

SHARIAT AND TASAWWUF

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ANCESTRY

Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat, Maulana Mohammed Maseehullah Khan, one of the greatest of authorities in Tasawwuf of our times, hails from the renowned and distinguished Sherwaani family of Pathans. Although the Sherwaani clan is famed as Pathan, it in reality is Sayyid in its origin, for its ancestral progenitor was Sayyid Husain Ghauri R.A. who migrated from Ghaur during the reign of Khalif Abdul Maalik Bin Marwaan (d. 65 A.H.) and settled in the region neighbouring ‘Koohe Sulaimaan.’ Sayyid Husain Ghauri R.A. settled among the Pathans and married the daughter of Batan Bin Qais Abdur Rashid. She bore him two sons, Lodi and Serwaani. The descendants of Serwaani became known as Sherwaani. It is then to this family of Sayyids that Hadhrat Maseehullah Khan Saheb belongs.

Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb was born in 1329 or 1330 A.H. at Barlah, District Aligarh, India. Born a saint, he was from early childhood the repository of piety and sterling qualities. His virtue, excellence of character, simplicity and dignity were acknowledged by all who came into contact with him even during his childhood. A considerable part of his time during childhood was spent in Zikr and supererogatory acts of Ibaadat. A favourite occupation of Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb during his early youth was to sit in the company of the Saaliheen and Auliya.

In this regard the companionship of Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Ilyas R.A., the Khalifah of Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind R.A. is noteworthy. It was this companionship during childhood days which introduced Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi R.A. to Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb. Sitting in the company of Hadhrat Muhammad Ilyas R.A. the young Maseehullah, heard with eagerness the incidents, talks and advices of Hakeemul Ummat R.A. Studying the works of Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. at the hands of Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Ilyas R.A. engendered in Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb a yearning, faith and love for Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi R.A. An outstanding feature of Hadhrat Maseehullah’s character is the dominant qualities of ‘hayaa’ (modesty) and tenderness. Hadhrat Allamah Mufti A’zam Saeed Ahmad Lucknowi R.A., Ustaaad of Hadhrat Maseehullah, who witnessed the life of Hadhrat Maseehullah from early childhood observed:

"From childhood he (Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb has been the repository of modesty, dignity, respect, forbearance, ingenuity, intelligence and commendable attributes ('ausaffe hameedah')."

Hadhrat Mufti Saeed Ahmad Lucknowi (rahmatullah alayh) – a great Faqeeh and Muhaddith – who had attained perfection in many branches of learning, despite being the Ustaaad of Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb, turned towards him (Hadhrat Maseehullah) for spiritual guidance after the demise of Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi R.A., who had bestowed even the mantle of Khilaafat (spiritual mentorship) upon Hadhrat Mufti Saheb. This act of Hadhrat Saeed Ahmad R.A. is ample testimony of the fact that Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb is a born saint who has attained spiritual perfection.

EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL TRAINING

Hadhrat Maseehullah’s initial educational training commenced in his hometown. The greater part of the Islamic syllabus up to the stage of Mishkaat Shareef was acquired from Hadhrat Mufti Saeed Ahmad. From Mishkaat Shareef and Hidaayah onwards up to completion of the Aalim-Faadhil course

was undertaken at the famous Islamic institute of learning, Darul Uloom, Deoband. He passed his student days in perfect solitude and was totally engrossed in the acquisition of 'Ilm'. At the same time he was a Mureed of Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. and as a result of his elevated spiritual rank, he occupied a distinguished position of honour and respect among students and Ulama as well.

It was already noted that a spiritual link of faith and love with Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. was already established during his early childhood days. The first time that Hadhrat Maseehullah saw Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi R.A. was at Aligarh during the year when he (Hadhrat Maseehullah) left for Deoband in pursuit of his Islamic education. The same year Hadhrat Maseehullah established his 'Islaahi' (spiritual rectification) connection with Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. Since that time he has been in constant communication with Hadhrat Thanvi R.A.

KHILAAFAT

The year when Hadhrat Maseehullah qualified in his Islamic studies at Darul Uloom, Deoband, Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. conferred upon him the spiritual Mantle of Khilaaafat authorising him to 'talqeen bai't' (initiation of Mureeds) and to conduct the spiritual training of Mureeds.

Among the various Khulafaa of Hakeemul Ummat R.A. Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb occupies a highly distinguished rank. Hadhrat Maseehullah was appointed as a Khaleefah at an early age, however, despite his relative youth. Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. listed him among eleven of his distinguished Khulafaa (Spiritual Representatives). This list was later published.

Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. had special reliance on the spiritual programmes and methods of spiritual training (islaah, ta'leem and tarbiyat) initiated by Hadhrat Maseehullah. As a result of this reliance, Hakeemul Ummat R.A. would refer certain Mureeds to Hadhrat Maseehullah for spiritual training.

As has been already observed that among all the Khulafaa of Hakeemul Ummat R.A., Hadhrat Maseehullah enjoys a distinguished rank of prominence. This was attested to by none other than Hakeemul Ummat himself. Once, upon someone's enquiry, Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. said:

“ISAA AND MASEEH HAVE SURPASSED (THE OTHERS)”

Isaa here is a reference to Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Isaa R.A. also among the distinguished Khulafaa of Hakimul Ummat R.A. and, Maseeh refers to Hadhrat Maseehullah Saheb. This statement made by Hakimul Ummat R.A. is in fact the stamp of authority on the abundance of spiritual grace, spiritual effulgence and spiritual benefit to the Ummah, which emanates from the person of this great Waarithul Ambiyaa (Representative of the Prophets), Maseehul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah. This observation of Hakeemul Ummat R.A. is ample testification to this fact since every word of praise and reproach was meticulously weighed in the court of Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat R.A. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat R.A. further testified to the spiritual training methods of Hadhrat Maseehullah by saying:

“There is order and arrangement in his temperament, hence order and arrangement in his instruction.”

SPIRITUAL INTUITION AND INSPIRATION (WAARIDAATE QALBIYYAH)

Hakimul Ummat R.A. advised Hadhrat Maseehullah:

“Act according to what enters into your heart repeatedly.”

This instruction of Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat R.A. adequately illustrates the purity of heart and the high standard of spiritual intuition and inspiration of Hadhrat Maseehullah. It is in fact a certificate of qualification of the deep esoteric knowledge and connection with the spiritual realm of Hadhrat Maseehullah. The attainment of such a lofty pedestal of spiritual elevation is explained by Hakimul Ummat R.A. in his famous work, ‘At-takash-shuf’ in which he says:

“When the darkness of the nafs and the impurities of character are eliminated by means of constant Zikrullah and abundance of spiritual exercise and abstinence and the heart and soul gain a special and a distinguished relationship with Allah Ta’ala then certain spiritual mysteries and esoteric knowledge enter the heart intuitively and inspirationally without the agency of the senses or other external material mediums.”

RU’YAA SAALIHAAH OR TRUE DREAMS

In the Hadith it is stated that the Sahaabah asked Rasulullah (saws):

“O Rasulullah! What are mubash-shiraat?”

Rasulullah (saws) replied:

“True dreams. And, this is the tafseer of Allah Ta’ala’s statement: ‘And, for them there are ‘bushraa’ (glad-tidings) in this worldly life.’”

Hadhrat Maseehullah has been endowed with the capacity for receiving such ‘mubash-shiraat’ (true dreams) mentioned in the Hadith. To this, Hadhrat Thanvi R.A. attested on several occasions.

SOME NOTEWORTHY ‘MUBASH-SHIRAAT’ OF HADHRAT MASEEHULLAH

Hadhrat Maseehullah obtained permission to deliver Wa’z (lectures) from Qutbul Aalam Hadhrat Gangohi R.A. via one such true dream. It was only after obtaining this permission and instruction that Hadhrat Maseehullah commenced the giving of lectures.

Hadhrat Khwaajah Mu’eenuddin Chisti R.A. specially directed Hadhrat Maseehullah in a dream to the duty of Dua. Khwaajah Saheb in this particular dream said:

“We transfer Dua to you. Whoever comes to you for Dua, make Dua on their behalf.”

In this directive is the tidings of Hadhrat Maseehullah being “Mustajaabud Da’waat’ (one whose Dua is readily accepted by Allah Ta’ala).

JALALABAD

Jalalabad is a fairly large town in the Uttar Pradesh province of India. In 1357 A.H., upon the express instruction of Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi R.A., Hadhrat Maseehullah came to Jalalabad. Since that time he has settled there permanently. To this day Hadhrat Maseehullah lives in Jalalabad from where he carries out his Islamic activities and duties. Recalling his despatch to Jalalabad. Hadhrat Maseehullah said:

“I happened to be present in the ‘khanqah’ when Hadratwaala (Hakeemul Ummat) said: A teacher is required there. You proceed to Jalalabad. ‘When I came here (to Jalalabad) there was one

Haafiz Saheb and two rooms. Haafiz Saheb taught in one room and I in the other.”

The choice of Hadhrat Maseehullah as the spiritual custodian of Jalalabad was the inspirational choice of Hakeemul Ummat R.A. Within thirty years the two-roomed maktab developed into a full-fledged Islamic

Madressa with over six hundred students from all parts of India, South Africa, Mauritius, Reunion, England, etc. Islamic education is imparted in the various branches of Islamic Knowledge, right from the elementary stages to the Aalim-Faadhil level.

The Madressa is operated purely on the basis of ‘Tawakkul’ (Trust in Allah Ta’ala). No appeal for funds are sent out nor has the Madressa any source of fixed income. It serves the Cause of Islam and Allah Ta’ala sees to its operation and existence. Since its inception, the functioning of the Madressa has been under the direct care and supervision of Hadhrat Maseehullah. However, of recent, Hadhrat Maseehullah is increasingly according greater time to the affairs of the ‘khanqah’.

Hadhrot Maseehul Ummat is truly one of those great saints and Ulama of Islam – of which there are few living today – of which the world is rapidly becoming empty. Once they depart, no replacements are found. Each departure heralds the approach of the Final Hour – in the words of Rasulullah (saws) .

“Verily, Allah Ta’ala will not eliminate Knowledge by way of extracting it (from the hearts) of servants. But, he will eliminate Knowledge by taking away the Ulama. And, when there no longer remains an Aalim, people will take for their leaders the ignorant. They (the ignorant ones) will be questioned, and they will issue verdicts. Thus they will be astray and lead (others) astray.”

THE HOLY CHISTIYYA, MASEEHIYYAH, ASHRAFIYYAH, IMDAADIYYAH SPIRITUAL TREE

Hadhrot Maseehul Ummat Maulana Mohammed Maseehullah Khan belongs to the auspicious chain of Auliyaa, which is linked to Rasulullah (saws) Every name in this holy ‘tree’ is a Star of immaculate piety and spiritual excellence in the firmament of Ma’rifat and Tasawwuf. The Tasawwuf of the members of this great Spiritual Order is deeply rooted in the Quraan and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (saws).

Hadhrot Mohammed Maseehullah Khan (died 1413 A.H.)

Khalifah of

Hadhrot Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (died 1362 A.H.)

Hajee Imdaadullah Makki (died 1317 A.H.)

Hadhrot Noor Muhammad (died 1259 A.H.)

Hadjee Abdur Raheem (died 1246 A.H.)

Shah Abdul Baari (died 1226 A.H.)

Shah Abdul Haadi (died 1190 A.H.)

Shah Adhdud-din (died 1172 A.H.)

Shah Muhammad

Shah Muhib-Bullah (died 1058 A.H.)

Shah Bu Sa-eed (died 1040 A.H.)

Shah Nizaamuddin Balkhi (died 1005 A.H.)

Shah Jalaaluddin (died 989A.H.)

Shah Abdul Quddus (died 924 A.H.) or is it 944AH [MC]

Shaikh Muhammad (died 989A.H.)

Shaikh Ahmad Aarif (died 882 A.H.)
 Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Haq (died 837A.H.)
 Shah Jalaaluddin (died 765 A.H.)
 Shaikh Shamsuddin (died 716 A.H.)
 Shaikh Alaauddeen (died 690 A.H.) or is it 590AH [MC]
 Shaikh Fareeduddin Shakar Ganj (died 669 A.H.)
 Khwaajah Qutbuddin Maqtool (died 633 A.H.) or is it Qutbud Deen Bakhtiyar [MC]
 Shah Mu-inuddin Habeeb (died 632 A.H.) or is it Mu-eenud Deen Chishti 627 AH [MC]
 Khwaajah Uthmaan (died 597A.H.)
 Shah Shareef Zindani (died 584 A.H.)
 Khwaajah Maudoon Chisti (died 577A.H.) or is it 527AH [MC]
 Shah Bu Yusuf (died 559A.H.) or is it 459 AH [MC]
 Shah Abu Muhammad (died 411 A.H.)
 Shah Ahmad Abdaal Chishti (died 355 A.H.)
 Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shaami (died 329A.H.)
 Khwaajah Mumtaaz Alawi (died 299A.H.) or is it Khawaaja Mumshad [MC]
 Shah Abu Habeerah Basri (died 275 A.H.) or is it 279 AH [MC]
 Shah Huzaifah Mur-ashi (died 252 A.H.) or is it 152 AH [MC]
 Shaikh Ibraahim Adham (died 266 A.H.) or is it 266 AH [MC]
 Shah Fuzil Ibn Iyaaz (died 187A.H.)
 Khwaajah Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (died 176 A.H.)
 Imaam Hasan Basri (died 110 A.H.)
 AMMERUL MU’MINEEN SAYYIDINA HADHRAT ALI (radhiyallahu anhu) (died 40 A.H.)
 MUHAMMAD RASULULLAH (saws) (died 10 A.H.) or is it 11AH [MC]

INTRODUCTION (by the Author)

The greater part of the subject matter of this book has been extracted from the various works of Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Mujaddid-e-Millat, Jaamiush Shariah Wat-Tareeqah, my Murshid, Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) . Among his works from which I have extracted this material, are At-takash-shuf, Bawaadirun Nawaadir, Aadaabush Shaikh Wal Mureed, Tableegh-e-Deen, Shariat Wa Tareeqat, etc. Part of what appears in this book, I have heard personally from Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat while sitting in his company.

All this is in reality the faidh and barkat of Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh). This is aptly conveyed by the following statements of Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Sulaimaan Nadvi (Rahmatullah Alayh):

“By virtue of his (Hadhrat Thaanvi’s) ta’leem (teaching), tarbiyat (spiritual training), writings, lectures and preaching, true aqaa-id (beliefs) were disseminated; correct masaa-il (laws) were propagated; programmes for Deeni Ta’leem were initiated; customs and innovations were eradicated; the Sunnah of Nabi (saws) was revived; the negligent were aroused; the sleeping one’s awoke; those who had forgotten, remembered; those without relationships were joined to Allah Ta’ala; hearts kindled with the love for Rasulullah (saws), and hearts lit up with the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala. That branch of knowledge (Tasawwuf) which had become empty, once again became adorned with the treasures of Hadhrat Shibli, Junaid, Bustaami, Jilaani, Suharwardi and Sarhindi (rahmatullah Alayhim).”

This attribute and rank of reformation (tajdeed) in this century has been bestowed by Allah Ta'ala specifically on the Mujaddid of the time, viz., Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Tha'anvi (rahmatullah Alayh). May Allah Ta'ala perpetually shower His limitless treasures and mercies on his noble Rooh, and may Allah Ta'ala always grant him His ranks of Proximity. Ameen thumma aameen.

TASAWWUF THE NATURE OF TASAWWUF

The department of the Shariat relating to a'male batini (esoteric acts or states of the heart) is called Tasawwuf and Suluk; and, the department of the Shariat relating to a'male zahiri (exoteric acts or physical acts) is called Fiqh. The subject matter dealt with by Tasawwuf is tahtheebe akhlaq or the adornment of character while the motive of this branch of the Shariat is the attainment of Divine Pleasure. The method of acquisition of this Divine Pleasure is total obedience to the commands of the Shariat.

Tasawwuf in fact is the rooh (soul) and state of perfection of the Deen. Its function is to purify the batin (the heart) of man from the lowly bestial attributes of lust, calamities of the tongue, anger, malice, jealousy, love of the world, love for fame, niggardliness, greed, ostentation, vanity, deception, etc. At the same time it (Tasawwuf) aims at the adornment of the heart with the lofty attributes of repentance, perseverance, gratefulness, fear of Allah, hope, abstention, tauheed, trust, love sincerity, truth, meditation, reckoning, contemplation, etc. In this way, attention towards Allah Ta'ala is inculcated in man. This is in fact the purpose of life. Tasawwuf or Tareeqat is therefore not at all negatory of the Deen and Shariat. On the contrary it is incumbent for every Muslim to become a Sufi (one who follows the path of Tasawwuf). Minus Tasawwuf, a Muslim cannot truly be described as a perfect Muslim

THE NEED FOR TASAWWUF

Now that it is clear that Tasawwuf is not contrary to the Deen, but is in fact a branch of the Shariat, its need is evident. Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) states in the introduction of Haqeeqatut Tareeqat :

“After rectification of beliefs and external acts it is fardh (compulsory) upon every Muslim to rectify his esoteric acts. Numerous Qur’aanic aayat and innumerable ahadith narrations explicitly indicate the fardhiat (compulsion) of this. However, most people of superficial understanding are neglectful of these because of their subservience to lowly desires. Who is not aware that the Qur’aan and the Ahadith are explicit regarding the significance of zuhd, qana’at, tawadhu’, ikhlas, sabr, shukr, hubbe ilahi, ridhabil qadha, tawakkul, tasleem, etc., while at the same time they emphasise the acquisition of these noble attributes? And, who is not aware that the Qur’aan and Ahadith condemn the opposites of these noble qualities, viz., hubbe dunya, hirs, takabbur, riya, shahwat, ghadab, hasad, etc., and has warned against them? What doubt is there in the fact that the noble qualities have been commanded and the bestial traits have been prohibited? This is the actual meaning of reforming the esoteric acts. This is the primary purpose of Tareeqat. It being fardh is undoubtedly an established fact.”

In Tareequl Qalandar, he says:

“All the authentic principles of Tasawwuf are to be found in the Qur’aan and Ahadith. The notion that Tasawwuf is not in the Qur’aan is erroneous. Errant sufis as well as the superficial Ulama (Ulama-e-Khushq) entertain this notion. Both groups have misunderstood the Qur’aan and Ahadith. The Ulama-e-Khushq claim that Tasawwuf is baseless since they believe that the Qur’aan and Hadith are devoid of it while the errant and transgressing (ghali) sufis assert that in the Qur’aan and Hadith

are only the exoteric (zahiri) laws. Tasawwuf they say, is the knowledge of the batin (esotericism). According to them – Na uthu billah – there is no need for the Qur’aan and the Hadith. In short, both groups consider the Qur’aan and Hadith to be devoid of Tasawwuf. Thus in conformity with their opinion, one group has shunned Tasawwuf and the other group has shunned the Qur’aan and Hadith.”

TASAWWUF AND THE QUR’AAN

Both external (zahiri) and internal (batini) acts and duties are commanded in the Qur’aan. Thus the Qur’aan while commanding Salaat and Zakaat:

“O People of Imaan! Establish Salaat and give Zakaat “,

also commands shukr (gratefulness):

“And be grateful unto Allah”.

At one place is to be found:

“Fasting has been decreed upon you.” and

“Upon mankind is the Hajj of the Bait for Allah.”,
while at another place is to be found:

“He (Allah) loves them (Mu’mineen) and they love Him.”,
and:

“Those who have adopted Imaan are most ardent in the love of Allah.”

Similarly, along with:

“When they stand for Salaat, they stand half-heartedly”,
is to be found:

“They show people (i.e. they perform Salaat in riya).”

The Qur’aan, like it reprimands and condemns the defaulter of Salaat and Zakaat, also states the evil of pride and vanity (takabbur and ujub).

The Same applies to the Ahadith. Like the chapters of Salaat, Saum, Ba’y (trade and commerce), Nikah (marriage), Talaq (divorce) are to be found, so too do the chapters of riya takabbur, etc, exist. No Muslim can refute the fact that like the a’male zahirah are Divine Commands so too are the a’male batinah.”(Establish Salaat and pay Zakaat)”are positive commands just as (Adopt sabr and shukr)”are positive commands. Like the aayat: “Fasting has been decreed upon you”, establishes the Shar’i nature of Fasting, the aayat: “Those who have Imaan are the most ardent in the love of Allah”, establishes the Shar’i nature of Love for Allah. On closer examination and reflection it will be realized that all the a’male zahirah are designed for the reformation of the a’male batinah. The purification of the batin (the heart and soul of man) is the aim and the basis of najat (salvation in the Akhirat) while the despoiling of the batin is the cause of destruction.

Allah Ta’ala declares:

“Verily, he who has purified the nafs has attained victory, and he who has despoiled it has lost.”

“That Day (of Qiyamat) neither wealth nor sons will benefit (anyone), but that person who comes to Allah with a reformed heart.”

The first aayat asserts victory as being the consequence of the purification of the batin while the second aayat negates the utility of wealth and sons in the absence of a reformed heart. wealth and sons in the absence of a reformed heart. Imaan and Aqa-id (Articles of Faith) on which pivots the acceptance of all a'mal (actions), are conditions of the heart (i.e. the batin). It is manifest that a'mal are designed for the perfection of Imaan. It is therefore clear that the original purpose is the reformation (islah) of the heart by virtue of which man is ushered into the Divine Court of Acceptance and attains the lofty spiritual ranks. This is precisely what is known technically as Tasawwuf.

STATEMENTS OF THE SUFIYA

In this regard Bayazid Bistami (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“Do not be deceived if you see a performer of supernatural feats flying in the air. Measure him on the Standard of the Shariat – how he adheres to the limits of the Commands of the Shariat.”

Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“All avenues besides the strict following of Rasulullah (saws) are closed to mankind.”

Hadhrat Nuri (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“Do not venture near to one who lays claim to a condition which brings about transgression of the limits of the Shariat.”

Hadhrat Khwajah Naseeruddin Chiraghe Dehlawi (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“Obedience to Rasulullah (saws) is imperative. Such obedience is essential in word, act and intention because Love for Allah Ta'ala is not possible without obedience to Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (saws).”

Khwajah Mueenuddin Chishti (rahmatullah alayh) says:

“He who adheres to the Shariat, executing its commands and refrains from transgression, progresses in spiritual rank, i.e. all progress is dependant on adherence to the Shariat.”

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) says in Ta'limuddin:

“Whoever acquires the wealth of Wusul (Attainment, having attained the Love of Allah) has acquired it by virtue of following the Sunnat.”

THE TECHNICAL TERMS OF SHARTAT AND TAREEQAT

The fountain of all Islamic teaching is the Qur'aan and the Sunnat. The inception of this teaching was in the Majlis (gathering) of Nabi (saws). It was the initial stage of Islam which was present in its headquarters. It had a confined number of adherents, hence all branches of Islamic instruction – Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh and Tasawwuf – were imparted at one venue, the Madrasah of Nabi (saws). Separate departments did not exist. However, in this Madrasah of Nabi (saws) there was a permanent group of lovers of Allah and devotees of Rasulullah (saws) who were at all times engaged in the purification of the nafs, and the reformation of the batin by means of practical education. This group is called Ashab-e-Suffah.

Later when Islam acquired an universal status, the Ulama of the Deen formulated the teachings of Islam into separate departments. Those who rendered service to the Knowledge of Hadith are called the Muhadditheen; those who undertook the responsibility of Tafseer are called the Mufasssireen; those who specialized in Fiqh are called the Fuqaha while those who took custody of the department of Islah Batin (purification of the nafs) became known as the Masha-ikh Sufiya. Hence, not a single one among the great authorities of former times ever divorced the Shariat from Tareeqat. On the contrary they also held Tareeqat in subservience to the Shariat.

SHARIAT, TAREEQAT, HAQEEQAT AND MA'RIFAT

The whole combination of the teachings imposed by Islam is known as the Shariat. Both sets of acts, viz., A'male Zahiri and A'male Batini, are included. In the terminology of the Mutaqaddimeen (the early authorities of the Shariat) the term Fiqh was synonymous with the word Shariat. Thus Imam A'zam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) defined Fiqh as follows:

“The recognition of that which is beneficial and harmful to the nafs.”

Later, in the terminology of the Muta-akh-khireen (the later authorities of the Shariat) the word Fiqh was used for that branch of Islam which related to A'male Zahiri while the branch which dealt with A'male Batini became known as Tasawwuf. The ways or methods of acquiring the A'male Batini are called Tareeqat.

The reformation of the A'male Batin brings about spiritual lustre and glitter of the heart to which is revealed, in consequence, certain realities (haqa-iq-e-kauniyah) pertaining to tangible and intangible occurrences especially virtue and vice; as well as certain realities (Haqa-iq-e-Ilahiyyah) pertaining to Divine Attributes and Acts especially related to affairs between Allah and servants. These revelations (makshufat) are known as Haqeeqat. The process of these revelations (i.e. inkishaf) is called Ma'rifat while the Saint of Inkishaf is known as a Muhaqqiq and Arif.

All the aforementioned relates to the Shariat. The notion that the Shariat and Tareeqat are entities apart – this notion has gained prominence in the public – is totally false and baseless. Now that the nature and reality of Tasawwuf and Sulook have become clear, it will be understood that:

Kashf (inspiration and revelation) and karamat (miracles) are not necessary.

It does not promise success in the worldly affairs.

It does not assert that one's work will be achieved by means of ta'weez and potions; nor does it claim that one will be successful in court cases by means of duaa.

It does not promise increase in one's earnings nor does it promise one cure from physical ailments.

It does not foretell future events.

It does not contend that the disciple's (mureed) reformation will be achieved by the spiritual focussing of the Shaikh. Extra-normal operation is not necessary to Tasawwuf.

It does not contend that the one who trods this Path will not be afflicted by even the thought of sin nor does it claim that the mureed will automatically (without effort) engage in Ibadat.

It does not promise total self-annihilation so that one is not aware even of one's presence.

It does not promise the experiencing of states of ecstasy and spiritual effulgence in Thikr and Shaghl (spiritual exercise) nor does it claim that one will see beautiful dreams and wonderful visions.

All these are not the aims of Tasawwuf. The purpose is the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This then, should be kept in sight.

BAY'T

Bay't is a mutual pledge relating to the striving, arranging, executing and adhering to the laws of A'male Zahiri and A'male Batini. This pledge is called Bay't-e-Tareeqat which has been in vogue by authoritative transmission from generation to generation from the earliest time of Islam.

Rasulullah (saws) had enacted bay't of the Sahaabah not only on Jihad, but on Islam and the adherence of the Ahkam (Laws in general) as well on practical deeds (A'mal). This is established by numerous Ahadith. The following hadith is one such Hadith:

“Auf Ibn Maalik Ash-ja-ee (radhiyallahu anhu) said: We were with Nabi (saws), seven, eight or nine (of us), when he said:

‘Will you not make bay't (pledge) to the Rasul of Allah ?’

We stretched our hands and enquired: On what shall we make bay't to you, O Rasul of Allah? He said:

‘That you make the Ibaadat of Allah; that you associate nothing with Him; that you perform the five Salaat; that you hear and obey.’ (Muslim, Abu Dawood, Nisai)

On this occasion the bay't which Rasulullah (saws) took from the Sahaabah was neither Bay't Imaani (Pledge of Imaan) nor Bay't Jihaadi (Pledge to wage Jihad). This Hadith is categoric proof for the validity of the system of bay't in vogue by the Masha-ikh of Tasawwuf. Like there are four Math-habs (Schools of Thought) in Fiqh, viz. Hanafi, Shafi, Maliki and Hambali, so too are there four schools of thought in Tasawwuf, viz., Chishtiyya, Qaderiyyah, Naqshabandiyyah and Suharwardiyyah. Like the Hanafi Way is dominant in this area (India and Pakistan), the Chishtiyyah Way too is dominant here. Our akabir (authorities in Tasawwuf) enter into (bay't) in all the four Schools of Thought (Silsilah) so that respect for the four Silsilah is maintained although Chishtiyyat is dominant .

The founder of the Chishtiyyah Silsilah is Hadhrat Khwajah Mueenuddin Chishti Ajmeri (rahmatullah alayh); founder of the Qaderiyyah Order is Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (rahmatullah alayh); founder of the Naqshabandiyyah Order is Hadhrat Shaikh Bahauddin Naqshabuddin (rahmatullah alayh); and the founder of the Suharwardiyyah Silsilah is Hadhrat Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardiyyah (rahmatullah alayh).

THE MODE OF BAY'T

The bay't is enacted by the Shaikh taking into his right hand the right hand of the mureed (disciple). If the group contracting the bay't is large, the Shaikh uses a length of cloth onto which each member of the group holds with his right hand. Ladies who contract the bay't do so from behind a screen. A mahram of the lady should also be present at the bay't ceremony. Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) said:

“Rasulullah (saws) never touched the palm of a woman, but he would make the (pledge-bay't) upon her. Upon having made the bay't he would say. ‘Go! Verify, I have already made bay't with you.’ ” (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu-Dawood)

It is for this reason that in entering ladies into the bay't, the Masha-ikh do so verbally or by means of a cloth which is spread from the Shaikh to the lady behind the screen. This is the method of bay't when in the presence of the Shaikh. Those who are not able to present themselves personally to the Shaikh could contract the bay't by means of a letter or through the agency of a responsible and trustworthy person. This form of bay't is called bay't-e-Uthmani. Rasulullah (saws) on the occasion of bay't-e-Ridhwan made the bay't of Hadhrat Uthmaan in his (Uthmaan's) absence. On this occasion, Rasulullah (saws) placed his right hand on his left hand and announced that he has made bay't of Uthmaan. (The bay't in absence of the mureed is therefore termed bay't-e-Uthmaani,)

TA'LEEM (INSTRUCTION) AT THE TIME OF BAY'T

Certain instructions are given to the mureed at the time of bay't.

1. Firstly, is the qadha (fulfilment) of Salaat and Fasts which were omitted. The qadha should be executed by performing along with each daily Salaat a Qadha Salaat of the same time, e.g. along with the Ada Maghrib Salaat, a Qadha Maghrib Salaat should be made. During Isha, the Witr omitted should also be made. In making the qadha only the Fardh and Witr are made. It is however preferable to perform a number of qadha Salaat collectively at one time or in a single day, e.g. the Qadha Salaat of several times or of several days. In this way quicker discharge of the obligation takes place.
2. Discharging any monetary obligations of others if one is liable for such obligations. Such discharge is either by making the due payment or by obtaining the pardon of the one whose right is involved.
3. Fully guarding the eyes, ears and the tongue; total abstention from haraam and mushtabah (doubtful) wealth; appearance, dress to be in conformity with the Sunnat; total abstention from innovation and un-Islamic customs and practices on occasions of happiness and sorrow; to refrain from unlawful methods in all affairs; to constantly bear in mind not to harm anyone by means of one's hand or tongue; not to hurt anyone; refraining from association; meeting according to need; and abstaining from unnecessary conversation.
4. Constantly maintaining the thikr of Kalimah Tayyibah, i.e. while walking, sitting, reclining and laying down. The way to do this is to continuously engage in reciting:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

After reciting it a few times,

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

should be added.
5. After every Salaat recite Ayatul Kursi followed by Tasbeeh Fatimi. i.e. 33 times 33 ; سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ times 33 ; الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ; and thirty four times اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ . If time affords then recite after Zuhr, Maghrib and Isha one Tasbeeh (100 times) the third Kalimah.
6. After Isha Salaat, at the time of going to bed engage in muhasabah (self-reckoning) and muraqabah-e-maut (contemplating death).

MUHASABAH

Muhasabah means to take stock or reckoning. Here it means to take stock of one's own deeds and activities. One should reflect over the entire day's acts and deeds. Upon recalling a noble act or an act of Ibaadat, express one's gratefulness (shukr) unto Allah Ta'ala and request for greater taufeeq (ability and inclination) to enhance virtue. Upon recalling one's evil or wrong doing, become regretful. This is the daily muhasabah incumbent upon the mureed.

MURQAQA-E-MAUT

This means to contemplate...to think about the oncoming event of maut (death). Reflect about the pangs of death, the questioning in the grave, the Plain of Resurrection, the Reckoning in Qiyamat; the presence in the Court of Allah; crossing the Sirat, etc. All this has to be contemplated and a pledge is to be made that one will in future not venture near to sin. One tasbeeh (100 times) Istighfaar is then to be recited. The Istighfaar is:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ | اسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِأَلِلهِ الْهَوِّ الْفَيْئُومِ وَالتَّوْبُ إِلَيْهِ

7. Consider yourself to be the most inferior, so much so, that if you observe with your own eyes another indulging in the worst of vices then too you shall not despise him/her, nor shall you consider yourself nobler than him/her. On the contrary one should fear and bear in mind that it is very possible that the perpetrator of the vice may resort to sincere taubah and become a person of high piety while the one who had despised the sinner become ensnared (Allah forbid!) in the meshes of the nafs and shaitaan and be diverted from Ibaadat and obedience. One has no certainty regarding one's end. One, therefore, has no basis for regarding another with contempt.

N.B. This instruction, No. 7, is the first step in Suluk. Without taking this step, the Path of Tasawwuf remains closed.

THE NATURE OF BAY'T

The meaning of bay't (بيع : to sell) is inherent in bay't (بيعت). Bay't thus implies that the mureed "sells" himself to the Shaikh. In other words he has sold himself to the Shaikh in preparation of ahkam-e-zahirah and ahkam-e-batinah (i.e. to learn to give practical expression to the Law of Allah Ta'ala). The nature of this "sale" envisages that the searcher after the truth (talib) should repose implicit trust and faith in his Shaikh. He should understand and accept that the advices and prescriptions, admonitions and prohibitions of the Shaikh are all designed and motivated for his (the mureed's) spiritual well-being. The talib shall not interfere with or impede the diagnosis and prescriptions of the Shaikh. He should have implicit faith to such an extent that he should believe that in all the world there is none in his knowledge who can benefit him more than his Shaikh. In the terminology of Tasawwuf this conception of implicit faith in the Shaikh is known as wahdat-e-matlab (unity of purpose). Minus this conception, the ceremony of bay't is meaningless and of no benefit because congeniality (munasabat) with the Shaikh is an essential condition for islaah (reformation) of the nafs.

The sign of the existence of congeniality (munasabat) between the Mureed and his Shaikh is that the heart of the mureed does not object to the respect, statements and acts of the Shaikh. Should any objection arise in the heart regarding the Shaikh, the mureed should grieve and feel depressed.

The external form of bay't is beneficial to the general public since it induces reverence and respect in them for the Shaikh. As a result, they readily accept the Shaikh's statements and are constrained to act accordingly. However, for the elite (khawas), i.e. the Ulama, bay't proves beneficial after a period has been spent in association with the Shaikh. By virtue of bay't a bond of sincerity (khulus) is generated

between the mureed and the Shaikh. The Shaikh considers the mureed to belong to him and the mureed considers the Shaikh to belong to him. There does not remain any suspense between them.

THE NEED FOR A SHAIKH

It has always been in the Divine Scheme of things that perfection cannot be attained without an ustad (expert instructor). Thus when one is endowed with the guidance to enter into the Road of Tareeqat, one should search for an Ustad of Tareeqat so that one may reach the true goal through the medium of his graceful instruction and auspicious companionship.

“O my heart! if you desire to undertake this sojourn hold on to the garment of the guide. Whoever trod the Path of Love without Companion his life passed by without attaining love.”

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Rahmatullah therefore says:

“What! Has anyone attained perfection by only books? it is simple to understand that one cannot become a carpenter without sitting in the company of a carpenter; one cannot become a tailor without the companionship of a tailor; one cannot become a calligraphist without the company of a calligrapher. In short, one cannot attain perfection or become an expert without the companionship of an expert.”

The companionship of a pious man will induce piety in you. Similarly, the companionship of an evil man will induce evil in you. He who searches for association with Allah Ta’ala, has to acquire the association of the Auliya-e-Kiram. A short while spent in the companionship of Auliya is nobler and superior to a century of unostentatious obedience. Companionship with the pious for even a moment is superior to a century of zuhd (abstention) and ta’at (obedience).

A LETTER AND ITS REPLY

The following letter and reply given by Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) demonstrates the need for a Shaikh.

The letter:

“I am presently in Daurah-e-Hadith (the final year in the Alim Fadhil course). For quite a while I had intended to write, but a certain aspect prevented me from doing so. I am a voracious reader and lover of your writings and have been engaged in reading your books since my childhood days. By the grace of Allah I have benefited much.

I have learnt one particular thing from your writings, viz. the commands of the Shariat are all voluntary (ikhtiyariyyah). Since the commands are ikhtiyariyyah (volitional) it follows that the commands to abstain are likewise volitional. Thus the remedy for ail spiritual ailments is to refrain (volitionally). I have always adopted this method for myself. The question now is this: Now that this principle has been learnt from the Masha-ikh of Tareeqat does the need still remain to refer to the Masha-ikh and obtain remedies from them? I do not understand this.

I have ruminated for quite a while regarding this matter. I trust that you will advise me so that I may practice accordingly. After realizing this general principle, what is the need for obtaining the diagnosis and prescription of a Shaikh? I hope that if I have erred, I will be informed.”

The reply:

“The commands and the prohibitions are all volitional. However, errors do happen in this regard. At times what has already been acquired (hasil) is considered as not having been attained yet (ghair-hasil), and sometimes vice versa. For example, a person intend to attain khushu’ (concentration based

on humility) in Salaat, and in reality he then attains khushu'. But, while having attained khushu' he is simultaneously afflicted by an abundance of stray thoughts (wasawis). This person then regards the accident of such wasawis as contradictory and negatory of khushu'. He thus considers that he has not attained khushu'. In the initial stages of Ibadat, wasawis are non-volitional (ghair-ikhtiyari) – coming of their own accord – however, later the musallee is diverted towards volitional (ikhtiyari) wasawis and he is deceived into believing that such wasawis are yet of the non volitional kind of the initial stages. He thus considers himself to have khushu' while in actual fact khushu has been eliminated .

At times he considers what is not firm (ghair rasikh) to be firm (rasikh). For example, in a few light mishaps he considers himself to have attained the state of radha bil qadha (satisfied with what has been divinely decreed). His contentment in the face of some slight misfortunes leads him to believe that he has attained advanced capability in firmness and steadfastness. But, if some great calamity overtakes him and he fails to be contented then too he labours under the deception that he has attained the desired degree and goal of rusukh (firmness).

The consequence of regarding the attained (hasil) as unattained (ghair hasil) is frustration and depression which in turn induce one to become careless and neglectful. Thus, the attained becomes truly eliminated. The harm of the opposite condition (i.e. considering the unattained as attained – ghair-hasil as hasil) is deprivation. Since one labours under the false notion that one has already achieved the goal, one does not make any effort in this direction.

The same danger lurks in considering ghair-rasikh (infirmary) as rasikh (firm), viz., one remains careless, not making any effort or arrangement to attain the desired goal of firmness and steadfastness. Sometimes one commits the error of believing that the state of rusukh has not been attained despite it having been attained. For example, one combated unlawful lust during a time when the effect of ones thikr was dominant. As a result, the condition of unlawful lust remained suppressed so much so that one's attention was totally diverted from it. Later when the effect of the thikr decreases and the natural propensities assert themselves even if in slight degree one is misled to believe that one's mujahadah (striving against the nafs) ha; gone wasted, hence the return of the evil propensities. The consequence of this feeling is that one loses hope and is overtaken by stagnation and retrogression.

The above are merely some examples of errors and the resultant harm. A qualified Shaikh (of Tareeqat) by virtue of his insight and experience discerns the reality and if one is connected to such a Shaikh, he informs one of the errors and pitfalls. The mureed is thus saved from these dangers. Assuming that the Saalik (one who treads the Path of Tasawwuf) because of intelligence and correct understanding discerns the pitfalls, then too, he will not attain tranquillity and peace of mind because of inexperience. He will remain perplexed. And, perplexity impedes the attainment of the goal.

This is the duty of the Shaikh's office. More than this is not his responsibility. Nevertheless, in kindness he performs another function as well. In realizing the goal or the initial stage of the goal or in eliminating an evil attribute, the searcher of the truth undergoes great stress and difficulty although repeated subjection to such difficulty finally becomes transformed into ease. But, the Shaikh sometimes as a favour devises such a scheme that the difficulty disappears from the very inception.

This is a brief exposition for understanding. The need for a Shaikh is felt and understood once one commences in the Path and systematically informs the Shaikh of one's particular conditions and at the same time following his advice and instructions. Furthermore, such total obedience is possible only if one has full trust and confidence in the Shaikh, fully submitting to him. At that time one will actually feel and realize that it is not possible to attain the goal normally without a Shaikh."

THE SIGN OF SHAIKH-E-KAMIL (QUALIFIED SHAIKH)

A Shaikh is one who has full knowledge and experience of spiritual ailments (amradh-e-batinah), attributes of vice and virtue (akhlaq-e-razeelah and akhlaq-e-hameedah), their characteristics (khawas) and their effects (ta'theerat). He should further be able to distinguish between their similarities and he must have perfect ability in devising plans and prescriptions for the acquisition of the attributes of virtue and the elimination of the attributes of vice. He has to be aware of the progress and retrogress of these attributes. He must be well versed in the hazards of the nafs and shaitaan, the intuitive senses and feelings pertaining to the angels and the Divine Being. He must be able to distinguish these various intuitive and extra-sensory feelings and perceptions. It is therefore imperative that the Shaikh of tareeqat be one who is qualified in this knowledge, be a mujtahid in this field and possesses natural ability and inherent propensity. If he has acquired the Tareeq by a mere self-study of books on Tasawwuf or by listening from others, he will destroy the mureed whom he is attending, because he will not be in position to correctly diagnose the various states of the mureed.

Shaikh Ibn Arabi (rahmatullah alayh) briefly summarises the signs of a Shaikh-e-Kamil (the perfect and qualified Shaikh) to be three:

1. Deen resembling the Deen of the Ambiya.
2. Prescribing like the physicians.
3. Management and control like that of kings.

The exposition of the above summary is as follows:

1. He should possess the necessary knowledge of the Deen which he must have acquired by either academic pursuit of such knowledge or from companionship with the Ulama-e-Muhaqqiqeen .
2. He must be a deputy (Khalifah) of a Shaikh-e-Kamil attached to an authentic Silsilah.
3. He should be uprighteous and pious.
4. He derived spiritual benefit by remaining for an adequate period of time in the company of the Shaikh. Such "companionship" is either by means of correspondence or by physical presence in the association of the Shaikh.
5. The people of knowledge (i.e. the Ulama) hold him in high esteem, and refer to him.
6. The effect of his companionship (suhbat) is increase in the desire for Akhirat and Divine love as well as detestation for the love of the world.
7. The majority of his mureeds are followers of the Shariat, their conditions conforming with the demands of the Shariat.
8. He is devoid of greed and desire (for worldly gain and benefit).
9. He engages in Thikr and devotional practices.
10. He does not leave his mureeds unfettered, but reprimands them when the need arises. He treats everyone according to their respective abilities.

The one in whom these attributes exist is worthy of being a Shaikh and he should be considered a wonderful alchemy. His companionship and service to him are in fact priceless treasures. Once these attributes or perfection are found in a Shaikh, one should not be concerned about karamat (miracles) and kushf (inspiration). It is not necessary that these states exist in the Shaikh-e-Kamil nor is it necessary that he be one who does nor himself earn his livelihood.

MUNASABAT (CONGENIALITY) WITH THE SHAIKH

Experience has proven that for gaining spiritual benefit (fuyudh-e-batini), mutual munasabat (congeniality) between the Shaikh and Mureed is a natural condition. Normally benefit is dependant

on affection which is the reality! of natural congeniality (munasabat-e-fitri). Sometimes a Shaikh will refer a mureed to another Shaikh because of the lack of such munasabat between them. In doing so the Shaikh establishes either by deduction or kashf (inspiration from Allah Ta'ala) that the mureed has munasabat with a certain Shaikh. In this Path it is essential that munasabat exists between the Shaikh and Mureed otherwise the latter will not benefit. Such munasabat is the basis for the acquisition of benefit and passing on faidh (spiritual grace) to the mureed. Munasabat envisages that there exists between the Shaikh and Mureed compatibility and harmony to such a degree that the mureed discerns no rejection in his heart for any word or act of the Shaikh although he (the mureed) may be afflicted by mental disagreement with any word or act of the Shaikh.

Nevertheless such mental disagreement will not countenance any rejection for the Shaikh in the heart of the mureed. In short, harmony and compatibility are conditional for bay't. It is therefore essential to first inculcate munasabat. This need is imperative. In the absence of this essential condition, mujahadat (strivings), riyadhat (certain forms of exercises designed to subdue the nafs), muraqabat (meditations) and mukashafat (intuitive revelations) are all futile. In the absence of natural munasabat (tab'i munasabat), the mureed should endeavour to inculcate intellectual (aqli) munasabat, because benefit is dependant on it. For this reason, one should refrain from entering into the bay't contract until total munasabat has been inculcated.

THE BENEFITS OF THE COMPANIONSHIP OF A SHAIKH-E-KAMIL

The benefits of association with a Shaikh-e-Kamil are manifold. Among such benefits are:

1. The noble and lofty qualities of the Shaikh slowly develop in the mureed.
2. Even if one is not totally reformed, one will have gained the ability to discern and recognize one's faults.
3. The mureed follows the Shaikh in character and habit.
4. Attainment of joy and pleasure in Thikr and ibaadat.
5. Enhancement of courage.
6. The obtainal of clarification and contentment from the Shaikh in the event of a spiritual condition settling over the mureed.
7. The mureed will discern his own spiritual condition which becomes manifest in the talks of the Shaikh, such talks being the essence of the masa-il (rules).
8. Increase in the desire to practice virtue.
9. The mureed's ability becomes manifest to him.
10. Love for Allah Ta'ala increases.
11. Quick attainment of cure for spiritual ailments.
12. Obtaining the dua of the Shaikh.
13. Elimination of doubt and uncertainty as a result of the Nur emanating from the heart of the Shaikh. This Nur has its effect on the mureed. Spiritual darkness is dispelled by this Nur. The reality of all things thus becomes manifest. There are degrees regarding the efficacy of this Nur depending on the degree of fertility of the disposition of the mureed. One of high and noble disposition can attain the full beneficial effect of this Nur by merely looking at such Shaikhs of perfection. In such cases the mureed attains spiritual progress and ranks without even physical association with the Shaikh.

HUQOOQ (RIGHTS) OF THE SHAIKH

1. The mureed should believe that he will attain his goal through the agency of his Shaikh. If the mureed turns his attention elsewhere (i.e. towards another Shaikh while he remains the mureed of one Shaikh) he will be deprived of the spiritual grace and benefit of his Shaikh.

2. The mureed should in all ways be obedient to his Shaikh and render sincere and total service to him. In the absence of the love of the Shaikh there is no real benefit. The sign of love for the Shaikh is immediate fulfilment of his orders. Never follow- an) act without his permission because sometimes the Shaikh resorts to an act which is appropriate for him in view of his rank and spiritual state, but the same act may be a fatal poison for the mureed.
3. Recite the thikr and the wazifas which the Shaikh instructs and refrain from all other forms of wazifas.
4. In the presence of the Murshid, the mureed should direct all his attention towards him. This attention has to be to such a degree that the mureed should not perform even Salaat (in his presence) without his permission.
5. Do not speak with anyone in his presence, in fact, do not pay attention to anyone.
6. Do not stretch the legs in the direction where the Murshid is seated, even if he is not directly in front.
7. Never lodge any objection against the Murshid. If the mureed is unable to understand any act of the Murshid, he should not entertain any misgiving, but should recall the episode of Hadhrat Musa (alayhis salaam) and Hadhrat Khidr (alayhis salaam) and consider that some wisdom must be underlying the act.
8. Never desire the Murshid to display karamat (miracles).
9. If in any doubt, immediately discuss it with the Murshid. Should the doubt after having discussed it still remain, consider it to be the result of your defective understanding. If the Murshid does not respond when the mureed puts forward his doubt, he (mureed) should consider that he is yet not capable of comprehending the explanation, hence the Murshid's silence. He should await another opportunity for clarification.
10. Inform the Murshid of dreams as well as any interpretation of such dreams which come to your mind.
11. The mureed should not without need and without permission remain aloof from the Murshid.
12. The mureed should not raise his voice above that of the Murshid nor should he speak in loud tones to the Murshid.
13. When necessary, the mureed should speak to the Murshid clearly and be brief and wait with much attention for the reply.
14. Narrate to others only that extent of the Murshid's talks which is understandable to them. Do not narrate to others such words of the Murshid which they will not be able to comprehend.
15. The mureed should not refute the words of the Murshid even if it seems that the mureed is correct. The mureed should hold the belief that the error of the Shaikh (Murshid) is superior to his (mureed's) rectitude.
16. The mureed should inform the Murshid constantly of his condition, whether good or bad. The Murshid is the Spiritual Practitioner and prescribes remedies after being informed of the mureed's condition. The mureed should not maintain silence about his condition depending upon the kashf (spiritual inspiration) of the Murshid for realization of the mureed's condition. The mureed has to systematically notify the Murshid of his condition.
17. The mureed should not engage in any wazeefah (thikr or form of recitation) while sitting in the company of the Murshid. Such recitation should be in the absence of the Murshid.
18. Whatever batini faiz (spiritual blessing) accrues, the mureed should consider it to be the consequence of the agency of the Murshid even if in a dream or state of muraqabah (meditation) it appears that such blessing is from a different direction (other than the Shaikh). If in a spiritual state it appears that such batini faiz accrued to the mureed via the agency of another Saint, the mureed should consider that it is some manifestation of his Murshid which has assumed the form of another Saint.

MUJAAHADAH

“Those who strive in Our Path, We will most assuredly guide them towards Our Paths.” Qur’aan

“Fudhaalah Kaamil narrates that Rasulullah (saws) said. ‘The mujaahid is he who makes jihaad (strives) in the obedience of Allah.’ Baihaqi

The Nature of Mujaahadah

The reality of Mujaahadah consists of the habitual practice of opposing the nafs (man’s lowly desire). In other words, to check and control the physical, monetary, egotistical and mundane desires, delights and preferences of the nafs in the pursuit of the Pleasure and Obedience of Allah Ta’ala.

Two types of benefits accrue to the nafs.

1. Huqooq. Huqooq (rights or obligations) are such benefits necessary for the endurance and existence of the physical body and life.
2. Huzooz. Huzooz (pleasures, delights, luxuries) are benefits in excess to the huqooq.

Mujaahadah and riyaazat (abstinence-forms of austere exercises designed to establish the control of the mind over matter) are directed towards the huzooz. In mujaahadah, reduction or total abstention from the huzooz, (pleasures) are advocated. (Pleasures here refer to lawful pleasures and not to such pleasures which are forbidden in the Shariat). In the employment of mujaahadah, the huqooq (rights and obligations) are not destroyed, for such destruction is contrary to the Sunnat. The Hadith Shareef states:

“Verily, your nafs has a haqq (right) over you...”

Destruction of the huqooq brings about physical weakness and the health deteriorates. When this happens, one finds it difficult to execute even the necessary duties and Ibaadaat.

The Need for Mujaahadah

A’maal-e-Saalihah (righteous deeds) are always accompanied by labour, toil and difficulty because such a’maal are in conflict with the desires of the nafs. There will always be some form of opposition sometimes great, sometimes slight by the nafs against a’maal. Striving against the nafs is therefore a life-long process.

Both the mubtadi and the muntahi are at times faced with lethargy because of conflict in the a’maal. (Mubtadi is a beginner in the Path of Tasawwuf). Muntahi one who has attained his goal in Tasawwuf. Both are in need to ward off their lethargy by means of mujaahadah. However, the mubtadi stands in greater need of mujaahadah in the initial stages, he at times becomes over-confident. But, frequently natural traits and habits return and the consequence is an urge for sinning. The nafs of the muntahi therefore also becomes lethargic at times in obedience. He, therefore, stands in need of mujaahadah at such a time.

There is, however, a great difference between the mujaahadah of the mubtadi and the muntahi. The mubtadi is like one who is seated on the back of a horse just trained. The rider of the newly trained horse has to be much more alert and exercise greater control over the horse as such a horse tends to be more mischievous and is apt to go out of control. The muntahi is like a rider seated on the back of a well trained horse. He exercises no great endeavour to maintain the horse under control. Nevertheless, he too has to be alert because even a trained horse sometimes reverts to mischievousness because of

its natural animal traits. But, the slightest warning from the rider is sufficient to check the horse. If, however, the rider is totally negligent then even the trained horse will sometimes suddenly drop him from its back. Thus, mujaahadah for the control of the nafs is necessary for the muntahi also.

Moderation in Mujaahadah

The purpose of mujaahadah is not to depress and frustrate the nafs, but is to habituate the nafs to difficulty and to eliminate the habit of comfort and luxury. For this purpose that amount of mujaahadah is sufficient which brings some difficulty on the nafs. It is of no benefit to impose excessive strain on the nafs and frustrating it. Excessive strain will render the nafs useless. Understand this well. Effort and trial are not always and in all conditions meritorious. It is desirable if in moderation resulting in beneficial progress. Excess in mujaahadah is contemptible, hence observance of moderation is incumbent. Shaikh Sa'di (rahmatullah alayh) echoes this in the couplet:

Eat not so much that it spills from the mouth
Eat not so less that the body is overcome with weakness.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“(The servants of Allah are) those who when they spend, do not waste nor are they miserly. But, between these (extremes of waste and miserliness) they are moderate.”

Moderation has therefore to be observed in mujaahadah. But, this moderation should not be prescribed by one's own opinion and desire. The degree of moderation and the method of mujaahadah should be acquired from a Muhaqqiq (a Shaikh qualified in Tasawwuf and who has been authorised by some spiritual master to spiritually train others).

The Types of Mujaahadah

There are two kinds of mujaahadah.

1. Physical Mujaahadah. This is the imposition of practices upon the nafs in order to accustom it to difficulties, e.g. accustoming the nafs to Salaat by imposing upon it Nafil Salaat in abundance; reducing the greed of the nafs by means of abundance of Nafil Fasting.
2. Opposition. In this type of mujaahadah the nafs is opposed in its desires. When the nafs urges to commit sin then opposition is offered. The main type of mujaahadah is this second kind. This second kind of mujaahadah is Waajib (compulsory). The first type of mujaahadah is employed in order to acquire the second kind. When the nafs becomes accustomed to difficulties then it will develop the habit of controlling its desires.

Those who possess the ability to control their desires without resorting to physical mujaahadah (the first kind) are not in need of this type of mujaahadah. However, because such people are extremely few, the Sufiyah have stringently adopted physical mujaahadah as well. According to the Sufiyah physical mujaahadah consists of four fundamentals (arkaan) as follows:

1. Qillat-e-Ta'aam: To eat less.
2. Qillat-e-Kalaam: To speak less.
3. Qillat-e-Manaam: To sleep less.
4. Qillat-e-Ikhtilaat Ma'al Anaam: To associate less with people.

One who fully acquires these four qualities and becomes accustomed to observe them, will attain the ability to control his nafs. He will be in a strong position to check the evil desires of the nafs.

Mujaahadah against the nafs in its urges for sin is acquired when the nafs is opposed to a certain degree in even its lawful desires, e.g. refusal to fulfil immediately the desire of the nafs for some delicious food, its urge for such food being rebuffed and only fulfilled after vehement desire so that the nafs does not become frustrated. When one becomes accustomed to oppose the nafs in things lawful then it will become relatively simple to oppose the sinful urges of the nafs. A person who grants his nafs absolute freedom in the mubaahaat (lawful things) at times will not be able to suppress the urge for sinning.

Summary

Riyaaazat and Mujaahadah have two fundamentals (rukun):

1. Mujaahadah Jismaani or Mujaahadah Ijmaali (i.e. the physical mujaahadah explained earlier).
2. Mujaahadah Tafseeli or Mujaahadah Nafsaani (i.e. the mujaahadah of opposition explained earlier).

Mujaahadah Ijmaali has four fundamentals as stated above. In these acts (viz. reduction in food, speech, sleep and association) it is necessary to adopt moderation in accordance with the instruction of a Shaikh-e-Kaamil (a spiritual guide qualified in this field). Neither is there to be excessive indulgence in these acts because the result will be indolence and negligence, nor should there be excessive reduction, for the consequence will be physical weakness.

The second rukn (viz. Mujaahadah Tafseeli, is divided into two classes:

1. Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah: Beautiful and virtuous qualities.
2. Akhlaaq-e-Rareelah: Evil qualities.

These will be explained further ahead.

THE EXPOSITION OF THE FOUR FUNDAMENTALS OF MUJAAHADAH IJMAALI

Allah Ta'ala states:

“He (i.e. man) utters nor a word, but a ready guard is at hand.”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“He who maintains silence has attained salvation.” Ahmad, Tirmizi

Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) said that it reached him that Eesaa Bin Maryam (alayhis salaam) said:

“Do not speak in abundance other than zikrullah, for your hearts will become hard. Verily, a hard heart is far from Allah, but you know nor. And, do not look at the sins of people as if you are the overseer. Gaze at your sins as if you are slaves. People are of two kinds: the one who is involved (in sin) and the one who is saved (from sin). Have mercy upon those involved and praise Allah Ta'ala for protection (received).”Taiseer

Abundance of speech hardens the heart thereby eliminating humility and fear. This fact is established by experience. A person becomes distanced from Allah Ta'ala because of the hardness in the heart, but one fails to realize this drift from Allah Ta'ala. The reality of it will be discerned in the Akhirat. Although the effects of such distance from Allah are detectable here as well, but due to unconcern one

fails to realise this. One should not view the sins of others as if one has been appointed over others, but on the contrary one should be concerned with one's own sins so that compensation could be offered and rectification adopted. Some people are involved in sin and others again have been protected from sin. One should have mercy upon those who have become involved in sin and not despise or criticize them. Admonish them with kindness and make duaa on their behalf. Protection against sins is a safeguard, hence one should not be vain and arrogant if one is saved from sin. On the contrary, one should consider such protection as a ni'mat (favour) of Allah a favour to which one is not entitled, and be grateful.

Taqleel-e-Kalaam (Reducing Speech)

Man's conversation apparently falls into three categories.

1. Beneficial. If such speech is some worldly or Deeni benefit.
2. Harmful. In such speech is some worldly or Deeni harm.
3. Neither beneficial nor harmful. The Hadith describes this third category of speech as laa-ya'ni (futile, useless). On closer examination it will be realized that this third class of speech belongs also to the second category, viz. harmful talk. If SUBHAANALLAAH was uttered once during a time which was squandered in futile talk, then half the pan in the Scale of Anil (deeds) would be filled. If some advantageous or righteous act was done during the time spent in futile conversation, it would have become an expiation for sin and a medium of salvation in the Akhirat. If not this, then at least such time idly spent could have been expended in some worldly benefit. Rasulullah (saws) said:

“A sign of one's Islam being healthy is one's shunning of futile acts and futile talks.”

In Ihyaa-ul Uloom it is mentioned that a reckoning will be taken (in Akhirat) of laa-ya'ni (futile) speech. There is therefore no certainty that one will be saved from something which will be submitted to reckoning.

The mujaahadah of reducing conversation is more difficult than the mujaahadah of reducing food and reducing sleep. In eating, preparation to a certain extent is involved, moreover, there is a limit to food consumption. Indigestion due to excessive eating will in itself compel one to reduce eating. Similarly, there is a limit to sleeping. On the contrary, conversation requires no effort and no difficulty is experienced in maintaining the tongue in operation. Man resorts to pleasures so as to experience delight and joy. Besides conversation, all other pleasures (hurooz) decrease in enjoyment with greater indulgence. Eating with a filled stomach does not bring about any enjoyment in the food. Excessive sleep too is not enjoyable. But, the enjoyment derived from speaking is limitless. In fact, pleasure increases the more one speaks. Hence, 'aqleel-e-kalaam (reducing conversation) is the most difficult. In spite of this difficulty, freedom in it (i.e. in speech) has not been granted because of the evils involved in abundant speech. One becomes greatly involved in sin because of speaking much. Reducing speech has therefore been stipulated as a rukn (fundamental) of mujaahadah.

Reducing speech does not mean reduction in such talk which is necessary. But, it means shunning nonsensical or futile conversation even if such talk happens to be lawful. If this habit is inculcated then abstention from haraam talks such as falsehood, scandalizing, slandering, etc. will be automatic. Abstaining from unlawful discussion comes within the scope of true mujaahadah - mujaahadah which is compulsory. If one becomes accustomed to refrain from idle (although it may be lawful) talk which falls within the scope of secondary mujaahadah then to a far greater degree will one practise true

mujaahadah (i.e. compulsory striving against haraam talk). It is not permissible to shun talk which is necessary since this will result in problems or cause inconvenience and difficulty to the audience.

Explanation of “Necessary”

“Necessary” here means such a need which if refrained from will result in harm. Therefore, if by refraining from a certain conversation the result is some worldly or Deeni harm, then such talk will be necessary. Example of necessary talk is the conversation that a trader has with customers in order to promote his sales. As long as his talk is in the interests of his trade it will be regarded as necessary. Refraining from such talk will result in worldly loss, hence the Shariat gives permission for such discussion. Such necessary conversation has absolutely no detrimental effect of the heart. The heart does not darken the slightest by such necessary talk. The illustrious Auliya have experienced that even a full day spent in necessary talk will not adversely affect the heart. An auctioneer can spend the entire day in selling by means of talking, but such talking will not darken the heart one iota because such talk is regarded as necessary. On the other hand, a single statement spoken unnecessarily will darken the heart.

The Shariat’s prescription of reducing speech does not mean sealing the mouth, but it envisages that the tongue be kept occupied with the tilawat (recitation) of the Qur’aan Majeed or in Thikr (remembrance) of Allah Ta’ala. In this way the mujaahadah of speech reduction will be most beneficial. By means of this mujaahadah of speech reduction will be most beneficial. By means of this mujaahadah the tongue remains detached from sin; the habit of nonsensical discussion is reduced (or eliminated), and along with it limitless thawaab (spiritual reward) is obtained. By constantly engaging the tongue in Thikr such benefit is acquired, which is unobtainable by maintaining silence.

The Remedy

Prior to speaking, ponder for a few moments. Endeavour to understand whether Allah Ta’ala Who is the Hearer and the See; will be pleased or displeased with what you are about to speak. If this method of contemplation is adopted before speaking, then, Insha’Allah, sinful talk will not emerge from your lips. If after adopting such contemplation, the nafs urges one to indulge in sinful or nonsensical talk, then confront it with courage and suppress the urge. If any unbecoming talk was spoken then compensate immediately for it by making taubah (repenting). If the talk involved abuse to anyone, mockery of anyone, scandalizing or gossiping about anyone, then after taubah obtain the pardon of the person concerned as well. If for some reason it is difficult to obtain the necessary pardon (e.g. the person concerned may be away or may have died) then make Istighfaar (seeking Allah’s Forgiveness) for the person concerned as well as for oneself. Such forgiveness could be asked in the following way:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلَهُ

“O Allah forgive us and forgive him.”

Hadhrat Shaikh Fareeduddin Atrair (rahmatullah alayh) explains most beautifully, perfectly and comprehensively the benefits of maintaining silence. He says:

“In my mind does not enter any topic nobler than silence. Silence contains so many benefits that they cannot be explained. Silence makes breasts the treasure houses pearls of wisdom. I learnt this hidden secret from the oyster’s shell.”

The drop of water enclosed in the oyster’s shell is transformed into a pearl. Similarly, man’s breast becomes a treasure-house for pearls of wisdom by means of closure of the lips.

Qillat-e-Ta'am (Reducing food)

Allah Ta'ala states.

“Eat and drink, but do not waste. Verify, Allah does not love those who transgress the limits.”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Tasbeeh and Taqdees which are sufficient for those of the heaven will suffice for them (people) too.”

(Mishkaat)

This Hadith means that like Tasbeeh (reciting the Glories of Allah) and Taqdees (reciting the Holiness of Allah) are sufficient for the Malaa-ikah (Angels) in the heavens so will it suffice as nourishment for Muslims. It is narrated that certain saints remained without food for long periods in solitude engaged in Tasbeeh and Taqdees. It is clear from this Hadith that at times Thikr and Tasbeeh are sufficient as nourishment. However, it is not possible to adhere to the methods of food reduction practiced in former times. The people of those days were endowed with great physical strength and despite the great reduction in food they suffered no ill effect and maintained their full concentration in their Ibaadat activities. Their physical strength could be gauged from the type of spiritual exercises (ashghaal) which they practiced. Some of their ashghaal were of such a severe nature that if anyone attempts to practice them today he will find his back breaking. Such an example is Salaat-e-Ma'koos which consists of suspending oneself upside down and in this inverted manner carry out some shaghl (singular of ashghaal).

In reality Rasulullah (saws) did not prescribe taqleel-e-ta'am, but altered the routine times of eating and in this way made the intervals between eating times longer. This change of habit (in eating times) and the longer intervals (between eating times) which are difficult upon the nafs, have been considered by the Shariat to be representative of taqleel-e-ta'am. Among the various forms of mujaahadah, fasting is the best. Hence, the Shariat has given taqleel-e-ta'am the form of fasting. In the Shariat, reduction of food will therefore be fasting. The other forms of taqleel-e-ta'am adopted by the people of mujaahadah have no original basis in the Shariat. Eating less and remaining hungry are not forms of mujaahadah of the Shariat. The significance (fadheelat) of hunger mentioned in the Hadith does not refer to voluntary (i.e. self-imposed) hunger, but refers to involuntary hunger – hunger which comes one's way uninvited. The Hadith consoles such persons of poverty by explaining the virtues of hunger so that they do not worry and suffer unduly.

Patience in the face of such divinely imposed hunger, occasions thawaab and elevation of spiritual ranks. This significance of hunger is similar to the significance of sickness explained in the Hadith. The Hadith mentions thawaab for even sickness, but this does not mean that one has to voluntarily induce sickness. The method of qillat-e-ta'am mentioned in the book, Tableeghe Deen by Imaam Ghazaali Rahmatullah Alayh, has been forbidden because reduction in food is not the intended purpose of the Shariat, also because the physique of people of today is unlike that of the people of earlier times.

Qillat-e-ta'am is not an end in itself, but is a means of acquiring an intended aim. This intended aim and purpose is to weaken the animal urge in man, and the aim in weakening this urge is to prevent the nafs from sin. Therefore, if the nafs could be controlled and restrained from sin without reducing food then taqleel-e-ta'am is not necessary. Furthermore, cheerfulness and joy in Ibaadat are experienced if the body is in the state of health and strength. Experience shows that nowadays the health in most

cases suffers as a result of taqleel-e-ta'aam. But, at the same time one must abstain from excessive eating and adhere to moderation. The capacity of people differs, hence moderation will differ for different persons. The guide line in this matter is to eat when hungry and to stop eating when you feel that you can yet eat a few more morsels. In other words, one is allowed to eat to one's stomach fill, but not to satisfy one's desire.

Qillat-e-Manaam (Reducing sleep)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Stand up during the night, but a portion (of the night); half the night or less than half the night.”
Qur'aan

The aforementioned aayat commands standing up during the night so that the nafs becomes accustomed to striving. In this way the ability of the nafs (to submit to righteousness) attains strength and perfection. Standing up during the night is most efficacious for bringing the nafs into submission. All forms of Ibaadat, be it Duaa or Qira't, Namaaz or Thikr and be it external (zahir) or internal (batin), are fulfilled in the proper manner during the night. The meaning of proper external (zahir) discharge of Ibaadat during the night is the proper and correct recital of the words since the time available is ample. The meaning of proper internal (batin) discharge of Ibaadat is that during the night one derives greater pleasure in Ibaadat. This is in fact what is meant by the tongue and the heart conforming.

During the month of Ramadhaan the Shariat has ordered the performance of Taraaweeh Salaat during the night because it envisages taqleel-e-manaam. Like saum (fasting) has its role in taqleel-e-ta'aam, Taraaweeh has its role in taqleel-e-manaam. Like the change of habit (i.e. in eating times) during fasting induces mujaahadah, so too, does the change of habit in Taraaweeh. The general habit prevailing is to sleep after ishaa. The command of Taraaweeh brings about a change in the habit of sleeping, and this changing of habit is difficult on the nafs. This is precisely mujaahadah.

In taqleel-e-manaam the Shariat does not stop at mere awakefulness, but instructs the observance of Ibaadat during the time of awakefulness. Allah Ta'ala praises pious servants in the Qur'aan:

“In the latter part of the night they make istighfaar.”

Elsewhere in the Qur'aan it is said:

“They separate their sides from the beds calling their Rabb in fear and hope...”

In other words, they perform Salaat during the night. However the trend of the aayat comprehends all forms of Ibaadat, hence it applies to Duaa and Thikr as well. Furthermore, beside the Deeni benefits in sleeping less, the physical health also benefits. Less sleep creates Nur (celestial light) on the face. The following is the statement of a Muhaddith in this regard:

“The face of one who performs Salaat in abundance during the night becomes beautiful during the day.”

Excessive sleep is detrimental to the physical health as well. It reduces or stunts the capacity of contemplation in a person. This in turn brings about harm in both Deeni and worldly activities. A person who is given to excessive sleeping is never able to be punctual in time.

Moderation in Qillat-e-Manaam

Moderation in this mujaahadah is also desirable. Nowadays this moderation means sleeping at least six to seven hours. If sleep becomes over-bearing then one should not ward it off. In this case postpone your wazeefah (act of Ibaadat) and sleep. The wazeefah should be completed later. If the sleep is not over-powering then one should adopt courage and remain awake. If sleep is warded off when it is really over-powering then the consequence will be harmful to the mind as well as to the body in general. Confused thoughts will arise in the mind and at times one is deceived into believing such confused thoughts to be inspiration (ilhaam). Such a person then considers himself to be a saint. The final result is insanity. Hence, Rasulullah (saws) said:

“When any of you rises in the night and finds that he is unable to recite the Qur’aan properly (due to feeling sleepy), and he does not know what he is reciting, then he should lay down.”

The advice in such cases of sleepiness is to lay down and not to ward off the sleep. Some people who are extreme in their observance of taqleel-e-manaam and other aspects of mujaahadah and do not heed the possibility of harm, should take advice from this Hadith. This Hadith is an admonishment for them. The advice given in this Hadith is two-fold.

1. At times extremism in mujaahadah proves detrimental to the physique.
2. When the words are not recited correctly because of over-powering sleep then the necessary thawaab will not be obtained. Thus remaining awake will serve no beneficial purpose in this case.

Qillat-e-Ikhtilaat Ma’al Anaam (Reducing association with people) Unnecessary association with people should not be augmented. Remember that besides Allah, there are three kinds of association.

1. Praiseworthy association. The Shariah commands this type of association, for in itself it is an association with Allah Ta’ala. Ending such association is not permissible.
2. Detestable association. The Shariat prohibits such association. Ending such association is Waajib (compulsory).
3. Permissible association . This association is neither Ibaadat nor sin. It is not necessary to end such association. Although permissible, there is a need to reduce such association. The instruction to discontinue association refers to detestable and permissible association and not to praiseworthy association. However, in so far as detestable association is concerned, the discontinuance must be total, i.e. such association is to be compulsory ended, and in regard to permissible association the meaning is reduction or limiting such association.

As long as the relationship with the Creator is not well-established and grounded, association with the creation is extremely harmful. The ostensible reason advanced for association with people, viz., fulfilment of their obligations, can be truly fulfilled only if the relationship with the Creator has been firmly grounded. If the relationship with Allah has not been firmly established then neither is the duty to creation fulfilled nor the duty to the Creator. This fact has been proven by the experience of thousands of Auliya.

Solitude is permissible, in fact best and advisable (afdhal) for one who has no worldly or Deeni duty pertaining to himself or others to discharge. Such solitude is of greater merit during times of strife and mischief when it becomes difficult to have patience (sabr) in the face of anxiety, agitation, confusion and anarchy. The Ahadith have extolled solitude during such circumstances. Rasulullah (saws): said in this regard:

“. . . a man who takes to solitude on the peak of a mountain. He has goats, he fulfils their right and makes the ibaadat of Allah.”

In another Hadith it appears:

“Soon a time will dawn when the best wealth of a Muslim will be goats. He will go with them to a peak of a mountain and to places where rain-water accumulates. He will flee from mischief taking along his Deen.”

Bukhaari

Solitude (i.e. total dissociation from people) is not permissible for one who has some duties and obligations to discharge, whether such duties pertain to others or oneself, and whether it be obligations, e.g. providing maintenance to one's family when one does not have the ability of Tawakkul (trust in Allah), or Deeni obligations, e.g. the acquisition of necessary Deeni knowledge. Certain Ahadith which prohibit solitude refer to these two states just mentioned. Such an example of prohibition is the case of Hadhrat Uthmaan Ibn Math'un (radhiyallahu anhu). He was forbidden from adopting solitude since he was yet in need of acquiring knowledge of the Deen. At the same time Muslims also were in need of him regarding matters of the Deen, especially in the fields of spreading the Word of Allah and developing Islam.

The above explanation pertains to solitude which is adopted permanently. However, temporary solitude (khalwat) of a few days is necessary for the muftadi (beginner in Tasawwuf) in the majority of cases.

The Benefits of Solitude (Khalwat)

Among the numerous benefits ensuing from solitude is the abstention from sin provided that in solitude control is exercised over the eyes as well. The ears as well as the heart have to be guarded in solitude. Deliberately the thought of anyone besides Allah Ta'ala should not be introduced into the mind. In the event of any such stray thought entering the mind, the one sitting in solitude should immediately ward off the thought by engaging in Thikrullah. In such a well-guarded solitude there is indeed great protection against sin.

It is quite manifest that prevention against evil has priority over the acquisition of gain, hence solitude has priority over association. Although association (i.e. with others) has its many benefits, nevertheless many sins follow in its wake. Secondly, qillat-e-kalaam (less conversation) is difficult with association (ikhtilaat). Only the Siddiqeen and those perfected in spiritualism are able to exercise perfect control over their tongues (as well as other emotions) even in association with others. In most cases futile and nonsensical discussions take place when one is in association with others. The hearts of those who have no solitude in their time become progressively denuded of anwar (spiritual effulgence).

The Benefits of Association (Ikhtilat)

For certain persons in particular circumstances, association is beneficial. Among such benefits are acquisition (ta'allum) of knowledge and imparting (ta'leem) of knowledge, Ta'leem and ta'allum are dependant upon association (ikhtilaat). Ikhtilaat affords the opportunity of rendering service to creation. The fadheelat (significance and benefits) of Jama't Salaat is available by means of ikhtilat. One who has adopted total solitude is deprived of the thawaab of Jama't and service to creation. Tawadhu (humility) is also the result of ikhtilat. The faidh (spiritual manificence) of the Deen is obtained by means of associating with the Auliya.

The Effective Method

Execute every act and duty at its stipulated time. Mundane (worldly) duties in their time and Ibaadat on its time. Even occasional humour and light-hearted talk for pleasing the hearts of Muslims should be resorted to at opportune times. One's daily life should be conducted in this controlled manner. Total solitude is not always ideal because sometimes eagerness and enthusiasm in one are dulled and it then becomes difficult to progress.

Service to creation is extremely beneficial for the Saalik (the one who trods the Path of Spiritual Progress), but his ikhtilat (association) should not exceed his time required for rendering his service to creation. Association in excess to the required measure is fraught with batini (pertaining to the ruh) evils and harm. One should not increase one's association and connections, for such increase interferes with thikrullah.

One should remain in solitude as long as the heart finds solace and united with Allah Ta'ala. However, when one becomes disturbed and frustrated in solitude as a result of a multitude of thoughts striking the mind, one should withdraw from solitude and sit in company. But, it is essential that the company be pious. The stray thoughts and frustration will be eliminated in such company. In such circumstances ikhtilat (association) is in the same category as khalwat (solitude).

These four aspects (discussed so far), viz., qillat-e-kalam, qillat-e-ta'am, qillat-e-manam and qillat-e-ikhtilat ma-al anam belong to Mujahadah Ijmali. In the ensuing pages will be discussed the kinds of Mujahadah Tafseeli.

AKHLAAQ

Khalq and Khulq are two different terms. Khalq refers to external form while khulq means internal form. Man, while consisting of body and physical parts, also consists of spiritual parts, viz., Rooh and Nafs. His physical body has been given the faculty of basaarat (sight) which is exercised by the eyes of the body. Similarly, he has been given the faculty of baseerat (insight or seeing with the "eyes" of the heart). The external eyes lack the ability to perceive the internal dimension.

Allah Ta'ala has created men with these two component parts (physical body and spiritual fern) in different moulds. He has bestowed to them different physical forms along with various internal forms. Some have a beautiful form and character and some have ugly form and character. The physical form is known as soorat while the spiritual or internal form is known as seerat. The rank of seerat is higher than that of soorat because Allah Ta'ala has related the former to Himself. In this regard

He said:

"I blew in him (Aadam) My Rooh."

In this Aayat, Allah Ta'ala relates "Rooh" to Himself. In another Aayat, He says:

"Say, the Rooh is of My Command."

This indicates that the Rooh is not lowly nor of dust. However, Allah Ta'ala has related the physical body to soil. He says:

Verily, I shall be creating man from soil."

The meaning of Rooh in this context is the substance which was generated by the direct ilhaam (inspiration) of Allah Ta'ala. Each such substance (Rooh) acquire cognition of things in proportion to its inherent ability.

It has thus been established that the object of greater honour and importance is the Command of Allah, viz. the Seerat of man. As long as beauty is not inculcated into the baatini (internal) dimension of man, he will not be described as having a beautiful seerat. Allah Ta'ala has granted the physical body limbs, e.g. hands, feet, etc. Similarly, has He bestowed "limbs" to the internal form. The "limbs" of the internal form are the faculties of knowledge, anger, desire and justice. A seerat will not be called beautiful until these four faculties have been adorned. Imperfection in the seerat is comparable to deformity in the physical body (soorat). Like a deformed physical body cannot be called beautiful, so too will a defective internal form not be described as beautiful. For example: if one's faculty of anger (quwwa-e-ghadbiyyah) is below the level of equilibrium and one's faculty of desire (quwwat-e-shahwaaniyah) is excessive above the degree of equilibrium then one's character (seerat) will not be described as beautiful.

THE I'TIDAAL (EQUILIBRIUM) AND HUSAN (BEAUTY) OF THE FOUR INTERNAL FACULTIES

The i'tidaal of Ilm is man's ability to distinguish between statements of falsehood and truth; between beliefs of Haqq and Baatil, and between deeds of vice and virtue. When this ability has been cultivated the fruits of wisdom (hikmat) will be experienced. Regarding such hikmat, Allah Ta'ala says:

"He who has been granted hikmat, indeed he has been granted abundant goodness."

In reality this hikmat, is the root of all significance and excellences.

The faculty of wrath and the faculty of desire

The i'tidaal of these two faculties is that both begin to operate along the lines of Hikmat and Shariat, submitting in entirety to the demands and commands of the Shari'at and abstaining from its prohibitions.

The Faculty of Justice

The i'tidaal of the faculty of justice is to hold the reins of the faculty of wrath and the faculty of desire and to ensure that they conform to the Deen and Intelligence. Aql (intelligence) is like the king and the faculty of justice is like the deputy of the king. It has to comply with the orders of the king.

The faculties of ghadbiyah (wrath) and shahwaaniyah (desire) should be like the trained hunting dogs of a hunter or like a well-trained horse, answering and acting in accordance with the call of the master. When these conditions are cultivated and become praiseworthy man will be described as the repository of beautiful character. His seerat will be said to be beautiful.

About the Faculty of Wrath

When this faculty is in the state of i'tidaal it is known as shuja-at (valour, bravery). This is praiseworthy by Allah Ta'ala. An excess in this faculty will be called tahawwur (rashness) and a deficiency will be termed jubnat (cowardice). Both the conditions of tahawwur and jubnat are reprehensible.

In the wake of the laudable state of shujaat (valour) flow the qualities of kindness, chivalry, courage, generosity, forbearance, steadfastness, tenderness, the ability to restrain anger, dignity and

far-sightedness in all affairs. The state of tahawwur produces inexperience, boastfulness, pride, inability to restrain anger, and vanity. The state of jubnat creates cowardice, disgrace, contempt, inferiority. All these lowly qualities find external manifestation.

ABOUT THE FACULTY OF DESIRE

The name of the state of i'tidaal of the faculty of desire is called Paar-saa-i (Chastity). When this faculty exceeds equilibrium, it will be termed hirs (greed) and hawaa (lust). Allah Ta'ala loves the condition of chastity. The excellences produced by chastity are generosity, shame, patience, contentment and it is also termed ittiqaa. In this state man's desire and hope decrease, fear and humility increase and the wish to aid others is engendered. If this faculty falls below itidaal it results in greed, expectation, flattery, servitude to wealthy persons, contempt for the poor, shamelessness, extravagance, show, narrow mindedness, impotency, envy, etc.

ABOUT AQL (INTELLIGENCE)

Equilibrium in Aql makes man wise, cultured, sharp-witted and far-sighted. His advice will be sound and he possess the ability to act in all affairs. Ingenuity manifests in him. If Aql exceeds i'tidaal it will be called deceptive, fraudulent and imposture. Aql below the degree of i'tidaal will be ignorance, dim-wittedness and stupidity. The consequence of this is that such a person is quickly misled.

In short, man will be described as having a beautiful seerat only when all these faculties are in the state of equilibrium. It has been said that the best of affairs is its middle (its state of equilibrium). Allah Ta'ala says:

“Our servants are such that they neither are extravagant nor are they niggardly but they remain in a condition in between (i.e. in the state of equilibrium).”

Internal beauty (seerat) varies with people just as external beauty (soorat) differs. The possessor of the most beautiful seerat was Rasulullah (saws). About Iris excellence, the Qur'aan declares:

“Verily, you are on a splendid character.”

Among the Muslims the degree of beauty of character (seerat) will be in proportion to the degree in which they resemble the character of Rasulullah (saws). The greater the resemblance in them with the character of Rasulullah (saws), the greater will be the beauty of their seerat. It is evident that success and fortune in the Akhirah will be in proportion to the beauty of seerat acquired.

ALL AKHLAAQ ARE NATURAL

All qualities of seerat (akhlaaq) are natural propensities. In so far as natural propensity is concerned an attribute is neither reprehensible nor praiseworthy. The attributes become praiseworthy or reprehensible by operation. Rasulullah (saws) said:

“He who gives for the sake of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah, verily, he has perfected his Imaan.”

The stipulation, “for the sake of Allah” is related to both “giving” and “withholding”. It is clear from this, that unrestricted generosity is not praiseworthy neither is niggardliness (i.e. to withhold spending) in itself reprehensible. Both will be praiseworthy if employed for the sake of Allah Ta'ala and both will be reprehensible if not for the sake of Allah Ta'ala.

The principle governing the elimination of akhlaaq-e-zameemah (reprehensible attributes) is “for the sake of Allah or not for the sake of Allah.” Insha-Allah this will be explained in detail further on. All

reprehensible attributes are inter-related. Hence, the nafs will come under control only after the elimination of all such attributes. Rectifying one attribute while ignoring another will not prove beneficial. One afflicted by a number of ailments will be considered healthy only after all the ailments have been cured. Similarly, man will have acquired a beautiful baatin (internal form) when all his internal conditions have become praiseworthy. Rasulallah (saws) said that a Muslim in fact is he whose character is perfect. He also said that the noblest Believer is one who has the best character. This basis is thus called Deen, and Rasulallah (saws) came to perfect this Deen.

KINDS OF AKHLAAQ

There are two kinds of Akhlaaq-e-Baatiniyah (internal attributes). One type is related to the heart and the other to the nafs. Akhlaaq-e-Baatiniyah related to the heart are called Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah (the Beautiful Attributes) and Malakaat-e- Faadhilah (the Excellent Faculties). These are also referred to as Maqaamaat. They consist of:

Tauheed, ikhlaas, taubah, muhabbat-e-ilaahi, zuhd, tawakkul, qanaa-at, hilm, sabr, shukr, sidq, tafweez, tasleem, ridhaa, fanaa, and fanaa-ul-fanaa. (These will be dealt with in detail further on).

The type of Akhlaaq-e-Baatiniyah related to the nafs are called Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah (the Despicable Attributes). They are:

Tama', toolul aml, ghussah, darogh, gheebat, hasad, bukhl, riyaa, ujub, kibr, hiqd, hubb-e-maal, hubb-e-jah, hubb-e-dunya.

The process of purifying the nafs from these attributes is called Tazkiyah-e-Nafs. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala says:

“He who has made tazkiyah (purified) his nafs, verily, he has attained success.”

AKHLAAQ-E-HAMEEDAH

TAUHEED

Allah Ta'ala says:

“And, Allah has created you and your deeds.”

“And you desire nothing, but that Allah Ta'ala desires it.”

Rasulallah (saws) said:

“Know that if all creation united to benefit you, they will not be able to grant you any benefit but that which Allah has ordained for you. And if they unite to harm you, they will not harm you in the least, but that harm which Allah has ordained for you.”

THE NATURE OF TAUHEED

Tauheed in this discussion refers to Tauheed-e-Af'aali or Unity of Actions. This means that one has to have implicit and strong faith that without the Will of Allah nothing can happen.

This state of Tauheed is acquired by contemplating on the weakness of creation and the power of the Creator.

IKHLAAS (SINCERITY)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“They have not been commanded, but to render ibaadat unto Allah sincerely establishing the Deen for Him and turning away from all others.”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Verily, Allah does not look at your external forms and your wealth, but He looks at your intentions and actions.”

THE NATURE OF IKHLAAS

Ikhlaas means to have the intention of only Allah in one’s acts of obedience. The motive must be only the Proximity and Pleasure of Allah. This motive must not be contaminated with personal motives of gain or the pleasure of others.

ACQUISITION OF IKHLAAS

Elimination of riyaa (show) is precisely the acquisition of Ikhlaas.

THE BENEFITS OF IKHLAAS

No matter what type of righteousness an act may be and no matter how little it may be, if it is accompanied by ikhlaas, it will be permeated with barkat even if there is no helper. Thawaab will increase in proportion to the degree of ikhlaas. For this very reason it comes in the Hadith:

“A half a mud (a measure) of corn given in charity by my Ashaab is nobler than gold equal to Mount Uhud given in charity by others.”

The secret is the degree of ikhlaas. The ikhlaas in the Sahaabah is far superior to the ikhlaas in others. Their reward is in terms of their sincerity and love.

The highest stage of ikhlaas is the rendering of an act for the sake of only Allah Ta’ala, creation having absolutely no connection in one’s motive. A lesser degree of ikhlaas is that the act is rendered to please people but it was not motivated by any desire for worldly gain. The motive was merely to please others. The third degree of ikhlaas is to render an act without having any motive. The motive is neither the Deen nor the world. This too is ikhlaas, i.e. the non-existence of riyaa (show).

TAUBAH

Allah Ta’ala says:

“O Believers! Make taubah unto Allah Ta’ala a pure taubah.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “O people! Make taubah unto Allah.” Muslim

The Nature of Taubah

Taubah (repentance) is the regret and sadness which arise in the heart when remembering a sin. For the validity of the taubah, shunning the sin, firmly resolving to abstain from it in future and controlling the nafs when it urges for the sin, are necessary.

The meaning of taubah is to return and to return from the far side to the near side. It has a beginning and an end. The beginning (ibtida’) of taubah is the spreading of the rays of Nur-e-Ma’rifat (the Light of Divine Recognition) of the heart which thus realises that the sin committed is a fatal poison which wroughts great spiritual disaster. This realization induces regret and fear which result in a true and sincere yearning to compensate for the sin. This yearning is to such a degree that shunning of the sin is immediate. Further, a firm resolve and intention are made to totally abstain from the sin in future. Along with this intention a full effort is made to compensate for the past shortcoming. When the result

is this fruit of taubah pertaining to the past, present and future, then perfection of taubah has been acquired. This then is the end (intiha) of taubah.

The Need for Taubah

It should be clear that taubah is Waajib (compulsory) upon every person because Allah Ta'ala addresses all Muslims in the aayat:

“O Believers! Make taubah unto Allah, a pure taubah.”

Since the reality of taubah is to regard sin as a fatal poison and disaster for the life of the Hereafter, and to firmly resolve to shun sin, and this much is part of Imaan, it therefore being waajib and necessary is apparent to every Mu'min. Hence, Allah Ta'ala says:

“He who makes taubah after his transgression and reforms, verily Allah turns towards him.” Qur'aan

The meaning of this aayat is:

Allah Ta'ala will forgive, have mercy upon and aid the person who after having sinned renders taubah according to the rule of the Shariat and reforms his acts for the future, i.e. he abstains from all evil, practices in conformity with the Shariat and remains firm on his taubah.

THE WAY OF MAKING TAUBAH

Taubah or repentance is to confess to Allah Ta'ala one's sins and to regret such commission. Resolve firmly to discharge all huqoqul Ibaad (rights of others) and other duties which are obligatory, but which have not been rendered. This intention should be immediately made and thereafter the actual fulfilment of such rights and duties put into motion. Alternatively, the pardon of those whose rights were usurped should be obtained.

When a sin has been committed, immediately perform two raka'ts Salaat with the intention of Taubah. One then has to offer repentance with both the tongue and heart. The taubah should be made fervently and vigorously. If one is unable to shed tears, then one's face should rake on the appearance of a concerned and crying person while making taubah.

For the purpose of making taubah, recall your sins and then offer repentance in profusion. However, do not meditate about the sins committed or do not make vigorous attempts in a bid to remember what sins had been committed, for this attitude will create a barrier between the repenter and Allah Ta'ala. This constitutes an obstacle in the path of love and progress. After having made a sincere taubah, if previous sins come to mind then renew the taubah. Do not be too much concerned about sins for which taubah has already been made.

While making taubah there should be a degree of moderation in mentioning the sins. There is no need to recite a whole list of sins while making taubah. Seek forgiveness for all sins in general. According to the Hadith Shareef one should say:

“And, I repent of even such sins which You are more aware of.”

“I repent of such sins which I am aware of and of such sins which I am unaware.”

Pondering about sins is in actual fact destruction of time and diversion from the remembrance of Allah. However, one should make special taubah for sins which one recalls automatically. The real Goal is Allah Ta'ala and not the remembrance of sins neither the remembrance of acts of obedience. The purpose of remembering sins is to offer repentance. Hence, once taubah has been made, one

should not deliberately and consciously ponder over sins thereby making such remembrance a definite purpose because this will engender the idea that Allah Ta'ala is displeased with one, and this is a dangerous idea.

THE METHOD OF ACQUIRING TAUBAH

Remember and reflect about the warnings sounded in the Qur'aan and Hadith in regard to sins. The pang of regret which enters the heart as a result of such reflection is in actual fact taubah.

MUHABBAT

Allah Ta'ala says:

“He (Allah Ta'ala) loves them and they love Him.”

“Those who have Imaan are strongest in love for Allah.”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“He who loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him. And, he who detests the meeting with Allah, Allah detests meeting him.”

THE NATURE OF MUHABBAT

The inclining of the heart towards something which gives it pleasure is called muhabbat (love).

Muhabbat consists of two kinds: Muhabbat Tab'i (physical love) and Muhabbat Aqli (intellectual love). Muhabbat Tab'i is not a voluntary or volitional condition. Its occurrence and endurance are non-volitional. Sometimes non-volitional acts are not lasting and are merely transitory. It is for this reason that Muhabbat Tab'i is not commanded. On the contrary, the origination and endurance of Muhabbat Aqli are volitional. It is, therefore a state which can endure. Muhabbat Aqli is thus commanded. It is this kind of Love which is superior and preferable. Since the source of physical love is emotion, it is a passing state.

THE CAUSES OF MUHABBAT

There are three factors giving rise to muhabbat;

1. **IHSAAN** (Kindness and favour). Ihsaan shown gives rise to muhabbat .
2. **JAMAAL** (Beauty). Beauty brings about attraction which gives rise to muhabbat.
3. **KAMAAL** (Perfection). Perfection in a thing also induces muhabbat .

These three attributes par excellence exist in only Allah Ta'ala. The muhabbat endures as long as these attributes endure. In so far as the Object of True Love (Allah Ta'ala) is concerned, these attributes are eternal. They will endure forever, hence love for Him is perpetual. Since, the existence of attributes in the state of perfection is not found independently (Biz-zaat) in any being other than Allah Ta'ala, the kamileen (the Saints who have attained spiritual perfection) cannot have Muhabbat Aqli (Intellectual Love) for anyone besides Allah Ta'ala. Muhabbat–Tab'i (physical love) is possible with others, but the love which has been commanded for Allah Ta'ala is Muhabbat Aqli. The terminology of the Qur'aan and Hadith describes: this form of love as Hubb.

This should not be understood to mean that the kamileen are devoid of Muhabbat Tab'i. However, in them (the kamileen), Muhabbat Aqli is dominant. At times Muhabbat Tab'i in the kamileen exceeds

the love in those in whom Muhabbat Tab'i is dominant, but Muhabbat Aqli remains dominant inspite of this comparative higher degree of Muhabbat Tab'i. At times, Muhabbat Tab'i becomes dominant in even the kamileen, but this is not frequent.

In short, the kamileen are perfect in both Muhabbat Aqli and Muhabbat Tab'i, the former being dominant while in others, Muhabbat Tab'i (physical love) is dominant. Although this attribute of excellence (in the kamileen) is not a goal in itself, it nevertheless is praiseworthy. Those devoid of both these aspects of love are in danger. Muhabbat is thus essential. Obedience without muhabbat is not sufficient since there is no resolution and firmness in such acts of obedience devoid of love.

ACQUIRING THE MUHABBAT OF ALLAH

Constant remembrance and contemplation of the Attributes and Bounties of Allah Ta'ala will induce the desired Muhabbat for Him. Compliance with the Laws of the Shariat and much Thikr of Allah expel the love of others from the heart, making way for the exclusive Love of Allah Ta'ala.

SHOUQ

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Those who yearn for the meeting with Allah (should take solace in the knowledge) that, verily, the Time of Allah is approaching.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “I ask of You (O Allah!) sight of Your Face and Shouq (eagerness) for meeting You.”

THE NATURE OF SHOUQ

The condition of natural desire (eagerness) which is a physical state to behold and fully comprehend a beloved object whose perfection is only partially known is termed Shouq.

Shouq is the initial stage of Muhabbat. At a later stage it develops into uns (affection). At this stage the conditions prevailing during shouq do not remain. Among such conditions are profuse crying and absorption in thought to such a degree that this condition asserts its dominance. Some (along the journey) consider such conditions to be the goal (of the sojourn), hence become depressed when these are reduced in the state of uns. However, there is no need to be concerned at this reduction in such feelings because the goal is not the state of shouq to be perpetual – that one should at all times be engulfed in this state. The purpose is not to eliminate natural desires neither is the purpose to create a constant throb in the heart. Rasulullah (saws), explained the limit of shouq in the following way:

“(O Allah!) I petition You for shouq for meeting You; such shouq which is devoid of hardship and which does not harm; such shouq which is not a trial leading astray.”

Sometimes excessive affection and love bring about destruction. It brings about a disturbance in righteous acts (a'mal) which are in fact the medium for attaining Divine Proximity. The true goal is achieved via the agency of executing the Divine Commands. Excessive shouq (eagerness) and ishq (love) interfere with this means. At times when shouq is overpowering, one transgresses the limits of respect and makes such statements which are disrespectful.

Most ush-shaq (those immersed and lost in love) are guilty of disrespectful statements which they utter in states of ecstasy. This disrespect is harmful although such disrespect uttered in ecstasy is forgiven. But, it is not a condition of kamal (excellence). Rasulullah (saws) was perfect in obedience, respect and love, hence he made the du'a mentioned above.

ACQUIRING SHOUC

Shouc being a necessary corollary of Muhabbat, its acquisition is by inculcating Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala.

THE NATURE OF UNS

Uns is a state of delight and pleasure induced by true recognition of certain known attributes of an object. In this state the object is known only partially, part of it being hidden. The known attributes on which the gaze is focussed induce the condition of uns.

Uns is also a necessary corollary of Muhabbat. Its acquisition is along with Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala.

KHAUF

Allah Ta'ala commands in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“And Fear Me.”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“He who fears, sets off (on the journey) at night; he who sets off at night, “reaches the destination; Hark! The merchandise of Allah is expensive. Hark! The merchandise of Allah is Jannat.”

Nature of Khauf

Khauf is the painful condition of the heart, which arises as a result of thinking of something reprehensible and the fear of it materializing.

The nature of khauf consists of the possibility of athab (punishment). This possibility extends to every person, for he may be overtaken by athab. This is the extent of khauf which has been commanded and imposed upon the servant. This extent, viz. fearing the possibility of athab, is a compulsory condition (shart) of Imaan. It is also known as khaufe-e-aqli (intellectual fear). At the behest of sin this faculty (khauf-e-aqli) has to be put into operation. The warnings and punishments of Allah Ta'ala should be recalled and ruminated over so as to be saved from sin. This degree of khauf is Fardh (compulsory). Its non-existence induces and involves one in sin. It is the medium of exhorting towards virtue and steering one away from sin.

Allah Ta'ala has combined the noble attributes of hidayat guidance from Allah), rahmat (mercy), ilm (knowledge) and ridha (contentment) for those who are imbued with the khauf of Allah Ta'ala. All beings fear the one who fears Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala has stated that in the servant, two fears will not combine. This means that the servant of Allah, who on earth entertains the khauf of Allah Ta'ala, will be fearless in the Akhirat; and, he who had no khauf of Allah Ta'ala on earth, will be overtaken by fear and calamity. In this regard, Rasulullah (saws) said:

“On the Day of Qiyaamat every eye will be crying excepting the eye which refrained from gazing at that which Allah Ta'ala had forbidden, and the eye which stood guard in the Path of Allah, and the eye from which emerged a tear-drop equal in size to the head of a fly, in fear of Allah Ta'ala.”

In a Hadith of Mishkat Shareef it is said that Allah will make haraam (unlawful) the fire of Jahannam for such a person. In the hadith it is also stated that on the Day of Qiyamat, Allah Ta'ala will proclaim to the malaikah to remove from the Fire anyone who had at any time or occasion feared Allah.

Fear is thus incumbent for every Mu'min. There are two reasons for this need.

One. The possibility of one committing voluntarily an act of disobedience in the future.

Two. The possibility of some act of disobedience having been voluntarily committed, but due to negligence one's attention has been diverted therefrom. Such diversion is also a voluntary act of disobedience.

It is a fact that the robber because of the fear of being apprehended abstains from robbery; the child because of the fear of punishment abstains from mischief; because of the fear of being fined people refrain from violation of law. When fear is effaced, anarchy is the consequence in the land. Khauf severs the roots of all evil while at the same time it is the medium of all obedience.

The manner in which to acquire the khauf of Allah Ta'ala is to meditate on his Wrath and Athaab.

RAJAA

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Do not despair of the Rahmat of Allah...”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“If even the kaafir realises the extent of Allah's Rahmat (mercy), he (too) will not lose hope of Jannat.”

Nature of Rajaa

Rajaa is the state of the heart's tranquillity which develops as a result of one's yearning for the desirable objects of fadhl (Divine Grace), Maghfirat (forgiveness), Ni'mat (Bounty) and Jannat, while devising ways and means for their attainment. Thus one who remains in expectation of Rahmat and Jannat, but does not adopt the means of their acquisition, viz., amal salih (righteous deeds), taubah (repentance), etc., will not attain the goal of Rajas. He remains on the contrary in deception. He is like the one who in spite of not sowing the seeds, expects to reap the crop. He dwells in empty desire.

The manner of acquiring Rajaa is to reflect about the vastness of Allah's Rahmat and His Munificence.

ZUHD

Allah Ta'ala states:

“...So that you do not grieve over what you have lost nor become proud over what you have.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “The first virtue of this Ummat is yaqeen (firm faith) and zuhd, and the first corruption of this Ummat is bukhl (niggardliness) and amal (distant and remote hopes).”

Nature of Zuhd

Zuhd is to refrain from an object of desire in the pursuit of a nobler objective, e.g. refraining from the desire of the world and pursuing the desire of the Akhirat. This is Zuhd. The basis of Zuhd is the Nur and Ilm which Allah Ta'ala inspires into the heart of man. As a result, his breast expands and he realises with clarity that the world with all its belongings is more contemptible than the wing of a fly and that only Akhirat is noble and everlasting. When this Nur is acquired, the worthlessness of the world fully dawns upon man. The effect of Zuhd is the attainment of contentment upon the obtainment of the bare necessities of life. Thus the Zahid (the one who has Zuhd) is satisfied with the bare necessities in the same way as the traveller is satisfied with the necessities which he takes along on his sojourn.

Zuhd is not abstention from pleasures. Reduction of pleasures is sufficient for the attribute of Zuhd. In other words, one should not be engrossed in pleasures. Constantly hankering after luxuries is negatory of Zuhd. On the contrary, obtainal of luxuries without undue effort and arrangement is the ni'mat of Allah Ta'ala, for which shukr (gratefulness) has to be offered. Along with granting comfort to the nafs, effort too should be imposed on it.

In all truth, gold and silver and the world with all its possessions, in the sight of one whose gaze is focussed on Allah, are of no value. Rasulullah (saws) never preferred the world for himself nor for those close to him. Whatever creation possesses is the material of the world. It is essential to sever one's hope from all things. He who is successful in this objective, will attain tranquillity, because both heart and body find rest and peace in Zuhd.

The manner in which to acquire Zuhd is to meditate on the defects, harms and ephemeral nature of the world, as well as to reflect on the benefits and the everlasting nature of the Akhirat.

TAWAKKUL

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Upon Allah should the Believers have tawakkul (trust).”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “When you ask, ask of Allah and when you seek aid, seek from Allah.”

THE NATURE OF TAWAKKUL

Reposing implicit trust of the heart in only the Creator is called tawakkul. The meaning of tawakkul is expressed by the term taukeel (to make or appoint a wakeel or a counsellor, agent, representative). When one lacks the understanding and ability for something then another is appointed to execute the task. Such appointment of an agent to act on one's behalf is the meaning of taukeel. Tawakkul then is to act in accordance with Allah's Scheme, i.e. to adopt the principles and laws of the Shariat, and to resign oneself unto Him. In every act or task, the means required for the task will be employed within the confines of the Shariat and one's trust will be placed in Allah Ta'ala.

THE FUNDAMENTALS (ARKAN) OF TAWAKKUL

Tawakkul has three fundamental principles: Ma'rifat, Halat and A'mal.

MA'RIFAT

This consists of Tauheed of Allah Ta'ala which means: Besides Allah there is no object of worship; He is Incomparable; He has no partner; All sovereignty belongs to Him; All praise and glory belongs to Him; He has power over all things. This conception of Tauheed acknowledges that Allah Ta'ala possesses such perfect power and wisdom which make Him worthy of all praise and glory. Sincere and honest belief in this conception of Tauheed grounds true Imaan in the heart.

The effect of Imaan grounding itself in the heart is Tawakkul. The condition essential for achieving this tawakkul is sincere acknowledgement of tauheed. The meaning of sincere acknowledgement is that this Tauheed pervades the heart so much that there remains no room in one's heart to entertain any other concept.

HAALAT

The Haal of Tawakkul is to resign oneself to Allah Ta'ala. Assign all affairs to Him and maintain the heart in the state of peace and tranquillity. It envisages diversion from all and everything other than Allah Ta'ala. Upon Allah Ta'ala being made the Wakeel one resigns in full confidence. Allah Ta'ala,

the Wakeel is full of Wisdom and is the Benefactor and Protector of the one who has reposed tawakkul in him. There is therefore no need for- the heart to toss in doubt and uncertainty. He will not allow your enemy to vanquish you. In this way when one fully realizes that rizq (sustenance), maut (death), hayat (life) and all affairs of creation are within the direct power and control of Allah Ta'ala, then there is absolutely no cause for the heart to labour in uncertainty and suffer any lack of confidence.

A'MAL

The ignorant labour under the misconception that Tawakkul entails abstention from effort, the means and material agencies. This idea of tawakkul is highly erroneous. Tawakkul does not advocate shunning or abstaining from the material agencies which Allah Ta'ala has created and made subservient to man. Shunning the legitimate use of the material means and agencies for legitimate purposes and needs is not lawful according to the Shariat.

ACQUIRING TAWAKKUL

The way in which to acquire Tawakkul is by contemplating the bounties of Allah Ta'ala, His Promises and one's past success.

QANA'AT & HILM

QANA'AT

Qana'at or contentment means in this regard abstention from desires. Contemplating about the transitory and perishable nature of the world inculcate Qana'at.

HILM

Hilm or perseverance means to hold in check the nafs in the face of events which are distasteful to one. This quality of Hilm is acquired by the eradication of anger. One has to contemplate constantly about the remedies for anger. This will be explained in the chapter on Akhlaq-e-Razeelah (The Despicable Attributes).

SABR

Allah Ta'ala says:

“O People of Imaan! Adopt sabr (patience).”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “A Believer is To be marvelled because every condition of his is good. This is exclusive to the Believer. If he attains happiness, he makes shukr (is thankful) and if calamity overtakes him, he adopts sabr.”

NATURE OF SABR

In man are two conflicting forces. The one force impels him towards Deen and righteousness while the other drives him towards base desires, Asserting the Deeni force and subduing the force of lust is called Sabr. In the state of Sabr, the Deeni force in man asserts its dominance over the lowly force of base desire. Its definition is given as follows:

“Maintaining control of the nafs in the face of such things which the nafs dislikes.”

THE TYPES OF SABR

There are three kinds of Sabr.

1. SABR ALAL AMAL

2. SABR FIL AMAL

3. SABR ANIL AMAL

SABR ALAL AMAL

This means to be firm and constant in practising righteous deeds.

SABR FIL AMAL

This means to have sabr while engaging in the righteous deed. The nafs is held in control and prevented from diversion while engaged in the act of virtue. Acts of Ibaadat have to be discharged adequately by the observance of the principles and rules pertaining to such acts. Full attention has to be directed towards the act.

SABR ANIL AMAL

This means to have sabr in the non-commission of any act or to restrain the nafs from indulging in the prohibitions of Allah Ta'ala.

NI'MAT AND MUSEEBAT

Ni'mat (fortune, favour, blessing) produces delight and happiness which in turn result in muhabbat (love) for Allah, The Benefactor. On the contrary museebat (difficulty, hardship, calamity) produces unpleasantness and grief. Thus the occasion of sabr is in the face of museebat. Museebat is the condition detested by the nafs. This condition is of two kinds: first, the form of hardship, and second true hardship.

Grief and frustration follow in the wake of true hardship which is the consequence of sin. Hardship which brings about the strengthening of one's bond with Allah and elevates one's spiritual condition is not true hardship. It is merely a resemblance or form of hardship. It increases one's submission to Allah Ta'ala. The Arifeen do perceive hardship. In fact their sense of perception is sharper, but due to their gaze being on Allah Ta'ala their grief and sorrow do not exceed the limits.

Difficulties are a means for the expiation of many sins. At times Allah Ta'ala wishes to bestow a special rank of elevation to a servant, but the latter lacks the ability to attain that lofty rank solely by virtue of his righteous deeds. Allah Ta'ala then afflicts him with some hardship by virtue of which he attains the desired lofty rank. It appears in the Hadith Shareef that on the Day of Qiyaamat the people of ni'mat (fortune and happiness) will envy those who had undergone museebat (hardship and sorrow). They will envy them and wish:

“Would that our skins were cut to bits with scissors so that today we could have attained the ranks bestowed to the people of hard-ship.”

It is also narrated in the Hadith Shareef that he who takes his vengeance, Allah Ta'ala assigns his affair to him (the one who took his own course). But the one who adopts sabr, Allah Ta'ala extracts vengeance on his behalf. Allah then sometimes awards him in this world, or may in Qiyaamat waive punishment totally from him. Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“When a hardship afflicts you. say: innalillahi wa inna ilayhi raji oon (Verily, we are for Allah and unto Him will we return).”

The purport of this aayat is that one should engage in the thikr of **إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ** at the time of difficulty and hardship. One should meditate the meaning of this statement, that we are the exclusive

property of Allah; we belong to Him and He has the full right to utilize and dispose of His property as He deems fit; we are therefore, contented with the decree of Allah.

When hardship afflicts one, firstly remember one's sins. Such remembrance of shortcomings and faults will fortify one against depression during the hardship. One will then realize the correctness of the affliction and accept it without complaint. One will regret and not complain. Secondly, meditate the reward which Allah has promised for hardship. Remembering this reward will lessen the grief and keep one resolute in the state of hardship. Never complain nor entertain the impression that Allah Ta'ala has become displeased with one. This impression is dangerous because it weakens the bond with Allah Ta'ala and by degrees one's relationship with Allah Ta'ala becomes effaced.

Consider hardship as either a punishment or a trial and contemplate its reward. At the time of hardship, the Shariat instructs sabr and firmness. For every hardship, the compensation will be good. There is, most assuredly, benefit in hardship, in this world as well as in the Akhirat although one may not be able to understand the worldly benefit therein.

ACQUIRING SABR

Sabr is inculcated by weakening the desires of lust and emotion.

SHUKR

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Be grateful unto Me.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “If happiness reaches him (the believer), he is grateful.”

THE NATURE OF SHUKR

Accepting that all benefit is from the True Benefactor (Mun'im Haqeeqi), the effect of which is to be happy with the Benefactor and be ever ready to render obedience to Him, is the meaning of Shukr.

The meaning of Shukr envisages:

Acceptance of the fact that all benefit is from Allah, the True Benefactor (Mun'im Haqeeqi). This acceptance induces:

1. Happiness with the Benefactor.
2. Eagerness to execute the commands of the Benefactor and to abstain from his prohibitions. One should consider all benefit, goodness and pleasant conditions as the bounties of Allah and regard these to be in greater measure than what one really deserves. Praise is to be offered to Allah and His bounties should not be employed in evil and sin. His favours should be used in obtaining His Pleasure. This is the true meaning of Shukr.

This conception of Shukr will be comprehended only when one has realized the purpose underlying creation and the functions of the various aspects of creation. For instance, the eye is a ni'mat of Allah Ta'ala. Its shukr is to employ it correctly—to employ it in only lawful avenues, e.g. making tilawat of the Qur'aan Majeed, acquiring knowledge, studying the wonderful creation of Allah so as to gain lesson and realize the greatness and splendour of Allah Ta'ala, etc. The shukr of the eye further demands that it be restrained from glancing at and viewing objects which Allah Ta'ala has prohibited. Similarly, the ear is a ni'mat. Its shukr is to employ It correctly, e.g. in listening to the thikr of Allah,

to such talks which remind one of the Aakhirat, and to prevent it from listening to evil, nonsensical and futile talk.

The tongue is a ni'mat. Its shukr is to employ it in thikr, in expressing hamd, thanaa and shukr of Allah, and to restrain it from complaining in adversity and from all evil generally. It is highly inappropriate and sinful for such a worthless slave as man to complain about any condition which Allah Ta'ala, the True King, has imposed on him. A word of shukr emanating from the tongue is recorded as an act of obedience.

Mere expression of shukr with the tongue unaccompanied by the true state of shukr of the heart is only lip-service. It is essential that along with verbal expression of shukr, the heart should value and honour the ni'mat of The Benefactor. Mere verbal shukr will be like the outer-casing, like the outer-covering which is its external form. The rooh (soul and essence) of shukr is that the honour and appreciation of the Mun'im (Benefactor) and the ni'mat (the bounty) are ingrained in the heart.

The initial stage of shukr is at the intellectual level. In other words, it is the correct understanding of the true meaning of shukr and the realization of the honour of the Benefactor. The final stage of shukr is the manifestation of its effect on one's body, movements and all states. In short, all the beliefs, acts of worship, mundane acts, moral and social life of the shaakir (the one who is truly grateful to Allah) will be in conformity with the Shariat.

ACQUIRING SHUKR

Shukr is acquired by contemplating the bounties of Allah Ta'ala. Every ni'mat is to be related to Him. By degrees such meditation will imbue the Love of Allah in the heart, the result of which will be the attainment of the perfect stage of Shukr.

SIDQ

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, the Mu'minoon (Believers) are those who believe in Allah, and His Rasul. Thereafter they have no doubt and they strive in the Path of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Assuredly, they are the Saadiqoon (the truthful ones).”

The following is narrated in the Hadith Shareef: “Nabi (saws) passed by Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) while he was cursing some of his slaves. Rasulullah (saws) turned towards him and said. ‘People who curse and people who are truthful!’”

Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) said: ‘I will not repeat it.’”

THE NATURE OF SIDQ

The nature of Sidq consists of developing a rank acquired until it attains perfection.

The meaning of Sidq is firmness. It is for this reason that a Wali-e-Kaamil (a saint who has attained spiritual perfection) is called a Siddeeqe. In all ahwaal (states), af'aal (acts) and aqwaal (statements) the Wali-e-Kaamil has been well-grounded. He has realized the state of perfection. In the Shariat, the conception of Sidq includes af'aal (actions), aqwaal (statements) and ahwaal (states and conditions). Sidq in regard to statements is that talk should be firm and true according to reality. One imbued with this quality is called Saadiqul Aqwaal. Sidq in regard to actions is that every act be in conformity with the Command of the Shariat and not in conflict with the Shariat. One whose acts are at all times in conformity with the Shariat is termed Saadiqul Af'aal. Sidq in regard to one's state or condition is that

all conditions should be in accordance with the Sunnat. Conditions which are in conflict with the Sunnat are false. One whose states are in accordance with the Sunnat is called Saadiqu Ahwaal.

The states (ahwaal) of Sidq are such that their effect is enduring. The influence of the states of Sidq are lasting and dominant. They are not of a temporary nature. This does not mean that such ahwaal exist over one perpetually. It is the effect or influence (athr) of these states of Sidq which lasts and does not disappear.

The summary of what has been explained is that one should develop the acts of Ibaadat or obedience to the stage of perfection. For example, perform Salaat in such a way that it could be described in the Shariat as Salaat-e-Kaamilah (perfect Salaat), i.e. a Salaat performed observing all the external rules and respects (aadab-e-zaahirah) and all the internal rules and respects (aadaab-e-baatinah). The same should apply to all other acts of obedience and Ibaadat. They should be rendered in the kaamil (perfect) way shown by the Shariat. The adoption of this way is Sidq.

ACQUIRING SIDQ

Sidq is dependant upon the knowledge of the factors which produces perfection. One has, therefore, to be alert at all times and compensate for one's shortcomings. An endeavour is to be made to rectify imperfectly performed obligations. Constancy in improving and perfecting one's acts will ensure within a short while the perfect state of Sidq.

TAFWEEZ

Allah Ta'ala says:

“I assign my affair to Allah. Verily He sees all (His) servants.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “When you arise in the morning do not contemplate in your heart about the evening, and when it is evening do not contemplate about the morning.”

THE NATURE OF TAFWEEZ

Tafweez is to assign oneself to Allah Ta'ala. He may do with one as He desires. One's gaze and hope should be on none besides Allah. While employing the means and the agencies, the result of all things should be left to Allah Ta'ala.

Tafweez does not mean shunning the means and the agencies which Allah Ta'ala has created for the acquisition and rendering of affairs. It merely means that one's confidence and hope should be on none besides Allah Ta'ala. The result of the employment of the means and agencies should be left to Allah Ta'ala. In affairs not related to means and agencies, tafweez should be adopted from the very beginning. In such matters one should not adopt tajweez (plan and scheme).

ajweez (to plan, scheme and programme) is the cause for all worry, because of it being expected that the operation of a project planned should proceed along the set plan and programme arranged for it. If the result is contrary to expectation, worry and frustration are the consequence. The schemes initiated by man mostly consist of matters not within the control of his volition. It is therefor puerile to scheme about things not within one's volition. It is for this reason that the Ahlullaah (the Auliya) shun tajweez. They resign themselves entirely unto Allah Ta'ala and submit to the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

It is necessary to abandon one's own scheme of operation and resign oneself to Allah. This applies to even the development of one's spiritual condition. In trodding the spiritual path of development one should not initiate one's own scheme. Assign everything to Him. Bestowal or the elimination of

haalaat and kaifiyaat (spiritual conditions) should be assigned to Him. The seeker of Allah should annihilate his tajweez in the Tajweez of Allah Ta'ala. In other words, he has to adopt total and perfect abdiyyat (submission and serfdom –being a total slave of Allah Ta'ala).

THE WAY OF ACQUIRING TAFWEEZ

When being confronted with an event which is in conflict with one's liking then immediately think that it is an act of Allah and most assuredly there is wisdom and goodness in it. In the beginning it will be difficult to acquire this attitude. However, constant reflection produces the annihilation of effort and then this attitude assumes a natural condition in the Ahlul-laah (the Auliyyaa)

RIDHAA (PLEASURE)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Of the good fortune of man is his pleasure with that which Allah has ordained for him.”

THE NATURE OF RIDHAA

This consists of total submission and pleasure with qadhaa (fate). One should neither by word or deed object against fate.

Ridhaa develops to such a lofty degree that its domination permeates one's being. In this high state of Ridhaa hardship recedes and is not considered as such. The state of ridhaa in which even pain is not felt is called ridhaa-e-tab'i (natural ridhaa). The state in which ridhaa prevails along with the sensation of pain is called ridhaa-e-aqli (intellectual ridhaa).

The first state (ridhaa-e-rab'i) is a physical condition, the acquisition of which is not incumbent. The second state (ridhaa-e-aqli) is an intellectual condition, the acquisition of which is incumbent.

Ridhaa with fate is commanded and exhorted so as to inculcate in one the qualities of perseverance and contentment when afflicted by adversity and hardship. When ridhaa has been inculcated adversity will be taken in its stride with Contentment and without feeling any undue hardship. This is so because the intelligence alerts one to the superior results of such ridhaa in the face of adversity. The result of such ridhaa is future thawaab (reward). This will be better understood by means of an illustration. A physician prescribes a bitter remedy to a patient or may even insist on an operation. The patient bears in mind his future recovery and health, and willingly submits to the treatment. He is not only pleased with the physician but feels indebted to him.

Similarly he who firmly believes that Allah Ta'ala will grant thawaab for every difficulty and sorrow experienced here, will most certainly be imbued with pleasure and happiness. The thawaab for such ridhaa is of such a nature that all difficulty wanes into nothingness. It is improper to desire anything contrary to that which Allah Ta'ala has willed and ordained for the servant. When Allah Ta'ala considers adversity and difficulty appropriate and advantageous for us, then we as His servants have no valid reason for dissatisfaction and sorrow.

Whatever state Allah Ta'ala chooses for a servant, that is best for him. Man seeing another in a more prosperous condition than himself yearns for such prosperity and is not contented with his own lot. But, reflection will convince one that the condition chosen for one by Allah Ta'ala is best.

It should be observed that making dua'a is not contrary to ridhaa. Ahlullaah (Saints of Allah) resort to dua'a merely because of the Divine Command. In this way they profess their abdiyyat (state of total submission and slavery to Allah). They therefore do not insist on the attainment of what is being supplicated for. In all states and circumstances they are fully pleased with the Choice of Allah Ta'ala whether their dua'a is accepted or not. Non-acceptance never induces in them dissatisfaction. This then is the sign of Ridhaa.

ACQUISITION OF RIDHAA

Ridhaa is the effect of muhabbat (Love for Allah). There is therefore no separate means of acquiring this quality. Ridhaa is a necessary corollary of muhabbat.

FANAA (ANNIHILATION)

NATURE OF FANAA

The nature of fanaa consists of the elimination of evil deeds and lowly attributes of the flesh. In other words, fanaa is abstention from sin and the expulsion from the heart of all love other than the Divine Love; expulsion of greed, lust, desire, vanity, show, etc. In the state of fanaa the reality of the true and only relationship asserts itself in the mind. One realizes and feels that the only real relationship is with Allah Ta'ala.

ACQUISITION OF FANAA

This lofty, state of fanaa is attainable by mujaahadah and Thikr in abundance—Thikr by means of both the tongue and heart.

FANAA-UL-FANAA (ANNIHILATION OF ANNIHILATION)

At times the Saalik becomes oblivious of his state of fanaa. This unawareness is termed fanaa-ul-fanaa. This state is also known as baqaa (perpetuity). In this state the realization of one's condition of selflessness disappears.

The annihilation of human qualities is also called qurb-e-nawaaafil and the annihilation of that (self ego) is described as qurb-e-faraaidh, i.e. the disappearance of awareness of others.

The development of righteous deeds into one's natural disposition and the perfection of the lofty attributes (akhlaaq-e-hameedah) are also termed baqaa.

The state of fanaa-ul-fanaa is realized by abundance of Thikr (remembrance of Allah) and fikr (contemplation) done with constancy.

HIRS (GREED)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Do not raise your eyes towards the glitter of the worldly life which We have granted to various groups among them (kuffaar).”

Rasulullah (saw) said: “The son of Aadam ages while two things of his grow younger, viz., greed for wealth and greed for (longer) life.”

THE NATURE OF HIRS

The engrossment of the heart with wealth, etc. is hirs. Hirs is the root of all spiritual ailments. It is, therefore, proper to describe it as the mother of all maladies. All mischief and strife are the

consequences of this lowly attribute. It is because of hirs that people plunder and usurp the rights of others. The basis of immorality is the lust for bestial pleasure. The root of all akhlaaq-e-razielah is this very hire.

All the aarifeen (Auliya of Allah) maintain that the foundation of akhlaaq-e-razielah is kibr (pride) and kibr is synonymous with the desire for fame. Thus, the basis of kibr too is hirs.

If man possesses two valleys filled with gold and silver, by nature he will desire a third. The more the demands of greed are satisfied, the greater will be its demands. Greed is like one afflicted with rash. The more he scratches, the worse the rash becomes. Allah Ta'ala says:

“What! Is there for man everything he desires?”

In other words, it is not possible for man to fulfil all his desires. It is for this reason that the harees (the one who has greed) has no peace of mind. Nothing besides soil (i.e. the grave) can satiate his greed. Before a wish can attain fulfilment, another develops. When one is not contented with taqdeer, one is smitten by a multitude of desires and hopes, the fulfilment of which is most difficult. The result of non-fulfilment of desire is frustration and worry. The harees in spite of perhaps possessing wealth in abundance and enjoying luxury, is perpetually afflicted with frustration.

THE REMEDY

Reduce expenditure. This will diminish concern and yearning for more earnings. Forget about the future and bear in mind that the harees always is contemptible.

TAMA' (COVETING-DESIRE)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Follow not desire, for it will lead you astray, away from the Path of Allah.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “A weakling is one who follows his desire and then has hopes on Allah (for reward).”

Desire means preference for things which conflict with the Shariah. The highest degree of such desire is kufr and shirk. The lowest degree is diversion from perfect obedience. Straying from Siratul Mustaqeem (the Straight Path) is common to all forms of tama'.

THE REMEDY

The remedy for tama' is mujaahadah-- to accustom oneself to oppose the desires of the lowly nafs so that the carnal and material desires of the lowly nafs are subordinated to the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Mujaahadah is to exercise restraint on the demands of the nafs irrespective if such restraint is simple or difficult.

GHUSSAH (ANGER)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“And those who swallow anger and those who forgive people, Allah loves the righteous.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Do not become wrathful.”

“A powerful man is not one who defeats (another) in physical combat. Verily, a powerful man is he who controls his nafs at the time of anger.”

In another narration it appears that a strong man is he who controls anger. It is essential to keep anger under control. One should never act spontaneously in accordance with the dictates of anger. On the contrary, anger should be made subservient to the instruction of the Shariah. It is natural to be aroused in the state of anger. Such natural propensity is not rebukeable. But, Allah Ta'ala has endowed man with volition (ikhtiyaar will-power). Anger has therefore to be controlled since it is within the scope of man's volition to do so. Failure to exercise this volitional power is contrary to insaanīyat (humanity).

There are many reasons for the inclusion of anger in the natural attributes of man. Along with the quality of anger Allah Ta'ala has endowed man with the ability to control such anger to ensure that the latter is not misappropriated and unjustly employed.

Ghussah in itself comes into motion involuntarily. It is automatically activated. But, acting in accordance with its demand is voluntary, hence refraining from it is likewise voluntary. The remedy for a volitional act (the way of curbing it) is nothing other than the exercise of one's volitional power to bring about restraint and control. This is within one's ability even if one experiences a degree of difficulty in the exercise of such volition. Repeated exercise of the volition of restraint weakens the demand of anger. In consequence, refraining from anger becomes a relatively simple task.

The following narration appears in the hadith shareef:

“The qadhi should not decide between two parties while in anger.”

The judge or the ruler is not permitted to issue a verdict while in anger, but should postpone the trial or case for a later date. The term, qadhi in the context of this Hadith applies to every person having authority over people. The instructor, teacher and head of a family all fall within the purview of this Hadith. They should not be hasty in meting out punishment to their subordinates while in the state of anger.

Those in authority should remember that Allah Ta'ala is the defender of the rights of those who have no defender. Allah Ta'ala will demand from the aggressor the rights of the oppressed. According to the Hadith Shareef, Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (saws) will claim from the tyrannical ruler the rights which he usurped even from his non-Muslim subjects. It is therefore imperative to exercise caution when punishing.

In cases of injustice executed in the state of anger, it is essential that the aggressor, after his anger has subsided, publicly apologise and humble himself in the presence of the one whom he has wronged. The aggressor should personally apologise in profusion and seek the pardon of the one whom he had wronged. This measure will restore the intelligence of the aggressor to equilibrium. He will thus be prevented from the perpetration of injustice at the behest of anger.

At all times refrain from haste. One has to strive greatly in opposing the dictates of anger. Whenever one succumbs, resort to istighfaar and obtain the pardon of the one whose rights have been violated. Recite:

عَوِذٌ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

when overtaken by anger: sit down if you happen to be standing; if you happen to be sitting then lay down. Make wudhu with cold water: or drink cold water. Divert your attention by immediately engaging in some other activity, especially reading which is very efficacious in curbing anger. If all this fail to eliminate the anger, withdraw from the presence of the one who is the target of your anger.

The Remedy

Remember that Allah Ta'ala has greater power and authority over you and that you are also disobedient to Him. Should he also adopt the attitude of Wrath with you, what will be your condition? Also reflect that nothing can happen without the Will of Allah Ta'ala. Ponder then:

Of what worth am I? I am an absolute non-entity. How can I then act in conflict with Allah Ta'ala

DAROGH (FALSEHOOD)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Refrain from false statements.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Make truth incumbent on you and beware of falsehood.”

Falsehood is to speak contrary to facts. For a person to be regarded as a liar it will suffice that he narrates every rumour without investigating whether it is a fact or not. Rasulullah (saws) ordered abstention from lies because falsehood and immorality are complementary partners and both will be in Jahannum. Nabi (saws) said that false evidence is equivalent to shirk.

In a vision Rasulullah (saws) was shown a man whose cheeks were being repeatedly slit from ear to throat. The cheeks would heal immediately upon having been slit and the process of slitting would be repeated. Upon enquiring, Rasulullah (saws) was informed by Jibra'eel (alayhis salaam) that the one who was being thus punished was a liar and this punishment will continue in the grave until Qiyaamah.

In another hadith it is narrated that a woman called her child. To entice the child in coming to her she indicated to the child that if he came, she would give him something. Rasulullah (saws) asked her that if the child came, what would she give him? She replied that she would give dates. Rasulullah (saws) then commented that if she had no intention of giving the child anything, her statement merely being to lure the child to her, then such statement is also a lie.

THE REMEDY

When speaking, be careful. Do not speak without thinking. Ponder before you speak and be firm in confronting and curbing the urge to speak what is false. If falsehood was spoken then compensate this error by means of istighfaar. Should any word contrary to the Shariah slip from your mouth, resort to Taubah in abundance.

HASAD (JEALOUSY ENVY)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“(Say) I seek refuge with the Rabb of the morning from the evil of the haasid (jealous person) when he envies.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Do not be jealous among yourselves.”

To be displeased with another's good position and to wish for its elimination is hasad. Hasad has three stages.

1. The natural human quality. In this degree of hasad, man is excused and is not at fault.

2. Acting according to the demands of hasad. In this degree of commission, man is a sinner.

3. Opposing the demands of hasad. In this degree, man is laudable and will be rewarded.

Generally the basis of hasad is takabbur (pride) and ghuroor (falsehood). Without any valid reason man seeks to withhold the bounties of Allah Ta'ala. He desires (at times consciously and at times subconsciously) that like himself, Allah too should restrict His bounties. Hasad is a malady of the heart. It is harmful to both one's spiritual life and worldly life. The harm to man's Deen (spiritual life) is the elimination of his good deeds and he becomes the victim of Allah's Wrath. Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Jealousy devours good deeds like Fire devours wood.”

The harm to his worldly life (dunyaa) is the frustration and worry which perpetually afflicts the envious person. He is consumed by frustration caused by hasad for another whose disgrace and fall he always anticipates. In this way the hasad destroys his Aakhirat in addition to eliminating his worldly comfort and peace of mind.

THE REMEDY

The disease of hasad is remedied by praising much the person against whom jealousy is directed. Praise him no matter how difficult this may seem. Honour him and meet him with respect and humility.

BUKHL (NIGGARDLINESS, STINGINESS)

Allah Ta'ala says:

"He who is stingy is in fact stingy because of his nafs.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “The miser is far from Allah, far from Jannat, far from people and close to the Fire.”

Bukhl is to withhold spending when such spending is necessary according to the Shariat and in order to be kind. Bukhl has two stages.

1. Contrary to the order of the Shariah. This stage is sinful.

2. Contrary to kindness (murawwat). This degree of bukhl although not sinful is nor good. Elimination of even this degree of bukhl is commendable and meritorious.

According to the Hadith Shareef wealth spent to protect one's honour is also sadqah (charity). Bukhl is a severe malady, hence Rasulullah (saws) exhorted.

“Save yourself from bukhl, for it has destroyed nations before you.”

It does not, therefore, behove a Muslim to be miserly. In being stingy one is paving the path to Jahannam. Bukhl in reality is the effect of love for wealth which directs man's attention to the world. The consequence of this is the weakening of the bond of love with Allah Ta'ala. At the time of death the miser looks on his wealth with regret and sorrow. He has to embark on his journey into the Aakhirah reluctantly and forcibly because in him there is no desire to meet Allah Ta'ala. According to the Hadith, the one who at death has no desire to meet Allah Ta'ala is a Jahannami (one who will enter Jahannam).

THE REMEDY

Remembrance of maut (death) in abundance expels the love of wealth from the heart.

RIYAA (SHOW)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“They display to people (their acts of Ibaadat).”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Most certainly, even a little riyaa is shirk.”

Riyaa is the intention to enhance one's dignity in the eyes of the people by means of acts of obedience to Allah Ta'ala. This attitude totally defeats the purpose of Ibaadat. The purpose of Ibaadat is to gain the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Since show or display of Ibaadat involves division of purpose, riyaa is termed shirk-e-asghar (the lesser shirk). By means of riyaa one splits the purpose of Ibaadat by endeavouring to attain both public acclaim as well as the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. In this regard the Qur'aan Shareef says:

“He who hopes for the meeting with His Rabb should practise righteousness and associate none with the Ibaadat of his Rabb.”

The Mufasssireen have explained that the meaning of “and associate none with the Ibaadat of his Rabb” is “to refrain from riyaa”. Qadhi Thanaa-ullah explained this aayat in Tafseerul Mazhari as follows:

“He (the worshipper) does not exhibit his good acts nor does he seek reward or praise for his virtuous deeds from anyone besides Allah Ta'ala.”

It is also mentioned in the Hadith Shareef that on the Day of Qiyaamah when Allah Ta'ala will be compensating people for their deeds, the people of riyaa will be commanded to proceed for reward to those for whom they had intended the exhibition of their acts of Ibaadat. In a lengthy hadith it is said that on the Day of Qiyaamah three persons will be ushered into the presence of Allah Ta'ala. These three will be an Aalim, a generous person and a Mujaahid who had waged jihaad. These three will proffer their respective acts of Ibaadat to Allah Ta'ala Who will say to them:

“You have rendered these deeds for riyaa and acclaim. You rendered these acts so that people may say: ‘You are a great Aalim, a generous person and a great mujaahid.’ You have already obtained what you had sought. People have already praised you on earth. You have therefore no right here. Enter the Fire.”

Rasulullah (saws) also said that a deed contaminated by even an atom of riyaa is unacceptable to Allah Ta'ala. Heed this and reflect! In view of the foregoing, never intend to display any act nor intend to conceal it. Concern yourself with the act itself, -intending thereby only the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Ignore all diversionary waswasah (stray thoughts and whisperings of the nafs and shaitaan) which enter your mind. You may at times be assaulted by the thought that your act is to obtain the acclaim of the people. Ignore this waswasah which in fact is a ploy of shaitaan or the nafs engineered to side-track you from executing the righteous act.

Prior to rendering a good deed, reflect and ascertain your motive. What is your intention for doing the act? Is it to seek the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala or the pleasure of others? If you discern any of the

contamination in your niyyat, then purify your intention. Divest it of the contamination and firmly resolve to render the deed for the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

THE REMEDY

The cure for riyaa is the expulsion from the heart of the desire for fame and name. Riyaa in fact is a branch of hubb-e-jah (love for name, fame and glory). Execute your acts of Ibaadat in solitude. This Ibaadat in solitude refers to such Ibaadat which does not have to be performed in jamaat. However, regarding congregational Ibaadar the elimination of hubb-e-jah will be sufficient to combat riyaa in this avenue. Another efficacious remedy regarding riyaa developing in an act of Ibaadat is to render that specific act of Ibaadat in abundance. Within a short while the riyaa will be dispelled and by force of habit the Ibaadat will become sincere.

UJUB (VANITY)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“(Remember the time) when your great number pleased you (instilling vanity in you).”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “And the destroyers are: desires which are followed; stinginess which is obeyed; and a man being pleased with himself, and this. (last trait) is the worse of them (of the things which spiritually wrought destruction to one).”

Ujub is to attribute one's excellence to oneself while being oblivious of the possibility of such excellences being snatched away by Allah Ta'ala. Ujub is a concealed and subtle trick of the nafs which always desires to occupy a distinguished rank (above others). The nafs obtains pleasure in this desire (of ujub). Allah Ta'ala detests one who considers himself to be distinguished, laudable and the receptacle of excellences.

Delight over the bounties granted by Allah Ta'ala is not ujub. Such true delight is not unrestricted and does not produce vanity since the fear of the elimination of the bounties is ever present in the heart. One realizes that the excellence or bounty which one has gained is purely a gift from Allah Ta'ala Who has awarded it because of some act or knowledge (which is also the favour of Allah), and one further realizes that Allah Ta'ala has the full power of snatching away the bounty at any time He desires. This experience of delight is therefore not ujub. On the other hand, a person suffering from the ailment of ujub becomes neglectful and fails to recognize that the bounty in his possession is in fact a gift from Allah Ta'ala. One afflicted with ujub considers himself to be entitled to the bounties.

Ujub resembles takabbur (pride) in all aspects, save one, viz., ujub does not necessarily imply others to be one's inferiors. A person involved in the disease of ujub considers himself to be of a lofty rank without necessarily regarding another to be his inferior. According to the Hadith Shareef the man of ujub strutting about in arrogance will meet Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Qiyaamah in the state of severe wrath.

THE REMEDY

Always regard excellences and virtues which one possesses to be the bestowal of Allah Ta'ala. Contemplate on the power of Allah and fear the possibility of the gifts being snatches away. Ponder about your faults, both internal and external so that the notion of perfection and holiness is annihilated.

TAKABBUR (PRIDE)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, Allah does not love the proud ones.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “He who has a grain of pride in his heart will not enter Jannat.”

Takabbur is to consider oneself superior to others in attributes of excellence. There are many kinds of takabbur. Most kinds are subtle, concealed and difficult to detect. It is only the thorough gaze of the Shaikh-e-Kaamil which can discern such hidden forms of takabbur. In this matter even the Ulama-e-Zaahir (those Ulama who concern themselves with only the external Law of the Shariah) are constrained to follow an expert in the Path of Tasawwuf.

In a nutshell takabbur is to voluntarily and consciously regard oneself superior to others in religious or mundane excellences in a way which engenders contempt in the heart for others. This is the reality of takabbur and this is haraam. Takabbur consists of two ingredients, viz.,

1. The feeling of superiority—considering oneself to be great.
2. Contempt for others.

Takabbur not induced voluntarily, but entering the heart involuntarily is not sinful. Such non-volitional pride is merely the external dimension or form of takabbur. Up to this stage takabbur is not sinful. But when one voluntarily entertains the feeling of pride which had initially crept in involuntarily, then it will be sinful takabbur. In this case the mere form of takabbur is transformed into the reality of takabbur.

Where the condition of contempt for others is non-existent, takabbur—will not be applicable. Mere belief in superiority and inferiority greatness and smallness—is not takabbur. For example: an old man regarding an infant to be small without the notion of contempt for it. But, the one who intentionally considers himself better than others, becomes arrogant. His nafs swells up with pride, the consequences of which then manifest themselves. Examples of pride are: to regard others with contempt; to take offence when others do not greet one first; to be offended if others do not offer you respect; to be annoyed when someone admonishes you; refusal to concede the truth even after having realized it. May Allah Ta'ala keep us under His Protection and save us from takabbur, for indeed, it is the severest of maladies. It is the root of all spiritual ailments.

It was takabbur which made shaitaan deviate. The Hadith Shareef therefore sounds dire warnings in regard to takabbur. Allah Ta'ala has warned that the abode of the proud ones will indeed be vile. Pride is the exclusive prerogative of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala will destroy all those who desire to participate in this exclusive Attribute of greatness. Rasulullah (saws) said that the mutakabbireen (the proud ones) will be encased in trunks of fire of Jahannam.

THE REMEDY

This malady is remedied by reflecting on the Splendour, Glory and Majesty of Allah Ta'ala. This reflection will produce in one a realization of one's own lowly position. Your own excellences will then recede into nothingness. Also, humble yourself in the presence of those whom you regard as your inferior. Be respectful to them so that you become imbued with humility.

HIQD (MALICE, AVARICE)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Be forgiving; command righteousness and dissociate from the ignorant ones.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “Do not have malice for one another.”

Keenah is the condition of malice which asserts itself when one lacks the power to take revenge in the state of anger. Keenah is the seed of many evils. When anger has not been satisfied, its vapours engulf the heart producing a seething effect which boils the heart. This smoke and feeling root the malice in the heart. This results in frustration.

Keenah or hiqd is an intentional condition. It is not the feeling of mere dislike which arises involuntarily and unintentionally. In malice one entertains evil in the heart for another by design and at the same time one is concerned about schemes to harm the one at whom the malice is directed, if intention and desire to harm are absent, it will not be malice, but will be known as inqibaadh which is not a sinful state as this is a natural condition.

Rasulullah (saws) said that two persons having malice for one another are not forgiven. The reference to this malice is malice based on injustice and wrong. A hatred for the sake of Deen is not within the purview of the malice described here. Such hatred (for the sake of the Deen) is meritorious since the Hadith commands love for the sake of Allah and hatred for the sake of Allah.

THE REMEDY

The cure for malice is to overlook the fault of the one for whom hiqd is entertained and to associate with him irrespective of the difficulty one may experience in the adoption of such a big-hearted attitude.

HUBB-E-JAH (LOVE FOR FAME)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“That (abode) which is Daarul Aakhirah, We will reserve it for those who do not desire greatness on earth nor (do they desire) strife. And, the ultimate success is for the pious.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: Two hungry wolves let loose in a flock of sheep do not cause as much harm as the harm to a man's Deen wrought by his greed for wealth and fame.”

The desire in one that others honour, respect and be submissive to one is termed hubb-e-jah. It is difficult to diagnose the malady of love for fame. It is only in the event of an incident in which one is not honoured that this disease becomes detectable,

Hubb-e-jah is a quality which lies in one's imagination, hence its nature is transitory. It is extremely flimsy in that it is dependent on, thoughts of others, for jah entails honour of one by others. The thoughts of others thus form the basis of jah. If others divert their thoughts, one's jah is eliminated. Hence, he who desires to be considered famous and honourable has to rely on the thoughts of others—thoughts which are not within the control of the one who desires the jah. But, in spite of hubb-e-jah being so flimsy in nature and temporary, man hankers after it.

Only such jah is detestable which has been acquired by one's desire and pursuit. Such jah is a calamity which destroys one's worldly life as well as one's life of the Hereafter. When man sees that the world acclaims him, he is overtaken by pride and vanity. These diseases finally destroy him. His Deen is thus destroyed. Many people have fallen into this trap and were utterly annihilated.

A famous person has many envious enemies who engage in conspiracies to harm and eliminate him. This then is the harm to one's worldly life. Thus, both Deen and Dunya suffer in the wake of jah.

On the other hand, jah which Allah Ta'ala bestows upon man without him requesting it, is a ni'mat (bounty). Like man stands in need of wealth to a certain degree, so does he stand in need of jah to a certain degree. Such limited jah enables him to remain in safety and be protected against injustice and oppression. Such safety enables him to engage in the ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala without fear and in peace. This amount of jah is therefore not harmful.

THE REMEDY

Meditate on the futility of hubb-e-jah. Neither the one who honours nor the one who is honoured will remain. All will perish. It is therefore childish to be delighted over such a transitory and illusionary attribute. Contemplating in this way will eliminate this malady.

HUBB-E-DUNYA (LOVE OF THE WORLD)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“The worldly life is nothing but substance of deception.”

Rasulullah (saws) said: “The world is the prison of the Mu'min and the paradise of the Kaafir.”

All things which give pleasure here to the nafs without being of any merit in the Aakhirah is termed dunya. We are afflicted with a number of spiritual ailments all having their origin in the love of the world. About this disease, hubb-e-dunya, Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Love of the world is the root of all evil.”

If this root ailment is treated and cured, all other maladies flowing from it will also disappear. A man overwhelmed by hubb-e-dunya has no concern and time for the Aakhirah. Such a person having no care for the Aakhirah will not be bothered about righteous deeds nor will he abstain from evil. The one in whom there is hubb-e-dunya has very little fikr for the Deen. Increase in the degree of hubb-e-dunya brings about a corresponding decrease in fikr (concern) for the Deen. Total hubb-e-dunya entails total lack of fikr for the Deen. This is manifest in the kuffaar.

Dunya does not mean wealth and family. Dunya is the intentional and voluntary adoption of anything evil which causes one to become forgetful of Allah Ta'ala irrespective of what that thing may be. Thus, acquisition of wealth and other material means is not evil, but hubb-e-dunya (love for such material objects) is evil. Wealth is like the water in the ocean and the heart of man is like the ship sailing in the ocean. Water, while it facilitates the movement of the ship can also bring about its sinking. As long as the water remains outside the ship, it aids its sailing. But entry of the water into the ship causes it to sink. Similar is the case of wealth. Wealth aids man as long as it remains outside his heart. However, if its love enters the heart it will bring about his destruction.

The Hadith Shareef states: “Halaal wealth is a benefit to a pious man.”

He benefits because he (a pious man) spends his wealth in meritorious ways. On the contrary, if love of wealth captures the heart of man, he suppresses the rights of others. When the treasures of the Persian Empire were ushered into the presence of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), he recited the Qur'aanic aayat:

“The love of pleasures has been adorned for mankind.”

He then commented: “O Allah! It is evident that the desire for pleasure is inherent in us. Its total elimination is not the aim. But, we supplicate that wealth aids us in the attainment of Your Love.”

The dunya (or the world) which has been criticized is like a serpent whose skin is colourful and most beautiful. But its poison is fatal. Intelligent people maintain a distance from such danger and are not lured by the externally adorned skin. But a little child unaware of the danger of a snake is attracted by the external beauty and is prepared to grab hold of the snake. We are comparable to the little child. We are attracted to the world by its external beauty and adornment without being aware of its dangers. Men of intelligence and experience do not incline towards the world.

People are generally deceived and overwhelmed by the glitter of the world because they are not aware of its reality. Should the reality of the world be revealed, they would become utterly disillusioned and detest it. The Hadith Shareef states:

“If the value of the world was equal to that of the wing of a mosquito by Allah, He would not have allowed any kaafir even a drink of water from it.”

In the Eyes of Allah Ta’ala the world has no value. It is a detestable object. He therefore prefers it for His enemies. A man aware of the realities is fearful of an object detested by Allah Ta’ala. Rasulullah (saws) described the world in the following similitude:

“What relationship with the world have I? My similitude is like a traveller on a mount, halting in the shade of a tree (for a short while only to leave it again, and proceed along the sojourn).”

The traveller rests a while in the shade and then moves on again.

THE REMEDY

Remember maut (death) in abundance and do not involve yourself in distant and remote hopes. The pursuit of distant schemes and material enterprises should be shunned. In this way the love of the world will be eliminated from the heart.

This elimination is in fact the stage at the end of Sulook (the Path along which the Mureed travels in his spiritual journey). One has, in fact, to become imbued with the spirit and quality spoken of in the following Hadith:

“Die before your death.”

This Hadith means that one has to inculcate the attribute of the dead in one even before death, and that attribute is the lack of worldly love. There are three ways by which one can attain proximity with Allah Ta’ala, These are explained in detail as follows.

1. Atwal (the longest way).
2. Ausat (the middle way).
3. Aqal wa Aqrab !the shortest and nearest way).

THE ATWAL WAY

This consists of observing in abundance Saum, Salaat, Qiraa’t, Hajj, Jihaad’ etc. This is the way of a class of Auliyaa known as the Akhyaar.

THE AUSAT WAY

In addition to the above acts of Ibaadat is engagement in Mujaahadah, Riyaadhat, elimination of Akhlaaq-e-Zameemah and the acquisition of Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah, The majority of men travelling along the Path of Sulook become Waasil (attain the goal of Divine Proximity) via this second way.

THE AQAL WA AQRAB WAY

This is the way of Ishq (Love). Riyaadhat (spiritual exercises) and mingling with people are suffocating to the Saalik (spiritual traveller) along this path. Thikr, Fikr, Shukr and Shauq are the intellectual occupations of the traveller plodding along the Path of Ishq. The traveller along this Road become Waasil by this method. Purification of the nafs and adornment of the heart and soul are realized by the method of Love. They have no interest in kashf (inspirational revelation of the Auliyyaa) and karaamat (miracles of the Auliyyaa). They are totally immersed in:

“Die before your death.”

This third way is the way of the class of Auliyyaa known as the Shataariyah.

DYING BEFORE DEATH

At the time of death, the dying man possesses certain attributes, the inculcation of which is exhorted by the Hadith: “Die before your death.” These attributes which are in the perfect state in the dying man are:

Taubah (repentance), zuhd, (abstention), qanaa’at (contentment), tawakkul (trust in Allah), azlat (solitude), tawajjuh ilal-laah (attention directed to Allah Ta’ala), sabr (patience), ridhaa (pleased with Allah), thikr (remembrance of Allah) and muraaqabah (meditation).

Among the Shataariyah the salient feature is Muraaqaba.

One has to inculcate the above qualities which overtake a dying person to a high degree. Taubah, i.e. repentance to emerge from all evil as is the position at the time of maut; Zuhd, i.e. to shun the world and everything in it as is the case at maut; Tawakkul, i.e. to shun all abnormal worldly agencies as is the case at maut; Azlat, i.e. to sever all ties with creation as is the case at maut; Qanaa’at, i.e. abstention from lowly desires—to be contented—as is the case at maut; Tawajjuh ilal-laah, i.e. to rivet one’s attention towards only Allah Ta’ala as is the case at maut; Sabr, i.e. to shun pleasures as is the case at maut; Ridhaa, i.e. to abstain from pleasing the nafs, and to be pleased with Allah and to submit in entirety to Allah Ta’ala as is the case at maut. This is the conception of “Die before your death.”

One has to transform one’s condition so as to be imbued with the conception of “death before death”. In this earthly life, the body is on earth, but the rooh should be directed to the Aakhirah, and be in communion with Allah Ta’ala. Possession of even the kingdom of the earth should not affect one’s heart. The heart at all times should be empty of the world. The sign of this lofty state having settled over one is total abstention from everything branded as evil by the Shariah. The mind, tongue and the whole body have to be sealed from evil. The heart is to be emptied of all things other than Allah Ta’ala. It has to be adorned with Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah.

A man dwelling in this lofty state of purity and communion with Allah Ta’ala is always aloof from gatherings of futility. Whatever diverts the mind of the Seeker of Allah from the remembrance of Allah is futility and nonsensical. The Seeker refrains from association with men of baatil (falsehood and corruption). One who does not pursue the Path in quest of Allah, is in fact a man of baatil.

O beloved one! This then is the meaning of “die before your death” stated by Rasulullah (saws). This is the way of Rasulullah (saws). This is the life which Rasulullah (saws) desired for his Ummah.

DOMINATION OF AKHLAAQ-E-HAMEEDAH

The sign of Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah having gained dominance and one having gained proficiency in these lofty attributes is the ability to employ correctly and naturally these attributes with the utmost of ease. Once one has reached this stage, it is evidence of the fact that the lofty attributes have become firmly grounded in one.

AL-KHAWATIR (THOUGHTS)

Thoughts which cross the heart of man are called khawaatir (singular khaatir). Such thoughts are at times virtuous and at times evil. These thoughts which occur to man emanate from different sources. Virtue is inspired into the heart sometimes by Allah Ta’ala, sometimes by an Angel whose name is Mulhim and sometimes virtue is whispered into the heart by even shaitaan. Evil assaulting the heart sometimes emanates from shaitaan, sometimes from the nafs and at times from Allah Ta’ala.

Pious inspirations from Allah Ta’ala serve the purpose of honouring one or for establishing some proof. The evil khaatir which comes from Allah Ta’ala appears as a test and to impose some labour and effort on one. From the Angel Mulhim emanates always only goodness since this is his function. His function is to guide towards virtue.

Khair (virtue or the good thought) emerging from shaitaan is deception. He casts his trickery in the form of a good khaatir, but in reality it is evil designed to divert one from a greater virtue by involving one in a lesser virtue. The purpose of evil emanating from shaitaan is to deceive and disgrace man. Evil emanating from the nafs is to mislead man and to prevent him from the truth. The good which issues from the nafs is extremely negligible. It is in fact comparable to shaitaan.

THE DISTINGUISHING SIGNS OF THE EVIL FROM ALLAH, THE NAFS AND SHAITAAN

If the evil khaatir is from Allah Ta’ala it will be recognized from its firmness and one’s total inability to combat it. One will discover that one is unable to ward it off. If the sharr which afflicts the heart is firm and retains constancy being of a solid unchanging condition which renders the nafs extremely restless in the desire to commit the evil while at the same time all effort and means of combating the evil are rendered useless in the face of the onslaught of the sharr, then such an evil khaatir is from Allah Ta’ala. The remedy for such a khaatir is nothing but to petition Allah Ta’ala, seeking His aid and protection, humbling oneself and shedding tears of concern and regret. This is a trial from Allah Ta’ala. Only His aid will be of any good.

If the khaatir of sharr is not as pressing and severe as is described above, but remains static then it is from the nafs.

If a khaatir of sharr assaults the heart after having sinned and it occurs vigorously then such sharr is from Allah Ta’ala and its purpose is to disgrace the sinner and act as a punishment for having sinned. If after having sinned, the thought of sharr occurs to one, but not vigorously, it enters feebly then such sharr is from shaitaan providing that it disappears or is weakened by engagement in Thikr. In this regard Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Verily, shaitaan clings onto the heart of man. When man remembers Allah, shaitaan retreats (from the heart). When man becomes neglectful of Allah’s Thikr, shaitaan asserts himself with his whisperings (into the heart of man).”

If the khaatir of sharr which assaulted the heart after having sinned does not disappear nor is weakened by thikr, then such khaatir is directed by the nafs. Shaitaan was the victim of such direction by the nafs. When he proclaimed his greatness on the occasion of his refusal to make the sajdah commanded for Aadam (alayhis salaam). Neither could his Thikr ward off the evil khaatir of his nafs nor did the exhortation of Allah Ta’ala benefit him.

The cause of this rebellion of shaitaan’s nafs was the absence of abdiyat. (Abdiyat is the state of total submission—being a slave to another.) Shaitaan further lacked humility, hence nothing was of a benefit for him. He possessed no true insight, hence his obedience and his ibaadat were mere bodily exercises shorn of the true insight which is in the heart of Imaan. This condition of shaitaan became manifest with his rebellion. If he had possessed the insight of Imaan he would not have engaged in disputation but would have submitted and would have derived pleasure from such submission and true obedience. Argumentation, disputation and doubt always occur prior to mushaahadah (true, sure and established knowledge).

If a khaatir of virtue settles on the heart with resoluteness and one is unable to attain peace of mind without enacting the virtue, then such good thought is from Allah Ta’ala: It will also be from Allah if the khaatir of khair (virtue) occurs after mujaahadah and ibaadat or even if such khaatir of virtue happens to be related to the principles and acts of the baatin (the esoteric dimension of man that pertaining to his rooh). The Qur’aan-e-Kareem says:

“And, those who strive in our way, We will most certainly show them our Ways.”

In other words, Allah Ta’ala will direct them towards His Proximity, Thawaab and Jannat. This aayat is proof for what has been elaborated in regard to the khair (virtue) which emanates from Allah Ta’ala.

If the khaatir of khair entering the heart is not as resolute as explained above or it occurs initially without one having resorted to mujaahadah or the khair relates to the details of the external acts of Ibaadat and righteousness, then such inspiration is from the Angel Mulhim.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IF THE KHAATIR OF KHAIR IS FROM ALLAH OR SHAITAAN

A khaatir of khair having the following ingredients is from shaitaan:

- It produces total delight-delight unchecked by khauf (fear).
- It demands haste. The haste it wants is, unchecked
- It pertains to something, the consequences of which are not at all considered.

The following five occasions are excluded from this rule:

1. Marriage of a virgin.
2. Payment of the debt.
3. Burial of the dead.
4. Feeding the visitor.
5. Repenting for sins.

If the khaatir of khair is accompanied by delight tempered with khauf and one is concerned about the consequences of the act if it is translated into practice, then such thought of virtue is from Allah Ta'ala. It has also been said that such a khaatir of khair is from the Angel Mulhim.

N.B. Khauf in the context of this discussion means concern and anxiety to render the virtue fully, and perfectly, observing all the required rules and adaab pertaining to that act, the thought of which has occurred. At the same time one is anxious in regard to the acceptance of the deed—will Allah Ta'ala accept it or reject it? The meaning of being concerned about the consequences is in relation to guidance, virtue and hope for thawaab in the Aakhirah. There should be no other motive.

Mulhim is the name of an angel who occupies the right side of the heart while Waswaas is the name of a shaitaan who occupies the left side of the heart of man. The Hadith Shareef explains this:

“When man is born Allah Ta'ala creates an angel and a shaitaan along with him. The shaitaan makes his abode on the left side of mans' heart and the angel settles on the right side. Both then call towards man.”

Some effort, concern and Thikr (among which the recitation of Laa haulaa walaa quw-wate is very efficacious) will suffice to ward off the khawaatir of shaitaan. Allah Ta'ala states:

“Verily, the scheme of shaitaan is weak.”

The best remedy for the waswasah (thoughts and whisperings) of shaitaan is to totally ignore these. How will one know that one is ignoring such thoughts of shaitaan? The recognition of this is that one will not be unduly bothered or vexed when such thoughts assault one. The state of indifference which existed prior to the entry of satanic waswasah should also prevail after these thoughts have entered the heart. In fact, the occurrence of satanic waswasah is proof of one's Imaan. Such assaults should therefore be a cause of happiness and not sorrow. When the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam explained their concern and vexation about these satanic thoughts which afflicted them, Rasulullah (saws) said:

“This is clear evidence of Imaan.”

A thief makes an attempt only where there is something of value.

Regarding the desires of the nafs, great effort and great struggle are required in this sphere. Subjugation of the desires of the nafs is achieved only after struggle. The need to confront the nafs with resolution, wrath and determination is very important. There are three ways of combating the desires of the nafs. These are:

1. Preventing it from lust by denying it its nutrition. Its desires should not be fulfilled. Much resistance has to be offered to the nafs. When a wild horse is denied food or its food is reduced it becomes submissive. It will become subdued and the lustful demands of the nafs will be ended.
2. The imposition of Ibaadat on the nafs also weakens its demands. An ass becomes weak and submissive if along with denying it food it is loaded with a heavy load. Similarly, the nafs will be transformed from a state of restlessness to tranquillity by imposing on it such Ibaadat which is beneficial.
3. Seeking the aid of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Azza Wa Jal says in the Qur'aan Shareef:

“Verily the nafs is a great commander of evil, but (the nafs) upon whom Allah is merciful (such a nafs will remain obedient).”

Adoption of these three methods with constancy will, Insha’ Allah, render the nafs obedient and submissive. Man will then be safe from its evil promptings. Even after having gained control of the nafs, one has to be alert at all times. Ghaflat (negligence) is extremely dangerous. Ghaflat will result in the nafs once again asserting its domination and control over man.

THE NATURE OF NAFS

In man there exists the capacity for desire. This capacity is termed the nafs. This capacity refers to both virtue and evil. It desires goodness as well as evil. In its development the nafs passes through three stages, viz., Ammaarah, Law-waamah and Mut’mainnah.

AMMAARAH

In this stage the nafs is overwhelming in the desire of evil and it experiences no regret for its evil commissions and omissions. This lowly stage is also termed Hawaa-e-Nafs.

LAW-WAAMAH

In this stage the nafs suffers remorse and regret when afflicted by evil desires.

MUT-MAINNAH

In this stage the nafs is overwhelmingly in the desire of virtue.

THE TYPES OF THOUGHTS AND THEIR HUKM (EFFECT)

According to the Hadith Shareef, Allah Ta’ala overlooks thoughts as long as these are not given practical expression. There are five stages in thought, viz., Haajis, E;haatir, Hadeethun Nafs, Humm and Azm.

HAAJIS

Haajis is a thought which in the beginning produces no reaction in the nafs. If one is fortunate to eliminate the thought in the haajis stage, the other four stages will not become applicable.

KHAATIR

If one fails to eliminate the haajis thought and it establishes its presence in the nafs without the latter (i.e. the nafs) plotting to give it practical expression, it (the thought) enters the Khaatir stage.

HADEETHUN NAFS

This stage consists of the nafs scheming regarding the enaction or negation of that which has established itself in the nafs. The nafs ruminates on the plot of doing or riot doing the act without giving preference to any side of action. The thought is now known as Hadeethun Nafs.

The hukm (effect) of these three stages is no punishment if the thought is evil and no reward if the thought is good. Punishment and reward do not apply to the stages of Haajis, Khaatir and Hadeethun Nafs.

HUMM

When the nafs after having reflected about action or inaction regarding the deed it had schemed, inclines partially to one side (i.e. any side whether to commit or shun the act), the thought is known as Humm. Thought in this stage merits thawaab if virtuous and punishment if evil.

AZM

When the thought finally asserts itself and a decision is made to give it practical expression, it is known as Azm. Thawaab and punishment are applicable to this stage as well.

THE SIGNS OF THE ACQUISITION OF NISBAT WITH ALLAH TA'ALA

NISBAT IMA'ALLAAH

Nisbat literally means relationship or connection. A nisbat or connection is a two-way process. It has two ends. In our context Nisbat Ma'Allah (Relationship with Allah) means Allah's connection with the bandah (servant) and the bandah's connection with Allah Ta'ala.

The attainment of Nisbat Ma'Allah is also referred to as Husool Ilal-laah (Attained towards Allah). The relationship of Allah with the bandah is Allah's Pleasure with His servant. The relationship of the bandah with Allah means constancy of the servant in taa'at (obedience) and involvement in abundant thikr with perfect consciousness.

The sign of the existence of the bandah's relationship with Allah is his restlessness for engagement in obedience and Ibaadat as well as total abhorrence for all forms—both zaahir and baatin—of sin and disobedience. In addition to this is the bandah's continuous striving to follow the Sunnah.

N.B. Among the various kinds of Ibaadat, Salaat is an all-embracing form of worship. If executed properly, observing all its rules, conditions and respects then no other specific form of riyaadhat (spiritual exercise) is necessary for spiritual progress and the achievement of Nisbat Ma'Allah. Salaat contains Thikr, Shaghl, Muraaqabah, Auraad, e.g. Tasbeeh, Istighfaar, Durood etc. The Thikr of Salaat is the tilawat of the Qur'aan in it. This is in fact the highest form of Thikr. Shaghl in Salaat is the pre-occupation of the mind which consists of focussing the attention on the spot of Sajdah during Qiyaam; on the feet during, Ruku; on the bridge of the nose during Sajdah; on the lap in Jalsah, and on the shoulders when making Salaam. Muraaqabah in Salaat is one's contemplation at the time of Takbeer-e-Tahrimah and keeping in mind for the whole duration of Salaat that "Allah is watching me." This condition of total contemplation is called Ihsaan. All Mujaahadah and Riyadhat are undertaken to achieve this condition of Ihsaan. Regarding the condition of Ihsaan, the Hadith Shareef says that Jibra'eel (alayhis salaam) asked Rasulullah (saws):

“What is Ihsaan ?”

Rasulullah (saws) replied:

“(Ihsaan is) that you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him and if you cannot see Him (then know) that, verily, He sees you.”

In brief the Path of Sulook and its final destination, the stage of Ihsaan, is attainable by fulfilling Salaat with all its Aadaab, Mustahabbaat and Shuroot. In this way the effects of the Lataa-ife Sittah (the six spiritual faculties) will become manifest.

LATAA-IF-SITTAH AND THEIR EFFECTS

The six Lateefah (spiritual faculties) in man are the Nafs, Qalb, Rooh, Sirr, Khafi and Akhfaa. Their effects are as follows:

1. NAFS: (Nafs here refers to Nafs-e-Mutmainnah): Its nourishment is abstention from sin.

2. QALB: Its nourishment is Thikr.
3. ROOH: Its nourishment is Hudhoori (constantly alert and in the presence of Allah).
4. SIRR: The nourishment of Sirr is the unveiling of realities
5. KHAFI: The nourishment of Khafi is Shuhood (to behold the truth and to contemplate it), and Fanaa (to be annihilated or totally absorbed in Tauheed).
6. AKHFAA: The nourishment of Akhfaa is Fanaa-ul-Fanaa (i.e. to Be unaware of even one's stage of annihilation). Regarding this faculty there exists difference of opinion among the authorities.

The manifestation of the affects of these six faculties assume the following form in Salaat.

There are seven degrees in Salaat, viz., Salaat-e-Tun, Salaat-e-Nafs, Salaat-e-Qalb, Salaat-e-Rooh, Salaat-e-Sirr, Salaat-e-Khafi and Salaat-e-Akhfaa .

The effect of Salaat-e-Tan is prohibition of sin; that of Salaat-e-Nafs is prevention of relationships other than the relationship of Allah; of Salaat-e-Valb is negator of negligence; of Salaat-e-Rooh is prevention of the gaze from looking at others; of Salaat-e-Sirr prevention of the mind from wandering and turning to others besides Allah; of Salaat-e-Khafi is man's achieving the degree of spiritual development where reality becomes manifest to him; and, the effect of Salaat-e-Akhfaa is true communion with Allah Ta'ala. The experience of this stage is Mi'raaj .

CONDITIONS FOR IJAAZAT

When the Shaikh discerns in a Mureed a constant yearning for islaah (spiritual reformation) and steadfastness in this purpose and the Mureed along the Path of Sulook reaches the junction leading up to Allah Ta'ala, he (the Shaikh) bestows the Mantle of Khilaafat-e-Bai't on the Mureed who is now appointed as the Khalifah of the Shaikh.

The Mureed attains this lofty rank after continuous and regular association and communication, etc. with his Shaikh.

THE JOURNEY OF SULOOK

The Journey of Sulook comprises two sojourns:

1. Ser Ilallaah (Journey towards Allah).
2. Ser Fil-laah (Journey in Allah).

SER ILAL-LAAH

This journey consists of two fundamental aspects, viz.,

a. Purification of the nafs from nafsani ailments known as Akhlaaq-e-Razielah. Reference to this is made in the Qur'aanic Aayat :

“Verily, he has attained success, who has purified his nafs.”

b. Adornment of the heart with Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah. This is called Tahliyah and also Tajalliyah. In Sulook this acquisition is described as Maqaamaat (stages).

When the Mureed becomes grounded in the acquisition of Maqaamaat, in the purification of the nafs and when he has achieved proficiency in the ways and means of acquiring lofty attributes and eradicating lower qualities, then upon him reaching the stage of Ser Ilal-laah the Shaikh confers on him the Mantle of Khilaafat and grants him ijaazat (permission) to initiate others into the Path of Sulook.

SER FIL-LAAH

Upon having attained the stage of Ser Ilal-laah, a special celestial glitter (jalaa) and light (noor) permeate the heart. The heart then is at all times dissociated from all things other than, Allah. The heart is now truly engrossed with Allah Ta'ala. In this high stage of spiritual development, matters pertaining to Thaat (The Being of Allah), Sifaat (Attributes of Allah), Af'aal (Acts of Allah), Haqaa'iq (Realities) as well as relationships between Allah and His servants become manifest. This then is termed Ser Fil-laah.

In the realm of Ser Fil-Laah are no limits. Progress is infinite. Progress is proportional and continuous in relation to one's ability, engrossment with Allah Ta'ala and casting aside all motives irrespective of such motives pertaining to this world or the hereafter. When one has attained this rank, one attributes nothing to oneself.

The Shaikh appoints the Mureed as Majaaz-e-Bai't (authorizes him to initiate mureeds and to attend to their spiritual affairs) after he (the Mureed) has attained the stage of Ser Ilal-laah. Sometimes the Shaikh delays this appointment until the Mureed has reached the stage of Ser Fil-laah. This appointment by the Shaikh of the Mureed at different stages of development is a matter confined entirely to the condition of the Mureed and the inclination (thauq) of the Shaikh.

SEARCHING FOR ANOTHER SHAIKH

There are various reasons which induce a Mureed to search for a Shaikh other than the one who is his Shaikh. Among these reasons are:

1. The Mureed discovers that his first Shaikh does not adhere to the Shariah. The Shaikh indulges in bid'ah or always commits kabeerah (major) sins.
2. The mureed has no congeniality (Munaasabat) with the first Shaikh notwithstanding the first Shaikh being a strict adherent of the Shariah and a follower of the Sunnah.
3. The demise of the first Shaikh. In this event it will suffice if the Mureed turns to another Shaikh to perfect his islaah (reformation) without him even becoming his formal mureed. The mureed may, however, also complete his islaah by another Shaikh along with entering into Bai't with him (the Shaikh).

Our precedent in this aspect is Haahrat Haaji Imdaadullah Saheb (May Allah brighten his grave). Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah first was Majaaz-e-Bai't in the Naqshabandigah Order. When his Shaikh died he made the bai't to Hadhrat Mianju Noor Muhammad Saheb (May Allah brighten his grave) in the Chishtiyyah Order. Haaji Imdaadullah did so because he had not yet attained satiation in the Spiritual Sojourn. Hadhrat Mianju also conferred the Mantle of Majaaz-e-Bai't to Haaji Imdaadullah Saheb. Today, both Arab and Ajam have benefited from the fuyoodh (spiritual effulgence) and barakaat (spiritual fortune) of Haaji Imdaadullah Saheb.

It is vital to remember that after having accepted another Shaikh, the Mureed should never be disrespectful to his former Shaikh, neither in word or deed nor in his absence or presence. This applies

even if the former Shaikh has happened to stray from the Shariah. Any such disrespect will prove calamitous for the Mureed.

MAWAANI' (IMPEDIMENTS)

All sin and connections other than those with Allah Ta'ala are the bandits along the Path of Sulook, However, there are several things from which the Saalik has to abstain. This is vital. If the Saalik does not rigorously abstain from these aspects, his efforts and struggles will be utterly wasted. These fatal impediments strewn along the Path of spiritual progress are:

1. Opposition to the Sunnah:

Alas! In the present age, customs and innovations are in great prevalence. Nowadays such innovatory customs are being regarded as Tasawwuf. Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Soon there will dawn an age over people when there will remain of Islam nothing but its name, and of the Qur'aan there will remain nothing but its script.”

2. Inadvertently becoming the mureed of an irreligious peer and in spite of the error in this bai't, clinging to him life-long. When the peer himself is not Waasil, how will he cause the mureed to become Waasil?

3. Association with females and lads and casting lustful glances at them. It is narrated in Jawaahir-e-Ghaibi that a man once while making Tawaaf of Baitullaah was uttering.

“O Allah! I seek Your protection from Yourself.”

Someone enquired from him the meaning of this. He replied:

“Once I cast a lustful glance at a handsome lad when lo, a hand from the unseen (ghaib) appeared and slapped me causing the of my eye.”

Yusuf Bin Husain said:

“I have observed that the calamities of the Sufis are in association with young lads, in companionship with impious persons and inclining tenderly towards females.”

Lust for lads is worse than lust for women. Nowadays such unnatural practices of lust with lads are very prevalent. The act of sodomy is in the severest degree of prohibition, hence Rasulullah (saws) said:

“I greatly fear for my people the practice of the nation of Loot.”

In another Hadith, Rasulullah (saws) said: “The curses of the Angels of the sewn heavens descend on seven types of sinners. The intensity of this la'nat (curse) is sufficient to destroy the mal'oon (the accursed).

(The first of the seven types) is one who practised sodomy.”

Nabi-e-Karem (saws) repeated the above warning thrice. In another Hadith it was said:

“Allah Ta'ala abhors looking at a man who commits sodomy.”

Some people although not committing acts of lust are involved in the malady of gazing with lust. It should be borne in mind that the eyes also commit zina (fornication). Few people exercise caution in this respect despite the fact that staring with lust is a stepping-stone to fornication. According to the principle of Fiqh, the means and agencies of haraam are likewise haraam. So remember this, and understand it well.

4. Evils of the tongue. Speech in abundance and claiming excellence and virtues as well as speaking disrespectfully of the Shariah or Allah Ta'ala are among the greatest of impediments along this Path. Some jaahil (ignorant) peers indulge in such evil use of the tongue.

5. To engage in mujaahadah of one's own making in addition to the ta'leem (instruction) of the Shaikh. Such unauthorized prescription by the mureed is detrimental. Within a short while, the Mureed will become frustrated and discard even the little which he was instructed to do by the Shaikh. This calamity has befallen many a mureed. It was because of this pitfall that Rasulallah (saws) instructed the adoption of only that much a'maal (righteous practices) which will not weary one down producing frustration. Rasulallah (saws) said in this regard that Allah Ta'ala will not "weary" and be "frustrated" as long as you do not become weary and frustrated.

6. Haste in expecting the fruits of mujaahadah. This is also a great obstacle. The Mureed sometimes in his haste and impatience feels that even after having made much mujaahadah for a while, he has not derived the fruits thereof. The consequence of this attitude is that the Mureed either loses confidence in his Shaikh or he neglects his mujaahadah. This is indeed a great calamity which can befall the Mureed. It is imperative that the Mureed realizes that nothing is achieved overnight. The selfsame person at one stage was an infant. Only after a considerable lapse of time did he attain youthhood. At first he was ignorant and only after some time had passed did he become a learned man. Similar then is the case of spiritual progress along the spiritual journey.

In short, haste and expectation (for the effects of mujaahadah to become manifest) are by implication demands which the Mureed puts to his Shaikh. Such demands are very harmful. This type of mureed does not remain contented with his Shaikh. He turns to all and sundry for remedies. He is like a vagrant along this Path and he in consequence loses the grace and favour of the Shaikh. The Mureed in the final analysis loses in entirety what he had initially desired so impatiently. His frustration and worry multiply. Outwardly and inwardly he becomes engulfed by harm.

7. Introducing defect in one's confidence and love for the Shaikh. Of greater calamity than even this, is to hurt the feelings of the Sheikh and to harm him. Such action and attitude bring about the total destruction of munaasabat (congeniality) between the Shaikh and the Mureed.

THE MEANING OF MUNAASABAT

Munaasabat or congeniality is the relationship of affinity which the Mureed has with his Shaikh. This bond should be of such a degree that the Mureed entertains no rejection or dislike for any statement, act or condition of the Shaikh. This should be a physical condition of attachment in one's disposition. However, if one's munaasabat has not reached this degree of physical congeniality, it is necessary that it exists at least on the intellectual plane (Aqli Munaasabat). The Mureed should find all acts and statements of the Shaikh likeable and acceptable.

This Munaasabat is conditional for Bai't. Great care has therefore to be adopted in this matter. Minus such Munaasabat, all devotional practices such as mujaahadah, riyadhah, muraqabah and mukaashafah will come to nought. They will be devoid of benefit. In the absence of a tab'i (natural

and physical) munaasabat, the mureed should inculcate an Aqli Munaasabat. Spiritual benefit to the Mureed rests on the existence of munaasabat.

In view of the overriding importance of munaasabat, one should not enter into the Bai't allegiance if such munaasabat is lacking. The Bai't will prove of great benefit after love and munaasabat have been cultivated.

THE HARMS OF UMUR-E-GHAIR IKHTIYAARIYAH

Umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah are qualities and conditions which are beyond one's volitional control. These are natural states and attributes in man and their cultivation and eradication are not within the purview of his power.

Among the impediments along the Path of Sulook are another two ailments which are so widespread that almost all Mureeds are involved therein. Even some Ulama are involved in these.

1. The one obstacle is the Mureed's concern to acquire attributes and states not within his volitional control. Among the Umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah are thauq (joy), shauq (eagerness), istighraaq (absorption), lazzat (pleasure), yaksoo-ee (solitude) in disposition), daf-e-khatraat (the ability to ward off thought), sorish (pangs of spiritual love), injithaab (a condition similar to istighraaq), etc. These states and attributes are erroneously considered to be the effects of thikr, shaghl and mujaahadah. The non-acquisition of these umur-e-ghair-ikhtiyaariyah is considered to be the consequence of having been deprived of the effects of effort, Bur, this too is erroneous.

2. The other obstacle is the Mureed's effort to eliminate certain of the Umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah, e.g. the state of qabdh (a state of spiritual contraction), abundance of khatraat, inability to concentrate, natural love for wealth, dominance of natural anger, absence of tenderness, inability to shed tears, the assertion of worldly sorrow or fear, etc. Sometimes the Mureed regards these natural and non-volitional attributes and conditions to be detrimental to his progress along the Path of Sulook. He labours under the notion that because of the presence of such umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah he will not be able to attain his goal. Failure to eradicate these non volitional aspects is erroneously considered to be a cause for drifting away from Allah Ta'ala.

The abovementioned are two obstacles which generally occur to the travellers along this Path of Sulook. The common factor between these two obstacles is the pursuit of things beyond one's control. Both acquisition and elimination of Umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah are not within the control of man. One suffers adversely by pursuing such non-volitional aspects. One harmful effect of such wasteful pursuit is the implied confrontation with the declaration of Allah Ta'ala:

“Allah does not impose on one (anything), but that which one can bear.”

Since these aspects are non-volitional, their acquisition and elimination are beyond man's control and capacity. Allah Ta'ala has therefore not imposed such acquisition and elimination on the Mureed. But when the Saalik considers such acquisition and elimination necessary for the attainment of his goal, he by implication believes that this attitude of his is commanded and imperative. But as said earlier, the Shariah has commanded one only in regard to that which one is capable of doing. The Saalik's attitude implies that capability is not conditional for the executing of a task. This then is his confrontation with the Divine declaration:

“Allah does not impose on a person (anything), but that which he is capable of doing.”

Failure by the Mureed to achieve the desired acquisition and elimination of Umur-e-ghair ikhtiyaariyah produces progressive frustration, the consequences being:

- Physical illness may develop as a result of constant worry. This in turn results in the omission of many devotional practices.
- Frustration sometimes results in ill-temper. Others are then inconvenienced by one's display of ill-manners.
- Preponderance of worry and frustration at times causes one to neglect the rights of one's family as well as those of others. Such neglect becomes sinful.
- In cases this frustration reaches such proportions which drive the mureed to suicide.. Thus, both his dunya and his aakhirah are destroyed.
- Sometimes the frustration causes the mureed to lose hope to the extent that he considers acts of obedience and righteousness to be useless. In consequence he ends all his righteous activities and reaches an abrupt halt in his spiritual affairs.
- Sometimes he becomes disillusioned with his Shaikh, losing confidence in him. He then labours under the notion that his Shaikh is not aware of the Path of Sulook.
- Sometimes the frustration becomes so extreme that one becomes displeased with Allah Ta'ala, attributing one's failure to Allah Ta'ala. One then finds fault with the promises which Allah Ta'ala has made in the Qur'aan Shareef regarding His Aid to the one who strives along His Path. May Allah Ta'ala protect us from such a disastrous end.

THE DEVOTIONAL PRACTICES OF THE SAALIK

The ma'mulaat or devotional practices which the Saalik has to adopt are vastly beneficial in this Path. These ma'mulaat are listed hereunder.

TAHAJJUD: The Saalik should perform four, eight or twelve rak'ats in the latter part of the night. If he is unable to do so in the latter part of the night then as the last resort he should perform at least four raka'ts (with the intention of Tahajjud) at the time of Isha.

THE THIRTEEN TASBEEH: Either at the time of Tahajjud or after Isha Salaat, the following should be recited:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

a. Laa ilaaha il lal laah (Two Tasbeehs) i.e. 200 times). This is called the Tasbeeh of Nafil (negative) and Ithbaat (positive).

b. Il-lal laahu (Four Tasberhs-400 times) إِلَّا اللَّهُ

c. Allaahu Allaah (Six Tasbeehs-600 times) اللَّهُ اللَّهُ

d. Allaahu (One Tasbeeh - 100 times) اللَّهُ

Between the Sunnat and Fardh of Fajr, 41 times Surah Faatifiyah, beginning each time with Bismillaah.

AFTER FAJR SALAAT: Surah Yaaseen Shareef, some tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef, at least a quarter Juz; those who have memorized Surahs should recite all such Surahs (if they are unable to make tilaawat); whenever opportunity affords, one Manzil of Munaajaat-e-Maqbool together with Hizbul Jiryaa; and 41 times the following:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تُحْيِيَ قَلْبِي بِنُورِ مَعْرِفَتِكَ
أَبَدًا يَا اللَّهُ

This should also be recited at least three times before making Thikr.

ISHRAAQ: Perform two or four raka'ts Ishraaq Salaat.

CHAASHT: Immediately after Ishraaq or a bit later perform two, four or six raka'ts.

AFTER ZUHR: Recite Surah Innaa Fatahnaa laka (Surah Fatah) and make Thikr of the word, الله as much as time permits, or recite الله الله (Allaahu Allah) five hundred times.

AFTER ASR: Recite Surah Amma Yatasaa aloon (Surah Nabaa) and one Tasbeeh, the Aayat:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

AFTER MAGHRIB: Four raka'ts Salaatul Awwaabeen or six raka'ts. If time permits make Thikr of Allaah الله. Recite Surah Waaqiah.

AFTER ISHAA: Recite Surah Mulk and Surah Alif Laam Meem Sajdah. Recite Istighfaar in the following way:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ ○ اسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ
الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

Recite the above Istighfaar 100 times or 70 times. If one feels very sleepy or tired then recite it 41 times.

MUHAASABAH: i.e. to take stock of one's deeds: At the time of going to bed reflect about your deeds. When recalling a righteous act, be thankful (make shukr), and when recalling a sinful act, be regretful. Remind your nafs of the rebuke and punishment of Allah Ta'ala for sins and pledge not to approach sin in the future. During the day recall this pledge.

CONSTANT THIKR: While reclining, sitting, walking, etc., always recite the Kalimah. Recite

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

constantly and whenever the breath breaks, add:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

After every Salaat recite Aayatul Kursi and Tasbeeh Faatimah, i.e. Insert Arabic سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ 33 times; 33 الحمد لله times and اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ 34 times. If time allows, recite the following Tasbeeh a hundred

times after Zuhr, Maghrib and Isha:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Adopt the recitation of the following formula which should be recited often at times available to the Saalik:

يَا اللَّهُ يَا حَفِيفُ يَا بَازِئُ يَا حَمْنُ يَا عَزِيزُ يَا طَيْفُ يَا رَجِيمُ
يَا قَوِيُّ يَا كَرِيمُ يَا قَرِيبُ يَا وَكِيلُ يَا لَطِيفُ يَا قَوِيُّ
يَا مَعِزُّ يَا مُعِزُّ يَا فَتَّاحُ يَا وَهَّابُ يَا رَزَّاقُ يَا بَاسِطُ
يَا مُعِزُّ يَا مُعِزُّ يَا وَاسِعُ يَا مُقِنْتُ يَا دَوْدُ يَا غَفُورُ
يَا تَوَّابُ يَا رَوْفُ يَا مُحِي يَا مُبِيتُ
يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيثُ بِحُرْمَةِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ
وَالِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

If one has the opportunity it is more efficacious and beneficial to fix one or two times daily for the Thikr of Isme Zaat instead of spreading the Thikr over a period or time. If the Isme Zaat is recited six or twelve thousand times, its beneficial effect will expedited.

THE EXERCISE OF PAAS ANFAAS

For presence of mind, increase in eagerness and improvement of memory the exercise known as Paas Anfaas is most efficacious while it is the simplest of exercises (ashghaal). This exercise is a breathing exercise and its method is as follows:

Take a deep breadth. While inhaling concentrate on the word الله. Exhale vigorously. While exhaling concentrate on هُوَ. Do this repeatedly.

In the beginning practise this exercise in solitude and do it until one feels a warm sensation. Thereafter, this exercise should be carried out at all times while walking, sitting, etc. In all states endeavour to establish this concentration. In the beginning some effort is required. However, after a short while one's breathing will be so conditioned that it (the breathing) will be along this pattern without one consciously resorting to it.

NAFL FASTING

Nafil fasts should be kept according to one's ability. For example: one should fast on the 13th, 14th and 15th (known as Ayyaam-e-Beedh) of every Islamic month; the six fasts during the month of Shawwaal; the nine fasts of Zil-Hajj or only on the Day of Arafah (9th Zil-Hajj); the two days of Muharram (9th and 10th or 10th and 11th), and the 15th of Sha'baan.

BOOKS TO BE STUDIED

For the improvement and checking of one's knowledge and condition it is essential that certain authentic Islamic literature be studied. A list of books recommended will be given hereunder. Each book should be read three times. The Saalik should measure his condition on the standards of the books. One should then with sincerity and honesty notify one's Shaikh of one's conditions—the condition which prevailed prior to the study of the books and the condition after having studied the

books. The Shaikh should be regularly informed of the rise and fall, the progress and retrogress in one's spiritual condition in the existence and disappearance of the various attributes of virtue and vice.

This will enable the Shaikh to properly diagnose the Mureed's condition and prescribe accurate remedies. Furthermore, the Mureed should be diligent and regular in carrying out the instructions of the Shaikh. The Mureed has pledged that he will not conceal from the Shaikh any khatrah which crosses the heart or any condition of the rooh. The Mureed in making bai't to the Shaikh pledges that he will accept and follow his instruction without quibbling and without finding fault in it. He will follow the Shaikh with firm conviction and the fullest of confidence.

The following is a list of books which the Mureed should study. Qasdu Sabeel, Aadaabush Shaikh wal Mureed, Usulul Wusul, Huququl Islam, Furu-ul Imaan, Safaa-ee Ma'malaat, Hayatul Muslimeen, Aadaabul Ma'aasharat, Shauq-e-Watan, Jazaa-ul A'maal, Tabligh-e-Deen, Ta'leem-e-Deen, Beheshti Zewer, Behesti Gohar, Malfuzaat of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) known as Husnul Azees, Nashrut Teeb, Islaahul Khiyaal and Shariat and Tasawwuf.

N.B. Regarding the book, Tabligh-e-Deen by Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh), one should not practise the instructions given in the book in regard to food.

NASEEHAT SPECIALLY FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN THIKR AND SHAGHL

Those trodding the Path of Sulook should endeavour to follow the method of Rasulullah (saws) in everything. Following the Sunnah creates much Noor in the heart. Have patience when anyone says something which displeases you. Don't say anything in haste, especially while in anger. Be very careful in the state of anger. Never consider yourself to be perfect or one who possesses excellences. Ponder before speaking. When you are convinced that in what you intend speaking is no harm and in it is some benefit or need regarding the world or Deen, then only proclaim it. Never speak ill of even an evil person. Do not listen to evil.

Do not criticize any dervish who may be overwhelmed by some ecstatic condition and may be saying something which in your opinion seems to be in conflict with the Deen. Never despise any Muslim even if he happens to be a sinner. Never yearn nor have greed for wealth and honour. Do not make an occupation of ta'weez and talisman, for the general public will overwhelm you (by making demands and requests for ta'weez). As far as is possible remain in the company of those who engage in Thikr. Such association creates Noor, courage and love in the heart.

Do not expand much worldly affairs. Do not meet people unnecessarily. When necessity compels you to meet others, meet them kindly and display good manners. As soon as the need has been fulfilled withdraw from company. Remain aloof especially from acquaintances, Search for the companionship of the people of Allah (the pious and saintly ones) or meet with such persons who are not well-known to you. Harm from such people is slight.

If same spiritual condition occurs in your heart or some amazing knowledge enters the heart, inform your Shaikh. Do not request your Shaikh for some specific shaghl (devotional practice). Do not inform anyone besides your Shaikh of the effect Thikr produces in you.

Do not be deceiving nor beat about the bush when you have realized your error. Confess immediately. In all circumstances have trust in Allah and present your needs to Him only. Request Allah to grant you steadfastness on the Deen.

IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR THE SAALIK

1. The first step of the Mureed in the Path of Sulook is Sidq orbsincerity so that the structure can be erected on a proper foundation. The Mashaa-ikh have said that people have been deprived of Wusool (gaining Divine Proximity) because they have destroyed the Usool (foundations). Thus, the first step is the rectification of belief which exists between Allah and man. Such rectification is obligatory. Belief has necessarily to be free of doubt, suspicion, error, innovation and should be established by means of absolute proofs.

2. Once the Mureed has solidified his belief with Allah Ta'ala, then it devolves upon him to acquire a sufficient amount of knowledge of the Shariah. Such knowledge may be acquired either academically or by enquiring from some Aalim. This is necessary so that one's duties and obligations be correctly discharged. When confronted by different verdicts of the Fuqahaa, adopt the one in which there is precaution. Always resolve to remain aloof from disputation.

3. It is then essential that the Mureed acquire moral character from some Shaikh. If he has no Ustaad, never will he attain success.

4. When he resolves to enter into the Path of Sulook, then after rendering what has been explained above, it is incumbent upon him to seek forgiveness from Allah Ta'ala for all sins. He has to abstain from all sin, be it zaahiri or baatini and be it sagheerah or kabeerah. Firstly, he must make his peace with those who have rights over him. The Road of Sulook will not open up for the Saalik who has failed to make his peace with the Ahl-e-Muyooq (people who have rights over him).

5. Thereafter he should endeavour to reduce his relationships and worldly activities because the edifice of Sulook is reared on the peace of the heart. When intending to emerge from relationships, begin with emergence from wealth, for wealth is such an object which diverts one from Allah Ta'ala and inclines one to it. There has never been a Mureed who having entered this Path with worldly associations, remained steadfast. On the contrary, his worldly encumbrances diverted him, separated him from the Path and restored him to former connections

N.B. The meaning of wealth here refers to such wealth which is outside the bounds of the Shariah as well as such wealth in which one is engrossed more than necessary.

6. After emerging from wealth it is incumbent to emerge from jah (name and fame), for jah is a great obstacle along this Path. Nothing will the Mureed gain until acceptance and rejection of him by others do not seem equal. The greatest harm for the Mureed is the desire that people honour and respect him. Jail is a fatal poison for the Mureed.

7. When the Mureed has emerged from maal (wealth) and jah (fame), it is then incumbent on him to make a firm pledge to Allah Ta'ala that he will not oppose any of the advices of his Shaikh. Opposition to the Shaikh is extremely harmful. Among the conditions of this pledge is that the Mureed does not entertain any objection regarding his Shaikh even in his heart.

8. It is then incumbent upon him to conceal his secrets, not revealing it to even his closest associates. But he should not conceal from his Shaikh. If any Mureed conceals even the slightest of his condition, then indeed, he has abused the right of subhat (companionship) of his Shaikh. If the Mureed realizes, either by himself or by having been reminded by the Shaikh, that he has opposed the Shaikh in anything, he should immediately confess his error to the Shaikh and submit happily to any punishment the Shaikh may prescribe. It is not proper for the Shaikh to overlook the faults of the

Mureed. If the Sheikh does so, he will be guilty of destroying the huqooq(rights) of Allah Ta'ala. Overlooking faults here means to refrain from calling the attention of the Mureed to such faults. However, there is no harm in the Shaikh forgiving the Mureed and not punishing him when he (Shaikh) has hope of reforming the Mureed without meting out punishment.

9. As long as the Mureed has not renounced all associations it is not permissible for the Shaikh to prescribe for him any of the special formula of Thikr. It is incumbent upon the Shaikh to first put the Mureed to test. After having tested the Mureed and when the Shaikh's heart bears testimony in regard to the firmness of the Mureed's resolution, the Shaikh should stipulate the condition that the Mureed will resign with pleasure to the variety of circumstances produced by fate (Qadhaa) in this Path of Sulook. The Shaikh must take a pledge from the Mureed that he will not turn his face away from this Path regardless of whatever overtakes him, whether it be harm, disgrace, poverty, sickness, pain, etc. Furthermore, the Mureed has to pledge that he will not incline towards the ease advocated by the heart nor will he search for easy ways out at the time of hunger and need. He will nor adopt physical comfort nor will laxity become his way. Concession (rukhsat) and laxity (kasl) in this context refer to those prescribed by indolence or one's personal opinion. Such concessions and laxity are reprehensible. However, concessions advocated by the Shariah or adopted on the instruction of the Shaikh are not reprehensible.

10. It is extremely harmful for the Mureed to sit in the gatherings of the Fuqaraa and Ashaab-e-Tareeq in the initial stages. However, if some Mureed has indulged in this error then he should adopt the following method and attitude:

He should respect the Shuyookh (plural of Shaikh) and be of service to them. He should desist from contradicting them and he should act in a way which will give them comfort. He should refrain from any attitude which will create a barrier in the heart of the Shaikh for him. In the association with Fuyaraa it is incumbent to give preference to them and not to consider oneself a greater claimant to any right. Consider the right of every one in the group of Fuqaraa to be binding on you. Do not consider that you have any right over any of them. It is incumbent that the Mureed does not oppose any among the group. If the Mureed discovers that he (i.e. the Mureed himself) is correct, then he should maintain silence. This does not mean association in the baatil (falsehood) of others. It merely means, maintenance of silence after proclaiming the truth and not indulging in disputation. In disputation is the destruction of rime and the clouding of the heart. Do not permit such differences to effect your other social affairs.

A Mureed suffering from the habit of excessive laughter, obstinacy) and arguing will attain no progress in this Path.

11. External abundance of aaraad (specific forms of Thikr) is riot among the etiquettes (aadaab) of the Mureed. On the contrary, this group (of Saalikeen) is ever engaged in eliminating from them khatraat (stray and evil thoughts and diversions) and negligence of the heart. Their occupation is purification of character and not abundance of practices. Faraa-idh and Sunan-e-Muakkadah are incumbent on them. They adhere to these rigidly. The heart remaining in a permanent state of Thikr (Thikr Qalbi) is superior than abundance of supererogatory acts of worship (Nafl).

12. After the Mureed has established in himself permanence of Thikr (the heart and tongue perpetually engaging in Thikr) and he has accorded solitude preference over publicit⁴, he may experience certain supernatural occurrences while sleeping or while awake or in a condition between sleep and wakefulness. For example: he may hear a supernatural voice or he may experience the

revelation of some metaphysical reality. If this happens, the Mureed should not pay any attention to it nor should he attach any importance to such events. He should not await or remain in expectation of similar experiences because all such events are diversionary. They divert the Mureed's attention from Allah Ta'ala. However, it is imperative to notify the Shaikh of all such occurrences and experiences. Relating this to the Shaikh will free the heart from the encumbrance of such experiences.

It is incumbent upon the Shaikh to guard the secrets of the Mureed. The Shaikh shall derogate the importance of such super-natural experiences. In other words, he will explain their insignificance to the Mureed because all such events are trials.

Contentment and pleasure with these supernatural experiences are in fact deception. The Shaikh should, therefore, alert and warn the Mureed about the danger of focussing the attention on such insignificant events. The Shaikh should encourage the Mureed to aspire for heights far loftier than such experiences.

13. Among the ahkaam (rules) of the Mureed is that he migrate to a place where he can be in the association of a Shaikh who happens to be a guide for mureedeen of the age. Such migration is necessary if the Mureed finds no such qualified Shaikh in the place of his residence. The Mureed should then remain in attendance to the Shaikh and not depart until such time that he obtains the permission of the Shaikh.

14. The Mureed should not entertain the idea that the Shaikh is ma'soom (sinless). However, he should hold the Shaikh in high esteem and if occasionally the Mureed witnesses any transgression by the Shaikh, he (Mureed) should not sever his ties with the Shaikh on this account. However, should the Shaikh perpetrate acts of transgression in abundance, the Mureed should end his ties with the Shaikh politely, honourably and with respect. The Shaikh should also not command the Mureed to do such acts which constitute transgression (in the Shariah).

15. Among the gravest of calamities and misfortunes in this Path is companionship with young lads. All the Mashaa'ikh unanimously assert that the one who has become involved in such association (with lads), has in fact been disgraced by Allah Ta'ala.

16. Among the calamities for a Mureed is subtle and concealed hasad (envy) in his nafs for brothers along the Path. He should not envy any of his contemporaries in the Path if they have attained a distinguished rank while he himself has been deprived thereof. He should understand that all affairs have already been predetermined.

17. Among the aadaab of the Mureed is that he should not aspire for leadership nor should he desire that anyone becomes his mureed or student. If the Mureed, prior to the annihilation of the flesh and elimination of the calamities, entertains such desires, then in fact he is deprived of reality. His advice and instruction will not benefit anyone.

18. The structure of this Tareeq (Path) revolves on the protection of the Aadaab of the Shariah, on guarding oneself against haraam and mushtabah (doubtful things), on guarding the senses against the prohibitions of the Shariah, preventing one's moments from negligence and connecting them (one's moments) to Allah and on not regarding as halaal even a grain in which there is doubt even in times of need, leave alone times of comfort and prosperity.

The Mureed is required to perpetually struggle in abstaining from lust and lowly desire. He who has complied with his desires has destroyed his acceptance (in this Path). The worst thing which can

happen to the Mureed is his return to a lust or desire which he had shunned for the sake of Allah Ta'ala.

19. It is not befitting the rank of the Mureed to accept the politeness of women. This has been the method of all the Saalikeen of this Path. When it is prohibited to even accept the politeness of women then to a far greater degree will its acquisition be forbidden. This has been the way of the Shuyookh. Whoever considers this an insignificant thing will soon be faced with affairs which will bring him to disgrace.

20. It is essential for the Mureed to keep aloof of the seekers of the world because their companionship has been proven to be poison. Allah Ta'ala has said that one should not follow a person whose heart Allah has turned away from Allah's remembrance. Ahl-e-Zuhd (the people of abstention, i.e. the Saalikeen) are in the quest of Allah's Proximity and in this endeavour they spend wealth. Ahl-e-Safaa (the purified ones) in their endeavours to acquire the Companionship of Allah expel from their hearts all creation in general, and acquaintances in particular.

FURTHER ADMONITION

1. A sinner who repents is nobler than a man whose worship is followed by pride.
2. The sign of the heart enjoying a connection with Allah Ta'ala is the heart's inability to find enjoyment in any relationship of the world.
3. Sleep with maut under your pillow and when you arise do not have much hope in life.
4. Never consider sin to be small. Regard sin as great. He who thinks slightly of sin has considered Allah to be insignificant.
5. Guard the nafs at all times.
6. Abstention from sin is of greater importance than Ibaadat.
7. A little of halaal earnings is superior to earnings which are in abundance, but haraam. Respect is in contentment and comfort in abstention.
8. A strong Sabr is to be pleased with one's lot.
9. Courage is to acquire the knowledge of the Deen. Perfect practice is that which is accompanied by ikhlaas (sincerity).
10. It is of the acts of courage that one acquires the knowledge of the Deen; practice perfectly with sincerity, and be fully contented and adopt beautiful patience.
11. A sheep is nobler than a man who sacrifices the commands of Allah for the sake of his desire, for the call of the shepherd is heard by the sheep.
12. The association of the pious is better than acts of piety and the association of the evil is worse than acts of evil.
13. The non-existence of even a grain of vanity and falsehood in one is an aspect of Ma'rifat.

14. The look cast without the intention of gaining admonition and lesson is total neglect and a medium of disgrace. Freedom is obtained by trampling the desires of the nafs underfoot. Elimination of envy occasions the love of Allah.

15. When speaking, speak the truth whether in anger or In happiness.

16. Three persons depart with regret at the time of death. A man who spent his life accumulating wealth without having realized contentment. A man who did not obtain what he had wished for. A man who did not prepare his stock for the Hereafter.

17. Abstain from the companionship of a friend who causes you no benefit of the Aakhirah. The friendship of worldly people is like something which has beautiful colour but bad taste. Hadhrat Hasan(rahmatullah alayh) said: "Never listen to music no matter what rank you have attained."

18. The knowledge of a man who prefers conversation with people to remembrance of Allah, is little; his heart is blind and his life is wasted.

19. The lowest degree of harm which befalls a man who befriends the world is that Allah Ta'ala eliminates the pleasure of His remembrance and supplication From his heart.

20. Shaitaan does not bother about the one who in this world is a seeker of the pleasure of the nafs because such a person has himself gone astray. What purpose then has shaitaan to search for him?

21. Hadhrat Shaikh Muhammad Waasi' (rahmatullah alayh) was among the very greatest Auliya. A man requested naseehat of him. The Shaikh said: "I will give you such naseehat by means of which you may become the king of the world, and obtain peace in the Aakhirah. Adopt zuhd (abstention) in this world. Never have any greed or hope regarding any man. Regard all creation to be dependant on Allah. It is then evident that you will become independent of all. This is the meaning of becoming a king."

22. Ruin comes to a person from six avenues.

- a. Weakness of intention regarding the acts of the Aakhirah.
- b. Obedience to the commands of shaitaan and striving in that direction.
- c. In spite of nearness of death, to entertain distant hopes and plans.
- d. To adopt the pleasure of people in preference to the Pleasure of Allah.
- e. To abstain from the Sunnah of Rasulallah ~ because of obedience to the desires of the nafs.
- f. To cite the errors of previous Auliya as proof for one's acts and to bury their excellences.

23. The sign of love for Allah Ta'ala is that one follows the character, acts, laws and ways of the beloved of Allah (i.e. of Rasulallah)

24. These ten attitudes will prove greatly beneficial in this world and the Aakhirah:

Truth with sincerity; justice with creation; wrath with the nafs; service to the saints; love and mercy upon little ones; generosity with the dervishes; advice and admonition to friends; patience with enemies; silence with ignoramuses and humility with the Ulama.

25. Stay among people, but remain aloof. Your body should be among creation, but your heart with the Creator. This will ensure that negligence does not overtake you. Beware of such negligence lest you conform with people in a way which entails opposition to Allah and His displeasure.

26. The sign of proximity and love of Allah Ta'ala is shunning all things which impede the love of Allah;

27. There are two kinds of Taubah: Taubah-e-Inaabat and Taubah-e-Istijaabat. Taubah-e-Inaabat is to repent of sins because of the fear of Allah's punishment. Taubah-e-Istijaabat is to resort to Taubah because of shame for Allah Ta'ala. One's ibaadat is absolutely insignificant in the presence of His Majesty and Splendour.

28. Every part of the body has its taubah. The taubah of the heart is its intention to abstain from haraam. The taubah of the eye is not to glance at things forbidden. The taubah of the ear is not to listen to evil and nonsensical talk. The taubah of the hands is not to raise them toward that which has been forbidden. The taubah of the stomach is to refrain from consuming haraam. The taubah of one's modesty is to abstain from acts of immorality and fornication.

29. A contemptible person is one who in spite of being ignorant of the Path of Allah does not enquire about it.

30. People said to Hadhrat Baayazid Bustaami (rahmatullah alayh):

“You are a performer of many miracles. You walk on the surface of water.”

He replied: “This is no miracle. Twigs also float on water.”

People said: “But you fly in the air.”

He replied: “This too is no miracle, for tiny insects too fly in the air.”

People said: “It is indeed a great miracle that within a single night you travel to Makkah Muazzamah.”

He replied: “This too is nothing. Sorcerers journey in a single night from Hindustan to Mount Diyaanand.”

People said: “What then is a miracle?”

He replied: “A miracle is engrossment of the heart with none besides Allah.”

31. Your relationship with your Shaikh should be like the relationship of Hadhrat Siddique Akbar Radiallahu Anhu with Rasulullah (saws). He never contradicted Rasulullah (saws) in either the Deen or the dunyaa. One should have a Shaikh fitting the description given by Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh), the Qur'aan-e-Kareem, in his right hand, the Sunnah of Rasulullah (saws) in his left hand and he (the Shaikh) should walk in the light of these two lamps so that one does not fall in the pits of doubt nor in the darkness of bid'ah.

32. When man considers his nafs to be despicable and contemptible, it is the sign of Allah loving and honouring him. And, when he considers his nafs to be honourable and when his defects remain hidden from him, it is the sign of Allah's detestation for him.

ADMONITION IN GENERAL

Ameerul Mu'mineen, Ya'subud Deen, Imaamul Mashaariq wal Maghaarib Hadhrat Ali (karaamallahu wajhah) said:.

“I have selected from the Taurah Shareef twelve statements and I daily reflect on these statements thrice.”

These twelve statements follow hereunder.

ALLAH TA'ALA SAYS:

1. O man! Never fear any shaitaan and king as long as My Reign endures .
2. O man! Never be worried about your food as long as you find My treasures to be filled. My treasures never decrease nor will be depleted.
3. O man! when you become helpless in any affair, call Me, and most certainly, you will find Me. I am the bestower of all things and all goodness.
4. O man! Be assured that I regard you as My friend. You therefore, befriend Me.
5. O man! Do not become fearless of Me until you have crossed the Bridge (in Qiyaamah).
6. O man! I have created you out of dust, sperm and a blood-clot. I was not without perfect power when creating you, how then can be without power in feeding you? Why then do you seek from others?
7. O man! I have created all things for you and, I have created you for My Ibaadat, But you have become trapped in that which has been created for your service and you have drifted away from Me for the sake of others.
8. O man! All creation desires something for themselves while I desire you for your own sake, but you run from Me.
9. O man! You are displeased with Me because of the desires of the nafs, but never did you become displeased with your nafs for My sake.
10. O man! My Ibaadat is incumbent on you and upon Me is incumbent your feeding. Bur, in most cases you are deficient in your duty while I am never deficient in feeding you.
11. O man! You seek future sustenance even today, but I do not desire from you the Ibaadat of the future.
12. O man! You will forever remain in peace and comfort if you are contented with what I have given you. If you are not contented with it, I will assert the greed of the world over you. It will then cause you to run from pillar to post, from door to door in utter contempt and then too you will obtain only that which has been predestined for you.

AN EPISODE—TO REFLECT!

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh), narrates the following awe-inspiring episode in which there is a great lesson for reflection. A man who was a resident of the town of Gawaaliya, India, spared no efforts in the English education of his son. (In those days of political serfdom) it was considered a honour to be educated along the lines of the British rulers). He expended a considerable sum of money in his son's worldly education.

After attaining the limits of English education which the institutions in India could offer, the Father despatched his son to London to obtain the highest qualifications in English education. The son passed his examinations in London with flying colours, but upon returning to India he became seriously ill.

His condition deteriorated until he (the son) was on the verge of death. The father, stricken with sorrow and misery, sat at the bedside of his dying son and wailed:

“O my son! I have spent 25 thousand rupees in your education, but I have not seen the fruit of my efforts.”

The son in the last stages of life suddenly opened his eyes and exclaimed:

“O my beloved father! Why do you wail and cry now? When you observe me in the Akhirah burning in the Fire of Jahannum then you may truly cry. You, by spending these 25 thousand rupees have made the arrangements for my fall into Jahannum.

You have purchased Jahannum for me with this sum. Because you have kept me ignorant of the education of the Deen. At this time I am witnessing the futility of all my education. The Angels of death are at hand. You, by expending such a large sum, have not befriended me, but you have displayed that you are my enemy manifest.” (Wa’zul Huda)