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FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, solely with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'áala and the barkat of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Twenty Three, has been published.

Ikhlás – sincerity – is a topic that has been discussed innumerable times. One may be forgiven for thinking that there is nothing new to be discussed as far as ikhlás is concerned. However, what about sidq? What is sidq? How important is sidq? What relationship does sidq have with ikhlás?

These are important questions and these are answered by Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه in this majlis. Other topics are also discussed. As we are all aware several topics are discussed in a majlis. These are not necessarily related to the main theme of the majlis.

One of the amazing qualities of our mashá'ikh that we have noted is their ability to re-cast familiar topics in a completely new light. Very often we are made to feel that this is the first time that this particular topic has been discussed, even though it may have been discussed previously. At other times, when a familiar topic is explained to us, it is done with a new angle, leaving the listener amazed at not having thought of the topic in the light that it is being explained on this occasion. This applies to qissas as well. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه repeated certain qissas quite often. The same qissah may be repeated in a different form, very often a different light being shed on the qissah and a different lesson learnt.

Readers are also reminded that the majális are directed at the people attending the majlis. The tone of the majlis is also determined by who is present. It is important to bear this in mind in order to understand the context of the advices given.

Alhamdulillah, this issue of "For Friends" has translations of two majális.

May Alláh Ta'áala grant us all proper understanding and also the ability to act on the valuable advices contained in these majális.

Passing away of Hadhrat Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhíb رحمة الله عليه, (Bhaiján)

Hadhrt Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhíb رحمة الله عليه, popularly known as "Bhaiján", son of our Hadhrt Mauláná Masihulláh Khán Sáhíb رحمة الله عليه passed away in a private clinic in Delhi, India, on Friday, the 3rd March 2012.

His body was taken to Jalálábád. News had spread like wildfire and there were throngs of people at his janázah. The crowd was estimated to be approximately 100,000. His janázah took place after Ishá.

He had been ill for some time and had to use a wheelchair to get around. Nevertheless, as the principal, he attended to the affairs of Madrasah Miftáhul-Ulúm punctually throughout his illness till the very last, being taken by car to the madrasah.

He was born in Aligarh, being the only son of our Hadhrt رحمة الله عليه. Initially, he was taught by Hadhrt رحمة الله عليه and then, later, he studied at Hadhrt's Miftáhul-Ulúm in Jalálábád, where he qualified in the year 1959. On graduating he immediately started teaching at the very same institute. In 1977 he was appointed the principal of the Dárul-Ulúm, continuing with teaching as well.

Hadhrt "Bhaiján" (Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhíb) رحمة الله عليه had travelled to several countries with our Hadhrt, and he endeared himself to all those who came to know him. The love that little children had for him was quite remarkable, something which we ourselves had personally witnessed.

In 1992 he was granted Khiláfat by our Hadhrt رحمة الله عليه. After Hadhrt's رحمة الله عليه demise he carried on his normal duties as well as conducting the after-Jumu'ah majlis which our Hadhrt رحمة الله عليه had been conducting. He himself made people bai'at and had given khiláfat to several people as well.

We make du'á that Alláh Ta'álá fills his qabr with núr and grant him high stages in Jannat.

Dr. I.M.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masihulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه in Jalálábád, India, on Tuesday, the 22nd Muharram, 1411, corresponding to the 14th August, 1990.]

IKHLÁS AND SIDQ – SINCERITY AND VERACITY

[A beggar arrived and Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه gave him two rupís. After the beggar had left Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه started speaking. Very often a majlis would commence in this manner. Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه did not have any prepared notes that he started a majlis with. It often happened that somebody would ask a question or some incident would occur and this would then be the starting point of the majlis that followed, as happened on this occasion]

Be indebted to the beggar

Many beggars come here on a continuous basis. Alhamdulillah, whatever Alláh Ta'álá grants taufiq for, I keep on giving.

Some tend to be very quarrelsome. They keep on coming regularly. I have told them that they should be happy with whatever I give them, whether I give them twenty or ten or five.

One should not boast of favours conferred on beggars. Alláh Ta'álá states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى

O you who believe! Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury (insult). S2.264

Explaining it in other words: O Muslims! Do not destroy the (thawáb) of your sadaqát by boasting about it and causing difficulties but rather consider it a favour of the beggar that, through him, we have been given the taufiq to give sadaqát. And

we should continuously ask Alláh Ta'álá for tawfíq. The du'á of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ وَفَّقْنِي لِمَا تَحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ وَالْفِعْلِ
وَالنِّيَّةِ وَالْهَدْيِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

O Alláh! Grant me the ability [to do] that which You love and are pleased with, be it a word, an act, a deed, an intention or a method [way]. Surely You have power over everything.

This is the statement of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. So, we should continually ask for tawfíq from Haqq Ta'álá. And we should feel indebted to the beggar. Otherwise, as it appears in the Hadíth Sharíf, such an era will also appear that the Muslims will go searching for people to give zakát to but will find no one who will accept the zakát.

That is why Haqq Ta'álá, at a different place, addresses the ashábe-taqwá (the pious), as follows:

فَلَا تَزْكُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ط هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى

And do not claim purity for yourselves. He knows best about him who turns away (from evil). S53.32

Do not consider yourself to be pious. Do not believe yourself to be holy. That only Alláh Ta'álá knows very well, who is really pious. It can be that, despite adopting taqwá, it is possible that there is included in it such an item of which you have no inkling of but which is in the knowledge of Haqq Ta'álá and which taints and spoils the taqwá. This knowledge will be with Alláh Ta'álá and not with us.

Ikhlás is no trifling thing, dear friend. It is a very elevated quality. By acting contrary to ikhlás, shierk has appeared, even though it is not shierk in i'tiqád.

The Súfiyá-e-muhiqqiqín and mudiqqiqín have proof from the Qur'án and Hadíth Sharíf for their claims. Haqq Ta'álá states:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ
بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

And whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate no one in the worship of his Lord. S18.110

Note that here it is not stated, "in the worship of *Alláh*", but what appears is, "in the worship of *his Lord (Rabb)*". There is a subtle point in this also.

So, just see: it is stated that do not associate any partner in the 'ibádat of your Rabb. The mufasssírín have stated that here the word "shierk" actually refers to "riyá" (show). It is possible that in the 'ibádat of the muttaqí there is riyá that is khafí (concealed/light). Just see: In this áyet there is an invitation to ikhlás. The translation of the áyet would be as follows: Whoever has hope of meeting his Rabb should perform pious deeds and not associate any partners in the 'ibádat of his Rabb.

The bounty of being able to breathe

It has been indicated in this áyet that, yes, there is death after life here. After death will come Qiyámat where the meeting with Alláh Ta'álá will take place. There will take place accountability for each and every grain and every drop of liquid consumed.

So, now a Muslim should ponder, "How should I live in this world? I will be called to account for every breath I take. I will be asked, 'What rights have I fulfilled for the breath I inhaled?' If air did not enter, what would have happened? What if the air that was inhaled could not be exhaled?" When you were sleeping were you breathing out of your own volition and choice? If your breathing were to have slowed down and stopped and death were to have faced you, what would have been your situation?

One breathes without a conscious effort and without having to exert oneself. Inhaling and exhaling take place without any meditation and research. What would have happened if one's

breathing depended on deep pondering? These are matters for consideration.

My dear children, save yourselves from foreign thoughts.

Negating the creation and instilling love for Alláh Ta'álá

The Kalimah-Tayyibah is such a phrase that has "Lá" (لا – No) in its commencement. The "Lá" cuts off all those passions, desires and connections with the creation, which are impediments obstructing from connecting with the Creator. "Lá" has negated all these.

Yes, that creation that is the means and intermediary for an increase in one's connection with the Creator, connection with such a creation is actually connection with the Creator. It is not considered being connected to the creation because it has become the means of the creation being connected to a greater degree with the Real Creator (Kháliq-Haqíqí).

Actually, there is a request to Alláh Ta'álá for access to such creations who will cause an increase in the connection with the Creator. So much so that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم himself had made this request:

اللَّهُمَّ ارزقني حُبِّكَ و حَبِّ من يَنْفَعني حَبِّه عندك

O Alláh! Grant me the rizq of Your love and the love of that person whose love will benefit me.

It is proved from this Hadíth Sharíf that the love of that creation that is of benefit in the love of the Creator is not love for the creation but actually love for the Creator. In the Hadíth Sharíf love has been interpreted as "rizq".

In a similar manner, that deed that is a cause for an increase in muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá, that deed is also for Alláh Ta'álá, as is stated:

اللَّهُمَّ اني اسألك حُبِّكَ و حَبِّ من يَحِبُّكَ و حَبِّ
عمل يقرب الى حُبِّكَ

O Alláh! I ask of You Your love and the love of that person who has love for You; and the taufiq of the love of such a deed which will draw me closer to You.

Otherwise, there is a statement to the opposite effect:

اعوذ بعزتك من شر ما عملت

I seek protection in Your Honour from the evil of my deeds.

And there is another statement:

واعوذ بك من ساعة السوء ومن صاحب السوء

I seek Your protection from the evil hour and the evil companion.

What type of companion is that? What is that type of deed? These are such as will bring a decrease in the muhabbat of Haqq Ta'álá. How can you socialise with him? How can you come and go there?

So Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had asked to be protected from the evil deed and to be protected from the evil hour. That is why, by means of the "Lá" in "Lá-iláha", all these have been cut off and negated. Whatever is good has not been negated.

In this "Lá" is included all evils and sins. So how can there be continued perpetrations of sins? This sentence deserves to be pondered on and repeated perpetually.

Occasional minor lapses are overlooked

Yes, by the token of being human, one may err – if it happened it happened. Just as the word "insán" has the root "uns" (love) in it literally, it also has the quality of "nisyán" (forgetfulness) in it from the aspect of attributes. So, occasionally, there will be forgetfulness and, occasionally, there will be falling into sin. There is no question of being called to account. Minor lapses will occur. Alláh Ta'álá states:

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ

For those who avoid major sins and indecent behaviour, except minor offences. S53.32

The gist of this is that you should keep on saving yourselves from obscenities and foul actions. Alláh Ta'álá does not look at your petty infringements. Your existence is from the "mumkinát" (possibilities). Therefore, error is also possible. But how can there be a *persistence* in evil deeds? In this evil is included sins. In this evil is included the evil companion, the evil friend. All this forms part of shierk, from the aspect of deeds and not from the aspect of aqá'id.

Just now an áyet was recited that one should not associate any partners in the 'ibádat of one's Rabb. In other words, do not let riyá intrude in that righteous deed (amal-sáleh) that you perform. By the contamination of riyá that deed ceases to be righteous in its correct meaning and complete methodology. To the contrary, it will be muddied.

There is a special point in regard to the first portion of the áyet, "*And whoever hopes to meet his Lord*". Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "You are hopeful of meeting Me and, simultaneously, you are committing shierk-e-amalí by way of riyá. How can the two be compatible?"

Radhá – the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá – is a stipulation

Another point: In performing any righteous deed there is the stipulation that it should be for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (radhá). That deed with which Alláh Ta'álá is pleased will be termed a righteous deed. And that deed which does not draw the radhá of Alláh Ta'álá will not be called a righteous deed.

Outwardly a deed may appear to be righteous but, if it does not fall within the category of radhá as defined by the laws of the sharí'at, how can it be termed to be drawing the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá?

For example: The person is making namáz at the time of zawál. The act (of namáz) is amal-sáleh but radhá is not a quality

in it (because of the prohibited time of zawál).

Another example: A person fasts on the day of Íd. The fasting is an amal-sáleh but there is no radhá (because fasting is prohibited on the day of Íd).

Another example: A person got up after midnight and read nafl namáz. He also recited the Qur'án Sharíf and he also made zikr. Thereafter he rested and fell asleep, so much so that he missed his Fajr namáz with jamá'at.

My dear brother! Why did you sleep at such a time that you did not perform your Fajr with jamá'at? So, the amal-sáleh was combined with sú (evil) in that namáz with jamá'at was discarded. Better than this was for him to have slept through the night and got up with the Fajr azán and made his namáz with jamá'at. He had given such importance to what was nafl that he missed out on the namáz with jamá'at. Thus, sú was combined with amal-sáleh.

Namáz in solitude versus namáz with jamá'at

In the same manner, some people do not perform namáz with jamá'at in order to have greater khushú'. They say, "We have experienced it many times that we do not have as much khushú' in our namáz when performed with jamá'at as when we perform the namáz in solitude at home." That is why they perform their namáz at home (and not in the masjid with jamá'at).

O bondsmen of Alláh! O jáhil! That namáz – with its attendant wasáwis – that is performed in the masjid with jamá'at is thousands of times superior to that namáz performed in solitude at home with full khushú'. That person who goes to the masjid to perform his namáz is the bondsman of the shari'at – that is, he is subservient. Whereas you, the one who is performing his namáz at home, are a bondsman of your temperament. And the bondsman of the temperament is termed a mushrik; and the bondsman of the shari'at is called a bondsman of Alláh.

So, just see: he considers himself to be mukhlis (sincere) whereas the shari'at considers him to be a mushrik, this being mushrik-amalí (and not i'tiqadí).

Qissah – the sháhsáhib of Patyálah

A sháhsáhib, a resident of Patyálah, once came here. He had a thousand muríds. I was still staying over there.

[Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه pointed to the house across the courtyard from the majliskhánah. This was now the residence of his son, Bhaiján.-Tr.]

He stayed for several days and discussions on the masá'il of sulúk took place regularly. He had also mentioned that he had met a number of mashá'ikh before coming here.

One day we were sitting and having a discussion. The azán for Asr was given. I stood up and went to perform my namáz in the masjid. He did not go. After performing namáz I came and sat by him and asked him, "Did you not go to the masjid to perform namáz?" He replied, "I performed my namáz here." I asked, "Why?" He replied, "At the time I was in such a spiritual state that, had I stood up, that state would not have remained with me."

I said to him, "There are three states: Hálate-gaibat (oblivion), hálate-istigráq (absorption) and hálate-sukr (spiritual intoxication). So, were you in such a state of gaibat that you neither heard the azán nor were you aware of people going for namáz and that I was going for namáz? Were you so engrossed?"

[The terms appearing above are explained in greater detail at the end of this majlis. -Tr.]

He replied, "No. I was not in such a state but I was fully cognisant – I heard the azán and I was also aware of your going for namáz."

This poor fellow was ignorant. That is why it is fardh to attain knowledge of the shari'at to the degree of necessity. Without acquiring this degree of knowledge it was not permissible for him to become a sheikh. How can that person who is ignorant of the shari'at be a sheikh?

Now, it does not matter whether one acquires this 'ilm by studying the detailed Arabic kitábs; or one acquires this 'ilm by studying authentic Urdu kitábs; or whether one acquires this 'ilm by regularly asking some 'álim; or one acquires this 'ilm by regular

attendance at the majális of an 'álim and listening attentively. However, definitely acquire 'ilm.

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه **acquiring 'ilm**
Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه presented himself in the service of Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمه الله عليه in Radúlwí. By the way, this qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه. On arriving there, he requested to become bai'at. Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمه الله عليه asked him, "Have you acquired any 'ilme-Dín?" Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه replied that he had not as yet. Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمه الله عليه told him, "Then entering sulúk will result in you going astray. First acquire some 'ilm of Dín, then come back."

Do you see? Acquiring 'ilm has been given priority over sulúk. In that era the centre for 'ilme-Dín was Delhi.

Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه responded, "Very well. I have no objections." As he stood up to depart Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمه الله عليه said, "Listen carefully. It seems that when you return after completing your studies, I will not be still alive. Be as it may. My son will be alive. You will benefit from him." Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه replied, "Very well. As you say."

Today, if one were to tell somebody that you should connect yourself for your isláh to such-and such a person who is also in our silsilah, he will never accept this. Not accepting this other sheikh shows that this person does not accept even this sheikh. If he had accepted this sheikh he would have accepted the other person as a sheikh. Seeing that he is not prepared to accept this other person indicates that he does not accept the first sheikh also.

Difference between knowing (ján-ná) and believing (mán-ná)

If a person says that he believes in Alláh but he does not believe in His Messenger – even when proof of him being a Messenger has been provided by Alláh Ta'álá by way of miracles, these miracles being proof and witness of Messengership – indicates that he does not really believe in Alláh. When the evidence as to him being a Messenger is presented from Alláh and he still does not believe

this, how can it be said that he believes in Alláh Ta'álá?

Have you understood the point, molvísáhib?

The name given to belief (mán-ná) is ímán. Just to know (ján-ná) is not termed ímán. All the kuffár know Alláh but such mere knowledge does not make the person a mu'min.

Similarly, merely to *know* a person as being a sheikh does not make the person a muríd – *believing* makes the person a muríd. And if he does not have this belief then he is not termed a muríd. Further, if a muríd, after having been guided to establish an isláhí relationship with any sheikh, says, "I do not have any aqídat (faith and confidence) in him", then he should have stayed at a distance from the sheikh. This person is not a "muríd" but a "maríd", as is stated in the Qur'án Sharíf:

شَيْطَانًا مَّرِيدًا

Shaitán – an obstinate rebel S4.117.

Just see: Sheikh Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه had accepted the advice and departed to acquire 'ilm. When he returned after having completed his studies, he found that his sheikh had indeed passed away. He established an isláhí relationship with his son because this is what his sheikh had instructed him to do. In this way he derived benefit from both sides.

We had digressed on this qissah when we said that an ignorant person cannot be a sheikh. We had mentioned the condition of the sheikhsáhib from Patyálah who had discarded namáz with jamá'at because of the special spiritual state he was experiencing at the time. I had asked him if he was in gaibat or istigráq. The third possibility of sukr is a very, very elevated condition where the veils, the barriers are lifted. This is a very, very elevated state. He had replied that it was none of these states: he had heard the azán and he had seen me departing for namáz.

Then I told him that the namáz read with jamá'at, with the accompanying wasáwis, was thousands of times better than that namáz read in solitude with the special spiritual state he was

experiencing. The namáz with jamá'at is according to the sharí'at, whereas the namáz in solitude is according to one's personal temperament. After hearing this explanation then only did his eyes open.

The poor fellow was ignorant. He just did not have this knowledge. Neither was he acquainted with the masá'il of sulúk nor was he acquainted with the masá'il of the sharí'at. Such a person is not a sheikh but merely a pír.

The difference between a sheikh and a mere pír

You should know that being a sheikh is one thing and being a mere pír is another. "Wazífí" (one reciting liturgies) is a pír, that he discards what is wájib and places undue importance to what is nafl. Just see what an excellent sheikh he is!

[This last statement was made in sarcasm. – Tr.]

On the other hand, who is a real sheikh? He is one who is a "sáhibe-fin" – an expert in his field. The sheikh in any field is one who knows the basic principles of that field and he knows many of the corollaries. He also has knowledge on how to derive corollaries from these basic principles. Also, other expert scholars in the same field consult him.

This topic has come to be mentioned incidentally.

I was saying that to attain ikhlás one has to discard shierke-khafí (minor shierk). This is a very elevated level. When this ikhlás appears then there is "khulásí".

[This a play of words: اخلاص (sincerity) and خلاصي (freedom/ release)-Tr.]

Take note of the words I am using: ikhlás and khulásí. When sincerity has truly arrived then there is release.

I wish to say something but commoners are also here. The majlise-khás has ceased to exist. Nobody sits for such a special majlis. However, what I wish to say is that when sincerity appears then there is release. Absolutely no question can arise that there can be a situation where ikhlás appears and there is no khulásí.

Why? The reason is that when a person chooses ímán he has discarded major kufr and shierk. In the same manner when

ikhlás, in its true meaning, arrives minor shierk is also discarded. Now there is just no question that there is no release.

Is my voice reaching you or not?

I am saying that when ikhlás has been attained in its true meaning then there is no question that the akhláqe-razílah – all of them – will be removed all at once. In actual fact, if strong (or forceful) ikhlás has been attained then there will be absolute freedom from all the akhláqe-razílah.

Arè! To what extent are you going to remedy each of the blameworthy qualities, one by one? And for how long are you going to carry on? In order to do this you need the lifetime of Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام!

Arè! Develop ikhlás and you will have remedied them all! Brothers! Has my voice reached you or not?

To cure the blameworthy characteristics one by one requires a great deal of striving and effort (mujáhadah) and one's body will also wither away. So, this is gladdening news that in order to have one's isláh made, firstly, develop ikhlás and then, secondly, search to find out what is the correct method of carrying out this task.

Is my voice reaching you, molvísáhib?

When ikhlás has arrived in its true meaning then the temperament will direct its attention towards the hukm (orders) of Haqq Ta'álá. However, it could happen that there is ikhlás but not sidq.

Defining sidq & ikhlás

The essence of **sidq** is that the manner in which whatever deed or 'ibádat that the sharí'at has ordered one to perform, to carry out that deed or 'ibádat in the manner specified.

Ikhlás, on the other hand, means that there is no other objective of any type and at any time in performing deeds except that of the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (radhá-e-iláhí).

So, it can happen that in any act or deed there is ikhlás but not sidq. But it cannot happen that there is sidq and not ikhlás. The reason is that ikhlás is encompassed in the definition of sidq.

The two share the relation of umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq. In Logic, four types of relations are explained between any two universal concepts. They are: tasáwí, tabáyun, umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq and umúm-khusús-min-wajhin. Hopefully you would have studied Logic and, furthermore, understood it.

(A brief explanation of the terms of Logic mentioned above:

Tasáwí is the equal application of one universal concept to another and vice versa. For example, sea and ocean share the relation of tasáwí as every ocean is a sea and every sea is an ocean.

Tabáyun is the incompatibility between two entities where none of the two is applicable to the other.

For example, night and day share the relation of tabáyun. No night is ever day and vice versa.

Umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq is the relation of two universal concepts where one is applicable to every member of the other whilst the second applies to certain or some of the first.

Example: Every Rasúl is a Nabí whilst not all Ambiyá were Rasúls. The reason for this is that in Islamic terminology a Rasúl is a Nabí who was instructed with a new Sharí'ah.

Umúm-khusús-min-wajhin is when both the concepts apply to certain members of the other one's class, not all. Example: Háfiz and 'álim . Some huffáz are 'álims and vice versa. Not all 'álims are huffáz and nor are all huffáz 'álims.) [*These explanations have been provided by Madrasah-Ashraf-ul-Uloom, De Deur -Tr.*]

Where there is sidq, therefore, there will definitely be ikhlás, and where there is ikhlás it does not necessarily follow that sidq will also be present.

In essence Rasúlulláh ﷺ is telling us that in every deed there must be ikhlás and there must also be sidq. The áyet mentioned earlier mentions ikhlás – *let him do righteous deeds and associate no one in the worship of his Lord. S18.110*. This has been explained in detail.

Qissah of a Sahábí رضي الله عنه told to repeat his namáz

There was a Sahábí رضي الله عنه newly entered into Islám, who had

not performed his namáz in the correct manner by not observing the various rules and he was told to repeat his namáz. When he realised that he was not performing his namáz as it should have been performed, he then enquired as to the correct method and etiquettes, according to the laws of Alláh Ta'álá.

So, there is the need to seek 'ilm because, without 'ilm one cannot know the correct method of performing a deed. Having gained this 'ilm, together with ikhlás the sidq of that deed has also been achieved.

If a deed is performed without the correct methodology there may be ikhlás but there will be no sidq. There is still a defect. There is no perfection in it. In what way?

Listen! The qissah of the Sahábí رضي الله عنه is as follows: He was performing namáz. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived on the scene. The Sahábí رضي الله عنه completed his namáz by making the salám. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم told him,

قم صلّ فانك لم تصلّ

"Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

In actual fact, he had performed namáz. For whom did he perform namáz? Keep in mind that he was a Sahábí رضي الله عنه.

My talk is in the form of a lesson and not in the form of that of a sheikh or of pírs. I am a tálibe-'ilm and I speak like a student of Dín. Here lessons are taught without the aid of kitábs, with taufíq-e-iláhí, with the fadh'l of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratwá'lá رحمه الله عليه.

To continue: That was a Sahábí رضي الله عنه and a Sahábí رضي الله عنه has ikhlás. If there is no ikhlás – Na-úzubilláh! Na-úzubilláh! – then there will be riyá in that Sahábí رضي الله عنه. Who dares to say that a Sahábí رضي الله عنه has riyá? To the contrary, there definitely was ikhlás. It is in relation to this namáz with ikhlás that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

This humble person, in obedience to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم

روسلّم stood up and repeated the namáz. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم again said, "Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

He again complied. This happened three times. When he was told the same thing on the fourth occasion, the Sahábí رضي الله عنه said, "O Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, I know only this way of performing namáz. Kindly teach me."

Method of performing namáz: khushú', khudhú' and sidq

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم then explained the method of making namáz. "When standing up to perform namáz, recite the takbír. Then, recite whatever portion of the Qur'án is easy. Then perform the rukú' with tranquillity and then stand up. That is, the qowmah should be performed with tranquillity. Then perform the sajdah with tranquillity and go into jalsah with tranquillity and complete the whole namáz in this manner." When the Sahábí رضي الله عنه performed the namáz in this manner Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم did not tell him that he did not perform his namáz and that he had to repeat the namáz.

The question arises: When he had performed namáz initially he was told to repeat the namáz, and when he performed the namáz as was shown to him he was not told to repeat the namáz, so what was the deficiency in his first namáz?

The answer is that there was a deficiency in the sidq – there was no sidq in that namáz. That is, the correct etiquettes of the salát and the tranquillity of the different arkáns that were supposed to have been observed were not observed.

Khushú' is connected to the heart and khudhú' is connected to the parts of the body. Just as the heart should have tranquillity in it, serenity in it, that it should not wander here and there, similarly there should be tranquillity of the different parts of the body. If the different parts of the body move contrary to the stipulated manner then this is contrary to the tranquillity of the body.

For example: The hands are moving here and there, contrary to the calmness required, sometimes doing this and

sometimes doing that. In qiyám, rukú' and sajdah, the eyes are not focused in the stipulated manner. Neither are the hands in control nor are the eyes under control. This is not khudhú'. This is contrary to sidq.

The different postures are performed very hurriedly. Going into rukú', before the hands and body have reached a tranquil state, while there was still some downward movement, he suddenly stands up again. Thereafter his body should be motionless for a while when standing but, before this could happen, he plunges down into sajdah. Here again, before attaining some tranquillity he quickly sits up. He has hardly sat when he goes into the second sajdah.

All this is contrary to sidq. He did not carry out the laws according to their specified etiquettes and levels. The Sahábí رضي الله عنه was told to repeat his namáz because there was no sidq in his namáz.

A question arises here. The Sahábí رضي الله عنه was an áshiq of Islám – he had passionate love for Islám. Therefore, why was there no sidq in his namáz?

The one answer has already been indicated above: This was the initial period of Islám. Laws were revealed in a slow and gradual manner. Up to that stage the Sahábí رضي الله عنه was not aware of the nature of sidq. When he gained this knowledge sidq was attained simultaneously.

The second answer: The Sahábí رضي الله عنه performed the namáz according to the degree of his knowledge at that stage. He performed the namáz at the level of sidq of his knowledge for which he was accountable (mukallaf). He was not mukallaf for the period before he had gained this knowledge. Therefore, there should be no doubts. I mention this to maintain his status as a Sahábí رضي الله عنه. This was his sidq at that level and he was maqbúl in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá.

However, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم wanted him to reach a higher level of maqbúliat. The Sheikh – that is, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم

وسلم – wanted to elevate the degree of his sidq. It was as if he was saying, "Because it being the initial period of Islám, this was the level of your sidq according to the level of your knowledge. But the level of sidq is something else when it comes to the knowledge that is with Alláh Ta'álá. Rectify this shortcoming. Acquire its knowledge."

It is apparent that the status of 'ilm of the shari'at is very high. There is no way of getting out of it. Having said that, it must be pointed out that it is not necessary to study the detailed Arabic kitábs to acquire this knowledge. As it was pointed out earlier, this 'ilm could be acquired by studying accredited kitábs in Urdu (or other languages) or by asking a reliable 'álim or by attending the majlis of a reliable 'álim.

The Hadíth Sharíf states that it is compulsory to acquire 'ilm:

طلب العلم فريضة

It is fardh (compulsory) to seek 'ilim.

The Hadíth Sharíf does not state that it is compulsory to study kitábs. 'Ilm commenced right at the beginning. The compilation of kitábs came only afterwards. Yes, the writing down of the Qur'án Sharíf and Hadíth Sharíf already commenced in the time of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – the writing was on bones, leaves and skins of animals. The art of writing existed from before.

The written word commenced from early times

Arè! Listen very carefully to what I wish to say! The art of writing existed from ancient times. Haqq Ta'álá had written down on the Preserved Tablet – the Lowhe-Mahfúz – everything before these things came into existence. Thereafter these were sent down.

Is there some "pakká-háfiz" sitting here? Or is there only a "Ramdhání-háfiz" here? There is a category called "Ramdhání-háfiz" also: he is one who can recite the Qur'án Sharíf but if he is asked to recite just a little before a particular passage, he has no idea what to recite. This is a "Ramdhání-háfiz".

It appears in the Qur'án Sharíf:

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ

Nún. By the pen and what they write (with it). S68.1

Initially is "Nún" then appears two oaths. Oho! Alláh Ta'álá is taking an oath and the oath is on the pen. Where Alláh Ta'álá has taken oaths on other items, He has taken an oath on the pen as well.

What type of item is the pen? Where will the pen be? It will be held by the fingers. Where are the fingers? They belong to the hand. Where is the hand? It is in the body. Now what can this faqír say in connection with the oath? Why is the oath taken on the pen? I do not know what the different items are that become necessary upon this oath – what becomes liable and what becomes necessary, mauláná-sáhibán?

To continue: So, writing has also become necessary, especially in our times where memories have become very weak. Writing is especially necessary for us students of Dín. If one is truly a student of Dín then one should keep pen and paper with one and immediately note down the precious lectures of the ustád.

The difference between "talab" and "kasab".

I am speaking to the tálibe-'ilm and not to the kásibe-'ilm. A tálibe-'ilm is one and the kásibe-'ilm is another.

[Talab of 'ilm: to earnestly seek knowledge; to pursue it all out; to have an obsession of gaining 'ilm.

Kasab of 'ilm: to seek 'ilm merely for the sake of earning an income; to study as a mere formality.-Tr.]

Where does a tálibe-'ilm have the opportunity to allow his heart to think about this and that? If he has no time to study then he is not a tálibe-'ilm. He is a kásibe-'ilm.

Just see: When it comes to seeking halál, tayyib dunyá, despite the fact that it is tayyib, the Hadíth Sharíf has used the word "kasab" (to seek). The word "talab" (to desire) has not been

used. Ponder a bit!

Learning and teaching has been made very easy. Learning and teaching has been made a sport. Do you understand, maulaná-sáhib?

I was saying that when it comes to explaining the task of attaining halál tayyib the word "kasab" has been used and it has not been described by the word "talab".

كسبُ الحلال فريضةً بَعْدَ الفريضة

Earning halál is fardh after the other fardhs.

The reason why the term "kasab" has been used and not the term "talab" is because talab demands that one should completely immerse oneself in acquiring one's objective to the extent that one is not diverted to anything else. So, how can one attach oneself, have oneself bound and to immerse oneself, in anything else? This is the difference between talab and kasab.

It is apparent that kasab does not demand fikr (thought and concern) but requires superficiality. Talab demands thought and concern. Superficiality is not sufficient.

With the tawfíq of Alláh Ta'álá and the fadhil of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh the difference between talab and kasab has been explained to you. Talab desires fikr. Kasab does not demand this. And fikr can only be one. So, how can there be fikr in another direction with the fikr of 'ilm? No. That person is a tálibe-'ilm, tálibe-tarbiyet, tálibe-akhláqe-hasanah, tálibe-wusúl-ilal-Haqq who submerges himself in the talab of his objective.

Have you understood these issues? To be a kásib of an item is easy. To be a tálib of an item is difficult. O ye students! Acquire 'ilm with great zeal! Listen carefully to what this servant has to say further on, with the tawfíq of Alláh Ta'álá.

Honour and disgrace for dunyá and for Dín

It is not necessary to fall into disgrace for the sake of kasab. Whereas it is necessary to place oneself in disgrace for the sake of talab.

Just think and ponder! This is no ordinary matter. Just look at that person who has talab for the dunyá how he puts himself to humiliation and disgrace in acquiring dunyá. He is not concerned at how others consider him to be contemptible and disgraced. So, in contrast to this person, even more so, why should the tálibe-ákhirat be concerned about the contempt of others? How can this not be tolerated? The difference between kasab and talab is like the difference between the heavens and the earth.

In actual fact, one should not disgrace oneself in kasabe-dunyá. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

السؤال الذلُّ

To ask (beg) is disgraceful

Just see. Permission has not being given to beg in order to attain dunyá because there is disgrace in it.

In essence, the tálibe-ákhirat should not be bothered about others as to what people will say.

Qissah of the person not performing namáz in the train

I am reminded of a qissah related in a majlis of Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه. The majlis after Zuhr was in progress when a person arrived. Greetings were exchanged. Whilst conversing he mentioned "I did not perform my namáz while I was travelling in the train." Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه asked, "Why did you not perform your namáz?" He replied, "The coach was full of Hindus. The thought came to me that if I were to perform my namáz in their presence, performing rukú' and sajdah in front of them, it must not happen that these people would laugh at me." On hearing this immediately Hadhratwálá was filled with jalál and he said very tersely, "These people also laugh at our ímán – so we should also leave aside our ímán? Leave the majlis!" He was expelled from the majlis.

I have mentioned this incident by way of illustration.

To continue: Worldly people do not bother about honour and disgrace in earning dunyá. So, should a tálibe-ákhirat bother?

Just see: dunyá is an objective and the person goes to Calcutta, he travels to Delhi, he visits Murádábád – he wants to see where items are bought cheaply and where are they sold more expensively. He buys from the cheaper source and goes to sell at the more profitable outlet. He is on the move all the time, hustling and bustling. He is not concerned about his meals. He sacrifices his sleep. He is not worried about his house and comforts, not bothered about what may befall him along his travels. He is completely finishing himself. So, is this a kásib of dunyá or is he a tálíb of dunyá.

The tálíbe-ákhírat should feel ashamed when compared to the tálíbe-dunyá. He should feel embarrassed. Just see to what extent has the tálíbe-dunyá immersed both his body and soul in the desire for dunyá. Where has he the time and opportunity to involve himself in other matters? So, O tálíbe-'ilm, what type of tálíbe-'ilm are you that you have the time to reserve a place in your heart for matters unrelated to 'ilm?

Yes, the pious of previous eras were tálíbe-'ilm in the correct meaning of the word. Just listen to their qissas! Read about their dedication! These were said to be tálíbe-'ilm!

To continue: The talk was on ikhlás. When there is ikhlás then he will be involved sincerely, body and soul, in acquiring 'ilm. Without detailed 'ilm there may be ikhlás but there will be no sidq. The concept of sidq was explained that sidq is to perform a task in the manner in which the sharí'at has ordered, to the level of its perfection (kamál). And, without learning the rules and etiquettes, it is not possible to perform that task to a degree of perfection.

So, to what degree is it not fardh to learn 'ilm because on this is dependent the performance of a task to perfection, which is fardh. Because of a lack of 'ilm the namáz of the Sahábí رضي الله عنه whose qissah was mentioned above, had ikhlás in it but lacked sidq. It is a different issue that, it being the initial phase of Islám, he was operating at his level of sidq. In that, it was praiseworthy. However, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – the sheikh – desired that he attain a higher level of sidq than what he had. By performing his namáz

as shown to him, he attained this level of sidq.

Thus, in every action, as it is necessary to attain the level of ikhlás, so it is necessary to have the level of sidq also. Otherwise there will be a defect in it. That is why a Messenger was sent in order to demonstrate every action. It could also have been possible for every detail to have been written down and the Qur'án Sharíf sent down as slates with the order to follow these written instructions. But this was not done. The complete Islámic lifestyle is a practical one, one which the Messenger demonstrated: As he does, so must you do.

It is a different matter that there is no substitute for the original. However, this imitation is also very, very close to the original. Seeing it is very, very close then there is nearness (qurb) as well. We have been made responsible of following the "Uswah-Hasanah". Alláh Ta'álá states:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

Verily, the Rasúl of Alláh is the best example for you... S33.21

The whole practical life of Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم – physical, economic, personality and character-wise, his dealings, social inter-relationships and 'ibádat-related – is in front of us. He demonstrated everything for our benefit. This was passed on by others by being strictly copied and imitated. Now seeing that this was passed on by strict copying and imitating, we have to look at our pious elders – our akábir – who are the road to this Uswah-Hasanah. It is not possible for us to see with our eyes the practical life of Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. However, his obedient followers and deputies are present. It is compulsory to see them.

One can gauge from this what the quality of the lifestyle of the 'ulemá' should be – those who have been referred to as the heirs of the ambiyá – from the aspects of 'ibádat, mu'ámalah, mu'ásharah and akhláq. Just make an assessment.

Khushú and the demands of khashiyat

There has to be both ikhlás and sidq in their actions, in their behaviour and character, in their social relationships and in their dealings. There has to be extreme khushú' and extreme khudhú'. This khushú' is not only to be attained in namáz – in namáz this khushú' is an objective for acceptance (maqbúliat). However, Alláh Ta'álá has made this khushú' of the heart an objective all the time.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has asked to be protected from a heart devoid of khushú'.

لَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ

O Alláh! I seek protection from such a heart that has no khushú'.

Opposing this khushú' are the qualities of cruelty and harshness. This khushú' arises from "khashiyat". Alláh Ta'álá states, referring to the mountains:

خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ

...humbled, split asunder from the fear of Alláh. S59.21

When there is khashiyat of Alláh Ta'álá in the heart then will there be khushú' – or will there be cruelty?

Ponder over it. With the fadh'l of Alláh Ta'álá the topic has been expanded to greater depths.

When there is khushú' then there will be khashiyat. And when there is khashiyat then there will be khushú'. We now have to ponder whether there is greater cruelty or greater khushú' within us? Is there greater tenderness, or greater hard-heartedness?

In the Qur'án Sharíf Alláh Ta'álá has attributed hard-heartedness to the kuffár.

[Tr.- There was a momentary pause, whereafter Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه with some exuberance, exclaimed:]

Ohoho! Wáh! Alláh-miya! Wáh! That áyet has been instilled in my heart. Alhamdulilláh! Shukran-lilláh!

الْمَ يَأْنٍ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

*Is the time not ripe for the hearts of those who believe to submit to
Alláh's reminder and to the truth which is revealed? S.57.16*

Listen carefully to what I say! O those who believe! O mu'mins! When will the time arrive that khushú' will develop in your hearts? What time are you in anticipation of? What hour are you awaiting, O mu'mins? What, has khushú' not developed in your hearts as yet?

Has Alláh Ta'álá demanded khushú' or hard-heartedness from the believers? The answer is obvious – it is khushú'. Should this be only in namáz or all the time? Again, the obvious answer is: all the time.

Ponder on this for a bit, O you students, O you 'ulemá'! By the tawfíq of Alláh Ta'álá these issues are being presented to you.

Is it the demands of your 'ilm that you should have hard-heartedness, with your own and with others? When you set foot in your house, you did so with heartlessness and not with khushú'. When you set foot outside you did so with heartlessness and not with khushú'. What, is this the demands of ímán?

It is because of ímán that you say that you are mu'min. Yes, you may be a mu'min but you do not possess kamále-radhá – perfection in pleasing Alláh Ta'álá. This is a defect. Kamále-radhá is a condition for acceptance.

I lament that I am not a háfiz, or else I would have recited the full áyet. Is there a háfiz here?

[Some huffáz proceeded to read the remainder of the áyet recited above.]

وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ
فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ

...so that they do not become like those who received the Scripture

(Taurah and Injíl); and the time was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened; and many of them are evil doers.S57.16

In other words: Are you trying to be like those people who existed before you, the Ahle-Kitáb, the Jews and the Christians, who were given the Kitáb and a time-period lapsed and their hearts became hardened and many of them became káfir?

It means that we should not become like the Jews and the Christians who were given the Kitáb and they then proceeded to act contrary to the Orders in the Kitáb, descending into lusts and sins; and a time-period went by without them making taubah. As a result of not making taubah their hearts became extremely hardened and the instinctive remorse and regret that accompanies the act of sinning also disappeared. The rot progressed to such an extent that, because of the heartlessness, many from amongst them are káfir.

So, O Muslims! Do not you become like them! Do not let hard-heartedness come even near you. Become habituated to khushú' and immediately make taubah should you commit a sin. It should not happen that sins lead you to kufr. Thus, it is apparent that the demand of ímán is khushú'. A mu'min should be one with khushú'.

Accept Islám in its entirety. Alláh Ta'álá states that one should enter fully and completely into Islám. Do not be like those who choose to follow that which is easy and according to their own desires and they leave out that which they find a bit difficult and burdensome.

Summary & du'á

This discussion has been on ikhlás and sidq. Alláh Ta'álá demands both ikhlás and sidq from the mu'min. And the demand of both is that there should be khushú' in the heart. This khushú' should be there all the time. How can there be hardheartedness?

May Alláh Ta'álá keep us all mu'minín firm with ikhlás and sidq until our last breath. Ámín, thummah ámín.

Gaibat

This is when some powerful state descends on the heart, whether this is when the attributes (sifát) of Alláh Ta'álá become overpowering or whether some thoughts of reward or punishment come to mind, causing one's senses to be in a state of suspension, and cause one to be completely unaware of the surroundings.

Istigráq

This a situation where the spiritual state the person is experiencing is so overpowering that he is not aware of anything else at that moment. The muntahí (accomplished) may experience this state occasionally whereas those in the intermediate phase along the path of sulúk, the mutawassatín, experience this state frequently.

Proof of this state is to be found in the following incident:

Hadhrat Abú Zarr Gifárí رضي الله عنه was going somewhere accompanied by his daughter. Somebody asked him, "This little girl accompanying you – is she your daughter?" Hadhrat Abú Zarr Gifáرى رضي الله عنه looked carefully at her and then said, "Yes, my wife did say that she is my daughter." Alláh! Alláh! He did not remember even that she was his daughter and had to rely on his wife's statement as proof!

This is a praiseworthy condition (mahmúd) provided that the istigráq does not cause any defect in the laws of the shari'at. However, in itself it is no great accomplishment

If it was a very elevated stage Rasúllulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم would not have said, "My heart desires that I lengthen my namáz but the sound of some infant crying reaches my ears during the namáz and I shorten the namáz with this thought that the mother would be agitated." This indicates that Rasúllulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was not in a state of istigráq.

Sukr

This is a state where the differentiation between the záhiri and batiní laws are eliminated due to a state descending from the Unseen. When this state goes away and the person returns to normal it is termed "sahú".

Examples:

Incident one: *When Firoun was about to drown, Hadhrat Jibra'íl عليه السلام stuffed mud into his mouth in order to stop him uttering*

such words that may cause the mercy of Alláh Ta'álá to descend on him, despite the fact that the heart is the basis of acceptance of imán among other collective conditions. To have stuffed his mouth with mud was the result of this state of sukr. And the reason why this state overpowered Hadhrat Jibra'íl عليه السلام was an extremely high degree of bugdh-filláh (hatred for the sake of Alláh Ta'álá).

Incident two: This incident involved Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه. When Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم stood in front of the janázah of the munáfiq Abdullah bin Ubay, Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه said, "Alláh Ta'álá has forbidden you to read the janázah namáz for him." Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Alláh Ta'álá has given me the choice (ikhtiyár) – He has not forbidden me."

In this instance as well, the sense of bugdh-filláh descended so heavily on to the heart of Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه that he did not have the slightest idea as to his behaviour towards Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in his statement and his action. In appearance it appeared very remote from good manners. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم considered him to be handicapped (ma'zúr).

Later, when Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه returned to his senses, it is stated in the Hadíth Sharíf that he said, "Afterwards I was astounded at my rashness and I felt repentant."

[These definitions and explanations have been taken from the kitábs "Sharí'at and Tariqat" of Hadhrat Thanwí رحمه الله عليه and "Sharí'at and Tasawwuf", volume two, of Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه -Tr.]

P.S: The du'ás appearing in this majlis may be found in the kitáb "Munájáte Maqbúl".

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhíb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ in Jalálábád, India, on Sunday, the 28th Rabí-ul-ákhír, 1411, corresponding to the 18th November, 1990.]

ISLÁMIC CULTURE AND LUSTRE

Using taqdír as an excuse is unbecoming

When insán came into the world did he study his taqdír before coming here, that he can say, "What can I do? This was written in my taqdír. What I am doing is according to my taqdír." What, does anybody remember from top to bottom and that he or she will act according to taqdír? No, never!

In actual fact, a person comes with the ikhtiyár (choice and power) that Alláh Ta'álá has given. A person sometimes climbs up, he climbs down, he walks about, he sits and lies down and he sometimes stands. In climbing up or down, sitting, lying and standing he makes use of this ikhtiyár. So, in obedience to the Shari'at he should also make use of his ikhtiyár.

As Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

Remember Alláh standing, sitting, and [lying down] on your sides.

S4.103.

You should remember Alláh Ta'álá whilst standing, sitting or lying on your sides. In other words, what is ma'múr-bihá – the ikhtiyár (volotional) acts we have been commanded to do – continue to do that. And, what is manhí-anhá – the ikhtiyár (volotional) acts we have to abstain from – discard these.

Essence of Tasawwuf and Tasawwuf made easy

So, we have to oppose those obstacles that come in the way of performing what is ma'múr-bihá. Similarly, those obstacles that come before us in abstaining from what is manhí-anhá, we have to

courageously utilise the power of ikhtiyár in removing them.

In essence, this is Tasawwuf. So, has Tasawwuf been made easy or difficult?

This Kashmírí does not understand. His name is Bashír. He is travelling around taking note of the dunyá. And I, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh, am conveying good news. He has stayed here four days and has become sáleh (pious) and also become mosleh (one making the isláh of others). Whereas, staying four years over there he never became sáleh. How can he become a mosleh?

And this person's name is Fahím. He would have great understanding of my comments. He has very good understanding: "Fahím" is derived from the root word "fahm". "Fahím" is the superlative. So, why should he not understand? He has stayed here four years but he has not become sáleh. What chance of him becoming a mosleh?

[It is important to understand Hadhratjí's رحمة الله عليه, special technique here. Firstly, there is a play on words: "Bashír" means "one who brings good news." "Fahm" means "understanding". "Fahím" means "one with great or deep understanding".

Secondly, it appears as if Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه is publicly criticising Fahím and embarrassing him. In actual fact, this is a technique Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه used occasionally to jolt a person. It happens that an obstacle arises in the person's progress in sulúk, causing him to falter or stagnate. Alhamdulillah, many of us who have experienced this can vouchsafe that this approach removes the obstacle and that progress in sulúk is much faster thereafter. –Tr.]

What was it that I said? With taufíqe-iláhí, fadhle-iláhí and the barkat of Hadhratwálá, that in four days Bashír became sáleh and also mosleh.

Conditions for a chillah to be of benefit

These poor people have developed a passion to go for a chillah. Fine. A chillah is acceptable in that a chillah has been mentioned in the Hadíth Sharíf. There is barkat in it. But when?

When there is ikhlás: Besides the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (radhá-e-iláhí) there is no other intention. In essence, the concern in the heart is for the ákhirat; there is awe and respect (azmat) for Alláh Ta'álá, with muhabbat. A chillah has been mentioned in the Hadíth Sharíf, so complete forty days. Fine, the objective has been attained, with taufíq-e-iláhí: he has become sáleh and he has also become mosleh. Having become a pír he sets out. But when? When he has planted his feet firmly on the path.

This is the manner in which I speak. Old age has set in. Whilst able to do so my heart desires that I pass by conveying some nasíhat and wasíyat to my friends. We are definitely going to pass on. Some principles should be instilled in the minds.

Principles will be of definite benefit. How long will you remember the branches of masá'il? How long are you going to take to rectify the offshoots, each, each branch and each, each quality? Grab hold of the principles and all the nafsání branches will be remedied. There are numerous masá'il. Here is a principle.

Aré! Very well – one chillah is fine but it will not be of use any old how. One has to stay the way that I explain. One chillah will be sufficient, inshá-alláh Ta'álá. How? Just to bring through the left to the right. We will depict the left as evil; the right as goodness. The nafs forbodes evil. On the right is the rúh.

[Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه is referring to the Latífahe-rúh which is situated just below the right nipple. The Latiífahe-nafs is situated below the navel. The Latífahe-qalb is situated below the left nipple. -Tr.]

Make taubah that you can come from through the left to the right. What else do you have to do? Let me give you an illustration: It is hot and you want to sleep in the open air. You wish to enjoy the cool breeze. However, the chárpái is inside the room. So, you need to bring the chárpái from inside into the open and, afterwards, from the open take it inside again. Now, will you have to carry it or not? Or drag it? Fine, even if you have to drag it. But still, when bringing it from inside to the outside you still need to carry it or drag it.

Method of making the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh"

Similarly, bring forth the "Lá" of "Lá-iláha" from below towards the left chest, towards the heart, causing the "Lá" to cut [the evil of the nafs], and then drag "iláha" over to this side to the right, towards the rúh. Then, emphatically say "há". While saying "há" throw away all gairulláh. Where do you throw away gairulláh? Throw it away behind your back. Have you done so or not yet?

Then recite "illalláh". In this way Alláh has entered.

What do you understand? It is that the creation has been removed and the Creator has entered – the Sáhibe-Jalál and Sáhibe-Jamál, with His Jalál and Jamál.

This is the method of the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh". If done in this way then enjoy the delight of it. Until there is not a little jehr (loudness) and a little full dharb (thumping) what zikr is it? Yes, it will be a tasbáh for connecting with Alláh Ta'álá. However, the effect of tayyib (goodness) that is in the Kalimah Tayyibah will not manifest until it is not done in this way.

This is a Kalimah Táhirah and also a Kalimah Tayyibah. As a tasbáh there will be táhirah (purification) but the tayyib will manifest only when it is done in the manner explained above.

"Tayyib" means "delightful, delicious". That is why it has been named Kalimah Tayyibah and not Kalimah Táhirah. The Kalimah is táhirah initially and tayyib afterwards. Purity comes first; delight comes afterwards.

Aré children! Why are you vexing me in my old age? This is a time for sabr. You come and just plant yourselves here just like that. Some have come from England and sat down. Some have come from Africa and sat down. Some have come from Kashmir and sat down. And, of course, there are the local children as well. *[This is not to be taken literally. Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه enjoyed inter-acting with the young students. The above statements were made in a teasing, affectionate manner. -Tr.]*

Listen! When "Lá-iláha" is recited you have become táhir. When "illalláh" is recited you have now become tayyib. Why is it

so? The reason is that when "Lá-iláha" is recited the creation has been removed. When "illalláh" is recited, the Creator has appeared. When the creation has been removed, you have become táhir. When the Creator has appeared you have become tayyib. So, in the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh" is the means of becoming táhir and also becoming tayyib.

May Alláh Ta'álá make it that I understand this and that you also understand.

Contaminating effects of association (ikhtilát)

However, it is necessary to understand this principle as well: Save yourself from association with others (ikhtilát). Intermingling is not good.

Just see: when preparing food the gravy is excellent but let a drop of urine fall in it and it becomes impure (ná-pák). It has all been wasted. Another example: Some grittiness has contaminated the savoury. The hand-mill for grinding the spices was not washed properly so that some sand got mixed up with the spices. These spices were then used as ingredients for the kebab. When the kebab was placed in the mouth it was all gritty with sand. So, the savoury was looking appetising and the aroma was mouth-watering but it was not pleasant to the taste.

Qissah: The tea of Mauláná Gangohí رحمه الله عليه

Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhíb رحمه الله عليه was the special attendant (khádime-khás) of Hadhrat Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمه الله عليه. (Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhíb رحمه الله عليه later became the principal at Dáarul-Ulúm Deoband.). In any case, it was his duty to make the tea.

Hadhratwálá related to us an incident that once took place. Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhíb رحمه الله عليه had made some tea and served it to Mauláná Gangohí رحمه الله عليه who commented, "I taste some rawness in this tea." When he made tea and served it the following day Mauláná Gangohí رحمه الله عليه said, "There is no rawness today."

Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhíb رحمه الله عليه started pondering on why the tea was fine that day and not the previous day. "I had done everything exactly the same on both days: the tea pot, the milk pot, the cup and the strainer were washed exactly the same on both days. What was the difference today?" After some deep thought it suddenly struck him. "Oho! Yesterday, after washing the utensils I merely shook off the dripping water. Today I wiped the utensils dry with a dishcloth! There was no moisture today. Yesterday there was some moisture remaining on the utensils! That is why he commented that there was no rawness in the tea today."

This was the degree of sensitivity of Mauláná Gangohí's رحمه الله عليه temperament that he could perceive even that degree of moisture.

So, you can see that the effect of the sand was grittiness and the effect of the water was rawness. These are the effects of ikhtilát.

In the same manner, by sitting with others, by intermingling with others the effect will be that the eyes will also be corrupted and the ears will also be corrupted and the tongue will also be used freely.

Why is this? The reason is that what was acquired, by the tawfiq of Alláh Ta'álá, when he stayed with his Sheikh, is now being diluted by intermingling with others when he reaches his hometown. He was not so firmly dyed in his colours that he is not affected by others.

Janáb, do you understand? This is the effect of intermingling. When you started interacting with these others, the state of being táhir and tayyib in your consideration and regard, minute by minute starts evaporating. That person who left with wisdom, in a short while has become inconsiderate.

One method for avoiding ikhtilát

Many letters come to me. Some poor mudarrasín write, "I had developed within myself a love for seclusion. However, other

mudarrasín come to sit here and they vex me. They just blab about this and that. What should I do?"

I wrote to him: "Sit with a kitáb nearby. When they start to discuss this and that, then you say, 'Oho! I was reading this kitáb and I came across a very remarkable article.' You then read out from the kitáb. Those who show an interest will sit and listen. Others will say, 'Please excuse us. We will be back in a while. Inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, we will be back.'

"Using this tactic, they will go and will not return in future. Should they return, repeat this process. When they see this two or three times then it will not be necessary to say anything any more." This is on condition that there is genuine love for seclusion, as there should be.

حب إليه الخلا

One of the first things taught in Bukhárí Sharíf is that, when Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم came to love seclusion and his heart became attuned by this seclusion, then by means of wahí, divine 'ilm was revealed to him.

In actual fact, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم was blessed with Nabúwat approximately three thousand years before Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام, who was created only afterwards. Whatever was to take place in this realm for the future arrival of this great personality was already prepared in the most perfect manner. Then only was the Nabúwat and Risálat revealed in this realm.

However, until such a time that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم did not perform 'ibádat in seclusion and he did come to love seclusion that divine 'ilm was not revealed to him by means of wahí.

As for us tulabá' and ahle-'ilm, we desire that wahí should descend on to us, in the form of some spiritual experience, in the form of kashf, in the form of intuition and in the form of ilhám, without having developed love for seclusion. There is a Fársí saying:

This is just a [whimsical] thought; an absurdity; [pure] insanity.

This thinking is like "khiyálí-puláo" [i.e. a pie in the sky].

Why this madness? When 'ilm was not revealed to the Nabí, in consideration of whom the universe – the heavens and the earth – was created, without him having developed a love of seclusion, will it be revealed to us? No. Never. Yes, some words and impressions will be acquired in the form of information but 'ilm will not be acquired.

Have you understood the point?

So, 'ilm is necessary. There is no way forward without 'ilm. The story of Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه has been related many times: he presented himself to Sheikh Abdul-Haqq Radúlwí رحمه الله عليه in order to follow the path of sulúk. He mentioned his condition and said that he had come for his isláh. He was asked, "Have you acquired 'ilme-Dín?" He answered, "No. Not really." The Sheikh said, "Go to Delhi. First go and acquire 'ilme-Dín. Without 'ilme-Dín there is a danger of going astray."

In that age the repository of 'ilme-Dín was in the family of Sháh Walí-ulláh.

As Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه stood up to depart Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمه الله عليه said, "Listen carefully. It seems that when you return after having studied, I will not be still alive. Be as it may. My son will be alive. You become bai'at to him. Turn to him for your isláh and keep on coming to my mazár. Inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, you will derive the same amount of faidh (blessings) as you would have were I to be alive."

Having proper faith and confidence in a sheikh

Before, people had tremendous faith and confidence. They were very firm. Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه said, "Very well." He proceeded to Delhi.

When he returned after completing his studies the situation was as the Sheikh had stated. The Sheikh had passed away. As he had been instructed, he became bai'at to his son. This is called "nibháhná" – to be faithful in maintaining a relationship.

Nowadays, the situation is amazing, as demonstrated by the qissah concerning Hadhratwálá: One person from the rural area

came and requested to become bai'at. Just by chance Hadhratwálá asked him, "You perhaps do not own some mowrúthí land?"

Mowrúthí land was land that was inherited, but not in accordance with the shari'at.

He said, "Hadhrat, I do." Hadhratwálá told him, "First relinquish the land and then you come back. I will then make you bai'at." This person replied, "Hadhrat, make me bai'at and then I will relinquish it." Hadhratwálá said, "No, brother. First you relinquish the land then I will make you bai'at." This person departed and became bai'at somewhere else.

This is the type of affection these days – "scratch the head and eat the brains!"

However, Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمه الله عليه did not have such flimsy i'tiqád. He became bai'at to the Sheikh's son and regularly visited the mazár of the Sheikh. Thereafter, who did he become? What rank did he achieve? Alláhu-akbar! What can one say? He became an amazing and astonishing Alláhwálá!

To continue: It is necessary to acquire 'ilm. 'Ilm may be acquired through an Arabic syllabus or a Fársí syllabus or a syllabus in Urdu prepared by reliable and authentic scholars. Or 'ilm could be acquired without studying from kitábs but by following a "syllabus" of listening and continuously asking questions. Acquiring 'ilm is not dependent on kitábs. The material in kitábs may also be found in listening to somebody and asking questions regularly. A person can become an 'álim by this method of continuous asking.

Were there not such great, lofty and noble Auliyá-Alláh in the past who did not study the Arabic syllabus and then renowned scholars went and became bai'at to them? So, why did these 'ulemá' become bai'at to them? They were not 'álim as such. Aré! They were such that even the 'álim appeared like non-'álims in front of them! They were "'álim-garr" – they made 'álims into an 'álim, with the taufiq of Alláh Ta'álá.

The status of an 'álim is very elevated

The status of an 'álim is very elevated. This I mentioned yesterday that an 'álim enjoys a very high rank. However, the 'álim, by the demands of his 'ilm, has to be a practising 'álim – an 'álim-bá-amal. Then his rank is very high.

If, by his being involved in some sin, some 'álim is sent into Jahannam, and an ignorant (jáhil) mu'min is also sent into Jahannam, and both are afterwards taken out by virtue of their ímán, the rank of the 'álim in Jannat will be very much higher in comparison with that of the jáhil mu'min. The reason is that the 'álim has in him the rank of 'ilm also. Where has the jáhil any status as far as 'ilm is concerned? So, if an 'álim is sent into Jahannam due to some weakness in his actions, when he is taken out his rank will be very much higher than that of a jáhil.

Yesterday I mentioned that an 'álim and a jáhil are not equal. How can an 'álim and a jáhil be equal? Neither are they equal in this world nor in the ákhirat. An 'álim will be superior here as well as over there. Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۗ
إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Are those who possess 'ilm equal to those who do not know? But only men of understanding will pay heed. S.39.9.

Just see: Alláh Ta'álá is saying that the difference between an 'álim and a jáhil will be recognised by those with proper intellect (aqle-salím). What does the jáhil know? It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

فضل العالم على العابد كفضلي على ادنكم

The excellence of an 'álim over an ábed is like my excellence over the lowest of you

Thus, the excellence of an 'álim is very great.

You look at the Molwísáhib doing something wrong but you do not look at the wrongs you are doing. Yet, you are a jáhil. He knows that the wrong he is doing is contrary to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá, whereas you do not even know this. So, how are you going to make taubah? On the other hand, he is remorseful and he will make taubah as well. He realises that he is ill and he will seek a remedy. You, on the other hand, are ill but you do not realise that you are ill. How will you seek a remedy?

In any case an 'álim is full of excellence. Even if he commits a sin, he will consider it to be a sin. The jáhil will not consider a sin to be a sin and he will be persistent in sinning. The 'álim will be repentant and make taubah. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

التائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له

One who makes taubah from his sin is like one who has not sinned at all.

Thus, in the first instance, it will be very difficult for an 'álim to land himself in Jahannam. If, for argument's sake, he does get sent to Jahannam, he will attain a very high stage when released from Jahannam.

The 'álim should recognise himself

So, O you 'ulemá'! Know yourselves! If you do not know yourselves how will the creation in this world know you? First recognise who you are. The tulabá'-'ilme-Dín have left off recognising themselves. If you were to have recognised yourselves, others would have recognised you merely by looking at you.

Ají! Remember that until the singer does not love his own singing the listeners will also not love his singing. It is a famous saying that if the dancer does not love her coquettish strutting, how will others love it? This illustration is quite famous.

Do you understand Molwísáhib? Just coming to sit here!

Some etiquettes of sitting in a majlis

Ají! One should sit in the majálise-isláh. To sit therein is fine

provided that there is i'timáde-kámil and i'tiqáde-jázim (complete faith and confidence) on the speaker. Then go and sit. Otherwise one should not sit because of the danger of worsening of one's condition. The reason is that one will not understand many of the statements. One does not know what corruption will set in and what misconceptions one may develop.

One should have full and complete faith and confidence in the speaker and then come and attend. Otherwise one should not attend. If this precondition is not there then, instead of becoming embellished, he will deteriorate.

That is why I also ask some persons whether they intend sitting through the whole majlis or will they leave halfway through? If a person says that he will depart halfway through then I tell him, "Go now. It is not permissible for you to attend. Until a person does not intend to sit through the whole majlis it is not já'iz to attend."

Bádsháh Álamgír رحمه الله عليه had the above announced. The reason for this announcement was as follows: One person heard half a lecture and stood up and departed. He had heard only part of the topic and he gave wrong information to the people based on what he had heard. In actual fact the topic was fully discussed later on and this he did not hear. This is why he made incorrect statements.

When Álamgír رحمه الله عليه got to hear of this, being the ruling king, he made the announcement that only that person should sit in a lecture who sits right through till the end, otherwise not.

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá.

Ají! What should one relate? This is no longer the age in which to relate things.

I was addressing the 'ulemá' and said that we have discarded out station. That is why the general public have an opportunity for criticism.

Mas'alah of standing behind the imám and equal saffs

What is the mas'alah, Muftísáhib? It is that the person standing behind the imám should be a sáhibe-'ilm – one who possesses

knowledge of Dín. Nowadays the ignorant rush forward to stand behind the imám. What can one say? Now it is the jáhil who sits behind the imám before anybody else.

Is the mas'alah not as stated above? Of course it definitely is! However, this is an age of fitnah. It is an age of weakness. Nothing can be said. Do not say anything. Yes, he is a jáhil and he will show he has a stature above that of the 'álim.

There is also the mas'alah that the saff on either side of the imám should be of equal lengths. If it is slightly longer on the right it is of no consequence. The left side should not be longer than the right. However, in these times one cannot say anything.

Why is this? The reason is because of this incident: Hadhratwálá was making imámat. The saff on the left was a bit longer than that on the right. Hadhratwálá told someone on the left to come over to the right.

Understand that imámat is an official position. The imám should look to the right and the left. He should rectify any irregularities. That is why the imám should be an awe-inspiring person – not a "tuppenny ha'-penny" imám. This is the ulúm of the shari'at. This is the principle.

So, Hadhratwálá told this one person on the left side, "Come over to the right side." This person did not move from his spot. He did not obey the command. He was stubborn. Hadhratwálá then saw another person who was an acquaintance, and told him, "This person does not want to move. You come over." This person humbly went over.

Remaining silent for fear of fitnah

Do you understand? This is an incident from the time of Hadhratwálá. Now, this age is an age of greater fitnah. Nowadays a jáhil considers himself to be superior to an 'álim. He arrives at the masjid before anybody else – this is commendable. The 'álim does not have the opportunity to be in the masjid before everybody. He is occupied with some Díní work. He is busy serving the people – khidmate-khalq.

One cannot say anything to that jāhil. It is an age of fitnah. Just try and say something and then see how you are disgraced. Therefore, keep silent.

Remember that it is also a principle of the shari'at that when there is even a chance of the slightest fitnah then do not say anything. Do not speak. Remain silent. Otherwise you will be humiliated.

[One can imagine what the situation is now! -Tr.]

Proper study of kitábs. The status of "Al-Hidáyah"

You have heard that there is great virtue in amr-bil-ma'rúf (enjoining what is right) and the áyet is also recited:

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind. You command good conduct and forbid wrong. S3.110.

Amr-bil-ma'rúf is proclaimed all over. However, work cannot be accomplished merely with one áyet. Work can only be done if all the áyát are taken together.

Similarly, work cannot be accomplished merely with one Hadíth Sharíf. All other opposing Ahádíth Sharíf have to be placed together and then work can be done.

Oh yes! It is the habit of some that if they have seen something in a kitáb they go around showing it to everybody. And if they come across something that contradicts this at some other place in the kitáb, what then? Whatever you read, try to understand what you are reading.

"Al-Hidáyah" which is studied in the Arabic Madrasah [i.e. Dáru-ul-Ulúms], is a very amazing and astonishing kitáb. It is a kitáb of verdicts and decrees. It is a kitáb of judiciary. An Englishman used to say, "If we [the English] did not have this kitáb 'Al-Hídayah' we would never have been able to administer the judiciary." This is

the verdict of the English. This is such a kitáb.

In this age, as for us who study it and teach it, do not study it and teach it as it should be studied and taught. Yet, see what this Englishman is saying because he had studied it.

Visits to the universities in England and Cairo

When I visited England, where there are two very famous universities, very high calibre universities, world famous. I went to see both universities. [*Oxford and Cambridge. -Tr.*]

There was an Englishman with me and he carried some keys with him. He went and unlocked the doors of the rooms and showed them to me. I saw the libraries of both universities. These were huge buildings, several storeys high. Nothing like these exist here. All our Arabic kitábs were in these libraries. There were several copies of every kitáb.

The tafsír of Hadhratwálá's رحمة الله عليه, "Bayáanal-Qur'án", was also there. The elucidation of the "Mathnawí Sharíf", "Kalíd-Mathnawí", was also there. All the Arabic kitábs that are studied here, were all there. The names of all the kitábs were written in massive catalogues.

After having climbed two storeys I got tired. The Englishman started climbing to the third floor. I told him, "I am now tired. I am unable to climb up."

In any case, I saw both the universities. There were boarding facilities, what we call "Darul-Iqámah". Áháhá! As for cleanliness... Do not even ask! Absolutely clean!

As for the system of administration, no visitor from outside could come into the boarding to meet somebody. A father cannot meet his son. I witnessed this with my own eyes. A doorman is present. He asks, "Who have you come to meet?" The father says. "I have come to visit my son." The doorman then goes to call the son and brings him to meet his father.

If the person is one whom it is necessary to allow to go into the building, the doorman will say, "Come with me." The boy will be informed. The boy will leave his room and go to a nearby

smaller, empty room to sit and converse with his father. Or else he will be told to go to the veranda. Table and chairs are placed there as well. There is no question of sitting on the ground.

So, Mauláná-sáhibán, even the father cannot go to his son's room in the residence and meet him there. This type of arrangements are not seen over here.

This is what we saw over there. We saw the libraries as well. We saw the students as well. We saw the doorman as well. The person entrusted with the keys was with us. Also, we had to take him with us to see the university. One could not just go in just like that. It was not like freely entering the university – not at all. There the doorman will stop you. He will enquire, "Have you a visitor's permit to enter?" If not, then one would have to go the principal and obtain one. We knew of this system, therefore, when we went to see the university we went with the permit.

We went to Egypt as well. The famous university [Al-Ahzar] in Egypt is situated in the capital, Cairo. Oho! It is a massive university, such that words cannot express. We also had to have permission to visit it, even though it was an Arabic institute.

We had an acquaintance there. He had gone to say that such-and-such person from Hindústán [India] has arrived and he wished to see the university. Permission was given and we went inside. Classes were in progress. Our companion went into the lecture hall and requested from the lecturer, "Our Sheikh is here and wishes permission to come into the lecture hall and see."

Do you see? This is proper etiquette. Important people have elevated manners.

The lecturer stopped his lecture and immediately came out to conduct me inside.

Countless students were sitting closely together in such a manner that they could see the ustádh. When I entered all the students stood up. They looked very majestic with very fine clothes. As they stood up, they happily clapped hands, as was their custom. I found this distasteful, so I turned to the ustádh and said,

Clapping of hands is for women – takbír is for men.

The ustádh related to the students what I had said. Immediately, the students took this up and shouted out, "Na'rah-takbír! Alláhu-akbar!"

Do you see? Have you noted their cultured response? They immediately substituted the hand-clapping by the na'rah-takbír. This is called being cultured.

Lesson to be learnt: the importance of being cultured

O students of Arabic! Are these topics not worthy of being narrated? Are these issues not worthy of pondering over?

[I lament that] some of our Arabic students are gájar (carrots) and others are múlí (radishes)! Those over there are great people of noble families; they are cultured persons, having knowledge of etiquettes. Here there are gajar and múlí – what do they understand what is meant by culture?

The scenario which I have presented of the situation over there, all this is what they have adopted by studying what is with us. By doing so they have profited from the worldly aspect and we have been left empty.

If some important person were to come here and the Muhtahim-Sáhib (Principal) takes him to view the madrasah we find the students coming out of their rooms to see who it is, as if some pageant is presented. Students will come out of the rooms and from the verandas and stare.

Over there it is not like that. Everybody stays put in his place. There may be no classes in progress, but the students stay in their places. Nobody comes out of his room to look.

When we went to the university in England and visited the library there were two English students, a male and female, specifically studying in a room. I went into the room they were studying in. Although I was close to them, the one student did not

even glance at me. The other briefly glanced at me and immediately turned back to his studies. He did not keep on looking at me.

Whereas, here at the Arabic madrasah, students keep on staring. It appears as if some entertainer has arrived.

Have you seen western culture? Is our behaviour not something to be ashamed about, something shameful? This culture is actually from our house. They have adopted this culture by studying what is ours. We now call them cultured and we have become uncultured.

Sometimes just go and look at the rooms [at our madrasas] and see how clean you will find them. Whatever the type of rooms there should be some degree of cleanliness. Or should they be messy and filthy?

Just go and have a look! The bedding will also not be neat and tidy. The cushion is also not placed correctly – it will be lying all crooked. Where the student sits, there is where he will take off his shoes, not outside the doorway but inside.

Do you understand, Mauláná-sáhibán? I am not saying anything that is incorrect? If I am saying anything that is incorrect, seeing that you are staying there, you can go and see yourselves.

These are issues to be heard and, having developed some shame, adopt these practices from our own household and become such. But there is just no perception.

There are no capabilities in the art of conversing even. Over there no outsider may enter the madrasah without permission. Over here, if a person is told not to enter – if the doorman stops him – the person will be offended and argue, "What is this nonsense about permission?" His attitude is that the madrasah belongs to him. If he has donated some money then he believes that he is the owner of the whole madrasah. And if he has given some rotí to some tálibe-'ilm then – don't ask! – he considers himself to be the master of that student and that student to be his slave. Is this called being cultured?

Whereas over there, even the father cannot proceed to

his son's room to meet him. He cannot enter even the university without permission.

These etiquettes are from our house. Does the Qur'an Sharif not state the following?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا
وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

O people of imán! Do not enter houses other than your own without first seeking permission (from those inside) and greet the people (before you take permission). This is better for you that you may be heedful (and act on it). S24.27

So, this institution which is here, is a house. Thus, why have you entered the madrasah without permission? We accept that you live in this neighbourhood but why do you enter the madrasah without permission? What is the doorman there for? You should have put a request to him and he would have obtained permission from the principal and then you could have entered.

Over here the children of the neighbourhood also play. They play in the field in front of the masjid and they also come to play in the precincts. If they are stopped, the fathers come to fight.

So, what is the madrasah? It is our house. Do you understand?

Having visited the universities in Egypt and England I saw what has been explained above. Yes, truly, they are cultured people. Over here the whole neighbourhood is uncultured. Why should one invite a fight? The fathers should have scolded their children, "Why do you go to the madrasah to play? You go to play cricket there. That is a madrasah. Do you think it is a clubhouse or bazár? Why did you go to the madrasah? If you go to the madrasah you go to study – why did you go there to play?"

This is how they should have been prohibited but neither the father nor the mother stops them. If the madrasah officials

say anything then it is inviting a fight. Everything is jumbled, misconstrued. Are these not topics to be heard?

Entering homes without permission

We find that even scholars, learned people and those who know the Qur'án Sharíf also enter homes without permission. Whereas the mas'alah is to enter houses only after permission has been granted. So much so that even the father should obtain permission before entering the house – one does not know in what state the daughters are relaxing.

Is this not the teachings of sulúk? Has sulúk and shari'at just become the recitation of tasbíhs of "Lá-iláha-illalláh" and the performance of nafl namáz? Is that all – just sit and keep on reading the tasbáh and do as you please?

First become an ádmí and then read wazífas. Yes, first become an ádmí.

Just see: Just now we mentioned that the father also should not enter the house without permission. Also, the husband should not enter the house without permission: There may be gair-mahram ladies present, or his wife may be relaxing in such a way that she would not want him to see her in. First ask and then enter.

These are the teachings of our house. Unfortunately it is those people who have taken benefit from the ta'lím of our house. I had mentioned earlier on that they possess our kitábs which they have studied and that is how they have adopted our ta'lím. When an Englishman comes home he will first press the bell. When he receives a reply to his ringing of the bell, then only will he enter.

Qissah One

We have witnessed with our own eyes the following during the time of the British rule [in India]: An Englishman wishes to meet a certain nawáb or ra'ís. A time is specified for the meeting, that he should present himself at such-and-such a time. The Englishman comes to the residence. There is a clock affixed to the door. He looks at the time and sees that a few minutes still remain for the time

specified. A chair is near the door. He sits on the chair. He will not even announce his arrival, never mind enter, before the allotted time. When he sees that it is now the time specified, then he will ring the bell which is on the outside. When permission is granted from inside then will he enter.

This is what I observed with my own eyes. Ají! Are these not topics to relate? Listen some more!

Qissah Two

I went to the main post office in Alígarh to fulfil some need. Now, some post offices are small but this one near the college was very large. I went in and did whatever work I needed to do. Just then an Englishman came there on his bicycle. He alighted from his bicycle and went to the room where stamps, envelopes and other items were sold. This room was situated near the door of the post office. The Englishman stood at the door and spoke to the clerk inside. He needed some glue. The clerk told him to come into the room.

The clerk was a Hindustání. The English were the rulers. Remember that whoever the rulers are, their children also know that they are the rulers. Those who live under the rulers also realise that they are subservient. This is an instinctive effect. So, just see – just see what happened next.

The Hindustání had told the Englishman to come in but he did not go in. He said, "What is this that is written above? It says that it is prohibited to enter." The Hindustání told him two to three times to enter but he did not.

The English are very cultured. They have good manners. This person did not consider it a disgrace to stand outside. We would consider it disgraceful and insulting. In any case, the Englishman did not go inside. He did his work from the outside, climbed on his bicycle and left.

Aré baccho! My dear children! Do you understand or not? I am reminding you of these forgotten topics. Having being studied, they are still forgotten. Having being heard, they are forgotten. May Alláh Ta'álá cause this arrogance to be destroyed.

Qissah Three

One other incident comes to mind. One Englishman was riding his bicycle. A Hindustání was coming on his bicycle from the opposite direction. He was wearing a watch on his hand. When they were close to one another the Englishman asked him, "What is the time?" The Hindustání replied, "My watch is not working." The Englishman told him, "Stop!" The Hindustání Muslim brother stopped. The Englishman got off his bicycle. The Hindustání also got off his bicycle. The Englishman went up to the Hindustání and slapped him lightly saying, "A watch is for telling the time – not for being fashionable!"

Do you understand my talk? What is the Englishman saying? Wearing a watch is not to be fashionable. It is to tell the time. If the watch was faulty, why was it not sent for repairs to the watchmaker? Why was it worn on the hand? Do you understand? The watch comes from them. They understood the purpose for which a watch is to be utilised, how it is to be utilised and when it is to be utilised. It was not working yet he was going around with it on his hand. The watch is not merely for fashion.

They have invented items for their needs. The clothes that they wear are according to their country's condition, it being a cold place. If they do not wear clothes closely wrapped around them, the cold wind would severely affect them.

When I went to London it was winter. For me it was very cold. It was not so cold for them. It was raining and snowing. Then, too, they were moving about just like that. I wore a shawl all the time.

In the morning I came from upstairs to have breakfast downstairs. I did not have any socks on. My host said, "Kindly wear some socks." I replied, "Aré bhaí, what need is there for socks?" He said, "Hadhrat, the cold here is no ordinary cold. It travels from your soles right to your brains."

Over there I saw a special type of material covering the walls. When I went to the toilet I noticed a light grade of carpet

spread on the floor. That is right. A carpet was spread on the floor of the toilet! It was not a high quality one but, nevertheless, it was a carpet.

I asked, "A carpet in the toilet even?" My host replied, "Yes. The cold over here is very severe. One cannot place one's feet on the ground. One has to wear shoes and step on the carpet in order to reach the footrest."

I had the impression that the carpet was placed there as a fashionable item, for show and decor, only to discover that, no, it was placed there out of necessity for health reasons.

The entertainer beats the drum and the monkey dances on cue!

We have seen them and we have adopted their ways for reasons of fashion. They do not do these things for the sake of fashion. Their clothing is also out of necessity for the conditions over there.

And we have commenced imitating them from the aspect of fashion. Have a look now. How is the Hindustání wearing the pants over here? Oho-ho! Fitting tight around the thighs. Is the portion below thick or thin? Just to look also causes one to feel bad. If it is beautiful then looking at it causes the emotions to stir, especially in this age.

Those people have not worn them out of being fashionable. We have imitated them. Just see what the Englishman said that the watch is worn not for being fashionable but for some need. If it is not working then why wear it? In the same way the English are saying, "The Hindustání is a fool. Whereas we wear our type of clothes to serve our needs, the Hindustání has imitated our styles for the sake of being fashionable. The Hindustání is very stupid. He has no intelligence."

The Englishman has beaten the drum for his monkey and the monkey has started to dance on cue – the Hindustání is dancing by imitating them for the sake of being fashionable.

Also, over here, in order to please another government that was established, our youth are going around with bare heads. Their "kurtah" has also been adopted and the Musalmání kurtah

has also disappeared, just as the topí has disappeared.

It must not happen – Alláh Ta'álá forbid! – that they start walking around bare-feet. The reason for saying this is that I have travelled to different cities in this country and I also visited Madras. The attire there is different. Even the superintendant of police walks around bare-footed. This I have seen in Madras. This is the lifestyle over there. Similarly, many of the rural village people also walk around with bare feet. I wonder that thorns do not prick them. Women also walk bare feet. I do not know whether the cold affects them or not. So, in Madras even notable people walk around bare-feet.

I have also seen the people of Madras eating. I was in a coach in a train when this person started eating some rice using a thin stick instead of his fingers. I do not know how he managed that. We eat rice using five fingers.

So, in each place the eating is different and the dressing is different. Why is there this imitation? This Hindustání attire is an imitation of others' attire. And when a Hindustání Muslim adopts the dressing of others is he not a "baihrúpyá"?

[A "baihrúpyá" is a mimic street-entertainer who disguises himself in such a way as to impersonate somebody else. He then goes around the village in this impersonation and is rewarded if he manages to fool the people. -Tr.]

He sometimes wears the clothes of the Hindus and he sometimes wears the clothes of the English and sometimes somebody else's. So, is he a "baihrúpyá" or not?

Men go about without a topí. If they come here I definitely reprimand them. I say, "Where has your topí disappeared to?" If there is a child with the adult then I say, "Do you not have a topí? Oho! A crow must have flown away with the child's topí! Aré! This elder was with – the crow also had a go at him and the crow took away his topí also! Oho! What a crow it must have been!"

This is the manner in which I tell them. I tell everybody, even if it is somebody coming here by car. *[Meaning some wealthy or*

prominent person. -Tr.]

If the lungí or pants are a bit long and the ankles are covered, I say, "Oho! Brother, just see! The lungí, or pants, is falling below the heels – do not trip on it, do not let it become soiled."

This is the manner in which I address them. I do not speak tactlessly, which is contrary to good manners.

There was no sign of the "shalwár" over here. When the people from Panjáb started coming here then the custom of wearing the shalwár commenced. Even the womenfolk started wearing the shalwár.

[Shalwár (salwar) – A pair of loose-fitting pleated trousers tapering to the ankle, worn by the people from northern India and Pakistan, especially in the Punjab region, usually under a long tunic kameez.-Tr.]

The strict observance of purdah previously

Previously, over here purdah was observed at its highest level. Among the noble Hindustání Muslim families purdah was at its quintessence. Let me give you an example.

Just behind us is the house of Achí-Bí. Directly in front is our house. When my family – when she was alive – wanted to visit Achí-Bí, a dolí was summoned. This was an age when this type of transport was used.

[Dolí, also called a sedan chair, palanquin, litter or palki: a chair concealed by surrounding curtains, attached to poles which are lifted by porters to transport the passenger. -Tr.]

It was placed in the house and she would then sit on the chair. The curtains would be closed and the porters would take the dolí and place it in Achí-Bí's house. Only after the porters had moved away would she alight from it.

Nowadays there is no trace of the dolí. Women now go around on foot. The government is different now. It is a new age. Let me mention an incident from the past so that you may have a better understanding.

My esteemed father رحمه الله عليه had six or seven children who passed away almost immediately after birth. When I was born

I survived a few days. So, there was hope that I would live. My paternal aunt *رحمة الله عليها*, my father's younger sister, who was married somewhere else, had come.

In those days the rain used to pour down in torrents. We do not see this nowadays. Neither is the heat like before nor the rains. Severe winds used to blow.

To continue: There was a very heavy downpour of rain. Water was flooding all over. Some light drizzle was also seen. My aunt said, "I will take the child to my place." Her house was at a distance of six to seven leagues.

[A league was a variable distance of approximately five kilometres.-Tr.]

My father *رحمة الله عليه* was the older brother. She was the younger sister. He told her, "It has rained very heavily and it is still raining. It will be very difficult to take him in these conditions." She was adamant, "I will take him this very day!" Female obstinacy is well known.

The situation was difficult. My father *رحمة الله عليه* tried again. "It will be very difficult for the porters of the *dolí* to travel." She repeated very firmly, "I will take him this very day!"

My father *رحمة الله عليه* was helpless. He summoned the porters. They came and asked, "Sir, what are your instructions?" My father replied, "What can I say? My sister wishes to take the child and we require a *dolí*. Will you take them?" The porters said, "Look, it has rained and the roads are in a terrible condition. It is still drizzling over here."

Obviously, I did not witness all this personally – it was related to me by the house people much later.

My father *رحمة الله عليه* relayed to my aunt what the porters had to say. She responded, "I will go today! Bring the *dolí*!" She was a *Khánsáhibah*!

The poor porters were forced to bring the *dolí*. My aunt placed me in it and off we went. As mentioned, the distance was about six to seven leagues.

There is no sign of the *dolí* nowadays. This was the custom

in those days – to summon the dolí. We have seen another era.

These are now times of decline. We now have to take into consideration the decline and walk along. We have to go along making a little sabr and some shukr. Ask me!

What I described above was a matter of civil administration. It was not oppression. One does not call it harshness.

The misconception of equal wealth for everybody

Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ

And if Alláh were to increase the provision for His bondsmen they would be sure to rebel on the earth. S42.27

Haqq Ta'álá is saying that should He give equal wealth to all the people in the world? This cannot be so. Why? The reason is that if this was done, no one person will feel obligated to another. This is because everybody would be equal. And when no one is obligated to another, the system in the whole world will be chaotic. It is maladministration that everybody should be given equal wealth and that everybody should be kept in an equal condition.

Do you understand?

To find a worker or an artisan has become difficult nowadays. They will say, "First we have to do this here. First I have to plough the land here. Then we will come to your place." Systems have become corrupted.

Nowadays the child confronts and opposes the father. Is this not happening? When he wants to he swears the father. The son is a lowly person that he hurls abuse at the father. He does not listen to the father. Just sit and keep on trying to make him understand.

The cultured manners of the nobility

Nowadays even the children of the nobility have not remained as we have witnessed during the age of nobility. I will relate an

incident when I was sitting with a ra'ís, a nobleman. Dear brothers, I did not spend my life sitting with women!

Anyhow, this qissah took place in Ditowlí. The biggest principality in those days was that of Ditowlí. The Nawáb of that place was Nawáb Faidh-Muhammad Khánsáhib. He had six sons and one daughter.

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه used to say that Hají Imdádulláh رحمه الله عليه – our Dádá-Pír – said that if you wanted to see a walí among the Nawábs then you should go and see Nawáb Faidh-Muhammad Khánsáhib.

To continue: I was sitting with Nawábsáhib's son, Isá Khánsáhib. I was still young. My beard had just started sprouting and was still small. I had gone for some reason or other. I will describe the etiquettes to you.

When I had arrived I announced my arrival. He had a butler who gave me permission to enter. I entered to where he was sitting. Although he had children and grandchildren, the moment I came he stood up for me. This was the culture with us. I was still small. His son was very much older than me.

Nevertheless, he stood up when he saw me enter. He told me to sit. He then rang the bell. His son came from inside the house but there was a delay in his coming. The son gave the royal salám which involves bowing slightly.

It is a different matter that this type of salám is ná-já'iz. I am only describing the manner in which the Khánsáhibs used to greet.

In any case, the son greeted with the royal salám. Khánsáhib gave a very soft reply and looked at his son with a frown. The son started trembling. Khánsáhib remained silent. After letting his son stand this way for some time, he asked, "Why were you delayed?" The son became visibly terrified. Khánsáhib then said, "Go!" The son left.

I have witnessed this spectacle with my own eyes. I have seen such an age. However, such an approach cannot be applied

nowadays. One cannot do it nowadays. It is an era of decline. It is an era of weakness and decay.

Listen some more: Once, I was late in coming home. I had gone with some older boys to play "kabbaddí"
[A game where members of one team chase those of the opposite team, trying to touch a member of the opposing team. -Tr.]

I performed Ishá namáz with the older boys. There was not a single child of any Khánsáhib who did not perform all the namázes. Similarly, the womenfolk were also such that they performed all their namázes.

I came home from the masjid. Now I felt myself trembling. The door-chain was open. I opened the door and went inside, closing the door and putting on the chain. My father رحمه الله عليه was extremely displeased. He was furious. He asked, "Why are you late?" I replied, "Some big boys went to play kabbaddí and I also went with them. That is the reason for my being late." He asked, "You performed your namáz?" I replied, "Jí, I have performed my namáz." He said, "This time you are forgiven. It should not happen again in future." I said, "Very well." I was devastated.

And now? It is the son who causes the father to tremble!

So, that person who has experienced that golden age, how must he be living in this age? Do not ask!

At times it is best to remain silent

Jí-há. Now do you understand that this is an age of decline? I am showing you the clash between that era and this era. Before this I showed you the clash between our institutes and the universities in England and Egypt. I also showed you the situation with regard to the order that the ahle-'ilim should stand behind the imám. However, the jáhil stands there now. I am demonstrating the clashes. This era is like that. The big should adopt a low profile. Do not speak, otherwise you will be disgraced. Thus, silence!

It has also become very difficult to explain mas'alas on every occasion. The shari'at says that we should look at the times, O 'ulemá'! Yes, do not speak on all occasions. Where it is stated:

من رای منکم منکرا فلیغیره بیده فان لم یستطع فبلسانه

Whoever sees any wrong should rectify it with his hand (physically). If he is unable to do so (rectify it) then with his tongue (verbally).

There it is also stated:

فان لم یستطع فبقلبه

And if he is unable to do so, then with his heart (mentally).

The meaning of this is: Keep silent. Do not speak. You will be disgraced. It should not be that you discuss controversial mas'alas all over the place. Explain mas'alas. However it is not the task of the ahle-'ilm, the 'ulemá' that they discuss controversial mas'alas on every occasion.

O 'ulemá'-kirám, do you understand? First measure the person you are addressing: What are his qualities? Who is he? What is his temperament like, his attitude? Yes. Will he not speak indecently? Will he not be abusive? And so forth.

Tahzíb – to be cultured

I have related the qissah of the Khánsáhib in order to show you what it is to be cultured; what is etiquette and respect between seniors and juniors; what is the effect of 'ilm. Culture is something else from what we understand it to be.

There is a saying in Arabic: "Hazzabash-shajarah – He has pruned the tree." There are orchards belonging to ordinary people and there are orchards belonging to the nobility and nawábs. The worker in the nawáb's garden is called a málí. He will prune the tree in such a way, cutting off the branches at the bottom and trimming the branches above, that one feels that one can spread a chárpái on it and lie down. This is the grammatical meaning of the Arabic word "hazzab". In other words, to trim the branches so that they are level.

This is referred to as "tahzíb" – to be cultured – taken from the root of the Arabic word "hazzab". Those who are horticulturists

know that even flowers can be cultured. So, this tahzīb is not only for humans but also for trees and even for flowers.

Shall I say more? This tahzīb is for dogs as well. Those dogs that are kept by the higher nobility, by the nawábs and the English for the purpose of hunting, are also taught tahzīb.

In Mishkát Sharíf "Kitábus-Sayyid" is taught. In this chapter Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has shown the method of training dogs.

What do these poor people sitting know? They think that only namáz and rozah are taught in the Arabic madáris. That is all that they teach. Foolish, unacquainted ones! What do they know? [*"Bawlah janglí kabútar"* is the actual phrase that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه used on occasions when addressing his young students. It was used affectionately, teasingly, like a father addressing his little child.-Tr.]

The holistic teachings in the madáris

A little while ago I had mentioned that an Englishman said, "If we did not have 'Al-Hidáyah' we would not have been able to run a judiciary." Al-Hidáyah is taught over here. What do Muslims think? They have this idea that only namáz, rozah, zakát, hajj and so forth are taught here and nothing else. Remember! Whatever is being taught in the colleges is taught here.

I had mentioned a little while back that I visited the university in Cairo. A lecturer was giving a lesson. As I entered the students clapped according to their custom. I said, "*Clapping of hands is for women – takbír is for men.*"

The professor explained to me the subject on which he was lecturing. I said that all of that was also taught over here. I did not remain silent over there. Alhamdulillah, with the fadhil of Haqq-Ta'álá, with the barkat of my asátizah and the faidh of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه I did not remain silent.

At that time the professor was lecturing on the topic of agriculture. I explained that this subject was also taught by us and with great detail. The professor turned to the class and told them exactly what I had said. I also added, "Do not think it is only at your university that this is taught and taught in this manner?"

Are these not matters to be listened to? Or should I just keep on teaching you how to just sit and make zikrulláh in abundance? These are topics that are to be discussed even more in this age so that the reality of the Arabic madáris is present in front of you. The 'ilm here is by means of wahí-qat'í so that you may value it in your minds. You yourselves have shown ingratitude for your 'ilm and have sought prestige from the creation. You yourselves are involved in activities causing dishonour so how can the question of honour ever arise?

Do you understand the points made? Jí! Know yourselves!

I have related to you some of my travels very briefly. I have seen many parts of the world. I have been to America. I have been to England. I have been to South Africa. Did I observe these places with furtive eyes or how did I view these places? I did not go for leisure and pleasure. When I was called by you I went. And, when I went, I saw these places with the view of taking lessons. These lessons I am presenting to you.

I have related the culture of these places to you. I have seen carpets laid down in the toilets. This I have also mentioned to you. All this started off on the topic of the watch. The Englishman had said that the watch is worn out of necessity and this person was wearing it to be fashionable. He had alighted from his bicycle and had gone to slap this person. "When the watch is not working why are you wearing it on your hand? If the watch is not working why did you not give it to the watchmaker to be repaired?"

These topics came up as asides. I presented the situation of the English students in the university in England – the manner in which they lived and the cleanliness of their living quarters. No stranger was allowed to enter the rooms without permission and could not crash through the gates into the precincts.

Here youngsters just enter the madrasah precincts and even play inside. If one prohibits them they get annoyed and confront one.

Over there one needed to obtain a permit to enter. One

needed to get permission from the principal. Then only was one allowed to enter. Over there even the father of a student cannot meet his son without permission. He is not allowed to go into his room. Over here, whoever wishes to just enters.

I showed that all what they practise is from our house – hamárí gharr kí báte.

Etiquettes of entering a house and a madrasah

Our teaching is that one cannot enter even one's own house without permission. Some people just clear their throats when entering. This is not correct. You cannot enter. What does Alláh Ta'álá state?

فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمْ بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً
مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُبَارَكَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ

When you are about to enter your homes then make salám which is a form of du'á and which has been specified from Alláh Ta'álá and is something of high blessings.

When my Hadhrat رحمه الله عليه used to go home he used to carry a cane in his right hand. When he reached the door he used to knock three times with the cane. He then said "Assalámo-alaikum". If a child inside the house said, "Come in," he never entered. Only when an adult said, "Enter," then only did he enter. I witnessed all this myself. It was Baré-mian's own house – I use the name "Baré-mian" out of muhabbat. Then too he used to enter by first obtaining permission.

On the other hand, just see here: here is a Molwísáhib and he enters without announcing his arrival. That is not all. He barges into such an area, into such a house where purdah is observed.

Sadly, purdah has disappeared. Is purdah not to be observed from first cousins, both on the maternal and paternal sides, and from close relatives? With whomsoever one can make nikah purdah has to be observed. But, just see! He just barges into the house and goes to sit there, next to them. What corrupt social

etiquettes are these?

In the same manner the madrasah institute is within four walls. What was the necessity for the four surrounding walls? Also, why was there the necessity for the four walls to be very high? Are there women staying inside?

So, just as a house is a residence, the madrasah institute is also a house. So, there is no question of an outsider entering the madrasah without permission. If anybody wants to meet his son or meet a relative then first take permission from the principal. If the principal is not present his deputy will be present. Tell the doorman, "Inform the principal that I wish to meet a certain person."

What happens now is that the children play within the precincts of the madrasah. If one prohibits them they feel upset.

Also, when the father of a student comes he asks, "Where does the boy, whose name is so-and-so, reside?" Somebody points out the room he is staying in. The father immediately goes directly to the room and barges in. He is completely unconcerned as to the state of the child. How is he sitting? How is he lying down? What is he engaged in? Unconcerned, he simply barges in as if he is entering his own room.

What type of culture is this? What type of consideration and manners are these? Are these not topics to be discussed? Is it not necessary for those in the madrasah to listen to them? Should the responsible persons in the madrasah not take note?

We have seen another age. Nowadays just keep silent. It is an age of decline, an age of decay. Do not say anything, otherwise you will invite a fight.

Cleanliness and tidiness is our teaching

To continue: The English took worldly benefit by studying our kitábs. They acquired cultural benefit. We are well aware of the condition of London and other parts of England before the coming of Islám. We know. We have studied the books of history. They were like animals. *[Refer to the note at the end.] Where was there any

insániyat (humanity) in them? It is through the study of our kitábs that they are what they are now.

Whereas we have retrogressed, even after having studied. They have acquired culture after studying; and we do not acquire any culture even after having studied. Just go and see the state of cleanliness of the rooms. The responsible persons do not bother to inspect the rooms to see the condition they are in. What is the state of the bedding and the cushions? What is the state of the chárpaí? Where are the shoes lying?

Where will they go and check? Even if they go and check today and the students have listened and obeyed, it is with great difficulty that the rooms will remain orderly for two to three days. After that the situation will revert to its disorderly state. The hue of the students' temperaments are of a different type, that of being uncultured. That is how they will live.

So, who will go day after day to tell them until some manners are not instilled in them? Having told them once and then twice, then leave them to live in that manner.

This topic is for the boys to listen to and also the responsible people of the madrasah.

Ají! Today the majlis is amazing! Is this not a majlis? Are these not issues to be related? Are these matters not to be understood? Is this not a culture to be imbibed? What type of culture should the students of Arabic acquire? Listening about the culture of others how cultured should they become?

Qissah of the Muslim Englishman coming to India

Otherwise it will happen as Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه once related to us: An Englishman from a noble family became a Muslim. He felt a desire to come to Hindustán. He arrived over here and associated with some of the nawábs and other noblemen. When the time for namáz came the Englishman, together with the group of four to six individuals who were with him, went to perform namáz in the masjid in the neighbourhood.

When he sat down to make wudhú he saw that the

drainage pipe was dirty and filthy. He asked, "Is there nobody here to keep the area clean?" His companions replied, "Yes, there is." The Englishman said, "Oho! Then how offensively filthy is this drainage pipe! It has filled with dirt and rubbish.!"

The Muslim mu'ezzin remarked, "Aré! You have become a Muslim but the smell of being English has not left your brains. Cleanliness, cleanliness, cleanliness – is all that you know!"

Do you see how this lowly paid worker is addressing a Muslim? He has the idea that cleanliness is to be found with the English, that cleanliness is an attribute of the English. Actually, the English learnt it from us. Yet, what does the Muslim think? He thinks that it is their quality. He calls one of our qualities their quality! Tell me now, what cure is there for this ignorance?

One from the group of refined people that were with the Englishman, reassured him, "Do not take any notice of what he said. These poor mu'ezzins tend to be such simple-minded people." This person thought that perhaps the Englishman felt insulted by the remarks of the mu'ezzin.

The Englishman said, "I have not become a Muslim on the basis of such comments. I brought ímán after having studied Islám and having understood it. I understand exactly the [high] status of cleanliness in Islám."

This is what he said. Assess from this, O you writers and students, as to what is he saying. We have not understood the [high] status of cleanliness even after having studied it here. They have learnt everything from us. Nowadays we have become so simple-minded as to think that cleanliness is part of *their* culture, that cleanliness is something that belongs to them.

Yet, what is the command? What is the instruction that Alláh Ta'álá gave to Rasúlulláh ﷺ

نظفوا افنيتم – Clean the area outside your homes.

This is the principle in cleanliness. I mentioned at the commencement [of this majlis] that there are certain principles in Islám. Amongst these is this one concerning cleanliness:

نظفوا افئيتكم – *Clean the area outside your homes.*

The area outside the house has a fence. The area beyond the fence is the area referred to. So, what is the teaching of Islám, that is, of Alláh Ta'álá and of His Rasúl ﷺ? It is that the area beyond the door or gate from whence you depart, keep it clean.

It is not stated that you should keep your houses clean. This is grammatical manner of expression. The instruction is to keep the outside area clean. When the order is given to keep the area beyond the gate clean then what would be the order to keep the inside of the house clean? Work this out by yourselves.

In the cities and in the villages, the municipalities have a department dealing with cleanliness. They have learnt all this from us. Drains should be kept clean. Roads should be kept clean. If anything is lying along the road, pick it up with your hand and place it on the side. It should not happen that some banana peels are lying there and somebody slips on them. Or there is a brick or other obstacle in the way and somebody who is in haste knocks against it and falls. Or a blind person knocks against it and falls. If there are thorns lying on the path, remove these. The Hadíth Sharíf states:

اما طة الاذى عن الطريق

Whatever item is injurious, remove it from the path.

This is a branch of ímán. So, just see. The department of cleanliness is from us. Others have learnt from us the concept of keeping roads clean and keeping the drainage system clean.

Do you now understand what Islám is? Do you now understand the culture of Islám, the [high] status of cleanliness in Islám and the etiquettes? Do the people know all this? Speak the truth. They do not know anything.

Listen some more! Somebody has eaten a meal but he has not cleaned his teeth. A person has eaten [raw] onions and he has not cleansed his mouth. All of these should not be done.

Have you now heard some of the laws of cleanliness? Are

these orders from our Islám or are they from the English? They have learnt them from us. All highly meritorious acts that are in them they have learnt from us. Our household folk do not even know this.

When I had gone to England I was invited to one city. I read the Hadíth Sharíf in full:

نظفوا افنيتمكم – *Clean the area outside your homes.*

I then said, "People think that there is cleanliness in the English and that there is no cleanliness in Islám. Actually, in Islám the order is to clean even the area that is in front of your front door. From this one can gauge that if the order is given that the area in front of the residence has to be kept clean why should there not be an order to clean the house itself? And when the order is there to clean the house to what a greater extent will there not be the order to keep the body clean, the body being a part of insán?"

Cleansing the rúh is Tasawwuf

The very existence of insán is comprised of the physical body and the rúh. The Hadíth Sharíf which was mentioned above was then used by this khádim to substantiate Tasawwuf. It was done in the following manner: When the order is given to cleanse the physical body, which is the external part of insán, then why would there not be the order to cleanse the rúh which is the metaphysical part of insán, and on which is dependent the existence of the physical body and its maintenance? The cleansing of this metaphysical part (bátin) is termed Tasawwuf. What else is it but this?

With the taufiq of Alláh Ta'álá and fadh'l of Alláh Ta'álá rúháníyat was thus proved. Now do you understand Islámic culture?

Up to where have I progressed? Up to this point that culture is not towards insán only, but also towards trees, flowers, dogs and horses.

The tálibe-'ilm is a sháhe-Dín – king of Dín

Yesterday, during the discourse I had stated that the tálibe-'ilm is

truly a king of Dín (sháhe-Dín). And how does a king behave? Is he uncultured that he sits wherever he wants to? Whatever gully he wants to visit he wanders into it? Whatever shopping mall he wants to see he just enters? That he wanders around the bus terminals? Whatever inner impulse he has he just follows it?

Is this your culture? Commoners of a different category than yours just join you and participate in the entertainment and participate in your games. Is this the manner in which you behave?

If you want to play sport, do it in your own areas. Who is stopping you? But why should others come and join you in your games? Why do you go and participate in the games of others? You are tálibe-'ilm. Know yourselves. Only when you recognise who you are will others recognise you. Otherwise others will make [condescending] statements, "These are tálibe-'ilm roaming around here and there. If they are studying in the city then they roam around in the Chándní Chowk and the shopping malls. They stroll around in the parks and the gardens. These are tálibe-'ilm! This is their culture!"

This is a brief explanation of culture that has been presented in front of you. Recognise the elevated status of 'ilm!

What is this elevated status of 'ilm? This is that absolute 'ilm ('ilme-qat'í) which Alláh Ta'álá revealed to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم by means of wahí. This is what the tálibe-'ilm is acquiring. From this make an assessment as to what the cultured behaviour should be within and what the cultured behaviour should be outside.

Today the discourse has been on culture. When the order has been given to cleanse the area outside the door, then should one's clothes be filthy, and that body which is in the clothes, should that be filthy? And that major fundamental of life – that is, the rúh – should that be filthy?

What is this culture and cleanliness of the area outside the door stating? Keep it clean. And the courtyard within the precincts, keep it filthy? And the room inside the house, keep it filthy? And

where one sits and lies down and sleeps, keep it filthy? These are all areas apart from the body.

Let us go a step further: Keep one's clothes filthy? Keep the body filthy? Keep the heart filthy? What about the *rúh*, which is the fundamental of life – what will happen if the *rúh* departs? So, this *rúh*, the most fundamental of all fundamentals, keep this *rúh* filthy? Ponder what the *Hadíth Sharíf* mentioned above is stating.

A very brief and comprehensive *mas'alah* of *Tasawwuf* – of *taríqat*, of *sulúk* – has been enunciated. This one *Hadíth Sharíf* is sufficient.

The first requirement is *ímán*

As for the *rúh*, what is the first requirement? It is *ímán*. It is not *kufr* which is complete filth. So, for *rúháníyat* the first requirement is that there should be *ímán*. Thereafter, there should be those aspects which are the demands of *ímán*, namely that there should be cleanliness of the *záhir* and cleanliness of the *bátin*, the heart. The heart should be embellished with the *akhláqe-hamídah* and not with *akhláqe-mazmúmah* – that is, the *akhláqe-razíláh* should not be found in it. Just see: this is what the *Hadíth Sharíf* is stating.

In summary

Having said all this, this *bandah* is returning to that point where this discourse had commenced. It is this that in order to acquire *sulúk*, *tazkiyah-nafs*, *takhliyah-nafs*, *takhliyah* and *zínate-rúh*, only this much has to be done: move away through the left side and come on to the right side. On the left side is corruption and on the right side is goodness.

Ají! On the left side is the [*latifah* of] the *qalb* (heart), below which is the [*latifah*] of the *nafs* [below the navel]. Purifying the *nafs* by cutting the *nafsání* branches with "*Lá*", one proceeds. Whereto? Towards the heart. With "*iláh*" it is then dragged through the heart over to the right side. With the pronouncement of "*ha*" the whole creation is thrown away behind the back. The whole creation has been discarded. And when "*illalláh*" is recited it denotes that only

the Creator remains. This is a brief explanation of the methodology of the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh".

Do you understand? Just by merely sitting here the creation has been removed. Or has it not been removed? This is "Lá-iláha-illalláh". When the creation is embedded in the heart all the time it is a manifestation of shierk in tauhíd. Even though it may not be major shierk but there are other types of shierk. This "Lá-iláha-illalláh" is there to remove this shierk.

In the commencement [of the majlis] it was also stated that "Lá-iláha" is purity. Through it purification is achieved. "Illalláh" is goodness (tayyib). When "Lá-iláha" is recited the creation is discarded behind the back. When "illalláh" is recited the Creator remains and the creation is disregarded. The creation is overlooked. Our actions and behaviour will show whether this indifference to the creation has been attained or not. Actions and behaviour will bear witness. What is achieved by merely claiming or saying so? One's actions and behaviour will show whether "illalláh" has come in or not.

A person may be making the zikr of "Lá-iláha" but has the creation left the heart or not? He may be reciting "illalláh" but has the Creator – accompanied by the love of Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم – remained or not? Evidence of this will be seen in his actions and behaviour.

You may have studied tauhíd in "Sharah-Aqá'id". The reality of tauhíd is what has been explained here. This is the method of making zikr that brings about tauhíd. It is not just a method of reciting a tasbíh. Everything has an effect. When? Only when it is utilised according to its correct method.

My brothers! Are you listening to something or not?

Up to now we still do not know the reality of zikr even though one has become a Molwísáhib. Please forgive my saying so. Up to now he still has not attained the recognition (ma'rifat) that this is what the Kalimah Tayyibah is stating.

So, af'ál, aqwál, ahwál and akhláq – actions, statements,

conditions and behaviour – will testify whether the creation has gone out of the heart or not. And whether the Creator has been accommodated or not.

Áhá! I have remembered the Hadíth Sharíf! I will relate this and end my discourse. There is a Hadíthe-Qudsí that Záte-Bá-rí-Ta'álá is stating:

لا يسعني الا قلب المومن

I cannot be accommodated except in the heart of a mu'min.

Alláh Ta'álá is stating – it is a Hadíthe-Qudsí – that, "I cannot be accommodated except in the heart of a mu'min."

Now introspect! How should that heart be? Can the creation be in that heart as well as the Creator? When the creation is there how will He be accommodated? So, to acquire what the Hadíthe-Qudsí indicates, the method is to recite "Lá-iláha" and fling the creation behind one's back; and by reciting "illalláh" only the Creator will remain.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá make us cultured with refinement of character in the correct meaning of these qualities. Alláh Ta'álá make it that we understand Lá-iláha-illalláh in the correct manner, that we understand it, recognise it and imbibe it.

May He grant us the taufíq to acquire, with a righteous and beautiful effort the above according to our actions (a'mál), conditions (ahwál) and character (akhláq), with concomitant constancy in obedience (tá'at) and constancy in the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá grant us taufíq and grant the tálibe-mukhlis taufíq. Khudá háfiz.

*[A book that is highly recommended is "Coprophilia or a Peck of Dirt", by Terence McLaughlin. I.S.B.N. 030493741. It is on the subject of community health in Britain in the past, written by Terence McLaughlin, who was an authority on public health and hygiene. Very few copies still exist. A Google search will show where copies may still be obtained.]

