

Foreword

*All praises are for Allah Ta'ala, the Executioner of all affairs.
'Salaat and Salaam upon the best of all Creation,
Sayyidina Muhammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), eternally.*

Hazrat¹ Maulana Yunus Patel Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ)² was the Khalifa³ of two illustrious personalities: Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muḥammad Akhtar Saheb (Mudda Zilluhu)⁴ and Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), and was, himself, the mentor and spiritual guide of thousands throughout the world.

In character, Hazrat Maulana was the embodiment of piety and righteousness, with a heart burning with the love of Allah Ta'ala and His Beloved Rasool (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Hazrat's sincerity and deep-hearted desire to connect people with Allah Ta'ala and His Beloved Rasool (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), was manifest in his unrelenting efforts, serving Deen and the Creation of Allah Ta'ala.

The emphasis of Hazrat's teachings was moral and spiritual reformation and purification; the central theme being the Love of Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), which is the catalyst in engendering piety.

Despite Hazrat Maulana's demise, Muslims, all over the world, are still benefiting tremendously from the recordings of Hazrat's programmes, as well as the books of Hazrat Maulana.

¹ *Hazrat* : literally means, 'the respected' . A title used when addressing a religious luminary.

² *Rahmatullah 'alayh* : 'May the mercy of Allah be upon him.' This is mentioned after the name of a religious personality who is deceased.

³ *Khalifa* : Deputy or representative of a Shaykh.

⁴ *Mudda Zilluhu* : meaning, May he live long.

Many have found these a means of increasing and strengthening their Imaan (faith) and Yaqeen (conviction) in Allah Ta'ala and their love of Rasulallah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

This book is a compilation of Hazrat Maulana's advice and brilliant and inspiring analogies, which are found to be very effective in the process of reformation. Reading through each exposition and one is amazed at the remarkable lessons derived; each one offering 'food for thought', and wonderful incentive and encouragement for those seeking the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

Most of this book was compiled during Hazrat Maulana's lifetime and was also edited by Hazrat Maulana (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).

May Allah Ta'ala make this book solely for His Pleasure, and accept the very humble effort. May He make it a Sadaqa-e-Jaariyah for Hazrat Maulana, as well as myself and all those who kindly contributed in its publication. May Allah Ta'ala grant us all a deep understanding of the knowledge acquired, accompanied with the '*Taufeeq*' of practice on the commandments of Allah Ta'ala and the beautiful teachings of Rasulallah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) - with sincerity and Divine acceptance.

May Allah Ta'ala grant Hazrat Maulana high and lofty ranks in the Aakhirah.

[Rajab 1434 / May 2013]



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH⁵,
THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ ط

“... AND THOSE WHO HAVE IMAAN⁶ ARE MORE INTENSE
IN THEIR LOVE FOR ALLAH...”

[SURAH BAQARAH 2 : 165]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE; FEAR ALLAH AS HE SHOULD BE FEARED AND
DIE NOT EXCEPT IN A STATE OF ISLAM⁷.”

[SURAH AAL-E-IMRAAN 3 : 102]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE; FEAR ALLAH AND KEEP IN THE COMPANY OF
THE SAWDIQEEN (THE TRUTHFUL ONES).”

[SURAH TAUBAH 9 : 119]

⁵ Allah : The Name of the Creator of the Universe

⁶ Imaan : Faith / Belief [To accept with the heart]

⁷ Islam : Literally means 'Submission'.

NB.: Do not touch the Arabic script of the Aayaat (verses) of the Qur`aan Shareef if not in a state of Taharah (cleanliness) –
i.e. Wudhu, or Ghusl (if required).

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The Green Leaf and the Juicy Grape

Hazrat Maulana Jalaluddeen Rumi⁸ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had mentioned a story in his *Mathnavi Shareef*, of a worm, which was told: “You will find a delicious, juicy grape on the grapevine.”

Having heard this, the worm began its journey up the grapevine. It soon came across a green leaf, and thinking it to be the delicious grape, it whiled away its entire life eating off that leaf, until it made its ‘qabr’ (grave) on that same green leaf.

Had the worm gone just a little further, it would have come across the delectable grape, and would have enjoyed the sweetness of that grape. It would not have spent all its life on a green leaf.

The anecdote illustrates our similarity with that worm....

Like that worm which landed on the green leaf, many have landed in front of some filthy television programmes, many have landed in Interest transactions, enriching themselves with Haraam; or have landed in fraud and theft, others in some illicit relationship, or in a casino, or in raves, or drugs, or homosexuality, or indecent and obscene novels and magazines, or some porn website on the Internet, or Haraam video games

⁸ Maulana Jalaluddeen Rumi (*Rahmatullah 'alaih*) was a great 'Aalim, Shaykh and Sufi who compiled a masterpiece on Tasawwuf, entitled '*The Mathnavi*' .

and a multitude of other sins and illusions - and they ignorantly think that that is the sweet grape. ...These were the leaves before the juicy grape or the thorns before the petals of the fragrant rose flower.

Many set out for the juicy grape of Imaan but have been waylaid and trapped by shaytaan⁹ and nafs¹⁰ in Haraam¹¹ pleasures, in which they while away and waste the very precious time of life. Yet, there are just two steps to be taken to taste of this delicious grape. The first step is on the nafs and the second step, on shaytaan. With these two steps we will enjoy such sweetness of Imaan that we would never want to return to the temporary and sinful pleasures of this world.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said that in reality, **there is just one step**, and that step is suppression of the evil desires of the nafs, since shaytaan became shaytaan because of his nafs.

...It will not be denied that there is some temporary enjoyment in consenting to the evil demands of the nafs. However, this Haraam 'pleasure', which is so short-lived, should be weighed against the anguish and punishment that awaits one in the Hereafter for having earned the displeasure and wrath of Allah Ta'ala.

This punishment is not reserved for only the Hereafter. It descends and pursues a person even in this world, in the form

⁹ *shaytaan* : satan / the devil

¹⁰ *nafs* : ego

¹¹ *Haraam* : unlawful / forbidden according to Shariah

of restlessness, anxiety, fear, humiliation, disgrace, and sometimes, everlasting regret.

My Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) says in poetry:

***“Agreed, there is a little stolen pleasure in sin,
But what great rebellion is this against the Sustainer
(Allah Ta’ala),
(That you use His bounties to disobey Him).
A little while of pleasure and everlasting regret;
What stupidity it is to bury
the Janaza of respect and honour.”***

Even though some difficulty is incurred in opposing the dictates of the evil nafs, the consequence in the Hereafter is eternal pleasure. In this world as well, the person will enjoy tranquility and satisfaction.

And when there are so many forms of Halaal (lawful) pleasures that one could enjoy, why foolishly go toward Haraam?

Commodities of the Heart

When traveling from one place to another, one does not take all of one's belongings. A person takes the required amount of clothes, currency, etc., according to the number of days away from home.

There is, however, one commodity that a person does carry with him throughout the duration of his life, wherever he may go; be it the marketplace, business or on travel. Inevitably, he will also carry this to his grave. **This commodity is that which he has built up in his heart.**

If a person has Imaan, Islam, Ma'rifat (Recognition) and Muhabbat (Love) of Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (ﷺ), generosity, honesty, Sabr (patience), Shukr (gratitude), Zuhd (ascetism), Taqwa (piety), and so forth, then these beautiful and virtuous attributes accompany him wherever he goes. He will take with him whatever he has built up **within** himself.

Although outwardly this person will take only a kafan (shroud) with him when he leaves this material and insignificant world, he will also take such a treasure trove of beautiful qualities and righteous deeds, which will be of tremendous assistance to him in his grave, as well as in the Aakhirah (Hereafter).

On the other hand, if the person has built up within himself, malice, anger, greed, pride, arrogance, conceit, jealousy, evil

desires and passions, and other evil qualities, then this 'baggage' accompanies him wherever he goes. **Such base and evil qualities also become a means of harm, hurt and pain to those with whom he lives, trades, works with, travels, marries or befriends.**

Furthermore, bad character becomes a cause for **isolation** – isolation from Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure, as well as from people. The person's bad behaviour and character automatically distances him from Allah Ta'ala, and people do not want to be near the person. People are apprehensive and uncomfortable with such a person, and prefer to keep their distance. They are happy and they feel safe when they do not have any contact or dealings with him (or her).

This is the condition of bad "baggage" whilst in this world.

There are severe warnings in the Qur'aan Shareef and Ahaadeeth regarding those who create mischief and deliberately cause hurt, harm or injury to others.

Worse, is the person carrying this 'luggage' with him to his grave: he will find this to be a great misfortune and curse. (Allah Ta'ala protect us all)

In this world, we go through 'Customs' and our luggage is sometimes searched. The 'custom officers' in the grave, who will search our 'baggage' of deeds, are the angels, Munkar and Nakeer.

If the person is weighed down with bad deeds and qualities, he will not find a favourable condition in the next life, even though he may have had plenty of money in this worldly life and lived a life of ease and comfort.

Before this impending and long journey, let us acquire the best provisions, by reforming our actions and behaviour, and fulfilling the rights of Allah Ta'ala and creation, sincerely.

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

“... AND TAKE A PROVISION (WITH YOU) FOR THE JOURNEY, BUT THE BEST OF PROVISIONS IS TAQWA. SO FEAR ME, O YOU THAT ARE WISE.”¹²

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2 : 197]

¹² This Ayah (verse) is in reference to the journey of Hajj.

3

Heart Surgery : An Analogy

Being a heart patient and having gone through a quadruple bypass, I have taken many lessons from the experience of ill health and cardiac surgery.

One lesson is analogous to the present condition of the Ummah¹³.

In the initial stage, the heart's condition begins to weaken and one suffers from *Angina*, where there is a lack of oxygen to the heart and there is a feeling of heaviness and crushing pain in the chest, accompanied by shortness of breath, fatigue, etc.

On consultation, one's doctor prescribes medication, a healthy diet, regular exercise and avoiding stress.

If one takes the required care, then a little medication clears the problem. If one is negligent in respect to the prescription, the condition of the heart will deteriorate and this leads to heart damage.

If the heart is severely injured, a heart attack occurs, where there is a blockage in one or more of the arteries – which does not allow blood to flow to an area of the heart. The person needs to be hospitalized and requires a period of rest, together with medication, diet and so forth. Sometimes an Angioplasty is necessary to clear the blocked arteries or widen the narrowed

¹³ *Ummah* : Community of Muslims

arteries, enabling the flow of blood, which contains oxygen and food for the tissues.

If this prescription is also not followed through, the cardiac condition will worsen and reach a stage where neither medication nor an Angioplasty will help. The solution is either a bypass or in the extreme circumstance, a heart transplant.

I had reached the stage where four arteries were blocked and an artery bypass was regarded as the only option. Alhamdulillah, the operation was very successful. However, the analogy that came to my mind was that this damage of the physical heart and blockage of the arteries is exactly the situation with the Ummah...

In the final analysis, we have severely injured the spiritual heart with sins, and we have blocked the arteries of Aqaa'id (beliefs), Ibaadaat (worship), Mu`aamalaat (Business transactions and dealings), Mu`aasharaat (Social dealings) and Akhlaaq (character)¹⁴ – with our ignorance, our indifference, our negligence, and by moving away from the Qur`aan and Sunnah, and adopting un-Islamic culture, dress, and practices. ...Our business dealings, our relationships with wives, parents, children, neighbours, Muslims and non-Muslims, do not in any way reflect the beauty and purity of Islam and the Sunnah.

¹⁴ This analogy is in respect to the 5 branches of Shariah :

Aqaa'id : Beliefs

Ibaadaat : Worship

Mu'aamalaat : Business transactions and dealings.

Mu'aasharaat : Social dealings

Akhlaaq : Character

The 'ECG' (electrocardiogram) for the spiritual hearts has disclosed the spiritual heart failure of so many, due to their statements reflecting weak faith, or faith on the threshold of kufr¹⁵, or outright rejection of the teachings of the Qur`aan and Sunnah¹⁶.

Since we did not heed the warnings of the 'Ulama¹⁷, Mashaa`ik¹⁸ and the righteous Scholars of Islam, in the initial stages, the spiritual heart is now so damaged, that speeches upon speeches, quotations upon quotations from the Qur`aan Shareef and Sunnah, do not cause any change, except in a few.

The only solution is the transplant of the spiritual heart.

What is this transplant of the spiritual heart? ...It is sincere Taubah (repentance) and Rujoo ilallah ('return' to Allah Ta`ala).

Why should we wait for punishment to hit us in the form of earthquakes, tornadoes, bombs and other disasters? Let us employ the protection given to us against punishment: **Sincere repentance and mending our relationship with Allah Ta`ala and His Rasul (ﷺ), with obedience.**

When we are going to make use of the prescriptions of sincere Taubah, Du`aa and Zikrullah¹⁹, which is the food and oxygenated 'blood' for the spiritual heart, we will gain in spiritual health

¹⁵ *Kufr* : Rejection

¹⁶ *Sunnah* : The practice of the Rasulallah (ﷺ) and his noble companions (RA).

¹⁷ *'Ulama* : Scholars (of Islam)

¹⁸ *Mashaa`ik* : Spiritual mentors and guides

¹⁹ *Zikrullah* : The Remembrance of Allah Ta`ala.

and strength, and we will not suffer spiritual imbalance. The spiritual arteries will become unblocked without the pain and discomfort of a bypass or transplant.

However, just as a heart patient has to submit himself to a surgeon, so is there a requirement that we submit ourselves to a specialist of the spiritual heart – a Shaykh who is experienced, learned, practicing and pious; whom Allah Ta'ala uses as the medium in the bypass or transplant of the spiritual heart.

After an operation on the physical heart, there are follow-up assessments, visits to the doctor, and an ECG is done, at least once a year. Similarly, there has to be regular visits and correspondence with one's spiritual mentor for assessment of one's spiritual condition.

We should understand that an attack of the physical heart, at the most, only leads to death, whereas that of the spiritual heart leads to death of Imaan and severe loss in the Hereafter.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the understanding, the concern for our spiritual health and well-being, and the Taufeeq of connecting ourselves to the teachings of Qur'aan and Sunnah, through Amal.

The Shops of Ma`rifat

A person generally purchases material commodities from a shop. Groceries are purchased from a supermarket; clothing from a clothing store, jewellery from a jewellery shop and so forth.

In order to obtain these material commodities, the buyer will have to give a certain amount of money in return for his goods. This is a transaction which is most common in the business world.

There is also a transaction in the spiritual world where special commodities may be purchased, which are generously available for all: **The commodities of Ma`rifat²⁰, Ishq²¹, Qurb²² and Nisbat²³.**

These special commodities of the 'Ma`rifat' and Ishq of Allah Ta`ala are such that they cannot be purchased with the coins and notes, or the gold and silver of this world. ...However, they are to be purchased **in** this world and are found in what I term, the '**shops' of Ma`rifat** – which are found throughout the world.

These 'shops of 'Ma`rifat' are the Ahlullah (People of Allah). They stock the merchandise of Allah Ta`ala. However, these Ahlullah do not accept cash, cheque, card, gold or silver in their

²⁰ *Ma`rifat* : Recognition (of Allah Ta`ala)

²¹ *Ishq* : Love (for Allah Ta`ala)

²² *Qurb* : Nearness (to Allah Ta`ala)

²³ *Nisbat* : Connection (with Allah Ta`ala)

transactions. They accept a different kind of currency, which is far more precious than money.

The payment for the merchandise of Allah Ta'ala is the qurbaani (sacrifice) of our evil desires. To become 'Aarif Billah'²⁴, we have got to make payment for these spiritual treasures with the sacrifice of our base desires.

The 'asking price' is the sacrifices of our evil desires – whether it is the evil desire to cast lustful gazes, commit fornication or adultery, gamble, take drugs, backbite, listen to music or commit any action which is Haraam²⁵.

Added to this, the more money a person possesses, the greater the commodity that can be purchased. ...Five Rand cannot buy a person a 22ct gold bangle. **You require 'big' money for big commodities.**

Similarly, the more the qurbaani, the more the Ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala; **the greater the sacrifice, the greater the recognition of Allah Ta'ala.**

Take the example of a person who goes to the Jeweller and he has with him R100 000. On the one hand, he wants to purchase jewellery and on the other hand, he does not want to part with his money. He is attached to the one and he is drawn to the other. He wants both. ...But he will have to part with that money in exchange for the jewels that he desires.

²⁴ *Aarif Billah* : One who has recognition of Allah Ta'ala

²⁵ *Haraam* : forbidden

Many of us want to please Allah Ta'ala and we want to also keep our nafs happy. ...This cannot be. No one can gain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and secure His love while pandering to the whims and fancies of nafs and shaytaan.

Just as the person will acquire gems, pearls, gold and silver in return for his money; so too, if the Saalik (Seeker of Allah Ta'ala) is prepared to make the sacrifice and then renders the sacrifices of his evil desires and passions, then from the 'shops' of Ma'rifat, he will be given the pearls and jewels of Ma'rifat.

The Ahlullah have within their hearts an invaluable treasure. They are very generous in sharing because sharing increases their treasure. And if we are able to secure the same, we too will understand the insignificance of Dunya (the material world).

***“O Allah, You have explained Your Value, being both worlds.
If by giving both the worlds, You are attained,
Both worlds are nothing in exchange for Your Love and
Friendship.
Even if a person should sacrifice his life for You,
Then too, the full price has not been paid.
To become martyred for the sake of Your Love,
Is better than a thousand lives,
And many are the Kingdoms to be sacrificed
for Your Bondage.”***

Once Shah Waliullah (رحمة الله عليه) addressed the Moghul Emperors, saying: **Waliullah has a heart that is beautified with the gems and pearls of the Love of Allah Ta'ala. If there is anyone wealthier, come forward! When you die, you will be beneath**

the ground, wrapped in a few sheets, while your power and position, your wealth and treasure will be left behind, above the ground.

These gems and pearls of the Ishq and Ma`rifat of Allah Ta`ala are dependent on how much of qurbaani is made.

“O Friend! Treasures are generally buried in places of destruction. Hence destroy the evil desires and attain the Treasure.”

Until we do not turn our hearts red with the blood of our evil desires, there is no way that we can gain the Ishq, Ma`rifat and Qurb of Allah Ta`ala. There is no Wali (Friend of Allah Ta`ala) who has become a Wali by fulfilling the evil desires of his nafs.

The condition of the sincere ones is :

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“SAY: ‘TRULY, MY SALAAH (PRAYER), AND MY SACRIFICE, MY LIFE AND MY DEATH ARE (ALL) FOR ALLAH, THE CHERISHER OF THE WORLDS.’”

[SURAH AN-AN`AAM 6 : 162]

Haqeeqat

Were we to analyse the eras when Muslims throughout the world were dominant, we will find that they had the *Haqeeqat* (reality) of Islam in their lives. They were living Islam – happily, willingly and enthusiastically. They understood their purpose in this world. They understood that they had high and noble objectives to aspire for, because they looked beyond this life.

Before them was their return to their Creator, to Allah Ta’ala; before them was Aakhirah (the Hereafter); before them was Jannah ... and so they exerted themselves in the direction of obedience to Allah Ta’ala and securing His Pleasure.

Allah Ta’ala put into the hearts of people, love for these sincere and obedient servants, and granted them success. There was a dynamic effect when people met with these Muslims, because they not only had the ‘*soorat*’ (outer form), they had the Haqeeqat as well. **People changed their religion, their culture, their dress and their language because they were seeing the beauty and blessings of Islam.**

In the early days of Islam, we see how a small number grew to 500, then 700 and thereafter 1500 - which was something of a great and wonderful accomplishment, considering the odds against the Muslims at that time.

Today, we are plus one billion – but what a difference between the early Muslims and us!

In the 1950s, as a young boy, I recall visiting the museum. There were different animals: omnivores, carnivores and so forth – but they were all stuffed with sawdust. And there were signs near the animals, which read : **‘PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH.’**

Now would we find such a sign in the Kruger National Park, when we go on a safari, wanting to see the Big Five?

When does the king of the jungle require a sign such as: **Please do not touch?**

Yet, in the museum, this sign was placed next to the lion because there was no life in that lion. There was no haqeeqat (reality). Even if it was the king of the jungle – he was now stuffed with sawdust. Rats too could nibble without fear. ...Since there was no life, there was no worry of even a roar.

Looking at the present scenario of the Muslim Ummah – globally, and we see our likeness to those stuffed animals.

We have lost that power and supremacy which is otherwise reserved for the Believers.

The majority of Muslims today have no reality. ...We have ‘stuffed’ our hearts with the love of Dunya and therefore our great weakness and overwhelming incapacity – a prophecy which is so clearly manifest today.

Rasulullah (ﺻﻠﻮﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﻭﺳﻠﻢ) said: "The People will soon summon one another to attack you as people, when eating, invite others to share their food."

Someone asked, "Will that be because of our small numbers at that time?"

He replied, "**No, you will be numerous at that time: but you will be froth and scum like that carried down by a torrent (of water), and Allah will take the fear of you from the hearts of your enemy and cast *al-wahn* into your hearts.**"

Someone asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what is *al-wahn*?"

He replied, "**Love of the world and dislike of death.**"²⁶

One billion in number, but how shameful, humiliating and lamentable, that we are subservient to the minority. ...Who is influencing the political and economic climate? Who is manipulating global dynamics? ...Certainly not the Muslims.

The early Muslims had the reality and spirit of Islam. As such, success and victory was theirs for the taking. On the other hand, we want to conquer the world with *soorat* (form) or with talks and literature.

Dominance, Supremacy, Power and Authority do not come with *soorat*. In fact, the majority cannot even be recognized as Muslims – so even *soorat* seems to fall by the way side.

²⁶ Abu Dawood / Ahmad

In one of my trips to Pakistan, I visited someone at his home. There was a bowl of plastic fruit which looked so real – but it was “good for looking”, not good for eating.

Many of us Muslims today are not even “good for looking”. The plastic fruit was a good imitation - but in our *soorat*, there is no imitation also... very much like the Munafiqeen: neither here nor there.

Success and supremacy come with engendering sincere piety in the heart, and living Islam, living the Sunnah ... not selecting what we like and leaving off what our nafs does not incline to.

Allah Ta’ala wants us completely **IN** Islam.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ۖ

"O YOU WHO BELIEVE! ENTER INTO THE FOLD OF ISLAM COMPLETELY..."

[Surah Baqarah 2: 208]

This is the recipe of success. But we will have to bring together the correct ingredients to make that a “flop-proof” success.

The Prohibition of Photography

One of the greatest calamities of our times is the abuse of the camera.

In this day and age, with the easy availability of cell-phones, digital cameras, camcorders, etc. everyone seems to be in possession of a tool which has created an upheaval in mischief.

...How many have had their names dragged through the mud, have been black-mailed, slandered or left humiliated and disgraced due to photographs taken and thereafter circulated?

Photography is an evil which has been entirely misjudged and under-estimated.

Just recently, a brother related a dream to me, requesting an interpretation. I interpreted his dream saying: *'It seems as if movies are being viewed in the Masjid.'*

Within a matter of days, the interpretation was made apparent. We had a visiting 'Aalim give a talk in our Masjid. I was sitting on a chair, near the front, when I observed three young boys very absorbed with their cell phones. I requested a friend to go to the back of the Masjid and see what they were up to. He observed that they were viewing some film with dirty, indecent pictures. **إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. We give our children high-technology at the expense of Hayaa (modesty), Deen and Imaan.**

One is to have no shame and commit sins in the presence of Allah Ta'ala, but increasing in shamelessness is when one is brazen enough to commit sins in the presence of Allah Ta'ala, whilst in the Masjid, the House of Allah Ta'ala.

The same shamelessness is found en-masse in the Masjid of all Masaajid, Masjidul Haraam in Makkah Mukarramah. The objective of the majority visiting the Haramain Shareefain these days, is taking photographs and video recording, instead of engaging in Ibaadah.

Complaints - and it is even experience - of flashes and clicks of the camera, seen or heard, whilst Salaah is in progress or whilst in Tawaaf, or whilst at the Raudha Mubarak.

There is a very dire need to explain that this is a grave and serious crime in the sight of Allah Ta'ala.

What needs to be understood is that photography of anything animate is a clear prohibition. It is Haraam.

It has been narrated from Hazrat Jaabir (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) that Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) forbade pictures in the house and he forbade making them²⁷.

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **“Verily, of the most grievously tormented people on the Day of Resurrection are picture-makers.”**²⁸

There are, in fact, many other Ahaadeeth, which clearly prove this prohibition.

²⁷ Tirmidhi

²⁸ Sahih Bukhari

Why did Allah Ta'ala prohibit photography?

One reason is quite clear; that it was the origin of Shirk (polytheism):

Going down the passage of history, we find that mankind was introduced to idol worship through shaytaan's efforts in leading mankind astray. Due to his whispering encouragement, people began to draw and sketch their pious predecessors, thinking that their faces and images will be a source of inspiration and an incentive to also follow in their footsteps of piety. However, it was the means by which many began to worship those pictures, and thereafter carved idols; and idol worship came into vogue.

Whilst this would have been more than sufficient for the Believer, it is no longer considered a worthy reason by Muslims who want to engage in the sin. Many say that there is no way that they would worship a photograph or even a sketch, let alone an idol.

My Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum), presented another reason behind the prohibition: **So that Allah Ta'ala may protect the respect and dignity of His servants.**

Many a time, a person who was engaged in various evils is granted Hidayat (guidance). Sometimes, this Hidayat is such that he attains a high stage of Wilayat. The person becomes a great Wali (Friend) of Allah Ta'ala and even a Shaykh, and thousands of people throng to his gatherings. Now at such a

time, if someone were to dig up the pictures of his past ... what embarrassment he would have to endure.

From Allah Ta'ala's side, there is forgiveness of sins, on sincere Taubah²⁹, to the extent, that all evidence is 'deleted' and Insha-Allah, the person will not have to render an account for those sins. However, if photographs were taken, this is evidence which the person has produced **against himself**, and which cannot always be destroyed – especially if it is in the hands of others who wish to bring disgrace to the person.

My Shaykh mentioned this, with reference to an incident, where a woman who was a candidate in one of Pakistan's elections, was blackmailed with photographs of herself in a compromising situation so that she withdraws.

Further to this reason, we find that the porn industry and filthy films are all based on pictures. **Islam nips the problem in the bud by prohibiting photography.**

If everyone practiced upon this teaching, we would not have pornography, woman abuse and exploitation, child pornography, and the evil consequences of rape, insanity, suicide, incest, etc., much of which has shattered and devastated the marriages and homes of even many Muslims.

Now thinking over all these harms, we should appreciate the prohibition all the more and show that appreciation by abstaining. **There is nothing but great wisdom in the prohibitions of Allah Ta'ala, with nothing but good for His servants.**

²⁹ *Taubah* : repentance

Children and Toys

When a child wants a toy which is an animate object or a musical instrument, gently explain to the child that Allah Ta'ala is displeased with such a toy, and that the presence of such toys in our homes, deprives us of the presence of the Malaa'ikah (angels) of Raḥmah (Mercy).

After having explained this, buy something ***better, if*** it is within one's means, of the 'mubaah' (permissible) category – without being extravagant and wasteful.

Considering the fact that most children have all kinds of animate, musical and Haraam (forbidden) toys, do not let the child feel as if he or she is being deprived of play. **...My Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) has explained that we should make our children happy with Halaal so that they grow up loving the beautiful Deen (religion) of Islam.**

The same applies to children's clothing and accessories to be found on the market; much of which has cartoon characters, fictional characters, etc. which would captivate and charm little children; but which the Shariah³⁰ does not permit.

Muslims today consider these restrictions as trivial and irrelevant, whereas there is great wisdom in all the 'Muḥarramaat' (prohibitions) of Islam.

³⁰ *Shariah* : Code of Islamic Law

One of the reasons why children have nightmares is due to the photographs that we bring into our homes, the cartoons and other programmes we allow and encourage them to view, or clothing and toys which are impermissible... Sometimes the room walls are plastered with cartoon characters. Huge teddy bears, dolls and stuffed animals are found all around the room, which result in frightful dreams.

...There are angels who are deputed to look after our children, but these angels do not enter that home where there are pictures of animate objects. This deprives our children of the presence and protection of the angels, who also play with babies.

Rasulullah (ﺻﻠﻰ ﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﻭﺳﻠﻢ) said : “Angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture.”³¹

We claim that we are Believers in Allah Ta’ala and His Rasul (ﺻﻠﻰ ﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﻭﺳﻠﻢ). If the claim is true and sincere, then it is not acceptable that as Believers in Allah Ta’ala and His Rasul (ﺻﻠﻰ ﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﻭﺳﻠﻢ), we debate, argue or reject what are clear injunctions of Shariah. The person who does so, has clearly strayed from the right path...

وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ
أَمْرِهِمْ ^ط وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا ۝

³¹ Sahih Muslim

“IT IS NOT FITTING FOR A BELIEVER, MAN OR WOMAN, WHEN A MATTER HAS BEEN DECIDED BY ALLAH AND HIS APOSTLE, TO HAVE ANY OPTION ABOUT THEIR DECISION : IF ANYONE DISOBEYS ALLAH AND HIS APOSTLE, HE IS INDEED ON A CLEARLY WRONG PATH.”

[SURAH AHAB 33 : 36]

Allah Ta’ala mentions the response of His sincere servants:

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ط وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

○ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَخْشِ اللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ○

“THE ANSWER OF THE BELIEVERS, WHEN SUMMONED TO ALLAH AND HIS RASUL, IN ORDER THAT HE MAY JUDGE BETWEEN THEM IS NOT OTHER THAN THIS : THEY SAY, ‘WE HEAR AND WE OBEY.’ IT IS SUCH AS THESE WHO WILL ATTAIN FELICITY. IT IS SUCH AS OBEY ALLAH AND HIS RASUL, AND FEAR ALLAH AND DO RIGHT, THAT WILL WIN (IN THE END).”

[SURAH NOOR 24 : 51 / 52]

Character

As Muslims, our character, morals and etiquette should differentiate us from others. Non-Muslims are not so attentive to our beautiful Salaah³², Tilawah³³, Zikr³⁴, and other Ibaadaat as they are to our character and dealings with others.

Wherever the Sahabah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) went, it was their character which attracted so many; which often became the focus of attention, as well as admiration.

When Rasulallah³⁵ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) invited the Quraysh to the worship of ONE Allah, he climbed Mount Safa and called out to his people, calling every family of the Quraysh. When they arrived, he asked them: *'If I told you that horsemen were advancing to attack you from the valley on the other side of the hill, would you believe me?'*³⁶

Simultaneously and immediately, they all responded: *'Yes! We have **always** found you honest.'*

Nabi (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) presented his credentials to them : **That that person who has never spoken a lie for 40 years, do you think he is going to do so now, in his invitation to the worship of One Allah?**

³² *Salaah* : Prayer performed five times a day. It is an incumbent duty upon every Muslim.

³³ *Tilawat* : Recitation (of the Qur'aan Shareef)

³⁴ *Zikr* : Remembrance (of Allah Ta'ala)

³⁵ *Rasulullah* : The Messenger of Allah Ta'ala

³⁶ Sahih Bukhari

How many of us can present trustworthiness, honesty and truthfulness as outstanding traits within us, let alone beautiful speech and noble etiquette in our dealings with people?

This is one of the main reasons why a large number of non-Muslims remain aloof from Islam. Our poor character and our poor dealings have become a barrier to them coming into Islam. It is as if we are standing at the door of Islam, and keeping them out – or pushing them away. ...Have we ever given a thought as to how we are going to answer for this?

Islam is not only Salaah, Fasting, Hajj³⁷ and 'Umrah³⁸. ...These forms of worship only make up one branch of Shariah. ... The person may be fulfilling the rights of the Creator (Allah Ta'ala) but he is at the same time displeasing Allah Ta'ala by neglecting and violating the rights of the creation (Makhlooq).

There are 5 branches of Shariah :

- *Aqaa'id* : Beliefs
- *Ibaadaat* : Worship
- *Mu'aamalaat* : Business transactions and dealings
- *Mu'aasharaat* : Social dealings
- *Akhlaaq* : Character

Every Muslim has to make an effort to correct **all** of these branches for perfection of Islam. It must not be that any one of us returns to Allah Ta'ala with plentiful of Ibaadaat, which subsequently accrues to others and is lost to ourselves.

³⁷ *Hajj* : Pilgrimage to Makkah Sharif during the month of Zul Hijjah. This is the 5th Pillars of Islam.

³⁸ *'Umrah* : The lesser pilgrimage

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) related that Nabi (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) once asked his companions: ***‘Do you know who is a pauper?’***

The Companions replied that a pauper is a person who has no money or property.

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said : ***‘A pauper from among my followers (Ummah) is one who will come on the Day of Judgment with a good record of Salaah (prayers) and Saum (fasting) and Zakaah (compulsory charity) but also he had abused somebody; slandered someone or beaten yet another person. Then all the oppressed persons will receive a part of the aggressor’s good deeds. Should they fall short of his aggression, then the aggrieved persons’ sins and defaults will be transferred from them to him, and he will be thrown into the Fire (Hell).’***³⁹

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) also related that Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: *‘If any Muslim has oppressed his brother, concerning his honour or anything else, let him obtain his pardon today (in this world) before the time comes when he will have neither Dinaars⁴⁰ nor Dirhams⁴¹ (i.e. he will be penniless). If the aggressor may have some good deeds (in his account) the same would be deducted in equal proportion to his wrongs. If the aggressor will have no good deeds in his account, the wrongs of the aggrieved would be added to the account of the aggressor in equal proportion.’*⁴²

³⁹ Sahih Muslim

⁴⁰ Dinaars : gold coins

⁴¹ Dirhams : silver coins

⁴² Sahih Bukhari

I often say : **'Pay back HERE, to save your back THERE.'**

If we want safety and salvation, we have to get our deeds in order. We need to make amends and compensate for our shortcomings HERE, in this worldly life; otherwise, THERE, on the Day of Resurrection, there will be great regret and humiliation. May Allah Ta'ala guide and protect us all.

Attractions and Distractions

In an accident, or due to a slip or fall, if the **joint** of the shoulder or leg is dislocated, **traction** is normally the means adopted in the healing process.

The sinful, immoral attractions and distractions which form the entertainment of those who have forgotten Allah Ta'ala are such, that they ***dislocate the joints of Imaan***.

The *traction* for indulgence in sins is sincere Taubah (repentance), distancing oneself from sins and from the venues of sins; together with attending good, Deeni programmes and associating with the pious.

...There are so many, so many, who have gone towards some Haraam (forbidden) attraction, never to return therefrom. So many have lost their identity as Muslims, and sometimes they have even lost their Imaan and suffer the great loss of their Aakhirah.

Thousands have died engaging in Haraam entertainment; whether at the casinos, discos, raves, prostitute quarters, massage parlours, in adultery, or some other vice.

One earthquake, one tsunami, one gale-force wind, one fire, and death comes upon thousands – many of whom are also engaged in sins. What guarantee do we have, while indulging in

sins, that we won't be singled out, for our return to Allah Ta'ala?

So think...

And think again!

What would be the condition of that person who comes face to face with the Angel of Death while gambling, drinking, dancing, in raves, adultery or fornication? ...**Which Muslim wants to return to Allah Ta'ala in a state of sin?**

Such matters should not be taken lightly.

The holiday period – even week-ends – are a time of great test and trial : Invitation to sins, promotion of sins, temptation to sins, enticement and encouragement towards all kinds of Haraam is the order of the day.

Beach partying, intermingling and courting, immodest dress, loud music and dance, smoking and drinking and drug-taking then become the programme and timetable for many Muslims. ...Salaah becomes a forgotten duty for holiday-makers. The Islamic dress and identity are discarded so that there is freedom to engage in more sinful activities.

Shaytaan's trump card to Haraam entertainment is even held up by Muslims, who also invite to Haraam just as the non-Muslims do. ... ⁴³ **إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ**

⁴³ To Allah we belong and to Him is our return

Is this what we were created for?

Allah Ta'ala says:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“DID YOU THINK THAT WE CREATED YOU FOR NOTHING, AND THAT YOU WILL NOT BE BROUGHT BACK TO US?”

[SURAH MU`MINOON 23 : 115]

The shocking behaviour of our Muslim youth (and even many Muslim adults) leaves us numb, disturbed, distressed and deeply, deeply grieved... What shocking news does the heart have to contend with?

The Muslim youth are supposed to be tomorrow's leaders for the Ummah. They are expected to be the representatives of Deen, inviting the non-Muslims to Islam, with the modesty and purity of thought, speech, dress and actions which should be characteristic of every Muslim.

Deen and Shariah do not stifle us, do not deprive us of pleasure and enjoyment, do not deny us happiness and celebration. Deen and Shariah accommodate leisure and pleasure. **Islam is beautiful. Most beautiful.** Islam is not 'dry'. It is enjoyable. ...Allah Ta'ala has only placed certain boundaries through His Divine prohibitions, for our own benefit, safety and well-being.

So let us make the effort and avoid the temptations towards sins. Let us not walk the route towards sins. Let us keep clear of the venues of sins like how we would if we had fore-knowledge

that there will be an earthquake, tsunami or bomb-blast devastating such places. ...We fear for our lives. **The greater need is to fear for our Imaan and that of our children's Imaan.**

Let us not forget that we are Muslims.

Let us not forget our relationship with Allah Ta'ala.

Let us not forget that death can visit very unexpectedly.

Let us not forget that there is accountability.

Let us not forget Jannah.

Let us not forget Jahannum.

This world is a prison for the Believer and a paradise for the disbeliever. ...What is 'good' for the disbelievers will not be good for the Believers. If they find enjoyment in Haraam, the Muslim will find **HARM** in that same Haraam.

Every person is given the choice. A person either makes a wise decision or an unwise decision.

If we adopt Taqwa⁴⁴, we restrain and abstain from disobedience to Allah Ta'ala, then when we leave this world, we leave behind a prison. When we leave this world, we leave **free**. When the disbeliever leaves this world, he leaves behind his paradise. When he leaves this world, he enters a prison; wherein there is no release, no bail, no escape and no parole.

⁴⁴ *Taqwa* : piety / abstinence from sins

This worldly life is short. Very short. Understand the reality : **Every passing second is delivering us closer and closer to the bridge of death. And there is no choice. We have to cross that bridge.**

My Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) says in poetry:

**“Strange is the visa of life;
It can be cancelled at any time.
The duration of its validity is unknown
And its extension too, impossible.**

Time is running out.

The journey is long. The life after this is **eternal**. **There is no return to this world.**

What preparations have we made? What provisions have we procured?

Nabi (ﺻﻠﻮﺍﻟﻠﻪ ﻋﻠﻴﻪ ﻭﺳﻠﻢ) said: **“The intelligent one is he who suppresses his desires and practises for what is after death, and the foolish one is he who makes his nafs follow its desires and (he) places (baseless) hope on Allah.”**⁴⁵

Imam Shaafi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) summed up this life very simply and aptly:

“This worldly life is a just a moment; let it be a moment of obedience.”

⁴⁵ Tirmidhi

In The Name of Islam

There is a sickness in society which has now reached epidemic proportions. It is so serious that it requires repetition in its warnings to drive the point home.

Fitnahs⁴⁶ abound, and the worst and most dangerous fitnah is that which takes the form and garb of Deen⁴⁷.

In the name and guise of Deen, Muslims are being invited to Fund-raising programmes, lunches, dinners, pre-Ramadaan and Eid Fairs. Funds are being raised for Deeni projects in this manner.

The theme of these programmes is ‘Fun’ and ‘Entertainment’, which entails mixing and socializing. The encouragement is for all to attend – men and women, young and old.

Since this is in the name of Deen, people consider it as something virtuous; as some kind of Ibaadah (worship). ...One can gauge how serious the matter is. The person is not going to make Taubah for this. He is not going to consider the intermingling and the socializing as sinful, because the event is promoted as something meritorious and ‘Halaal’, and because the invitation is from people and organizations that are representing Deen, and whom it is expected, would know better as to what is Haraam and Halaal.

⁴⁶ *Fitnahs*: Trials (It also implies corruption, mischief, etc.)

⁴⁷ *Deen* : religion

**‘What a kind of revolution!
That Ummah which detested Haraam, which stayed far
from that which is doubtful,
now has no fear indulging in Haraam.’**

Even if an ‘Aalim is involved in such activities, or endorsing such programmes, and is seen at such venues, this does not make Haraam, Halaal. ...This is the weakness of that ‘Aalim.

There are so many who are deendaar and they know better than to attend such programmes; their hearts will give them the Fatwa: **‘Don’t go’** – then why still go? ...Thereafter complaints are presented of the immodest dressing of the women, the intermingling of sexes, the disconcerting condition of the youth, etc. ...This is the trap of shaytaan and nafs!

The person is gazing at strange women (or vice versa), engaging the nafs in Haraam pleasure and destroying the heart with evil desires.

Those who project piety, with their dressing, their Khidmat of Deen, their Ta-alluq with the Mashaa`ik, must prove their piety and sincerity by restraining themselves from such fitnah. The instruction and order of Shariah is :

**‘IT IS NOT PERMISSIBLE TO BE PRESENT IN A GATHERING
WHERE ALLAH TA’ALA IS BEING DISOBEYED.’**

Mullah Ali Qaari (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) has defined Hayaa (modesty) as :

“The Haqeeqat (reality) of Hayaa is that your Maula (your Master, Allah Ta’ala) must not find you in that place which He has forbidden.”

...Or indulging in that which He has forbidden.

Such events and functions bring one close to Zina (adultery).
Allah Ta'ala says:

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّيْنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً ۖ وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ۝

**“AND COME NOT NEAR TO ZINA. VERILY IT IS A SHAMEFUL
AND EVIL PATH”**

[SURAH AL- ISRA 17 : 32]

These functions promote Zina of the eyes, whereas it is from the Commandments of Allah Ta'ala that we lower our gazes from looking at ghair-mahareem. Allah Ta'ala addresses both the believing men and believing women:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ۝

**“TELL THE BELIEVING MEN TO LOWER THEIR GAZE
(FROM LOOKING AT THAT WHICH IS HARAAM) AND TO BE MODEST
(I.E. TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM PROHIBITED DEEDS LIKE ADULTERY
AND FORNICATION). THAT IS PURER FOR THEM.
VERILY ALLAH IS AWARE OF WHAT THEY DO.”**

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ
وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ

**... AND TELL THE BELIEVING WOMEN TO LOWER THEIR GAZE (FROM
LOOKING AT THAT WHICH IS FORBIDDEN) AND TO BE MODEST AND NOT
TO SHOW OFF THEIR BEAUTY...**

[SURAH NUR 24 : 30/ 31]

Young men have written to me and have mentioned quite explicitly that their intentions in frequenting such functions, fairs and programmes is for no other purpose but to admire the women. Some have even mentioned deriving Haraam pleasure by deliberately touching those women in the crowd (تَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ)⁴⁸ – and if these are not our wives, then they are our daughters or mothers or sisters or nieces, who are exposed to lustful glances and physical contact with strangers.

So when it is plainly evident that these programmes and fairs are against the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala, **we can stop ourselves and our families**, even if we cannot stop others.

Moreover, we should keep in mind that Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **“The most beloved places in the Sight of Allah are the Masaajid, and the most disliked places in the Sight of Allah, are the markets.”**⁴⁹

⁴⁸ (تَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ) *Na-oozu Billahi min zaalik*: We seek Allah’s protection from that.

⁴⁹ Sahih Muslim

Immediate Wilayat

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

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ

“... VERILY ALLAH LOVES THOSE WHO REPENT...”

[SURAH BAQARAH 2 : 222]

A young person, after listening to a talk, experienced a revolution in his heart. He asked me : “*With my past, with the sins in my life, how is it possible for me to become a Wali⁵⁰?*”

I said : “*It is extremely simple. It takes just one minute to become a Wali. Raise your hands and with deep regret and remorse in your heart, shed a few tears and pray to Allah : ‘O Allah, I have wasted my life, but I want to become Your Wali; I want to become Your friend. So forgive all the sins which I have committed since maturity, and grant me the Taufeeq⁵¹ to do that which pleases You in my future life.’*

*You have immediately become a Wali. Now make an effort towards fulfilling those rights which had been violated. **The effort made indicates to the sincerity of your Taubah.***”

If Salaah and Fasts were missed, then *Qaza* must necessarily be made. If *Zakaah*, *Qurbaani* and *Sadaqatul Fitr* were not fulfilled, such monies must necessarily be paid. The same applies to

⁵⁰ *Wali* : Friend of Allah Ta'ala

⁵¹ *Taufeeq* : Divine Assistance to do good deeds.

monies which are owing to people. Pay back to whomsoever, what is due, or ask them to forgive. If not, then that Taubah will not be complete. And if harm and injury was caused to another, his or her forgiveness should be sought.

If there are a number of outstanding Salaah or fasts due, it is obvious that a person cannot read all the Qazas⁵² in one day, or keep all his missed fasts in one day. This will take due time. **However, the intention of the person, to fulfil all dues of Allah Ta'ala and creation, and the effort made in that direction makes the person a friend and beloved of Allah Ta'ala.**

If the person does not make any effort in that direction after Taubah, this is a clear sign that he was not sincere in his repentance.

Also, in respect to his future life, every effort should be made not to return to sins.

⁵² *Qaza* : Religious duty performed after the expiry of its time.

Bringing Life into the Heart

When a hen lays enough eggs, her effort is then to incubate her eggs. We observe how she sits on the eggs, and is so committed to the process, that she only leaves her eggs for a few minutes in a day, when she needs to eat and drink.

As is well-known, it takes twenty one days for the eggs to hatch - that is, if they are properly incubated by the hen. So for almost all that time, the hen sits on the eggs. The embryo develops inside the egg in that period of time, until a chick pecks its way out of its eggshell and is hatched.

When life comes into that chick, the chick does not require any assistance to come out. It does not wait for its mother to crack the shell so that it may come out. It is able to crack the shell itself.

Once the eggs hatch, the hen continues to stay on the nest for weeks thereafter, occupying herself in raising her chicks. She teaches them survival skills and how to look for food.

Together with providing her chicks with warmth and the shelter of her wings, she fervently protects her brood from anyone who dares to disturb them. She constantly worries over them and keeps them close to her, knowing that her little ones are vulnerable to predators. ...We have seen how the chicks hide under the wings of the mother hen.

A beautiful lesson is drawn from this natural phenomenon:

The Saalik⁵³ or Mureed⁵⁴ who takes cover and refuge in the sanctuary of the Shaykh-e-Kaamil⁵⁵ will find spiritual life being generated in him. **The Suhbah (company) of the Shaykh-e-Kaamil is akin to the incubation process, whereby spiritual life is generated into the Mureed.**

Just as there is a required period for the chick's development and growth, so too, the Mureed or the Saalik is required to spend sufficient time with the Shaykh to draw that spiritual life within his heart. Naturally, and it should go without saying, the intention must be sincere.

In the company of the Shaykh-e-Kaamil, the sincere Saalik finds a change overcoming his heart, he finds the love and fear of Allah Ta'ala flourishing in his heart, he finds the courage and capacity to give up sins, and he finds the inclination and strength to do good deeds.

...Often, through the noble company and guidance of the Shaykh, the Mureed is able to abandon sins more easily. Of course, some striving (Mujahadah) and sacrifice (qurbaani) are required. But it becomes easy to become '*muttaqi*' or pious in the right company.

And this is the Command and Direction of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. to keep the company of the pious):

⁵³ *Saalik* : Seeker (of Allah Ta'ala)

⁵⁴ *Mureed*: Disciple

⁵⁵ *Shaykh-e-Kaamil* : Experienced, learned, practising and pious spiritual mentor

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE, FEAR ALLAH AND JOIN THE COMPANY OF THE TRUTHFUL ONES (THE PIOUS, THE AULIYA ALLAH).”

[SURAH TAUBAH 9 : 119]

Through the Suhbat, Du’aa and Tawajjuh (attention) of the Shaykh, the Saalik is able to easily crack the shell of all *ma’siyat* or sins. He will be able to un-shackle himself from the chains of nafs and shaytaan. And when a person makes ‘*fanaa*’ of (i.e. destroys) the evil desires of his heart (qalb), Allah Ta’ala grants that heart, ‘*Hayaat*’ (life).

Once there is life in the heart, all parts of the body will function properly, as has been explained by Rasulullah (ﷺ):

“There is a piece of flesh in the body, if it becomes good (reformed), the whole body becomes good but if it gets corrupted, the whole body gets corrupted – and that is the heart.”⁵⁶

Thus, the heart is the focal and central point for reformation and spiritual life. The simple and most successful means for the heart’s reformation and life (*Hayaat*), is ‘*join the company of the Truthful Ones.*’

As has been aptly conveyed in poetry:

**‘My journey has become easy;
Even the winds have changed direction.
...When your hand came into my hand,
Even the lamps of the road lit up.’**

⁵⁶ Sahih Bukhari

Like the hen, we find that the Kaamil Shaykh offers protection to those who come under the wings of his spiritual care and nurture. He guides and directs them to recognizing the predators that are out hunting them – i.e. nafs and shaytaan. He teaches them how to find their spiritual food, through various good deeds and through good character; through following the Sunnah and through practicing on Deen and Shariah.

He, himself, is constantly burdened with the responsibility and obligation of attending to them, but he earnestly continues in his efforts.

The Auliya Allah are '*mahfooz*' (protected by Allah Ta'ala) so the Shaykh-e-Kaamil is also in the special protection of Allah Ta'ala, and in this manner, those who keep his company benefit from that protection, especially against nafs and shaytaan.

...And this is the experience whilst in the company of the Shaykh. Many do not even feel the inclination to commit sins; rather the inclination is to do good deeds.

One of our Mashaa'ik defined **Deen** as the name for 'Hayaat-e-Qalbi'.

If a person develops 'Hayaat-e-Qalbi' – i.e. he adopts Taqwa, life will automatically come into his Deen. **Knowledge comes into practice. Good deeds come to life.**

In a Hadeeth, Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said : ‘...**Taqwa is here.**’⁵⁷ and he pointed towards his heart, repeating this statement thrice.

Taqwa is the life of the spiritual heart. Without Taqwa or ‘Hayaat-e-Qalbi’, there is only the casing of Deen.

Presently, what we have is the shape and form of Ibaadaat. Even though our bodies are occupied in Ibaadaat, there is no spirit, soul or ‘kaifiyyat’⁵⁸ because there is no Hayaat-e-Qalbi, because there is no Taqwa; there is no abstinence from sins.

Furthermore, Hayaat-e-Qalbi guarantees Hayaatan - Tayyibah (a good life). Allah Ta’ala mentions in the Qur’aan Shareef:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

“WHOEVER DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHETHER MALE OR FEMALE, WHILE HE IS A BELIEVER - WE WILL SURELY CAUSE HIM TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE, AND WE WILL SURELY GIVE THEM THEIR REWARD [IN THE HEREAFTER] ACCORDING TO THE BEST OF WHAT THEY USED TO DO.”

[SURAH AN-NAHL 16 : 97]

The heart which has no ‘Hayaat’ is a heart devoid of the Tajalli⁵⁹ of Allah Ta’ala. There are so many who can be seeing the truth, but at the same time they are not seeing it, since there is no acknowledgement by the heart. Many

⁵⁷ Sahih Muslim

⁵⁸ *Kaifiyyat* : spiritual feeling / experience

⁵⁹ *Tajalli* : Special Mercy

can be listening to the truth, but they are not listening to anything, since there is no belief and acceptance in the heart. Such a heart has become hardened, so much so that it is not even considered a heart...

Allah Ta'ala says regarding the Bani Israeel :

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادْرَأْتُمْ فِيهَا ط وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ۖ

**‘THENCEFORTH WERE YOUR HEARTS HARDENED : THEY BECAME LIKE A
ROCK AND EVEN WORSE IN HARDNESS.’**

[SURAH BAQARAH 2 : 72]

May Allah Ta'ala, out of His Infinite Kindness, bless us all with spiritual life and strength, and safeguard us from the hardness of the heart, from death of the spiritual heart. May Allah Ta'ala afford us the good fortune that our life and death be amidst His Auliya Allah and that we too become His Friends.

Holding a good opinion of the deceased

After a Believer is buried, we should **not** have the opinion that the person is suffering the ‘a_zaab’ (punishment) of ‘Qabr’⁶⁰, even if he or she was involved in sin. **We should hold a good opinion of the dead.**

Imam Abu Dawood (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) narrated that Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said : ***“Make mention of the virtues of your dead, and refrain from (mentioning) their evils.”***

It may well be that the person has already secured Divine Forgiveness. We do not know which action of the deceased, during his lifetime, earned him the pleasure of Allah Ta’ala and gained him, Najaat (salvation) and Jannah⁶¹. **Moreover, the deceased has already traversed where we still have to journey. What do we know of the conditions to meet us at the time of death and after?**

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said : *‘Forgiveness was granted to a prostitute. She came upon a dog at the mouth of a well, that was panting, and about to die of thirst. She took off her leather sock, tied it with her headscarf, and drew some water from the well for the dog. It was for this act of kindness that she was forgiven her sins.’*

⁶⁰ *Qabr* : literally means, grave. (Also refers to the period after death till the Day of Resurrection.)

⁶¹ *Jannah* : Paradise

When Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was asked, ‘Are we rewarded even for the good we do to animals?’

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) replied: **‘Reward is given for good done to any living creature.’**⁶²

Reading such an incident does not mean that we just look for some thirsty dog, give it some water and then be confident of our forgiveness. Every Hadeeth Shareef must be understood in its proper context.

Does a person steal or commit some other crime a day before the president’s birthday because he heard that the president of the country gives amnesty and releases many prisoners on his birthday? ...No.

Even though Allah Ta’ala’s Mercy and Forgiveness searches for opportunities, we should not be fooled and misled by shaytaan to commit sins based on this fact.

Whilst there is no doubt that Allah Ta’ala is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful, Allah Ta’ala also punishes those who are **persistent** in sins and negligent in obedience.

Allah Ta’ala states in the Qur`aan Shareef :

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِّلنَّاسِ عَلَى ظُلْمِهِمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

‘... BUT VERILY YOUR LORD IS FULL OF FORGIVENESS FOR MANKIND FOR THEIR WRONG-DOING. AND VERILY YOUR LORD IS (ALSO) STRICT IN PUNISHMENT.’

[SURAH RA’D 13 : 6]

⁶² Sahih Muslim

Securing Rewards in Marriage

The Sawaab (reward) for the sabr (patience) a woman exercises over her difficulties in managing the home of her husband and fulfilling the rights of her husband and children can make her 'reach' Allah Ta'ala very quickly. This, however, is **conditional** to her obedience to Allah Ta'ala; fulfilling His rights, the rights of His Rasul (ﷺ), as well as the rights of His Creation.

Women who have a number of children, sometimes even a temperamental husband, together with many household chores and other responsibilities, sometimes think that they cannot achieve the ranks of the Auliya Allah⁶³ because they do not have time for 'wazeefas'⁶⁴ and Nawaafil (optional prayers).

I tell them that they need not worry about too many wazeefas. **The most important 'wazeefa' is abstinence from all sins. Added to this, they should just correct their Niyyah or intention, in all that they are doing as routine housework. Make the intention of pleasing Allah Ta'ala, then that same housework becomes Ibaadah. In this simple way, they will easily secure great rewards and the same spiritual stages, if not higher.**

Similarly, the Sawaab for the sabr (patience) a man exercises over his wife's shortcomings, emotional outbursts or mood swings is a medium by which he too acquires great rewards and

⁶³ *Auliya Allah* : Friends of Allah Ta'ala

⁶⁴ *Wazeefas* : additional, optional supplications

reaches Allah Ta'ala very, very quickly.

Many Auliya Allah reached great spiritual heights, and were accepted for tremendous service to Deen on the patience they adopted with their wives, and on the love, care, affection, tenderness and generosity they also extended to their wives.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) set the perfect example for all. Despite the tremendous responsibilities that he was entrusted with, he gave due attention and time to his wives and treated them with love and generosity. He was never harsh or insensitive towards any single wife.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: **“The best amongst the Believers is he whose character is the best. And the best among you is the one who is best towards his wife.”**⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Sahih Muslim / Tirmidhi

Integrity and Honesty

It has been mentioned in a Hadeeth that a pious person from the Bani Israel took a loan of one thousand gold coins, and fixing a date, promised to pay back at that time. The person giving the loan required witnesses.

The pious person said : *'Allah is sufficient as a witness.'*

He was then asked : *'Who stands surety on your behalf?'*

The person replied : *'Allah is sufficient as a surety.'*

The person, giving the loan, accepted this, saying : *'You have spoken the truth.'* And without further consideration, handed over one thousand gold coins.

On the due date, due to flood, the pious person could not find a boat to take him across the river, to his creditor, to make the payment. **This both perplexed him and hurt his conscience.**

...The people of the past had integrity and honesty. They stood by their word. The thought of deliberately breaking their promises or going against their word did not even pass through their minds. They were averse to hypocrisy and did not allow it to taint their hearts. They stayed clear of those qualities which Rasulullah (ﷺ) described as qualities of the hypocrites.

Rasululullah (ﺻﻠﯩﺌﯩﻠﻠﻪﻫﯩﻲﻭﺳﻠﻢ) said: *"Four are the qualities which, when found in a person, make him a complete hypocrite, and one who possesses one of them, possesses one characteristic of hypocrisy until he abandons it. These are: **When he is entrusted with something, he betrays trust; when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he acts treacherously; and when he argues, he becomes vulgar.***

...However, such was this pious person's predicament.

Having found some wood, he made a hollow in that piece of wood, and in a state of desperation, placed one thousand gold coins and a note therein, that it be given to such and such a person and then sealed it.

Since this person's Niyah (intention) was correct, he became recipient to Allah Ta'ala's assistance.

Taking the piece of wood to the river, he said: *'O Allah! You know well that I took a loan of one thousand Dinaars from so and so. He demanded a surety from me but I told him that Allah's guarantee was sufficient and he accepted Your guarantee. He then asked for a witness and I told him that Allah was sufficient as a witness, and he accepted You as a witness. No doubt, I have tried hard to find a conveyance so that I could pay him his money but could not find one, so I hand over this money to You.'* So saying, he threw the piece of wood into the river and placed his trust in Allah Ta'ala.

On the other side, the creditor was waiting for the arrival of the boat that was to bring his money. He went to the riverbank and

as he paced about, losing hope in his debtor returning, he noticed the log (wherein his money was deposited). He picked it up and took it home to use as firewood.

When he struck the axe against the log and it split open, he found the one thousand gold coins with the note, wherein his debtor had written, that since he could not get a boat in due time, he had opted to mete out payment in this manner, trusting solely in Allah Ta'ala.

On return, the pious person was anxious to find out if his creditor had received the money or not. Taking with him another one thousand gold coins, he went to the creditor's home with the intention of making a late payment, had the creditor not received his money.

After having explained his plight and offering the thousand gold coins, the creditor **truthfully** told him that Allah Ta'ala had already delivered the money which he had sent in the piece of wood, and the pious person was told to keep the one thousand gold coins which he had brought with him.

...That was their level of honesty and trustworthiness and for that, Allah Ta'ala gave them plenty of Barakah (blessings)... A far cry from present day experiences with even Muslim businessmen and traders.

Because of the temptations faced by traders⁶⁶, Rasulullah (ﷺ) enumerated many great rewards for the honest

⁶⁶ *Mu'aamalaat* is a branch of Shariah, dealing with business and trade. It is compulsory (Fardh) upon a person involved in business and trade to learn the relevant masaa'il (rules).

trader. It is mentioned in a Hadeeth that an honest and trustworthy merchant shall be with the Ambiyaa⁶⁷ (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام)⁶⁸, the Martyrs and the pious.

Allah Ta'ala opens the doors of Rizq (sustenance) and Barakah (blessings) for the honest and truthful ones.

Allah Ta'ala has presented various ordinances on loans, which we are instructed to implement in our transactions. This is **especially** necessary in these times of hypocrisy, cheating and deception, when we cannot even trust some of those who have adopted the garb of the pious and have a connection with the Masjid (mosque) and with Deen. Due to fraudulent deals, even family members and friends are not being trusted anymore.

In Surah Baqarah, Allah Ta'ala states :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ ط

‘O THOSE WHO BELIEVE, WHEN YOU TRANSACT A DEBT PAYABLE AT A SPECIFIED TIME, PUT IT IN WRITING. ... ’

ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا

... THAT IS MORE EQUITABLE WITH ALLAH AND MORE ESTABLISHING FOR THE EVIDENCE AND NEARER TO THAT YOU FALL NOT IN DOUBT... ’

[SURAH BAQARAH 2 : 282]

Allah Ta'ala clearly outlines and establishes various directives to

⁶⁷ *Ambiyaa* : Prophets

⁶⁸ (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام): ‘May peace be upon them’.

a loan in this Ayah (verse), which has more details of importance.

The gist of which, directs towards a written document to be drafted for such transactions, wherein the names of all parties, the analysis, exact due date of payment and fine points of the transaction are distinctly and unambiguously stated. The wisdom behind written agreements is precaution against breach, oversight, misunderstanding or dispute and conflict at a later stage.

Allah Ta'ala also calls for witnesses to such transactions, since they would verify and resolve any dispute that may arise in future.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the noble qualities of honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness and sincerity in our dealings with people.

Hearts of Gold

My respected Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) says in poetry :

***“O Allah, we will choose the company of those who please You;
We will not keep company with those hearts
which do not have You.”***

No one can deny the effect of company. Good company offers good influence and the opposite proves true, in that bad company offers bad influence. Companionship and friendship pave the way to either success or failure. Therefore Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: **“A person is on the Deen (way of life) of his friend, so every one of you should look at who he befriends.”**⁶⁹

We are living in a time where there is mass production of “imitation” and “artificial” products. They appear genuine, but in the test of their quality, they prove to be artificial or just cheap imitation.

In the same way, we find the condition of hearts. The majority walk around with artificial or imitation hearts. Their worth is made known sooner or later, when we find infidelity, dishonesty, greed, deceit, double-standards, etc. Who we thought to be a friend, turns out to be an enemy.

Then we have the Auliya Allah – the friends of Allah Ta’ala.

⁶⁹ Abu Dawood / Tirmidhi

Their hearts are genuine “metal”; **genuine gold**. Their hearts have undergone various tests which make known their value.

When gold is mined from the earth, it is first pulverized and crushed and thereafter placed in a furnace. Despite its value, **it has to be purified**.

Thus we find that that gold is purified by the means of smelting, which requires pressure, high heat and chemicals to remove the impurities contained in it. Only after this intense process or ‘Mujahadah’, the gold is in its purest form.

It is melted and poured into moulds to form bars or nuggets. This is now the precious, pure gold that demands a high price in the markets, which is utilized in making jewellery and so forth.

In a similar vein, we find the hearts of the Auliya Allah undergoing a purification process as well: Their hearts experience the pulverizing and crushing of evil desires in resisting the demands of the nafs. Together with this are the efforts in striving to earn the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala, through His Obedience. These are the means which make up the purification process, until they reach that stage, that level, where their hearts are like the pure gold.

We hear the cliché: ***“He / She has a heart of gold.”*** This generally indicates to a good heart, a generous heart – **but a heart of genuine “gold” is the heart which belongs to a Wali of Allah Ta’ala.**

Just as we have genuine gold stamped with its carat : 18ct,

22ct, 24ct, these Ahlullah have their hearts stamped by Allah Ta'ala, of His Friendship, because they proved "genuine" in their faithfulness and obedience to Him and His Rasul (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Their hearts have the stamp of the 'gold' of Nisbat-ma-Allah (Connection with Allah Ta'ala). May Allah Ta'ala make our hearts pure 'gold' and stamp them with His Pleasure.

A Mu`min (Believer) looks for people with such hearts. If a person is faithful to Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), we can expect him to be faithful to the creation. If the person is unfaithful to Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), this is a sure indication, that he will be unfaithful – in some way or the other – to people.

We should not only keep the noble company of the Friends of Allah Ta'ala; we should aspire and work towards acquiring that heart of gold as well.

Allah Ta'ala gives us direction in respect to who we will find to be genuine friends:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ

وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ ۝

“YOUR (REAL) FRIENDS ARE (NO LESS THAN) ALLAH, HIS APOSTLE, AND THE (FELLOWSHIP OF) BELIEVERS – THOSE WHO ESTABLISH REGULAR PRAYERS, AND REGULAR CHARITY, AND THEY BOW DOWN HUMBLY (IN WORSHIP).”

[SURAH MAA`IDAH 5 : 58]

And further:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۗ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

“THE BELIEVERS, MEN AND WOMEN, ARE AULIYA (HELPERS/ FRIENDS/ SUPPORTERS/ PROTECTORS) OF ONE ANOTHER, THEY ENJOIN (ON THE PEOPLE) AL-MA'RUF (THAT WHICH ISLAM ORDERS ONE TO DO), AND FORBID (PEOPLE) FROM AL-MUNKAR (THAT WHICH ISLAM HAS FORBIDDEN)... ”

[SURAH TAUBAH 9 : 71]

Watering the Root

The main reason for being unable to solve the many problems the Muslim community is facing presently is that we are misdirecting our energies in 'watering leaves', when in actual fact, the 'root' is in dire need of water. **...We are not getting to the root of the problem, since we are too pre-occupied in watering the leaves of our problems.**

Take the example of Zina (adultery and fornication) which is the scourge of our society: The consequences are illegitimate children, abortions and various physical and deadly diseases. It is common knowledge that many physical ailments today point to immoral, unrestrained behaviour as the cause.

Having moved away from the Nasihah (advice) of Qur`aan Shareef and Sunnah, and drawing from the manner in which the non-Muslims try to remedy their problems, many will suggest that a home be built for illegitimate and abandoned children, that more awareness be instilled in the youth on Aids and other transmitted diseases, and so forth.

As we all know, drugs are another major problem amongst our youth. Our attention to remedying the situation is building rehabilitation centres.

...Because we have adopted the Western way of thinking, we consider these the solutions.

The root cause is the heart. Change the condition of the heart and automatically sins will be given up.

If the spiritual heart is in a good condition, the actions will be good. If the heart is not in good condition, the actions will be bad. The person will suffer due to his own evil and mischief, and others will also suffer as a result.

The supreme qualities of the heart are Imaan and Taqwa, and this is what is lacking in most people. Shariah has laid tremendous emphasis on the purification of the heart.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) lived amongst a people who were immersed in sins, including sins such as adultery, liquor and gambling. His approach and method in eradicating those major problems, in that society, was creating the love of Allah Ta'ala, the Khauf (fear) of Qiyaamah and accountability, and the awareness that Allah Ta'ala is watching every deed: **A person can hide and conceal his sins from people but there is Someone who is always watching from above.**

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

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمُرْصَادِ ۝

“VERILY YOUR LORD IS EVER – WATCHFUL (OVER THEM).”

[SURAH AL-FAJR 89 : 14]

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

**“... AND HE IS WITH YOU WHERESOEVER YOU MAY BE.
AND ALLAH SEES WELL ALL THAT YOU DO.”**

[SURAH HADEED 57 : 4]

In this manner, so many problems are solved in one capsule – The capsule of the Love and Fear of Allah Ta’ala. This is the real solution : Change the condition of the heart. Awaken the spiritual heart. Make the heart conscious of Allah Ta’ala.

Otherwise funds are being terribly burdened on various projects which are sometimes short term measures and not solutions.

The purpose of the Qur`aan Shareef is to learn it, understand it and practice upon its teachings.

It is the Qur`aan Shareef that works on the heart : If the person keeps before him the four witnesses which will either testify in his favour or against him, on the Day of Qiyaamah, he will definitely opt for abstinence from sins.

These four witnesses are :

I. The Earth, which witnesses our deeds:

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۗ

“ON THAT DAY WILL SHE (THE EARTH) DECLARE HER TIDINGS.”

[SURAH ZILZAAL 99 :4]

II. The Angels, Kiraaman Kaatibeen, who record all of our actions :

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ۖ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ۖ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝

“BUT VERILY OVER YOU (ARE APPOINTED ANGELS) TO PROTECT YOU;

KIND AND HONOURABLE, WRITING DOWN (YOUR DEEDS).

THEY KNOW (AND UNDERSTAND) ALL THAT YOU DO.”

[SURAH INFIJAAR 82 : 10 / 11 / 12]

III. Our Book of Deeds, in which the actions are recorded :

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يُوَيْلَتَنَا مَا لَ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ
لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا ۗ ط
وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ۝

“AND THE BOOK (OF DEEDS) WILL BE PLACED (BEFORE YOU); AND YOU WILL SEE THE SINFUL IN GREAT TERROR BECAUSE OF WHAT IS (RECORDED) THEREIN; THEY WILL SAY : ‘AH! WOE TO US! WHAT A BOOK IS THIS ! IT LEAVES OUT NOTHING. SMALL OR GREAT, BUT TAKES ACCOUNT THEREOF!’ THEY WILL FIND ALL THAT THEY DID, PLACED BEFORE THEM : AND NOT ONE WILL YOUR LORD TREAT WITH INJUSTICE.”

[SURAH KAHF 18 : 49]

IV. Limbs of the body, which will testify against the person :

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝

“THAT DAY SHALL WE SET A SEAL ON THEIR MOUTHS. BUT THEIR HANDS WILL SPEAK TO US, AND THEIR FEET BEAR WITNESS, TO ALL THAT THEY DID.”

[SURAH YAASEEN 36 :65]

If the root of Imaan, which is in the heart, is watered, the tree of Imaan will bear the fruit of obedience.

The above is the solution to all our problems.

May Allah Ta’ala grant us the understanding and the Taufeeq of Amal.

Evidence of Sins

Destroy the reminders and evidence of sin and evil. They are stepping-stones to returning to the same sins. Reminders include photographs of those places where sins were committed; even if the pictures are not animate.

...When a person will see the photograph of the hotel, tourist resort, etc. where he committed Zina (adultery), shaytaan will take him down memory lane and give him the Haraam enjoyment of his past sin. This, in turn, could lead to the sin itself.

If some gift was given by an illicit beloved, destroy it or give it away.

One should also not diarise sins as is the habit of so many.

Many girls keep diaries, with even locks and keys. ...If these diaries are opened by others, pages of sins indulged in, of fancies and fantasies are revealed, and the person suffers humiliation and disgrace.

The same with smses and e-mails which are saved on cell-phones or on computer, or letters and faxes which are stored away. **All can be implicating evidence against a person and can lead to not only disgrace, but distrust and even the dissolution of friendship and marriage.**

There have been incidents of families that have met up with accidents, or were victims to hijackings or robberies, and **all** members were killed. ...These are happenings that we hear of and read of these days.

Thereafter, other members of the family have to sort out the estate, and this is when the dark secrets are exposed.

A person contacted me, saying that an entire family was killed in an accident – the husband, wife and children. As such, other members of the family had to enter the home to sort out the estate. On opening the one cupboard in the main bedroom, they were shocked to find porn magazines, films, etc. whereas they knew the husband to be an upright Muslim, a Namaazi⁷⁰, etc.

...Is this not embarrassment and disgrace?

There is no guarantee that the wife will survive the husband to conceal his secret sins, or the husband will survive the wife, to conceal her sins. ...Someone is going to enter that home and all will be exposed.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the realization that death can visit at any time and that evidence of sins opens doors of problems and disgrace.

⁷⁰ *Namaazi* : One who is regular with his Salaah

Islamic Law

We want Islamic law to conform to our liking, so much so that we will find some Fatwa (Islamic ruling or verdict) to justify our actions.

The ordinary laymen, and so too many who are highly qualified in the secular field, read the Qur`aan Shareef and authentic Hadeeth kitaabs⁷¹ such as Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, and find some Ayah (verse) or Hadeeth to justify their actions.

Often, the Ayah or Hadeeth is taken out of context and expounded to justify *grave* and *major* sins.

Each Ayah and Hadeeth has an explanation and commentary. If there was no need for explanations, we would not have had Allama Sayyid Maḥmood Baghdadi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), Ibn Katheer (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) and other Mufasssireen (commentators of the Qur`aan Shareef), or Hafez Asqalani (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), Mulla Ali Qaari (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) and other Muhadditheen⁷² writing volumes in commentary. Therefore, to just read and present an Ayah from the Qur`aan Shareef or a Hadeeth from a kitaab is not sufficient to justify one's actions.

Despite the fact that there are so many law books and medical journals at the disposal of the layman, not everyone is qualified to understand or explain and interpret these. One has to spend

⁷¹ *kitaabs* : books

⁷² *Muhadditheen* : Scholars of Hadith

many years in study and research under one already qualified in the field of law, medicine, etc. before one can do so. ...If some quack has to give a wrong opinion or an incorrect diagnosis, he would be sued for malpractice.

So in the field of *Ifta*⁷³, only those qualified in the science of Qur`aan and Hadeeth may issue verdicts. No matter how many certificates, degrees and other qualifications and titles a person may have acquired in the secular field, these do not then give him (or her) the license and authority to issue Fatwas (rulings) in the sphere of religion.

...Then there are so many who have a superficial knowledge of just the Arabic language but consider themselves qualified to interpret the Qur`aan Shareef and Ahaadeeth.

The Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ), who were perfectly acquainted and versant in the language of Arabic, were still required to formally learn the Qur`aan Shareef from Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). It would therefore be false and arrogant of a person, with a basic study of Arabic, to lay claim to having more knowledge and understanding than the noble Sahabah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ), by presenting his own commentary of the Qur`aan.

There are so many who have not studied Shariah under the guidance of Ulama-e-Haq, who reject the teachings of the Mujtahideen⁷⁴ and present their own concocted theories and commentaries; others are quick to quote Ayaah and Ahaadeeth in support of their sinful actions, or misinterpret the same. Such

⁷³ *Ifta* : Legal Shar`i injunctions

⁷⁴ *Mujtahideen* : Scholars certified as capable to interpret Islamic Law

people should seriously heed the warnings of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in regard to their careless and erroneous statements and ignorant behaviour.

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said : **“Whosoever, in interpreting the Qur`aan, says therein anything of his own opinion commits a mistake even if he is correct.”**⁷⁵

In another narration, Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) mentioned : **“Whoso interprets the Qur`aan without knowledge, let him seek his abode in the Fire.”**⁷⁶

And: **“Whoso interprets the Qur`aan according to his opinion, let him seek his abode in the Fire.”**⁷⁷

In regard to misquoting Ahaadeeth, Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) stated explicitly : **“Be careful of (narrating) traditions from me except what you know. Whoso imputes falsehood to me intentionally, let him then seek his abode in the fire.”**⁷⁸

Yes, when it comes to etiquette, character, the stories of the Ambiyaa (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام) and nations of the past, the causes of rise and decline; paradise and hell, reward and retribution, then read and quote *authentic* Tafseer or translation; **but when it comes to the laws of Shariah, Fatawa (Islamic rulings), commentary of Qur`aan and Hadeeth, leave it to those who have spent years mastering these sciences and are experts in these fields.**

⁷⁵ Abu Dawood

⁷⁶ Tirmidhi

⁷⁷ Tirmidhi

⁷⁸ Tirmidhi

Nowadays, the title of 'Mufti'⁷⁹ has also become very cheap. Some spend a few months or a year in a Darul Ifta⁸⁰ and become rubber stamp "Mufti so and so". **Before enquiring about matters pertaining to Deen, verify the person's qualifications, just as we do in worldly matters.**

...Women have a weakness, that if a woman gives a powerful speech on a subject, having read some Islamic books, she is asked questions on all subjects. The speaker too, will sometimes reply to all questions, even though unaware or ignorant.

Just giving a good speech is no qualification to answer all questions on the Qur`aan Shareef and Sunnah of Rasulallah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

We should be cautious and selective regarding whom we acquire Ilm-e-Deen⁸¹ from. ...There is a famous statement of Muhammad bin Sireen (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ): **"This knowledge is a matter of Deen, so be careful who you take your Deen from."**

We should keep these points in mind and we should also not lay claim to qualifications we do not possess.

⁷⁹ *Mufti* : Muslim Jurist

⁸⁰ *Darul Ifta* : Institution offering a course concentrating on Islamic Law and passing verdicts

⁸¹ *Ilm-e-Deen* : knowledge of religion

The Airport

At the Johannesburg International Airport⁸², whilst in transit, some brothers requested that I give them some Nasihah (advice) before departure.

I mentioned the following: ‘The Airport itself presents sufficient Ibrat (lesson) for a person’s Islaah (reformation).

Boards are seen, computer screens inform, and announcements are repeatedly heard of **ARRIVALS** and **DEPARTURES**. We should take lesson from this.

We have ‘*arrived*’. Our scheduled *arrival* to the destination of this world has come to pass. We have journeyed from Aalame-Arwah⁸³ to this transitory world. Our next journey is to ‘Aalame-Barzakh’⁸⁴.

In this material world, the time of departure is given for the flights that are leaving for various cities and countries. A person can make preparations for travel, accordingly. As is common experience though, flights are generally delayed.

Our departure to the Akhirah (Hereafter) is scheduled, but absolutely unknown to us. Moreover, there will be no delay in departure and no cancellation.

⁸² Now known as OR TAMBO International

⁸³ *Aalame-Arwah* : The World of Souls

⁸⁴ *Aalame-Barzakh* : The period of life after death until the Resurrection

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ۝

“... AT LENGTH WHEN DEATH APPROACHES ONE OF YOU, OUR ANGELS TAKE HIS SOUL AND THEY NEVER FAIL IN THEIR DUTY.”

[SURAH AN`AAM : 6 : 61]

In a couplet that deeply impresses upon the reality of this life, my Shaykh, Hazrat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum), states:

***Strange is the visa of life;
It can be cancelled at any time.
The duration of its validity is unknown,
And its extension too, impossible.***

Therefore, we need to be ever ready for the journey to the Hereafter.

Passengers are either seated in the VIP lounge or in the ordinary waiting area. Whether the person intends traveling ‘First Class’, ‘Business Class’ or ‘Economy Class’; **all will depart.** Each one has a boarding pass in hand. It is just a matter of time before departure.

The Azaan⁸⁵ in our right ear, and the Iqaamah⁸⁶ in our left ear, were already given at the time of our birth. All that is left is the Janaza Salaah⁸⁷ at the time of our death. Just as the time between the Iqaamah and Salaah is negligible – so too is the time span of our lives.

⁸⁵ *Azaan* : The call to prayer

⁸⁶ *Iqaamah*: The announcement of the commencement of the obligatory prayer

⁸⁷ *Janaza (Salaah)* : The funeral prayer

As someone has aptly mentioned : Our life is just like the **'dash'** between the date of birth and the date of passing away, which is inscribed on many tombstones. Though this 'dash' of life is so short, it is such a significant stage in our journey, that it either *'makes'* or *'breaks'* our Hereafter. This little dash either delivers a person to Jannah or Jahannum. So before someone mentions the date of our departure, we should convert the 'dash' of life to time spent securing provisions for the coming journey.

Then I mentioned that now two new boards are to be found :

UNDERGROUND PARKING

and

PRAYER ROOM UPSTAIRS

Our *'parking'* too is reserved. ...What then should we do? Before *'departure'* and before being *'parked'* under the ground, we should visit the *'prayer room'* – meaning, that we should bring the submission and servitude found in prayer or Salaah, into our lives. Submit to the One who gave us this life because very soon will we be returning to Him.

وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

“... AND THE DESTINATION (OF ALL) IS TO ALLAH.”

[SURAH AHZAAB 35 : 18]

In addition, this world is very much like a time-share. The occupants make full use of all facilities during that week or

month – the lounge, fridge, stove, furniture, air conditioner and the luxuries of the timeshare. However, they know that they will have to move out as soon as their time expires.

Similarly, we should make use of the bounties of Allah Ta’ala in this world but we should not give our hearts to this world. ...How can we give our hearts to a world which is so unfaithful? ...The home in which there is excitement and celebration of a wedding is suddenly plunged into grief, sorrow and mourning.

We should keep before us the Hadeeth of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): ***‘Verily, the world has been created for you and you have been created for the Aakhirah.***⁸⁸

Preparation for the Aakhirah (Hereafter) does not mean that we will be deprived of the good things of this world. Eat, drink, marry, conduct business and do all other activities according to the teachings of Shariah and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). This is all that is required.

May Allah Ta’ala grant us all, death on Imaan, at a time when He is most pleased with us.

تَوَفَّقْنِي مُسْلِمًا وَ الْأَحْقَبِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ ۝

“...(O MY LORD) TAKE YOU MY SOUL (AT DEATH) AS ONE SUBMITTING TO YOUR WILL (AS A MUSLIM), AND UNITE ME WITH THE RIGHTEOUS.”

[SURAH YUSUF 12 : 101]

⁸⁸ Shu’abul Imaan

Publications

Tafweez – The Cure for Depression
Hedayatus Saalikeen – Book 1
Combating the Whisperings of Shaytaan
Aashiq-e-Sawdiq Part 1
Aashiq-e-Sawdiq Part 2
Ikhlāas
Kicking the Habit
Du`aa
Labour of Love
Removing the Safety Net
His Character was the Qur`aan
Rujoo`Ilallah
Towards Reformation of the Heart
Feeling Spiritually Low?
Islaahi Correspondence – Book 1
Advices to workers in the efforts of Deen

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Hazrat Maulana Yunus Patel Saheb's (RA) talks
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An Excerpt from the book
“Combating the Whisperings of shaytaan”
By Hazrat Maulana Yunus Patel Saheb (Rahmatullahi ‘alayh)

One person was a complete atheist before being guided to Islam. After accepting Islam he was again being plagued with thoughts about the existence of Allah Ta’ala. These thoughts were from shaytaan. His unhappiness and discomfort was, as has been mentioned, a clear indication of Imaan. An atheist will not be concerned by such thoughts. In fact, atheists propagate such thoughts and beliefs.

I told this person that at such times he should immediately read: “أَمِنْتُ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ” (I believe in Allah and His messengers). He should also read Imaan-e-Mujmal and Imaan-e-Mufassal, with an understanding of the meaning, and لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ (There is no strength to do good or abstain from evil without Allah Ta’ala’s help).

Thereafter he should talk to shaytaan, even though he does not see him. Tell him: *“The Proof that Allah Ta’ala exists is in my own person. If Allah Ta’ala was not existing, I would not have been created. I would not have these eyes, ears, etc....All of which have been created in the darkness of the womb.”* Or say to him: *“I do not see my intelligence but believe I am intelligent.”*