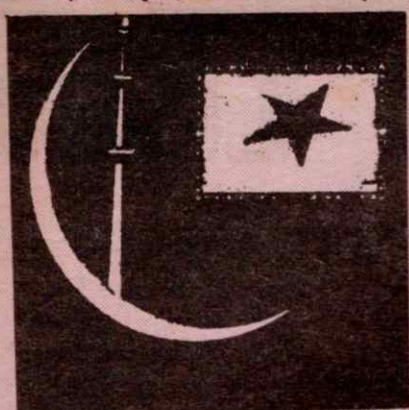
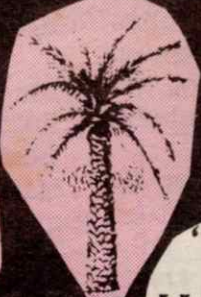
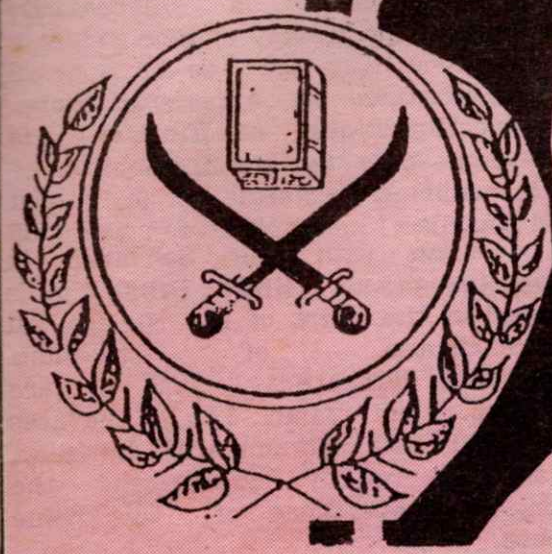
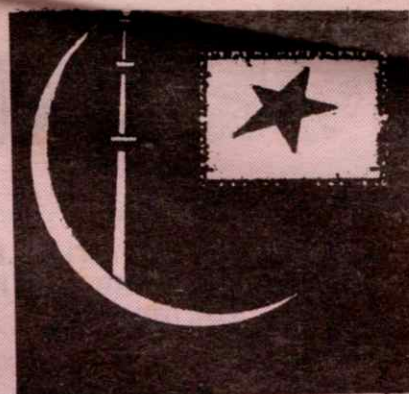




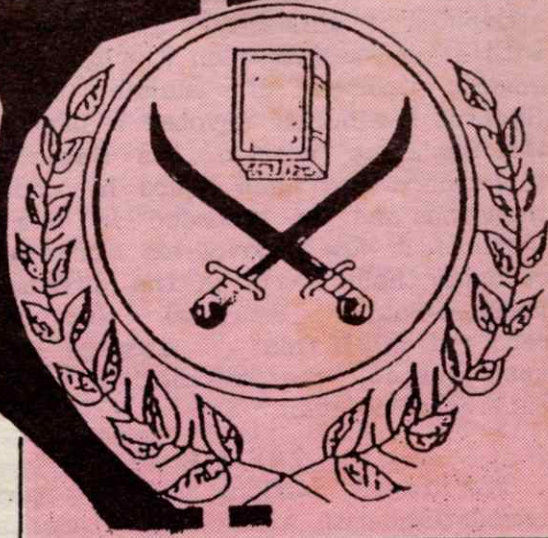
AL-HAQ

JAMADIL ULA 1413 - NOVEMBER 1992

AL-HAQ P.O.BOX 3393 Port Elizabeth 6056 South Africa



**"A SINGLE FAQIH IS
HARDER ON SHAITAAN
THAN A THOUSAND
PIOUS WORSHIPPERS"
(-HADITH -)**



A GREAT SOUL

During the later part of the night of Friday 18th Jamadil Ula 1413 (13th November 1992), one of the world's greatest authorities of Tasawwuf, Hadhrat Shaikh Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sherwani, the Muhtamim of Miftahul Uloom, Jalalabad, India left the confines of this transitory and base abode to continue life's sojourn into the next phase of Barzakh. (Inna lillaahi wainna ilayhi raaji-on.)

Hadhrat Masihullah's demise has undoubtedly created a void in the lives of thousands of muredeen and friends who were spiritually associated with him. It is with profound grief that his thousands of spiritual children across continents are mourning him. May Allah Ta'ala in His infinite mercy perpetually permit the roohaani faidh of Hadhrat Masihullah to benefit us.

The order of this universe in fact, is upheld by the great lovers and proponents of the Kalimah La-ilaha illallaah for which men like Hadhrat Masihullaah devoted their entire lives. The day when there no longer remains a single proclaimer of La-ilaha illallaah, this universe will have no reason to exist, hence Allah Ta'ala will terminate its (To column four)

HADHRAT'S DEMISE

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Verily, Allah will not remove Ilm (Deeni Knowledge) by removing it from the hearts of the servants (of Allah). But, He will remove Ilm by taking away the Ulama until there remains no Aalim; then people will take the juhhaal (ignoramus) as their leaders. They (the juhhaal) will be asked (Deeni questions) and they will issue fatwa without knowledge. Thus, they will be astray and leads astray (others)."

(Bukhaari & Muslim)

The demise of Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan, the Muhtamim of Miftahul Uloom, Jalalabad, India is another step towards the fulfilment of the demise of the Knowledge of Islam mentioned by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in the aforementioned Hadith.

The world is rapidly becoming denuded of the Stars of Shar'i Knowledge. In these times in close proximity to Qiyaamah when one Star of Zaahiri and Baatini Knowledge of Islam departs from this ephemeral world, there no longer is any replacement. The departure of an Ahlullaah (Man of Allah) leaves a vacuum. Unlike in former times, when the demise of a great man was compensated with a greater man taking up his place, these times on account of a great dearth of true Men of Allaah, are increasingly becoming bereft of goodness.

The quick departure of the illustrious Ulama in rapid succession is a pointer to the

rise of greater fitnah and fasaad. All around us, throughout the world, we witness the spiritual vacuum in which the Ummah is engulfed. The earth is practically bereft of Roohaani and Ilmi guides. Charlatans, cranks, frauds, deceits and thugs of a variety of kinds under religious guise are robbing the Ummah of whatever little spiritual and Islamic bearings it has left. Undoubtedly, the age of the juhhaal predicted by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has ushered in. Every spiritual fraud and ignoramus sporting some degree acquired in an institution of kufr and satanic liberalism is setting himself up as an authority of the Shariah. They are astray and lead the Ummah astray with their shaitaani and nafsani pronouncements and enactments.

Undoubtedly, with the departure of the illustrious Ulama of the calibre of Hadhrat Masihullah, the world must necessarily become fertile ground for the machinations of the juhhaal.

The era of the juhhaal, which has already set in, heralds the initial stage of the demise of the world. The beginning of the end has commenced, hence we observe the unfolding of all the lesser signs of Qiyaamah predicted by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This is a time when Muslims have to take stock of their spiritual and moral lives. The death of a great man is a time of stock-taking and a time for much soul-searching. How much of the teachings of the Sunnah of which these great men were embodiments, have we inculcated?

TAKES LEAVE

existence in a massive upheaval in the order known to us.

Thousands of us in particular and the Ummah at large, in general, have been deprived of a wonderful and great roohaani and ilmi beacon by the demise of Hadhrat Masihullaah. May Allah Ta'ala grant him the highest ranks and stages of Jannatul Firdaus and may the Baatini Faidh remain with us perpetually. Aameen.

In these times of corruption, fitnah and fasaad--in these times of close proximity to Qiyaamah the Spiritual Garden of Islam is desolate. In this unkept Garden strewn with weeds and thorns, one of the last Flowers of Roohaaniyat standing out with great conspicuousness among the thorns and weeds, has also left us. This Flower and spiritual balm has been plucked away from the Ummah. Those who are associated with this true Waarith-e-Nabi (Representative of Rasulullah--sallallahu alayhi wasallam) understand the meaning of this great loss which we have sustained. The desolation and forlornness of Islam's Spiritual Garden have taken greater effect.

While the demise of Hadhrat Masihullah is an event of the greatest grief and loss for his associates, it is also a time for true soul-searching. It is imperative for all those who were connected to him by way of Islah and Ilm, to take stock of their lives and give greater meaning and application to the spiritual and moral precepts and lessons which they had acquired in his Suhbat (Companionship). After all, the Qur'aanic purpose

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A GREAT SOUL TAKES LEAVE

underlying the command:

**O PEOPLE OF IMAAN! FEAR
ALLAH AND JOIN THE COMPANY
OF THE SAADIQEEN (THE
AULIYA),**

is the acquisition of spiritual reformation by way of the elimination of Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah (the lowly despicable attributes of animality) and adornment with Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah (the higher noble angelic qualities of Islamic morality). Hadhrat Masihullah devoted a lifetime in this Qur'aanic mission. His Naseehat in this sphere has been heard by countless thousands and is recorded in numerous writings. It now behoves his muredeen to redouble their efforts in the direction of Islaah-e-Baatin (spiritual and moral reformation). If this message has not been grasped, the association with the Saint is of no avail.

THE AIM

The aim of striking up a spiritual association with a Shaikh of Tareeqat is nothing other than Islaah-e-Baatin and Qurb-e-Ilaahi (Divine Proximity). These treasures are available only to those who give practical expression to the Taalimaat (Deeni instructions) of the Shaikh. We, therefore, say to the Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah: If you turn away from this aim and continue life on this earth in a headlong plunge into the abyss of moral corruption into which the world is sliding, then your association with Hadhrat Masihullah was and is meaningless. The Shaikh is not a being to be set up as a deity. He is not an idol to be verbally revered and to be shown merely outward expressions of humility, loyalty and obedience. The Shaikh has been appointed a **Shaikh** in the Spiritual Hierarchy to execute the Qur'aanic aim and command of instructing the Ummah in the lessons of Roohaaniyat. This duty, Hadhrat Masihullah discharged par excellence. Any mureed who turns away from this one and only AIM of Tasawwuf and Tareeqat should understand that he has betrayed the spiritual trust which he acquired by virtue of the spiritual allegiance he had offered Hadhrat Masihullaah. He should know that his association with Hadhrat Masihullah has been made a mockery if he refuses to come to his spiritual senses by the shock which hadhrat Masihullah's demise has caused in the hearts of his Muhibbeen.

THE SUNNAH

Everyone, friend and foe alike, who had the good fortune of meeting Hadhrat Masihullah and sitting in his company, even for a brief while, will bear testimony that Hadhrat Masihullah was an embodiment of the Sunnah in the minutest detail. His mission on earth was the revival of the Sunnah, an important and vital dimension of which is true Tasawwuf. By Tasawwuf is meant the Tasawwuf which the Qur'aan and the Sunnah teach—the Tasawwuf which aims at the moral and spiritual revolution of the Ummah—the Tasawwuf which aims at the subjugation of the world by the Roohaani force of Islam in the wider concept of establishing the Kalimah of Allah in every corner of the world and on every hill-top of the world—a mission in which the Ummah of these times has hopelessly and miserably failed. Tasawwuf is not the silly cults of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah—cults which admit the perpetration of kufr, shirk and fisq. Such baatil tasawwuf should not be confused with the Tasawwuf which the

true Auliya of Allah Ta'ala practised and propagated. Any system of tasawwuf which admits diversion from the Sunnah is a shaitaani influence from which Muslims should steer far off.

The roots of true Tasawwuf, for which Hadhrat Masihullah had dedicated his life, are firmly embedded in the Qur'aan and Sunnah. It is for this reason that the Auliya do not tolerate the slightest diversion from the minutest aspect and detail of the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Those who are grieving the loss of Hadhrat Masihullah will feel his spiritual presence by inculcating into their daily lives the teachings of the Sunnah which they had gained from the companionship of this illustrious Shaikh of Tasawwuf. Those who profess grief at this loss, but abstain from consciously reforming themselves spiritually and morally, should know that their expression of grief is hollow and hypocritical.

THE ALLEGIENCE

All Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah should understand well that they had offered spiritual allegiance by way of Bay't to their Shaikh. They should necessarily revise the lesson and the demands of this Allegiance and compulsorily act accordingly. The purpose of the Bay't was never to gain the dua of the Shaikh. The aim of the Bay't was never to observe the manifestation of miracles at the hands of the Shaikh. The aim of the Bay't was not to view and understand mysteries of the spiritual realm. The sole aim of the Bay't was to learn how to acquire the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. And, this lesson was imparted to us most honourably and beautifully by Hadhrat Masihullah. The emphasis on the observance of the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was the basis of the Tasawwuf propagated by Hadhrat Masihullah and all his forbearers in the long and glorious Spiritual Chain linking up with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). It is this Sunnah which every Mureed of Hadhrat Masihullah must implement in his daily life—at home, in business, in the street, in relationship with people and animals. By the implementation of the Sunnah in every aspect, the Muredeen will join the ranks of those men about whom the Qur'aan Majeed says:

"They are men who neither trade nor commerce diverts from the Thikr of Allah, from establishing Salaat and from paying Zakaat. They fear such a day when the hearts of men will be upturned."

TAWAADHU'

Everyone who was blessed with the Suhbat of Hadhrat Masihullah knows that Tawaadhu' (Humility) was the spiritual theme in almost every bayaan he gave. The emphasis on humility was to such a degree that one was led to conclude that Humility constituted a religion in itself. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Whoever adopts humility for the sake of Allah, Allah elevates him."

In our estimate we have not seen a greater manifestation of this Hadith and a greater embodiment of Tawaadhu' in contemporary life than Hadhrat Masihullah. Every one who had sat with him will testify to the accuracy of our claim. This is the great and noble lesson which Hadhrat Masihullah imparted. This is the great and noble lesson—the lesson of Tawaadhu'—which every Mureed of Hadhrat Masihullah must inculcate in his daily

affairs. Tawaadhu' is the real and conscious feeling that 'I am the most inferior being on earth'. When this attribute has been engendered, all strife will disappear. This attribute is the root of true unity. Without Tawaadhu' there can be no unity in the Umma. A heart bereft of Tawaadhu', is necessarily diseased with the malady of kibr (pride).

Tawaadhu may seem to be a small teaching confined to a personal scope. But, in reality, its ramification is world-wide. It is for the inculcation of this Tawaadhu that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) spent thirteen years of his mission with the Sahaabah in Makkah Muazzamah. When Tawaadhu is impressed in the heart of the Mu'min, all other attributes of satanism automatically dissipate and are annihilated. When Allah Ta'ala elevates the purified soul adorned with humility, one can then readily comprehend the meaning and importance of this noble attribute.

GHADAB

Another salient feature of Hadhrat Masihullah's Ta'leem was abhorrence for Ghadab (anger). In almost every naseehat he disparaged the attribute of nafsani anger. Anger having its origin in kibr (pride) is a most disgusting attribute for the Mu'min. One who gives vent to nafsani anger cannot climb the ladder of roohaani progress. Hence, Hadhrat Masihullah placed the greatest emphasis on the control of anger.

While he would discuss every aspect pertaining to Islaah-e-Baatin, the theme of Tawaadhu' and Ghadab was always prominent in his discourses. Suppressing, controlling anger and bringing it into the state of Itidaal (equilibrium) where the emotion is made subservient to the dictates of Aql (Intelligence), simplify the difficult task of the elimination of Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah. Inculcation of Tawaadhu' facilitates the task of adorning the rooh with Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah. Concentrating on these two salient aspects of Hadhrat Masihullah's Ta'leem will produce a wonderful transformation in the moral and spiritual life of the Mureed.

A GRAVE INJUSTICE

Mureeds who proclaim their association with Hadhrat Masihullah without implementing the ways of Mujaahadah instructed by our Shaikh, should know that they are guilty of a grave act of injustice and betrayal. They are unjust to their own souls and they have betrayed the Pledge of Bay't. They lack true understanding of the Oath of Allegiance—its purport, its meaning, its function and its aim. A mureed who is unconcerned with his Islaah (spiritual reformation) dwells in deception if he labours under the notion that he will acquire of the spiritual benefits of the Shaikh. It is imperative that the Muredeen always practise Muraqabah (meditation and contemplation), reflecting on the numerous naseehat—advice and admonitions—which Hadhrat Masihullaah had given us when we had enjoyed the good fortune and blessing of being in his august company.

Even his departure can act as a point for the re-dedication of muredeen to commit themselves to the process of Islaah-e-Baatin. His talks, Naseehat and writings which in reality are the teachings of the Qur'aan and Sunnah are

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THE AIM OF JIHAAD

By Hadhrat Masihullah

Jihaad against the kuffaar is not to forcibly convert them to Islam. The objective of Jihaad is to eliminate the impediments which the kuffaar place in the Path of Islam. Obstacles which are mounted to thwart the spread of Islam are the targets of Jihaad. Those who constitute a block in the way of people who incline towards Islam are targets of Jihaad. This is the clear objective of Jihaad.

In addition to clearing the path for those who wish to enter the fold of Islam, the purpose of Jihaad is also to protect Muslims from the zulm and brutalities of the kuffaar. The kuffaar are constantly scheming of ways and means to exterminate Muslims, sully their honour, pillage and plunder their wealth and lands. The need for Jihaad, therefore, always remains.

Islam does not permit Muslims to expose themselves to destruction at the hands of the kuffaar. It was precisely for this reason that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) spent thirteen years with the Sahaabah in Makkah undergoing great hardships and struggles. The struggle against the nafs was so intense that all nafsaniyat was banished from the Sahaabah. There remained in them only the desire for Allah's Pleasure. Whatever they then contemplated was solely for the sake of Allah's Pleasure.

Thus, in the duration of the stay in Makkah, was the process of perfecting the moral character. This was achieved in the most excellent manner. It was ingrained in the Sahaabah that the need was first to accomplish the Jihaad against the nafs. Thereafter every act in every sphere of their lives would be solely for the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. There will then remain no impediment in their path and every activity will then be executed fully, perfectly and correctly within the confines of the Ahkaam of the Shariah. To achieve this objective, the Sahaabah were constrained to pass thirteen years in silence, continuing with the spiritual programme with single mindedness. It was a period in which the Ta'leem of the Deen was the only occupation. Besides this, not even the other acts of Ibaadat such as Zakaat, etc., were ordained. Fasting became Fardh after Hijrat (Migration) and Salaat was decreed one year prior to Hijrat.

After Hijrat when obstacles in the Path of Islam were placed by the aliens, did the physical Jihaad commence. Now, whatever action the Sahaabah took was solely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala and fully within the bounds of the Shariah. No move was made for their own sake. Allah's aid was with them at that stage.

For Jihaad, a Headquarters and Taqwa are necessary requisites. In the absence of a Headquarters Jihaad is not Fardh. Thus, the fardhiyat of Jihaad depends on a Headquarters while Taqwa is necessary for Divine Aid.

FRIENDS

On the Day of Qiyaamah, worldly friendship will be of no avail. A friend will flee from a friend. However, friendship struck up for the sake of the Deen will endure even on that Day of Terror. Those who were friends here for worldly motives will be enemies there. But the friendship of the Muttageen will be lasting. Therefore, if you wish to make friends, befriend a Muttageen. (Hadhrat Masihullah)

DEENI KNOWLEDGE

Speaking on Jihaad, Hadhrat Masihullah said: "Undoubtedly, Jihaad is of great importance. Everyone is aware of this. In spite of the great importance of Jihaad, Ilm-e-Deen (Knowledge of the Deen) has greater significance and priority. Its importance is such that even during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) all were not permitted to depart for participation in Jihaad. The Qur'aan ordered that a group remains behind acquiring Knowledge of the Deen from Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

The greater importance of Ilm-e-Deen is because it constitutes the basis for Jihaad, i.e. the physical Jihaad. Without correct Deeni Knowledge, the Jihaad will not be in conformity with the Wishes of Allah Ta'ala.

THE NEED FOR A SHAIKH

When the mureed's spiritual association terminates with the demise of his Shaikh, he should not fold his arms and abandon the spiritual sojourn. There yet remains the vital need for the mureed to seek guidance in the Baatini sphere so that his progress is not impeded.

The Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah are anxious and seeking to know the direction they have to take. Many have turned to us for guidance and naseehat in the void which the departure of Hadhrat Masihullah has left. The instruction of the Mashaa-ikh is for the Muredeen to continue practising in accordance with the instructions and advices of their Shaikh. However, they should be on the lookout for another Shaikh-e-Kaamil whose mantle they may grasp, for it is not possible to traverse the labyrinthal pathways of Sulook without the expert guidance and aid of a Shaikh-e-Kaamil.

While there is a great need to search for another Shaikh, the Muredeen are warned to avoid haste in the choice of a Shaikh. A wrong choice can be spiritually fatal. Great care has to be exercised in choosing one's Shaikh.

The type of Shaikh which the Muredeen need at this juncture, is one who emphasises on Islaah-e-Baatin. This was the main thrust of Hadhrat Masihullah, and this is what his Muredeen have to search for. In some quarters the emphasis is on prescribed forms of Thikr and Ashghaal while very little attention is paid to self-reformation. It has to be conceded that the ultimate goal of every activity of man is or should be Thikrullah—the Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. But, without having attained purification of the nafs and rooh, the effects of the prescribed forms of Thikr will not manifest themselves. And, should they manifest themselves, the mureed who has not attained spiritual purification, will be misled and deflected from the true Path by the spiritual impressions of Thikr.

It is, therefore, imperative to search for a Shaikh who himself is constantly involved in the occupation of training his Mureeds and preparing them spiritually and morally. To locate a Shaikh of this calibre in this day is difficult, but not impossible. The close associates and senior Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah should search out such a Shaikh and instruct the rank and file to offer their allegiance to the Shaikh-e-Kaamil thus indicated.

PURSUE THE PATH

The demise of Hadhrat Masihullah has overwhelmed many among his Muredeen. On account of their love and devotion for him, their grief is great and the loss is unbearable. For them, this is a period of uncertainty and anxiety. But, the demise of the Shaikh does not signal the end of the Road. The process of Islaah is perpetual. The Journey is towards Allah Ta'ala. The struggle against the nafs has, therefore, to continue with even greater concern and determination.

Muredeen should understand well that the Haqq of the Shaikh is not fulfilled by the organization of functions and reciting his praises. While it is only a natural expression of love and sincerity for the Muredeen to grieve in this way, they should reflect and understand the conception of association with the Shaikh.

This address is directed in particular to the Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah. You had entered into Bay't—the Pledge of Allegiance—with Hadhrat Masihullah. For what purpose? The aim is Islaah-e-Baatin and Qurb-e-Ilaahi. There is absolutely no other motive for the Bay't at the hands of the Shaikh. The function of the Shaikh was to provide tarbiyat—spiritual and moral training—for his Mureeds. This function and duty were most honourably discharged by Hadhrat Masihullah. But, to what extent did you, the Muredeen, implement his instructions into your daily life? To what extent have you expelled the love of the world from your heart? To what extent have you inculcated the love of the Akhirah? You must ponder.

How concerned are you about your moral and spiritual reformation? Are you diligently pursuing the ways of eliminating Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah and imbuing in yourself Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah? Are you attending to the takabbur, riya, hasad, ghadab, hirs, bukhl, etc. which have made you the slave of your nafs? Are you striving to adorn your rooh with tawaadhu', ikhlaas, sidq, qana'at, sabr, hilm, etc.?

If you are lacking in this dimension and if your concern is your business and your mundane profession, then know that you have not fulfilled the Haqq of your Shaikh and that your concern for his demise is a mere external display—a show and a sham—a pretence and an act of self-deception.

If you are a sincere Mureed, you will continue along the spiritual path forging ahead with the greater Jihaad against the nafs and the effort to gain proximity to Allah Ta'ala. And, if you are sincere but have been lax, negligent and uncaring of your spiritual development, then you can fulfil the Haqq of your Shaikh by your resolve to compensate for the past inertia and neglect by way of initiating the spiritual programme to rid yourself of the moral maladies in which you are wallowing. If you don't, then know that your claim to be a Mureed of Hadhrat Masihullah is false and a blatant act of self-deception spun by the nafs and shaitaan.

Showing concern and voicing grief and sorrow over the Shaikh's demise, but refraining from the Ta'leemaat of the Shaikh is a deception prepared by shaitaan to keep the Mureed in perpetual slavery of the nafs. So examine your motives and contemplate in your life so that you can detect the mischief and the traps of the nafs and shaitaan. Sit in solitude and meditate so that your baatini eyes and heart open up and you see reality.

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

It is incumbent on the Saalik to study and examine the man whom he wishes to accept as his spiritual guide (Shaikh) in the Journey to Allah. Only after having been satisfied of his credentials should one enter into Bay't with him. Many people make haste in this regard and find themselves on either a crooked or a futile road which deflects them from the Goal..

In the quest for a Shaikh, the following attributes should be searched for:

- (1) The Shaikh should have adequate Knowledge of the Shariah by means of which he can reform the beliefs and practices of his Muredeen.
- (2) The Shaikh should be a man who has been authorized by a reliable Shaikh-e-Tareeqat whose integrity and authenticity are proclaimed by the Ulama-e-Haqq.
- (3) He should be a strong adherent of the Sunnah. His Aqa-id, Akhlaaq and A'maal should conform to the Shariah.
- (4) He should be a man whose heart is devoid of worldly love and filled with the love for the Akhirah. These attributes will become manifest after sitting in his company for a while.
- (4) He should be constant in the Zaahiri and Baatini acts of ibaadat.
- (5) He should not be a claimant of perfection and excellence.
- (6) The majority of his Muredeen are conscious of the Deen and strive to practise in accordance with the Shariah.
- (7) His talks create a dislike for the world and a yearning for the Akhirah.
- (8) In relation to laymen, more people of knowledge and intelligence incline towards him.
- (7) He should himself be a Thakir and a Shaghil. Without practise, there will be no barkat in his Ta'leem.
- (8) He should be concerned with his Mureeds, not leaving them to do as they please. He should be a Shaikh who reprimands the Mureeds for their failings.

When you find a Shaikh with these attributes, grab hold of his mantle and enslave yourself to him. He will, Insha'Allah, show you the Path leading to the Ultimate Goal.

MUNASABAT (CONGENIALITY) WITH THE SHAIKH

Experience confirms that for the acquisition of fuyudh-e-baatini (spiritual benefits) there should be a natural bond of affinity and congeniality between the Shaikh and the Mureed. When such a natural bond of affinity is lacking, the Masha-ikh refer the mureed to another Shaikh with whom the mureed has a natural affinity. This natural affinity is termed **Munaasabat**. Munaasabat is an essential condition for the acquisition of spiritual benefit from the Shaikh. If Munaasabat with the Shaikh is lacking, the Mureed will not derive the required spiritual benefits. This Munaasabat is a condition for Bay't. As long as one lacks Munaasabat with a Shaikh, one should refrain from Bay't with him.

The Munaasabat necessary for spiritual progress is of two kinds: Munaasabat-e-Tab'i and Munaasabat-e-Aqli. The former is a natural affinity. The Mureed naturally inclines to the Shaikh and he finds pleasure in total submission to the Shaikh. This is the best category of

In the Khaanqah the emphasis is on tarbiyat (spiritual and moral training). Akhlaaq (development of moral character) has priority. The thirteen years of the Makki life were devoted to Akhlaaq. Without joining the Mashaa-ikh in the Khaanqah, tarbiyat is not possible.

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

MURAAQABA

Speaking on Muraaqabah, Hadhrat Masihullah said:

Muraaqabah is to contemplate—to meditate on Allah Ta'ala. This practice should be adhered to until the state is reached where one consciously perceives Allah or at least one perceives that Allah is seeing one. This thought about Allah Ta'ala has to be a permanent perception in the conscious mind of the Saalik. When he has gained this state, every moment of his will be ibaadat. And, it is for His ibaadat that He has created us.

TAKLEEF

Among the salient features of Hadhrat Masihullah's teaching and practice was never to cause takleef (difficulty or inconvenience) to any creation of Allah Ta'ala, be it a lowly animal. Those who had lived with him witnessed this unique feature in his practical life. Once on the way to the Masjid accompanied by some of his Muredeen, a dog lay sleeping in the pathway. Hadhrat made a detour of a few metres so as not to disturb the peace of the sleeping dog. When a man has reached this stage of feeling for creation, can anyone expect him to harm a human being?

THE END

A MAN USUALLY MEETS HIS END IN THIS WORLD IN A WAY BEFITTING HIS LIFESTYLE. HADHRAT MASHIULLAH WAS AN EMBODIMENT OF THIKRULLAAH. HIS TA'LEEM EMPHASISED THE TRANSFORMATION OF ENTIRE LIFE INTO THIKRULLAAH. THUS, WE FIND THIS BELOVED DEVOTEE OF ALLAH PASSING AWAY AT THE RIPE AGE OF 85 YEARS ENGROSSED IN THIKRULLAAH AT THE TIME OF TAHAJJUD— MAY THE ETERNAL RAHMAT OF ALLAH BE ON HIM.

THE KHĀNQAḤ

The **Khaanqah** is an integral part of the Islamic way of life. (The khaanqah is a place where a person stays for a while in the company of a Shaikh with the sole intention of gaining spiritual and moral training and proximity to Allah Ta'ala. The life in the khaanqah is or should be one of ibaadat, contemplation, thikr and acquiring Deeni instruction from the Shaikh. The theory which is acquired in the Madaaris and which are extant in the books of the Shariah are given practical expression in the khaanqah. In the khaanqah the Mureed is morally and spiritually prepared for his role as a true Muslim in his daily life.

The origin of the khaanqah is in the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Khalwat (seclusion and solitude), tarbiyat (spiritual training), muhaasabah (stock-taking, soul-searching) and muraaqabah (meditation) are all practices grounded in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. These are the lessons and the training which the Mashaa-ikh offer in the khaanqah. The essentiality of spiritual purification and elevation are sufficiently emphasised in the following Qur'aanic ayat:

"Whoever has purified the nafs has gained the everlasting success. And whoever has contaminated the nafs has fallen into destruction."

In some quarters it is being propagated that in this age there is no longer a need for the khaanqah. This idea is indeed a colossal shaitaani deception designed to utterly ruin Muslims. In fact, in this age of corruption and evil, there is a greater need for the khaanqah.

THE MADAARIS

In former days, the Madaaris were veritable khaanqahs. The Ustaadhs were either Mashaa-ikh of Tareeqat or almost in that category. By the time the student emerged from the portal of the Madrasah, he was already spiritually and morally purified. A high degree of Taqwa was already gained by the Deeni student by virtue of his association with Ustaadhs who were Masha-ikh of exceptionally high spiritual ranking. The student had already accomplished the greater part of the spiritual programme of tarbiyat during his student-days under the guidance of his Ustaadhs. However, in spite of the moral and spiritual excellences gained in the Madrasah, the Aalim after bidding farewell to the Madrasah, went out in the quest of a Shaikh to complete the remainder of the Journey of Sulook. He would take Bay't on the hands of a Shaikh-e-Kaamil, spend time in the khaanqah and emerge when the Shaikh instructed him to set forth into the world to carry aloft the Standard of Islam and to enrich the servants of Allah with the Baatini and Zaahiri treasures which he had acquired jointly from the Madrasah and the Khaanqah.

When such illustrious Souls and Stars of Islam as Imaam Ghazaali, Baayazid, Junaid Baghdaadi, Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilaani and innumerable others who were paragons of knowledge, virtue and piety, considered the need for the khaanqah imperative and of fundamental importance, then the views of non-entities in this age of degeneration and corruption should be dismissed as specimens of Talbees-e-Iblees (deceptions of shaitaan).

(The views expressed here are the Ta'leemaat of our Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah—rahmatullah alayh)

TA'LEEM AND NASEEHAT

NASEEHAT IN GENERAL FOR ALL MUSLIMS AND IN PARTICULAR FOR THE MUREEDEEN OF HADHRAT MASIHULLAAH (rahmatullah alayh)

Every Mureed of Hadhrat Masihullah knows the importance which he attached to the Ta'leemaat of Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh). Hardly can we recall any bayaan of Hadhrat Masihullah which was without the mention of Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh). The entire spiritual philosophy and programme of Hadhrat Masihullah were reared on the foundation of the Ta'leemaat of Hakimul Ummat whose senior Khalifah Hadhrat Masihullah was.

In the sphere of Tasawwuf in particular, Hadhrat Thaanvi was a Mujaddid. He removed the cob-webs and eliminated the baatil which the Ahl-e-Bid'ah had for so long interwoven into the fabric of the Tasawwuf of the Qur'aan and Sunnah. It was for this reason that he drew the wrath of the Ahl-e-Bid'ah who are false claimants of tasawwuf. It was for this reason that the Ahl-e-Bid'ah went to the greatest lengths in vain, futile and satanic bids to discredit him. And, it was for this reason that the Ahl-e-Bid'ah branded Hakimul Ummat as a kaafir. May Allah Ta'ala grant him the highest ranks and stages in Jannatul Firdaus, Aameen.

We reproduce here Naseehat which Hakimul Ummat has left for us. These selected advices and instructions will particularly apply to the Mureedeem of Hadhrat Masihullah, who find themselves in a void as a result of the departure of the Shaikh.

(1) The Saalik should apply himself to the work and not hanker after the fruits and results.

In otherwords, the Mureed should continue along the Path, striving and struggling against the nafs, no matter how long the process may take. The Saalik's duty is to repeatedly renew his efforts in the spiritual programme, never giving up.

(2) The Matloob is Maqaamaat, not Ahwaal because the first are acquireable and the latter cannot be acquired by effort.

The Matloob is the objective or the aim. The aim in the spiritual programme is to acquire elevated ranks of Divine Proximity. The aim is not Ahwaal. Ahwaal refers to states of ecstasy and emotional states produced by Thikr, Muraqabah and Ibaadat. The acquisition of such emotional states, though good, is not within the volitional control of the Mureed. He should, therefore, not hanker after such Ahwaal. If he acquires such states as the effects of his Thikr, etc., he should not become proud. He should make shukr and not be distracted. He should not pay heed to these states which are beyond his control and which are not the aims of Tasawwuf. The sole aim is Proximity with Allah Ta'ala. This is known as Maqaamaat (Stages). Divine Proximity is acquired in stages by the effort and mujaahadah of the Saalik. While some ahwaal (states) could be nafsani and shaitani influences, Maqaamaat are known to only Allah Ta'ala. The sign of the Mureed rising from one Stage of Proximity to another, is his resolution and perpetual effort and mujaahadah. He allows nothing to deter him from his journey. He may stumble and fall, but he always rises and continues

along the Path.

(3) Even the preponderance of wasawis is a mercy. The roots of vanity and self-esteem are severed in this way.

Wasawis are stray thoughts entering the mind without the Mureed introducing them of his own will. By reflecting on the preponderance of such stray thoughts and his inability to curb them, the Mureed will realize his weakness and not allow himself to become but swollen with vanity. He will understand that he has no cause for self-esteem. The variety of stray thoughts, mostly corruptive and of a lowly type, will indicate to him his inferiority in the spiritual plane. He should, however, not be perturbed by the frequency of such wasawis. The best remedy is to simply ignore these thoughts. Never brood over them.

(4) Man is not obliged to ensure that his heart derives pleasure in ibaadat. His obligation is simply to direct his heart towards Ibaadat.

The acquisition of pleasure and yearning in ibaadat and thikr is not within man's control. These are bestowals of Allah Ta'ala. Man is obliged to only strive and submit himself to the Ahkaam of the Shariah.

(5) When grief overwhelms the Mureed by his remembrance of his Shaikh, he should divert himself into some other activity.

The purpose of the association with the Shaikh is to act in accordance with his teachings. The aim is to work and strive against the nafs. Excessive grief and sorrow are detrimental.

(6) Until you have not created a Munaasabat by sitting in the company of a Shaikh and paying attention to his Ta'leem, do not make haste in Bay't with him.

Munaasabat or affinity or compatibility is a condition for spiritual progress. Elsewhere in these pages, the issue of Munaasabat is discussed.

(7) Reciting YAA BAASITO in abundance eliminates fear.

The abundant recitation of this Attribute of Allah Ta'ala is a remedy for loneliness and fear.

(8) Don't despair when sin has been committed. Hasten towards Taubah and Istighfaar and renew the work of obedience.

Shaitaan conspires to deflect the Mu'min by engendering in him a feeling of hopelessness, whispering into him that his efforts in the spiritual direction are in vain on account of the sins he is committing. Shaitaan strives to prevent the servant from Taubah and Istighfaar. Never fall in his trap, no matter how abundantly you may have sinned.

(9) The treatment for sin is nothing but courage and istighfaar.

The only method to counter sin, is to strive with might against the nafs. There is no simpler way. There is no other way. Seeking repentance and being alert and diligent in the struggle against the nafs are the only remedies for the plots of the nafs.

(10) If the majority of the mureeds of a Shaikh refrain from Salaat and lack piety, such a Shaikh should not be offered one's allegiance.

When the majority of his mureeds are irreligious, it indicates a radical flaw in the shaikh himself. There is no spiritual benefit to be gained from such a shaikh. Bay't is to gain roohaaniyat.

(11) Wilaayat or Qurb-e-Ilaahi is not something which the Shaikh can apportion out to his Mureeds.

It is not within the power of the Shaikh to grant spiritual ranks of Divine Proximity. The Mureed acquires Qurb-e-Ilaahi by giving practical expression to the instructions of the Shaikh. The Shaikh teaches the ways and methods of gaining Allah's Pleasure and Nearness.

(12) Dars and Tadrees are also a form of Muraqabah.

Involvement in teaching Deeni subjects in a Madrasah is also a form of meditation by way of which the Mureed becomes conscious of Allah Ta'ala provided that his occupation of Dars and Tadrees is for the sake of Allah Ta'ala.

(13) Courage and meeting less with people are the treatment for abundant speech and futile discussion.

Speech in abundance, i.e. futile talk, is harmful for the spiritual heart. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that such talk produces hardness in the heart and such hardness distances man from Allah Ta'ala.

(14) Separate yourself from gatherings in which gheebat takes place.

Gheebat is to speak ill of a person in his absence. Gheebat is a true statement which will hurt a person if he hears of it. If the statement is false, it will be known as buhtaan which is worse than gheebat. A Gheebat, according to the Qur'aan, is like eating the flesh of a dead brother.

(15) Love for the world will be severed only after prolonged Thikrullaah. A considerable time has to be spent in Thikr and spiritual exercises.

Worldly love is embedded in the nafs of man. Elimination of this love requires prolonged striving. Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala has to be established as a permanent practice, then only will the love of the world be expelled from the heart.

(16) Constancy in opposing the nafs produces a natural aversion for sin.

Man's nafs always inclines towards sin. He derives pleasure in sin. Diligence in the struggle against the nafs, produces a glitter in the nafs. It then commences to see its follies and gradually a natural abhorrence for sin is engendered. But, permanence in Mujaahadah is necessary.

(17) If counting one's Thikr disturbs one's concentration, abandon the counting, for it is not the maqsood.

The aim is remembrance of Allah. Concentration of Allah is sometimes disturbed if the Thakir attempts to keep track of the number of times he is reciting a particular Thikr. He should, therefore, discontinue the counting as this is not the aim of the Thikr. He should proceed with his Thikr without keeping count.

(18) Casting evil glances is a malady which requires severe mujaahadah, e.g. for a single evil glance cast, perform 20 raka'ts Nafl Salaat.

Casting gazes at ghair mahareem is a malady which is spiritually destructive. It calls for diligence in mujaahadah and the imposition of stiff penalties as indicated. This is the only remedy.

(19) When one becomes deficient in virtuous deeds, then in addition to Istighfaar impose some fine on oneself, e.g. 20 raka't Nafl Salaat.

This self-imposition will bring the nafs to its senses. To page 10

By
HADHRAT MASEEHUL UMMAT,
MAULANA MUHAMMED MASEEHUL KHAN SHERWANI
(The senior Khaleefah of Hadhrat
Hakeemul Ummat, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi - R.A.)

t a s a w u f

MUJAHADAH

"Those who strive in Our Path, We will most assuredly guide them towards OUR Paths."

(Qur'aan)

"Fudhaalah Kaamil narrates that Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: 'The mujaahid is he who makes jihaad (strives) in the obedience of Allah.'"

(Baihaqi)

The Nature of Mujaahadah

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

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

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

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

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

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TYPES of MUJAHADAH

There are two kinds of mujahadah.

- (1) **Jismāni** - Physical Mujahadah. This form of striving relates to the body. One such way is the imposition of practices upon the nafs in order to accustom it to difficulties, e.g. **accustoming the nafs to Salaat** by imposing upon it Nafil Salaat in abundance; reducing the greed of the nafs by means of abundance of Nafil Fasting.
- (2) **Nafsāni** - Sensual Mujahadah. In this type of mujahadah the nafs is opposed in its desires. When the nafs urges to commit sin then opposition is offered. The main type of mujahadah is this second kind. This second kind of mujahadah is Waajib (compulsory). The first type of mujahadah is employed in order to acquire the second kind. When the nafs becomes accustomed to difficulties then it will develop the habit of controlling its desires.

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

- (1) Qillat-e-Ta'am: To eat less.
- (2) Qillat-e-Kalām: To speak less.
- (3) Qillat-e-Manām: To sleep less.
- (4) Qillat-e-Ikhtilāf Ma'al Anām: To associate less with people.

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

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

NEED of MUJAHADAH

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

Both the muftadi and the muntahi are at times faced with lethargy because of conflict in the a'māl. (Muftadi - a beginner in the Path of Tasawwuf; Muntahi - one who has attained his goal in Tasawwuf). Both are in need to ward off their lethargy by means of mujahadah. However, the muftadi stands in greater need of mujahadah than the muntahi. In relation to their ranks, the nafs of both muftadi and muntahi at times urge for sin. Hence, mujahadah is essential in the opposition of sin as well.

It is totally erroneous for the muftadi to stay away from mujahadah and labour under the notion that he will attain his goal without mujahadah. The error of the muntahi lies in over-confidence. As a result of gaining proficiency in mujahadah in the initial stages, he at times becomes over-confident. But, frequently natural traits and habits return and the consequence is an urge for sinning. The nafs of the muntahi therefore also becomes lethargic at times in obedience. He, therefore, stands in need of mujahadah at such a time.

There is however, a great difference between the mujahadah or the muftadi and the muntahi. The muftadi is like one who is seated on the back of a horse just trained. The rider of the newly-trained horse has to be much more alert and exercise greater control over the horse as such a horse tends to be more mischievous and is apt to go out of control. The muntahi is like a rider seated on the back of a well-trained horse. He exercises no great endeavour to maintain the horse under control. Nevertheless, he too has to be alert because even a trained horse sometimes reverts to mischievousness because of its natural animal traits. But, the slightest warning from the rider is sufficient to check the horse. If, however, the rider is totally negligent then, even the trained horse will sometimes suddenly drop him from its back. Thus, mujahadah for the control of the nafs is necessary for the muntahi also.

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MODERATION IN MUJAHADAH

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

Eat not so much that it spills from the mouth
Eat not so less that the body is overcome with weakness.
Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Shareef:

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

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

THE THAKIR

The true Saalik is a permanent Thakir. He is perpetually engrossed in Thikr. Thikr is grounded in his heart. Such a Thakir is under the protection of Allah.

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WHAT IS

TASAWWUF is a misunderstood concept. Its true meaning and significance in the daily life of a Muslim are lost. Commercial "sufis" (men of guile who exhibit themselves as saints) are trading Tasawwuf as some mysterious cult of "mysticism" apart from the Shariat and Sunnat of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). They have reduced Tasawwuf to potions, talismans, incantations, empty rituals, and they have cloaked it with beliefs and theories of kufr and shirk. They have interwoven Tasawwuf with bid'ah and practices of corruption. All this have become necessary in the interest of their pecuniary benefits. A "mystical" cult appeals and preys on the mind of ignorant and unwary masses who seek an escape for their Shar'i duties and Ibaadaat in the fantasy of "mystical" concepts fraudulently conjured by the fraudulent "sufis". Such fraudulent "sufis" are swift in pampering the weaknesses and the spiritual lethargy of the masses and are adept in providing "easy" solutions of escape for a fee. Muslims who treasure their Imaan and their Islaam have to beware of such robbers of the Deen who are easily recognized by the high fees which they levy for spiritual initiation (ba'yt) into their "mystical" paths, for their annual renewal fees, for their tabarruk charges and for their many other fees subtly, but compulsorily levied in the supposed interests of their disciples.

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DIVINE PROXIMITY

By means of riyazat and mujaahadah the urges of akhlaaq-e-zameemah (the lowly attributes) are suppressed and brought under full control. When this occurs, there rises in the servant of Allah the perfect attribute of Hubbe Marziyaat (love for acts which occasion the Pleasure of Allah), as well as the quality of Bughz Namarziyaat (hatred for acts which occasion the Displeasure of Allah). The consequence of this development is the free and ready flow of righteous deeds and the almost total annihilation of evil acts. About such a person who has developed into an embodiment of virtue, the Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) says:

"By means of Nawaafil (optional Ibaadat) my servant progressively attains my proximity until I make him My beloved. When I love him, I become his hearing by means of which he hears; and I become his sight by means of which he sees, and I become his hand by means of which he touches, and I become his feet by means of which he walks."

(Bukhaari)

Abundance of Nawaafil, whether it be Salaat, Fasting, Muraqabah (meditation) or reduction in desires, is an integral part of mujaahadah which is essential for the spiritual progress and development of the Saalik (the one who travels along the Path of Tasawwuf to reach the Proximity of Allah Ta'ala). It should, however, be noted that abundance of Nawaafil will be of no benefit if the discharge or Faraidh (compulsory Ibaadaat) is neglected. No amount of Nafil Salaat can compensate the deliberate loss of a single Fardh Salaat due to neglect. One who foregoes Fardh Salaat and engages in forms of "zikr" is lost in deception. Such "zikr" will be of no benefit to him. The Hadith of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) makes it very clear that Fardh Ibaadaat are more efficacious in the attainment of Love, Pleasure and Proximity of Allah Ta'ala. In a Hadith Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says:

"There is nothing more loved to me by means of which My servant can gain My Proximity than those duties which I have made Fardh on him."

(Bukhaari)

The superiority of Fardh Ibaadat over Nafil Ibaadat is strongly asserted by the Shariat. Abundance of Nafil being a means of gaining Divine Proximity refers to Nafil performed after the Fardh Ibaadat has been discharged. Nafil Ibaadat will not attain for one Divine Proximity if the Faraidh duties are neglected.

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l of Islam

TASAWWUF

Tasawwuf in reality is nothing but the ROOH of Islam. Islam consists of two fundamental parts, viz. the external laws pertaining to Ibaadat and, the internal state of beauty, concern, sincerity and perfection on which the external laws are to be based. Thus Tasawwuf is an integral part of the Shariat of Islam. Any "tasawwuf" beyond the confines of the Shariat is not the Tasawwuf of the Qur'aan and Hadith, but is a practice of fraud and deception. The Tasawwuf of ALL the great and illustrious Auliya operate within strict control of the Sunnat of our Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). A tasawwuf which is at variance with the Tasawwuf of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not Tasawwuf, but is some satanic concept designed to obtain the pleasure of shaitaan.

The main purpose of Tasawwuf is to eliminate the bestial qualities in man and to supplant them with the high and virtuous qualities of angels. In this direction, Tasawwuf employs the advices, exhortations, restrictions, prohibitions and remedies prescribed by the Qur'aan, Hadith and the authoritative and authentic Auliya of Islaam. On these pages, Hadhrat Masihul Ummat, Hadhrat Mohammed Masihullah Khan, Imaam of Tasawwuf of our time outlines some fundamental aspects of Tasawwuf, i.e. Qur'aanic Tasawwuf--the Tasawwuf which is Fardh upon every Muslim.

ROAD TO ALLAH

Once Hadhrat Baayazeed Bustaami (R.A.) saw Allah Ta'ala in a dream. He petitioned:

"O My Rabb! Show me the nearest road leading to You."

Allah Ta'ala replied:

"O Abaa Yazeed! Leave your nafs and come."

Therefore, the quickest way to reach Allah Ta'ala is by opposing one's desires, i.e. by eliminating the ego. Consider yourself as non-existent and eradicate pride from you. Do not dispute in the laws of Allah Ta'ala because this constitutes the barrier between Allah and His servant. If these evils have been expelled, then you have become Waasil (reached the Divine Proximity).

(Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Maulana Thanvi - R.A.)

MODERATION IN SLEEP

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

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

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

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

THE STARTING POINT

The first step of the mureed (disciple) in this path (Tasawwuf) is Sidq, i.e. sincerity. On the correct foundation will be erected a correct building. The Mashaa-ikh (Spiritual Guides) say that because of destruction of the usul (the foundations) people are deprived of the wealth of wusul (obtaining of the desired goal). Hence, the beginning is waajib with rectification of aqaa-id (beliefs). Belief should be devoid of all vestiges of suspicion, doubt, deviation, bid'ah and be well grounded in the absolute proofs of the Shariat.

(HADHRAT HAKIMUL UMMAT)

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QILLAT-E-IKHTILAT MA'AL ANAM

(Reducing Association)

Unnecessary association with people should not be augmented. Remember that besides Allah, there are three kinds of association.

(1) Praiseworthy association. The Shariat commands this type of association, for in itself it is an association with Allah Ta'ala. Ending such association is not permissible.

(2) Detestable association. The Shariat prohibits such association. Ending such association is Waajib (compulsory).

(3) Permissible association. This association is neither Ibaadat nor sin. It is not necessary to end such association. Although permissible, there is a need to reduce such association. The instruction to discontinue association refers to detestable and permissible association and not to praiseworthy association. However, in so far as detestable association is concerned, the discontinuance must be total, i.e. such association is to be compulsorily ended, and in regard to permissible association the meaning is reduction or limiting such association.

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SOLITUDE (KHALWAT)

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

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

"... a man who takes to solitude in the peak of a mountain. He has goats. He fulfils their right and makes the Ibaadat of Allah."

In another Hadith it appears:

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

(Bukhaari)

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

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

QILLAT-E-MANAM

Allah Ta'ala says:

"Stand up during the night, but a portion (of the night); half the night or less than half the night."

(Qur'an)

The aforementioned ayat commands standing up during the night so that the nafs becomes accustomed to striving. In this way the ability of the nafs (to submit to righteousness) develops strength and perfection. Standing up during the night is most efficacious for bringing the nafs into submission. All forms of Ibaadat, be it Du'a or Qira'at, Namaz or Zikr and be it external (zahir) or internal (batin), are fulfilled in the fullest manner during the night. The meaning of proper external (zahir) discharge of Ibaadat during the night is the proper and correct recital of the words since the time available is ample. The meaning of proper internal (batin) discharge of Ibaadat is that during the night one derives greater pleasure in Ibaadat. This is in fact what is meant by the tongue and the heart conforming.

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

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

"In the latter part of the night they make istighfaar."

Elsewhere in the Qur'aan it is said:

"They separate their sides from the beds calling their Rabb in fear and hopes ..."

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

"The face of one who performs Salāt in abundance during the night becomes beautiful during the day."

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

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QILLAT-E-TA'AM

Allah Ta'ala states:

"Eat and drink, but do not waste. Verily, Allah does not love those who transgress the limits."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

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

(Mishkaat)

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

In reality Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not prescribe taqleel-e-ta'am, but instead altered the routine times of eating and in this way made the intervals between eating times longer. This change of habit (in eating times) and the longer intervals (between eating times) which are difficult upon the nafs, have been considered by the Shariat to be representative of taqleel-e-ta'am. Among the various forms of mujaahadah, fasting is the best. Hence, the Shariat has given taqleel-e- (Continued on Page 8)

QILLAT-E-TA'AM (Cont from F

ta'am the form of fasting. In the Shariat, reduction of food will therefore be fasting. The other forms of taqleel-e-ta'am adopted by the people of mujaahadah have no original basis in the Shariat. Eating less and remaining hungry are not forms of mujaahadah of the Shariat. The significance (fadheelat) of hunger mentioned in the Hadith does not refer to voluntary (i.e. self-imposed) hunger, but refers to involuntary hunger - hunger which comes one's way uninvited. The Hadith consoles such persons of poverty by explaining the virtues of hunger so that they do not worry and suffer unduly.

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

Qillat-e-ta'am is not an end in itself, but is a means of acquiring an intended aim. This intended aim and purpose is to weaken the animal urge in man, and the aim in weakening this urge is to prevent the nafs from sin. Therefore, if the nafs could be controlled and restrained from sin without reducing food then taqleel-e-ta'am is not necessary. Furthermore, cheerfulness and joy in Ibaadat are experienced if the body is in the state of health and strength. Experience shows that nowadays the health in most cases suffers as a result of taqleel-e-ta'am. But, at the same time one must abstain from excessive eating and adhere to moderation. The capacity of people differs, hence moderation will differ for different persons. The guide line in this matter is to eat when hungry and to stop eating when you feel that you can yet eat a few more morsels. In other words, one is allowed to eat to one's stomach fill, but not to satisfy one's desire.

Excessive Speech - the Remedy

Prior to speaking, ponder for a few moments. Endeavour to understand whether Allah Ta'ala who is the Hearer and the Seer will be pleased or displeased with what you are about to speak. If this method of contemplation is adopted before speaking, then, Insha'Allah, sinful talk will not emerge from your lips. If after adopting such contemplation, the nafs urges one to indulge in sinful or nonsensical talk, then confront it with courage and suppress the urge. If any unbecoming talk was spoken then compensate immediately for it by making taubah (repenting). If the talk involved abuse to anyone, mockery of anyone, scandalling or gossiping about anyone, then after taubah obtain the pardon of the person concerned as well. If for some reason it is difficult to obtain

the necessary pardon (e.g. the person concerned may be away or may have died) then make Istighfar (seeking Allah's Forgiveness) for the person concerned as well as for oneself. Such forgiveness could be asked in the following way:

"O Allah forgive us and forgive him."

Hadhrat Shaikh Fareeduddin Attar (Rahmatullah alayhi) explains most beautifully, perfectly and comprehensively the benefits of maintaining silence. He says:

"In my mind does not enter any topic nobler than silence.

Silence contains so many benefits that they cannot be explained.

Silence makes breasts the treasure houses of pearls of wisdom.

I learnt this hidden secret from the oyster's shell."

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

O RECITER!

O Reciter of Tasbeeh! Has the effect of your Tasbeeh reached your heart or not? Or is your Tasbeeh only the movement of the tongue? If you say: 'Yes, the Tasbeeh is in my heart as well.', it will be said to you: When the tongue is thakir and when the heart too is thakir, then is the obedience of the Law of Allah Ta'ala on every occasion also in you? If you do have correct obedience, then congratulations. If not, your act testifies that the Tasbeeh is only on your tongue while your heart is devoid of it. If the effect of the Tasbeeh was in your heart, then what is the meaning of your conflict with the Law of Allah even after prolonged recitation of Tasbeeh? (Hadhrat Masihullah)

AKHLAQ-E-ZAMEEMAH

Akhlaaq-e-Zameemah or the lowly animal attributes in man are natural qualities in man. Their total eradication is neither commanded nor is it possible. Therefore, the presence of these characteristics is not abominable. However, fulfilling the urges of these attributes is abominable and not permissible. Directing the natural lowly qualities into virtuous avenues is meritorious, e.g. withholding to spend (bukhl or stinginess) in evil undertakings will be meritorious whereas the same quality if employed in a good undertaking, i.e. withholding to spend when necessary, will be abominable.

The following are among the Akhlaaq-e-Zameemah, the direction and control of which are obligatory duties on Believers.

ISRAAF or wastefulness.

Spending unnecessarily is termed israf. Its reality is exceeding the prescribed limits.

BUKHL or niggardliness.

Withholding to spend when necessary, the need being occasioned by either the Shariat or benevolence.

BUGHZ or enmity.

Bughz also known as hiqd is malice which festers in the heart when one fails to take revenge in anger due to one's lack of power. It fosters in one the desire to harm the one against whom the bughz is directed.

TAKABBUR or pride.

Regarding oneself to be superior to others in attributes of excellence. It implies the inferiority of others.

HUBBE JAH or love of fame.

The desire that others become subservient to one and shower praise and respect on one is termed hubbe jah.

HUBBE DUNYAA or love of the world.

Anything which has immediate (i.e. in this life) pleasure without producing beneficial results in the Akhirat is termed dunyaa (or the world). Love of the dunya is called hubbe dunyaa.

HIRS or greed

Involvement of the heart with wealth, etc. is termed hirs.

HASAD or envy.

Hasad is the condition of the heart which dislikes another's prosperous state and desires its elimination.

RIYAA or ostentation.

The desire to be honoured by others through the agency of one's acts of Ibaadat is termed riyaa. Ibaadat is displayed for worldly purposes.

SHAHWAT or lust.

Preferring acts which are in conflict with the Shariat is termed shahwat or khawaa-ish nafsani.

UJB or vanity.

Ujb is to attribute one's excellence to oneself without fearing the possibility of such excellences being snatched away. One in this condition derives pleasure by being distinguished from others.

GHAZAB or anger.

The wrath in the heart agitating to take revenge is termed ghazab.

SILENCE AND SALVATION

Allah Ta'ala states:

"He utters not a word, but a ready guard is at hand."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"He who maintains silence has attained salvation."

(Ahmad, Tirmizi)

Malik (Rahamatullah alayhi) said that it reached him that Eesa Bin Maryam (alayis salām) said:

"Do not speak in abundance other than zikrullah, for your hearts will become hard. Verily, a hard heart is far from Allah, but you know not. And, do not look at the sins of people as if you are the overseers. Gaze at your sins as if you are slaves. People are of two kinds: the one who is involved (in sin) and the one who is saved (from sin). Have mercy upon those involved and praise Allah Ta'ala for protection (received)."

(Taiseer)

Abundance of speech hardens the heart thereby eliminating humility and fear. This fact is established by experience. A person becomes distanced from Allah Ta'ala because of the hardness in the heart, but one fails to realise this drift from Allah Ta'ala. The reality of it will be discerned in the Akhirat. Although the effect of such distance from Allah is detectable here as well, but due to unconcern one fails to realise this. One should not view the sins of others as if one has been appointed over others, but on the contrary one should be concerned with one's own sins so that compensation could be offered and rectification adopted. Some people are involved in sin and others again have been protected from sin. One should have mercy upon those who have become involved in sin and not despise or criticize them. Admonish them with kindness and make duaa on their behalf. Protection against sin is a safeguard, hence one should not be vain and arrogant if one is saved from sin. On the contrary, one should consider such protection as a ni'mat (favour) of Allah - a favour to which one is not entitled - and be grateful.

QILLAT-E-KALAM

Man's conversation apparently falls into three categories:

(1) **Beneficial.**

In such speech is some worldly or Deeni benefit.

(2) **Harmful.**

In such speech is some worldly or Deeni harm.

(3) **Neither beneficial nor harmful.**

The Hadith describing this third category of speech as la-ya'ni (futile, useless). On closer examination it will be realized that this third class of speech belongs also to the second category, viz. harmful talk. If SUBHANALLAH was uttered once during a time which was squandered in futile talk, then half the pan in the Scale of Aml (deeds) would be filled. If some advantageous or righteous act was done during the time spent in futile conversation, it would have become an expiation for sin and a medium of salvation in the Akhirat. If not this, then at least such time idly spent could have been expended in some worldly benefit. Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The sign of one's Islam being healthy is one's shunning of futile acts and futile talks."

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

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

Reducing speech does not mean reduction in such talk which is necessary. But, it means shunning nonsensical or futile conversation even if such talk happens to be lawful. If this habit is inculcated then abstention from harām talks such as falsehood, scandalling, slandering, etc., will be automatic. Abstaining from unlawful discussion comes within the scope of true mujaahadah - mujaahadah which is compulsory. If one becomes accustomed to refrain from idle (although it may be lawful) talk which falls within the scope of secondary mujaahadah then to a far greater degree will one practice true mujaahadah (i.e. compulsory striving) against harām talk. It is not permissible to shun talk which is necessary since this will result in problems or cause inconvenience and difficulty to the audience.

If the Tasbeeh has exercised its effect on your heart, then why do you stand up in readiness to fight when someone abuses you? Why did you abuse your wife? Why did you abuse your son? In reality the Tasbeeh is only on your tongue. It has not penetrated into your heart. It is stuck in your throat.

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

HIS TA'LEEM

All Naseehat, views, ideas, advices and exhortations expressed in this issue of AL-HAQ are those of Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah (rahmatullah alayhi). Nothing is of ours. This issue of AL-HAQ and all our other Deeni activities are the products of Hadhrat Masihullah's Ta'leem and Tarbiyat. There is no excellence which we can advertise. Everything has been gained from the Spiritual Table which our Shaikh had always spread in our presence. We took therefrom according to our limited capacities. And, it is solely with the Taufeeq of Allah Ta'ala and the Duas of our Shaikh that we are able to make our voices heard in this world smitten with baatil, bid'ah, dhalaal and kufr. May Allah Ta'ala perpetually sustain us with the spiritual shadow and the Baatini Fuyoodh and Barakaat of our Shaikh. It is from such illustrious hearts that the anwaar of Hidaayah and Ilm gush forth to cascade over the heads of those Muredeen who possess the flame of Sidq and Ikhlās in their hearts. May Allah Ta'ala reward our Shaikh, Aameen.

The System of Bay't

The system of Bay't - pledging fealty or allegiance - in vogue among the Sufiyah Kiram has been labelled by some persons as a bid'ah. They have claimed it to be bid'ah since according to them, this system of the Sufiyah (Auliya) is not proven on the basis of Rasulullah's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) Sunnah. It is argued that the bay't system in vogue during the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) envisaged the acceptance of the pledge of allegiance only from kuffar who embraced Islam and from Muslims enrolling in Jihad. However, this claim is not corroborated by the Ahadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The following Hadith appears in Abu Dawood and Nisa'ee

"Hadhrat Auf Bin Malik Ash-Ja-l narrates:

We were by Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). We were a group of nine, eight or seven persons. He (Rasulullah - sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

'Do you not make bay't (swear allegiance) to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)?

We, then stretched out our hands and asked:

'Regarding what shall we make bay't to you, O Rasulullah? He (Rasulullah - sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

'On that, you will worship Allah; not associate with Him anything; perform the five Salat; you will hear and you will obey."

The audience of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) on this particular occasion was a group of Sahabah. This bay't was therefore, assuredly, not a bay't on Islam. It was not a bay't of the kuffar embracing Islam nor was it a bay't on Jihad as the practices enumerated by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in this Hadith, clearly indicate. This group had already embraced Islam and were practicing according to the Commands of Allah. What then was the purpose and the meaning of obtaining 'the bay't (pledge of allegiance) from Sahabah on practices such as Salat, Iman, obedience, etc. which they were engaged in offering daily? The clear import of the Hadith is that the purpose of this bay't was for the strict adherence and regulation of the practices of the Deen. And, the purpose of the system of bay't in vogue by the Sufiyah is precisely the same, viz., strict adherence and regulation of the exoteric demands and the esoteric demands of the Shariah. The bay't of the Sufiyah Kiram is merely a pledge made by the mureed (disciple) that he will, to the utmost of his ability, adhere strictly to all aspects of the Shariah, executing the demands of the Shariah pertaining to the external acts of Ibadat, e.g. Salat, Saum, etc., as well as the internal acts of purification, e.g. purifying the heart from the lowly bestial attributes of avarice, pride, etc. There exists, therefore, not the slightest doubt in the Sunnat nature of the bay't system entertained by the Auliya.

During the initial era of Islam, i.e. after the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), when the system of bay't was employed also by the temporal Khulafa (the Rulers of the Islamic Empire), the Sufiyah abstained from making use of it (the bay't system) to avoid any confusion and resemblance with the temporal rulers. During that early stage, suhbat (the disciple's association with his Murshid) was considered sufficient to achieve the purpose envisaged by the custom of bay't.

MUJAHID

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

In the early days, the period of acquiring Deeni Knowledge (Knowledge of Fiqh, etc.) was an era of Taqwa. The students of Deen were grounded in Taqwa and they were conscious of their spiritual reformation (Islaah). However in these times, they resort to a variety of interpretations to render lawful reprehensible things.

Ilm is essential for A'maal. Ilm constitutes the basis for righteous deeds. Ilm without A'mal is unacceptable. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"He who sets out in the quest of Ilm, is in the Path of Allah until he returns (back home)."

Thus, the Student of Deeni Knowledge is a Mujaahid in the Path of Allah. The aim of Jihaad is I'laa-e-Kalimatullaah or raise the Deen of Allah. This is also the aim of Ilm-e-Deen. As the Mujaahid in the battlefield has to undergo dangers and hardships, so too, the Student of Deen who sets out in the pursuit of Ilm, has to wage a permanent struggle against the Nafs. He has, therefore, been described by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as a Mujaahid.

HADHRAT ANSWERS YOUR QUERY

The following episode will answer the questions, doubts and anxieties of many Muredeen who are overwhelmed with grief by the departure of our Shaikh Hadhrat Masihullah (rahmatullah alayh).

Once a Mureed asked Hadhrat Masihullah: "The thought often comes to my mind: When Hadhrat passes away what should I do?"

Hadhrat Masihullah replied:

"Look at the condition of the followers while the Shaikh is alive. When they do not engage in even Thikr while the Shaikh is alive, what can be expected of them when he passes away?" Hadhrat then added:

"When the last moments of Haji Imdaadullah Sahib were approaching, people were greatly worried. What will happen after his demise? But, after his death a great Star of Knowledge and Piety appeared on the horizon. The greatest Wali of the time, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) was raised for the welfare of the Ummah. If followers are sincere in the quest for Islaah, Allah Ta'ala will most definitely provide for such sincere devotees."

TA'LEEM

* A person asked: How should I safeguard myself from sin when I return home?" Hadhrat replied:

"The Shaikh cannot be with his followers forever. But, his Naseehat and life-style will be with you forever."

* Hadhrat would say to his followers:

"The Imaan of Muslims is like dry twigs held over a fire. The drier the twigs, the quicker they burn. In a similar way, depending on the sincerity of the Mureed, will he gain benefit from the Shaikh. Then, even a single majlis (session) in the company of the Shaikh will be adequate to transform one's lifestyle."

* Hadhrat often reminded his Muredeen:

"People speak of meditation. Is there any better meditation than to contemplate Allah's attributes of Haazir and Naathir (That He is Omnipresent and He is Ever watchful)? Keep in mind these Attributes of Allah in all walks of life—when at work or at home; when in public or private. And, when one is tempted to sin, remember that Allah watches and He is present. This will assist you immensely in making your entire day a Remembrance of Allah (Thikrullaah)."

SERVICE

In his Ta'leemaat, Hadhrat Masihullah always stressed on **Khidmat-e-Khalq** (service to mankind). One day, as was his normal practice, he went for a walk in the field after Fajr accompanied by a small group of Mureeds. On the way, the group passed by a big truck. The Hindu driver was having starting problems and there was none present to assist him. Hadhrat immediately realized the problem and without hesitation started to push the truck. The mureeds quickly followed suit and the truck started. The Hindu truck driver alighted from the truck and tried to offer his thanks by bowing down in front of Hadhrat. But, Hadhrat prevented him by holding his hand, saying: "Only Allah is entitled for bowing". Then he commented: If one

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INCOMPETENT AND DANGEROUS MENTORS

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned that a time will come when men will utilize the Deen to earn material benefit. Many forms of such betrayal of the Deen are to be found. One of the severest forms of plundering the Deen and the Iman of innocent and unwary believers is for "wolves in sheep-skins" to lure unwary and ignorant Muslims into their Iman-plundering traps. Such men will be found in abundance among the Ahle Bid'ah (the people of innovation). They will be found to be posing as spiritual guides (Shaikhs and Murshids of Tareeqat). They lay great claims of being spiritual masters of tasawwuf. They don long, flowing and impressive garments to convey the impression that they are masters of tasawwuf. But, in reality they are, in the words of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), men with the hearts of wolves, and shayateen in human bodies.

Such fraudulent "peers" employ the system of bay't (initiation of disciples into the spiritual orders of tasawwuf) as a lucrative trading practice, charging at times exorbitant fees as payment for initiation. The money-making racket does not cease at the "admission" fees. An annual "renewal" fee also has to be paid to avoid expulsion and the inauspicious wrath of the fraudulent "mentor" who acts as the agent of shaitan. Besides the "admission" and "renewal" fees, there are several other side-charges which have to be paid for dubious spiritual acts and customs.

It is essential that Muslims realise that these "peers" among the Bid'atees are NOT masters or Murshideen in any of the **Orders of Tasawwuf**. They have no relationship whatsoever with the purpose of tasawwuf, which is to attain the spiritual reformation of the Mureed through the agencies of the Shariah, and not via some methods which are a conglomeration of hotch-potch kufr and bid'ah rituals. These fake "peers" of the Ahle Bid'ah mercilessly plunder the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), but audaciously and vociferously trumpet the slogan of "Hubbe Rasul" (Love of Rasulullah - sallallahu alayhi wasallam). There is no relationship between these false "peers" and "Hubbe Rasul".

Muslims should not permit themselves to be caught in the web of these tricksters who are out to amass wealth at the cost of Iman. They fall within the purview of the Quranic ayat:

"They trade the Laws of Allah for a miserable price."

It is not permissible to become bay't on the hands of one who is linked with bid'ah (innovation). If the "peer" is a man of bid'ah, he will never be in position to instruct the Mureed along the lines of the Shariah. The beliefs of bid'ati "peers" are defective and contagious. Association with a bid'ati "peer" will despoil the Iman and the practice of those who are supposed to be the Mureeds of such an unqualified "peer". A bid'ati "peer" will endeavour his utmost to entrench the Mureed in bid'ah and beliefs of shirk. He is not in position to administer ta'leem (spiritual instruction) and naseehat (advice and admonition) based on the Sunnah and Shariah. He will resort to queer and baseless interpretations to justify his anti-Sunnah practices. There, therefore, exists the grave danger of the Mureed being seriously deviated from the Road of Iman.

The "instruction" and "naseehat" of the bid'ati "peer" will not be imbued with anwar (spiritual lustre) nor will it be efficacious. Divine aid will not be with the bid'ati "peer" in his instruction of the Mureed.

THAKIR

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Every person obedient to Allah, is a Thakir (one engaged in Thikr)."

When the Mu'min engages himself in an act of obedience solely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, he is regarded by Allah as a Thakir even if his tongue is not involved in thikr while he is engaged in the act of obedience. A man's gaze accidentally falls on a ghair mahram. Solely for the sake of Allah, he restrains his nafs and diverts his gaze. His tongue has not recited a word of thikr, but by Allah he is recorded a Thakir. This is the meaning of the Hadith.

This Thakir who restrains his nafs for Allah's sake, now rises above even the Angels because he wages a struggle against his natural inclinations while the Angels have no such jihaad to wage. His success against the nafs is progress and he attains spiritual ranks of elevation thereby. In addition he will experience the sweetness of Imaan.

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

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SHAJARAH

Hadhrat Masihullah belongs to the auspicious Chain of Auliya linking up with Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Every name in this Shajarah Tayyibah (the Holy Spiritual Tree) is a Star of immaculate Taqwa and spiritual excellence in the firmament of Ma'rifat and Tasawwuf. The Roots of this Holy Tree rose out of the Fountain of Ma'rifat which gushed from the blessed heart of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The illustrious names in this Shajarah Tayyibah are:

Hadhrat Muhammad Masihullah Khan, the Khalifah of
 Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, the Khalifah of
 Hajee Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki, the Khalifah of
 Hadhrat Noor Muhammad, the Khalifah of
 Haji Abdur Raheem, the Khalifah of
 Shah Abdul Basri, the Khalifah of
 Shah Abdul Haadi, the Khalifah of
 Shah Adhuddin, the Khalifah of
 Shah Muhammad, the Khalifah of
 Shah Muhibbullah, the Khalifah of
 Shah Bu-Saeed, the Khalifah of
 Shah Nizaamuddin Balkhi, the Khalifah of
 Shah Jalaluddin, the Khalifah of
 Shah Abdul Quddoos, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Muhammad, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Ahmad Aarif, the Khalifah of
 Shah Ahmad Abdul Haq, the Khalifah of
 Shah Jalaluddin, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Shamsuddin, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Ala-uddin, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Fariduddin Shakar Ganj, the Khalifah of
 Khwaja Qutbuddin Magtool, the Khalifah of
 Shah Mueenuddin Habeeb, the Khalifah of
 Khwaja Uthmaan, the Khalifah of
 Shah Shareef Zindani, the Khalifah of
 Khwaja Maudood Chishti, the Khalifah of
 Shah Bu Yusuf, the Khalifah of
 Shah Abu Muhammad, the Khalifah of
 Shah Ahmad Abdaal Chishti, the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shaami, the Khalifah of
 Khwaja Mumtaaz Alawi, the Khalifah of
 Shah Abu Habeebah Basri, the Khalifah of
 Shah Huzaifah Mur-ashi the Khalifah of
 Shaikh Ibraheem Adham, the Khalifah of
 Shah Fuzail Ibn Iyaaz, the Khalifah of
 Khwaja Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid, the Khalifah of
 Hadhrat Hasan Basri, the Khalifah of
 Ameerul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Ali (radhiallahu anhu), the Khalifah of
 MUHAMMADUR RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).
 May the Rahmat of Allah perpetually shower on them all and may Allah Ta'ala grant them the highest Stages in Jannatul Firdaus, Aameen.

A SHAIKH?

A Shaikh who concentrates on the Islaah-e-Baatini of his Mureeds deserves to be appointed as one's Guide and Murshid. It is meaningless to enter the fold of a Shaikh whose predominant occupation and Ta'leem are only prescribed formulae of Thikr. If the Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah cannot locate a Shaikh whose Ta'leem resembles that of Hadhrat, it will be best to refrain from entering the fold of another Shaikh. Under the circumstances the best solution is to adhere to the Ta'leemaat and the Books of Hadhrat Thanvi and Hadhrat Masihullah (rahmatullah alayhima). The Journey can be continued and the Destination reached in this way. But, there will be no benefit in a strange relationship on account of adam-e-munaasabat.

TA'LEEM AND NASEEHAT

(20) Man is under obligation to refrain from submitting to the dictates of the corrupt attributes (Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah). He is not required to eliminate them.

Eradication of the natural propensities is not possible. The natural characteristics which Allah Ta'ala has created in man cannot be effaced. However, by means of Tarbiyat, the nafs is brought into the state of equilibrium and it meekly submits to the Aql (Intelligence) which commands all the emotions in man. By Tarbiyat, man acquires the ability to control, restrain and dictate the nafs. All the base attributes are diverted from evil into virtue.

(21) Never despise anyone. Believe with conviction that you are the most inferior and keep your gaze on your faults. Honour the person whom you despise and offer salaams to him first.

To hold anyone in contempt is the sure sign of takabbur (pride). Among all the base qualities, pride is the worst. It was the cause for Iblis's fall.

(22) An aid for waking late in the night (for Ibaadat) is to eat early, eat less and sleep immediately after Isha.

It is not permissible to waste any part of the night in idle pursuits and futile talk. Allah Ta'ala has created the night for rest. Every Muslim in general and every Saalik in particular, is required to rise for Tahajjud Salaat. The time after Isha should, therefore, not be spent in any pursuit which is of neither worldly nor deeni benefit.

(23) Qasaawat (hardness of heart) is the lack of regret after sin. Qasaawat is not the inability to shed tears.

When the Mu'min's heart hardens in consequence of flagrant transgression and abstention from Thikrullah and indulgence in futility, the capacity for regretting when he violates Allah's Law disappears. This is a dangerous condition which endangers Imaan. The inability to shed tears on occasions of grief and sorrow is not a sign of qasaawat.

(24) To adopt patience on account of the wife's indiscretion is mujaahadah. With patience should her indiscretion be borne.

Kindness to the wife has been stressed by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). It does not behove the husband to flare into a rage when his wife resorts to childish acts and displeases him with her indiscrete statements. This does not mean that the husband should submit to her unlawful desires.

(25) In sickness is also rahmat and hikmat. Be pleased with Allah even in this state.

The servant of Allah should be satisfied with His Choice. He intends good for the servant although the latter does not understand. The Saalik should remain contented with whatever condition Allah Ta'ala chooses for him.

(26) Contemplate on the events which will transpire after maut. Meditate on the separation from this world and the presence in front of Allah.

Meditation on these events is essential to create a true understanding of the realities of the Akhirah and the futility of this world. By such meditation mujaahadah is simplified and the inclination for ibaadat becomes stronger.

(27) When the gaze of the servant is no longer on his righteous deeds and he has developed an attitude between hope and fear with regard to the affairs of the Akhirah, it is a sign of Abdiyat.

Abdiyat is the state of total humility. The servant of Allah vividly recognizes his utter insignificance and the magnificence and power of Allah Ta'ala. His gaze is not on his deeds as he is convinced that his salvation depends on the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. He is not vainglorious. His righteous deeds and piety, far from giving rise to self-esteem, increase him in humility.

(28) If a man engages in his islaah (spiritual reformation) with the motive of initiating mureeds, his islaah can never be made.

Some people become Bay't to a Shaikh and pursue the path of self-reformation for an ulterior motive. The aim is to acquire qualification to enable him to initiate mureeds into the Path. Such a person cannot be spiritually reformed because of the defective motive. The intention for the association with the Shaikh should be nothing other than one's own reformation.

(29) A simple way of fulfilling an abundance of Qadha Salaat, is to perform one Qadha with every Salaat.

Although the best method is to sum up courage and discharge the Qadha Salaat as quick as possible, for those who are weak and lack determination, the method outlined above is the simplest.

(30) A sign of Abdiyat is to regret when one becomes deficient in one's spiritual affairs.

Such regret indicates humility and the readiness to serve Allah. Only a true servant will regret his shortcomings.

MUNASABAT IS ESSENTIAL

In some quarters, of recent, the despicable innovation of canvassing for mureeds has developed. This shameful practice brings into disrepute the illustrious Silsilah of the Auliya. Such canvassing does not behove men who are in pursuit of higher spiritual ideals.

Now that Hadhrat Masihullah has departed, there will be people who will make attempts to influence the Muredeen to join this or that Silsilah or become bay't to this or that Shaikh. Our advice to the Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah is to refrain from haste in this matter. Entering into Allegiance with a Shaikh is not to be viewed lightly. The condition of Munaasabat is stressed much. In the absence of Munaasabat, it is not advisable to become bay't to a Shaikh.

Hadhrat Masihullah's tareeqah of tarbiyat was unique with his emphasis on Islaah-e-Baatin. While we cannot deny the existence of Mashaa-ikh who also emphasise on Islaah, we must say that in our knowledge there is no Shaikh with whom the Muredeen of Hadhrat Masihullah have a Munaasabat. If we fail to link up with a Shaikh of Hadhrat Masihullah's tareeq, our advice to his Muredeen is to continue with the lessons which they had gained from him and to incumbently study the Kitaabs of Hadhrat Thanvi and Hadhrat Masihullah. Insha'Allah, the answers and solutions will be found. We express our gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for having provided us with sufficient insight and guidance through the agency of Hadhrat Masihullah in these matters. The Road is crystal clear in front of us. Insha'Allah, we cannot go astray if we cling to the direction he had imposed on us.

HONOUR THE BAY'T

Many Muredeen appear to have plunged into a quandry on account of the demise of Hadhrat Masihullah (rahmatullah alayh). Emotionalism should not be permitted to cloud clear thinking. Those who had failed to adhere practically to the teachings of the Shaikh during his lifetime, should start afresh and carry on with the work of Islaah. They should concern themselves with their own reformation.

Time should not be squandered in the organization of functions to sing the praises of the departed Shaikh. This is not among the instructions and Ta'leemaat of Hadhrat Masihullah or of any of the Akaabireen of our Silsilah. Our seniors believe in practical work and reaching the Maqsood (Goal).

O Mureed! You had entered into an Allegiance with Hadhrat Masihullah. The terms of the Allegiance are to uphold the Shariah, cleanse yourself of the beastly attributes, adorn yourself with the angelic qualities and pursue the Path of Thikrullah so that you attain Qurb-e-Ilaahi. This Maqsood cannot be attained by diversionary acts and profession of devotion and aqeedat. The Goal is attainable only by giving practical expression to the Ta'leemaat and Naseehat of Hadhrat Masihullah.

As an introductory measure, you were instructed by Hadhrat Masihullah to adhere to certain forms of Thikr with constancy. How constant are you in upholding this first requirement of the Bay't? You have no valid excuse for negligence in this regard. Whatever excuse you tender to justify your neglect of Thikr, is baseless and an act of self-deception. The Qur'aan Majeed says:

"In reality, man has insight over his nafs even though he puts forth excuses."

You will say that you have no time for the prescribed Thikr because you are involved in earning a livelihood. Your business and your profession and your family commitments allow you no time for the the Thikr which your Shaikh has instructed you. If you examine your heart, you will not fail to discern the invalidity of these arguments which you present to soothe your conscience. You do have time to read the newspapers and other magazines to derive nafsani pleasure. You do have time to listen to the radio supposedly to keep abreast with world developments. You do have time for other recreational activities and you do have a world of time to engross yourself in the pursuit of unnecessary wealth and luxury. But, you have no time for the short Thikr prescribed by your Shaikh for your everlasting benefit and success in both this world and the Aakhirah. You should shame yourself and understand your nifaaq (hypocrisy). You should understand that your claims of devotion are hollow, designed to deceive yourself and others.

When the Mureed lacks the resolve to even observe the light forms of Thikr prescribed for him, he cannot be a Mureed. Mureed means one who has firmly resolved to move and act in the direction of Divine Proximity. When the supposed mureed lacks the determination to even commence the Journey, how can he be a Mureed? We say to the Mureed: Stop beating about the bush. If you are sincere or if you had lacked sincerity but have been jolted into sincerity by the death of your Shaikh who you had not appreciated, then do not lose hope. Get up and start along the Road as if you have today entered the Pledge of Allegiance.

YOUR THIKR

The Muredeen are required to get up for Tahajjud and after Tahajjud Salaat discharge the quota of Thikr which they have been instructed to do by their Shaikh. The best time for the prescribed Athkaar is the time of Tahajjud. However, should one just lack the ability to wake up for Tahajjud, then after Isha' perform a few raka'ats with the niyyat of Salaatul Lail. Thereafter complete the Athkaar which you are supposed to recite in the later part of the night. But, never abandon it. Strive to improve your condition, no matter how slow the process appears.

If the Mureed is going to continue in his state of ghaflat and indolence, he will only find himself wallowing in corruption and contamination of the heart and nafs. Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala will appear to be an unbearable undertaking when in fact it is the simplest and most efficacious of exercises. Allah Ta'ala says:

"Hear well! In the Thikr of Allah do hearts find rest."

This peace and tranquility of heart and mind come only after a long time of constancy in Mujaahadah and Thikrullah.

PURDAH

We mention here an important Naseehat of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah), which has reached us via the agency of Hadhrat Masihullah (rahmatullah alayh). This Naseehat has much relevance to the situation prevalent in our time. Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"When it is not possible to arrange for a female to teach (Deeni Ta'leem) to near-baaligh girls, the male Ustadh should be behind a screen with his wife in attendance."

In spite of the total separation created by the intervening screen, the presence of the Ustaadh's wife is an essential condition. Her presence will close the door of fitnah. The screen is not sufficient to save man from the ploys and deceptions of shaitaan and the nafs. Through Deeni colour's and Deeni avenues will shaitaan enter and ruin the Akhlaaq and Imaan of the Ustaadh and his female pupils.

MUJAHADAH

In these times, on account of weakness of Imaan and the waves of corruption on all sides, a little Mujaahadah will yield the same results which the Salf-e-Saaliheen had to acquire by means of great sacrifice and Mujaahadah.

(Hadhrat Thanvi)

MALFOOZAT

Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

* With increase in Taqwa will increase the love for the wife.

* Joining the company of the Shaikh with the burden of debt, reduces the benefits of the companionship.

* The aim of Thikr is to establish the relationship with Allah Ta'ala.

* Concern for righteous deeds is also a way of gaining thawaab.

* Consumption of doubtful things increases shahwat (carnal lust).

* Greater concern for Huqooqul Ibaad (the rights of people) is a salient feature of Silsilah Imdaadiyyah (the Line of Tasawwuf of Hadhrat Haji Imdaadullah Sahib).

* It is best in the Sirri Salaat for the Muqtadi to engage in Thikr of the heart.

EXCESS VENERATION

(Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi)

Just as it is forbidden to disrespect the Auliya, so to, is it forbidden to indulge in excess in their praise. An excess in praising them is tantamount to showing disrespect for Allah and Rasulullah (salallahu alayhi wasallam).

Among the excesses which are committed in the excessive veneration of the Auliya are erroneous beliefs attributed to the Auliya, e.g. they are the knowers of the Ghaib (Unseen Realms). Among such excesses are acts of excessive respect such as making tawaaf of their graves, prostrating to their graves, etc.

To offer such obedience to the Shaikh that even if he instructs observance of an act which is in conflict with the Shariah, he will be obeyed, is a malady and is for the sake of pleasing creation (not the Creator). If gheebat takes place in even the gathering of the Shaikh, the Mureed should immediately withdraw from the gathering.

Some people are in the habit of proclaiming the veneration and superiority of the Auliya in their Silsilah in a manner which implies disrespect for the Auliya of the other Silsilahs. This habit has to be compulsorily reformed.

REMEMBER MUCH

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

In the Qur'aanic verse which orders the search for the bounty (rizq) of Allah, it is added:

"And, remember Allah much."

The implication of this aayat is:

O Mu'mineen!

Do not engross yourselves in the search for earnings so much that you forget the remembrance of Allah. Remember Allah in abundance so that you take into account what is halaal and haraam, permissible and not permissible, pleasing and displeasing people, harming and benefitting people and conveniencing and inconveniencing others.

The remembrance of Allah will take root in the heart when Salaat is performed on time along with the observance of all the rules and etiquettes.

OBEDIENCE

A man becomes a Thakir by virtue of his obedience to Allah Ta'ala, hence the Hadith says that everyone who is obedient to Allah is a Thakir. We sometimes understand that only one who recites 'Allahu Allahu' is a Thakir. We consider only a person sitting down and reciting prescribed forms of Thikr to be a Thakir. But, the reality of Thikr is to correctly execute the commands of Allah Ta'ala in the manner and time prescribed by Him. Thikr is not restricted to the form of 'Allahu Allahu'.

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

A STRONG BOND

(Hadhrat Masihullah)

The demand of a strong bond with Allah Ta'ala is to denude oneself of all motives other than Allah Ta'ala. The intensity of the bond with Allah demands that no other bond with anyone else be as strong as the bond with Allah. The bond with Allah has to be stronger than the bond with one's life, children, wife, wealth, etc. The bond with Allah should be stronger than the bond a king has with his kingdom. After having adopted Imaan, Allah demands such an intense bond

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A GREAT SOUL TAKES LEAVE

with his muredeen. Thus, even though the Shaikh is no longer with us physically, he exists with us spiritually. The spiritual benefits of his Ta'leem will be perpetually attainable as long as the disciples implement the Ta'leem with sincerity and true Mujaahadah in their daily lives.

MUJAAHADAH

Mujaahadah or striving against the emotional demands of the lowly nafs is a fundamental requisite for the realization of the effects and impressions of the Thikr and Naseehat of the Shaikh. Without offering constant resistance to lowly desires, the Saalik (the Traveller along this Path of Divine Love) cannot expect to progress one jot. The spiritual path leading to Divine Proximity and Love is strewn with dangers, pitfalls and obstacles. The Road is uphill and precarious. The need is for alertness. Ghaflat (negligence) in the spiritual path is fatal. Ghaflat must be banished and the Traveller must be alert to the temptations and wasaawis of the nafs and shaitaan. In this regard Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Jahannam is adorned with delights while Jannat is veiled with miseries and hardships."

Mujaahadah is therefore, essential to train and tame the nafs. Every Mureed who sat in Hadhrat Masihullah's company is aware of the emphasis he accorded to Mujaahadah. Mujaahadah in fact, he said, is the Rooh of Tasawwuf. Without this life-blood or soul, there is no Tasawwuf. Tasawwuf is not confined to prescribed forms of Thikr and Shaghl. Athkaar, i.e. the prescribed formulae and Ashghaal are but measures adopted for the realization of a higher aim. By the adoption of the Sufi prescriptions and their execution in strict obedience to the instruction of the Shaikh, a stage is reached when the remedies and measures are discarded. In this stage the Saalik is ushered into the Divine Presence where Allah's absolute Remembrance pervades his every breath and his very being.

However, since most of us muredeen never mustered up the determination to enter Sulook in the true way the Ahlullaah advocate, we remain ignorant of the higher stages in the spiritual realm. We remain grounded to the nafs and we even abandon the struggle which we, in our Allegiance to our Shaikh, pledged to wage against the nafs. The Bay't entails a total onslaught or Jihaad against the satanic nafs-e-ammaarah. The Bay't Pledge of Allegiance binds the muredeen to sustain the Jihaad-e-Akbar (The Greatest Jihaad) which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) decreed Fardh for every Mu'min.

Abandonment of Mujaahadah is in fact surrender to shaitaan and the nafs. Such a disgraceful surrender does not befit any Muslim, least of all the Muredeen who had taken the Oath—the Bay't—to continue the struggle against the Nafs unto the very end.

Whatever we are saying here, is not new to those who had the good fortune of sitting in Hadhrat Masihullah's company. Our Naseehat serves only to refreshen your memories and to possibly jolt you from your slumber of ghaflat. Surely the demise of a great man of Allah should be an adequate reminder of the incumbent duty of Islaah which we owe ourselves. May Allah guide us.

THE CONCEPT OF JIHAAD

In the Shar'i or Sunnah conception of Jihaad, Hadhrat Masihullah (rahmatullah alayh) explained that there are two phases:

(1) Jihaad-e-Akbar or the Greatest Jihaad and (2) Jihaad-e-Asghar or the Little Jihaad, i.e. little in relation to Jihaad-e-Akbar.

Jihaad-e-Akbar is the struggle against the nafs or the lowly evil propensity in man while Jihaad-e-Asghar is the physical fight against the kuffaar in the battlefield for the sake of Ilā-e-Kalimatullaah (Raising the Word of Allah).

In the Shar'i concept of Jihaad, Jihaad-e-Akbar is the first and vital stage. Without having accomplished Jihaad-e-Akbar with great success, victory in Jihaad-e-Asghar is not possible. The springboard for the small Jihaad against the kuffaar is successful accomplishment of Jihaad-e-Akbar.

For thirteen years—the first phase of Risaalat—Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) laboured with the Sahaabah in the war against the nafs. In this initial period, the full concentration was on spiritual and moral reformation. Minus this accomplishment, the ventures of the Muslims will be no better than the acts of the kuffaar. Only after the Sahaabah had successfully emerged from Jihaad-e-Akbar, was the Divine Proclamation of Jihaad-e-Asghar sounded.

It is this important lesson which the Ummah has missed. Muslims are suffering failure upon failure and defeat upon defeat on every front solely because they have completely abandoned the Jihaad against the Nafs. Thus, their ways, methods, ideas, conceptions and goals are not much better than those of the kuffaar. In consequence, our struggles in the Little Jihaads are shorn of Divine Aid.

The true Sufiyah, far from shying away from Jihaad-e-Asghar, prepare the Ummah for the struggle against the kuffaar by equipping Muslims with the spiritual material and moral fibre so necessary for the success of the Mu'mineen. But, ignorant people fail to understand the way of the Sufiyah. Their way is the way of the Rasool (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Success for the Ummah is only in their way. They are the true Warathatul Ambiya (Heirs of the Ambiya) and they direct their affairs by Divine inspiration and the Truth which emanates from the Noor of Nubuwwah which travels down the Spiritual Chain of these illustrious Masters of the Deen.

Hadhrat Masihullah is a Branch of the glorious Silsilah of Mashaa-ikh who follow the ways of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), hence the ideas and prescriptions for the ills of the Ummah offered by him are the solutions left to the Ummah by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). But, the Ummah ignores these solutions and consequently grovels in degeneration and disgrace. Muslims hanker after the ways and systems which self-appointed 'doctors' have borrowed from the kuffaar. We, therefore, see gloom and defeat on all sides. The Jihaad-e-Asghar can never be won by the adoption of the ways and ideas of the enemies of Allah Ta'ala. The only path of success and victory is the Path indicated by the Mashaa-ikh who are true embodiments of the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

"The Ulama of my Ummah are like the Ambiyaa of Bani Israeel." (Hadith)

The Mashaa-ikh are the Heirs and Representatives of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who has likened them to the Ambiya of the Bani Israeel. The similarity is not in rank, for a non-Nabi can never aspire to the rank of a Nabi. The likeness stated by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) pertains to the Office of Hidaayah. Like the Ambiya of Bani Israeel led and guided their flocks, so too, do the Mashaa-ikh guide and lead the Ummah in the Light of the Noor of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Therefore, whatever prescription and solution a Shaikh of Haqq offers, it should be accepted that these are in the Light of Nubuwwah. It is under the spiritual canopy of Rasulullah's Noor that the Mashaa-ikh derive their spiritual insight and guidance. Hence, every solution and direction which anyone else has to offer will be mardood (rejected) and doomed to failure.

If anyone has any doubts regarding the veracity of this claim, let them look at the jihaad in Bosnia, in Palestine, in Kashmir, in Burma and elsewhere. All are miserable failures. For half a century the Palestinian Muslims are waging their jihaad against a merciless enemy. But, their jihaad is shorn of Allah's Aid, hence the defeat and disgrace. Since the way is not the Way of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)—the Way the Sufiya and the Ulama-e-Haqq propagate—we all are spectating the heart-rending consequences.

It is imperative that the Ummah understands that the Jihaad in the battlefield against the kuffaar (the Jihaad-e-Asghar) cannot be won without attaining success in the Struggle against the Nafs (Jihaad-e-Akbar). This is the Tareeqah of the Sufiya—the Mashaa-ikh of Tasawwuf among whom Hadhrat Masihullah was one link in that glorious Chain of spiritual Stars which adorned the firmament of Islamic Knowledge and Piety. Rahmatullaah alayhim.

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SERVICE

person cannot assist another person (i.e. when he has the means and ability of providing assistance), then of what use is his existence on this earth?"

TO HIM WE OWE...

TO HIM WE OWE OUR SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE. NEITHER WORDS NOR EMOTIONS ARE ADEQUATE TO CONVEY OUR GRATITUDE TO OUR SHAIKH. OUR GRATITUDE TO HIM IS TO CONTINUE THE MISSION OF HAQQ WHICH WE HAVE INHERITED FROM HIM. HIS EFFORTS WERE NEVER IN VAIN. THE SEEDS OF HAQQ HE HAD PLANTED IN THE BOSOMS OF HIS FOLLOWERS ARE BEARING FRUITS ACROSS THE CONTINENTS. THE STANDARD OF THE HAQQ OF THE SUNNAH IS BEING HOISTED BY THE SLAVES OF HAQQ PRODUCED BY HADHRAT MASHIULLAAH THE RAHMAT OF ALLAH BE ON HIM.

Jamadil Ula 1413

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