



JOURNEYING TOWARDS OUR RABB

This book is intended to help Muslims worldwide who aspire to attain closeness to Allah, the Exalted. I have personally experienced immense benefit from the spiritual discourses of Sheikh Maulana Abdul Sattar (may Allah preserve him), Imam and Khateeb of Masjid BaitusSalam, Karachi, Pakistan. Although his discourses are originally delivered in Urdu, I am dedicated to making his teachings accessible to a broader audience through translation into English. Starting with a blog <https://theheartopener.wordpress.com/>, I have been translating his spiritual courses and my goal is to compile them into a book. Through this book, I aim to deepen our connection with Allah, the Exalted and inspire us all to implement the knowledge we acquire. May Allah, the Exalted accept this endeavor and assist us in our journey to draw closer to Him. Aameen.

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1. Connect with Your Lord and See the Remarkable Transformation

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

1.1 Aqeedah-e-Ruboobiyat

O honorable brothers and sisters in Islam, let us reflect upon the profound significance of the word "Rabb" that resonates throughout our Salah. As we perform our prayers, we repeatedly encounter this word, affirming its importance in our lives. When we stand in Salah, we recite "Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen" - All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds. In the state of Ruku, we proclaim "SubhanAllah Rabbial Azeem" - Glory be to Allah, the Lord of greatness. And upon rising back to the standing position, we declare "Rabbana lakal hamd" - Our Lord, all praise belongs to You. In Sajdah, we utter "SubhanAllah Rabbial A'la" - Glory be to Allah, the Lord of the highest. In every Rak'ah of our Salah, we encounter this profound word. We beseech our Rabb saying, "Rabbij'alni..." - My Lord, make me... "Rabbana zalamna anfusana..." - Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves... "Rabbana aatina fiddunya..." - Our Lord, grant us in this world... Even before our existence in this world, we were made to recognize the significance of this word. Allah asked us, "Alastu birabbikum?" - Am I not your Lord? And we replied, "Bala, shahidna" - Indeed, we bear witness. This recognition of Allah as our Lord was ingrained in us, and it continues throughout the life of a Muslim. Why is this repetition of the word "Rabb" so essential? It is because any deviation from the straight path, the Sirat al-Mustaqeem, stems from a weakening of our belief in the Ruboobiyat (Lordship) of Allah. Our entire life becomes feeble when this fundamental belief is compromised. Throughout history, attacks have targeted this aspect of our belief. The concept of Ruboobiyat has always been under threat. In the end times, the greatest trial will come in the form of the Dajjal, against whom the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge. The Dajjal will falsely claim, "Ana rabbukumul a'la" - I am your Lord, the most high. Similarly, Pharaoh made a similar claim, saying "Ana rabbukumul a'la" - I am your Lord, the most high.

1.2 It is Our Rabb Who Has Perfect Knowledge, Power, and Affection

We were often taught, "Rabbil alameen", "Rabbial A'la", "Rabbial Azeem", "Rabbana lakal hamd", "Rabbana aatina", "Rabbana hablana", "Rabbana innaka ta'lamu ma nukhfee". The same word was repeated again and again. Aqeedah-e-Ruboobiyat is to believe that Allah ﷻ is one's Rabb. There is affection in Rabb because without affection, one cannot experience true love and care. If there is no deep affection within a mother, she will not bring forth children into this world. It is this profound affection that compels her to wake up countless times during the night to attend to her child's needs, showering them with boundless love. She diligently cleanses them from impurities while never wavering in her affectionate care. Even on the coldest of nights, she selflessly washes their clothes and cradles them in her warm embrace. The affection of a mother, with all its greatness, cannot compare to the perfect affection of Rabb. Rabb possesses not only affection but also perfect knowledge (ilm). His knowledge encompasses all things, from the visible to the

unseen, from the past to the future. Without this divine knowledge, the upbringing and guidance of creation would be incomplete. Additionally, Rabb is endowed with immense power. His power is limitless and unfathomable, capable of bringing about any change and manifesting His will. He ﷻ is the Beneficent, the Knowledgeable, and the Powerful.

O honorable brothers and sisters in Islam! Reflect for a moment on the profound impact that a firm belief in the presence of our Rabb can have on our lives. If we truly internalize the conviction that our Rabb is always with us, encompassing us with His boundless mercy, wielding His infinite power, and possessing perfect knowledge, then how can we not experience tranquility and peace? Imagine a scenario where a child receives a slap outside his house, away from the comforting presence of his mother. Despite her physical absence, what word instinctively escapes the child's lips? It is "amma" - the loving name for his mother. Why does he utter this word? It is because the child recognizes that his mother is the refuge to whom he can turn in times of distress and seek solace. He knows that she has been there for him during harsh weather conditions and difficult moments. In a similar vein, when a Muslim attaches themselves to Allah ﷻ, their bond becomes unbreakable. They become intimately connected to their Rabb. Just as a child instinctively calls for its mother when faced with pain, the believer, when confronted with the prick of a thorn or any hardship, immediately turns to their Rabb. From the depths of their being, the word that springs forth is "Rabbi" - "O My Lord." SubhanAllah! This word Rabb carries a profound weight, encompassing the essence of our firm aqeedah (belief). "Rabbil alameen", "Rabbial A'la", "Rabbial Azeem", "Rabbana lakal hamd", "Rabbana aatina". That is precisely why it is repeated again and again, reminding us of its magnificence and reinforcing our unwavering connection with our Rabb.

1.3 Recognize the Power and Dominance of Your Rabba

O honorable brothers and sisters! In a life filled with trials, difficulties, and fear, finding support becomes immensely valuable. Today, we are in dire need of the support of our Rabb, whose knowledge, affection, and power are perfect and complete. He is more compassionate and loving than even the most caring mothers. My wealth, provisions, and future are all under His custody. And what power He possesses! Allahu Akbar! When He closes a path, there is none who can open it. And when He opens a path, there is none who can close it. If He eases our way, there is none who can place obstacles in our path. If He intends to solve a problem, no one can create difficulties. WaAllahu ghaalibun alaa amrihi - Allah has complete control over His affairs. As stated in the Quran, "Allah hath full power and control over His affairs" (12:21). And "Allah commands, there is none to put back His Command" (13:41). When He decides something, no one can dare to oppose it. Ala lahul khalq wal amr - Is it not His to create and govern? (7:54). We are the masterpiece of His power, and the decisions in our lives are governed solely by Him, our Rabb. O honorable ones! Let us develop a deep familiarity with this belief in our Rabb. Let us bring Him close to us, and may we draw near to Him. This belief is unwavering and possesses immense strength. It is the firm conviction that my Rabb is Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth. This belief empowers us beyond measure.

1.4 The Story of Youths of Cave and the Power of Aqeeda e Ruboobiyat

In the sight of those youths, every single person became an enemy. Their lives, wealth, honor, and respect were in danger. From the ruler to the public, from their own ones to strangers, from blood relatives to all relatives, there came a threat to their very existence. It was an incredibly challenging time. Yet, amidst this adversity, what filled the hearts of these few youths with strength, courage, and boldness? What enabled them to remain steadfast, even as strangers in a society that had turned against them? It was their unwavering belief in the Ruboobiyat, the Lordship of Allah. Both their own ones and strangers tried to reason with them, to understand why they had chosen a path that isolated them and made everyone their enemy. "Which path have you chosen?" they asked. And what was the response of these courageous youths? "Our Rabb is the One who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth." SubhanAllah! The Quran has narrated the true story of these youths, and it calls upon us to reflect. The entire society had turned against them, and no one was willing to assist them, not their own ones, nor strangers. Even the ruler granted them a few days to consider their decision, announcing the punishment of death. Their own ones withdrew their support, fearing for their own lives. Tolerance and forbearance were abandoned. No comforting or supportive words were spoken. Yet, in the face of all this, these youths remained firm in their conviction. They learned one crucial lesson: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth." Warabatna 'alaa quloobihim ith qaamoo faqaaloo rabbuna rabbus samawati wal-ardi. Lan nad'uwa min doonihi ilaahan laqad qulnaa ithan shataata. "We gave strength to their hearts: Behold, they stood up and said: 'Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth: never shall we call upon any god other than Him: if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity!'" Their people had taken gods other than Allah for worship, yet they challenged them to bring forward clear and convincing evidence for their actions. Haaolaai qawmunaa ittakhathoo min doonihi aalihatan lawlaa yatoona 'alayhim bisultaanin bayyinin.

Such were the profound words of their aqeedah, proclaiming that our Lord is the One who cherishes the heavens and the earth, whose Power reigns supreme over them, and whose knowledge encompasses all that exists within them. It is through His affection and kindness that even the insects in their nests, the fishes in the oceans, and the birds in the sky are nurtured and provided for. Our connection to our Rabb is that of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, so what danger can possibly befall us? We need not fear anyone. Rabbuna Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh. He, in His infinite knowledge, even sees the insects hidden within rocks, and by His tremendous power, He provides sustenance to them. He is our Rabb. This aqeedah instills strength within the hearts of individuals. It fills their hearts with courage and boldness. It imbues them with inner strength, making them resilient, courageous, and bold. Indeed, this aqeedah is extraordinary. It is easy to utter these words when one's own ones abandon them, friends take a different path, relatives sever their ties, and society turns away. When even the King declares their death sentence, these youths, who come from noble families and have been raised in wealth, are fortunate to possess such a potent aqeedah that fills them with unwavering strength and power. Rabbuna Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh.

1.5 Allah's Affection for the Youths of Cave

The Prophet ﷺ taught us that Allah ﷻ says, "I am as My slave thinks of Me." When those youths made the decision to establish a connection with their Lord, Allah ﷻ manifested the sublime nature of His ﷻ Ruboobiyat. He ﷻ displayed the extent of His ﷻ knowledge and power. The world bore witness to it. Those youths entered a cave, and Allah ﷻ enveloped them in a deep sleep that lasted for many years. Allah ﷻ says, "And We turned them on their right and on their left sides." (Quran 18:18) Even if a person sleeps on one side for an extended period, it can lead to skin deterioration. Yet, Allah ﷻ, in His boundless love, states that He ﷻ Himself turned them on their right and left sides, just as a mother would gently turn the sides of her child with love. These words convey a profound sense of affection, as Allah ﷻ Himself tenderly shifts their positions from right to left. Sunrays are vital for sustaining life, and Allah ﷻ commanded the sun to cast its refreshing rays upon His ﷻ slaves when it rises, while the wind continues to blow a gentle breeze upon them. The youths remained in their prolonged sleep for many years until Allah ﷻ eventually awakened them.

1.6 Allah's Protection is Unmatched

O honorable ones! Allah ﷻ, being the Almighty, holds unmatched power. When He ﷻ intends to protect and preserve someone, no harm can touch them. Conversely, if we detach ourselves from Him ﷻ, no means of protection can avail us. When His ﷻ merciful gaze turns away, no one can shield us. There is only One Being to whom we should attach ourselves. If we establish a connection with that Rabb and if His ﷻ mercy encompasses us, our affairs will be taken care of. Thus, these youths proclaimed their true belief that their Rabb is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and their reliance was solely upon Him ﷻ. They declared, "We do not care about others." Even though the entire army and regime pursued their lives, Allah ﷻ desired to safeguard them. Whenever people passed by the cave, Allah ﷻ cast a sense of dread, preventing anyone from peeping inside. When Allah ﷻ awakened them, they glorified be Allah ﷻ, did not feel hunger or thirst despite sleeping for years. However, upon awakening, they felt hungry. One of them thought that only a single day had passed while sleeping, while another person corrected him, stating that it was half a day. Realizing the futility of arguments, they decided to focus on obtaining food. They advised the person they sent to be cautious, lest he attract attention and get arrested. They emphasized the importance of acquiring only halal food, warning against the detrimental effects of haram food, which extinguishes the light of faith. They urged him to find a reputable shopkeeper.

When the youth approached the shopkeeper, the change he observed bewildered him. They had slept for an extensive period, yet Allah ﷻ is Allah ﷻ, possessing supreme power and boundless beneficence. The youth presented the coins, but the shopkeeper insisted on receiving new ones, claiming that the ones brought were old. The youth expressed his confusion, stating that he had just left the shop. At that moment, the man grasped his hand and recalled the story of the righteous youths from his country, who followed the right path. The king of that time sought their arrest, but they vanished without a trace. The man questioned if he was one of those youths, and the youth, now unable to lie, confirmed his identity. The man informed him that the previous king and his people were no longer alive, for the king and the people had changed. He offered to take the youth to the court of a righteous king who would rejoice at his presence. Upon reaching the court, the king was found prostrating in prayer, beseeching Allah ﷻ, "O Allah! Some people in my kingdom

deny the existence of an afterlife, doubting how they will be resurrected. Send me a clear manifestation and a definitive proof that will enable me to guide them." As the youth arrived, the king realized that Allah ﷻ had answered his plea by sending this evident sign. The youth's prolonged sleep served as a clear demonstration that the One who can make them sleep for years on end is also capable of resurrecting the dead.

1.7 Do Not Distance Yourself from Your Lord

O honorable ones! The deficiency lies not with our Rabb, but with us. It is we who have forgotten Him ﷻ. We have become attached to everything and distanced ourselves from our Rabb. We have forgotten Him ﷻ. His ﷻ power remains the same today, and His ﷻ strength is unchanged. His ﷻ affection and benevolence are as abundant as ever. He ﷻ is extremely merciful. The upbringing of a Muslim child used to revolve around this very belief in the Ruboobiyat of Allah ﷻ. The first lesson taught to a Muslim child was, "Iqra bismi Rabbikalladhee khalaq" (Read in the name of your Rabb who created). SubhanAllah! In fact, Islamic scholars have written that this is the foundation of education and upbringing for Muslim children. "Iqra bismi Rabbikalladhee khalaq" - Who will provide sustenance for you? How many people's faith becomes hollow, and how many go astray from the right path because they consider sustenance as their greatest concern! How is many people's faith destroyed due to worries about how they will eat? Thus, the upbringing of a child begins with the understanding that it is the Rabb who provides. It is Allah ﷻ who nourishes the fishes, insects, and bugs. It is Allah ﷻ who sends the birds back to their nests with full bellies in the evening. It is Allah ﷻ who will provide for you in the place where you open your shop. It is He ﷻ who infuses taste into the land where you sow seeds. The grains and fruits that emerge from the earth are protected from the scorching heat and freezing cold by Him ﷻ alone. He ﷻ is the Rabb. You can establish a factory and produce goods, but it is not in your control to inspire buyers to purchase from you. You can sow the seeds, tend to the plants, water them, but who causes the seeds buried beneath the earth to burst forth and the delicate fruits to grow, safeguarded from the hot and cold winds? Who brings out the ripe fruits, infusing them with taste? Rabbuna Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh. It is He ﷻ who cherishes.

When you were unable to do all these things and, in fact, you couldn't even walk or hold anything in your hand, you couldn't even express your hunger, then Who is the One who provided nourishment for you through your mother's breasts? Rabbuna wa Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh. Even when you were in the darkness of your mother's womb, who sent you provision? Rabbuna wa Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh. It is He ﷻ who cherishes. The tarbiyah (upbringing) of Muslims used to be based on this belief and declaration. This belief is reminded to us throughout our lives. Whenever we perform salah (prayer), it is reiterated several times. And whenever we beseech Allah ﷻ for something in our lives, it is mentioned in our supplications. Rabbana aatina... Rabbana hablana... Rabbi habli... Rabbana zalamna... Our pleas are aligned with this word. SubhanAllah! Rabb is Rabb because He ﷻ possesses perfect Power, Affection, and Knowledge. O honorable ones! Our Rabb cherishes us even today with all His Power. But we should maintain a good opinion (husn-e-dhan) of our Rabb and draw closer to Him ﷻ. The closer we become to our Rabb, the more we will experience the blessings of our belief in His Ruboobiyat. We will come to realize the immense benefits and strength that this belief instills within us.

1.8 Awaken and Draw Close to Your Rabb

O honorable ones! When we engage in prayer, let us pay close attention to the words we utter, such as "Rabbil Alameen" (the Lord of all worlds), "Rabbial Azeem" (my Lord is the Most Great), "Rabbial A'la" (my Lord is the Most High), and "Rabbana lakal Hamd" (our Lord, all praise belongs to You). These words hold deep significance and serve as a reminder of our belief in the Ruboobiyat of Allah. It is this belief that we must bring to life and infuse with freshness. With this understanding, Muslims found solutions to the challenges they faced in life. Whenever they encountered a necessity or hardship, they turned to their Rabb (Lord) and sought His guidance and support. When faced with strong winds or difficulties, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would prostrate to Allah and seek solace in Him. In every situation, his calling was to his Rabb. O honorable ones! Even today, our Rabb is present with His power, affection, and knowledge. We must draw closer to Him. O honorable ones! Our Rabb, with His Power, Affection, and Knowledge, remains present even today. It is crucial for us to draw near to Him. By getting closer to Allah ﷻ, we find the ultimate support that frees us from dependence on others. Allah ﷻ Himself facilitates the means for us. Every individual, regardless of age or gender, should revive this belief, which will bring about a revitalization in our lives. Currently, we find ourselves trapped in despondency and fear, lacking the vibrancy we need. However, if we revive this aqeedah (belief), our sense of hopelessness will transform. We have our Rabb, who bestows life in the face of death's grasp.

1.9 Lesson from the Story of Three Young Men

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ shared a story about three young men. One of them was extremely obedient to his parents, another fulfilled the rights of his subordinates and dependents, and the third was granted the ability to resist engaging in sinful acts. Despite being young and having the opportunity to indulge in impure actions, he chose to refrain out of fear of Allah ﷻ. These three individuals sought refuge in a cave, but a large rock fell and sealed the entrance. Each one of them appealed to their Rabb with a righteous deed. The first one said, "O Lord, You know that I always cared for my parents. One day, I went far away to graze the sheep. When I returned, I found my parents asleep. I milked the sheep and stayed by their side, awake all night, so as not to disturb their sleep or let them suffer from hunger. If You are pleased with my actions, save us from this rock and spare us from death's grip." The Prophet ﷺ mentioned that the rock moved slightly, creating a small opening but not enough for them to escape. The second person pleaded, "O Allah, You know that I had a worker who left without receiving his wages, which I invested in business. When he returned, the valley was filled with livestock and slaves that resulted from the profits. I told him that everything was his wages, but he insisted on receiving his rightful due. I recognized that all the blessings came from his labor, so he took everything. O Allah, if You accept this act, save us from death." The rock shifted a bit more, but the passage remained blocked. Finally, the third person prayed, "O Allah, You know that I approached my cousin with ill intentions. She refused and told me that if I brought a certain amount of money, she would allow me to fulfill my desires. I worked hard and saved the money. When I acquired enough funds and strength to carry out my intention, she reminded me to fear Allah and abstain from such wrongdoing. O Allah, only for Your sake, I refrained from this sin. If You are pleased with my actions, grant us life." The

Prophet ﷺ stated that the rock then moved away, and these young men were saved from the clutches of death.

O honorable ones! Drawing closer to Allah ﷻ is not solely achieved through righteous deeds, but also by refraining from sins. When a person possesses the strength to commit a sin but resists it for the sake of Allah ﷻ, it holds greater value than engaging in night-long worship. In our present time, we should strive to get closer to Allah ﷻ, and He ﷻ will demonstrate His ﷻ power by delivering us from difficulties. O honorable ones! When we desire something from someone, we must first please them. We cannot expect to receive things from others if we anger them. Similarly, if we wish to improve our lives and our conditions, we must first seek to please our Rabb. It is not through mere recitations or rituals that we can please Allah ﷻ; rather, it is by engaging in actions that bring Him ﷻ pleasure. Please Allah ﷻ, for without pleasing Him ﷻ, mere recitations and rituals will not suffice. By pleasing Him ﷻ, He ﷻ will manifest His ﷻ power and resolve our problems with His ﷻ might. Today, we are in dire need of reviving the life of this belief. It is Allah ﷻ alone who cherishes and protects us through His ﷻ power. The solution to all our problems lies solely with Him ﷻ. When we revive this aqeedah within ourselves, we will witness remarkable transformations. SubhanAllah! A person will no longer compromise his faith due to worldly concerns. Consider a scenario where a man has successfully completed the Hajj pilgrimage and diligently observes fasts, yet he compromises Islamic principles when it comes to earning a livelihood. This predicament arises due to his weak understanding of Islamic beliefs, causing him to question how he will sustain himself financially. Moreover, even though he is a devout individual, his children are raised with a sole focus on worldly matters, neglecting their spiritual growth, all in the pursuit of securing their future livelihood.

1.10 The best legacy for the children

Umar bin Abdul Aziz (RA) was a unique ruler who lived a life of luxury, adorned in expensive clothing and indulging in excellent food. However, when Allah ﷻ entrusted him with the responsibility of leading the Ummah, his entire lifestyle underwent a drastic change. As he approached the end of his life, a close friend asked him about the provisions he had left for his children. To everyone's surprise, Umar bin Abdul Aziz had only left behind 13 or 14 dirhams, along with instructions to take care of his burial shroud. Despite being the ruler and Amirul Mumineen of his time, he had chosen not to accumulate wealth for his children. Instead, he emphasized the importance of instilling piety in them. He believed that when his children turned to their Rabb (Lord) and knocked on the door of His mercy, their needs would be fulfilled, as he had taught them to rely on Allah ﷻ. O honorable ones! Our Rabb is Allah ﷻ. He is the Rabb of the heavens and the earth, the Rabb of all worlds. He can take care of my humble abode and guide me through this short life. He has the power to restore and fulfill my needs, for He is the Rabb of all creation. It is essential to establish a deep connection and love for our Rabb. Whenever we invoke the name of Rabb, let this belief come alive within us, acknowledging that He ﷻ is the One who cherishes and sustains us. SubhanAllah! He ﷻ possesses boundless Affection and Power. Just as a child calls out to its mother in times of need, let Allah ﷻ instill within us the habit of calling upon Him ﷻ, our Rabb, in every situation. Whenever we encounter difficulties, let us call upon our Rabb by saying, 'O my Rabb!' Let this aqeedah (belief) be refreshed in our hearts, and may the name that comes to our tongues be "Rabb."

1.11 Enjoy the Moments of Loving Your Rabb

Today, many Muslims tend to turn to Allah ﷻ only as a last resort, when all other options have been exhausted and they feel that only Allah ﷻ can provide assistance. However, our beloved Prophet ﷺ taught us to prioritize calling upon our Rabb from the very beginning and seek His ﷻ help and guidance. By invoking Allah ﷻ sincerely, He ﷻ blesses our endeavors, puts blessings in our chosen means, and grants us the ability to accomplish our tasks. Therefore, it is crucial that we always turn to Him ﷻ first and foremost. When we truly call upon Allah ﷻ, a remarkable sense of contentment prevails within us, regardless of whether our endeavors ultimately succeed or fail. This contentment arises from our firm belief that our Rabb is the most benevolent and compassionate, and that He ﷻ always acts in our best interests. It is like how a mother may deny her child's requests, which the child may later realize were for its own protection and well-being. For instance, a mother may insist that her initially reluctant child takes a bath, even if the child protests and cries. Eventually, the child grows to understand and appreciate that the mother's decision was made of love and concern. When our belief and faith in our Rabb are revitalized, we experience contentment and peace, regardless of the outcomes of our efforts. This stems from the understanding that the ultimate decision-maker is the Most Beneficent Being, whose knowledge far surpasses our own limited understanding. Our Rabb encompasses not only our past and present but also our future. This realization brings us great solace and tranquility, knowing that every decision made is by our Rabb's divine wisdom and care.

O honorable ones! If we neglect calling upon our Rabb and solely rely on our own efforts, we will never find true contentment. Even if we achieve success, it will not bring us lasting satisfaction, and if we face failure, we will be filled with disappointment. Therefore, establish a strong connection with your Allah ﷻ and devote yourself to that Rabb. Find moments of solitude to mention His ﷻ name with love. For it is through constant remembrance and conversation that one develops closeness and familiarity with Him. Dedicate time to mention the beautiful names of Allah ﷻ and experience the love that follows. Whenever you have a need, ask your Rabb. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Even if my shoelace gets broken, I ask my Rabb". Let it become your habit to seek everything from Allah ﷻ. Make Him ﷻ your sole focus. Strengthen your connection to the extent that your mind naturally turns to Him ﷻ in times of difficulty. Let your thoughts be consumed by that Supreme Being. As you grow closer to Allah ﷻ, you will witness the barakah (blessings) of this aqeedah. You will find contentment, courage, and strength in your life, unlike anything else can provide.

1.12 Connect with Allah and Help Children Connect with Allah

Today, many individuals lack inner strength and resilience. They easily become disheartened by even the slightest trials and are thrown into turmoil by the slightest changes in their circumstances. However, when one establishes a deep connection with his Rabb, a newfound life emerges within them. It is essential to instill this connection within children, as it used to be an integral part of the education of Muslim children, which unfortunately seems to be lacking in today's society. Teach children to ask themselves, "Who provides for you? Who quenches your thirst and feeds you?" The answer is always their Rabb. Encourage them to ask their Rabb and familiarize them with the practice of seeking His assistance. Create an environment within the household where everyone

turns to Allah ﷻ. Today, if one family member becomes distressed, it affects the entire family because everyone is spiritually weak. In the past, even if one family member possessed great courage and strength, they would inspire and empower everyone else through their connection with Allah ﷻ. O honorable ones! Our Rabb is Rabbuna Rabbus samaawaati wal ardh, the Lord of the heavens and the earth. He ﷻ creates circumstances and conditions for the entire universe, and He ﷻ will create circumstances for us as well. No one else has the power to shape our circumstances except Allah ﷻ, for He ﷻ holds the keys to all situations. Therefore, it is imperative that we turn towards our Rabb. Allah ﷻ declares in the Quran, "Race toward forgiveness from your Lord" (Quran 3:133). The more earnestly we seek His forgiveness, the closer we will find ourselves to Him ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn Abbas, "If you take care of Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ will take care of you." This means that if we are mindful of Allah's ﷻ commandments, we will receive His help and support before us. Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ taught us that no one can benefit or harm us except by the will of Allah ﷻ. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a profound connection with Allah ﷻ.

1.13 Recognize Our Problem of Disconnection with Allah

The primary issue we face today is the distance we have created between ourselves and our Rabb. Our biggest problem is the severed connection with our Rabb. The widespread destruction and turmoil we witness are a direct result of this severed connection. However, if we reestablish our bond with Him ﷻ, we will begin to see resolutions to all our problems. Every issue will find its solution. The Prophet ﷺ played a pivotal role in reconnecting the fractured society with their Rabb. By doing so, he ﷺ restored harmony and balance to every aspect of their lives. Sons embraced their fathers, wives found solace in their husbands, husbands fulfilled their responsibilities towards their wives, and brothers treated one another with love and respect. All barriers of color and race were broken because they were all connected to their Rabb, and everything fell into its rightful place. O honorable ones! Since the time we severed our connection with our Rabb, everything has become disjointed. Nothing is in its proper place. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the wisest and most insightful among us, the greatest reformer of this ummah, and the finest healer of this ummah prescribed the very same solution. He ﷺ emphasized that the remedy to all our problems lies in reconnecting with our Rabb. Let it be on our tongues that the solution to our problems lies in establishing a deep connection with Allah ﷻ.

1.14 Our Rabb's Mercy is Beyond Words

Two men were engaged in a debate about who receives more mercy from Allah ﷻ: one who remains constantly connected to Him ﷻ, or the one who disconnects and then reconnects. An elderly wise man happened to pass by and, though lacking extensive knowledge, offered his insight based on personal experience. He shared an analogy of him making threads, highlighting how special attention is given to the thread that has broken and been reattached, ensuring it does not break again. Therefore, it is undeniable that the slave who disconnects from Allah ﷻ and then reconnects receives a special gaze of mercy, preventing them from disconnecting once more. O honorable ones! Such is the nature of His ﷻ benevolence. Seek connection with that Rabb. SubhanAllah! Draw near to Him ﷻ. Do not dwell on your past, regardless of how sinful it may have been. When you establish a sincere connection with Him ﷻ, He ﷻ does not even remind you of your sins to

humiliate you. He ﷻ is simply pleased that His ﷻ slave has sought connection with Him ﷻ, and He ﷻ purifies their entire sinful life. Then, He ﷻ bestows His ﷻ special gaze of mercy upon this slave.

1.15 Repent to Allah and Establish a Firm Connection with Allah

O honorable ones! It is crucial for us to establish a strong connection with Allah ﷻ. According to the Prophet ﷺ, Allah ﷻ will withhold punishment from His ﷻ ummah as long as two things exist: the presence of the Prophet ﷺ himself, and the continuous seeking of forgiveness by the ummah. The act of seeking forgiveness (istighfar) is what binds a servant to his Rabb, and through this practice, Allah ﷻ keeps His ﷻ punishment at bay. This profound statement by the Prophet ﷺ is also supported by the teachings of the Quran. The Prophet ﷺ emphasized that when a sinful servant seeks Allah's ﷻ forgiveness with sincere remorse for their wrongdoings, Allah ﷻ opens avenues of relief, alleviates their worries, and provides sustenance from unexpected sources. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to establish a connection with Allah ﷻ and witness the positive impact it has on our lives. By connecting ourselves and our families to Allah ﷻ, we can create an environment in our homes, workplaces, or any place under our influence where everyone is deeply connected to Allah ﷻ. Let us strive to change the atmosphere around us and encourage others to strengthen their connection with Allah ﷻ. It is through this connection that we will find the mercy of Allah ﷻ encompassing our lives. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to act upon what we hear, write, and read. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)

2. Man's True Progress Lies in His Bond with Allah

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

2.1 Understand the Progression of Humanity

Every individual has a limited time in this temporary world, and this life holds immense value. Time is scarce, and there is much to be accomplished. The vast field of opportunities will eventually come to an end for everyone. Therefore, it is crucial to wisely measure and utilize time. Engaging in basic activities like sleeping, eating, and drinking is not exclusive to humans; even animals partake in them. The more one becomes fixated on materialistic pursuits, the more they resemble a clever animal. If your sole purpose is eating, there are cows and goats that can consume more than you. If your primary focus is sleep, a bodily desire, remember that animals also fulfill this need. Consuming, drinking, and sleeping well do not signify the progress of a noble human being but rather the advancement of a commendable animal. The progress we witness today is not the progression of humanity (insaan) but rather the progression of animals (haiwaan).

2.2 True Progress is in Recognizing the Creator

When a person acknowledges the Creator of material possessions and the Creator of mankind, that is true progress. Even if someone lacks proper clothing, recognizing their Creator signifies advancement. The Prophets (peace be upon them) of Allah guided humanity solely towards this path. The more one recognizes Allah and strengthens their connection with Him, the more progressive they become. May Allah increase our desire for Him more than our desire for food and clothing. We derive immense pleasure from having food, clothes, houses, and cars. How wonderful it would be if we found the same delight in worshipping Allah! In the past, Muslims found great joy in worshipping Allah, akin to the pleasure derived from delicious food, and this enjoyment emanated from their hearts. Nowadays, Muslims often worship out of obligation, lacking enthusiasm in their worship. We should find delight in reciting the Quran, performing voluntary prayers, and waking up for Tahajjud (night prayer). When a person is hungry, their hunger alone is enough to wake them up without relying on others. When we have enthusiasm for worship, we will wake up for Tahajjud willingly, without needing external assistance.

2.3 Why Do We Lack Enthusiasm in Worship?

We have become so lacking in enthusiasm that even spending time alone in reciting tasbeeh (praising Allah) gives us a headache. However, if we are called to engage in idle conversation, even if the conversation is prohibited, we easily spend hours indulging in it because we find enjoyment in it. Due to the absence of pleasure in worship, it has become difficult for us to remember Allah ﷻ in solitude and to recite the Quran. Therefore, the progress we perceive today is comparable to that of an animal, while the true progress of a human being lies in finding delight in the worship of Allah, whether it is through reciting the Quran, performing voluntary prayers, or engaging in the remembrance of Allah. Until now, we have approached worship considering it a burden and an obligation. In the beginning, we should strive to cultivate a sense of enjoyment by mustering some courage. Our aim should be to make our prayers magnificent. Without finding any pleasure in worship, how can one establish a connection with Allah ﷻ? The reality is that when a person establishes a connection with Allah ﷻ, the One deserving of our utmost love, they will yearn for moments of solitude. Just as a person who has newly wedded desires to spend intimate time alone with their spouse, one will seek solitude with anything they have a connection with. When a person establishes a connection with Allah, they will eagerly await moments of solitude to be alone with Him, for He is the ultimate object of love.

2.4 Measure Your Attachment with Allah, the Exalted

The measure of your connection with Allah can be seen in your desire to sit alone in solitude in the prayer area (musallah). If your heart yearns for it, then Alhamdulillah, know that you have a connection with Allah. Fa'idhaa faraghta fansab. "So, when you have finished (your immediate task), then labor hard." This is what our beloved Prophet ﷺ used to do, engaging in worship in seclusion to the point of exhaustion. He ﷺ would choose a place devoid of any human presence, leaving him alone with Allah. From his position, he ﷺ would have a direct view of the Kaaba. If your heart is deeply attached to moments of solitude, Alhamdulillah, know that your heart is in a good state and has a connection with Allah. Approach prayer, recitation of the Quran, and

remembrance of Allah with utmost importance and attentiveness. The truth is, we lack the enjoyment in worship, and this indicates a lack of a deep internal connection with Allah.

2.5 The Purpose of Message of the Prophets (AS)

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ directed his message towards humanity, not towards animality. He ﷺ elevated mankind to their rightful status as humans. The pursuit of materialistic progress has driven individuals to reach the moon and beyond, but it has caused them to forget the purpose of their existence, Who sent them here, and ultimately, their ultimate destination. If your sole focus is on eating and sleeping, then go to the jungle, where you will witness animals consuming more than you do and constructing homes perfectly suited for all seasons. If you take pride in construction and engineering, observe the intricate construction of a beehive. Bees create 70,000 cells, all the same size and shape, within a single beehive. Even the most skilled engineer may struggle to achieve such precision, yet it effortlessly exists in the creation of bees. Sitting, lying down, sleeping, and engaging in trade are all actions performed by animals. This does not constitute progress for mankind, but rather for animals. Materialistic knowledge is the knowledge of animals, whereas true knowledge is the knowledge that the Prophet ﷺ brought, through which one recognizes Allah, the Creator. Even animals possess medical knowledge. They know that if their offspring consumes something harmful, there is a specific leaf that can provide a remedy. They are aware of how to treat their injured young. Even birds can discern when their chicks are ill and take appropriate measures for their recovery. Animals also possess knowledge of construction and engineering. If we consider the knowledge of food storage to be impressive, ants excel in this area. In one season, they store enough food to sustain themselves throughout the remaining seasons, and they even know how to preserve it. This kind of knowledge is shared by both disbelievers and animals. However, when it comes to the knowledge of recognizing Allah, it is exclusive to Muslims.

The progress achieved through recognizing our Creator was brought by the Prophets (AS) of Allah. They elevated the status of mankind, and the earth and everything within it was created to serve them. However, mankind was created to serve Allah ﷻ. This service is not comparable to how a worldly king is served. The Prophet ﷺ brought two essential ways, the Quran and Sunnah, without which the administration of this world cannot function properly. Today, the world is in a state of restlessness. Crimes have increased, yet they cannot be effectively controlled, and criminals often escape justice. Despite advancements in prison systems, the number of criminals continues to rise. These man-made laws are not true laws; the only true law is that of Islam. The shortcomings of non-Islamic laws are evident. Diseases are not being cured but rather worsening with the prescribed remedies. The Prophet ﷺ came with the message to recognize Allah ﷻ, believe in Him ﷻ, and benefit from the commandments sent by Allah ﷻ. Let us not think that Europe progressed by embracing atheism. What kind of progress is it if it fails to bring peace and tranquility to the heart? True progress is accompanied by peace and tranquility. It is a mistake to assume that Europe and the West are progressing when they are plagued by pain and labor. Look at their nations; they lack peace. True peace and tranquility can only be found in Islam, in its entirety. If someone possesses five rupees, even that amount is considered wealth, but they would not be called wealthy. Similarly, if we possess Islam to a minimal extent, like having only five rupees, how can we consider ourselves true Muslims? Even if someone has substantial wealth in thousands or lakhs,

they do not call themselves wealthy because their mind is focused on possessing crores. However, when it comes to Islam, even having a small portion of it and offering Salah only once a day brings contentment, and they proudly identify themselves as Muslims. Just as you don't consider yourself wealthy with just five rupees, why do you consider wealthy when it comes to your faith?

2.6 Find True Peace and Tranquility Through Islam

Peace and tranquility can only be found in obedience to the Prophet ﷺ, regardless of one's ability to reach the moon or heavens. It is important to understand that worldly progress alone cannot bring true peace. History has shown that when people embraced the principles of the Prophet ﷺ, they experienced peace, and when they deviated from those principles, peace was lost. Even animals lived peacefully during the reign of Umar bin Aziz (RA), as seen by the wolf and sheep sitting together. Hazrat Maulana Zakariyah (RA) witnessed a remarkable scene in the house of his uncle Maulana Ilyas (RA) where chickens and a cat would frequently engage in playful interactions. When a person becomes close to Allah ﷻ and gains His ﷻ pleasure, the divine system is established, and everyone feels secure. Today, if humans themselves do not feel secure, how can animals find peace? True peace exists when everyone feels secure, and this is the teaching of the Prophet ﷺ.

Dear honorable ones! As you progress in your journey of Islam, you will experience a greater sense of peace and security. Embracing Islam wholeheartedly brings immense joy and fulfillment to life. Restlessness fades away, and tranquility fills your heart. Therefore, continue to perform the voluntary prayers (nafil salah) that you have been blessed to pray during Ramadan. Choose the ones that you can comfortably manage, whether it's the Ishraq salah or the Tahajjud salah. Even if you cannot do everything, establish the habit of regularly performing the ones within your capacity. Make recitation of the Quran a daily practice and never abandon it. Start with at least half a juzz (portion) each day, or if that seems challenging, begin with a quarter of a juzz. Morning time is especially favorable for Quran recitation. Engage in tasbihaat (remembrance of Allah) in the mornings and evenings. Strive to offer all the obligatory prayers in their complete form. Pray the 8 rakats in Asr salah, 12 rakats in Zuhr salah, and so on. Some may believe that only exceptionally pious individuals perform voluntary prayers but let me clarify that it is precisely those of us whose obligatory prayers may have shortcomings who are in greater need of voluntary prayers. These voluntary prayers compensate for any deficiencies in our obligatory prayers. Let us cultivate a sense of delight and attach greater significance to the supplications (duas) we recite during various moments of our day. Pay special attention to the duas offered in the morning and evening, during meals, before sleep, when leaving the house, when heading to the market, and on similar occasions. May Allah grant us all the guidance and ability to fulfill these practices. Ameen.

Morning Tarbiati Majlis-24.8.2012

3. Cultivating Courage and Sincerity: The Ultimate Goal of Tasawwuf

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

3.1 The Real Accomplishment

If a person expects to completely eradicate thoughts of show-off (riyaa), they may find it impossible. However, if they sincerely reflect on their motivations and find that their sole intention is to please Allah ﷻ, that itself is an achievement. The true accomplishment of self-reformation (islaah) lies in seeking Allah's pleasure in every action and developing the courage to abstain from sins and perform good deeds. Nowadays, many individuals seek spiritual elevation without putting in the effort, hoping for spontaneous changes and a sudden aversion to sins. A certain disciple once wrote a letter to Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA), asking him to help transfer the spiritual enlightenment from his heart to his own. In response, Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA) humorously replied that there was only phlegm in his chest, indicating the need for spiritual purification. The primary objective is to cultivate courage and strength within oneself. Previously, the person struggled with laziness in performing Salah from the first Takbir, but now they have achieved it. Previously, they were unable to perform voluntary prayers (nafil salah), but now they can. Previously, they struggled to control their gaze, but now they have learned to guard it. This transformation reflects their courage. Whispers, evil thoughts, and attacks will continue to occur, but to steadfastly protect oneself with courage is the true accomplishment.

3.2 Know the Purpose of Tasawwuf

To fulfill the rights of Allah ﷻ concerning both our inner and outer selves, sincerity (Ikhlas) and a diligent attitude are required. While a pious elder may or may not express it, the command is to uphold the superficial and inner laws and to maintain steadfastness in our lives. This is the true purpose of life. Regardless of how people perceive tasawwuf, its real objective is to attain sincerity (Ikhlas) and courage (himmat). The essence of tasawwuf lies in seeking Allah's pleasure and cultivating the inner strength to perform righteous deeds. A person, despite being aware of the importance of performing Tahajjud Salah, finds themselves unable to do so. Similarly, they struggle to control their gaze and often fail to refrain from speaking ill-advised words. It is evident that these actions reflect a lack of courage on their part. The ultimate aim of tasawwuf, spiritual upbringing, maintaining a relationship with a spiritual guide, and personal reformation is to acquire both courage and sincerity. The primary objective is to seek Allah's pleasure in every action by introspecting on our intentions and developing the courage to engage in virtuous deeds. If one aspires to establish a strong connection with Allah and reach a level of piety where sinful thoughts no longer cross their mind, it is unrealistic. The temptation to sin may still arise, but if one possesses the courage to resist acting upon those thoughts, then Alhamdulillah, they have achieved their goal.

3.3 Don't Be Carried Away by The Outward Appearance

Our entire life is a constant battle against our evil selves (nafs) and Satan. Even on his deathbed, a pious elder repeatedly said, "No, no, no." When asked about it, he explained that Satan is coming again and again to him, telling him that he (the pious elder) has succeeded. However, the pious elder firmly responded by saying "no" to Satan, indicating that he has not yet succumbed to his temptations or deceptive tactics. Similarly, it is narrated about Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) that once a radiant light appeared before him, accompanied by a voice saying, "O Abdul Qadir Jeelani, you have attained such a high status that you no longer need to offer Salah (prayer)." Upon hearing this, Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jeelani immediately sought refuge in Allah ﷻ, recognizing it to be a deception of Satan. The luminous light then transformed into darkness and stated that he was saved because of his knowledge (ilm). Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jeelani, once again realizing that he was being targeted by a second deceptive tactic, firmly replied that it was not due to his knowledge, but rather he was saved by the grace of Allah ﷻ. Shaitaan incessantly lays traps, one after another. Even if one manages to escape from one trap, Shaitaan will quickly set another to lead them astray. Honorable ones, the true purpose for everyone is to attain sincerity (ikhlaas) in every single action by constantly reflecting on the intentions behind their deeds. It is essential to self-examine and question why one is engaging in a particular act. Mufti Zainul Abideen, a revered elder associated with Tabligh Jamaat, used to emphasize that a person may acquire numerous outwardly righteous deeds and display qualities of faith (eemaan), but true sincerity (ikhlaas) is something that is attained only at the end. This is the achievement of self-reformation (islah). Now, let me ask you, is there anything objectionable in it? If a person attains this level of sincerity and purification through spiritual connection (talluq), taking a pledge (bayat) with a spiritual guide for reformation (islah), or engaging in the process of self-reformation (islah), there is nothing wrong with it. In the present day, we often come across individuals in sacred places who adorn themselves with big beards, trimmed mustaches, and turbans, attempting to exude a spiritual ambiance. However, in the name of tasawwuf (Islamic mysticism), there has been an excessive amount of innovation associated with it. These innovations have distorted the essence of tasawwuf, which is meant to empower individuals with courage and strength, enabling them to lead a righteous life and seek the pleasure of Allah in all their actions.

3.4 Beware of Death

During a meeting with Hazrat Ashraf Thanvi (RA), a righteous individual sought concise advice. In response, Hazrat Ashraf Thanvi (RA) reminded him of a hadith where Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "If you live until the morning, do not wait for the evening, and if you live until the evening, do not wait for the morning, and count yourself among the dead." This advice pertains to our life in this world. It is the counsel of the sage of our time, who was blessed with deep spiritual insight by Allah ﷻ. By considering oneself among the dead, one should not be swayed by the praise or criticism of others, as it holds no effect on a deceased person. Another person emphasized the need to prioritize the hereafter, as the time of death is uncertain. They shared their personal experience of suffering from a heart ailment, where they perceived each bout of pain as a reminder of imminent death. Allah ﷻ alleviated the pain, and this continued for five years, during which many young individuals in good health passed away. We should not forget Allah ﷻ and the reality of our existence. Today, we have forgotten both our true nature and our relationship with Allah ﷻ. We have forgotten how weak, vulnerable, and dependent we are. A pious elder once remarked that everyone engages in work, whether it be for worldly matters or for the sake of religion. Regardless

of the nature of the work, be it worldly, official, or any job, what matters is considering it as one's duty. By doing so, a person becomes a close friend (waliullah) of Allah ﷻ. The sincerity with which one approaches their work determines its significance. If a person performs their worldly tasks diligently out of fear that Allah ﷻ is watching them and fulfills their responsibilities, it carries greater weight. Conversely, if a person engages in voluntary acts of worship without sincerity, it holds no value. However, if someone fulfills their clerical duties or carries out their responsibilities with the awareness that Allah ﷻ is observing them, it becomes an act of worship (ibaadat).

3.5 Seek Sincerity in All Actions

People often prioritize sincerity (ikhlaas) and show-off (riyaa) when it comes to voluntary acts of worship, but they tend to overlook the performers' status as close friends of Allah (waliullah) in other duties such as official jobs, responsibilities, or writing fatwas. For instance, a person may stay awake until 1 am, meticulously researching and writing a fatwa based on extensive knowledge from voluminous books. However, the recipient of the fatwa may be unaware of the effort invested, and even if someone witnesses the person working late at night, they may not perceive them as a close friend of Allah. The key point here is that the weight and significance of any task depend on sincerity, regardless of people's perception. Whether it is writing fatwas, reading books, or teaching, the task holds value when performed purely for the sake of Allah. Unfortunately, society often fails to recognize the piety behind such acts. If a person stands in voluntary prayer for two hours, people may admire and consider them highly pious. However, if the same person teaches a book for two hours, people may dismiss it as a mundane act of teaching. But in reality, if the person teaches with sincerity, considering it an act of worship, it surpasses the significance of voluntary prayer, irrespective of people's understanding. People tend to focus only on outward appearances, whereas the true essence lies in developing courage and sincerity in every action. Whether it is a conversation, an explanation, or a discussion, one should reflect upon their intentions and question why they are engaging in such activities. Every action should be solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

3.6 Allah's Pleasure: The Ultimate Goal

May Allah ﷻ grant us all sincerity (ikhlaas), for it is truly invaluable. This is exemplified by the statement of our beloved Prophet ﷺ who said, "If any of you were to spend gold equivalent to Mount Uhud in the cause of Allah, it would not equal a handful of dates given by one of my companions RA." This highlights the significance of their sincerity. The true accomplishment of self-reformation (islah) lies in transforming our inner enthusiasm and dedicating our lives for the sake of Allah. Whether we talk to someone, meet someone, smile at someone, or distance ourselves from someone, it should all be done for the sake of Allah ﷻ. Our losses, gains, and desires should be solely for Allah ﷻ. Our lives should revolve around pleasing Him and every matter should be undertaken with His pleasure in mind. We should live for Allah ﷻ, love for Allah ﷻ, befriend for Allah ﷻ, and make our entire life centered around Him. May this zeal grow within us and, along with it, may we be granted courage. The purpose of prescribing remembrance of Allah (zikr), recitation of the Quran, and keeping righteous company is to gain strength and make it easier to find courage through the blessings of these acts. Merely performing these acts is not the ultimate goal; rather, they serve as a means to fulfill the rights of Allah, both outwardly and inwardly. Additionally, there are prohibitions against excessive talk and unnecessary socializing. However, the real purpose is to use these guidelines as a means to achieve the ultimate goal of spiritual healing and purification. These acts are not obligatory or mandatory, but they serve as spiritual

remedies. Sometimes a doctor forbids bananas. Are bananas haram? No, but they are forbidden to help the patient's stomach heal so that they can digest them later. Similarly, the real objective is to constantly seek the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and engage in righteous deeds, while protecting ourselves from sins by cultivating courage and strength.

3.7 How to Attain Courage?

O honorable ones! The truth is that sins have proliferated in our lives to such an extent that we no longer perceive them as sins. It is similar to living in a foul-smelling place; the resident becomes accustomed to the odor and no longer notices it, while a visitor from a fragrant place would be appalled. We have become so desensitized to sins in our society that we fail to recognize them. We need to gather the courage to uphold both external and internal commands, and may Allah grant us all the ability to do so. To foster courage, certain actions have been prescribed. Give importance to the remembrance of Allah (tasbeehaat) and what if one lacks the courage to even engage in tasbeehaat or recite the Quran? Consider this: when one wants to eat, they must make a little effort to bring the morsel of food from the plate to their mouth; it does not fly and comes on its own. Similarly, these daily acts of worship (maamulaat) are common and easy. When one musters the courage to perform these simple acts, they develop enough inner strength to abandon the sins that their ego finds difficult to let go of. With a persistent attitude and by taking some courage, engage in voluntary acts of worship, recite the Quran, associate with righteous individuals, and engage in tasbeehaat in the mornings and evenings. Additionally, give importance to supplication, beseeching Allah, saying, "O Allah! I am weak and lack courage. I have intentions and desires, but I often fail. I progress for a few days, then give up. I take a few steps forward, only to fall back. O Allah! Please help me." Plead before Allah and beseech Him for assistance. By performing these prescribed acts, having righteous companionship, and making supplications, one will attain the courage and sincerity that are the achievements of this worldly life. This is the true purpose of our existence: to have Allah constantly in our minds when we interact with our family, children, friends, or engage in any work. All of these acts are acts of worship and adorn our Hereafter. People may or may not perceive them as acts of piety, but indeed they are. May Allah grant us all the ability and make it easy for us. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)

Morning Tarbiati Majlis (27.5.2012)

4. How to Deal with Nafs?

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

4.1 Forbidden Temptations: Understand the Urge within Humans

Why are humans drawn to forbidden acts? It is evident that individuals often develop a yearning for the prohibited. Take, for instance, an online game that has led many young people to the point

of suicide. Despite efforts to curb its influence, people continue to engage with even greater enthusiasm. The desire for forbidden acts is directly proportional to the strength of measures taken to prevent them. Consider the example of Adam (AS) who was forbidden from eating the fruit of a specific tree. Although there were numerous other trees from which he (AS) could freely eat, he chose to consume from the forbidden one. When a person is restricted from a particular action, their craving for it intensifies. This human behavior can be understood through careful observation, revealing two underlying reasons:

- The ego, or nafs, cannot tolerate confinement. Already restrained within the physical body, when it is further limited spiritually, it becomes furious. A person may willingly confine themselves within a house for a month, but the moment they are ordered not to leave the house, even for a single day, they find it difficult to comply. The nafs reacts with a sense of imprisonment, pressuring the individual to break free.
- It is not in the nature of the nafs to readily obey others, and it struggles with submission and obedience. While it may be capable of performing physically strenuous acts, mentally it finds it challenging to submit to even the simplest commands. This is why the greatest religion in this world is the worship of the nafs, whereby people obey their desires. In fact, the people of this world can be broadly divided into two groups: those who live by the command of the Lord and those who live by the command of their nafs.

It is due to these two characteristics of the nafs that individuals find pleasure in forbidden acts but struggle with acts that are permitted. For instance, growing a beard is a simple task that requires no significant time, energy, or money, and it does not harm one's skin. However, many find it difficult to grow a beard, while they willingly put in effort, spend time, money, and endure pain to shave it off, which is forbidden. Shariah has simplified the process of getting married, freeing individuals from unnecessary customs, yet they find it challenging to comply. On the other hand, people will invest their time, energy, and hard-earned money, which they have painstakingly saved for years, in following customs that please their nafs and cater to their desires. But do these actions truly bring satisfaction? No! They only invite the envy of others who may harm them. It is intriguing to witness how individuals can effortlessly engage in the most strenuous acts that please their nafs, while simple and easy acts become difficult for them because they go against their nafs. This is the inherent tendency of the nafs.

4.2 Go Against the Nafs and Enjoy the Jannah Right in this World!

Regardless of the challenges faced by the nafs, the struggle we undertake to resist its desires and please Allah ﷻ is what will lead us to attain Jannah (Paradise). When we strive against our nafs, Allah ﷻ will facilitate our path. Pursuing the desires of the nafs may seem enticing, but behind its veil lies the torment of hellfire. Conversely, if we adhere to the commands of Allah ﷻ, it may be difficult for the nafs, but behind its veil lies Jannah. I am not only referring to the Jannah that awaits us in the hereafter; rather, we will be able to experience the essence of Jannah in this world after a certain period if we resist our nafs. Just as applying medicine to a wound initially causes a stinging pain, eventually we enjoy good health. Similarly, endure the displeasure of the nafs in the beginning, and later you will taste the sweetness of Jannah in this world. If you avoid applying medicine to a wound due to the momentary pain, the wound will fester internally and cause

unbearable agony. Understand that by enduring the difficulties and discomforts of the nafs for the sake of Allah ﷻ, you will experience the flavor of Jannah, just as medicine brings healing.

4.3 The Lives of Sinners: A Glimpse into the Depths of Hell

To witness the life of hell, one need only observe the lives of sinners. The depth of their sin determines the intensity of their hellish existence. There are countries acclaimed as paradises on earth, yet their inhabitants find themselves in a state of despair, leading to suicide. What drives them to such drastic measures? Their anxiety, worries, and hardships mirror the anguish experienced by those confined to the depths of hell, yearning for death and annihilation. Can you fathom the level of desolation, anxiety, insecurity, and turmoil they endure? Despite outwardly favorable conditions such as pleasant weather, luxurious homes, and material comforts, they succumb to the overwhelming weight of their sins. The severity of one's sins directly correlates to the heat of the hellish life they lead. While minor sins may generate a lesser heat, grave sins can transform one's life into a living hell. This truth is as evident as the light of day, unaffected by grand houses, factories, or cars, as the sins committed by an individual inevitably manifest as their personal hellish reality.

4.4 Endure the Nafs for the Coolness of the Heart

The Quran instructs individuals to protect themselves, as well as their women and children, from the fire of sins. This divine command was revealed to the most intellectually distinguished people to ever walk the earth—the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). They were urged to safeguard themselves from the destructive flames of wrongdoing. It is crucial to recognize that this fire poses a danger not only to you, but also to your loved ones, including women and children. Though children may be unaware of the consequences of the sins prevalent in their surroundings, they are unwittingly heading towards the fire. Embracing faith in Allah ﷻ and following His commands may indeed present challenges for the nafs, but within the discomfort lies a path to spiritual well-being and the taste of worldly Jannah (paradise). Those blessed with tahajjud salah (night prayer) or engaging in solitary worship during the early morning find it more gratifying than the most delectable food. The serenity, tranquility, and pleasure experienced in these acts of worship are incomparable. When Hazrat Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) was imprisoned and led towards his cell, he exclaimed, "How wonderful it would be to spend my time in solitary confinement! Now I can relish my own personal Jannah here." Perplexed, the prison guard inquired about his statement, to which he replied, "My Jannah resides within my heart and accompanies me wherever I go." Who can snatch away the Jannah that Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon the hearts of His servants? When Allah ﷻ grants someone true faith and inner purity, they have attained the Jannah of this world. Allah ﷻ promises such individuals tranquility in their hearts, and tranquility is also experienced in Jannah. In this worldly Jannah, one remains peaceful in all circumstances. This is true pleasure. Therefore, endure the trials and tribulations imposed by the nafs when obeying the commands of Allah ﷻ, for this temporary pain is akin to applying medicine to a wound, which will be followed by the enjoyment of faith (eemaan). Despite the heart's inclination towards backbiting and gazing at forbidden things, restrain the tongue from slandering the honor of others through backbiting, and avert the eyes from beholding what is forbidden. Undoubtedly, the nafs may find this restraint agonizing, but soon you will experience the coolness and tranquility that accompany righteousness.

4.5 Control the Nafs by Balancing Leniency and Firmness

Deal with the nafs just like how a smart patient would deal with medicine. The patient aims for good health and willingly consumes bitter medicine. If the taste is too unpleasant, the patient convinces themselves by adding a little sweetness or immediately consuming something sweet afterward, ensuring the body accepts it. Similarly, do not blindly obey the nafs; instead, handle it like a smart patient. It's worth noting that the nafs may even resist indulging in certain delicious foods because it knows they will hinder the enjoyment of other delicacies. Educate the nafs about the severe losses it would incur by committing sins and losing the blessings it currently enjoys. This is how a wise believer manages their nafs, maintaining full control of the reins and not letting go. At times, they may loosen the reins but remain in control. As long as the nafs follows the straight path, they show leniency. However, if it deviates, they attempt to guide it gently, and if it doesn't respond well, they assert themselves firmly. They deal with the nafs as one would with an ignorant spouse. When the spouse reveals intellectual weakness, they respond with patience and consideration. If the wife becomes disobedient, the husband begins by offering gentle advice. If the advice fails, he may create some distance, even on the bed, to address the behavior. And if she continues in her disobedience, he may become firmer. Firm determination is the most effective tool to control the nafs—there is no whip greater than resolute willpower. Be determined not to disobey Allah ﷻ, for there is no better means than determination to discipline the nafs. May Allah ﷻ grant His divine help in leading a life that pleases Him. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis-29th September 2017.

5. How to Make the Righteous Deeds Effective?

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

5.1 Be Attentive of the Benefits of The Deed

Many people are deprived of the blessings of dhikr because they lack the intention for advancement and blessings from it. Take salah as an example; the Quran states that salah is effective in preventing sins. However, we often do not intend to pray to save ourselves from sins. It is essential to start praying with the intention of seeking protection from sins through salah's blessings, and the effect will become apparent. Allah ﷻ is truthful in His words, and offering Salah properly will eliminate sins from our lives. Salah and sins cannot coexist, just like fire and water. This requires us to pray with the intention of seeking refuge from sins.

We do not abandon Salah because we are well aware that if we neglect it, we will face difficulties and challenges. Our faith may be weak, and we may continue to engage in sins, thinking that lying is necessary to conduct business, maintain family life, and survive in this world. We have mistakenly believed that sins will protect us from problems. However, Allah ﷻ says, "Give up sins, and you will be saved from all problems." We must acknowledge the truthfulness of Allah's

statement. Our thinking contradicts Allah's words. Allah ﷻ does not merely promise ease in our problems but guarantees delivery from them.

Similarly, people often miss out on the blessings of dhikr because they perform it as a mere customary practice without intending for advancement and blessings. Dhikr should be done with a sincere intention and a deep understanding of its benefits.

A pious elder once said, "A Muslim does not engage in righteous deeds with a bad intention, but rather, they simply lack intention." It is certain that one will benefit by engaging in dhikr or reciting the Quran with the intention of seeking its blessings, benefits, and radiance. When performing ablution, contemplate the words of the Prophet ﷺ, "Ablution washes away the outer and inner sins," and observe the radiance you attain. Notice the difference between performing ablution, offering Salah, and leaving the masjid without reflecting on their benefits and blessings. The love of Allah ﷻ is not achieved through mere actions if His love is not intended. Merely performing deeds as a customary practice will not earn us the love of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Voluntary worship brings one closer to Allah ﷻ." This necessitates that we first strive for Allah's closeness. Praying inattentively without seeking Allah's closeness will not bring us closer to Him. This principle applies to every aspect of worship.

5.2 Be Consistent in Your Daily Activities

Hazrat advises us to diligently perform our daily religious activities (maamul) regardless of our state, whether we are in a state of ablution or while sitting or walking. Abandoning these practices after establishing them will deprive us of their blessings. Therefore, strive to perform the maamul to the best of your ability. By maintaining perseverance, mindfulness of Allah ﷻ, and adhering to proper etiquettes, you will attain the blessings of these practices. Even if one has a valid excuse such as illness and is unable to perform ablution, they should continue with the maamul in any state. It should not be discontinued. An incident is narrated about Hazrat Sirri (RA) who was sitting under a tree when he heard a voice emanating from it. The voice said, "O Sirri! Be like me. People pelt stones at me, and in turn, I give them fruits." Hazrat Sirri (RA) responded mockingly, questioning why people throw the tree in the fire if it claims to be a great saint. The tree replied, "One weakness outweighs all my good characteristics. I sway in whichever direction the wind blows, and I am not stable." Therefore, we should continue with the maamul by any means necessary. Even if we feel lazy, lack concentration, or have limited time, we should strive to perform these practices. By not abandoning the maamul, everything will eventually fall into place, by the will of Allah ﷻ.

The Prophet ﷺ advised us to consistently perform acts of worship, even if they are small in scale. This is more desirable than engaging in righteous acts while staying awake throughout the entire night. It is not necessary to stay awake for three-quarters of the night, half of the night, or even a quarter of the night. Simply offer four units of voluntary Salah during the night but do so consistently for the sake of Allah ﷻ. At times, when sleep overpowers you and it becomes challenging to wake up, and there is limited time remaining, offer Salah with the intention of praying tahajjud before going to bed. Do not abandon this practice. May Allah ﷻ grant us all divine help and blessings. Ameen.

Abandoning established practices will deprive us of their blessings. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "O Abdullah! Do not be like the man who used to pray during the night and then left it." Do not give up a deed after making it a habit. It is similar to a person who frequently visits a ruler and establishes a good relationship, only to abruptly terminate their visits. The ruler would be displeased, wouldn't they? There would be no complaints against someone who does not establish any relationship in the first place. However, if you have established a relationship with Allah ﷻ, do not abandon it. Worship Allah ﷻ in private. This relationship is of utmost importance.

5.3 Keep the Islahi Talluq Intact

Hazrat advises that even if you don't act upon the counseling in the spiritual connection with a Sheikh, it is important to maintain the contact. He doesn't prescribe additional daily activities to avoid making it difficult, but the reformation of actions is crucial. This contact is blessed, so continue seeking guidance from the Sheikh. Satan tries to sever the connection and instill doubt, while the nafs (lower self) and mood influence the seeker. However, when one's faith in the Sheikh surpasses suspicions, they will seek guidance on everything. Thus, there is a blessing in this connection.

A disciple once wrote to his Sheikh expressing the difficulty of controlling his eyes and requested a solution to permanently despise this distressing act. The Sheikh replied that there is no solution except for taking courage and putting in diligent effort. However, two acts can assist in this matter: 1) Focusing on mindful remembrance of Allah (dhikr) and 2) Reflecting on the consequences of the sin, such as the punishment, the loss incurred, the blessings it would snatch away, and the deprivation caused by Allah's anger. These two acts can aid, but one must genuinely gather courage and put in the effort. It is necessary to exert control over the nafs.

Allah ﷻ warns of the punishment for sins if we do not repent. It may come today, tomorrow, in old age, or later, but the punishment is certain. We receive countless blessings from Allah ﷻ, and we never know which blessings we have lost or the doors of blessings that have been closed due to our sins. Allah ﷻ plans to elevate us, but due to our sins, He ﷻ keeps us at a lower level. The sinner often fails to realize this. Reflecting on the punishment and the losses incurred by sins can provide courage through its blessings. A habitual sinner becomes entangled in problems, but when Allah ﷻ grants piety and a life free from sins, their affairs are set right. When Allah ﷻ decrees something, His power is unstoppable, and no one can prevent it.

5.4 Develop Conviction in Allah, the Exalted through Aamaal

A saalik (seeker) once inquired about the means of attaining yaqeen (conviction) in Allah ﷻ. The response he received emphasized the significance of righteous deeds (aamal) as the only path to developing yaqeen. Yaqeen is forged through action. When an individual receives from Allah ﷻ and makes decisions with His assistance through their deeds, they cultivate yaqeen in Allah ﷻ. If we desire something from Allah ﷻ, our beloved Prophet ﷺ advised us to perform the salah of haajat (prayer of need). If one's needs are not fulfilled after offering two units of haajat salah, and they persistently continue praying without giving up, eventually developing yaqeen, then inshaaAllah their objective will be accomplished merely with those two units of salah. Yaqeen can only be obtained through aamal. As the Prophet ﷺ stated, "Charity stands in the way of calamity," a person

continues to give charity until their yaqeen is strengthened by the blessings it carries. Eventually, they will have more confidence in giving to charity than in seeking medical treatment, finding greater peace in giving to charity as if paying a doctor's fee. Our Prophet ﷺ said, "Treat the sick with charity." How many believe in this today? Yaqeen increases only through righteous deeds. There is no other way. Often, people are unaware of the true nature of mashwara (consultation). When they perceive the outcome of consultation as either beneficial or detrimental, they solely blame the advisor. However, seeking counsel from a trustworthy, righteous, and pious individual makes decision-making easier, and the faithful person is content with whatever Allah ﷻ decrees. There will undoubtedly be blessings in the outcome. May Allah ﷻ grant us the tawfeeq (divine help) for righteous deeds and a true understanding of the deen. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Morning Tarbiati Majlis (23.12.2016)

6. Let Us Not Forget to Make Duaas

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

6.1 Duaa, A Great Blessing

Duaa is a profound act of presenting our needs and requests before the One who possesses the power to fulfill them. Unfortunately, in today's world, many Muslims have overlooked the significance of making duaas, forgetting that it is a potent tool that can safeguard us from immense calamities. When Allah ﷻ grants someone the tawfeeq (divine help) to make duaas, they should recognize that their supplications have been accepted. The immediate effect of making duaas to Allah ﷻ is a sense of contentment and assurance that their pleas will be answered. It is akin to gaining direct contact with someone who possesses the authority to fulfill our needs, instilling a profound sense of relief within us. Making duaas and continuously engaging in this act is undoubtedly a great blessing. Since Muslims have stopped making duaas to Allah ﷻ, they have begun seeking help from everyone else, whereas when they were devoted to making duaas to Allah ﷻ, they found independence from relying on others. In fact, we are utterly reliant on Allah ﷻ for every single moment, to the extent that we should continuously make duaas to Him ﷻ, whether we are sitting, walking, or engaged in any other activity. We should ask for aafiyah (physical and mental ease in both the worlds), good health, strong faith (eemaan), and continuously beseech Allah ﷻ, for there is immense pleasure and fulfillment in seeking His divine assistance.

6.2 Seeking Protection and Pleasure

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has bestowed upon us a multitude of exquisite supplications. When we encounter someone who is unwell, we beseech Allah ﷻ, saying, "O Allah! Do not deprive me of the blessings of my health." In the face of trials, calamities, and the sight of others immersed in

sin, we implore Allah ﷻ, "O Allah! Protect me from calamities and safeguard me from Your disobedience." Engaging in supplication to Allah ﷻ brings about immense pleasure. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has encouraged us to barricade the path of trials and tribulations through supplication. Not only does supplication shield us from calamities, but it also fosters constant mindfulness of Allah ﷻ. It establishes a strong connection with Him, filling our hearts with His love and granting us immense pleasure.

6.3 Harness the Moments of Divine Acceptance

When it is not possible to engage in continuous supplication, it is crucial to set aside dedicated time each day to earnestly make supplication from the depths of our hearts. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has enlightened us about numerous moments when supplications are readily accepted, leaving no room for rejection. These opportune times include after performing the obligatory prayers and during the call to prayer (Adhan). Moreover, our beloved Prophet ﷺ has assured us that there is a specific time on Fridays when the supplications of believers will be granted, regardless of what they ask for. Reflect for a moment: If a ruler were to announce that he would fulfill every citizen's desires on a designated day, how eagerly would people flock to him! However, let us remember that this ruler is not an independent authority; he himself relies on Allah ﷻ. Then how astounding it is that Allah ﷻ, the King of all kings, proclaims that He ﷻ will grant His slaves whatever they beseech! As for the blessed time on Fridays, opinions may vary. Some believe it to be any time during the day, while others suggest it is the shortest period between the Friday sermon (Khutbah) and the congregational prayer (Salah). Some propose that it occurs between the afternoon (Asr) and evening (Maghrib) prayers, and others state it is right before Maghrib. Therefore, let us seize this precious opportunity. After the sermon, without raising our hands, let us make supplications and seek forgiveness, fully embracing this divine time of acceptance.

The time immediately after Asr salah holds great blessings, and generally, engaging in remembrance of Allah (zikr) during this time has additional excellence. The period following Asr on the blessed day of Friday holds even more virtue. If one is unable to allocate the entire duration between Asr and Maghrib, it is recommended to make dua immediately after Asr salah and also during the time before Maghrib. Some individuals spend hours and hours making supplications to Allah. If we cannot dedicate such a lengthy period, we should at least designate a few minutes to make heartfelt dua to Allah, and by His grace, we will gradually find the ability to ask for more and for a longer duration. When making dua, let us have a deep sense of Allah's greatness in our hearts, recognizing that all the treasures of the heavens and the earth belong solely to Him. Every single thing we need and request is with Allah ﷻ alone. Moreover, Allah ﷻ is the most merciful and compassionate towards us, so why not turn to Him? Whenever we feel worried, in pain, or restless in our hearts, or when calamities approach, let us beseech Allah. Let us keep making dua for 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, or even half an hour, whether we are sitting, standing, walking, or even in the markets, because we are constantly in need of Allah's assistance.

6.4 Duaa, A Form of Worship

The act of making dua is not only a supplication to Allah ﷻ, but it is also a form of worship in itself. Even if someone is not reciting the Quran or performing voluntary prayers, simply sitting in

the mosque and engaging in duaa is a significant act of worship. Many individuals have found solace and ease through the practice of making heartfelt duaa. Therefore, it is essential to continue making duaa, as it not only garners more attention from Allah ﷻ, but it also brings comfort and relief to the supplicant. In a noteworthy incident, a person once sought the help of a revered spiritual leader to make duaa for him to be blessed with a pious child. However, it was discovered that the man had not even married yet. The spiritual leader admonished him, emphasizing the need to take the necessary steps and adopt the means prescribed by Allah ﷻ before expecting the fulfillment of his duaa. Although Allah ﷻ is Al-Qadir, fully capable of granting provisions without any effort on our part while we just remain in our rooms, He ﷻ has designed our lives in a way that necessitates the adoption of lawful means. It is crucial to combine sincere efforts within the boundaries of Islamic teachings with our supplications to Allah ﷻ. Both aspects are essential and go hand in hand. A righteous spiritual teacher compared our efforts and attempts to those of a crying baby. Just as a baby cries, screams, and moves its hands and legs to seek the attention of its mother, our efforts are similar. The baby's crying and movements alone do not bring milk to him; they serve to draw the mother's attention, prompting her to come and fulfill his needs. Likewise, our efforts are a means to seek the attention of Allah. Although our plans and actions may not yield immediate results, we still pursue them because they are Allah's commandments. Ultimately, it is Allah alone who grants what is truly necessary and beneficial to us.

6.5 Duaa, The Cry of the Heart

We should understand that duaa is the heartfelt cry of the soul. Merely raising our hands and uttering words with our tongue, while our hearts are elsewhere, does not constitute true duaa. Duaa offered with a heedless heart will not be accepted. Imagine a person who books a first-class train ticket, dresses elegantly, and approaches a ruler with a letter of request filled with beautiful words. However, when presenting the letter, the person turns their face away in disregard. How will they be perceived? The ruler would be offended, considering them to be ill-mannered, and their request would be rejected. The same principle applies to our duaa. We may articulate eloquent words, but if our hearts are heedless, our duaa will not be accepted by Allah ﷻ. Therefore, let us make duaa sincerely from the depths of our hearts. When our duaa is accepted, it is solely due to Allah's ﷻ special mercy directed towards us. This special mercy can manifest in various ways, such as granting the requested matter, safeguarding us from calamities, or bestowing its effects in the hereafter where we will be in dire need of such divine mercy.

6.6 Connect directly to Allah, the Exalted

Only making duaa is your responsibility, while the acceptance of it is in the hands of Allah ﷻ. Do your utmost in taking action and leave the outcome to Allah ﷻ. If you don't receive what you ask for, make efforts to improve the manner in which you make duaa, as perhaps there is a lack of proper etiquette in your supplication. Even if you don't receive the exact thing you asked for, be content knowing that there is goodness in it, and this shows humility. It is a struggle to subdue the ego's desire for everything it desires. Once, a distressed individual approached a spiritual guide and asked for duaas. The guide responded by asking the person to consider him as if he were dead, unable to make any supplications or do anything on his behalf. Initially, this response may have seemed harsh, but the guide's intention was to prevent the person from becoming reliant on him

and to establish a direct connection with Allah ﷻ. Sometimes people rely solely on pious individuals to make duas and perform istikhara on their behalf, which can lead to heedlessness. While it is acceptable to ask others to make duas for you, it is equally important for you to make duas for yourself.

6.7 The Etiquette of Duaa: Raising Hands and Embracing Divine Gifts

The etiquette of making dua involves raising one's hands to the level of the heart, with the palms facing the heavens, as the direction of dua is towards the heavens. After making dua, one should wipe their hands over their face, symbolizing the expression of gratitude for receiving what was requested and embracing the gift. This act beautifully expresses one's servitude to Allah ﷻ. There may be questions regarding the practice of wiping the hands over the face during dua, as some may not raise their hands or object to this action. The answer to such questions lies in the appreciation of Allah's ﷻ royal benevolence. Just as we embrace a precious gift received from a royal court, this act signifies a positive omen. Similarly, when we receive something valuable or beloved, we often embrace it with our eyes. An interesting point to consider is the efficacy of dua made by a sick person, as the angels respond "Ameen" to their supplications. It is recommended to start by making dua for oneself and then extend it to the entire Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, saying, "O Allah! Forgive me and forgive the Ummah of the Prophet ﷺ. O Allah! Have mercy on me and have mercy on the Ummah of the Prophet ﷺ." In dua, it is important to prioritize oneself before others, recognizing our dependence on Allah ﷻ more than others. Offering two units of nafl salah (voluntary prayers) and then making specific requests has proven to be highly effective. While making dua, it is advisable not to rush but to ask with tawarru (humility, piety, and a sense of awe and reverence towards Allah).

6.8 Strengthen Faith through Abundant Duaa in Challenging Times

The one who desires his supplications to be readily accepted should develop a habit of making more duas during times of well-being. While our hearts long for our duas to be answered in times of calamity, a simple solution to attain this is to make dua when we are in a state of well-being and good health. When we do so and then continue making duas during times of calamity, the angels intercede on our behalf for the acceptance of our supplications. Hence, we should make dua to Allah ﷻ in every state, whether it is a time of prosperity or adversity. Every Muslim should have a fervent desire for making dua and should also request others to make dua for them. However, it is important to approach others with genuine sincerity and not merely as a formality. Recognize that the person you request to make dua for you may be more pious than you, and their supplications may be readily accepted. It has been the honor of the people of Allah ﷻ to ask even the young ones to make dua for them. They valued and respected every single Muslim, considering their faith to be superior to their own, and believed that the supplications of others would be accepted on their behalf. Therefore, make dua yourself, prioritize it, and also seek the dua of others. Especially in these times of trials and challenges, where the security of everything is at stake and everyone is in distress, we must make abundant duas. This instills a sense of Allah's constant presence with us, which in turn strengthens our courage and bravery. It is akin to feeling more secure when accompanied by two or three guards.

6.9 Have Allah with You at Always

Always have Allah with you through duaas, for duaas is the weapon of a believer. If one neglects this practice, especially in these trying times, the individual will become overwhelmed with distress. After all, humans are affected by what they see and experience in society. Continuously beseech Allah ﷻ in every state, whether sitting or walking, seeking His blessings and protection for yourself and all Muslims. Pray for aafiyah (physical and mental ease in both the worlds), mercy, and protection. By doing so, you will find increased courage and experience a profound sense of peace and contentment. Whatever challenges you may face, whether in business or family matters, turn to Allah ﷻ. Remember that He ﷻ is not only the Most Merciful to you but also the Most Powerful of all. So, there is no need to worry when you have the Most Powerful, Merciful, and All-Knowing Allah ﷻ by your side. He ﷻ possesses all the treasures and when He ﷻ is with us, all difficulties will ease. You will always sense His ﷻ presence and enjoy a fulfilling life by engaging in duaas and conversing with Him ﷻ constantly. May Allah ﷻ grant us all the ability to make plentiful duaas to Him ﷻ. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis (30.3.2012)

7. Give Up Sins, O Slaves of Allah

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

7.1 Keep Away from Sins

Achieving spiritual health requires us to address both the apparent (zaahiri) and hidden (baatini) sins that dwell within us. Zaahiri sins encompass actions involving our hands, ears, eyes, and other outward behaviors, while baatini sins reside within our hearts, such as jealousy, malice, pride, and an excessive love for worldly possessions. It is possible for someone to refrain from committing outward sins, yet their heart remains attached to the materialistic allure of this dunya (worldly life). Our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized that the love for dunya is the root cause of all evils. Just as one cannot attain good health by taking medicine without adopting a proper diet, abstaining from sins is essential for spiritual well-being. It is futile to consume both medicine and poison simultaneously. If we continue to hold onto sins in our lives, our firmness in the deen (faith) will be compromised. Therefore, it is crucial to relinquish both zaahiri and baatini sins. Why do people dare to commit sins today? It is because their belief in the consequences of their actions, particularly in the hereafter, has weakened. However, the truth is that the detrimental effects of these sins are not only experienced after death but can also manifest in this very world. Although not always readily apparent, they leave an impact, much like an undiagnosed illness whose cause remains elusive to some doctors.

7.2 Have Firm Belief in The Evil Consequence of Sins

When one firmly believes that the effects of sins will manifest in both this world and the hereafter, it becomes easier to refrain from committing them. For instance, imagine someone lacking control over their anger. Would they display their anger before someone more powerful than them? The reason we persist in sin is our lack of firm belief, or *yaqeen*, in the negative outcomes it brings. However, if one truly grasps the severity of those consequences, even a criminal would renounce their crimes. Consider the example of a person who has developed a fondness for sweet dishes over forty years. Suddenly, a doctor warns them that continuing to indulge in sweets jeopardizes their health. Despite their long-standing habit, they willingly give up sweets. They decline even when friends offer them because they firmly believe in the detrimental consequences of consuming sweets. Unfortunately, many Muslims today have lost their conviction in the evil consequences of sins. It is a fact that persisting in sin without repentance results in the loss of blessings in one's life. These blessings need not be limited to physical faculties like eyesight. There are also blessings in righteous acts, such as Allah granting some individuals the ability to consistently perform Tahajjud salah (night prayer). How unfortunate it is to be deprived of this tremendous blessing when Allah awakens some for Tahajjud salah. Inevitably, one will experience a deprivation of blessings in various ways if they remain immersed in sin.

7.3 Sins For Sure Take Away the Blessings

Once, a man from Bani Israel approached Musa (AS) and claimed that Allah ﷻ does not hold him accountable for his sins. In response, Allah ﷻ conveyed to Musa (AS) through revelation to ask the man whether Allah ﷻ had not stripped the sweetness from his acts of worship due to his sins. Just as losing the sense of taste renders everything like eating sand, when Allah ﷻ removes the spiritual taste, one feels no distinction between performing salah or abandoning it, reciting the Quran or neglecting it. Sins have a profound impact, causing physical and mental weakness, as well as adverse effects in both this world and the hereafter. They can deprive a person of righteous children, blessings in terms of time, provisions, and peace during youth and old age. The consequences of sins are so extensive that only Allah truly knows their entirety. It is my earnest wish that Allah ﷻ grants everyone a firm conviction in the severe consequences of sins. A revered pious elder once stated that the ultimate purpose of knowledge is to manifest its effects through action. Sins have the ability to diminish the divine radiance (*noor*) of knowledge, rendering it ineffective. Consequently, a person may possess extensive knowledge, but it will not benefit them if they persist in sin.

7.4 Sins Take Away the Light of Ilm and Weaken the Memory

Once Imam Shafi (RA), a young scholar, sat in the company of Imam Malik (RA) to seek knowledge. Imam Malik (RA) was astounded by Imam Shafi's remarkable memory and his keen intellect in acquiring knowledge. Addressing him, Imam Malik (RA) said, "Son, I perceive the divine light of Allah ﷻ in your heart. Do not extinguish this light through sins." On another occasion, someone approached a wise and righteous person, complaining about their weak memory. In response, the wise person advised them to abandon sins because knowledge is a divine light, a manifestation of Allah's ﷻ grace, and His grace is not bestowed upon sinners. Some may

find it perplexing or frustrating that sins are connected to memory, questioning why they are not provided with specific remedies or practices to improve memory instead. However, no matter how many memory-boosting techniques one employs, if they continue to consume poison, they cannot expect any positive effects. Sins are like poison. May Allah ﷻ grant us a deep understanding of the grave consequences of sins.

7.5 Sins Diminish the Blessings of Provision

In reality, when a person persists in committing sins, they become deprived of Allah's help and support. All their blessings, both material and spiritual, remain insecure. The greatest sin of the heart is the love for worldly possessions, which leads to continuous sinning driven by various factors such as relationships and societal influences. Abandoning sins, both outwardly and inwardly, is imperative because the consequences are truly detrimental. Without forsaking sins, one can never fully experience the blessings in their provision. The Prophet ﷺ has stated that a person's sustenance is sent to them, but it is prevented from reaching them due to their sins. As a result of their transgressions, a person may even lose their ten years hard-earned wealth to theft, jeopardizing the barakah (blessings) in their earnings. When one truly understands the danger posed by something, they become cautious and vigilant in avoiding it. The problem lies in individuals failing to grasp the gravity of sins due to their weak faith.

7.6 Sins Lead to A Sense of Desolation and Dreariness in One's Worship

The detrimental effects of sins create a wall of desolateness, cheerlessness, and dreariness between Allah ﷻ and the sinner, diminishing the love and attachment to Allah ﷻ. The more a person abstains from sins, the stronger their connection to acts of worship such as reciting the Quran, spending time in the mosque, and cherishing solitary moments of remembrance of Allah ﷻ. Conversely, the more one indulges in sins, the more they will experience a sense of desolation during their acts of worship. The level of affection for Allah ﷻ can be gauged by how closely the heart is attached to solitary worship. When someone develops a deep attachment to another person, they yearn for moments of seclusion to communicate with them privately, actively seeking such opportunities. By committing sins, one experiences a growing sense of desolation in their relationship with Allah ﷻ, to the extent that they may even avoid going to the mosque due to this feeling. This desolation leads to a preference for hastening the completion of prayers rather than performing them with devotion. Thus, as a punishment for sins, a person loses their connection to Allah ﷻ and feels a profound sense of desolation. They may possess all worldly means of happiness, yet still feel abandoned and lonely due to being distanced from Allah ﷻ. They experience a peculiar sense of unease, restlessness, worry, and hopelessness, which are the consequences of the internal desolation (wahshat) they feel, depriving them of true enjoyment.

7.7 Sins Are the Source of Worries and Restlessness

Just as not every doctor can diagnose a disease, our condition is such that we may not fully recognize the profound consequences of sins, despite the significant loss they cause in this worldly life. Moreover, a person becomes even more distressed when they are unaware of the root cause of their distress. The inexplicable worry within them amplifies their anxieties. When he discovers

an amulet or a piece of paper that mysteriously appears in their house, they often jump to the conclusion that someone has cast black magic upon them, when in reality, the source of their troubles lies in their distance from Allah ﷻ. It is crucial to understand that the detrimental effects of sins manifest not only after death but also in this earthly life. Can we consider it a minor punishment that Allah ﷻ withdraws His love from our hearts, replacing it with desolation, turning our lives into a raging fire? Leading a life filled with constant worry is indeed wretched. Consider the state of someone who resorts to suicide, consumed by distress and experiencing immense desolation from Allah ﷻ. It is unimaginable. The reason why a significant portion of people, nearly 90%, lose their sanity is due to their unlawful attachments, which fill their minds with desolation. The intensity of their forbidden love becomes unbearable for their minds. Therefore, let us recognize the reality that the evil effects of sins are visible even in this worldly life.

7.8 Stay Away from Sins and Give Up the Life of Misery

Whenever you experience feelings of desolation and cheerlessness, recognize that it is a consequence of your sins. By abstaining from sins, you will find love and affection for Allah ﷻ. Sometimes, it happens that one develops a sense of detachment or aversion even towards the righteous servants of Allah ﷻ. And as this feeling intensifies, they also start experiencing aversion towards their gatherings and end up being deprived of their company and the blessings associated with it. The further your mind strays from the Most Merciful, the closer it becomes to Satan. The more you distance yourself from the righteous community, the closer you draw to the community of Satan. As this desolation progresses, it may extend to one's spouse, children, and all relationships, eventually reaching a point where even self-worth is diminished, potentially leading to self-harm. These are the harmful effects of sins. May Allah instill in us firm belief that disobedience to Allah ﷻ is the greatest threat to our success and progress in both worlds. Let us not tolerate sins and strive to purify our lives from them as soon as possible. May Allah grant us the ability to act upon what we hear, write, and read. Ameen.

--Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis (14.9.2012)

8. Die Before You Die: A Journey of Self-Transformation

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

8.1 The Swift Impact of Deeds

The instant reward for every good deed may not be evident to everyone, as it is a matter of individual perception. Similarly, the immediate consequences of a sin may not be apparent to all. Therefore, it is essential that if one commits a sin, they should not delay in turning to Allah in repentance, as the punishment for it can manifest swiftly. The form of punishment may vary, and it requires a keen perception to recognize it. Just as a person who has lost their sense of taste due

to illness cannot fully appreciate the flavors of food, it does not mean that the flavors have no impact on them. Similarly, the reward and punishment for deeds are delivered instantly, but it takes a perceptive mind to fully comprehend them. The righteous individuals who diligently obey Allah's commands feel immense happiness and contentment, akin to the joy experienced when witnessing a breathtaking landscape or flowing rivers. This feeling is a glimpse of the bliss one would encounter in Paradise (Jannah). Unfortunately, the venomous bite of worldly desires has tainted our sense of taste. Nevertheless, if we develop insight within ourselves, we too can experience this happiness. Just as the pleasure derived from performing good deeds is instant, the distress one feels upon committing a sin is incomparable to the agony caused by a thousand swords striking the head. When the darkness of sin infiltrates a person's heart, it spreads within, causing their spiritual well-being to wither.

In a town in India, there lived a pious man who used to cut and bundle grass to sell. People would patiently queue to purchase his bundles, as they witnessed a special blessing upon their livestock when fed with his grass. Despite earning modest amounts, he never overpriced his product. Instead, he would save a portion of his earnings over several months to prepare a feast for a few esteemed pious elders, including Hazrat Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (Raheemahullah), who resided in the town. These revered elders eagerly awaited his banquet, as the divine radiance they experienced after partaking in his meal would linger within them for days. This, once again, emphasizes the significance of individual perception. Just as the darkness becomes apparent when forbidden food is consumed, one must possess insightful awareness to recognize the spiritual consequences of their actions. Similar to how a pristine white garment would be affected by even a few spots of stain, a person with a pure heart would be deeply affected by sins, while a corrupted heart remains indifferent. The reaction to both good and bad deeds is instantaneous.

8.2 Overcome Suspicion

Suspicion is one of the worst diseases that causes one to doubt every individual, and groundless suspicion is a sinful act. A suspicious person creates a distorted mental map based on thoughts far removed from reality. When a suspicious thought arises, find a quiet place and reflect upon the words of Allah, recognizing that suspicion is a sin that carries punishment. Turn to Allah ﷻ in repentance, acknowledging your inability to bear the consequences, and beseech Him to protect you from His punishment and cleanse your heart from suspicion. Additionally, pray to Allah ﷻ to bestow blessings upon the person you suspect in this world and the hereafter, both day and night. If the feeling of suspicion persists, continue making dua for two or three consecutive days. If it still does not dissipate, personally meet the individual, seek forgiveness for suspecting them, and request their prayers for your deliverance from this feeling. This is the remedy for suspicion—maintain a pure heart devoid of suspicion. One who harbors the darkness of suspicion in their heart will not receive the illumination of good deeds. Suspicion is akin to backbiting of the heart; just as backbiting is associated with the tongue, suspicion is linked to the heart. It is a major sin that engulfs the heart in darkness.

8.3 Recognize the Role of Allah in Our Endeavors

When a person has obtained the pleasure and acceptance of Allah, their mere presence and existence can bring benefits to others, even without their conscious effort or knowledge. People can derive blessings and assistance from such individuals, even if they have never personally met them or sought their direct help. Upon hearing the news of the passing of such a pious or respected person, one may still feel a sense of loss, as they realize the blessings and support they had been receiving from that individual. It is possible for a person to impact others positively not only through their actions, but also through their character and demeanor. It is important to acknowledge that not all problems and challenges can be solved solely through intelligence and planning. It is crucial to seek the favor and blessings of Allah in all endeavors. While it is essential to plan wisely, it is foolish and ignorant to take pride in one's intellect and boast about their plans. Instead, one should acknowledge that the success of their endeavors is dependent on the beneficence of Allah. This can be expressed in two ways: Firstly, by saying "in shaa Allah" (if Allah wills) when making plans, recognizing that nothing can happen without Allah's decree. And secondly, by saying "maa shaa Allah" (what Allah has willed) when a task is accomplished, attributing the outcome not to one's own intelligence or planning, but to the will of Allah.

8.4 Rely on Allah: The Power of "In shaa Allah" and "Maa shaa Allah"

The words "in shaa Allah" and "maa shaa Allah" indicate your belief that you are not proud of your intelligence and not dependent on your plans, but solely reliant on Allah ﷻ. Your tasks and problem-solving can only be accomplished with His grace and favor. Disbelievers may not understand why we say "maa shaa Allah". In Western education, there is complete trust in intellect, materialistic means, and strategic planning, and thus the concept of "in shaa Allah" and "maa shaa Allah" is absent. However, as Muslims, we use our intelligence and plan, while acknowledging that it is only through the grace and favor of Allah ﷻ that anything will happen. A Muslim doctor may diagnose and prescribe medicine accurately, but recognizes that the cure comes solely from Ash-Shaafi, the Healer. A Muslim may have all the necessary materials and plan perfectly, yet knows that the task will be accomplished only if Allah ﷻ wills it. Even when we see material means helping us achieve our goals, our focus remains on Allah ﷻ, saying "maa shaa Allah". I solemnly swear by Allah ﷻ that feeling proud of one's intelligence is an act of ignorance. Allah desires a humble heart from His slaves. The proper attitude is to say, "I am nothing, and nothing is mine."

8.5 Respect the Salaf-us-Saaleen and Do Not Deviate

The greatness of Salaf-us-Saaleen lies in the fact that they established the foundation for acting on religious knowledge. Therefore, it is crucial not to object to or criticize them, as this may lead a person astray. Salaf-us-Saaleen are the pious elders of this deen, and the very essence of our faith relies upon them. Anyone who objects to or criticizes them falls into the dangerous trap of deviation. They disrespect the Sahabahs (RA), the Awliya (friends) of Allah, and the fuqaaha (scholars). They show disrespect towards the pious elders of this deen, speaking or writing about them as if they were their contemporaries or friends. Such scandalous behavior and contemptuous attitude push a person further away from the right path. Our deen is founded on good manners and etiquette.

"wa mai yu'azzim sha'aaa'iral laahi fa innahaa min taqwal quloob (al-Hajj 22:32)"

Translation: If one venerates the symbols of Allah, it is a sign of piety in their hearts.

Showing respect, honor, and regard for symbols that have a specific link to Allah is a sign of piety in one's heart. It is an indication that there is purity and cleanliness within.

8.6 Navigate Criticism and Focus on Self-Reflection

It is often said that prescribed deeds (Amaliyaat) do not bring blessings or have a significant impact on the hearts. The real impact comes from individuals who are connected to the Divine Truth (Sahib-e-Haqq), whose mere presence captivates others. The impact is heightened when there are no miracles (karamat) involved, as miracles may cause individuals to question whether something else would happen. The true effect is manifested when a person starts leading a life in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ), embodying the Sunnah and gaining charisma. This is the essence of reformation (Islaah). Once, someone asked a pious elder about the state of a person who earns and consumes haram (forbidden). The elder replied by admonishing the individual for focusing on others' actions instead of accounting for their own deeds. People often inquire about the consequences of others' actions, while neglecting their own spiritual state. They complain about the actions of certain scholars or individuals without considering their own behavior. Such individuals may consider themselves pure while openly engaging in major sins, displaying obstinacy and pride in their wrongdoing. Despite their own transgressions, they continue to criticize others. When people rebuke or criticize you for following the truth (Haqq), it is important not to pay attention to them. Their reproach can actually become a means of refinement, leading to steadfastness granted by Allah ﷻ. Therefore, it is essential to ignore their criticism, ridicule, or taunts and focus solely on seeking Allah's pleasure.

8.7 Endure Journey of Salah and Embrace Its Imperfection with Hope

A person expressed his struggle in maintaining his salah to its fullest measure. He was reminded that who can truly fulfill their salah completely! It was emphasized that even when we acknowledge our shortcomings in salah, we continue to offer it with the hope that Allah, the Merciful, will accept it. We prostrate before Allah, seeking His acceptance despite its imperfections. We persist in praying, knowing that we can never fully fulfill the requirements of salah. It is the mercy of Allah that He still accepts our efforts and encourages us to continue in our worship. With divine assistance, we have hope that Allah will accept our salah. Therefore, we should keep on striving and never give up.

8.8 The Power of Influence of Pious and Impious Effects on Hearts

It is quite intriguing to observe that even when impious individuals copy someone else's texts, which may not inherently be impious, it can still leave a negative impact on hearts. Impious people have a way of tainting everything they touch with their irreligious influence. Sometimes, a person picks up a book without considering the author or their beliefs, unaware of the potential effect it may have. The companionship, conversations, and writings of both impious and pious individuals hold significance and can influence others. It is often said that Satan does not possess unique tools

such as lust or rage; rather, humans have these emotions. Satan takes advantage of these human weaknesses to lead them astray, as he lacks new tools of his own. Therefore, one should never consider themselves free from the influence of evil. Escaping from one's own self is a challenging task. When your own being becomes your enemy, inner peace becomes elusive. Overcoming oneself means eradicating despicable qualities and destructive habits, essentially putting an end to their existence. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ advised, "Die before you die" - a call to eliminate contemptible qualities and negative habits. May Allah ﷻ grant us the correct understanding of His Deen and steadfastness upon it.

-Maulana Abdus Sattar (damat barakatuhum)

Tarbiati Majlis 27/03/2022

9. Beware of Rights of Creations

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

9.1 The Charity Beyond Material Possessions

Serving mankind is a form of worship that holds immense value. The saying "Khairunnas Anfa'uhum Linnas" emphasizes the notion that the best individuals are those who benefit humanity as a whole. One truly excels when they become a means of service to others, embodying the essence of worship. It's important to note that charity extends beyond monetary contributions alone. Providing comfort to the distressed, instilling courage in the troubled, and demonstrating love and kindness are integral aspects of charitable acts. Such gestures have the power to uplift and enlarge the heart. There are instances when an individual may donate generously, yet their behavior tarnishes the impact of their charity. Conversely, even if someone lacks material possessions, offering kind and comforting words to a person in distress becomes the greatest gift they can receive.

Consider the analogy of gifting a diamond ring to one's spouse. If it is presented rudely, accompanied by insensitive remarks like, "Have it. Are you happy now?" the value of the gift is diminished. However, if one cannot afford a diamond ring but expresses heartfelt appreciation, saying, "You are a diamond yourself, why would you need another?", it highlights their partner's inherent goodness, offering praise and genuine admiration. This becomes the greatest gift, as it appreciates their spouse by acknowledging and bringing forth their positive qualities through words of admiration. Material provisions and years of devoted care can be rendered meaningless if one concludes with rude and disrespectful behavior. Therefore, it is essential to understand that charity extends beyond financial offerings. Speaking kind words and displaying considerate behavior can have a profound impact, boosting a person's courage and bringing them happiness. The easiest way to touch someone's heart is to uncover their goodness through words of praise. Everyone possesses numerous positive attributes; it is our duty to recognize and speak kindly of

them. By doing so, we cultivate a deep sense of love and appreciation within their hearts. Consider the source of the illicit love affairs observed in society. Often, they originate from a foundation built upon sweet words of praise. A person may forsake their religion, parents, and family, but they vehemently refuse to relinquish the love that was nurtured through mutual admiration. Failing to offer praise where Allah ﷻ intended and displaying a reluctance to appreciate others can be perceived as a form of miserliness.

9.2 Serve the Mankind and Wish Well for Others

Serving humanity is considered the highest form of worship. Those who have the means to benefit others bring blessings to those around them. It is important to note that one doesn't need to possess wealth to make a positive impact. Charity encompasses a wide range of actions, as mentioned in a Hadith: showing someone the right path, offering a smile, and helping others to lighten their burdens. Charity is about doing good, and it can manifest through our words, actions, financial contributions, or any resource at our disposal. In the context of a Muslim's pledge of allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ, three oaths were emphasized: performing Salah (prayer), giving Zakah (charity), and sincerely wishing well for every single Muslim. This underscores the significance of demonstrating goodwill towards all Muslims. Imagine the transformative effect if every Muslim embraced this principle! Even within a household, it could create an environment akin to paradise, where all family members genuinely care for one another. Now envision the impact when this spirit extends beyond the confines of the home.

Sadly, the spirit of well-wishing has been diminished by selfishness. Many individuals are solely focused on their own interests, seeking personal gain without considering the welfare of others. In conflicts between individuals, it is not the individuals themselves who clash, but rather their conflicting desires and motives. Whether it is a clash between father and son or husband and wife, it is their desires and aims that collide. Consider the analogy of vehicles moving smoothly in their respective lanes. When everyone wishes well for each other, collisions are avoided, and harmony prevails. However, if a few vehicles veer out of their lanes and cross into others, traffic jams occur. Similarly, in today's world, many individuals have deviated from their designated paths due to unfulfilled desires. Even when there are only two people, clashes arise because they are driven by their self-interest. In the past, there were thousands of people, but clashes were rare. The emergence of clashes is a consequence of individuals prioritizing their desires over the well-being of others. The solution lies in embracing the spirit of well-wishing and selflessness, where human interactions are driven by genuine care and concern for others.

9.3 Be Kind and Respectful

Being a means of benefiting others is a noble form of worship in the eyes of Allah ﷻ. It is not obligatory for you to give money or material possessions when you are unable to do so, but having a good attitude towards others is equally important. Simply treating others with kindness and respect is sufficient. While it is commendable to provide financial assistance or charity, it is futile if you harbor feelings of worthlessness towards the recipient. Appreciating the inherent value and dignity of every individual is essential.

9.4 Seek the Company of a Murabbi

Finding solace and enlightenment in the company of a Murabbi (a pious, wise, and knowledgeable person) is a clear indication of compatibility and a key to personal growth. When someone attends gatherings for spiritual reformation and religious learning, and experiences a sense of peace in doing so, it signifies their alignment with the teachings and principles being discussed. At times, the words spoken in these gatherings may feel tailored specifically for the individual, addressing their unique needs. It is not uncommon for someone to feel that the sheikh or teacher possesses deep insight into their personal circumstances. I recall a companion sharing that his family members asked if he reveals everything about them, as they could perceive their own situations being reflected in the discourse.

9.5 Trust Allah and Relieve from Worries

SubhanAllah! It is a profound statement that those who possess unwavering trust and conviction in Allah ﷻ are spared from worries. The verse "And whoever puts all his trust in Allah, He will be enough for him" (Qur'an 65:3) encapsulates this truth. However, the attachment to Allah ﷻ, contemplation, and trust can wane due to the detrimental effects of sins. The stronger our connection and reliance on Allah ﷻ, the more we will find solace and relief from worries. It doesn't mean that a believer will never face trials, as this world is not paradise. Yet, they will remain impervious to worry. It is akin to a waterproof watch submerged in water; though surrounded by it, no water can penetrate inside. Similarly, a believer may be surrounded by difficulties, but their heart remains steadfast. They may fall ill, experience loss, or encounter unpleasant moments, yet when they recognize Allah, place their trust in Him, and have conviction, worries do not consume them.

However, if, despite having complete trust in Allah ﷻ, one still feels disturbed, they should turn to Him in repentance, seeking forgiveness for their sins with deep remorse, thereby nullifying the harmful effects of their transgressions. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ offered a remedy, stating that abundant seeking of forgiveness paves the way for Allah ﷻ to grant relief from worries. He alleviates every concern and fulfills needs through means that we could never fathom. As fallible beings prone to making mistakes and committing sins through our words, actions, and thoughts, it is natural for worries to arise. Nevertheless, the solution lies in seeking Allah's forgiveness with genuine regret and mindfulness. He will illuminate our path, make our journey easier, and, above all, bestow us with a tranquil heart and inner peace.

9.6 Beware of Rights of Creations and Seek Divine Guidance

When individuals seek guidance for their personal reformation, I advise them to engage in attentive prayer (salaah), fasting, sincere repentance, guarding their gaze, reflecting upon death, fulfilling others' rights, minimizing unnecessary social interactions, and striving to perform Tahajjud salah (night prayer) in four, eight, or twelve units as much as possible. By following these practices, one can experience true transformation and abundant blessings, by the will of Allah.

The entire creation forms a collective family under the care of Allah ﷻ, and His servants are part of His divine family. Mistreating others within this family not only harms their rights but also

angers the Creator. In addition to being a family of the creator, when the individual possesses a familial, blood, neighborhood, or any form of association with someone, their responsibilities and rights further increase. Thus, when these rights are violated and misconduct occurs, one can imagine the displeasure of the Magnificent Creator. At times, when a person lacks good companionship and fails to learn about the true essence of the faith in the company of righteous individuals, their understanding of religion becomes limited. They may perceive piety as merely fulfilling a few rituals, equating it to complete religiosity. Consequently, they may express disappointment when they fail to experience the blessings of faith, despite their presumed righteousness. Such individuals have shaped Islam according to their limited understanding and have become complacent within their self-defined mold.

However, seeking knowledge and education in the company of pious individuals can broaden their perspective, enabling them to comprehend the true meaning of piety. This realization ignites hope in Allah ﷻ, inspiring them to rectify their mistakes, seek divine assistance, and, at the very least, feel remorseful before Allah ﷻ, seeking His forgiveness. They come to acknowledge their shortcomings and the need to align themselves with the teachings of Islam. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that mistreatment and misbehavior towards Allah's creations lead to His divine anger. In our efforts to guide those seeking reformation, we place significant emphasis on the importance of fulfilling the rights of creations. Being mindful of these rights is an essential aspect of the journey towards spiritual growth and transformation.

9.7 True Love and Respect

If a person's sole concern is to seek the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and their greatest wish and desire is to please Him, it is a sign that Allah ﷻ has blessed them with the knowledge to discern right from wrong. They have truly attained the path of truth. When Allah ﷻ is pleased with someone, good-hearted individuals naturally develop love for them. Respect that stems from wealth, status, profession, or worldly possessions is transient. It fades when positions are lost, and connections diminish with the loss of wealth. However, there is another kind of love and respect that originates from the heavens. When Allah ﷻ loves an individual, the angels and the beloved people of Allah ﷻ on earth also hold affection for them. Even after their passing, this love endures. This enduring love and respect are genuine and lasting. People often exclaim, "Look at the fame and respect this person has!" but that is not genuine respect. True respect is the one that comes from the heavens. We often witness individuals who were famous during their career but fall into depression and even commit suicide after retirement because no one enquires about them.

I know a government officer who faced depression and when asked about it, he said that he used to receive numerous banquet invitations every week when he was working, but now no one calls him. The person who was appointed by him doesn't even acknowledge him when they cross paths. The respect he had received was for his position and rank, not for him as a person. However, the love and respect that come from Allah ﷻ are permanent and continue even after death. To this day, when we mention such individuals, we say, "RadhiAllahu anhum" - "May Allah be pleased with them" or "Rahmatullaahi Alaih" - "May Allah ﷻ shower His mercy upon him." We continue to supplicate for them whenever they come to mind. Although we may not have seen or met them in our lives, we still hold them in high regard because that respect originated from the heavens.

Therefore, desiring only the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is a matter of consciousness. If one receives divine assistance in abstaining from sins and remains vigilant, there is no need to worry about any condition. Such a person has attained righteousness. Today, our society has significantly narrowed down the list of sins. Some sins remain recognized as such, while others have been normalized. We often adopt the mindset of "If everyone is doing it, then so can we." Murder, prostitution, alcohol consumption, and theft are considered sins, while many other acts are viewed as normal. Therefore, if one is blessed with divine assistance in avoiding sins as defined by Shariah, there is no need to worry about any condition. This is a great blessing from Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ bestow His blessings upon us all, grant us understanding of the religion, progress in our religious practices, and steadfastness in our faith. Aameen.

-Maulana Abdus Sattar (damat barakatuhum)

Tarbiati Majlis 13/03/2022

10. Intellect Alone is Insufficient: The Power of Allah's Grace

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Intellect alone is not enough; it must be accompanied by Allah's grace. Throughout history, there have been many great individuals whose intellect led to their downfall. True success comes when your intellect is accompanied by Allah's grace. Goodness cannot be achieved by intellect alone without the grace of Allah ﷻ. By performing righteous deeds and making supplications, you can acquire the grace of Allah ﷻ. It is through receiving His grace that your endeavors find fulfillment.

The Quran states, "And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed" (Al-Quran 62:10). Here, the grace of Allah ﷻ refers to worldly prosperity, progress, and blessings. These worldly blessings can become a means for attaining success in the afterlife. Such grace is not solely attainable through intellect but through the grace of Allah ﷻ.

Pride in one's intelligence is a sign of foolishness. Feeling proud of one's intelligence is, in fact, foolishness. Without Allah's grace, our intellect holds little value. Whenever you feel pride in your intellect, remind yourself to let go of that thought. Remember that even great minds have stumbled. A fast horse becomes useless once it reaches the foot of a hill, and it is a helicopter that can lift you up. Similarly, your intellect alone will be of little use before Allah ﷻ. To truly succeed, you must acknowledge your weaknesses and demonstrate humility before Him. Pride in your intellect will inevitably lead to your downfall.

Present your humility and weaknesses before Allah ﷻ, acknowledging your feebleness and fragility. Intelligence alone cannot achieve anything without the grace of Allah ﷻ. Attain His grace through righteous deeds and supplications, and that is how true success is attained.

11. Ten Signs of Man with Perfect Intelligence

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

The ten signs of a person with complete intelligence, known as a man of kamil aql, are as follows:

1. Humility: They do not possess arrogance or pride.
2. Guidance: They walk steadfastly on the path of righteousness.
3. Contentment: They are satisfied with whatever provisions Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon them.
4. Generosity: They are not miserly when it comes to spending in the way of Allah ﷻ, be it money, food, clothes, or any other possessions.
5. Do not seek fame: Rather than seeking worldly ranks or fame, they value and prefer humility.
6. Preference for humble life: They choose to be faqeer and miskeen (humble and ascetic) rather than seeking honor and respect. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to pray, 'O Allah, let me die among the miskeen.' Miskeen here refers to preferring a humble life without being consumed by a desire for name and fame.
7. Lifelong Learner: They remain dedicated students of knowledge throughout their lives and never hesitate to seek knowledge. They consider it a form of prosperity to admit when they lack understanding and ask for guidance.
8. Giving Counsel: When someone seeks their advice or knowledge, they do not hesitate or withhold it.
9. Humility in Good Deeds: They consider the good deeds of others, no matter how small, as significant, while viewing their own numerous deeds as negligible.
10. Equality: They see people as falling into two categories in this world: the good and superior, and the evil and wretched. When they encounter someone superior, they are filled with yearning and desire to become righteous like them. Conversely, when they encounter someone wretched, they believe that even that person may possess hidden goodness that can overcome their evils. They do not look down upon anyone.

When a person possesses these qualities, their intelligence becomes complete (kamil aql), leading them to attain high status in both this world and the hereafter. They become individuals who are devoted to Allah ﷻ, seeking His mercy and Paradise. May Allah ﷻ grant all of us these qualities. Ameen, ameen, thumma ameen.

-Maulana Abdus Sattar (damat barakatuhum)

12. Seek Allah’s Pleasure over Worldly Concerns

Bismillaahir Rah’maanir Rah’eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

12.1 Trust in Allah’s Plan and Parent with Peace

Parents often express concern when their children lack interest and enthusiasm for Islamic teachings, worrying about the potential impact on their family’s reputation rather than displeasing Allah. However, there is no need to let worry and anxiety consume our hearts. As believers, the only thing that should truly trouble us is whether our actions displease Allah. Our main concern should be ensuring that we and our families lead lives that are pleasing to Him. If your child lacks interest despite your efforts and supplications, remember that you have done what is within your control. Excessive worry beyond that is unnecessary because what is beyond our control is not our responsibility. We have fulfilled our duty by making sincere supplications and taking appropriate steps to the best of our ability. We should not burden ourselves by going beyond our capacity. Sometimes, we may become overwhelmed by taking actions beyond our means. Once we have done what we can and made our supplications, we should leave the matter in the hands of Allah. Instead, focus on the actions that are within our control, ensuring that we are not displeasing Him. Any worry or concern unrelated to seeking Allah’s pleasure is insignificant in comparison. When it comes to pleasing Allah, we should take action within our means and ability. However, beyond that, there is no reason for our hearts to be worried or anxious, regardless of the circumstances we face. Our responsibility is to take action within our capacity, such as finding a kind knowledgeable teacher for our children, providing them with the necessary tools for learning, and emphasizing the importance of knowledge. After that, we should trust in Allah’s will and accept whatever outcome He decrees.

12.2 Prioritize Allah’s Pleasure and Find Peace in the Face of Illness

When faced with illness, it is crucial not to succumb to worry and anxiety. After seeking appropriate treatment, making necessary plans, and exerting efforts, we must leave the rest to Allah. In these matters, Allah is not displeased; it is the only concern worthy of worry. The focus should be on understanding if our actions have caused displeasure and disobedience to Allah. Apart from this, there should be no difficulty for a believer. In our lives, we often prioritize numerous worries while neglecting the essential concern—the displeasure of Allah. It is peculiar that we become preoccupied with various stressors but fail to prioritize Allah’s pleasure. Instead, we must recognize that seeking His pleasure should be our primary concern. We should not overlook His displeasure while allowing other worries to consume us. Let us redirect our focus and prioritize the displeasure of Allah over everything else. Amidst life’s burdens, our primary worry should be staying on the right path and avoiding actions that displease Him. May Allah bestow upon us unwavering faith and profound understanding of religion, so that our sole concern becomes maintaining His pleasure. May we seek His mercy in every aspect of our lives.

12.3 Embrace a Mindset Free from Worries and Attain Tranquility

The Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) emphasized that Muslims should not allow worries to trouble them. A true Muslim should navigate their life in the right direction, devoid of disturbances. By rectifying their mindset, a Muslim can liberate themselves from the concerns and anxieties of this world. According to the Prophet (ﷺ), Allah has assured that those who prioritize the hereafter will find relief from the worries and anxieties of this worldly life. Hakeemul Ummat Ashraf Ali Thanvi (Raheemahullah) further elaborated that one engrossed in the worries and sorrows of this world will hardly feel any concern for the hereafter. Allah does not allow these two concerns to coexist. One's focus can only be directed either towards worldly worries or concern for the hereafter; they cannot coexist simultaneously. It is important to recognize the significant difference between these two types of worries. One type brings a coolness and serenity to the heart, like running a heater in cold weather. Worries for the hereafter offer solace and contentment without restlessness or uneasiness. On the other hand, the other type induces anxiety and distress, like running a heater in hot weather, causing discomfort and restlessness. Both are sorrows, yet their effects differ greatly. Worries for the hereafter bring pleasure and contentment without restlessness or uneasiness. On the contrary, burdensome worldly worries resemble sitting over a fire on scorching summer days. May Allah grant us all the correct understanding of our religion, enabling us to embrace a mindset free from worries. Let us heed the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and focus on the hereafter, finding tranquility and relief from the concerns of this world. May we find pleasure in our concerns for the hereafter and avoid becoming burdened with worldly worries. May Allah protect us from such distress, allowing us to lead a serene and peaceful life.

-Maulana Abdus Sattar (damat barakatuhum)

Tarbiati Majlis 26/02/2023

13. Empowering Approaches to Attain Contentment

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

13.1 Consequences of Ignoring Wise Counsel

Ya ay yuhan nasu inna wadal lahi haq qun fala tagur rannakumul hayatud dunya wa la yagur ran nakum bil lahil garur. Al Quran-35:5

O men! Certainly the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver deceive you about Allah.

A boatman docks his boat on an island, advising the passengers to disembark and fulfill their needs but to return promptly due to the island's inherent dangers. Some individuals wisely heed his words, making use of what they need on the island and quickly returning to the boat, securing comfortable and spacious seating. However, there are others whose minds become absorbed in the

island's allure, completely forgetting the boatman's warning. Later, they regain consciousness of his cautionary words and hastily rush back to the shore, hoping to board the boat. Unfortunately, they only manage to secure cramped and undesirable places. Lost in their infatuation with the island, they collect stones and cut down trees, disregarding the boatman's advice. As a result, they find limited space in the boat upon their return, burdened by the possessions they gathered. This burden brings them discomfort and pain throughout their journey. Additionally, some individuals become so captivated by the island's beauty that they arrive at the shore only to find the boat has already departed, leaving them stranded. Tragically, these individuals become prey for ravenous animals, their fate sealed by their decision to remain on the island.

13.2 Remember the True Destination

Allah ﷻ is saying:

Ya ay yuhan nasu inna wadal lahi haq qun fala tagur rannakumul hayatud dunya

O men! Certainly, the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you.

Allah ﷻ addresses humanity, emphasizing the truth of His promise. He cautions against being deceived by the fleeting nature of this worldly life. We have been granted a temporary sojourn on this island of the world. Some are fortunate to recognize this, taking only what is necessary from this temporary abode and embarking on their journey towards the ultimate destination. Their focus remains fixed on the destination, content with the essentials for sustenance, clothing, and shelter. Others, however, forget the words of Allah ﷻ, neglecting the reality of His promise. Nevertheless, even those who remember later in life, at the age of fifty, sixty, or seventy, and hurriedly turn towards their true purpose as travelers, are blessed. They too will find a place in the boat. Yet, there are those who become deeply entangled and infatuated with the allure of this worldly life. They desire it to be their permanent abode, accumulating possessions and luxuries. They burden themselves with material possessions, causing physical ailments, mental distress, and sleepless nights. Their lives become heavy, lacking peace and tranquility both day and night. Some are oblivious, completely unaware of their true direction and purpose. Allah ﷻ warns us not to lose ourselves in the captivating attractions of this temporary abode. It suffices to take what is important and necessary from this world, always keeping our faces turned towards the ultimate destination.

1.1 Recognize the Transient Nature of the World and Focus on the Eternal Home

Just as a man living in a rented house cannot fulfill all his desires, as the owner can evict him at any time, so too should a Muslim recognize that this worldly life is temporary and that we are mere trustees here. It is those who seek to fulfill all their desires in this world who consider it their permanent abode. However, it is important to remember that our true home, Jannatul Firdaus, is to be inherited from Allah ﷻ. In it, we shall find all that our souls desire. Alladheena yarithoonal fir'daus. Allah ﷻ will make you inherit that house, the jannatul firdaus. Walakum feeha maa tashtahee anfusukum. Therein ye shall have all that your souls shall desire. Therefore, it is crucial to realize that the Master can send us away at any moment. With this understanding, why would one invest in expensive flooring, lavish tiles, or construct grand buildings, when we are but temporary guests? There was a time when Muslims firmly believed that this world is a rented

place, and that the Master of the universe could dismiss them from it at any time. Just as a water bubble cannot endure, our stay in this dunya is similarly fleeting. We are certain about the duration of our stay in a waiting room, yet we lack the same conviction regarding our stay in this temporary world. Ignorant Muslims seek to fulfill all their desires in this world, their insatiable wishes never-ending. But would a person who knows their impending death wish for such things? Would a person living in a rented house think in such a manner? Imagine a man given a house on rent for a month, who then proceeds to construct an additional floor, attach expensive tiles, and make extravagant modifications. Would we not question his sanity? What greater folly is there than attempting to fulfill all our desires in this temporary world when we are destined to depart from it?

13.3 The Clash of Human Whims

A husband and wife engage in a heated argument, each complaining about unfulfilled desires. However, it is not a clash between two individuals, but rather a clash between the personal desires of each. The whims of one person collide with the whims of another. Long-term goals and aspirations clash with the aspirations of others. This clash permeates the entire world, where desires seem insatiable for fathers, sons, daughters, and mothers alike. Man strives to fulfill all desires within the confines of his temporary abode. Yet, one who invests in a rented house is considered foolish. Spending money on someone else's property is seen as lacking intelligence. Considering this, what can be said about those who do not know when they will depart from this dunya? Today they are among the living, but tomorrow they may join the ranks of the deceased. Is there anything more foolish than this? Nevertheless, the world revolves around this very foolishness. In fact, those who immerse themselves in it and spend the most in this world are deemed the most intelligent, as everyone becomes entangled in this cycle of foolish pursuits.

13.4 Attain Contentment through the Love of the Hereafter

May Allah ﷻ bestow upon us the true faith in the hereafter, which brings about contentment. Those whose focus is on the akhirah are safeguarded from the detrimental diseases of greed, desire, envy, and covetousness. They are shielded from the fire of these ailments and instead acquire the wealth of satisfaction and contentment. They believe that whatever they possess is more than enough. Even if they have two meals a day or a few outfits for the entire year, they consider it an abundance, knowing that their time in this world is temporary. Living a peaceful and content life stems from fixing one's gaze upon the hereafter. Such individuals are like those who comprehend the words of the boatman, gathering only necessary possessions before embarking on the journey. They understand that a lighter load leads to a smoother journey. Their lives are enriched by a modest home, a humble means of transportation, and a modest status. These elements facilitate an easier journey through life.

Unfortunately, desires and wishes have become exaggerated, intertwining with perceived necessities. Look at men and women; their desires seem endless, and their wishes remain unfulfilled. Such preoccupations entrap the heart in worldly matters. When the heart becomes engrossed in worldly love, the love of Allah ﷻ becomes prohibited. Just as water and fire cannot coexist in the same vessel, the love of the world and the love of Allah ﷻ cannot reside within a

heart simultaneously, as they are inherently different. Today, we are afflicted with this poisonous love for the dunya, suffering from this ailment. May Allah ﷻ guide us towards a deeper love for the hereafter and protect us from the allure of worldly attachments.

13.5 Find Contentment and Overcome Endless Desires

The insatiable nature of human desires is fueled by a relentless pursuit of status and the belief that acquiring more will bring fulfillment. However, this mindset is ignorant, akin to adding dry grass to a fire. Will the fire extinguish or intensify? The flames of desire grow stronger with each quest for wealth, never subsiding. To quell this fire, sprinkle the water of contentment upon it, not more wealth. Develop the perspective of the hereafter, for Allah ﷻ warns us not to be deceived by the fleeting nature of this worldly life. Allah ﷻ reminds us not to envy the temporary enjoyments granted to the disbelievers. They are given the splendor of this world to test them, placing them in trials. *wa laa tamuddanna a'ynayka elaa maa matta'naa behi*. Do not strain your eyes towards that which we have given to those Kuffar. *azwaa'jam minhum zahratal hayaatid dunyaa, le naftenahum feehe*. We have given for enjoyment to parties (wedded pairs) of them, the splendor of the life of this world, so that we may try them in it. However, the allure of materialistic pleasures has caused us to forget the akhirah.

When one neglects thoughts of the hereafter, desires become endless, expectations become inflated, and goals become long-term. Conversely, remembrance of the akhirah bestows a life of contentment, where one feels blessed with what they possess. Today, neither men nor women find contentment or satisfaction. Both demands more, perpetuating a cycle of longing. Questions of “What have you done for me?” arise, devoid of patience, gratitude, and an end to desires. A beautiful life awaits those who keep the hereafter in their focus, with Allah ﷻ granting them mastery over their desires. In Jannah (Paradise), Allah ﷻ will fulfill their every wish and desire. *Alladheena yarithoonal fir'daus*. Allah ﷻ will say, “Today is the day where you can fulfill all your desires and wishes.” However, we must remember that this world is not the final abode, and we must depart from it.

13.6 From Kingdom to Spirituality: Ibrahim Ibn Adham's Awakening

The story of Ibrahim ibn Adham (RA) serves as a powerful reminder of the transient nature of worldly life. When a stranger questioned Ibrahim about the previous inhabitants of his house, he realized that they had all passed away, emphasizing the fleeting nature of human existence. The stranger enlightened Ibrahim, explaining that those who come and go in this manner are travelers. This profound lesson deeply impacted Ibrahim, leading him to renounce his kingdom and dedicate himself to the path of Allah ﷻ, ultimately becoming a revered saint.

Aye sarai dahr musaafiron, ba khuda ye kisi ka makaan naheen,

jo the muqem kal yahaan, aaj kaheen un ka nishaan naheen

O the travelers of the temporary world, by Allah, this is not anyone's house

Those who were residing here yesterday, today nowhere is their sign.

These lines beautifully capture the essence of this realization. They remind us that we are mere travelers in this temporary world, and no one truly owns anything here. Those who resided yesterday have left no trace today. Every soul eventually returns to the earth, leaving behind their worldly abode.

13.7 Remember Death, A Powerful Admonisher

The one who was once vigilant enough to keep a fly away from his cheeks is now consumed by worms. The eyes that sparkled with life are now feasted upon by insects. The once wicked thoughts that originated from the brain, possessing traits of Pharaoh, are now disintegrating beneath the earth. How many individuals like this exist, who neglected their own well-being in this temporary world? Despite their esteemed names and statuses, where have they all gone now? Everything is destined to perish, a scene witnessed throughout time. O respected ones! The greatest admonisher and catalyst for change in the lives of Muslims is a true remembrance of the Hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ stated that he left behind two admonishers: the speaking one, the Quran, and the silent one, death. Death serves as a powerful admonisher. May Allah ﷻ assist us all in deriving lessons from it.

13.8 The Lost Destination

Imagine a person embarking on a journey to perform Hajj, riding on an animal. Along the way, he stops at a field to feed his animal, becoming so engrossed in this task that he completely forgets about his intended destination. Wouldn't one consider him a fool? Similarly, Allah (ﷻ) has provided us with this body as a means to reach our ultimate destination, but instead, we become overly preoccupied with its nourishment, appearance, and comfort. We avoid any blemishes on our faces, resist any changes in our beauty, and strive for flawlessness in our attire and comfort. In this attachment to our physical existence, we forget the true purpose of life. How foolish is such a person and what kind of life is this? We have become so fixated on the means of transportation that we have lost sight of the destination itself. O honorable ones! The real essence of life lies in the remembrance of the hereafter. Those fortunate enough to attain this remembrance are granted true contentment by Allah (ﷻ), and their desires become subdued. Consequently, conflicts and disputes driven by worldly desires, whether between spouses or family members, no longer arise, as they are merely consequences of being infatuated with this temporal world and neglecting the eternal hereafter

There are three signs of firm belief in the hereafter:

1. Contentment

A person who is focused on the hereafter will never sever relationships, as they strive to foster unity. Any form of severance is solely for the sake of Allah (ﷻ), and they never engage in conflicts driven by desires. The root cause of most conflicts in today's world is the clash of immense desires and wishes. However, those destined to remember the hereafter are granted a life of contentment by Allah (ﷻ). They remain constantly satisfied and happy, regardless of their living conditions. Whether residing in a humble hut or having only one modest meal a day, their contentment endures, recognizing the temporary nature of this world. They are unconcerned with the opinions and taunts

of others, as their focus lies beyond the judgment of society and their own personal status. This freedom from fear allows them to avoid becoming anxious and sleepless, unlike those who constantly worry about people's opinions. Those who do not embrace the remembrance of the hereafter often lack true contentment. Thus, the greatest sign of a person's belief in the hereafter is the presence of enduring contentment in their life.

2. Immediate Repentance

Another sign of a person's firm belief in the hereafter is their immediate inclination towards repentance. Recognizing the unpredictability of the start of the afterlife, they do not procrastinate repentance by engaging in forbidden activities, thinking they can repent later. Such behavior is characteristic of those who are heedless of the hereafter or possess weak faith in its reality. However, once a person firmly believes in the hereafter, they swiftly turn to Allah (ﷻ) in repentance without delay. They do not rationalize committing multiple sins, intending to abandon only one at a time. Rather, they repent daily and perform additional voluntary prayers, beseeching Allah (ﷻ) for forgiveness and seeking deliverance from their transgressions. When one possesses a steadfast belief in the hereafter, they are granted the opportunity and inclination to repent promptly. Conversely, individuals with weak faith often postpone their repentance, running the risk of passing away without seeking forgiveness from Allah (ﷻ).

3. Fervor in Righteous Deeds

An akhirat-oriented individual experiences not mere submission but a strong desire towards performing righteous deeds. When one realizes the immense rewards that await their efforts, enthusiasm and joy naturally accompany their acts of worship. The anticipation of receiving divine recognition and recompense in the presence of others fuels their devotion. Conversely, when faith in the hereafter weakens, acts of worship tend to fade from one's life, and even if performed, they are carried out with laziness and indifference. As Allah (ﷻ) states, "And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily" (Quran 4:142). Either the burden of obligatory worship weighs them down, or they neglect it altogether. The absence of enthusiasm, desire, and eagerness signifies a weakened belief in the hereafter.

Hence, these three signs – contentment, immediate repentance, and fervor in righteous deeds – arise when an individual develops a firm belief in the hereafter.

13.9 Embrace Consciousness of the Hereafter and Find a Path to a Joyous Life

Dear honorable ones, it is imperative that we free ourselves from the prevailing ailment of heedlessness towards the life after death. We must cultivate constant awareness and mindfulness of that eternal existence. By directing our attention and reverence towards the hereafter, we will truly experience the joys of this life. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to remind his followers, "O people! Remember the hereafter abundantly." It is through this remembrance that worldly desires and long-term goals lose their hold over us. Aisha (RA), our beloved mother, once asked the Prophet ﷺ if anyone other than martyrs would join their ranks on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "O Aisha! Whoever remembers the hereafter at least twenty times a day and night, Allah will gather them among the martyrs." Such is the wealth found in remembering

death. It beautifies the entirety of life, instilling sincerity in worship, nurturing good conduct, prioritizing lawful means, speaking the truth, and embodying the essence of humanity. It fosters qualities such as overlooking the faults of others, forgiveness, anger control, patience, tolerance, self-reflection, and the pursuit of beauty in life. Let us, therefore, abundantly remember death and embrace a consciousness of the hereafter for a joyous and fulfilling existence.

13.10 How to remember death?

To remember death, contemplate the fate of those close to you who have passed away. Ponder where they have gone, envision their once beautiful faces, recall their unfulfilled wishes and aspirations, and contemplate the transient nature of their wealth. Consider where they are now and imagine the scenes unfolding beneath the earth, where worms and insects surround them. Reflect upon the potential hardships and loneliness they may face in the darkness of the grave. Additionally, think of those who departed from this world suddenly, reminding yourself of the unpredictability of death. Realize that this life is temporary and bound by time. Therefore, dear honorable ones, for the sake of Allah (ﷻ), lead a simple, frugal, and contented life in this world. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) taught us that the chosen servants of Allah (ﷻ) do not indulge in luxury. When one becomes captivated by worldly pleasures, they forget about the hereafter. Engaging solely in the pursuit of desires, they become consumed with joy, hard work, and the relentless quest for more, oblivious to the fact that they are destined for another abode.

13.11 Awaken to the Concerns of the Hereafter

The Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) taught us that the one who wakes up with concerns about this world will have a restless heart throughout the day. Conversely, the one who wakes up with concerns about the hereafter will find contentment and independence from the worldly distractions. However, how many people today awaken with the worries of the akhirah? Most individuals go to sleep preoccupied with worldly matters and wake up with the same concerns. Their worries revolve around their children's success, their spouse's well-being, and their own financial stability. Rarely do they express concern about their daughter's modesty, their son's moral upbringing, or the halal means of sustenance. Instead, we often hear people seeking solutions and prayers for their businesses, financial setbacks, and material gains. The focus on the worldly aspects overshadows the importance of nurturing an akhirah-oriented household and the well-being of one's family in the Hereafter. O honorable ones! Let us remember that true life lies in seeking the comfort of the Hereafter, as proclaimed in the supplication: "O Allah! There is no comfort, but the comfort of the Hereafter (Allahumma la aisha illa aishul aakhirah)."

13.12 Embrace the Uncertainty and Journey towards Allah

None of us knows when our journey in this world will come to an end. As night falls, we are among the living, but who can predict how many will join the ranks of the deceased by the next day? How many individuals wake up in the morning among the living, only to find themselves lying beneath the earth by nightfall? Death does not wait; it can come suddenly, while one sleeps or even while engaged in daily activities. Such is the nature of life, and we must be prepared to return to Allah ﷻ at any moment. Let us lead lives of simplicity and lightness, refraining from excessive worldly

pursuits, and remaining cautious in our actions, always mindful that we will ultimately be accountable to Allah ﷻ. May we strive to keep our hearts pure, free from jealousy, animosity, and ill-will towards others. Let us also keep our bodies and limbs clean from the contamination of sins, so that when we are presented before Allah ﷻ, we may stand victorious and without shame. We cannot know when we will face our Lord but let us pray that Allah ﷻ grants us true remembrance and concern for the akhirah. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)

14. The Painful Consequences of Sins and its Remedy

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

14.1 The Greatness of Allah, the Exalted

Nothing in this universe occurs by chance but rather follows a divine code of law. Even the smallest movement on Earth, the falling of a leaf from a tree, or the advancement of a single drop in the ocean, all seek permission from Allah ﷻ. The blowing of warm and cold winds is commanded by Allah ﷻ. Every event, whether it is related to health, sudden illness, constraints in sustenance, moments of happiness or sadness, honor or humiliation, experiencing prosperity in the morning and poverty in the evening, being healthy in the morning and falling ill in the evening, and so forth, all adhere to the divine law of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ not only created this universe but also governs its affairs. Everything happens solely by His ﷻ command, and nothing is beyond His ﷻ control. His ﷻ power and dominion are absolute, and His ﷻ command prevails. He ﷻ acts according to His ﷻ will, whenever and wherever He ﷻ desires, and no one can impede His ﷻ command. He ﷻ is the ultimate ruler of all. When He ﷻ decrees something, there is no creature in the heavens or on Earth that can prevent it. He ﷻ alone is the King of both the heavens and the Earth.

14.2 A ruler is the Mirror of His Nation's Deeds

Allah ﷻ has established His law, as He ﷻ says, "If you remember Me, I will remember you," and "If you adhere to My laws, I will take care of you." Allah ﷻ is explaining His ﷻ law here. Musa (AS) once asked Allah ﷻ, "O Lord, You are in the heavens and I am on the earth. How will I know if You are angry with me?" Allah ﷻ replied, "When My righteous slaves become your rulers and take care of your affairs, know that I am pleased with you. And when the worst and tyrant slaves take care of your affairs, know that I am angry with you." The ruler of a nation reflects the deeds of that nation. If you want to see the deeds of people, just look at their rulers, their caretakers, for you can gauge how much their deeds have deviated from righteousness. You can see your life reflected in the actions of those who are in charge of you.

14.3 Be Warned Oh Muslims!

Events upon events come your way, bringing troubles and worries on one side while your honor is in danger on the other. This is a clear sign from Allah ﷻ that His mercy is turning away from you and the Lord ﷻ is withholding His help. Nothing happens by coincidence. A hadith states that when Allah ﷻ wishes good for a nation, He ﷻ grants them a righteous ruler and blesses the most generous among them with wealth. However, if Allah ﷻ wishes evil for a nation, foolish leaders will govern them and misers will hoard wealth. Whatever unfolds is the work of Allah ﷻ, and His authority is absolute. Hazrat Fuzail bin Ayaz (RA) relates that Allah ﷻ sent revelations to some Prophets (AS), saying, "When the people who recognize Me and believe in Me begin to disobey Me, I will punish them by subjecting them to tyrant rulers who do not even acknowledge Me." Allah ﷻ has established a rule by which this world operates. It is certain that if we touch an ember, our hand will burn, and if we hold an ice cube, our hand will become cold. There is always a cause and effect. Similarly, when there is disobedience to Allah ﷻ, there will be consequences. When shameful acts become normalized, calamities will increase. The incidents of bomb blasts, bus accidents, and other tragedies we hear about do not occur randomly. When Allah's ﷻ mercy turns away from us, we will witness destruction from all directions.

14.4 Evil upon evil

The Prophet ﷺ once foretold about the consequences that when certain acts become prevalent in society, calamities will befall them from Allah ﷻ, just like a chain of beads being severed. Destruction will descend upon the society and countries, similar to the scattering of beads. This will occur when people misuse public funds for personal gain, treat others' wealth as their own, and spend it as they please. Zakat will be perceived as a burden or tax, wives will be obeyed while mothers are neglected, friends will be cherished and considered well-wishers, and fathers will be hated and viewed as enemies. Which of these conditions does not exist in our society? The situation does not improve on its own. When societies become immersed in sinful acts, when music echoes from homes, and when streets and markets are filled with obscene imagery, Allah ﷻ turns away His mercy from that society. When haram income enters households and people take pride in usury, the Lord ﷻ turns away His mercy. When immorality and interest become widespread in a society, Allah ﷻ decrees their destruction. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ clearly outlined the causes of destruction, warning us that if we engage in such acts, we will face corresponding consequences. If our lives still reflect the same conditions, our situation will only worsen. The hadith continues, addressing the issue of raised voices in mosques, signifying the loss of reverence for Allah ﷻ. We hear distressing news of people dying in accidents, but how many of us have purged our homes of music and sin? How many of us have shed tears of remorse and repentance for our sins? Undoubtedly, the situation will deteriorate day by day. When music permeates every aspect of life, when men and women work together in offices, markets, and factories, how can we expect Allah's ﷻ mercy to turn towards us?

14.5 The Significance of Having Reverence for Allah ﷻ

When an entire society becomes engulfed in sins, oppressors will rise one after another, leaving no hope for goodness. Allah ﷻ will unveil the hearts of individuals and select those who align with the oppressors as their leaders and guides. Fear will encompass every aspect of life, with no

security for one's life, wealth, or honor. Yet, despite this, people remain unwilling to abandon their sins and protect themselves. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ instructed us to safeguard our wealth by paying Zakat and to embrace Taqwa (God-consciousness), so that Allah ﷻ may rescue us from calamities and make our paths easy. "And whoever fears Allah, He will make a way out for him" (Quran 65:2). Remove all disobedience to Allah ﷻ from your life, and Allah ﷻ will facilitate your journey. The Prophet ﷺ further warned about the increasing consumption of alcohol. The new generation takes immense pleasure in intoxicants. There are various forms of intoxication, such as cigarettes, betel leaf products, and many others. However, the worst addiction is alcohol, which is incredibly challenging to give up. In Arabian culture, alcohol was deeply ingrained to the extent that there were around 200 different names for it in the Arabic language. It had different names based on the time of consumption, whether in the morning or evening, and whether mixed with water or other substances. Unfortunately, the societal norms had become so ingrained that teaching a child to drink alcohol was considered one of the initial rites of passage into adulthood. However, when the Prophet ﷺ instilled the concerns of the Hereafter and the reverence for Allah ﷻ in the hearts of Muslims, a remarkable transformation occurred. When the prohibition of alcohol was announced, pots of alcohol were broken, glasses halfway to the mouth were discarded, and alcohol flowed through the streets of Madinah like rainwater. The people did not dare to consume alcohol again, such was the profound impact of faith and reverence for Allah ﷻ in their hearts.

14.6 Embrace Courage

O honorable ones! When you possess courage, you have the ability to relinquish any sin. I swear by Allah ﷻ, if you were incapable of abandoning sins, Allah ﷻ would not have commanded you to do so. It is our lack of courage that has led us astray. Allow me to share a story from the time of Khalifa Harun Rashid: A man presented himself in the court of the Khalifa to display his exceptional skill, hoping to receive a reward. The man placed a needle on the ground and, from a distance, managed to thread it with a piece of thread. Such an act requires great practice and effort. Khalifa Harun Rashid was astounded and acknowledged the man's remarkable skill by awarding him ten gold coins. However, he also ordered that the man be struck on the head with shoes ten times. Perplexed, the man questioned the reasoning behind the beatings. Khalifa Harun Rashid explained that while the man had demonstrated an extraordinary skill for which he received the gold coins, had he exerted the same efforts to seek goodness in both this world and the Hereafter, he would have benefited even more. The truth is, when a person summons the courage within themselves, they can accomplish incredible feats. Humans have built paths through air, conquered seas, and conquered mountains. Allah ﷻ has bestowed countless abilities upon us, and all that is required is the courage to act. It is solely due to our lack of courage that giving up sins may appear impossible. However, with courage, one can purify their household from sins and pave the way towards righteousness.

14.7 Our Wretched State

The Prophet ﷺ foretold that a time would come when the most wretched and corrupt individuals would rise to leadership positions in the nation. Gender difference would become blurred, with women imitating men and men imitating women. The distinction between a woman and a man is becoming increasingly difficult to discern. Their clothing is becoming tighter and tighter, contrary to the modesty encouraged by Islam. Even men are prohibited from wearing tight clothes that reveal the shape of their bodies, yet unfortunately, some women have adopted this practice. Our

beloved Prophet ﷺ once prophesied that a time would come when a woman would be dressed but still appear naked. Although unimaginable during his ﷺ time, the Prophet ﷺ possessed divine insight. Women now wear very revealing and tight clothing that exposes their bodies. Such women are immersed in their own filthiness and draw attention to their immodesty. They tie their hair in a conspicuous manner on top of their heads. These women will be deprived of the scent of paradise, even when it is fragrant for miles and miles. O honorable ones! The deplorable state of our households, society, and country did not occur by chance; there is a divine decree behind it. As you sow, so shall you reap. Men are adorning themselves with earrings and bracelets to the point where it becomes difficult to discern their gender. People are engaging in usury. How is it possible to engage in usury and expect peace? Can anyone live in tranquility while waging war against Allah ﷻ? If you persist in practicing usury, then be prepared to enter the battlefield against Allah ﷻ. By openly declaring war against Allah ﷻ, you display audacity. When Allah ﷻ proclaims war against anyone, how can they be saved from destruction?

14.8 The Keys to Salvation for Our Ummah

O honorable ones! Let us not only consider the worldly causes that lead to destruction, but also pay attention to the warnings of Allah's ﷻ Prophet ﷺ. The hadith states that in the later generations of this Muslim ummah, there will be those who speak ill of the earlier generations. Today, the honor and respect of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ are disregarded, and even the honor and respect of the Prophets (AS) are not safeguarded. People freely express their wishes, thoughts, and opinions without being held accountable. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ prophesied that when our ummah reaches this lowest state, the signs of Allah ﷻ will manifest, and we will witness severe trials and tribulations from every direction. However, the Prophet ﷺ also taught us that as long as two things exist in my ummah, they will be protected. Firstly, the presence of the Prophet ﷺ himself, as long as he ﷺ is alive, calamities will not befall the Muslims. Secondly, as long as people continue seeking Allah's ﷻ forgiveness, calamities will be averted. Committing sins in itself is a grave matter, but taking pride in sins is even worse as it openly demonstrates enmity towards Allah ﷻ. If you present a torn currency note to a bank, it may be replaced with a new one. However, if you intentionally tear a note in front of a bank officer, will they provide you with a new one? No, they will register a case against you. Feeling remorseful before a court is one thing, but displaying pride is an act of dishonoring the court.

14.9 Committing Sins Openly and Our Lament

Today, sins are no longer committed in secret, but rather openly proclaimed and embraced. Our Prophet ﷺ made it clear that the ummah will be forgiven for sins committed in secrecy, but sins committed openly distance one from Allah's mercy and forgiveness. However, it is never too late to seek repentance and turn to Allah ﷻ with sincere remorse. When we observe the causes of our destruction as outlined by our beloved Prophet ﷺ in our homes, marriage ceremonies, deaths, markets, and throughout society, we must acknowledge our own responsibility. We cannot simply lament our ruin while actively engaging in the very actions that lead to our downfall. It is akin to someone suffering from dysentery who, instead of seeking treatment to cure it, takes medicine that worsens the condition, all the while complaining about their illness. Such behavior is irrational and foolish. The man stubbornly clings to lying, usury, and filth in his home, showing no willingness to abandon these destructive habits. He neglects his Fajr Salah and fails to make any meaningful changes. Yet, he continues to lament his miserable condition.

14.10 The Three Great Blessings of Seeking Forgiveness

Allah ﷻ does not deprive His ﷻ slave of blessings until the slave misuses those blessings to disobey Him ﷻ. We are in dire need of protection, and our beloved Prophet ﷺ has advised us to develop the habit of seeking forgiveness. It is important to genuinely regret our sinful lives, as istighfaar (seeking forgiveness) is not merely a matter of words, but should stem from a remorseful heart. Seeking forgiveness brings three great blessings in this world, as stated by the truthful Prophet ﷺ. The first blessing is that Allah ﷻ will alleviate us from every difficulty, the second is that He ﷻ will alleviate our grief, and the third is that He ﷻ will open doors of provisions beyond our imagination. Do we not worry about the well-being of our family, our children, our businesses, and the security of our honor and lives? Consider how easily we have been provided with a guidance to attain peace, and that too from the Prophet ﷺ of Allah ﷻ, who speaks only what Allah ﷻ inspires him ﷺ. And remember that when Allah ﷻ speaks, His ﷻ power is behind His ﷻ words. The treasure of Allah ﷻ is abundant, and even today it contains peace, tranquility, provisions, love among family members, and everything that we need. There is no shortage or deficiency in His ﷻ treasures.

Allah ﷻ possesses the treasures of both worlds, and it is our failure to receive them from Him ﷻ. The deficiency lies within us, as we have closed the doors of Allah's ﷻ mercy through our behavior. Nothing happens coincidentally, but everything occurs according to the divine law of Allah ﷻ. I urge all men, women, the rich, and the poor come to terms with istighfaar (seeking forgiveness), as it is the pathway to attaining peace. If you seek security and peace, engage in more istighfaar. The Companions once asked the Prophet ﷺ if Allah ﷻ would send calamities even upon the righteous people. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, when the sinners become numerous, then Allah ﷻ will send punishment upon all the people. However, as for the righteous people, Allah ﷻ will recompensate them in the hereafter."

14.11 Take Courage and Advance Towards Allah, the Exalted

If a large gathering of people seeks forgiveness from Allah ﷻ, there is a possibility that Allah's ﷻ anger will subside, and His ﷻ mercy will be inclined towards us. It requires two things: courage and turning towards Allah ﷻ. Utilize whatever courage you possess to cleanse yourself from sins. Continuously seek Allah's ﷻ assistance and earnestly supplicate, saying, "O Allah! I am weak and consistently fall prey to my desires and Satan. Assist me, O Allah! I worship only You, and without Your help, I am incapable. If You aid me, I will be able to worship You, and if You do not assist me, I will be helpless." He ﷻ is exceedingly benevolent, and when someone turns to Him, His mercy envelops them ardently, and He ﷻ takes care of them. Just as a toddler perseveres and stumbles frequently while striving to reach their mother, there comes a time when the mother comes forward and embraces the child in her arms. Similarly, even if we stumble in our earnest pursuit of reaching Allah ﷻ, with true determination, inshaAllah, Allah's ﷻ mercy will embrace us and provide us with care. Advance towards Allah ﷻ with unwavering courage.

O honorable ones! Amid trials and tribulations, everyone is filled with worry and restlessness. For the sake of Allah ﷻ, let us adopt the path to peace as prescribed by the Prophet ﷺ. Instead of wasting time reading news reports that only increase our anxiety, let us focus on what the Prophet ﷺ has instructed us to do: turning towards righteous deeds. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ would observe his ﷺ immediate response whenever there was even a slight change in the

environment, such as strong winds or heavy rainfall. He ﷺ would rush to the Mosque, seeking closeness to Allah ﷻ and remaining devoted to His doorstep. This is the honor of a believer that when faced with distressing circumstances, they draw near to Allah ﷻ, and in turn, their condition becomes a source of mercy for them. If we embrace such a lifestyle, there is hope that Allah ﷻ will improve our condition, ease our path, and alleviate every difficulty we face. May Allah ﷻ assist us all in implementing what we hear, write, and read. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)

15. **Take yourself into account before you are taken into account!**

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Always remember that Allah ﷻ is watching us with every breath we take. He ﷻ is ever-present, wherever we may be. Whether we are in a group of three, with Allah ﷻ as the fourth, or in a group of four, with Allah ﷻ as the fifth, He ﷻ is always with us. Regardless of our numbers, Allah ﷻ is always present with us. Just as we would behave respectfully and modestly in the presence of an elder brother, we should maintain that same sense of modesty and respect before Allah ﷻ. If we possess modesty, shyness, and respect, we will refrain from engaging in anything indecent or cheap in the presence of our parents. The more a believer possesses modesty and reverence for Allah ﷻ, the more protected they will be. While parents may sometimes miss observing our actions, Allah ﷻ never misses a thing. Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to advise, "Hold yourself accountable before you are held accountable, and evaluate your deeds before they are evaluated." Prepare yourself for the most significant transaction—nothing will be hidden, and even the secrets within our hearts will be revealed. Therefore, fear Allah ﷻ in matters of religion, place your hope solely in Him ﷻ for all your affairs, and maintain patience during times of difficulty.

Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say that the only thing to fear is our sins. If Muslims would fear their sins as much as they fear the loss of their material possessions, then SubhanAllah, how well they would be protected! The Prophet ﷺ said that protecting oneself from sins is like having a fortress and a shield of protection. As long as one avoids disobedience to Allah ﷻ, the shield remains strong, and they remain protected. The real thing to fear is the disobedience of Allah ﷻ, and any deficiency in the obedience creates a hole in the shield, through which something may be lost. Save yourself from sins with the same vigilance you have in protecting yourself and your children from poisonous creatures and fire. You protect yourself from these dangers because you know they are to be feared. Hence, Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say that if there is anything to be feared more than these things, it is sins.

Ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo qoo anfusakum waahleekum naran- Save yourselves and your families from the Fire. We cannot bear to see anyone jumping into a fire, nor would we allow our children to do so. Then why should we allow ourselves to jump into the fire of sins? Protect

yourself from a sinful life. Allatee tattaliAAu AAala al'afidati-The Fire of Hell will leap up to the hearts. The fire of sins is like the fire of Hell, reaching up to the hearts, and its effects can be felt in this world. The fire of sins fills the heart with distress, and even turning on the bed brings no comfort. So, fear sins. May Allah grant us the ability to act upon what we hear, read, and preach. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (Damat Barakatuhum)
Morning Dars

16. **Be Content with Allah's Divine Plan and Reap the Benefits**

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

There are numerous blessings concealed in the events that occur to humans, which are beyond their control. Falling sick, having a child facing trials, or having only daughters instead of sons are all circumstances that are beyond one's control. There are countless blessings hidden in the events that befall humans, which are beyond their control. "Oh Allah, I acknowledge that I have no control over this situation, and I trust that it is all part of Your divine plan. You are the All-Wise and All-Knowing." When a mother turns away from her child and pushes him outside the door despite his cries, people still believe that the mother is acting in the child's best interests by disciplining him. Allah ﷻ is more beneficiary than the mothers. There are only blessings in His divine plan.

At times, you may cry over the loss of a son, and at other times, you may cry over the loss of a daughter. But if you believe that it is Allah ﷻ's divine plan, guided by His wisdom and knowledge, and that there are countless blessings within it, you will find the courage to face it. In situations that are beyond our control, there may be countless benefits or rewards that we cannot perceive at first. May Allah ﷻ protect us from missing out on these gains in such circumstances.

It is possible for someone to encounter hardship and struggle, yet still be unable to reap the rewards or benefits that could come from it when in fact that's the season of earning. If a person encounters an unpleasant event, they can derive benefit from accepting Allah's decree and finding contentment in His wisdom and prudence. The rewards that come from accepting Allah's decree and finding contentment in His wisdom may far surpass those obtained through intense worship and performance of supererogatory prayers. Facing situations beyond one's control will become the season of earning and there are countless benefits in it.

Regrettably, some people who consider themselves to be pious may begin to complain about the hardships they face, despite their piety and devotion. Despite facing difficulty, such a person may lose out on potential rewards or benefits. Initially, a person may not fully understand the benefit of facing a difficult situation, but they may come to realize it in the future. May Allah ﷻ just grant us this understanding. Aameen

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Tarbiati Majlis dated 26.2.2023

17. Focus on Your Inner Self

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

17.1 Reforming the Inner Self is Indeed Difficult

The pious elders didn't focus much on outward deeds because they believed that reformation could be achieved in an instant through a mere change of intention. A person who neglects prayer can start praying within a minute, a man without a beard can begin growing one in a minute, and a drunkard can give up drinking just as quickly. Even a person engaged in sinful behavior can become pious in a minute. However, the elders emphasized that true reformation involved the purification of one's inner self, such as overcoming pride, which was a challenging task. Overcoming spiritual diseases like the love of fame, pride, jealousy, self-centeredness, resentment, and the desire for praise was a difficult process. While being in a righteous environment may inspire a person who neglects prayer to start performing the Tahajjud prayer in the Masjid al-Nabawi, it does not guarantee that their pride will easily disappear from their heart. Similarly, being in the holy city of Makkah may prompt someone to arrive at the mosque before the prayer begins, but it does not mean that they will instantaneously overcome jealousy and resentment. Ending the pursuit of fame and worldly desires is not an easy task. Therefore, although a person's external appearance can change quickly, the healing of spiritual diseases takes time as one progresses on the spiritual path. In fact, the significance of a person's outward deeds depends solely on the purity of their inner self. The cleaner the heart, the greater the weight of their external actions, and the more radiant their light. It is considered fortunate for a person to be liberated from their spiritual diseases.

A person may engage in establishing Tahajjud salah, yet still harbor resentment in their heart and possess a love for worldly things. The love for the world is not solely limited to wealth, but it also encompasses the desire for honor, fame, and praise. A prevalent issue in society today is the tendency to excessively praise individuals directly on their faces. This act is akin to harming them with a sharp knife. Even a person who may be insignificant can develop a high opinion of themselves when constantly showered with praise. In order to accomplish their objectives, people often use extravagant words to praise others, elevating their self-importance. This environment is becoming increasingly widespread. It is a disease wherein a person yearns for praise, and as a result, they are surrounded by people who offer empty flattery. Those who speak the truth and advise them for their betterment are usually not in their company. Only those who falsely praise them tend to associate with them. Therefore, our elders found it relatively easy to bring about a change in a person's outward appearance by surrounding them with a positive environment. This

change could transform someone who neglects prayer into an avid worshipper, a man without a beard into one who grows a beard, and a habitual drinker into a non-alcoholic individual. Many individuals flock to the mosque during the blessed atmosphere of Ramadan. However, attaching a person's heart to the Hereafter and detaching it from this worldly life is a much more challenging task. Acquiring the detachment from worldly possessions and developing a sincere desire for the Hereafter takes time and great effort to overcome spiritual diseases. Due to these inner afflictions, the light of external good deeds does not illuminate the heart. May Allah protect us from such trials. It is said that the disease of love for fame is difficult to recognize. Only when we hear something related to it do we realize that we are afflicted with this ailment. Understanding our pursuit of honor and fame is not a straightforward matter.

17.2 Be in a Righteous Environment

It is often said that lowering one's gaze is challenging, and if one violates this rule, they should pray 50 units of voluntary salah as a penalty. Only by being strict with oneself and imposing severe consequences can true reformation occur. Protecting one's gaze is of utmost importance. The signs of acceptance by Allah Almighty are as follows: holding correct religious beliefs, remaining steadfast in righteous actions, abstaining from sins, and detesting worldly attachments. Once, a man approached the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and asked him to show him an action that would make him beloved to Allah and the people. The Prophet (peace be upon him) responded, "Do not love this world, and you will become beloved to Allah. Do not covet what people possess, and you will become beloved to the people."

The absence of hatred for sins and the lack of attachment to Allah's obedience are signs of a hardened and rusted heart. May Allah protect us from such a state. Hatred for sins is crucial because it is only through this that one can safeguard themselves from committing sins. A highly effective way to protect oneself from falling into this state is to distance oneself from sinful environments. Even if a person refrains from committing sins, continuously being in a sinful environment can lead to a point where they no longer detest those sins. It is akin to someone living in a cowshed; over time, they become accustomed to the foul smell of cow dung. When they step out of the shed, they may even lose consciousness. Attempts to awaken them using various methods may fail, but as soon as they are presented with cow dung near their nose, they immediately wake up. Similarly, when a person becomes accustomed to a sinful environment, not only do they lose their aversion to sin, but they may even take pleasure in committing those sins. May Allah protect us from such a situation.

When a person is in a righteous environment, Allah grants them the blessings of righteousness. How many of us were unaware of our spiritual ailments until Allah sent someone with a pure heart to awaken us, making us uncomfortable with our sinful surroundings! People may claim that we lack good intentions or perception, but in reality, we have become a reflection of our environment. Therefore, the absence of hatred towards sins and the desire to perform righteous acts are signs of a hardened heart. As mentioned earlier, creating a righteous environment around us is an effective way to overcome this condition. If we are compelled to enter a sinful environment for our needs, we should strive to leave as quickly as possible. Failing to do so makes it increasingly difficult to perceive the sins as abnormal, as we become accustomed to witnessing them continuously.

17.3 Prioritize Your Health Over Voluntary Acts

It is often advised to prioritize one's health over recommended or voluntary acts. For instance, sitting in the mosque after Fajr prayer and waiting for Ishraq prayer is a voluntary act that brings reward. However, if a person's health requires them to take a daily walk, and the only feasible time for that is during this particular period, then going for a walk in a safe and healthy environment is better for them than engaging in the voluntary act. They can pray Ishraq at home instead. When there is a choice between voluntary acts and one's health, it is important to prioritize health. Taking care of one's well-being is more important than engaging in recommended acts, and going for a walk in a pleasant setting is better than sitting in the mosque waiting for Ishraq prayer with devotion. Ishraq prayer can be postponed and performed at home. We should value our health because we are weak beings. You may have noticed that when you are in good health, you find joy in reading the Quran and performing other voluntary acts of worship. Good health enables us to engage in numerous righteous deeds. On the other hand, if our health deteriorates, we may struggle to even maintain our current level of worship. For instance, if someone experiences headaches or hip pain, it becomes challenging for them to carry out their usual activities. Therefore, it is essential to prioritize our health. SubhanAllah! Our religion is moderate and balanced, but if we start interpreting it according to our own understanding, it may appear difficult.

17.4 Focus on Allah's Pleasure

It is often said that a sincere seeker of truth is not concerned with the hostility of others, as their main focus is to seek the pleasure of Allah. While one should not intentionally create enmity, if it arises while preaching the truth, Allah is there to provide assistance. The primary concentration should be on pleasing Allah alone. Many times, the displeasure of people can actually protect one from numerous calamities. Friends may become displeased when one strives for piety, but adherence to the path of faith safeguards against various tribulations. Therefore, when one is dedicated to pleasing Allah, there is no need to worry about the displeasure of others. What can be more dangerous than committing sins? And what can be more hazardous than remaining in a sinful environment? So if someone becomes angry while one seeks to please Allah, there is no cause for concern. Who knows how many sins and calamities one has been saved from! Therefore, it is essential to prioritize the pleasure of Allah, and not worry about the displeasure of His creation.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Morning Tarbiati Majlis 15.07.2016

18. Embrace Mujaahidah, the Vital Aspect of Islaah

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

18.1 Be Concerned About Your Islaah

The person who is blessed with the concern for their spiritual reformation (islaah) has truly received favor from Allah Almighty. When one is genuinely concerned about their own improvement, their path becomes smoother. Let's consider the example of a person who neglects their health and remains indifferent to it. Even if expensive medication is placed right in front of them, they won't bother taking it because they lack the concern for their well-being. Similarly, if someone is provided with valuable advice and tips for their spiritual reformation, they won't pay much attention if they lack the genuine concern for their own improvement. The greater one's concern for their spiritual reformation, the easier their journey will become.

There are two aspects of spiritual reformation: the apparent (zahiri) and the hidden (batini) aspects. Zahiri islah refers to the outward improvements such as growing a beard or wearing a turban, which can be attained to some extent when one is exposed to religious individuals or a pious environment. On the other hand, batini islah, which deals with internal spiritual diseases, requires more time and effort to address. When a person becomes aware of the evils within them, such as jealousy, rancor, attachment to the worldly matters, and so on, they seek treatment for these spiritual diseases. Similar to physical ailments that show visible symptoms like changes in eye color, wounds on the hand, loose teeth, or pain in the ears, one becomes more concerned about their health. However, there are also internal diseases that do not manifest outwardly, and unless one undergoes specific tests like X-rays or other diagnostic procedures, they may remain unaware of these hidden ailments. It is often observed that there may be no visible signs of a disease but one might find no secretion of food, no nourishment despite food intake, and a lack of vitality. Only when tested with specialized equipment like an X-ray, it is revealed that the person is afflicted with a condition such as cancer. Similarly, a person may engage in outward acts of worship, but inwardly their faith may not strengthen, and they may lack spirituality and experience a sense of stagnation. This indicates that they may be afflicted with a spiritual ailment, such as jealousy, rancor, or any other issue that hinders their progress.

18.2 The Excellence of Sahabah in Spiritual Reformation

It is important for individuals to have concern for both their outward and inward reformation. If one possesses this concern, their path will be easier, but if one lacks it, the path becomes more difficult. Even the Sahaba (may Allah be pleased with them) who had the privilege of being in the company of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and had their paths guided, would become greatly troubled by even the slightest perceived shortcomings within themselves. For example, Sahabi Hanzala (may Allah be pleased with him) would express his concern by saying, "Hanzala has become a hypocrite; Hanzala has become a hypocrite." This illustrates their high level of self-awareness and their constant striving for spiritual excellence. The Sahaba (may Allah be pleased with them) were extremely sensitive when it came to their spiritual reformation and faith, just as we are sensitive about our physical health. We become highly concerned even over a small blemish on our face. Similarly, if the Sahaba felt even the slightest deficiency within themselves, it would deeply trouble them. Their intense focus on their spiritual reformation and faith played a significant role in their blessings and facilitated their paths. The first and foremost aspect of spiritual reformation is acquiring concern for it.

18.3 Three Vital Components in the Journey of Spiritual Reformation

If one is fortunate enough to possess this concern, there are three fundamental elements in the process of reformation:

1. Safeguarding oneself from every sin.
2. Supplicating abundantly to Allah for personal reformation.
3. Seeking righteous companionship (Sohbat) that nurtures and supports one's spiritual journey.

If one is unable to have regular association (sohbat) with a pious person, then the option of sitting alone in the masjid can serve as a substitute. Spending 15-20 minutes in solitude in the masjid can provide the blessings of companionship of angels and fulfill one's spiritual needs. When a person realizes the need for spiritual reformation (islah) and actively seeks it, Allah Almighty facilitates their path and makes it easier for them. Conversely, if one remains content with their current state and lacks the desire for improvement, the journey becomes arduous. The truth is that our need for islah is not limited but rather constant throughout our lives, continuing until we reach our graves. We often witness how easily we become overwhelmed by emotions, lose control of our tongues, and stumble in our actions. This signifies a lack of spiritual reformation, particularly in controlling our temper, and emphasizes our desperate need for islah. If Allah grants us the realization and concern for islah, it is indeed a great blessing and divine grace from Him.

One should beseech Allah Almighty for spiritual reformation (islah) with the same earnestness and need as one seeks any other necessity. It is important to set aside a dedicated time, whether it be 5, 10, or 15 minutes, each day to specifically ask for islah. The companionship (sohbat) of pious individuals carries immense blessings and has the power to awaken a constant awareness within oneself, just as looking into a mirror reveals one's physical flaws. Even if one is unable to find the companionship of pious individuals, spending 15 minutes in the masjid after salah, when people have left, or arriving at the masjid 15 minutes before salah can make a notable difference in one's spiritual journey. When a person possesses genuine concern and fikr for their spiritual reformation, they will courageously embrace all three essential aspects of islah. However, without this deep concern, even though these three remedies are highly effective, one may lack the courage to take the necessary steps towards their spiritual betterment.

18.4 Courage Comes from Genuine Concern for Islaah

When a person is deeply concerned about their health, they display astonishing courage, willingly taking drastic measures such as amputating a limb to save the rest of their body from disease. This courage stems from their profound awareness of the importance of their health. They willingly pay the doctor and express gratitude towards them. This level of courage is only possible when one possesses genuine concern. Similarly, in the case of spiritual reformation (islah), having fikr (concern) empowers one to take courageous steps. Just as a person faithfully goes to the same job for 30-40 years, dedicating their mornings and evenings, driven by their concern for income. Courage is attained when one has deep concern for something. Without struggle (mujahidah) and courage, nothing substantial can be achieved. This mujahidah and courage are bestowed upon those individuals whom Allah Almighty grants the fikr of islah. Take any renowned figure known

for their piety and guidance, whether it be Imam Ghazzali, Rumi, or any other great person, none of them attained their status without enduring mujahidah and displaying immense courage. They would cry and wake up during the nights, earnestly seeking their spiritual reformation because islah is not a trivial matter, but something of immense value and significance.

Indeed, the attainment of islah (spiritual reformation) requires struggle and courage, except for the Prophets (peace be upon them), who are granted special blessings by Allah Almighty. Allah Azzawajal bestows upon them unique qualities and guidance. However, even the Prophets (peace be upon them) undergo their own form of struggle and mujahidah, as Allah Azzawajal wants to make them exemplary models for the ummah (community). An example is Prophet Musa (peace be upon him), who grazed sheep for ten years without considering it beneath his spiritual status. He would diligently chase after the sheep whenever they tried to stray. This illustrates that nothing can be achieved without struggle and mujahidah.

18.5 The Necessity of Mujahidah for Correcting Our Path

Mujahidah, or striving and exerting effort, is essential for achieving success. Our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) exemplified this by spending extended periods of time in seclusion and worship, particularly in the Cave of Hira. He (ﷺ) would devote months to solitude in the cave, overlooking the Kaaba from the Hira mountain. It is a testament to his (ﷺ) immense dedication. In comparison, we struggle to sit in seclusion for just five minutes in our place of prayer. The level of attachment and focus he (ﷺ) attained through such seclusion can only be achieved through mujahidah. The nature of mujahidah varies for individuals; for some, fasting is easy but spending money in the path of Allah (ﷻ) is a challenge, making it their form of struggle. Conversely, others find it easy to spend money but struggle with fasting, making it their personal mujahidah. The face of mujahidah differs for each person. Through sincere and consistent mujahidah, significant progress is made on the path of spiritual reformation.

In order to refrain from unlawful actions and sins, one may need to impose restrictions on even permissible activities. Just as a wrongly folded paper can only be made straight by folding it in the opposite direction, the intention is not to fold in the opposite direction, but rather to correct the fold and make the paper straight. Similarly, when a person veers off the right path, they may need to abstain from certain permissible actions to rectify their course. The intention is not to deprive them of permissible things, but rather to guide them towards the middle path, just as folding the paper straight requires folding it in the other direction. Merely straightening the paper without folding it in the opposite direction will cause it to continue bending in the wrong direction. Similarly, if a person does not strive to turn themselves in the opposite direction through mujahidah, they will continue to bow towards the wrong path whenever they are tempted to commit sins. Our condition is similar, as we fail to embrace mujahidah in the opposite direction. Since we are already folded incorrectly, without mujahidah, we will consistently bow towards the wrong direction, even if we manage to remain straight momentarily.

18.6 Different Types of Mujahidah

Mujahidah, the practice of self-discipline and struggle, encompasses various methods to control and rectify our nafs (inner self). These methods include moderation in eating, voluntary night

worship, minimizing social interactions, and more. While these actions are generally permissible, they are restricted to maintain self-control. For instance, when a person tends to speak ill, restraining speech helps bring the tongue under control. Without such restrictions, undesirable habits may develop. Therefore, at times, even permissible actions are curtailed for the sake of *islah* (self-purification). *Mujahidah* plays a vital role in maintaining steadfastness on the path of the *deen* and adhering to the *shariah*. Since the *nafs* naturally inclines towards deviation, it needs to be redirected by folding it in the opposite direction. To restrain oneself from *haram* (forbidden) actions, it is essential to cultivate discipline by practicing moderation even in *halal* (permissible) matters. Hence, it is incumbent upon each of us to engage in some form of *mujahidah* for personal growth and spiritual progress.

Do *Mujahidah* to bring in courage for three key elements of self-reformation as mentioned before: abstaining from sins, abundant supplication to Allah ﷻ for one's *islah*, and seeking good company (*sohbat*). Engaging in seclusion within the *musallah* (prayer area) for a dedicated period, regardless of our inclination, is an important aspect of *mujahidah*. If we cannot devote even 15 minutes to seclusion, how can we expect to achieve *islah*? We must cultivate persistent courage and unwavering concern for our *islah*, irrespective of our feelings. This is the essence of *mujahidah*. Sometimes, we may feel inclined to perform voluntary acts of worship, while other times we may lack motivation. By persevering in performing *nafil salah* (supererogatory prayers) even on days when we don't feel inclined, we attain blessings and spiritual growth that surpass those achieved through sporadic worship over a few weeks. Once we have the *fikr* (concern) for *islah*, courage becomes easier to attain. May Allah ﷻ grant us all the *tawfeeq* (ability and success) to embark on this path. In today's era, Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA) has prescribed practical forms of *mujahidah* suitable for our times. These include speaking less, sleeping less, and eating less. By striving to achieve these practices to the best of our ability, even to a modest extent, we can experience significant benefits in our spiritual journey.

18.7 Balance *Mujahidah* for Health and Spiritual Growth

In the present age, it is important to approach *mujahidah* with a balanced perspective, considering both spiritual growth and physical well-being. Completely restricting oneself from essential needs can pose risks to one's health. Therefore, the *mujahidah* of our time lies in moderating these aspects according to individual requirements. Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA) advises that even the most knowledgeable scholars may not have precise guidelines on eating less and sleeping less, as it varies from person to person. For instance, if someone normally consumes five breads, reducing it to three can be considered a *mujahidah*, whereas for another person who usually consumes three breads, the same restriction may not hold the same significance. The same principle applies to sleeping patterns. Each person's needs differ, and caution should be exercised to ensure that health is not compromised. On the other hand, speaking less and reducing excessive interaction with people can be challenging but holds immense blessings. Those seeking *islah* (rectification) in their actions and character must engage in *mujahidah* in these two areas. While it may be difficult, the rewards are substantial. Striving to speak less and limiting unnecessary interactions can have a transformative impact on one's spiritual journey.

18.8 Intention and Approach in Interactions

One pious elder engraved the words, "Speak good or remain silent," on his ring. Another pious elder advised, "Interact less with irreligious people and interact more with the pious." The first part of the advice pertains to those who are negligent of their faith, while the second part emphasizes the importance of associating with righteous individuals. It is necessary to distance oneself from environments characterized by negligence and instead seek the company of those who uphold and recognize the importance of faith. When withdrawing from certain individuals, the intention should not be to view others as inherently bad, but rather to acknowledge one's own weaknesses and recognize that excessive interaction may lead to spiritual decline. This can be likened to a raw clay pot that may break when filled with water, even though the water itself is pure and beneficial. Therefore, consider your own rawness and vulnerability. One perspective involves avoiding people based on their perceived faults, while the other perspective acknowledges personal weaknesses and the potential negative influence on others. Embracing the latter perspective helps guard against pride and looking down upon others. Therefore, it is important for an individual to recognize their own spiritual shortcomings and consider themselves as spiritually "sick." By acknowledging their own weaknesses, they can avoid causing harm to others through their interactions. It is better to freely engage with people in a public setting, rather than isolating oneself out of a sense of superiority or pride. Pride is a detestable trait, and one should instead hold the intention that they have flaws and their actions may have negative effects on others. Accepting this truth in one's heart can be challenging, but it is necessary for personal growth and humility.

18.9 Approach a Spiritual Guide for Cure

It is important to refrain from embarking on personal mujahidah without proper guidance from a knowledgeable sheikh. Making decisions on our own in matters of spiritual struggle can often lead to negative consequences and veering off the right path. Just as a sick person would not attempt their own surgery but seek the expertise of a doctor, similarly, in matters of spiritual healing, it is crucial to approach a trustworthy spiritual guide who has our best interests at heart. By following the advice and guidance of a qualified mentor, one can undertake mujahidah in a manner that is beneficial and effective. May Allah grant us all the ability to seek guidance and follow the right path. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Morning Tarbiati Majlis 11.09.2011

19. Our Islaah is in Salah

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

19.1 Salah is Our Pride

My dear esteemed, honorable brothers, elders of Islam, and sacred mothers and sisters of the Ummat-e-Islam, just as a soldier takes pride and trust in his weapons, a wealthy person takes pride and trust in his wealth, and a little child trusts that their crying will capture the attention of their mother, a Muslim has even greater pride and trust in their Salah. Through Salah, a Muslim seeks the attention of Allah ﷻ, draws His mercy towards them, and opens the door to their Lord. This is why the Sahabahs (may Allah be pleased with them) would say that whenever the Prophet ﷺ found himself in difficulty, he would turn to Salah, for it is a refuge, a source of peace, and the door to the Generous One. And when a poor person humbly falls before this door, it will surely open for them.

19.2 Salah is the Means to Draw Allah's Mercy

A wise individual used to proclaim, "I am a humble beggar; I am a humble beggar." He took pride in acknowledging that even his ancestors were beggars, as they humbly sought the generosity of the Almighty. Similarly, a Muslim used to possess such profound reverence and reliance on their salah (prayer). Just as a fish cannot survive without water and helplessly flops without it, a Muslim found themselves in a comparable state without salah. This is why the Prophet ﷺ would affirm, "Allah ﷻ has placed the solace of my eyes in salah." He ﷺ would request Bilal, "Arrange the prayer for us and bring tranquility to my heart." During times of hardship, a Muslim used to approach Allah's ﷻ door and beseech His ﷻ mercy. What has become of today's Muslim? They knock on the doors of others but neglect to knock on the door of the Benevolent One. They seek guidance from others but fail to seek the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ.

19.3 Salah is the Gift from Our Lord

When the Prophet ﷺ introduced the gift of salah, the Sahabahs (radhiAllahu anhum) were overjoyed and exclaimed, "Now we have a direct means to ask Allah." The essence of salah was deeply ingrained in the life of a Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ would say, "Salah distinguishes a Muslim from a disbeliever." One who abandons salah ceases to be a Muslim. "Establish the Salat, and do not be among the mushriks" (Quran 30:31). "But if they repent, establish regular prayers, and give zakah, then they are your brethren in faith" (Quran 9:11). Salah sets believers apart from the polytheists, as believers diligently perform salah while the polytheists neglect it. The Sahabahs (radhiAllahu anhum) used to affirm, "Salah has become an inseparable part of us; none of us could be considered believers without salah." Even the hypocrites, who lacked genuine faith in their hearts, would not forsake salah when joining the congregation of Muslims, as they were aware that abandoning salah would expose their hypocrisy and disbelief.

19.4 Salah: A Shield Against Divine Wrath

I was expressing to my friends that despite the chaotic and troubled state of affairs in Saudi Arabia, Allah ﷻ has protected it from ruin and confusion in the Arab land due to two significant factors. Firstly, from the ruler to the soldier, from the rich to the poor, and from the mosques to the educational institutions, every single person performs salah (prayer). Despite their imperfections, the excellence of performing salah is widespread, and arrangements are made to facilitate it

everywhere. Secondly, the prevalence of filth and shameful acts is not seen as commonplace, whether it be in markets, universities, or any other setting. The people possess a sense of hayaa (modesty and shame). It is through these two qualities that Allah ﷻ has safeguarded them from destruction.

In our country, Pakistan, although there are many commendable acts taking place, the blessings of these actions have come to an end due to two unfortunate trends. Firstly, there is an increase in the number of people abandoning salah, and secondly, there is an increase in shameful acts occurring in schools, colleges, and markets, which have coincided with the abandonment of salah. These two sins have polluted the entire environment. In markets where women's heads remain uncovered, Allah's curse is invoked. In schools where girls do not observe proper hijab, Allah's curse is invoked. In markets and offices where individuals neglect salah, there is a prevalence of adversities. Consequently, the environment becomes contaminated, and the impact of righteous deeds diminishes. Even supplications lose their efficacy. For every two family members who perform salah, there are five who do not. The practice of performing Fajr salah has become rare among Muslims, and in factories and offices, we observe only a few individuals offering salah, while the rest neglect it.

19.5 Abandoning Salah is Worse than Consuming Alcohol

When a daughter smokes in front of guests or a son brings home a bottle of liquor, parents feel humiliated. But when their daughter or son abandons the Fajr Salah (morning prayer), does it bother them at all? Oh, honorable ones! Abandoning Salah is worse than consuming alcohol. If you see your driver consuming alcohol, how long would you keep him as a driver? And what if he is someone who neglects Salah? Today, even those who perform Salah do not hold any reverence for it in their hearts. If a person consumes alcohol, would anyone marry their daughter to him? If a girl smokes cigarettes, would anyone engage her to their son? But when someone is negligent in Salah, how do they perceive this matter? Abandoning Salah is worse than consuming alcohol or smoking cigarettes. People may not accept a drunkard as a son-in-law, but they may accept someone who neglects Salah. As even those who perform Salah lack reverence for it, the entire environment is filled with negligence. The Prophet ﷺ, with his truthful tongue, said that one who purposely leaves Salah has become a disbeliever. It is such a grave matter that the caller of Allah ﷻ calls out, "Come to Salah and come towards success," yet some still do not respond. They are doing the same as what Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and idol worshippers are doing.

Today, the act of neglecting salah has become so commonplace that even those who perform salah have lost its true significance and the sense of disgust associated with abandoning it. If a colleague of an employee comes to work drunk every day and sits beside him, wouldn't he eventually advise him to give up drinking? But when a colleague neglects salah for years, does he ever advise him to pray? If 80% of students in an educational institute consume alcohol, would you enroll your child in such an institute? And if 80% of the students in that institute do not offer salah, would you still think that your child will remain steadfast in prayer if admitted there? O people! Neglecting salah is worse than consuming alcohol and even worse than committing zina (fornication and adultery). The consumption of alcohol is still considered unacceptable because people understand how bad it is, but they fail to realize that neglecting salah is more evil. As people fail to perceive

this sin as evil, the awareness of its sinful nature has been eradicated from their hearts. It is no longer seen as a sin in the eyes of the people.

When a shopkeeper is known to be a drunkard, wouldn't you hesitate before sending your son to that shop? But when a be-namazi (one who neglects salah) is present, do you ever think twice about going to them? This is because the significance of salah has been diminished even in the hearts of those who perform it. That's why a drunkard would never dare to sit near us, but a be-namazi can come and even be our guest. No drunkard would attend our gatherings, but a be-namazi would come and sit among us because they know that we don't see anything wrong in being a be-namazi. Allah asks in the Qur'an, "What has led you into Hellfire?" They respond, "We were not among those who prayed." Their condition is that they have neglected salah for years, yet they still consider themselves noble and honorable, and their nobility and righteousness remain unchanged. They are perceived as good people, and marriage proposals are readily accepted from them. When namazis truly understand the importance of salah in their hearts, the environment around them will transform into one of devout worship. A father may be a dedicated namazi, always standing in the first row, but his young daughter does not pray. The mother may perform salah, but the son neglects it. Now, think about how the parents would feel if they found a bottle of alcohol near their son. This is because the sin of consuming alcohol is not taken lightly, while the sin of abandoning salah has unfortunately become a normalized tradition.

19.6 Salah is the Manifestation of Eemaan

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who only speaks the truth, said that the one who abandons even one Asr salah (prayer) is as if all his family and wealth have been destroyed. Just by missing one salah, a person experiences such a great loss, and how many of our salahs go wasted without any valid reason! When there are ten be-namazis (those who neglect salah) and only a couple of namazis in an office, where will one find blessings? How can there be blessings in a household where there are be-namazis? Perhaps she performs two or more prayers, but the tradition of performing Fajr salah has come to an end. She stays awake until 2 am, and even if she manages to perform Fajr salah throughout the week, she will miss it on Sundays. After abandoning salah, is there any part of Islam left? Is there any part of faith (eeman) left? This sin of abandoning salah has become a norm, and people can't even bear to be called to prayer. The pious scholars of the past have advised to keep such be-namazis locked up until their death. When the qibla (direction of prayer) was changed from Bait-ul-Muqaddas to the Kaaba, the Jews spread the propaganda questioning which prayers of the Muslims would be accepted—those performed before the change or those performed after. Allah responded, "Both prayers were correct, and no prayer will be wasted because in both cases, the command of Allah was followed." Look at the words of the Quran: "And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost." Here, faith (eeman) is associated with prayers.

19.7 Salah Cannot Be Abandoned in Any State

Eeman, the state of the heart, is closely intertwined with salah, the outward expression of that eeman. Thus, salah is obligatory for everyone, regardless of their social status, age, health, or circumstances. Without salah, there is no true eeman. Unfortunately, in today's times, some

Muslims mistakenly believe that they are doing good by neglecting salah while tending to the needs of the sick. However, we have the example of our beloved Mother Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) who narrated an incident during the critical health condition of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). After regaining consciousness, the Prophet (peace be upon him) inquired about whether the people had performed salah. Upon learning that they had not prayed and were waiting for him, he requested water to perform wudhu (ablution). Despite his weakened state, he completed wudhu and again lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness once more, he repeated his concern about the performance of salah. This pattern occurred three times, with the Prophet (peace be upon him) demonstrating a strong desire to reach the masjid and a deep worry regarding salah. This incident highlights the importance the Prophet (peace be upon him) placed on salah, even during times of critical health.

The companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) used to say, "If there was anyone among us who needed assistance to come to the masjid, we would bring them and make them stand in the front row." The only two exceptions were individuals who openly displayed hypocrisy and those who were physically unable to reach the masjid. Without salah, how can there be Islam? That is why the prayer was shortened to two units during travel (safar), and if someone is sick, they are permitted to offer salah while sitting. If it is not possible to perform the complete physical actions of salah, one may perform it through gestures, as long as they can be identifiable as a person of eeman. However, leaving salah altogether is never excused.

When a Muslim is in a marketplace where there are Christians, Hindus, and people of other religions, and the call to prayer is heard, if they show the same indifference as the non-Muslims without responding, they are behaving like them. Likewise, in a hospital setting where people of different faiths are lying down, whether they are Hindus, Christians, or Muslims, if a Muslim behaves the same way as the non-Muslims upon hearing the adhan (call to prayer), they are behaving like them. This should never be the case for a Muslim. Even if it means offering salah through gestures, a Muslim should never miss their prayers. If water is not available, they should perform tayammum (dry ablution) and offer salah, thus affirming their identity as a Muslim. Salah distinguishes a person as either a Muslim or a disbeliever. Therefore, whether in school, college, university, or any place of teaching and learning, upon hearing the adhan, a Muslim should offer their salah.

19.8 Salah Surpasses All Good Deeds

A Muslim may engage in various great services for Islam, yet they are never excused from performing salah, as salah surpasses all other deeds. In the realm of Islam, few services are regarded as highly as Jihad. However, even in the pursuit of Jihad, the Quran emphasizes the indispensability of salah. It specifically addresses the mujahid (fighter) in the field, urging them not to neglect their prayers. The Quran instructs that during the battle, one party should engage in salah while the others stand prepared, holding their weapons. Once the first group completes their prostrations, they should take their positions at the rear, allowing the second group, who have not yet prayed, to join in prayer. All necessary precautions should be taken, including remaining armed. Salah, the fundamental act of worship in Islam, is an obligation that cannot be neglected or abandoned. It is through salah that one fulfills their duties in the realm of faith (deen) and carries

out acts of service to both the religion and humanity. Its significance extends beyond individual devotion; it encompasses the collective congregation, even in the battlefield. Unfortunately, our current state is far from what the Quran and our beloved Prophet ﷺ taught us regarding the importance of salah. We have brought destruction upon ourselves. If only a few individuals in our homes and markets are offering salah, can we expect anything but adversity? If in a large city, only a handful of people are dedicated to the prayer, will Allah ﷻ not hold us accountable and inflict punishment upon us?

When sin is committed in secrecy, its repercussions are dealt with discreetly. However, when sins are openly committed, the punishment from Allah ﷻ becomes evident for all to witness. Regrettably, in today's society, individuals openly proclaim their sins by neglecting salah, and women openly disregard the virtue of modesty (purdah). The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned that while all sins of his ummah can be forgiven, those who commit sins openly will not receive forgiveness. Sadly, there is a widespread lack of regard and respect for Allah ﷻ, and modesty has been entirely abandoned. Regardless of the grandeur of institutions, the presence of devoted worshippers is noticeably absent. Offices and factories are filled with individuals who neglect salah, transcending the boundaries of wealth and poverty. The prevalence of individuals forsaking salah creates an atmosphere permeated with adversity and spiritual decline. It is disheartening to witness the lack of importance placed on fulfilling this fundamental obligation. The consequences of such behavior are apparent in every aspect of our surroundings.

19.9 The Greatness of Salah and Its Position in Lives of Believers

The importance and virtue of salah are emphasized throughout the Qur'an. "The believers who offer salah with sincerity, devotion, and full obedience are indeed successful". "The Qur'an serves as a guidance for the righteous, those who have faith in the unseen and establish the prayers". We observe that salah follows eeman (faith), and the successful individuals are those who safeguard their salah. Our righteous predecessors competed in occupying the first row for salah, and among them was the greatest man of this ummah, Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him), who prayed with unwavering dedication akin to a firmly pegged stick in the ground. The noble figures of this ummah, such as Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them), could be seen in the first row for salah. They were engaged in trade and agriculture, yet Allah praises them as "Men whom neither trade nor sale diverts from the Remembrance of Allah (with heart and tongue), nor from performing As-Salat (prayer)."

19.10 Do Not Tolerate Non-Praying Muslims

You employ a non-praying Muslim but not a drunkard because you don't perceive the former as evil as you see the latter. Some may argue that it's difficult to find Muslims who prioritize prayer these days. However, if you only encounter drunkards, would you start employing them? No one would employ a drunkard. Similarly, if you come across someone engaged in immoral behavior, would you hire them? Let us recognize the gravity of the sin of abandoning prayer, which is worse than consuming alcohol. In light of this understanding, would anyone dare to tolerate a non-praying Muslim? No, they would be encouraged to establish their prayers. Consider this perspective: a shop can be closed, but the presence of a non-praying Muslim cannot be tolerated.

We cannot bear the adverse effects it brings. The negative influence of a non-praying Muslim extends to forty households, and yet there is a non-praying Muslim present within my office? A non-praying Muslim in my shop! A non-praying Muslim in my factory! Why should I employ a driver who consumes my resources and disobeys Allah? I cannot support such an individual. I can hire a praying Muslim, even if it means paying them more, but I cannot employ a non-praying Muslim. If we adopt this mindset, imagine how it would become a tradition to prioritize prayer.

19.11 Salah Rectifies Our Affairs

Today's problem is that even those who pray lack the reverence and importance for salah, which is why many non-praying individuals roam freely before their eyes. In the Hereafter, their loins will become stiff like wood, and people will recognize them as those who neglected to prostrate before Allah in the worldly life, identifying them as non-praying individuals written on their foreheads. I am speaking the truth when I say that right here, the state of a non-praying person can be witnessed, as Allah strips away the light from their faces. A praying individual may have numerous faults, but in times of adversity, where people's wealth and lives are at stake, a praying individual will possess some fear of Allah within them. Unless we develop a sincere desire for everyone around us to become regular in their prayers, and unless we transform the current state of our offices, factories, and institutions, our condition will not improve. We must take definite action. Hazrat Anas bin Malik used to say, "Nothing will rectify the final ranks of this ummah except that which rectified the first ranks of this ummah." After faith, the first and foremost obligation is salah, which provides human beings with training and guidance. Salah is the primary commandment after faith. Allah has mentioned salah in more than seventy places in the Quran, emphasizing the establishment of salah. The command is not simply to perform salah but to establish it.

19.12 Establish Salah

The commentators have explained that the command to "establish salah" (aqemus salaah) is to emphasize the importance of observing the etiquette of salah, maintaining its timing, and creating an environment in which one cannot live without offering salah. If everyone in my household performs tahajjud, then it will become challenging for me to neglect the fajr salah. Likewise, if everyone in my workplace offers salah, it will be difficult for me to abandon it, but if everyone in the office neglects salah, it will be challenging for me to uphold it. The same principle applies on an airplane, where only a few individuals are seen offering salah while the habit of offering salah has declined. It is disheartening to witness someone performing hajj but neglecting salah during the flight, or someone going for voluntary umrah while disregarding the obligatory salah. Seventy voluntary acts cannot compensate for a single obligatory act. The awareness that abandoning salah is a major sin has diminished, and we fail to recognize the extent of Allah's anger towards this negligence.

Honorable ones! The first step is to prioritize salah in your own lives and strive for excellence in your salah. Secondly, create an environment of salah around you and commit to encouraging someone to perform salah every week. Both men and women can participate in this effort. Begin by inviting people towards salah. Some claim to perform only four salah, but the Prophet ﷺ stated that fajr salah is burdensome for the hypocrites, not for true Muslims. If one desires to establish

fajr salah, sincere repentance for hypocrisy is necessary. Sins have their consequences. Just as it is easy to remove a small splinter of wood, but difficult to lift a buffalo that has fallen on you, similarly, it is easier to overcome a small sin but much harder to overcome a sin that has grown to the size of a mountain. Therefore, we must firmly believe that there should be no one neglecting salah, and starting today, there should be no one neglecting salah in my household.

19.13 The Collective Impact of Neglected Salah on the Community

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of nurturing children to develop the habit of offering salah by the age of eight and making it obligatory by the age of ten. Why are we given such instructions? Because, Allah ﷻ forbid, if a child grows up to become an adult who neglects salah, it may sever their connection with Islam. By instilling the reverence for salah in children at a young age, we can prevent the occurrence of negligence in the future. First and foremost, we should create an atmosphere of salah within our own households. Additionally, each one of us holds a certain position or status in our workplaces, factories, or any other environment where people listen to us. Therefore, we should have the intention to guide others towards becoming regular in salah. If someone near us is drinking alcohol or falling into a dangerous situation, wouldn't we, out of our sense of humanity, try to save them? Likewise, when we witness someone neglecting salah right before our eyes, it is an act of compassion to encourage and help them to perform salah. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ instructed us that if we witness any form of evil or wrongdoing, particularly the grave sin of abandoning salah, we should take action to stop it using our authority or influence wherever it is applicable, whether it is in our workplaces or homes. The Quran, the truthful book from Allah ﷻ, mentions that those who abandon salah are destined for the depths of Hellfire. It is our duty to extend our sympathy and support towards them. Some may argue that each person will be held accountable for their own deeds in the grave, but if we follow that logic, why should it bother us to have some drunkards in our homes? Leaving salah is a greater sin than drinking alcohol, and we should not adopt such a perspective.

The analogy presented emphasizes the importance of addressing both visible and invisible forms of wrongdoing. Just as having three to four drunkards in an office would disrupt the atmosphere, the abandonment of salah can have an equally detrimental impact. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised believers to actively prevent evil, using their hands if possible, and their tongues if necessary. Just as one would call for help to extinguish a fire they cannot put out themselves, those unable to directly intervene should reflect on how to encourage and guide others towards establishing salah. If one is unable to stop wrongdoing even through verbal means and feels helpless, they should consider how to inspire others to become regular in offering salah, adopting suitable approaches. Accomplishing this indicates that there is still some faith in them. Conversely, if there is a prevailing neglect of salah in one's household, workplace, or within their observation, even if they themselves are punctual in prayer and have performed Hajj, they will still face the consequences of the punishment that befalls others. They will be equally affected by the divine curse that descends upon them.

19.14 Significance of Congregational Prayer

The importance of salah and its establishment should be our foremost priority. The Prophet ﷺ introduced not only individual salah but also emphasized congregational salah for men. A companion once approached the Prophet ﷺ, expressing his inability to reach the mosque and seeking permission to pray at home. The Prophet ﷺ initially granted the permission but later called him back, asking if he could hear the call to prayer (adhan). When the companion confirmed, the Prophet ﷺ instructed him to offer salah in the mosque, stating that there is no excuse for abandoning congregational prayer. Men traditionally performed salah in the mosques, while women prayed in their homes, as they receive greater rewards for their devotion within their households. The congregation holds a special blessing when men gather for prayer in the mosques. A hadith narrates that certain individuals in the mosque possess blessed qualities, and their presence benefits others who join them in congregational prayer. Therefore, men are commanded to perform salah in the mosques with congregational unity. On one occasion, while highlighting the importance of congregational prayer, the Prophet ﷺ expressed his desire to gather firewood and burn the houses of those who neglect the congregation in the mosques. His ﷺ words reflect the seriousness of this matter. Congregational prayer is a manifestation of Muslim unity and an expression of their identity. It draws Allah's ﷻ mercy and blessings upon the community, creating a virtuous environment.

19.15 Reflect on the Decline of Mosque Attendance

In the past, mosques used to be bustling with Muslims, but today we witness a different reality. Instead, we find the courts, jails, and hospitals filled while the house of Allah ﷻ remains empty. This unsettling situation is a direct result of neglecting the house of Allah ﷻ; when mosques are deserted, other institutions become crowded. People are present in these places more than anticipated, while the number of worshippers in the house of Allah ﷻ falls significantly short. Considering the size of mosques, it is disheartening to see only two rows of worshippers. If a significant majority of Muslims, say 60%, were committed to establishing salah, our circumstances would undoubtedly undergo a transformation, and Allah's ﷻ mercy would be bestowed upon us. Unfortunately, the reality is far from this ideal, with less than 5% of Muslims consistently performing their prayers. Regrettably, many Muslim parents do not express concern when their children are unable to find a suitable place to offer salah in schools and colleges. This raises a critical question: What has happened to their sense of value for salah? If these same educational institutions were serving alcohol in their canteens, how would the parents respond? If parents truly valued salah, they would come together and exert pressure on the administration, compelling them to establish mosques within the school or college premises. They would demand designated prayer times because these are Muslim children attending Muslim educational institutions in a Muslim country. The current state of affairs calls for a collective awakening and renewed commitment to the significance of salah. It is through unity, determination, and upholding the value of prayer that we can bring about positive change in our communities and institutions. Let us strive to rekindle the spirit of devotion and establish a strong connection with the house of Allah ﷻ, for it is through this connection that Allah's ﷻ mercy will encompass us once again.

19.16 The Erosion of Reverence and The Overpowering Influence of Irreligiosity

Today, the absence of reverence has allowed the irreligious and those who neglect salah to gain dominance. Even in educational settings, if a student rises for salah, the teacher instructs them to remain seated, claiming it is time for a lesson. Similarly, when a doctor intends to perform salah, they are reminded that their service to humanity should take precedence. However, without salah, there can be no true service to humanity. Salah is the greatest obligation after faith, emphasizing its paramount importance. The noblest figure in the universe, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, upon nearing his departure from this world, reminded us of the rights of Allah ﷻ and the rights of His creation. Significantly, he placed the rights of Allah ﷻ before the rights of creation, emphasizing the primacy of fulfilling one's obligations to Allah ﷻ. With the simple yet profound utterance of "as-salah, as-salah, as-salah" (prayer, prayer, prayer) and "wamaa malakat aymaanukum" (and what your right hands possess), the rights of Allah ﷻ and the rights of His creation were encompassed. Our beloved mother, Ayesha (RadhiAllahu anha), witnessed the final moments of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's life. Though his voice had weakened, she observed his lips moving. Curious to know his last words, she drew near and heard him repeating "as-salah, as-salah, as-salah" and "wamaa malakat aymaanukum." Among the rights of Allah ﷻ, salah holds the utmost significance, as emphasized by the Prophet ﷺ himself by mentioning it first.

19.17 Excel in Salah

In today's time, the lack of reverence for salah has led to a shameless abandonment of this fundamental act of worship. The one who neglects salah no longer feels ashamed or even considers the gravity of forsaking salah, as it has become a widespread sin. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us, the honorable ones, not only to fulfill our own salah but also to invite others and establish the tradition of offering salah together, excelling in our collective prayers. For women, promptly engaging in salah inside their homes upon hearing the adhan is a means of giving due importance to this act of worship. The greatness of a Muslim's salah is directly proportional to their upbringing in accordance with the principles of Islam. Salah leaves a profound impact on a Muslim's character, thoughts, concerns, and every aspect of their life. The Qur'an attests, "Surely, the prayer keeps you safe from all kinds of evil deeds" (Surah Al-Ankabut, 45). Each salah holds its own significance and weight. The more effort one puts into their salah, the greater its weight becomes. The weight of salah is determined by one's love for Allah ﷻ, their connection with Him, and their concentration during the prayer. Even the combined two units of salah performed by the entire Ummah cannot match the weight of the two units of salah offered by our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. There is no limit to excelling in salah, and one can strive for excellence to the extent they desire.

19.18 Find Hope and Solace in Salah

Muslims today are often turning to amulets in times of tribulation. However, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provided a simple yet profound solution: whenever faced with a trial, offer two units of salah (prayer). It is through persistent supplication and seeking nearness to Allah ﷻ that the doors of mercy are opened. The importance of never abandoning salah cannot be overstated. Hazrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) lived among the companions of the Prophet ﷺ for a considerable period of time. During his lifetime, there was a particular occasion of complete darkness. People

approached him and inquired whether they had experienced a similar situation during the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Hazrat Anas responded that even if the wind blew slightly stronger, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims would hasten to the Masjid to perform salah. In times of solar or lunar eclipses, they would immediately turn to salah. Even in times of minor distress, they would seek solace in salah. Similar to how a child confidently cries, knowing that their mother will attend to them, Muslims had unwavering hope, confidence, and trust in salah, believing that the mercy of Allah ﷻ would surely turn towards them. Just as a fish finds comfort in water, Muslims would experience peace and tranquility within their salah, with all worries dissipating. They had full confidence that they had established a direct connection with Allah ﷻ. Salah held such a significant place in a Muslim's life that they would approach Allah ﷻ with every single matter through this act of worship.

19.19 Stand in the Ranks of Friends of Allah, the Exalted

Leaving salah is akin to adopting the behavior of a mushrik (polytheist). When a person who neglects salah adopts the ways of Allah's ﷻ enemies, what can they expect in return when they seek help from Allah ﷻ? They want their situation to be transformed by Allah ﷻ and their needs to be fulfilled, all while engaging in the actions of His ﷻ adversaries. It is comparable to standing in the ranks of your country's enemy army and expecting assistance from your own country. The logical approach is to use your intellect, leave the enemy's army, and join the ranks of your friends, and then you will receive support. If you desire your needs to be met and your problems to be resolved by Allah ﷻ, then join the ranks of His ﷻ friends. Only the enemies of Allah ﷻ abandon salah, as it is their habit. Salah, on the other hand, is the weapon of a believer, and they never forsake it in their lifetime. That is why when a devoted Muslim, who consistently performs salah throughout their life, falls unconscious for a few days and subsequently passes away, it becomes obligatory for their close associates to make arrangements for the compensation of every missed prayer.

19.20 Make Up for the Missed Salahs

Regarding those who have previously neglected salah but have now been guided by Allah's ﷻ guidance to become regular in their prayers, they should make up for the missed salahs they have accumulated over the years. They should count the number of salahs they have missed, whether it is for two years, five years, or any other duration, and gradually make them up. One way to do this is by praying a missed salah after every obligatory salah, once or twice, or as many times as they can manage. By consistently making up for the missed salahs, they can eventually fulfill their obligation. Honorable individuals, once you have sincere concern for this matter, the task will become easier for you. Focus on performing the qaza (make-up) salah for the missed obligatory and wajib prayers. If you have sincerely repented and have started making up for the missed prayers, then by the will of Allah ﷻ, He will forgive this grave sin. However, if you have neglected salah out of laziness all these years, and if you truly repent and begin offering the qaza salahs and perform your daily salah with renewed aspiration, then Allah ﷻ will indeed forgive this transgression.

Allah ﷻ warns those who neglect their salah, as mentioned in the verse, "So woe to those who pray, [But] who are heedless of their prayer" (Quran 107:4-5). Even those who perform salah will face

ruin if they are heedless in their prayers. It is important not to pray only when convenient and to abandon salah for trivial reasons. For example, one should not leave salah when going to the market. Therefore, it is necessary to seek repentance before Allah ﷻ for neglecting salah and also repent for the sin of allowing others to abandon salah in your presence, whether it be in your home, office, or anywhere else. Make a strong resolution that from today onwards, you will do your best to prevent anyone from leaving salah through your actions and words. Give utmost importance to spreading this message and, by the will of Allah ﷻ, His ﷻ mercy will be directed towards us, and He ﷻ will change our circumstances. If this practice becomes alive in our markets, homes, and workplaces, there will be peace everywhere. The covering of Allah's ﷻ mercy will be widespread. Presently, due to neglecting salah and disregarding modesty, adversity prevails, and the effects of Allah's ﷻ curse are evident. Peace and tranquility have been lifted, love and affection have diminished, and humanity seems to have vanished. If we bring the command of Allah ﷻ to light in markets, schools, colleges, factories, offices, and homes, then Allah's ﷻ mercy will be directed towards us. O Allah ﷻ, grant me and all of us the ability to act upon what we preach and hear. All praise and thanks are due to Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ assist us in remembering Him ﷻ excessively, showing gratitude to Him ﷻ, and worshiping Him ﷻ in the most beautiful manner. O Allah ﷻ, grant us a life of faith, peace, and tranquility. Bestow upon us Your ﷻ connection and love and a life free from sins. O Allah ﷻ, help us establish prayers and prioritize them, and grant us sincere repentance for our sins. O Allah ﷻ, bless us with the blessings of salah and a life immersed in it. Aameen

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

20. Effective Approaches to Deepen the Love of Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

20.1 Recognize the Transformative Power of Love

When the land is neglected, weeds and thorns flourish. When plants and trees are deprived of water, they lose their lush greenery and appear faded. Similarly, when the rain of love and passion of Allah ﷻ does not shower upon our hearts, the vibrancy of a believer's faith diminishes, and their life loses its radiance. The true spring in a believer's life emerges when the shower of Allah's ﷻ love drenches their heart. Just as water revitalizes plants, causing them to blossom with fragrant flowers, the fragrance of love for Allah ﷻ and the believer's faith becomes evident to others. Just as a deficient ear struggle to hear and a silent tongue fails to speak, when the heart fails to fulfill its purpose of loving Allah ﷻ, it deteriorates. A house without inhabitants and devoid of light invokes fear, as it may harbor darkness or evil spirits. Similarly, when the heart is empty of Allah's ﷻ presence and devoid of the light of His ﷻ love, it becomes desolate. It becomes a dwelling of fear, plagued by thorns of distress and internal worries that torment the individual, leaving their heart in ruins. Just as uncultivated land naturally gives rise to thorns and weeds, neglecting the heart and failing to nurture love for Allah ﷻ leads to its own destruction. Hatred and negativity

require no effort to grow. The heart shapes the individual, and when it is in ruins, so is their life. The purpose of the heart is to love Allah ﷻ, and the believer once possessed this love. The life of a believer cannot be adorned solely with love for Allah ﷻ; it must also be accompanied by passionate devotion.

A young man shared the heartbreaking story of his sister falling into a forbidden love with a Hindu boy, eventually embracing Hinduism. It is astonishing to witness the intensity and passion in such forbidden love, which can make individuals abandon everything, including their family and faith. If this forbidden love can evoke such strong emotions and lead to drastic actions, then why should the love for Allah ﷻ not inspire us to sacrifice everything for His sake? In today's world, we witness the power of forbidden love, where parents and families become insignificant, and relationships are broken as barriers crumble in the face of intense passion. It seems impossible and unbelievable, but love possesses such strength. Despite our inherent weaknesses, love empowers us and fills us with immense courage, enabling us to face seemingly insurmountable obstacles. This determination was evident in the lives of the companions (Sahabahs) who had intense love for Allah ﷻ, and their love was accompanied by unwavering commitment. Sadly, today we witness forbidden love leading to unimaginable consequences. Sons and daughters of Muslim parents are abandoning their family, relatives, cultural and religious heritage due to the intensity of this forbidden love. It is crucial to reflect on the fact that this intensity and passion should be directed towards the love of Allah ﷻ, with the same level of determination. When our love for Allah ﷻ is intense and profound, it has the power to remove all barriers from our path, just as it did for the believers of the past.

20.2 Lesson from the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him)

Today, it is often remarked that carrying out divine commands is challenging, and the deficiency lies in one's love. If an individual possesses fervent love, even during times of turmoil, they would be considered a true devotee of Allah ﷻ. The difficulty in obeying Allah's ﷻ commands arises from a lack of fervor in one's love for Him. When there is passionate devotion, even the mightiest mountain can crumble to dust. Allah ﷻ bestowed His love upon the Sahabahs, along with an immense intensity in their devotion, resulting in unimaginable outcomes. They willingly left their homes and lands for the sake of Allah ﷻ, abandoning prosperous businesses, their homeland, and companionship. They embraced a life of solitude for the sake of Allah ﷻ. In one remarkable incident, a woman offered her infant to the Prophet ﷺ, saying, "Take him with you, for he can protect you from arrows." These astonishing acts were made possible by the intensity of their love for Allah ﷻ. However, in today's time, there is a noticeable lack of fervor in the love for Allah ﷻ.

In today's times, people often question, "What is the wisdom, reason, and benefit behind this command?" Such inquiries arise due to a lack of fervor in their love for Allah ﷻ. However, when an individual's heart is filled with intense love for Allah ﷻ, they do not question the reasoning behind His commands. For example, Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) received a command to strike off the neck of his own son with a sword, yet he did not question why; instead, he obeyed without hesitation. Striking the neck of one's own innocent son is an incredibly difficult task—it would be easier to strike one's own neck. However, due to the depth of his love for Allah ﷻ, he was willing to carry out the command. Similarly, when his child was just able to walk and Ibrahim (peace be upon him) had profound love for his wife and son, Allah ﷻ commanded him to leave them in a desolate place, devoid of signs of life, human habitation, water sources, markets, and

means of sustenance. Allah ﷻ commanded him, "Go, leave your wife and child in that place." The astounding outcome of this situation was a result of the intensity of his love. He sacrificed everything for the sake of Allah ﷻ. When his wife asked him, "Why are you leaving us here?" the command was for him to remain silent, so he stayed silent. She asked again, and he remained silent. Once more, she asked, and he remained silent. Then she asked, "Did Allah ﷻ command you?" Ibrahim (peace be upon him) nodded, affirming the command. His wife, too, had a remarkable attitude. She expressed her belief that if he was leaving them by the command of Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ would not forsake them. When one possesses intense love for Allah ﷻ and willingly sacrifices for His sake, they witness how Allah ﷻ replaces what is sacrificed with something even better. However, it is crucial to genuinely offer sacrifices to Allah ﷻ and leave things for His sake, and

20.3 The Miraculous Influence of Allah's Love in the Lives of the Pious

When there is an intense love (shiddat) for Allah ﷻ, every barrier is overcome, and even the difficulties related to practicing the faith become easy. Even during times of trials and tribulations (fitna), being a person of Allah ﷻ becomes effortless. Are we being driven out of our homes for practicing the faith? Are we forced to lie on a burning bed? Are we being severed with swords because of our faith? No, none of these are happening. Is anyone ripping off our skin while we stand alive? Does anyone throw us into boiling oil? No, none of that is happening either. Although such atrocities occurred in the past, those individuals had an intense love for Allah ﷻ, and thus they carried on. They understood that living a life devoted to Allah ﷻ is akin to living a life under constant threat, a life surrounded by fire. They risked losing friendships, facing trade loss, economic ruin, and even the possibility of being boycotted by their own families. Despite all these hardships, they possessed an intense love for Allah ﷻ, which propelled them forward. They embraced all the trials that came their way. However, today we lack this intensity of love (shiddat) for Allah ﷻ. That is why a Muslim may choose to act according to their desires, appearing as a non-Muslim in certain situations. They display one persona in some places and a different one in the marketplace. There is a different demeanor at funerals and another at weddings. Why doesn't one become a person of Allah ﷻ in every place? It is because there is a deficiency in the love for Allah ﷻ.

20.4 Signs of Allah's Love Manifested in a Believer's Life

When there is an intense love for Allah ﷻ, certain aspects manifest in the life of a believer. Firstly, there will be moments of solitude solely dedicated to Allah ﷻ, as when one loves and has intense passion for something, they allocate private time for that pursuit. When a Muslim loves and has intense passion for Allah ﷻ, they will inevitably experience moments of solitude where it is only, they and their Lord. This is why those who have love and passion for Allah ﷻ are granted the opportunity to pray Tahajjud, the night prayer. If they are unable to find time for Tahajjud due to various reasons, they ensure to create a separate time of solitude during the day or night where it is just they and their Lord. Thus, this is one aspect observed when there is intensity in love.

The second aspect is that when one possesses deep love for Allah ﷻ, particularly at an elevated level, they develop a desire to meet Allah ﷻ and a preference for the Hereafter, as meeting Allah ﷻ awaits them. The sorrow associated with death ceases to exist. However, in today's world, when people hear about death, they become saddened. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "When one loves to

meet Allah, then Allah too loves to meet him." Likewise, if one dislikes meeting Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ too dislikes meeting them. Undoubtedly, there will be moments of solitude in their lives where it is only, they and their Allah ﷻ, and when there is intensity in love, they will yearn for the Hereafter.

Furthermore, when there is intensity in love, even the slightest thing received from the beloved is considered significant. However, this condition requires sincerity in one's love. Therefore, when there is love for Allah ﷻ, gratitude permeates their life, even if they have very little. Moreover, even if they have done so much for their beloved, they remain concerned about whether their beloved will be pleased or not. They constantly carry this thought of fear and uneasiness within them. The righteous companions of the Prophet ﷺ were sincere in their love, and they even had intensity in their love. They experienced hunger, had limited clothing, their wives had calloused hands from carrying water pots, their hands bore the marks of manual labor, yet their hearts and tongues were filled with words of gratitude. They were so truthful in their love that they spent the entire night in worship, and when the time for pre-dawn meal (Sehri) arrived, they sought forgiveness fearing whether Allah ﷻ would accept their gift of worship. Therefore, when there is love and intensity in the love for Allah ﷻ, one dedicates solitary moments to Allah ﷻ, desires to meet Him, their heart overflows with gratitude, and they are troubled by the fear of whether their life is pleasing to Allah ﷻ.

In today's world, a person who performs a few obligatory prayers feels content when they see someone offering only the Friday prayer. Similarly, a woman wearing a head cover may feel satisfied when she sees another woman without a head cover and considers herself superior. However, those who truly love and have intense passion for Allah ﷻ will never be content with their worship alone. They continuously strive to improve and seek forgiveness even for their righteous deeds. Their bodies are detached from their beds at night, standing, bowing, and prostrating in devotion. As daylight approaches, they seek forgiveness from Allah. When there is intensity in love for Allah ﷻ, they develop love for those who love Allah ﷻ. When a Muslim begins to love Allah ﷻ, it becomes impossible for them not to love the Prophets, the Companions, the Successors (Tabieen), the pious saints (Awliya), and the scholars, because their love and passion for Allah ﷻ will make them love all those who love Allah ﷻ. When someone loves and has intense passion for someone, their friends become their friends, their beloved becomes their beloved, and they sever ties with those who are disliked by their beloved. This is the intensity of love. That is why the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate, "O Allah! Grant me Your love and the love of those who love You." Therefore, when a person loves Allah ﷻ intensely, all these five aspects are observed within them. Their love is for Allah ﷻ, their friendships are for Allah ﷻ, and their associations are for Allah ﷻ. If someone claims to love Allah ﷻ passionately but befriends His enemies, they are simply lying. It is like a person claiming to love their mother while loving someone who speaks ill of their mother. Can they be considered grateful to their mother? Is it possible for someone to befriend the enemies of their father? It cannot happen. Therefore, their friendships, love, and associations are for Allah ﷻ. When they belong to Allah ﷻ, they will be for Him ﷻ. This can only happen when there is intensity in love. Thus, all these aspects will be evident in the life of such an individual.

20.5 How to Develop Intense Love for Allah, the Exalted?

How can we attain this profound love for Allah ﷻ? This love for Allah ﷻ is crucial for our lives, as it brings vitality to our faith, allows the blossoming of spiritual growth, and fills our lives with

a beautiful fragrance. It is a love that is intense and fervent. Now, let me present a few factors that, if given importance with the help of Allah ﷻ, can lead us to develop this intensity of love. The first factor is that love increases through communication. Unfortunately, when girls have unrestricted access to mobile phones without proper guidance, their lives can be ruined simply through excessive talking. Similarly, when young people have unmonitored access to the internet without proper upbringing, their honor and youth can be compromised. Even forbidden love can increase through conversations, opening the door to worldly infatuation, resulting in destruction. Communication begets more communication. Therefore, the love for Allah ﷻ will also increase through communication. When we recite the Quran and engage in solitary conversations with Allah ﷻ, we will develop an intensity of love for Him. Reciting the words of Allah ﷻ and then conversing with Him in solitude nurtures a fervent love for Allah ﷻ. Initially, we may not feel the desire to recite the Quran, but as we consistently engage in this practice, we will realize the pleasure that comes from conversing with Allah ﷻ. Eventually, we will not want to abandon the recitation, for there is undoubtedly immense satisfaction in communicating with our Creator.

When love is intense and fervent, time seems to fly by, and we cannot even measure its passing. The whole night can be spent in conversation with Allah ﷻ, to the point where one's legs may even become swollen. The hours slip away in this love. May Allah ﷻ make us all fortunate to recite the Quran and engage in solitary conversations with Him. Let not a single day pass without reciting the Quran. Even when beloved sisters are unable to recite the Quran, they can engage in adhkaar (remembrance of Allah) and tasbeehaat (glorification of Allah) during those days, but they should not omit it altogether. Whenever you recite the Quran or engage in dhikr, intend in your heart that your love for Allah ﷻ is increasing, and that you are conversing with Allah ﷻ, and indeed Allah ﷻ is responding to your talks. In a hadith, we learn that when a servant says, "Alhamdulillah Rabbi Alameen" (Praise be to Allah, Lord of all worlds), Allah ﷻ responds, "Yes, my servant has praised me." When the servant says, "Arrahman nirraheem" (The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful), Allah ﷻ responds again, and so on. As long as the servant directs his attention towards Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ also directs His attention towards the servant. However, when the servant diverts his attention, Allah ﷻ too withdraws His attention. So, if you desire intensity in love for Allah ﷻ, recite the Quran and engage in some adhkaar in solitude. Another aspect is that the Prophet ﷺ said that the most beloved deeds in the sight of Allah are the obligatory acts (faraaiz), and nothing is more precious to Allah ﷻ than these obligations. However, due to the abundance of voluntary acts (nawaafil), the servant attains closeness (kurb) to Allah. The servant becomes so close that Allah becomes his eyes, ears, tongue, and hands, meaning that all these faculties will be used in a manner that pleases Allah. It is through the abundance of voluntary acts that intensity in love for Allah is achieved.

If Allah ﷻ blesses someone with the opportunity to pray the voluntary night prayer (tahajjud), it is indeed a great blessing. However, if one is unable to wake up for tahajjud due to fatigue, then before praying witr (the final prayer of the night), they can offer a few units of voluntary prayers with the intention of tahajjud. This way, they can still engage in voluntary prayers. Normally, people spend their time according to their own preferences until the last third of the night and then they go to sleep. They naturally fall asleep during this special time because Allah ﷻ, in His mercy, intends to awaken His beloved servants, and so He causes others to sleep. If Allah ﷻ blesses us with the opportunity to experience those hours, it is indeed a great blessing. If one cannot pray tahajjud, then throughout the day and night, they can allocate some time for voluntary prayers such as ishraq, chast, awwaabeen, or voluntary prayers before and after the obligatory prayers. It is

important to give significance to a consistent number of voluntary prayers so that they can be performed throughout one's life and done consistently, as there is more blessing in performing them consistently and with steadfastness. These voluntary acts of worship include not only prayers but also acts of charity and kindness, dealings with others, and following the recommended practices as narrated to us. There are obligatory duties that should be fulfilled in our interactions, social affairs, worship, and manners. However, when one gives importance to voluntary acts and recommended practices, they attain the love of Allah ﷻ. Let's consider an example of an employee whose duty is to work for eight hours, and after completing his hours, he finds something that pleases his employer on his way home. Even though it is not his responsibility, he does it for the sake of his employer. When the employer becomes aware of this, won't the employee's status be elevated in the eyes of his employer? The employer will greatly appreciate him for going above and beyond. Similarly, when a Muslim gives importance to voluntary acts of worship, their recognition and worth increase, and their status is elevated in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Thus, one attains intensity in love for Allah ﷻ when there is abundance in voluntary acts.

The third tip to intensify the love of Allah ﷻ is to contemplate and acknowledge that every blessing is from Allah ﷻ. As Muslims, we believe that every blessing we receive is ultimately from Allah ﷻ, but often we fail to deeply reflect upon this fact. When we start contemplating and acknowledging that each blessing is indeed from Allah ﷻ, and we express our gratitude through supplications taught to us by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, we develop a deeper sense of love and appreciation for Allah ﷻ. For example, when we wear new clothes, we should thank Allah for providing us with clothing. When we eat a meal, we should express gratitude to Allah ﷻ for the sustenance He has provided. Similarly, we should thank Allah ﷻ when entering our homes, when drinking water, and even when coming out of the restroom. By expressing gratitude to Allah ﷻ in every aspect of our lives, we cultivate a greater intensity of love for the One who blesses us with these favors. Although we already have faith that all blessings come from Allah ﷻ, contemplation deepens our understanding and enhances our connection with Him. Just as reflecting on the help and support received from a person in specific situations fosters love for that individual, contemplating and expressing gratitude for the blessings bestowed by Allah ﷻ increases our love for Him ﷻ. Therefore, by contemplating and expressing gratitude for every blessing through supplications and duaas, we can cultivate a heightened intensity of love for Allah ﷻ.

In summary, the five indications of having intense love for Allah ﷻ are:

1. Spending time in solitude.
2. Having a desire for the hereafter.
3. Having a heart filled with gratitude.
4. Experiencing fear and uneasiness about the acceptance of deeds.
5. Loving those who love Allah ﷻ.

To cultivate love for Allah ﷻ, the following three ways were discussed:

1. Recitation of the Quran and engaging in remembrance of Allah ﷻ.
2. Giving importance to optional prayers and acts of worship.
3. Contemplating the blessings of Allah ﷻ and expressing gratitude through supplications.
4. Additionally, a fourth way was mentioned, which is to surround oneself with people who have love for Allah ﷻ and engage in discussions about Allah's ﷻ remembrance. By sitting

with such individuals with the intention of gaining Allah's love, one can experience progress in their love for Allah ﷻ.

It was emphasized that the correct intention is crucial, with the focus being on increasing love for Allah ﷻ rather than seeking worldly needs. When the intention is sincere, Allah ﷻ has the power to inspire the person to speak words that fulfill the seeker's needs and desires. This deepens the love and connection with Allah ﷻ. Overall, by following these methods and surrounding oneself with a loving and Allah-conscious environment, one can attain intensity in their love for Allah ﷻ.

20.6 Barriers in the Path of Allah's Love and its Solution

Indeed, one of the barriers to attaining Allah's love is disobedience to Him. While our lives may be filled with various sins, there are three specific sins that require special attention and effort to remove:

1. The sin of the heart: Saving oneself from the sin of the heart, which includes avoiding suspiciousness and having a bad opinion of others (badgumani), is of utmost importance. Unfortunately, Satan has spread badgumani so widely that individuals develop negative opinions about even Allah ﷻ and the elite group of Sahabahs, who serve as the foundation of the entire religion. Such badgumani has become so severe that it leads to suspicions even about the esteemed scholars (aalame Rabbani). It is important to recognize that the existence of the deen is intertwined with the presence of the scholars (ulema), who inherit the knowledge and wisdom of the Prophets (peace be upon them). However, due to mere hearsay, Satan has managed to instill doubts even about the scholars. In fact, some individuals have resorted to backbiting scholars, considering it as their favorite indulgence. It is said that backbiting scholars is as poisonous as consuming their flesh, and such actions can even lead to the erosion of one's faith. When a person is a righteous scholar, who avoids minor sins, refrains from major sins, and does not engage in innovations, it is dangerous to hold suspicions against them, as it can jeopardize one's iman. The Prophet ﷺ used to advise, "Become a scholar, and if not, become a seeker of knowledge. If that is not feasible, sit in the gatherings of scholars and listen to their words. If even that is not possible, then at the very least, hold respect and love for scholars. But do not join the fifth group, which is to hold a bad opinion about them, for it leads to destruction." Therefore, it is essential to avoid harboring animosity towards scholars, as doing so can have dire consequences. Badgumani is indeed a sin of the heart, and it is often the cause of conflicts within our homes. Holding a good opinion about fellow Muslims is a righteous deed, while having a bad opinion of someone only invites problems. On the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ will hold us accountable for the evidence supporting our bad opinions. Hence, it is crucial to save ourselves from these three sins, and by doing so, we can hope to be saved from all other sins.
2. The sin of the tongue: Avoid engaging in backbiting (gheebat). Instead, focus on self-reflection and personal growth. It's unnecessary to concern ourselves with the actions of others. Oh, of course, people just can't seem to find any enjoyment in gatherings unless there's absolutely no gheebat involved. The Prophet ﷺ emphasized the simplicity of two actions that hold significant weight: maintaining silence and displaying good akhlaq (character and manners).
3. The sin of the eyes: Avoid looking at individuals who are not mahram to you. Refrain from casting your eyes upon forbidden things.

If one manages to avoid these three sins in today's environment, they will be protected from many other sins. When the eyes are not under control, the heart becomes susceptible to impurity, and once the heart is tainted, it becomes difficult to safeguard one's purity and chastity. This occurs when the eyes are left unchecked. By maintaining control over the heart, tongue, and eyes, one can avoid numerous sins. Therefore, the barrier to attaining the love of Allah ﷻ lies in disobedience, and it is crucial to pay special attention to these three sins. With this focus, we hope and pray that we will be fortunate enough to receive the love of Allah ﷻ. May Allah grant us His love and bestow upon us a strong fervor for His ﷻ love. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

21. Trials: A Mercy from Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

21.1 The Sign of a Believer

Once, our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was seated among His noble companions. He then posed a question to them, inquiring about the indication of their faith. The companions responded by stating that when Allah ﷻ bestows upon them a life of prosperity, they express gratitude towards Him. Similarly, when they encounter trials and tribulations, they remain content with His ﷻ decree. Upon hearing this response, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) swore by the Lord of the Kaaba, affirming, "Indeed, you are the believers." Demonstrating gratitude during times of abundance, exercising patience during times of hardship, and accepting Allah's ﷻ destined path with contentment are clear indications of true believers. Such signs and contentment with the divine decree are unique to those who possess genuine faith. Being human, one holds a deep attachment to life, wealth, family, and honor. These four aspects become the test and trial for an individual.

21.2 Sabr Comes with the Love of Allah, the Exalted

There was once a man who endured flogging as a punishment for engaging in forbidden love. He remained calm and composed throughout the ordeal, enduring 99 lashes without uttering a cry of pain. However, when the hundredth lash struck him, he screamed in agony. This sudden outburst surprised those witnessing the punishment, prompting them to inquire about the reason behind his change in behavior. The man explained that until the 99th lash, he had his beloved in his thoughts, which provided him solace. However, at the hundredth lash, the image of his beloved disappeared, intensifying his pain and causing him to scream out. Similarly, for a believer, Allah ﷻ is the most beloved, and His ﷻ presence is always in front of them. Therefore, they bear with patience whatever is destined by Him ﷻ. Their level of patience corresponds to the intensity of their love for Allah ﷻ. It is said that in the hereafter, Allah ﷻ will reward people based on the deeds He ﷻ weighs. When a person of patience (sabr) arrives, Allah ﷻ will grant them immeasurable rewards.

Some individuals will attain high ranks in paradise, evoking envy from others. Those who wonder about their elevated status will be informed that these are the ones who demonstrated patience in the trials of worldly life. Upon hearing this and witnessing the rewards, they will wish their bodies had been cut with scissors in earthly life, just so they could have remained patient. Therefore, when Allah ﷻ intends to grant someone more, He ﷻ subjects them to greater trials. It is the Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them) who are tested the most, followed by those who closely adhere to their way of life.

21.3 The Season for Earning More Deeds

The period of trials for a believer can be likened to a season. Hazrat Muaa'dh (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that when a believer falls ill, the angel responsible for recording their bad deeds on the left side is commanded to cease their recording. Simultaneously, the angel on the right side, responsible for recording their good deeds, is instructed to write down all the good deeds the believer used to perform when they were in good health, even if they are unable to do so during their time of trial. Just as a person earns greater profit during a fruitful season, a believer accumulates more good deeds during the period of trials without actively engaging in them. Furthermore, sins are not recorded during this time. Additionally, the believer receives increased rewards for exercising patience (sabr). Thus, the believer finds contentment and peace in accepting the divine decree of Allah ﷻ, knowing that immense rewards await them through their trials. Therefore, it is advised not to complain to fellow creations during times of trial but rather raise one's hands in supplication before Allah ﷻ and beseech Him.

21.4 The Trials Are Expiation of Sins

When a Muslim undergoes trials as a consequence of their sins, and they turn to Allah ﷻ with humility and repentance, those trials become a mercy upon them. However, if a person fails to turn to Allah ﷻ and humble themselves during a trial that results from their sins, it should be understood as the initial punishment from Allah ﷻ in this world, with the anticipation of a more severe punishment in the hereafter. On the other hand, when an individual repents to Allah ﷻ and increases their remembrance of Him ﷻ during trials, it is undoubtedly a manifestation of Allah's mercy and favor upon them, leading to purification from all sins. When the verse was revealed, "Whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah" (Quran, Surah An-Nisa, Ayah 123), Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) became greatly concerned and rushed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), asking who could be saved from punishment now. In response, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said to Abu Bakr, "O Siddiq, haven't you experienced sickness and trials after good health and prosperity? Verily, these become expiation for the sins of a believer, and he emerges purified." The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) further explained that just as rain showers cleanse and purify, Allah ﷻ showers trials upon those He ﷻ loves until they traverse the earth free from sins. Although no one is more beloved to Allah ﷻ than the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he faced numerous trials throughout his life. Likewise, the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), after the Prophets, held an esteemed position and were deeply loved by Allah ﷻ. Yet, they endured tremendous trials, including the loss of their homes, wealth, and families. They faced physical hardships and endured verbal abuse from their enemies.

21.5 Allah Is the Most Merciful and Affectionate of All

When a child is young, their mother bathes them, pouring water over them, applying soap, and scrubbing them, even if the child screams and protests, wanting to get out of the bathroom. The mother doesn't pay heed to the child's cries and proceeds to undress them forcefully to give them a thorough bath. As the child grows and matures, they feel a sense of gratitude towards their mother, realizing how caring she was in purifying them and preventing them from remaining dirty. Allah ﷻ, the Most Loving of all those who love, is even more affectionate than a mother. He ﷻ purifies a believer of their sins and evils through the bath of trials. We may shed tears during such trials, but as we spiritually mature, we come to realize the immense favor Allah ﷻ bestows upon us by guiding us through these challenges. In every decision of Allah ﷻ, His wisdom is present; in every decision, His affection is evident; in every decision, His love is apparent; and in every decision, His mercy prevails. Let us recognize Him, for He is truly the embodiment of boundless love.

21.6 The Excellence of the Words “Inna Lillaahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raajioon”

Exercising patience (sabr) is the most prominent characteristic of a believer, yet in today's world, we often lack patience. Consider the example of Imran bin Hussain (may Allah be pleased with him), a companion of the Prophet ﷺ, who remained bedridden for thirty-two years, unable to move. During this time, he could only eat and relieve himself while being assisted by others. However, despite his physical condition, his face radiated with peace, contentment, and a divine glow that surpassed even those who were healthy. When asked about his state, he responded that when Allah ﷻ is pleased with his condition, he is also pleased with Him. As previously mentioned, the period of trials serves as a season of opportunity for a believer to earn abundant rewards. Unfortunately, we often squander this precious time by complaining and distancing ourselves from Allah ﷻ, whereas He ﷻ desires for us to turn to Him, supplicate, and seek His mercy during such moments. Indeed, it is a time of immense mercy. Allah ﷻ's words hold great wonder and astonishment when He ﷻ promises to send blessings upon us when we say, "inna lillaahi wa inna ilaihi raaji'oon" (Indeed, we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return) during times of trial. It brings us closer to Allah ﷻ, and His mercy becomes evident during these times. However, we often reserve the recitation of this verse solely for moments of death, neglecting its relevance in times of general difficulties. Once, while sitting with Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her), the beloved Prophet ﷺ experienced a blown-out lamp. In response, he recited "inna lillaahi wa inna ilaihi raaji'oon." Surprised, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) asked why he was reciting it at that moment. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "O Aisha! Whenever a Muslim faces difficulty, he recites this, and didn't it cause us difficulty?" This incident highlights the significance of reciting this verse during various challenging situations, not just limited to times of death.

The words of our Lord are truly astonishing and carry a profound sweetness. When we say, "inna lillah" (Indeed, to Allah we belong), we are expressing our recognition that everything belongs to Him. We acknowledge that whatever we possess has been granted by Him alone, and we belong solely to Him. He has the ultimate authority over all things, and it is His prerogative to give or take away from us. As His servants, who are we to object when He decides to take something away from us? Furthermore, the phrase "wa inna ilaihi raajioon" (and indeed, to Him we will return) adds another layer of amazement. O my Lord, despite everything belonging to You, You have instructed us to spend our wealth, our lives, and even our families. Therefore, we are returning to

You seeking the reward for these things which You have bestowed upon us. Trials and hardships are inevitable in this world, but the unfortunate reality is that some people pass through trials without gaining any benefit from them. There are three scenarios when it comes to facing trials: Firstly, a person endures trials without repenting or turning to Allah ﷻ. In such cases, these trials serve as a form of punishment in this world, with a more severe punishment awaiting them in the hereafter. Secondly, a person goes through trials, but they repent to Allah ﷻ and draw closer to Him. Through these trials, they find purification from their sins and experience a greater closeness to their Creator. And thirdly, there are individuals who are granted the ability to repent immediately after committing even a minor sin. Trials may come their way to elevate their ranks and increase their closeness to Allah ﷻ.

21.7 Trials Elevates One's Rank

Indeed, our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has taught us that sometimes Allah ﷻ desires to bestow a higher rank upon His slave in Jannah, but their worldly deeds may not be sufficient for that rank. In such cases, Allah ﷻ puts them through trials, and through their patience and perseverance during these trials, He ﷻ elevates them to the higher rank that He ﷻ had intended for them. This world is a place where we can earn deeds, and the period of trials is a season of opportunity to earn even more. These trial periods are incredibly precious, as one can earn an abundance of rewards in a single night of trial that may surpass what they could earn in their entire lifetime. It is truly unfortunate to waste such a valuable and opportune time. We must realize that trials are not always a form of punishment. If that were the case, the most beloved slaves of Allah ﷻ would not have endured trials. For example, Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) would not have been made to lie under the scorching sun in the desert, and Khubaib (may Allah be pleased with him) would not have been subjected to hanging. Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her), the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, holds the esteemed position of being the leader of the women in Jannah. We can only imagine the elevated status she holds in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Yet, if we examine her life, it was filled with trials and hardships. She had scars on her hands from laborious tasks and carrying water pots. These examples demonstrate that trials are not necessarily a sign of displeasure from Allah ﷻ. Rather, they can be a means of raising our ranks and increasing our closeness to Him. It is not for us to ask for trials, but when they come, we should strive to be patient and make the most of them in our favor.

21.8 The Great People of This Ummah Faced Tough Trials

Imam Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) was indeed a great personality, known for his vast knowledge and the widespread benefit derived from his teachings even today. However, he too faced trials and hardships. He was dragged through the streets of Madinah by oppressors, enduring physical and emotional pain. Despite these tribulations, his knowledge and contributions to Islam continue to inspire and guide millions. Similarly, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah be pleased with him) was a remarkable figure whose knowledge has had a profound impact on the Muslim community. Many Muslims across the world benefit from his teachings. Indeed, our pious predecessors recognized the significant roles played by Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy on him) in preserving the essence and integrity of Islam. Abu Bakr, known as Siddiq-e-Akbar (the Greatest Truthful One), demonstrated remarkable wisdom, insight, and a strong sense of honor. After the passing of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when many Arab tribes began renouncing their faith and refusing to pay the

obligatory zakat, Abu Bakr stood firm and ensured the preservation of Islam. His leadership and unwavering commitment to the principles of the religion played a pivotal role in keeping the community united and upholding the teachings of Islam. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, on the other hand, faced a significant challenge during his time. There was a belief propagated by some that the Quran was a creation and not a divine revelation. The ruler of that period strongly supported this belief. However, Imam Ahmad boldly stood against it, firmly upholding the orthodox belief that the Quran is the eternal and uncreated Word of Allah. Due to his refusal to compromise on this matter, he endured severe persecution and was subjected to eighty lashes, each strike being extremely painful comparable to what would cause an elephant to move from its place. Yet, he remained steadfast and resolute in defending the truth. His funeral prayer was eventually conducted from the prison. Imam Shafi (may Allah be pleased with him), another eminent scholar, experienced severe illness during his final days. Despite his immense knowledge, he too faced physical trials and suffering.

21.9 Allah ﷻ Takes Immediate Retribution from Those Whom He ﷻ Loves

When Allah ﷻ intends to bestow goodness upon someone, He immediately takes them into account and purifies them from their sins. There is a narration about a companion who encountered a woman he knew from the days of ignorance. As he was looking at her while walking, he accidentally hit his head against a wall, causing blood to stain his head. When he arrived in that state before the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ explained that when Allah ﷻ intends to grant a favor, He ﷻ may exact retribution immediately. During times of trial, it is important for a person to reflect upon their inner and outer state. They should examine if they are engaged in any sinful actions, assess their business dealings for any prohibited elements, evaluate their conduct within the confines of their home, and scrutinize the upbringing of their children. If any wrongdoing is found in these areas, one should sincerely repent to Allah ﷻ and firmly believe that the trial is actually a blessing from Allah ﷻ. At times, punishments may appear as blessings, such as when a person continues to commit sins while enjoying increased wealth, good health, and a prosperous family life. Outwardly, this may seem like blessings, but in reality, it is a form of punishment from Allah ﷻ, who holds the sinner accountable in the hereafter. Similarly, trials may actually be blessings, even though they may initially appear as punishments, such as experiencing poor health, business losses, or the loss of family members. When faced with a series of trials, such as health issues, illness in one's children, or financial losses, it is common for people to mistakenly attribute consecutive trials or hardships to the actions of others. It is beneficial to request supplications from those who are sick, as their prayers are more likely to be accepted by Allah ﷻ. When we face trials, the prayers we make for ourselves are gathered by Allah ﷻ and will be rewarded in the hereafter. Therefore, let us refrain from complaining during times of trial and instead long for the rewards that await us from Allah ﷻ.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

22. The Effect of Deeds on Our Life

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

22.1 Misunderstandings Regarding the Impact of Actions on Life

Do our actions, whether they involve doing good or evil, the words we utter, the tongue that speaks the truth or lies, the deeds of our hands, and the way we live our lives day and night, have an effect on our lives and the society we live in, or do they have no effect? Do these have any priority, or do they not? Do we believe that whatever one does, he will attain peace and honor in this world without any connection to his deeds? Honorable brothers and sisters, until now, man has been under the impression that there is no correlation between his actions and his life. He assumes that his progress or destruction in life is solely determined by material possessions, wealth, profession, or personal priorities. It does not occur to him that his honor and humiliation are linked to his deeds, that his health and sickness are connected to his actions, that the increase or decrease in his provision is influenced by his conduct, and that his sense of fear and security is intertwined with his deeds. This misconception has been ingrained in people's minds, resulting in a decline in their inclination towards virtuous actions and an increase in their pursuit of worldly means and resources, as they perceive life to revolve around them.

22.2 Take Heed to the Words of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ

Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ always speak the truth, and numerous verses and hadiths emphasize that one's deeds bear consequences both in this worldly life and in the hereafter. When one person lives a righteous life while another person lives a life of wickedness, their hearts cannot be in the same state. The honor and integrity within a person's heart cannot be equal for someone who is deeply immersed in sin compared to someone who is devoutly pious. Similarly, when a household disobeys Allah ﷻ while another household lives a life of piety, it is inevitable that the two environments will differ. Allah ﷻ promises a fitting recompense for everyone's actions, both in this life and in the hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ likened the expectation of reaping grapes after sowing thorns to the impossibility of attaining peace and prosperity through a life of disobedience. It is simply unattainable, regardless of one's desires. The only way to realize the true impact of our deeds, words, and solitary moments is by firmly believing in the words of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Every action we undertake, every word we speak, and every moment of solitude has a profound effect on our lives. The weakness of one's private life becomes evident when exposed to the public sphere. To reinforce this truth, Allah ﷻ has revealed countless verses in the Quran.

22.3 Lessons from the Downfall of the Disobedient

Why did Satan become ashamed in the court of Allah ﷻ? It was due to his disobedience to Allah ﷻ that he was rejected, and his status diminished in the eyes of Allah ﷻ. Both his outward appearance and inner essence were ruined. He was once close to Allah ﷻ, but then distanced himself. He used to associate with friends of Allah ﷻ, but ended up among enemies. The consequences of his disobedience manifested in his life. What caused the people of Nuh (Noah) to

be engulfed in water, with torrents gushing from the earth and rain pouring from the sky to the extent that even mountains sank? It was their disobedience to Allah ﷻ, and its effect afflicted their lives. Why did a severe wind blow over the people of Aad, causing them to be thrown around like decayed palm trunks and leaving nothing intact, from houses and markets to fields? The reason was their disobedience to Allah ﷻ. The people of Thamud were known for their strength, yet a loud cry of punishment from Allah ﷻ tore their livers apart. Why did they meet such a fate? It was their disobedience to Allah ﷻ. As for the people of Lut, the angels descended, lifted the entire city, and hurled it down. Every stone that rained upon them had a name indicating who it would strike, tearing apart their bodies from head to toe. The people of Lut faced this consequence due to their disobedience to Allah ﷻ. The people of Shuaib witnessed clouds gathering as a respite from the scorching heat, but instead, fire showered from those clouds, gathering everyone and everything. Why did they face such a consequence? It was their disobedience to Allah ﷻ.

Even Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt with flowing rivers beneath his palace, boasting great power and a formidable army, was eventually submerged by Allah ﷻ along with his resources. What caused this? It was his disobedience to Allah ﷻ. In all these instances, disobedience to Allah ﷻ led to severe consequences and downfall. Qarun, a man of immense wealth unmatched by anyone in the present world, was swallowed by the earth along with his riches. None of the people witnessing his downfall could assist him. The Bani Israel, a large community blessed with abundant provisions, faced severe oppression when they started disobeying Allah ﷻ. They were subjected to tyrants who killed their men, captured their women and children, and destroyed their homes and fields. This happened once as a consequence of their disobedience, but their subsequent generations also engaged in disobedience, leading them to fall victim to oppression. The reason behind this was their disobedience. They reaped what they sowed.

When victory was achieved over Kabras, a companion named Abu Darda was found sitting and crying. Hazrat Zubair asked him, "O Abu Darda, Muslims have attained victory and honor. Why are you crying?" Abu Darda responded, "O Zubair, I am crying because these people disregarded the commandments of Allah ﷻ, and as a result, Allah ﷻ turned away from them, and they fell in His ﷻ sight."

22.4 Engulfment of Punishment Is Not Limited to Evil Ones

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) stated that people do not face destruction until they themselves pave the way for it. When individuals willingly contribute to their own destruction, nothing can prevent their downfall. Umm-e-Salmah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that she heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, "When sins become widespread, clearly surpassing the limits set by Allah ﷻ, His punishment will also become widespread, sparing no one." Umm-e-Salmah inquired, "O Messenger of Allah ﷻ, even if there are righteous individuals among them, will they still be affected by the punishment?" The Prophet (ﷺ) affirmed that they too will experience the consequences of the punishment in this world. However, in the hereafter, Allah ﷻ will include them among His forgiven slaves, with whom He ﷻ is pleased. Nevertheless, when sins become prevalent, the ensuing punishment will also be widespread.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) conveyed that as long as three conditions are absent within this ummah, it will remain under the mercy and protection of Allah ﷻ. These conditions are as follows:

1. When the learned scholars approach the rulers and the wealthy are deprived.
2. When the righteous individuals of this ummah start praising the sinful people for worldly gains.
3. When the righteous and pious individuals are insulted and ridiculed by the wicked elements of this ummah.

When these three conditions come to pass, Allah ﷻ will withdraw His hands of mercy from the ummah and remove His protective shield. Consequently, Allah ﷻ will allow tyrants to oppress them to the utmost degree, subjecting them to economic hardships and poverty. Thus, Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ make it clear that the actions of individuals do have an impact on society and their own circumstances. It is not that a person can act without consequences, whether in secret or openly, and without considering it a sin. Whatever state is destined to fall, one's deeds will inevitably have an influence on it. The Prophet ﷺ stated, "When a person angers Allah ﷻ through sins, Allah ﷻ will withhold blessings of provision from them." Conversely, when one engages in righteous deeds, provisions will be granted from above and below. The mercy of rainfall will shower from the sky, and the earth will yield its sustenance. Even trade journeys will be facilitated and protected. However, when a person disobeys Allah ﷻ by committing sins, the blessings within their provisions will be diminished, leading to deprivation and scarcity of food.

22.5 The Effect of Sins on the Rizq and Other Blessings

Scholars have extensively written about the concept of rizq (provision) because it encompasses health, children, wealth, and honor. When rizq is impacted, every aspect of life is affected. Health deteriorates when the blessings of rizq are withdrawn, to the extent that even young individuals now suffer from diseases that were once exclusive to the elderly. Allah ﷻ withdraws His blessings from every aspect, including health, children, wealth, and honor, to the extent that the notion of honor has been forgotten. The Prophet ﷺ foretold that enemies would gather from all directions, likening it to the gathering of hungry people rushing towards a meal. Likewise, the disbelievers will unite to bring about the destruction of Muslims. When the companions of the Prophet ﷺ asked him, "O Messenger of Allah ﷻ, is this because we will be few in numbers?" he responded by saying, "No, you will be in large numbers, but you will lack weight like the foam of the sea." This analogy illustrates that Muslims will lack influence and substance. Despite Muslims possessing abundant natural resources, wealth, minerals, fuel, experiencing the four seasons, engaging in trade, and having various blessings, these material advantages will not translate into meaningful impact. Muslims will be like foam, easily swayed by the whims and desires of society and the world. They will comply with whatever society demands, whether it be sitting or standing, without holding their own distinct views, culture, or society. Furthermore, Muslims will lack their own educational systems, and it is even lamentable that we have lost our own language. Muslims will find themselves running after foreign influences and losing their sense of identity and autonomy.

Allah ﷻ would remove fear from the hearts of their enemies and instill cowardice within the Muslims, making them vulnerable to attacks and causing sleepless nights filled with fear. These consequences stem from two root causes: an insatiable love for the worldly life and an aversion to death. When these diseases enter the heart, one loses all dignity and becomes consumed by fear, like a decorated meal on a dining table, attracting predators. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ emphasizes that sins not only impact individuals but also affect their entire lives, countries, territories, geographical conditions, and societies.

23. Embrace Good Behavior

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

23.1 Enter Islam Completely

O honorable brothers and sisters! Allah ﷻ addresses the people of Islam, Yaa ayyuhalladheena aamanudkhulu fissilmi kaaffaah. O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely. Al Quran: 2:208. When Islam was embraced holistically by society, it was easier to comprehend its true essence. Individuals were presented with a clear image of how to embody Islam as a Muslim, facilitating a complete understanding. However, as Islam gradually recedes from people's lives, comprehending it in its entirety becomes challenging, resulting in each person forming their own subjective perception of Islam. Some may claim their version represents the complete Islam, while others hold differing views, as no uniform understanding prevails in people's lives. When Islam is actively practiced, explaining its principles becomes easier. Unfortunately, today, many find contentment merely in their birth-given Muslim identity, without grasping the true meaning of the Kalimah. Despite lacking a comprehensive understanding of Islam, they are satisfied with their Muslim label. How many are content with sporadic Islamic rituals during their birth and death? How many are registered as Muslims but openly engage in shirk, yet find solace in considering themselves Muslims? How many possess non-Islamic appearances but find contentment in reciting Laa ilaaha illallaahu Muhammadur Rasoolullah?

O honorable ones! Misunderstandings about Islam arise when it is not manifested in practical life. Some believe that having correct belief (aqeedah) is sufficient and disregard the importance of other aspects, assuming they will enter Paradise after purification in Hellfire. Others may emphasize both belief and worship (ibaadah) yet neglect the halal and haram aspects of their business dealings. Their limited understanding of Islam revolves around aqeedah and ibaadah alone. Consequently, they hesitate to break their fast but feel no remorse when earning interest money. When their children break their fast, they express sadness and shock, yet rejoice when those same children establish factories with interest-based funds, considering them successful entrepreneurs. Their understanding of Islam is confined solely to aqeedah and ibaadah, lacking concern for halal and haram or the correctness of market dealings. They inquire about the validity of their fast if their pre-dawn meal (sehri) is delayed, but do not question the halal or haram nature of money earned through deceit. They seek assurance for the validity of their fast if it ends a few minutes before the designated time but fail to question the lawfulness of usurped wealth and its suitability for meeting their children's needs. This limited understanding of Islam blinds them to the fact that their business and professional lives also fall within the realm of Islam's teachings.

23.2 The Five Aspects That Will Make Our Islam Complete

The essence of complete Islam lies in having the correct belief (aqeedah), performing worship (ibaadat), conducting ethical business dealings, demonstrating good etiquette and manners, and exhibiting excellent social conduct (husn-e-muaasharat) in our interactions with others. Engaging in harassment and torture is contrary to Islamic principles. While causing financial loss to someone is evil, causing pain to someone's heart is even more evil. Poor business dealings may result in financial loss, but bad behavior inflicts emotional pain.

It is possible for someone to have a proper belief system, perform worship, show concern for halal and haram, and possess good etiquette and manners, but their behavior towards others is lacking. This lack of good social conduct leads to the breakdown of unity, bonds, and mutual love. It is the foundation of animosity. Consequently, even if a family performs religious duties such as salah (prayer) and hajj (pilgrimage), their hearts may remain broken, indicating an incomplete understanding of Islam. They may mistakenly believe that their understanding is comprehensive, but they are content despite the absence of good social conduct. They work together in matters of religion, yet harbor animosity due to their poor treatment of one another.

Honorable individuals, it is the neglect of husn-e-muaasharat (good social conduct) that has been removed from the concept of Islam. Muslims today often disregard the importance of good conduct as an integral part of Islam. The consequence is a prevalence of hatred and animosity everywhere. People face difficulties from others in various aspects of life, and social and family relationships become increasingly challenging.

23.3 Parallel Effects of Un-Islamic Behavior and Black Magic

Unfortunately, despite their strong connection with the religion, performing salah, and fulfilling the obligations of hajj, many people are still deprived of the blessings of Islam due to their un-Islamic social behavior. This behavior can be likened to a harmful practice that breaks families apart, similar to the negative effects of sifli amal, which is a form of black magic associated with evil spirits. Hearts are bound to break because of this harmful behavior, and people may attribute it to sifli amal, but in reality, it is a result of their own un-Islamic conduct. When social conduct is devoid of Islamic principles and individuals inflict pain on others, hearts are shattered, leading to the breakdown of unity and the absence of love. Where hearts are broken, the door of blessings (barakah) from Allah ﷻ is closed, and the barakah in religious endeavors diminishes. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of good behavior. Hazrat Jabir narrated that the Prophet ﷺ observed him eating dates with someone, and while the other person ate one date at a time, Jabir took two. Upon seeing this, the Prophet ﷺ corrected him, advising him not to take two dates without the other person's permission. The Prophet ﷺ also instructed against coming to gatherings after consuming raw onions or garlic to avoid causing discomfort with their strong odor. This highlights the significance the Prophet ﷺ placed on good social conduct. Additionally, the Prophet ﷺ advised individuals with bodily issues causing unpleasant odors to refrain from attending the Masjid, as it may inconvenience others.

Pay attention to this, as it demonstrates the emphasis placed by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) on alleviating difficulties for others. Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)

narrated that initially, it was obligatory to perform ghusl (ritual bath) before attending the Friday prayer (Jumu'ah salah) due to people's exertion and sweating, which could cause discomfort to others in the congregation. Later, it became a recommended act, still motivated by the desire to prevent hardship to others. It is essential to exert sincere efforts to the extent of obligation, ensuring that you do not cause distress to others. Dear honorable ones! In the present time, our interactions with one another are un-Islamic, and our society lacks an Islamic foundation. Despite placing significance on acts of worship (ibaadat) and having a strong belief system (aqeedah), we find ourselves deprived of the blessings of Islam. The reason behind this deprivation is the trouble we cause to others through our behavior and conduct. Once, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) observed a man striding over people's shoulders as he walked towards him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised the man to remain in his place and not come closer, so as not to inconvenience others. He (peace be upon him) also instructed the people to make space for the newcomer and advised the person coming to sit in the available spot, ensuring the comfort of others.

23.4 Repent and Reform Your Behavior

Dear honorable individuals! It is undeniable that when a person exists in this world, they must coexist with fellow human beings and frequently encounter situations that require proper behavior towards others. It is crucial to reflect upon our conduct and assess whether it causes any hardship for those around us. Consider the beloved status of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the eyes of his Companions. They held an unparalleled love for him, yet they refrained from standing up for him, knowing that it would inconvenience him. This demonstrates the essence of courtesy and respect without imposing any difficulty on others. This is the essence of our faith.

Honorable ones, the blossoming of life lies in good behavior and the establishment of an Islamic society. Our way of life should be such that we refrain from causing any inconvenience to others, whether it be within the confines of our homes, outside, or while interacting with friends. Let Allah ﷻ forgive us, as we often overlook this flaw and fail to comprehend the true essence of Islam and our faith. We must seek repentance, considering the hearts we may have broken and the difficulties we may have caused through our behavior and actions. Regrettably, we neglect to repent to Allah ﷻ, and we show little concern for self-improvement.

23.5 The Twenty-Four Hours Torment

Today, the disunity in society and within Muslim families can be attributed to the poor treatment and behavior towards one another. While we engage in acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, Hajj, recitation of the Quran, and supplications, our treatment of one another falls short. This is indeed a painful reality. Let Allah ﷻ forgive us. If our behavior is not virtuous within the confines of our homes, it causes continuous hardship for twenty-four hours, while external affairs only present themselves from time to time. May Allah ﷻ protect us from the torment and suffering that arises when our behavior within the confines of our homes is not good. The mere sight of someone becomes distressing, and even a glimpse of them causes headaches and unbearable agony. Allahu Akbar! We seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from such circumstances occurring within our homes, where we must reside and endure this pain, despite having our faith. This unfortunate behavior may arise

from a husband towards his wife, a wife towards her husband, or even from children towards their parents. Allahu Akbar! Life then becomes a thorny path, and I speak the truth when I say that it becomes akin to entering a blazing furnace. O honorable ones! The root cause of this distress lies in our failure to recognize good conduct as an integral part of Islam. We must remember that Allah ﷻ will hold us accountable for our actions on the Day of Judgment.

23.6 A Muslim's honor is More Precious Than the Kaaba

Abdullah bin Masood (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that during one of his tawaf (circumambulation) around the Kaaba, the Prophet ﷺ addressed the Kaaba, acknowledging its great honor and respect in the sight of Allah ﷻ. However, he ﷺ also stated that there is a creation whose honor and respect surpasses even that of the Kaaba in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Now, imagine if someone were to demolish the house of Allah ﷻ, how would our emotions be affected? And if someone were to attempt to demolish the Kaaba, how would the Muslims react? Undoubtedly, we would be filled with intense emotions, and rightly so. Let me explain the profound meaning behind the Prophet's ﷺ statement. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "O Baitullah (House of Allah)! There is a creation of Allah ﷻ whose honor and respect are greater than yours in the sight of Allah ﷻ, and that creation is the Muslim. Inflicting harm upon a Muslim's honor is like demolishing the Baitullah." Yet, unfortunately, we are unaware of how many "Baitullahs" we demolish every day. How many times do we, in our actions and words, harm the honor and dignity of fellow Muslims? This leads to a life filled with torment and suffering. If this calamity is happening within the walls of our own homes, demolishing these "Baitullahs," can we expect blessings to be present there? Will Allah's ﷻ mercy encompass such an environment? Within the confines of our homes, we commit such severe sins by causing pain to our fellow Muslims and by smearing their honor, which is akin to demolishing the Baitullah.

23.7 The Emphasis of Good Social Conduct in Quran

O honorable ones! It is crucial for us to embrace the comprehensive teachings of Islam, which encompasses our behavior and conduct towards others. It is a misconception to limit Islam to mere matters of faith, worship, business transactions, or personal ethics. By neglecting the significance of social conduct, we contribute to the demolition of the Baitullah (House of Allah) and the degradation of others' honor and respect.

Let Allah ﷻ forbid, and I implore Him ﷻ to forbid it a thousand times, if such destructive behavior exists within our homes, our lives become filled with torment and suffering. This is why our beloved Prophet ﷺ placed great importance on Husn-e-Muaasharat (good social conduct). It was emphasized to such an extent that when it came to matters like salah (prayer) and zakaat (charity), Allah ﷻ commanded simply, "Establish salah and give zakaat," without providing extensive details or methodologies. However, when it came to good social conduct, Allah ﷻ revealed two whole sections, highlighting the importance of seeking permission before entering someone's house and not overstaying when invited for a meal. Allah ﷻ dedicated two complete sections of the Quran to emphasize the imperative nature of husn-e-muaasharat.

This underscores the significance of good social conduct in Islam, highlighting its vital role in maintaining harmony and fostering positive relationships within society. Let us strive to revive and

uphold the principles of husn-e-muaasharat, understanding its paramount importance as emphasized by Allah ﷻ and our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

23.8 The Weight of Sin Committed Against a Muslim

Hazrat Sufyan At-Tawri (RA) wisely stated, "If you were to gather all your sins that are solely between you and Allah ﷻ, even if they were seventy in number, know that they would be light in comparison to a single sin you commit against any of Allah's ﷻ slaves." This is because, firstly, Allah ﷻ is Al-Ghani (The Self-Sufficient), unaffected by our sins. Secondly, Allah ﷻ is the Most Merciful, capable of forgiving not just seventy sins, but seventy hundred sins. It is a trivial matter for Him ﷻ. However, on the Day of Judgment, every Muslim will earnestly seek good deeds to alleviate the burden of their sins. In that moment, forgiveness will not come easily, for everyone will wish for their own forgiveness and salvation. Therefore, it is said that if there is any dispute or ill behavior between a servant and their Creator, it can be forgiven, but if one's behavior towards others is lacking, it becomes a grave sin.

Let us be mindful of the importance of our conduct and strive to ensure that our behavior adheres to the teachings of Islam. It is our responsibility to revive the spirit of Islam by fostering good relations and treating fellow Muslims with kindness and respect. Unfortunately, today there are numerous flaws and shortcomings among Muslims, largely due to their failure to treat each other with the kindness and compassion that Islam encourages. Let us reflect upon these words and make a sincere effort to rectify our behavior, bringing forth positive change and unity within our community.

23.9 The Excellence of Good Behavior

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has emphasized the virtues of good behavior on numerous occasions. He ﷺ taught us that Jannah lies beneath the feet of our mothers, urging us to treat them with utmost kindness and respect. He ﷺ advised wives that if they maintain their five daily prayers, obey their husbands, and fulfill their duties towards them, all the eight gates of Jannah will be opened wide for them. SubhanAllah! He ﷺ also advised husbands that for every morsel of food they feed their wives, they will be rewarded as if they had given charity. Likewise, those who raise their children with care and provide for them will be rewarded abundantly, as their efforts are considered acts of charity. When spouses show love and affection towards each other, it brings a smile to the face of Allah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ highlighted numerous virtues of good behavior in various relationships.

He ﷺ even mentioned that those who look at their parents with love and affection will receive the reward of performing Hajj and Umrah. When someone asked if they would receive the reward multiple times for looking at their parents repeatedly, the Prophet ﷺ confirmed that the reward would indeed be multiplied. Allah ﷻ is not limited in His ability to grant rewards. All these virtues are associated with good behavior. Such was the significance given to displaying good behavior towards parents, children, husbands, and wives. However, today we witness many flaws in this regard.

O honorable ones! There is a group among us who may recite the Kalimah, engage in worship, exhibit concern for halal and haram, and strive to follow the path of the Deen, yet their behavior

is far from Islamic. It is unfortunate that when a religious individual displays bad behavior, those who are new to the Deen seek refuge, questioning whether this is the conduct of a Muslim or a religious person. They wonder how someone who claims to be religious can have a sharp tongue like a pair of scissors.

23.10 Islam Spreads Through Good Social Conduct

Indeed, when the behavior of Muslims reflects the beauty and virtues of Islam, it becomes a means of spreading the message of Islam. Husn-e-Muaasharat, or good social conduct, holds great importance in attracting others towards the faith. In the past, the closer one was to a Muslim, the more they were affected by their exemplary behavior. This was the charm of the Muslims, as people would observe their conduct and be drawn to the teachings of Islam.

Hazrat Anas (RA) served the Prophet ﷺ for ten years and witnessed his noble character. He (RA) mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ never rebuked or admonished him even once. Such was the Prophet's ﷺ gentle and compassionate nature. Similarly, Hazrat Zaid (RA) was a slave who had been bought and sold multiple times before he came into the care of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ treated him with utmost kindness, love, and respect, to the point where Zaid (RA) developed a deep affection and loyalty towards him. Such was the influence of the Prophet's ﷺ character and conduct. At one point, Zaid's biological father and paternal uncle approached the Prophet ﷺ, requesting him to send Zaid back with them, as he was their relative. The Prophet ﷺ, recognizing the family ties, gave them the option to take Zaid if he desired to go with them. However, when Zaid was asked to join his family, he expressed his unwavering commitment to staying with the Prophet ﷺ, stating that he couldn't bear to be separated from him. He valued the company of the Prophet ﷺ over his own freedom, as he found immense contentment and happiness in being close to him. This incident reflects the profound effect the Prophet's ﷺ character had on those around him. Zaid's attachment and willingness to sacrifice his freedom were a testament to the beautiful conduct and personality of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet's ﷺ compassion, wisdom, and genuine care for others left an indelible impression on the hearts of those who met him.

O honorable ones! An excellent Muslim is one who not only holds the correct beliefs (aqeedah), performs acts of worship (ibaadah), engages in righteous dealings, and displays good manners (akhlaaq), but also exhibits exemplary social conduct.

23.11 Humility and Good Behavior Unites the Hearts

"Waibaadur rahmaan allatheena yamshoona alal ardhi hawnan waithaa khaatabahumul jaahiloona qaaloo salaama. And the servants of ((Allah)) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, 'Peace!' Al Quran: 25:63. The scholars have written that salah, khashiyat (fear of Allah ﷻ), abstention from squandering, and many other merits related to righteous believers are mentioned alongside good behavior. This signifies its great importance. When a person behaves well, Alhamdulillah, humility is cultivated within them, forming the basis for mutual agreement.

Haji Imadadullah Makki (RA) states that where there is humility and selflessness, there is love and hearts remain united. He further explains that humility means thinking lowly of oneself, while

selflessness means prioritizing others over oneself. It is in this environment that hearts unite. Conversely, where there is avarice and pride, hearts break. Today, the foundation of our behavior is often characterized by pride and avarice, rather than humility and selflessness. This shift in behavior is detrimental, as it brings forth nothing but pain and suffering from every direction. When pride and avarice govern our actions, our behavior becomes unpleasant. However, if we embrace humility and selflessness, our conduct will be pleasing, and it is in this state that Allah's ﷻ mercy is attracted.

When individuals exhibit good behavior and foster unity within their households, Allah's ﷻ mercy descends upon that home, and closed doors are opened. Conversely, if our behavior deteriorates and hearts become broken, it is an indication of negative influences that can harm families and close the door to Allah's ﷻ mercy. Some individuals may attribute their misfortunes to external forces, such as the practice of bandish (evil spells), but it is essential to recognize that bad behavior itself can shut the doors to Allah's ﷻ mercy, blessings, and provisions.

23.12 The Beautiful Etiquettes of Islamic Life

O honorable ones! It is of utmost importance to reflect upon our lives and examine our behavior. A valuable resource in this regard is the book "Adab e Muasharat" (Etiquettes of social life) by Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA). It is essential for everyone to read this book with the intention of self-education and to share its teachings with our children. By doing so, we can create an Islamic environment within our homes, transforming them into models of paradise where peace and harmony prevail among all family members.

One aspect of adab e muasharat is exemplified by the practice of returning items to their original place after use, ensuring that others are not inconvenienced. SubhanAllah! Hazrat Jabir (RA) narrates that during his stay with the Prophet ﷺ, whenever the Prophet ﷺ approached the entrance of a house, he would greet the inhabitants in a soft voice. If they were awake, they would respond to the greeting, and if they were asleep, they would not be disturbed. Contrast this with the behavior of people today who knock on doors loudly, disturbing the sleep of those inside. Furthermore, it is disheartening to witness individuals arriving at someone's home during sleeping hours and then requesting to warm or prepare food. Such behavior is far from the etiquettes of social conduct that Islam promotes.

23.13 The Tit for Tat Attitude Is Not for A Muslim

O honorable ones! The true measure of a devout Muslim within a household is one whose behavior surpasses that of others. It is incorrect to respond to ill-treatment by treating others poorly in return. Such behavior is reminiscent of nevta (a customary gift which is made compulsory, like bride family must give to groom and vice versa), a Hindu tradition that has no place in Islam. The teachings of our beloved Prophet ﷺ encourage us to maintain ties with those who sever them, to forgive others when they transgress against us, and to care for others even when they do not reciprocate that care. SubhanAllah! This is the conduct of Muslims.

O honorable ones! I speak the truth when I say that you may find individuals who have performed Hajj, who fast diligently, and who engage in abundant supplications and spiritual practices, but it

is rare to find individuals who possess exemplary behavior through a thorough search. Today, we tend to adopt an attitude of "tit for tat," responding to verbal abuse with more abuse. Let me share with you an incident: A person once came to Hazrat Nizamuddin (RA) and complained about his brother, stating that his brother constantly throws thorns in his path and obstructs his way. The person declared that he had decided to respond in the same manner. Hazrat Nizamuddin (RA) responded, "O my son! If he throws thorns, and you also throw thorns like him, then this world will be filled with thorns. Who, then, will remove the thorns?" There must be someone to remove the thorns, and that someone should be you—one who overlooks the wrongdoing and responds with kindness.

Indeed, a person of good character and behavior surpasses the one who engages in voluntary prayers for months on end. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ once stated that a person who possesses good character and behavior will be ahead of one who fasts every day and spends the nights in worship.

23.14 It Is the Good Behavior That Makes You Religious

O honorable ones! Good behavior is what truly makes a person religious. It is through good behavior that one truly embodies religiousness. However, practicing good behavior may initially cause injury to one's ego and desires. It is not easy for the ego to bow down, forgive others, and behave well when one is not naturally inclined to do so. But the rewards for such behavior are immense, and Allah's ﷻ favor upon that person increases.

In the context of relationships, we often hear complaints from husbands about their wives' behavior, wives complaining about their husbands' treatment, and even mothers-in-law expressing dissatisfaction with their daughters-in-law, and vice versa. If a mother-in-law does not behave like a mother, let the daughter-in-law behave like a daughter. And if the daughter-in-law does not behave like a daughter, let the mother-in-law behave like a mother. The key is to remember that this is the essence of Islam and, indeed, it can be challenging.

O honorable ones! But it is through this approach that one attains greater closeness to Allah ﷻ, and His mercy turns towards them. It is through such behavior that one progresses significantly. Therefore, examine your own lives and reflect upon how you interact with others. Ensure that you do not inflict pain or difficulties on others through your words, actions, gestures, or any form of behavior. Instead, strive to bring comfort and solace to those around you and adopt a conduct that reflects the beauty of Islam.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

24. Overcome Rancor and Purify Your Heart

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

24.1 Internal Purification: The Key to Giving Meaning to Outward Actions

The body and soul are intertwined, and when the soul departs from the body, no one can preserve it, highlighting the intrinsic value of the unseen. O honorable ones! There exists an inner life and inner deeds, which hold great significance. Without these inner aspects, the physical body becomes meaningless and futile. Just as a body holds no worth without a soul, outward actions lack value without internal purification. Consider a person performing the Zuhr prayer with outward beauty, but harboring the intention of showing off, thus rendering the act devoid of worth. Similarly, someone may spend vast sums of money constructing mosques, hospitals, and other noble projects, yet these external deeds hold no value if tainted by spiritual diseases. Therefore, just as a physically attractive body is meaningless without a soul, apparent actions are meaningless until the inner self is purified. The terms "sufi" and "tasawwuf" have acquired a negative connotation akin to the word "politician." When someone is labeled a politician, it is often interpreted as offensive due to the association with corruption and dishonesty. Similarly, the term "sufi" evokes imagery of an individual adorned with a large rosary, amulets, and a long robe, knowledgeable in amaliyaat (rituals) and wazeefahs (supplications). However, this perception is incorrect.

24.2 Purify the Inner Self

A true sufi is known for the purity of their inner self. Likewise, the essence of being a siyaasi (politician) is taking responsibility for the reformation of a particular entity, be it a household, an organization, or an entire region. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) defined a siyaasi as someone who does not deceive others nor falls victim to deception. Similarly, the word tasawwuf encompasses the true meaning of purifying the inner self. It is important to understand that a person may be pious outwardly, but it does not necessarily imply that they possess deep knowledge of their inner self. To identify spiritual ailments such as pride, vanity, jealousy, and others, one may require guidance from a spiritual mentor or advisor. Just as a patient may not be aware of the nature, severity, and extent of their illness, but they recognize their state of unwellness, seeking the expertise of a doctor becomes necessary. The spiritual doctor examines the heart and identifies the ailments, providing guidance on the necessary remedies. O honorable ones! It is possible for a person to perform prayers and observe fasting for decades without experiencing the true effects of these acts, as they may not be accepted due to the presence of inner diseases that go unnoticed, such as harboring malice in the heart. Despite fulfilling the obligatory prayers, they may not attain the desired spiritual fruits and blessings. As mentioned in the previous sermon, extravagance is considered a sin, yet it is seldom repented for. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) once lovingly advised Anas bin Malik (RA), saying, "O my dear son, if you can go through each day and night without finding fault in others, then strive to do so, for this is my Sunnah (way of life). Whoever follows my Sunnah has indeed loved me, and those who love me will be with me in Jannah (Paradise)."

24.3 Overcome Rancor and Cultivate Inner Purity

Undoubtedly, it is very difficult to keep the heart clean, and in comparison, offering nafil salah (voluntary prayers) throughout the night is often seen as an easier task. However, we often lack sufficient effort in striving for purification. But if we do strive, there is hope in Allah's mercy and assistance. The purity of the inner self is the key factor that brings progress in outward deeds and

leads to their acceptance. Allah ﷻ commands us to cultivate a forgiving nature, promote good speech, and distance ourselves from those who are ignorant. Our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) advised us, "Do not hold rancor towards one another." When a person is unable to seek revenge against someone in their anger, a feeling of resentment may develop, known as vindictiveness or rancor. This feeling stems from pride and vanity, which are the root causes of anger. Rancor is not just an outcome of anger, but a sin in itself. It also serves as the source of many spiritual ailments, where the heart desires the other person's loss, humiliation, and disgrace. As rancor serves as the foundation for numerous evils, it leads to various harmful thoughts and actions, including backbiting. When anger persists in the heart, it intensifies into hatred. Rancor involves actively desiring harm and showing malevolence towards others. However, it is important to distinguish between such rancor and having negative thoughts about someone without acting upon them or avoiding meeting someone who causes distress. These distinctions are best discussed with a knowledgeable spiritual guide or mentor who can assess the individual's heart condition and determine the presence of rancor.

24.4 Inner Transformation Takes Time

If someone has an aversion to meeting a person but does not harbor any animosity towards them or wish them harm, it does not constitute rancor. There are instances where one may choose not to engage with someone out of concern that it could lead to backbiting or the fear that their own negative qualities might affect the other person, and even this does not amount to rancor. Rancor has its own distinct characteristics, and if one is uncertain about their own state, they should consult a spiritual guide to determine if they are afflicted with this ailment. A person becomes concerned about their spiritual rectification only when they fully comprehend the gravity of rancor or any other spiritual disease in their heart and feel its burden. When a person experiences uneasiness in their heart and comprehends the seriousness of the situation, they promptly seek the guidance of a doctor, regardless of whether they have a serious heart problem or not. And when the doctor diagnoses them with a minor gastric problem instead, they find relief. This awareness of the severity of heart-related diseases causes restlessness within oneself. Therefore, it is only when individuals realize how dangerous the disease of rancor is that they become concerned about whether they are afflicted by it. May Allah ﷻ grant us the realization of the seriousness of spiritual ailments, just as we comprehend the gravity of physical illnesses. The primary focus should be on eliminating spiritual diseases. While outward changes like wearing a cap or growing a beard can be accomplished through a single sermon or by finding pious company, inner transformations occur gradually as we continuously strive to improve ourselves, thereby eradicating spiritual diseases as we progress. Outwardly, we may appear religious, but when people come closer to us, perceiving us to be pious, they begin to feel it is better to distance themselves from us. This is due to our spiritual ailments, which result in a lack of spiritual attraction. Thus, one can achieve external changes promptly, whereas internal changes take time as we persistently work to purify our hearts from malice, ill wishes towards others, and similar ailments.

24.5 Rancor: The Barrier to Accepted Supplications and Divine Forgiveness

Our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned that our deeds are presented before Allah ﷻ on Mondays and Thursdays, and Allah ﷻ forgives those who seek His ﷻ forgiveness. However, those who harbor rancor and malice do not attain salvation even on these blessed days. This highlights the severity of this sin. Indeed, there are individuals who diligently engage in prayer

during blessed times such as the mornings and evenings, in the month of Ramadan, and during Laylatul Qadr. However, their supplications are rejected and returned from the heavens due to the presence of rancor and malice in their hearts. Reflect upon the severity of this spiritual ailment. It is worth noting that even if someone performs Hajj, Umrah, and engages in night prayers, their supplications may not be accepted due to the presence of rancor. Such is the severity of this disease! It is said that two individuals are not forgiven until there is animosity and rancor between them, provided the cause of animosity is worldly matters. However, if there is rancor towards a hypocrite or disbeliever due to matters of faith, they become our brothers when they accept the true faith and abandon innovations and associating partners with Allah ﷻ. The Quran states, "They are humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers" (Al-Quran 5:54). Being stern towards disbelievers is a sign of faith, and having rancor due to disbelief or innovation is acceptable. However, it is wrong to harbor rancor for worldly matters, which unfortunately is the case for many of us. This rancor may be related to business, family customs, traditions, or even gift items. We often adopt the attitude of treating others the way they treated us. May Allah ﷻ keep our hearts pure and free from such afflictions.

24.6 Prefer Allah ﷻ Over Your Ego

O honorable ones! Despite our efforts in performing voluntary prayers, reciting the Quran, engaging in remembrance of Allah, giving charity, and making supplications, if our hearts are tainted with impurities, we will find no enjoyment, and all our hard work will be in vain. We may exhaust ourselves with numerous acts of worship, yet still find ourselves destined for the Hellfire due to the corruption within our hearts. Let us strive to purify our hearts. If we harbor animosity towards others solely for the sake of religion, it is indeed a praiseworthy and rewarding act. Loving and hating for the sake of Allah ﷻ, giving, and taking for the sake of Allah ﷻ, are signs of the perfection of faith. Today, our attitude is such that if someone says something negative to us, we completely disregard any goodness within them, and instead, we harbor resentment in our hearts. Furthermore, when Allah's ﷻ laws are violated, we show no concern or reaction. There is no sign of disapproval on our foreheads, and we remain indifferent to the transgressions. We prioritize our own ego and desires over the One who truly deserves our devotion. Loving and hating someone for the sake of Allah ﷻ is a commendable trait. A hadith mentions that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah ﷻ will say, "Where are my servants who loved each other purely for My sake? Today, I will shade them under My Throne."

24.7 Two Levels of Love for Allah, the Exalted

It is important to understand that after having faith (eemaan), there are two levels of love for Allah ﷻ. The first level is when you love someone from whom you have gained something that is greatly beneficial for the Hereafter. This love is also for the sake of Allah ﷻ. For instance, one may love their teacher, spiritual guide, or religious scholar who has imparted beneficial knowledge for their Hereafter. This love can be seen in a student's affection for their teacher, a disciple seeking spiritual guidance from their sheikh, and even a teacher's love for their student who is cultivating good deeds for them in the Hereafter. The knowledge acquired becomes a form of continuous charity (sadaqah-e-jaariya) as its rewards continue to benefit others for a long time. However, it is crucial that these relationships are solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ and not driven by worldly gains. By maintaining this pure intention, one can hope to be fortunate enough to find shade under the Divine Throne (arsh) in the Hereafter.

The other level, which is even greater than the previous level, is to love someone solely because they are beloved to Allah ﷻ, without seeking any personal or religious benefits. Regardless of whether one gains any benefit from that person or not, they love them purely because they are beloved to Allah ﷻ. This level of love surpasses the previous level. Gradually, this connection based on the love of Allah ﷻ becomes so strong that it not only tames one's ego but also leads them to prioritize the people of Allah ﷻ over themselves. They become concerned when the people of Allah ﷻ are in distress, they feel pain when the people of Allah ﷻ are hurt, and they wish for their well-being and peace just as they wish for themselves. Depending on the strength of their preference for others over themselves, they will progress in attaining perfection. Likewise, when it comes to rancor, those who have attained this higher level of closeness to Allah ﷻ develop enmity towards those who disobey Him. Their state of spiritual advancement reaches a point where they completely avoid sitting and conversing with disobedient individuals. When they come across their faces, they even close their eyes as a sign of disapproval and avoidance. Our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated to Allah ﷻ, "O Allah! Do not let any transgressor have any favor upon me, so I do not develop love for them in my heart due to their favors."

Even in cases where one may have contact with a person disobedient to Allah ﷻ, it is only for the purpose of inviting them towards the path of righteousness, encouraging them to abandon their sins, and guiding them towards repentance. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified the importance of engaging with others for the sake of da'wah (invitation to Islam) and conveying the message of Allah ﷻ. He would actively reach out to individuals of different faiths, including Jews and others, in order to convey the teachings of Islam and invite them to embrace the truth. It is important to note that the love and affection he had were reserved for Allah ﷻ and those who sincerely followed His commands. Therefore, it is incorrect to refer to someone as "my friend" or "my Ahmadi/Qadiani friend" when they are not even Muslims. How can they be your friend when true friendship is exclusive to Muslims? This notion itself is erroneous.

24.8 The Sign of Weak Eemaan

Yes, it is important for us to maintain good relations with others in order to bring them closer to the teachings of Islam, impact them with our good character, and ultimately guide them to accepting Islam, abandoning sins, and repenting to Allah. This approach can be applied to anyone, whether they are Hindu, Sikh, Christian, or from any other religious background. There was a pious elder who harbored strong animosity towards English people due to their actions, and he even spent approximately 13 years in jail for rebelling against them. This elder had a Hindu servant who was responsible for cleaning his house and bathroom. The pious elder would occasionally invite the servant to sit with him during meals and personally feed him morsels of food. This act of kindness and generosity was motivated by the hope that by treating the servant well, he might be influenced to accept Islam, which was the ultimate objective. The pious elder recognized the servant's vulnerability and believed that by doing good to him, there was a possibility of positively impacting his spiritual journey. This demonstrates the intention to guide others towards the truth, regardless of their religious background. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prayed, "O Allah! Don't let any evildoer have favor over me, so I do not develop love in my heart for them due to their favor." It is crucial for individuals who lack this quality to recognize that it may indicate a weakness in their faith (eemaan).

24.9 The Remedy for Rancor

If one experiences a sense of joy and satisfaction in their heart upon witnessing a loss or misfortune befalling their adversary or opponent, it is important to recognize that this feeling is indefensible and should be avoided. We should make supplications to Allah ﷻ to protect us from such harmful pleasures. So, what is the remedy for rancor? Whenever your opponent or adversary experiences a loss, it is important to consciously ward off any emerging feelings of happiness or satisfaction. Instead, make a sincere prayer (duaa) for both the person and you. By doing so, you can gradually overcome the feelings of rancor and vindictiveness. Sometimes, when we are hurt by someone, instead of seeking revenge, it is better to express our feelings directly to the person, at an appropriate time, explaining how their words or actions have hurt us. This open communication can help keep our hearts clean and prevent emotions from building up and exploding suddenly. It is important to forgive those for whom we hold rancor and maintain communication with them, even if it may be inconvenient. By doing so, inshaAllah (God willing), over time, the rancor in your heart will be removed. If we truly realize the severity of this spiritual disease, the cure becomes easier. The challenging patient is the one who lacks awareness of the disease itself. By acknowledging the illness within our hearts and seeking spiritual remedies, we can find a definite cure, and with Allah's ﷻ help, we will receive further assistance. Let us pray to Allah ﷻ to purify our hearts from these ailments and keep them clean. May Allah ﷻ assist us in implementing what we hear, write, and read. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 7.10.2012

25. Taqwa is the Key to Uphold Your Respect and Honor

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

25.1 Superficiality vs. Genuine Respect

We observe that people increasingly spend money to gain honor in society. During joyous occasions, they indulge in extravagant spending and may even commit sins to impress others and maintain their social status, even though they have no genuine desire for such actions. They believe that without engaging in these acts, they will not be respected. However, can we truly attain honor through material possessions like big houses, expensive cars, and lavish wedding celebrations? The truth is that honor can only be achieved by prioritizing taqwa (God-consciousness) above all else. Even if we possess all the worldly means but lack taqwa in our lives, Allah ﷻ will not inspire respect for us in the hearts of people. Take a look at those around us today, who may have acquired worldly possessions through unlawful means. We often hear people criticizing them behind their backs, and while they may receive superficial admiration due to their wealth, genuine respect is absent. On the other hand, observe the people of Allah ﷻ. They may not possess much in terms of worldly possessions, but they are held in high regard in the hearts of others.

Indeed, it is true that when a person, as a servant of Allah ﷻ, commits sins, they are deprived of respect and honor both from Allah ﷻ and His creation. Honor is something that everyone desires, and some individuals would rather go hungry than compromise their honor. People are more concerned about preserving their honor than accumulating wealth. It is inherent in human nature to yearn for a life of dignity. This noble aspiration can be fulfilled by removing sins from one's life. When a person purifies themselves from sins, Allah ﷻ grants them honor. May Allah ﷻ grant us all honor.

25.2 Sins are Termites that Erode Honor

Sins are like termites that slowly erode one's honor before the eyes of Allah ﷻ and His creation. Honor is a precious attribute, and the path to attaining it is simple. It is said that among all of creation, the most honorable in the presence of Allah ﷻ is the one who is most committed to leading a life of restraint. The one who is most obedient to Allah ﷻ holds a higher status in His ﷻ court. Just as a servant's worship of Allah ﷻ reflects their dignity and countenance before Him, their respect among righteous people is also determined accordingly. If a person disobeys Allah ﷻ, they will fall in the sight of Allah ﷻ. While their sins may not be seen by creation, they are not hidden from the sight of Allah ﷻ. Therefore, if one falls in the sight of Allah ﷻ, they will also fall in the eyes of His creation. It is ignorant for a human being to commit sins to maintain honor in the sight of people. If they fall in the eyes of the Creator, how can they expect to be honored in the sight of creation?

Many people commit sins in their lives, thinking that by pleasing others through these acts, they will gain respect. However, this is a deceptive belief. Such individuals will never attain true honor and respect. While people may say a few words in the moment, they will not genuinely hold respect for such a person. If one falls in the sight of Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ will make them fall in the eyes of His ﷻ servants as well. If someone loses respect among people, they will only face humiliation. Therefore, honor is a valuable treasure. Wise individuals are willing to sacrifice their wealth to safeguard their honor. They are willing to endure difficulties in order to protect their honor. Such is the worth of this honor. In the eyes of a person, the most precious things are their life, followed by their honor, and then their wealth. Wealth ranks after honor. If stealing money makes someone a thief, then how much greater is the thief who steals honor? That is why a person who lives with honor possesses more wealth than someone who is materially wealthy, because they possess something more precious than mere riches. This honor can only be achieved through taqwa (piety), and if sins are attached to it, it is like termites eating away at its foundation.

Even if no one is watching, Allah ﷻ is always watching. If someone falls in the sight of Allah ﷻ, then they will undoubtedly fall in the eyes of people as well. Therefore, honor (izzat) is the greatest wealth, and if Allah ﷻ has bestowed someone with honor, they should strive to preserve it. How can one preserve their honor? By erecting a barrier against sins and cultivating taqwa (piety), which acts as a protective hedge for their honor. A person who is humiliated in the eyes of others will continue to lead a life of humiliation in their midst. Even if they eat biryani (a delicious meal) every day, it serves no purpose. Hence, the saying goes, it is better to have dry bread with honor. If someone is hungry but maintains their honor, it is better for them. One person eats dry bread with respect, while another is fed biryani by people but experiences humiliation. Who is better off? What good is it to enjoy a delicious meal with humiliation? The one who falls in the eyes of people is generally mistreated by them, and they find no joy or happiness. A person who lacks honor is

burdened with constant distress and worry. Imagine the anxiety they would feel if they encountered humiliation wherever they go.

25.3 Respect Allah, the Exalted and Earn the Respect from Creation

It is common to see people becoming increasingly worried when they perceive a lack of respect from others. This can lead to spiritual distress. No one, not even their siblings or spouses, asks about them, and they receive no respect. They feel like lifeless beings. If they reflect upon their situation, they will realize that since they have fallen in the sight of Allah ﷻ, none of His ﷻ creation is willing to give them any respect. Consider the condition of those who are anxious because they feel they are not being respected, whether within their households or outside. It is crucial to ponder upon whether they have truly respected Allah ﷻ, as it is only when they respect Allah's ﷻ commands that His ﷻ creation will respect them. If one respects Allah's ﷻ commands, Allah ﷻ would have ensured that the world respects them. Conversely, if one disregards Allah's ﷻ commands, they will be punished for their lifestyle. Sometimes, to maintain friendship, a person may displease Allah ﷻ. However, since these friends did not prioritize respect for Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ removes respect from their hearts for each other. We have witnessed how friends can turn into enemies, despite once dining together, and now they cannot bear to look at each other. This is often a consequence of committing sins based on their friendship. It is guaranteed that if a friend prevents their friend from committing sins for the sake of Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ promises that their friendship will be beneficial not only in this world but also in the hereafter. By adhering to Allah's ﷻ command in their friendship, Allah ﷻ takes care of them in both worlds. Therefore, honor (izzat) is in our hands, not derived from wealth, family, or profession, but from our actions. If our deeds are righteous, we will have honor. However, even if we amass all the worldly means, we will not attain true honor. This is a crucial reminder to bear in mind.

25.4 Piety Measures Our Honor

In today's world, people yearn for honor more than wealth, yet they often fail to follow the path prescribed by Allah ﷻ and His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ to attain that honor. Consequently, despite their countless attempts, they only face humiliation, and no one shows any regard for them. Therefore, it is essential to be mindful of one's actions and behavior when alone with Allah ﷻ as well as in public if one seeks honor. Even when no one is watching, Allah ﷻ is always observing us. The Quran explicitly states that the best among us is those who possess the highest level of piety. The Quran is a book of truth, devoid of any falsehood. It is guaranteed that those who earn honor in the sight of Allah ﷻ will undoubtedly be honored among His ﷻ creation, irrespective of their wealth or lack thereof. Bestowing honor upon His ﷻ slaves is one of the greatest blessings from Allah ﷻ. When a person receives respect and honor from others, it is not a trivial matter. That is why the Quran mentions the names of Prophets and their companions when discussing this blessing. Allah ﷻ bestowed such immense honor upon them that even today, we name our children after the Prophets and the companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Indeed, we do not name our children after individuals for whom we have no respect. We choose names for our children that carry significance and honor. For example, we do not name our children after individuals like Qarun or Abu Jahl, despite their wealth or status. Qarun, despite his immense riches, lacked the respect and admiration of people. He may have had a long line of servants, but their service did not reflect genuine respect in their hearts. On the other hand, consider the example

of Hazrat Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him). He did not possess material wealth or come from a prominent family, yet his piety and devotion elevated him to a position of great honor and respect. Even after centuries have passed, Muslims continue to mention his name with reverence and dignity. Thousands of children have been named Bilal in admiration of his character and legacy. The respect and honor Bilal received originated from the treasures of Allah ﷻ. It is Allah ﷻ who instills respect for His beloved servants in the hearts of people, and no one can impede the honor bestowed by Allah's ﷻ treasures.

25.5 Sins Diminish Intellect

One of the dire consequences of committing sins is its detrimental impact on the intellect. The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the significance of intelligence and bestows special attention upon those who possess it. Let us consider a scenario: If I were employed in the house of a master and knowingly engaged in actions that provoked his anger, fully aware that such acts would result in my expulsion, could I still be considered intelligent? Now, let us extend this analogy to the house of Allah ﷻ, where He ﷻ constantly observes our actions and possesses the authority to cast us out. If, despite this knowledge, I persist in committing acts of disobedience, is there anything more ignorant than such behavior? Unfortunately, when a majority partakes in acts of ignorance, they often perceive themselves as intelligent. It is akin to a spreading plague, where people fail to recognize the disease. This pervasive ignorance has also spread like a plague, leading people to remain oblivious and unaware of its true nature and consequences.

May Allah ﷻ eradicate every major and minor sin from our lives. While some sins may be considered minor when compared to major sins, in terms of disobedience to Allah ﷻ, every sin holds equal significance. In the past, when parents were respected in our society, there was no distinction between minor and major ill-manners towards one's father, as they observed not the nature of disrespect itself, but rather the person with whom it occurred. Similarly, in the eyes of Allah ﷻ, every sin is a major transgression. Therefore, let us beseech Allah ﷻ to purify our lives from all sins. Such a life is blessed, as every aspect of it is adorned with goodness by the mercy of Allah ﷻ.

25.6 Eyes and Tongue are the Major Source of Transgression

Never underestimate the gravity of any sin, especially in today's era where sins related to the eyes and tongue are prevalent. Exercise control over these faculties and safeguard your eyes from sinful sights. You will witness the coolness and tranquility that ensues within your heart. Allowing the eyes to wander freely only fuels the fire of desire, perpetuating constant anguish and distress. Conversely, by protecting your eyes, you will attain inner peace. It is akin to gazing at something delicious; if you are unable to have it, your mouth will water. Similarly, those who allow their gaze to roam will experience unnecessary turmoil within their hearts. By safeguarding both the eyes and the tongue, one can hope to be saved from 99% of sins, and with the grace of Allah ﷻ, eventually be freed from the remaining 1% as well. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to protect ourselves from sins and bestow His forgiveness upon us. May He ﷻ bless Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them). Ameen. All praise and gratitude belong solely to Allah ﷻ.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

26. Squandering and Miserliness

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

26.1 Desires and Necessities are Not the Same

Allah ﷻ states in Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 27: "Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord." Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has prohibited us from engaging in squandering. But what exactly is squandering? Squandering refers to spending money or purchasing things unnecessarily. There are two types of needs: genuine and fake. Genuine needs are those without which our religious or worldly obligations would be hindered or would become significantly difficult. In such cases, if spending money eases the difficulties, it is permissible because these needs can be assessed. On the other hand, fake needs, also known as whims and desires (Hirs), cannot be assessed. Nowadays, many of our desires have made their way into the list of necessities. As desires have no bounds, this list keeps expanding over time. Consequently, whatever is spent in this world leads to devastation, as the expenses seem never-ending. This is because desires do not cease. While our income is limited, our desires have become endless needs, resulting in constant distress over unmet expenses. However, there is hope if we spend money on essential things. If our needs are infinite while our income remains fixed, how can it ever be enough? It will only lead to continued distress. While we may not have control over our income, we do have control over our expenses. Therefore, let us utilize what is within our control, and by the will of Allah ﷻ, He will put barakah (blessings) in it.

26.2 Squandering Leaves Our Deen in Danger

Squandering itself is a sinful act that brings definite ruin in the hereafter. Its detrimental effects can also be observed in this world, where numerous families have collapsed due to excessive expenses and striving for status. Increasing expenses in line with income is not a wise approach. Wisdom lies in leading a simple life that aligns with one's individual style, controlling desires, saving surplus money bestowed by Allah ﷻ, and utilizing it for noble causes. It is unwise to exhaust all the money within a month or year, indulging in luxurious trips or extravagant plans when income increases, such as planning a European tour. By instilling this habit in our children, if they later find themselves unable to match our level of income, they will strive to maintain their status, even resorting to earning through forbidden means, jeopardizing their faith. Today, the faith of many individuals is at risk due to their preoccupation with expenses and constant concern about how they will be met. The excessive prolongation of expenses leads them to resort to any means, regardless of whether they are lawful or unlawful, in order to meet their financial obligations. This constant fear of expenses takes a toll on their well-being. It has become difficult for people to be content with owning a motorcycle instead of a car.

26.3 Squandering and Ostentation

O honorable ones! Our beloved Prophet ﷺ exemplified a beautiful and comfortable life. Let us adopt a unique lifestyle and refrain from increasing our expenditure. When it comes to furniture, there is no necessity to spend exorbitant amounts, like 1.5 crores. Why do people often buy expensive furniture? It is often driven by a desire for others to notice and admire their possessions. However, this act of ostentation is a sin in itself and is considered haram. The act of showing off one's furniture, boasting about where it was acquired, is highly noticeable. This kind of lifestyle is perilous, which may explain why no other verse of the Quran is as strong in its condemnation of squandering: "Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils." These words are indeed harsh. Unfortunately, we have become so accustomed to this sin that we rarely repent for it. If one commits theft or engages in looting, they feel remorse and repent, yet squandering does not elicit the same response. This sin has become so deeply rooted that we fail to recognize its role as the foundation for many other evils. Let us establish a lifestyle that sets a standard for our children. So that when they grow up and face financial constraints, it will be easier for them, by the will of Allah, to lead a halal life within their means. If expenses consistently surpass income, it opens the door to haram practices. Moreover, if one's level of faith is not strong enough, they may resort to consuming haram rather than going hungry. When such a state of deficient faith upbringing coincides with the temptation of squandering, the consequences can be severe. Therefore, let us refrain from squandering and its detrimental effects.

26.4 Reflect, Consult and Reform

Reflect and contemplate upon the verses of Allah ﷻ regarding squandering and consider two important factors before spending. The first factor is to assess whether there will be any loss if you refrain from spending money in a particular case. If there is no worldly or hereafter-related loss, then it is advisable not to spend. Today, we have made all our false needs into obligations. People believe that if they do not elevate and maintain their social status, their daughters will face difficulties in marriage or establishing a reputation in society. However, these needs are baseless and have no connection to genuine necessities. Moreover, the praise and honor sought through such means are also false. If the potential loss is evident when not spending the money, then seek counsel from a knowledgeable person to determine if the expenditure is against your interest or necessary. Making personal judgments regarding spending can lead to loss, so it is advisable to consult someone you trust in all matters and act upon their advice. InshaAllah, your money will then be spent for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, as the opinion of the trusted advisor aligns with the divine guidance.

Maintain a lifestyle akin to pious individuals and do not adhere blindly to customs and practices. Begin by carefully selecting your household items. Discard the useless possessions, either by selling them or donating them to the poor. If you do not have the courage to give them as voluntary charity (nafl sadaqaat), then give them as obligatory zakat. You can estimate the value of these items and deduct it from your zakat calculation, but never keep useless things in your homes. For instance, if the value of these items is approximately ten lakhs rupees and your zakat obligation is around twenty lakhs, deduct ten lakhs from the total. Holding onto junk items will only consume your precious time and require unnecessary maintenance from others.

26.5 Clarification on Miserliness

The second aspect to consider is miserliness (bukhl). In Islamic shari'ah, miserliness in extravagance is not considered bukhl. Allah ﷻ states in the Quran: "And among you are some that are miserly. But any who are miserly are so at the expense of their own souls." (Quran 47:38) Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "A miser is distant from Allah ﷻ, Paradise, and people, and very close to Hellfire." Even people tend to keep away from miser.

Bukhl refers to being miserly in spending on obligations set by the shari'ah, such as taking care of the expenses of one's wife, children, and even fulfilling the rights of one's own body. Bukhl also applies to acts of decency and benevolence, like helping a neighbor or a fellow traveler who asks for something as simple as a tissue paper. Failing to fulfill these obligations or denying assistance classifies one as a miser.

There are two levels of spending:

1. Spending money on things prohibited by the shari'ah, which is clearly sinful.
2. Spending to maintain decency, which is not sinful.

Excellence lies in resisting unnecessary spending, but if one lacks the courage to do so, there is no need to worry. It is mentioned in a hadith that the money a person spends to protect their honor is also considered charity. If someone fears the negative consequences of denying assistance to a beggar or a hermaphrodite, and giving to them would preserve their own honor, they should give. In such a case, even if they are labeled as a miser for not spending freely, it is important to prioritize preserving one's honor and respect. If saving one's honor and respect requires giving, then it should be given.

26.6 The Punishment of the Miser

Allah ﷻ warns in the Quran: "And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which Allah hath given them of His Grace, think that it is good for them: Nay, it will be the worse for them: soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgment." (Quran 3:180) The worst form of miserliness is exhibited by those who fail to pay their zakat. The Prophet ﷺ once said, "Whoever is made wealthy by Allah and does not pay the Zakat of his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection his wealth will be made like a bald-headed poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes. The snake will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and say, 'I am your wealth, I am your treasure.'" The Prophet ﷺ then recited the above-mentioned verse. Although the hadith specifically mentions zakat, it is not limited to zakat alone. This example was given to illustrate the punishment for miserliness in spending as commanded by the shari'ah. In another hadith, a similar warning is given to those who show no mercy and are miserly towards their relatives, the needy, and the poor. It is not merely recommended (mustahabb), but obligatory (wajib), to help them. Spending on them is not limited to zakat funds but also includes general wealth. It is essential for believers to fulfill their obligations towards others and avoid the sin of miserliness. By fulfilling the rights of others and spending for the sake of Allah's pleasure, they will be rewarded both in this world and the Hereafter.

26.7 Dangers of Miserliness

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ emphasized the dangers of miserliness (bukhl) and its detrimental effects on individuals and societies. He warned that due to miserliness, people may declare the forbidden as permissible, leading to corruption and spreading mischief. He further stated that there is nothing that erases Islam more than miserliness. When squandering becomes the foundation for numerous evils, bukhl (miserliness) serves as another basis for destruction. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ explicitly cautioned us to shield ourselves from the perils of bukhl, as it had been the cause of ruin for past nations. It is not befitting for Muslims to be characterized by miserliness and be on a path towards hellfire. Miserliness stems from an excessive love for worldly possessions, which in turn weakens one's love for Allah ﷻ. The miser's intense attachment to wealth is so strong that even at the time of death, his eyes remain fixed on his material possessions, and his soul remains entangled in his bank accounts and possessions. Imagine the miserable state of the miser when the angel of death approaches to take his soul. With great jealousy, the miser looks upon his beloved wealth, but he is forcefully taken away, resisting the departure of his soul. This illustrates his reluctance to meet the Creator ﷻ. In a hadith, it is mentioned that the one who does not desire to meet Allah ﷻ is destined for hellfire.

26.8 Prepare for the Afterlife

O honorable ones! As the approach of death draws near, you will yearn to meet Allah ﷻ, but only if you have amassed treasures for the sake of Allah ﷻ and adorned your akhirah (hereafter) more than this worldly life. It is when your investments and provisions for the hereafter are abundant that you will long for the abode where your wealth is stored. However, if you have solely focused on accumulating possessions in this life, diligently filling your coffers and finding joy in counting your savings, how then will you desire death? Allah ﷻ states, "He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal." When the worldly life holds little significance, there is pleasure in departing from it, as everyone is destined to leave this world eventually. May Allah ﷻ enable us to beautify our eternal life in the hereafter, so that our hearts yearn for departure and the meeting with Allah ﷻ. This longing is indicative of a dweller of Jannah (Paradise). Conversely, if one's heart does not yearn for death, may Allah ﷻ protect us, our beloved Prophet ﷺ has informed that such a person is a dweller of Jahannam (Hellfire). The time of death is indeed a delicate matter.

26.9 Remove the Love of Wealth from Your Heart

If one desires to protect themselves from miserliness (bukhl), let them reflect upon the evil consequences it brings in the hereafter and the humiliation it brings in this world. It should be firmly understood that a miser cannot take their wealth to the grave, as money is granted to individuals solely to fulfill their needs in this worldly life. When your wife is in need and crying for basic necessities, why do you keep your money protected when Allah ﷻ has granted it to you for spending? Sometimes, a person becomes so obsessed with their wealth that they fail to spend it on themselves, and they eventually pass away leaving behind bundles of money. Squandering is certainly wrong, but miserliness is also condemned, as one is obliged to spend where it is needed. Take better care of your body than the clothes that adorn it. Eat and drink in moderation, for your body has rights upon you. The irony of today is that people prioritize taking care of material possessions that others can see, while neglecting their own well-being. This is a strange phenomenon, as it should be the other way around. Eat wholesome food, provide your children

with nutritious meals from the sustenance that Allah ﷻ has provided, and take care of your health. This is what you are commanded to do, so do not be miserly in fulfilling the needs that Allah ﷻ has ordained. And whatever you possess in excess, compel yourself to give it to those in need or for religious causes. Even if it is difficult for your ego, bear it with courage and continue doing so until the effects of miserliness are eradicated from your heart. Remove the love of wealth from your heart, and by the blessings of Allah ﷻ, miserliness will also be eliminated. How wonderful it would be if squandering and miserliness were removed from our lives! If one attains these beautiful qualities, their life will be adorned with allure, beauty, and balance.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 30.9.2012

27. Tawakkal Ala Allah- Putting trust in Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

We trust someone when we recognize their knowledge, power to fulfill our expectations, and genuine concern for our well-being. However, the knowledge and power of any created being are not perfect like that of Allah ﷻ, nor does anyone wish good for us as profoundly as He does. In fact, Allah ﷻ wishes good for us more than we could ever wish for ourselves. Placing trust in Allah ﷻ has always been the hallmark of the people of Islam. They entrust their affairs to Allah ﷻ because they acknowledge His supreme knowledge, power, and benevolence. Unfortunately, in today's world, people tend to rely on worldly causes and means rather than trusting in Allah ﷻ. There are two types of Tawakkul: one is placing trust in the means, and the other is placing trust in Allah ﷻ. Those who solely rely on the means demonstrate weaker faith (eeman), whereas a Muslim adopts the means while maintaining unwavering trust in Allah ﷻ.

When a child desires the milk bottle, he cries and screams, knowing that his cries and screams won't directly lead him to the bottle. However, he understands that his mother's attention will ultimately bring him the milk bottle. Similarly, a believer recognizes that relying on mere means will not grant them their desires, but rather, it is the attention and favor of Allah ﷻ that they seek. The focus of a believer's efforts is to gain the attention of Allah ﷻ, and therefore, they refrain from resorting to any forbidden means to achieve their goals. They do not fear deprivation from others, as they trust that Allah ﷻ will provide them with what is destined for them.

An incident illustrates this perspective: A man once witnessed a blind crow and pondered how it would find food. While contemplating, an eagle appeared, carrying food in its beak, and feeding the crow. Witnessing this, the man concluded that if Allah ﷻ could provide for the crow in such a manner, surely He would provide for him without any effort on his part. With this conviction, the man spent days without exerting any effort to seek sustenance. Eventually, his hunger became unbearable, leading him to seek the advice of a wise person (hakeem). The hakeem explained to him that Allah ﷻ had demonstrated two examples: one without means, exemplified by the crow,

and the other with means, represented by the eagle. The hakeem questioned why the man did not follow the example of the eagle, utilizing the means provided by Allah ﷻ to sustain himself and others. When Allah ﷻ bestows means upon an individual, it is their responsibility to utilize them in accordance with His commands. And when a person lack means, they need not worry, for Allah ﷻ is fully capable of providing for them without any means. With this mindset, a believer can find complete satisfaction in their life and remain at peace. They do not rely solely on the means, but rather, place their trust in Allah ﷻ, recognizing His ability to provide for them in various ways.

When one trusts Allah ﷻ, they receive the love of Allah ﷻ, the creator, as well as the love of His creation. However, if a person relies solely on others, expects things from them, and displays greediness, they will eventually fall in the eyes of those people. In contrast, a person who relies only on Allah ﷻ will find richness in their heart. Nowadays, people are being acknowledged for their trustworthiness, but unfortunately, recognition for trusting Allah ﷻ is often lacking. Understanding the concept of tawakkal (reliance on Allah) can be challenging, except for those who have strong faith (eeman). There is a historical incident involving Muawwiya (may Allah be pleased with him), who once sent a letter to our beloved mother Ayisha (may Allah be pleased with her), seeking her advice. In response, she conveyed two important points. Firstly, she stated that when someone intends to do something and fears no one except seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ Himself will take complete responsibility for their task. Secondly, she emphasized that if a person only cares about what people think of them, prioritizing their fake reputation in society, but fails to fear Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ will leave them to the consequences of their actions, making them dependent on others throughout their life.

Tawakkal is indeed an incredible concept, and when one learns to trust Allah ﷻ, they can find true contentment in life and overcome depression and fear. However, in today's world, many Muslims tend to place their trust in worldly means instead of relying on Allah ﷻ. If we were to rely solely on means, the non-believers have far surpassed us in terms of possessing resources such as technology and weapons. In fact, they may be a century ahead of us in this regard. Yet, if we observe their lives, we find that they are the largest consumers of antidepressant drugs compared to us. This indicates that life is not defined by the material means alone, but rather by the Lord of those means. We trust someone when we truly know and understand them. Similarly, we will come to recognize Allah ﷻ when we draw closer to Him.

The closeness or nearness to Allah ﷻ can be attained through two things. In a hadith, it is mentioned that a person draws closer to Allah ﷻ through performing obligatory acts, and when they engage in additional voluntary acts (nafil), Allah ﷻ becomes their eyes, ears, tongue, and feet. Therefore, we should increase our voluntary acts of worship to draw nearer to Allah ﷻ and attain His recognition (maarifat). Additionally, in another hadith, it is stated that on the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ will question a servant as to why they did not feed and clothe Him. The servant will be astonished and ask how it is possible to provide sustenance to the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Allah ﷻ will respond by saying that when His destitute servant came to their door seeking food and clothing, they turned them away. Thus, by increasing our voluntary acts of worship and by aiding those in need, we can attain the closeness and nearness (kurb) of Allah ﷻ.

When two deaths occur in a hospital—one of a disbeliever and the other of a believer—the relative of the disbeliever becomes disturbed and worried, thinking that if they had shown the deceased to another doctor, they might have been able to save them. On the other hand, a believer understands

that even if a hundred doctors had come together to save their relative from death, they would not have succeeded unless it was decreed by Allah ﷻ according to His infinite wisdom. The believer remains content with the divine decree (qadr) of Allah ﷻ. Both the disbeliever and the believer employed the same means of medical treatment, yet the outcome had a different impact on them. In today's world, people are surrounded by problems more than ever and they require assistance, yet they often try to find solutions by themselves, utilizing all the means at their disposal. When a person is deprived of any means, they become disappointed and lose hope. There is a prevailing sense of loneliness within individuals today, causing them to neglect their spouses, children, and parents, resulting in their isolation.

A person may believe that their life will improve once they have a child. However, once they have a child, they start thinking that enrolling the child in a good school will bring them happiness. They strive to achieve that goal, and then they desire their child to obtain a good degree and secure a good job. However, in the end, we often see the person in the same state as before they had a child, realizing that they haven't achieved much through all these means. We have allowed numerous screens of sin to distance us from Allah ﷻ, preventing us from recognizing Him and placing our trust (tawakkal) in Him ﷻ. If a person performs righteous acts but still fails to recognize Allah ﷻ, they should understand that there is a barrier of sin between them and Allah ﷻ, hindering their recognition of Him.

When we contemplate the tawakkal (reliance on Allah) of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), we witness his immense trust in Allah ﷻ as he left his wife and infant son in the desolate valley of Makkah. Even his wife demonstrated remarkable faith. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) had been commanded not to speak, and as he began to walk away, leaving his beloved wife and son in a land devoid of signs of life and far from any human presence, his wife ran after him, questioning why he was leaving them there. He remained silent. She asked again, and he remained silent. Once more, she inquired, and he continued to remain silent. Finally, she asked if this silence was indeed the command of Allah ﷻ, and he confirmed by nodding his head. What an exceptional recognition she had of Allah ﷻ, for she immediately responded, "Then Allah won't abandon us." She was a nursing mother, and when there was no water, a mother's breast is deprived of milk. It is easier to endure hunger and thirst oneself than to witness one's child suffering. However, this mother recognized Allah ﷻ and placed her trust in Him.

In a hadith, it is narrated that when a person says, "Bismillahi tawakkaltu ala Allah, laa hawla wa laa quwwata illah billah" (In the name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah, there is no power or strength except with Allah) upon leaving their house, they are told, "You are guided, taken care of, and protected." As a result, the devil distances himself from that person. The devil then says to other devils, "What can you do against a person who is guided, taken care of, and protected?" Thus, the devil becomes disappointed and loses hope in leading them astray. There is an incident involving a companion (may peace be upon him) who asked the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) whether he should trust in Allah and leave his camel untied. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised him to tie his camel and trust in Allah ﷻ. This highlights that as Muslims, we should make use of the means and blessings provided by Allah ﷻ, but ultimately, we should turn to Allah ﷻ alone and place our complete trust in Him. Therefore, it is important for us to adopt the means available to us in our daily lives, while maintaining unwavering trust in Allah ﷻ as the ultimate source of guidance, protection, and support.

28. Duaa is the Weapon of the Believer

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

28.1 Man's Inherent Recognition of Allah, the Exalted

Allah ﷻ has ingrained within mankind the innate recognition of Himself (tarruf). When a child enters this world, they are born on Islam with an inherent knowledge of Allah ﷻ, the Creator. However, the environment in which they are raised, and their life experiences can either nurture or hinder their connection with Allah ﷻ. If they are exposed to an environment that reinforces the belief in "La ilaha illa Allah Muhammadur Rasulullah" and they actively engage in righteous actions, they deepen their familiarity with Allah ﷻ. This familiarity has limitless potential, depending on the individual's commitment to good deeds and avoidance of sins. It is through this process that they become blessed with the closeness (kurb) to Allah ﷻ and His divine knowledge (ma'rifah). As they draw closer to Allah ﷻ through this recognition, they naturally turn to Him ﷻ for all their needs and requests. When someone truly recognizes and familiarizes themselves with Allah ﷻ, they no longer seek assistance from others but instead direct their supplications solely to Him ﷻ.

28.2 Sins Strain the Relationship with Allah, the Exalted

One whose heart is veiled by the screen of sins remains distant from recognizing Allah ﷻ. They find themselves humiliated, begging and prostrating before others, hoping that these individuals will relieve their worries. On the other hand, those fortunate enough to attain the recognition (ma'rifah) of Allah ﷻ are unable to extend their hands in supplication to anyone other than Him. This recognition and closeness to Allah ﷻ are achieved through righteous deeds, while the commitment of shirk (associating partners with Allah) and engaging in sinful acts leads one further away from Allah ﷻ. When the rust of sin tarnishes the heart, distress and worries increase. The person begins to seek help from every door, neglecting the House of Allah ﷻ. People exploit him, taking his money and corrupting his faith, yet he remains oblivious. However, upon attaining the recognition (ma'rifah) of Allah ﷻ, even when all hope seems lost, he never loses hope in Allah ﷻ. Even if the entire world abandons him, he firmly believes that his Allah ﷻ is with him. When Allah ﷻ is by his side, there is no need to worry about others.

28.3 Friends of Allah Recognize Him and Turn to Him Alone

When he finds himself surrounded by enemies, facing a level of enmity that tarnishes his honor and modesty, he recognizes that behind it all are worldly powers and means. In this difficult time, engulfed in darkness - the darkness of the night, the darkness of the water, and the darkness within the belly of a fish - this slave of Allah ﷻ, who possesses the recognition (ma'rifah) of Allah ﷻ, cries out, "Laa ilaaha illa anta subhanak" - "There is no deity worthy of worship except You; glory be

to You, O Allah." In a narration, it is mentioned that when a terminally ill person, certain of their impending death due to their sickness, recites the supplication "Laa ilaaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu minaz-zaalimeen" (There is no deity worthy of worship except You; glory be to You, indeed I have been among the wrongdoers) forty times, they will be granted the status of a martyr. When a slave attains the recognition (ma'rifah) of Allah ﷻ, they present every single request before Him ﷻ. Therefore, when a slave asks more of Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ is even more pleased with them, as it is a sign of recognition and acknowledgement of Him ﷻ. On the other hand, one who refrains from asking Allah ﷻ incurs His ﷻ anger, as it signifies a distance between the individual and Allah ﷻ. A person may possess great generosity, yet if someone repeatedly approaches them with their needs, they may become annoyed, questioning why they keep coming back. But Allah ﷻ loves the one who comes to Him in constant supplication and begging, as the act of seeking from Him is a manifestation of recognition and closeness to Him ﷻ.

"Anni massaniya 'd-durru wa anta arhammu 'r-rahimin" is a supplication that translates to "I am afflicted and who can be more merciful than You, O Allah." Every lover of Allah ﷻ and everyone who recognizes Allah ﷻ places their needs solely before Him ﷻ. A believer used to have a deep recognition of Allah ﷻ and would present all their needs before Him ﷻ. However, when the screen of sins falls upon the heart, one distances themselves from Allah ﷻ. As a result, they become bereft of the intimate knowledge of Allah ﷻ because they rarely seek His ﷻ help, and even when they do, their hope is limited. Du'a (supplication) becomes a mere formality of recited words, devoid of true sincerity. True du'a is not just about repeating words; it originates from the state and condition of the heart. It is a heartfelt connection with Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ Himself says, "Call upon Me, and I will respond to you." Du'a is considered the most significant act of worship, and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Du'a is the weapon of a believer."

28.4 Duaa is Our Protection

Duaa, the act of supplication, serves as a means of assistance during times of calamity and difficulty, and it can also serve as a preventative measure against future hardships. The Prophet ﷺ used to emphasize the importance of relying on dua, saying, "Stop the way of trials, calamities, and difficulties through dua, by beseeching Allah ﷻ earnestly." When faced with challenges, some may suggest alternative methods such as carrying multiple taweez, consuming them, placing them under pillows, or tying them around one's arms. But how can one truly trust in these practices? In contrast, Allah ﷻ assures us in the Quran with the statement, "Ammayi Yujeebul Muztarra iza da'ao wa Yakshifusso" - "Is He [not best] who responds to the desperate one when he calls upon Him and removes evil?" This divine promise highlights the tremendous power and mercy of Allah ﷻ, who responds to those who humbly seek His ﷻ help and relieves them from their difficulties. How powerful and effective is this spiritual practice (sof making dua) and this talisman (of dua)!

Unfortunately, the true recognition and connection with Allah ﷻ have diminished, leading people to wander from door to door seeking assistance. The awareness of Allah ﷻ's presence and the practice of calling upon Him ﷻ have dwindled. However, Allah ﷻ reminds us that when His ﷻ slaves inquire about Him, they should be informed that He ﷻ is very near (qareeb) to them. The word "qareeb" cannot be aptly translated, but it signifies Allah's ﷻ closeness, surpassing even that of the jugular vein. Therefore, when calling upon Allah ﷻ, it is crucial to do so with unwavering trust and belief in His ﷻ absolute power and control over all matters. He ﷻ holds the keys to all treasures, and if it is meant for us, it will come from Him ﷻ alone. When we approach Allah ﷻ with this attitude of complete reliance and faith, we will find that our supplications are answered.

28.5 Conditions for Acceptance of Duaa

When a person sincerely asks Allah ﷻ with proper etiquette, they will immediately feel a sense of contentment in their heart, indicating that their plea has been heard. It is similar to when one contacts the relevant authority over the phone; even though the task is not yet completed, they feel content knowing that it will be taken care of. Likewise, when one reaches out to Allah ﷻ through duaa, the acceptance is demonstrated as a sign of contentment. However, the crucial factor is that duaa must be made, not merely recited. Nowadays, the problem lies in reciting duaa without truly making it. Duaa should be made with complete trust and belief, ensuring that the subject of the duaa is correct and there are no barriers hindering its acceptance.

It is like saying that an animal will die from a gunshot. Now, if someone holds the bullets in their hand and throws them at the animal, not even a bird will be affected because they have not placed the bullet where it should be placed. Duaa has an effect, but the person making the duaa must also possess the strength and conviction (taaqat) that comes from firm belief. This is the second condition. The third condition is that the weapon itself is good and the bullets are placed correctly, but there should be no barriers between the person making duaa and their target. Many times, the subject of the duaa is appropriate, and the person makes duaa with utmost humility, but then they consume forbidden (haram) food. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "A person embarks on a long journey, with disheveled hair and calls out, 'O Lord, O Lord!' while wearing haram clothes, eating haram food, and drinking haram. How will their duaa be accepted?" Therefore, it is essential to ensure that there are no barriers in between the one making duaa and their supplication.

Many times, a person makes duaa in the most auspicious places where duaa is highly accepted, such as during a journey or in the vicinity of the Kaaba. However, their sins act as formidable barriers that prevent their duaa from being accepted. If I were to stand in the company of someone's enemy and seek their assistance, I would not be helped because I would be aligning myself with their adversary. But if I were to stand among their friends, assistance would readily come my way. Every act of disobedience to Allah ﷻ reflects the characteristics and qualities inherited from His ﷻ enemies. Thus, if someone persists in their sinful ways, they find themselves positioned alongside Allah's ﷻ adversaries.

To experience the acceptance of duaa, one must transition to the ranks of Allah's ﷻ friends, repenting sincerely from their sins, and witness how He ﷻ responds to their supplications. Engaging in the same transgressions as Allah's ﷻ enemies while standing in their ranks, and then claiming that one's duaa is not being accepted, is a contradiction. Instead, come to the ranks of Allah's ﷻ friends, beseech Him ﷻ with unwavering trust and belief, and witness the answers that unfold. The Prophet ﷺ has indeed conveyed that Allah ﷻ continues to respond to duaa until the slave says, "I am making duaa, but my duaa is not being accepted." It is at this point that the duaa begins to rebound and return to the supplicant.

When one is blessed with the recognition (maarifat) of Allah ﷻ, they humbly present every need of their life before Him ﷻ. Allah's Prophet ﷺ said, "Even if my shoelace breaks, I seek the help of Allah ﷻ." Every single thing, no matter how small or large, should be sought from Allah ﷻ. Developing a habit of asking Allah ﷻ is crucial. By doing so, we will find salvation from all matters. When one gains access to the door of Allah ﷻ, they will no longer be in need of anyone else. On the other hand, for one whose access is closed, they will remain a beggar wherever they

go. Therefore, let us establish the habit of seeking only from Allah ﷻ, approaching Him ﷻ with humility, earnestly beseeching Him ﷻ, and allowing our supplications to be lengthy.

There are specific times when dua is readily accepted, such as during the time of Tahajjud (the pre-dawn voluntary prayer), after the Fajr salah (obligatory prayer), between the call to prayer (Azan) and the commencement of the prayer (Iqaamat), at the end of the day (i.e., before Maghrib). These are special moments of dua acceptance. These are the times when we particularly desire something from Allah ﷻ. However, if we make dua at other times with full concentration, Allah ﷻ will not deprive us of His response.

28.6 Dua is the Essence of Worship

Allah ﷻ is Wise, Knowledgeable, and Merciful. Sometimes, when a servant turns to Allah ﷻ in repentance, standing among His ﷻ righteous friends and making dua with firm belief, Allah ﷻ accepts their supplication without any doubt. However, being the King, Wise, All-Knowing, and Merciful, instead of granting the exact thing they asked for, Allah ﷻ gives them something even better. Just like a mother who, when her child asks for a chocolate, gives them a superior apple. Allah ﷻ is more merciful than a mother, fully aware of His servants' needs and requests, and He ﷻ knows the wisdom behind granting anything.

So, Allah ﷻ employs various ways to accept the dua of His ﷻ servants. Therefore, it is essential to make dua regularly and abundantly. In fact, dua increases one's recognition (maarifat) of Allah ﷻ. When a person receives something multiple times, they come to realize that this is where they receive it from. Their connection with Allah ﷻ strengthens, and they experience His closeness. That is why the Prophet ﷺ used to say, "Dua is the essence of all worship." In this act of slavery, the servant humbles themselves, acknowledges their neediness, confesses the greatness of Allah ﷻ, and proclaims His ﷻ majesty. It is a complete expression of servitude. When a servant beseeches Allah ﷻ and earnestly asks Him ﷻ, Allah ﷻ loves these styles and expressions of His ﷻ servants. He ﷻ loves it even more. Therefore, let this be our way of making dua, adopting these styles and expressions with sincerity and devotion.

28.7 A Special Duaa Taught by Our Beloved Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ made numerous supplications, to the extent that there is a collection of his ﷺ duaas in hadith literature. He ﷺ would make dua for every situation, and these prayers possess a beauty and excellence that only Allah's ﷻ Prophet ﷺ could articulate. Once, Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the Prophet ﷺ to teach him a dua that he could recite at all times. The Prophet ﷺ instructed him to say the following dua: "Allahumma inni as'alukal afwa wal aafiyata fid dunya wal aakhirah." It means: "O Allah! I ask for Your forgiveness (by this, one approaches the ranks of His ﷻ friends and then makes the request), grant me well-being in both the worlds." What a magnificent dua that encompasses everything in a few simple words. The well-being of the dunya (worldly life) includes good health, righteous children, sustenance, family, and successful trade. The well-being of the aakhirah (hereafter) is well known.

In the current times of trials and tribulations, it is essential to make this dua a habit. Seek forgiveness and ask for well-being: "Forgive me and grant me well-being, forgive me and grant me well-being." If this dua is accepted at any time, then praise be to Allah, you have attained

fulfillment. Your purpose is accomplished. If Allah ﷻ grants you well-being, then no one can harm you in the least.

28.8 Heed to Allah's Proclamation

The Prophet ﷺ used to say, "If the entire jinn and mankind were to gather together to harm you, they would not be able to harm you except by the will of Allah ﷻ. And if the entire jinn and mankind were to gather together to benefit you, they would not be able to benefit you except by the will of Allah ﷻ." Therefore, knock on the door of Allah ﷻ and knock on it frequently, seeking His ﷻ help in every aspect of your life. There is immense pleasure in asking Allah ﷻ because the treasures of everything are found at His ﷻ door. He ﷻ possesses the treasures of both worlds: the treasure of honor, well-being, health, children, peace, comfort, relationships, and every single thing. So ask Him ﷻ and present your needs before Him ﷻ.

However, it is crucial that you approach the ranks of His ﷻ friends before making your request. Once, a wise individual asked, "Why do people go to others besides Allah ﷻ, present their needs before them, sacrifice animals in their names, and prostrate to them? It is because they do not want to change their lives and believe that their needs can be fulfilled without changing their ways." If someone desires to approach Allah ﷻ, they must come to the ranks of His ﷻ friends, but they may be unwilling to do so. They do not want to abandon their sins or make the effort to join the ranks of His ﷻ friends. Instead, they simply wish for their needs to be fulfilled by offering sweets in someone's name or wearing amulets. They seek the fulfillment of their needs without changing their ways. However, if they were to come to the door of Allah ﷻ by joining the ranks of His ﷻ friends, they would no longer be dependent on anyone else.

Allah ﷻ Himself declares, "Call upon Me, and I will respond to you." When Allah ﷻ promises to accept our requests and fulfill our needs, why do we not believe in Him ﷻ? The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven of this world and asks, 'Is there anyone seeking his needs to be fulfilled, so that I may fulfill them? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?'" If a ruler in power were to declare, "If anyone comes to me with all their requests and needs by tomorrow at this time, I will fulfill them within an hour," we would witness long queues of people seeking their desires. Why? Because people know that ruler and recognize his authority. They would eagerly line up before him. Yet, here we have the King of all kings proclaiming and giving glad tidings through the truthful words of His beloved Prophet ﷺ, "Is there anyone who wants their needs to be fulfilled?" How many of us wake up in the night? How many of us line up before Allah ﷻ? These earthly rulers have no power over us, but we can imagine the lines that would form. And here we have the King of all kings making this proclamation.

The truth is that we have not truly recognized Allah ﷻ. If we had a true acquaintance with Allah ﷻ, do you think a single night would pass without us asking Him ﷻ? We would awaken and seek Him ﷻ. However, our hearts have become stained with sins, and this has severed our acquaintance with Allah ﷻ. Our disobedience has tarnished our relationship with Him ﷻ. That is why we lack the ability to awaken for our Master, and often our hands do not even rise before Allah ﷻ. Years and years of our lives pass by without a single moment where we ask Allah ﷻ with complete trust and firm belief. Not even once. And even if we have asked, we have failed to come to the ranks of His ﷻ friends and ask Him ﷻ.

28.9 The Etiquettes of Making Duaa

The etiquette of making duaa is to begin by praising Allah ﷻ, reciting the durood sharif (salutations upon the Prophet), and seeking His ﷻ forgiveness, thus aligning ourselves with His ﷻ friends. Only after that, we should ask for our worldly and hereafter needs. We have everything available only at His ﷻ door, and our Master is saying, "Come to me, and I am the One who fulfills your needs." Every lover of Allah ﷻ has sought only His ﷻ door, and He ﷻ has fulfilled their needs. We have the same Allah ﷻ today, present with all His power, strength, and the treasure of His ﷻ mercy and affection. He ﷻ is still the greatest of all. Allahu Akbar! When He ﷻ decides to dishonor someone, no one can honor them. When He ﷻ decrees something, no one can change that decree. When He ﷻ wills goodness for someone, no one can alter that goodness. When He ﷻ takes hold of someone, no one can save them. He ﷻ has power over every single thing. He ﷻ is the Protector, and the dominion of the heavens and the earth is solely in His ﷻ hands. Not a single movement occurs on this earth without His ﷻ permission, nor does a leaf fall from a tree without His ﷻ permission. Even a drop in the ocean does not stir without His ﷻ permission. How can my life progress without Him ﷻ? Even if all the sorcerers in the world were to gather, they cannot help without His ﷻ will. Even if all the jinn and mankind were to come together, they cannot harm me in the slightest without His ﷻ will.

Indeed, there is only one Allah ﷻ, and it is crucial to make it a habit to ask Him ﷻ. This is the greatest wazeefah (spiritual practice), the greatest taweez (amulet), and the greatest protection. Duaa serves as a shield against calamities that have befallen us and those that are yet to come. The Prophet ﷺ clearly stated that duaa is the weapon of the believer. It is through duaa that we seek protection from Allah ﷻ.

That is why when the Prophet ﷺ would enter his house, he would make duaa, and when he would leave his house, he would make duaa. The Prophet ﷺ said, "When a slave enters his house and makes duaa while remembering Allah ﷻ, and when he eats by saying Bismillah (in the name of Allah), the shaitan (devil) says to his companions that they have no place to stay or eat." This is because the person has sought protection from Allah ﷻ, and they have been safeguarded, leaving no place for the devils to reside or find sustenance. However, when a person does not remember Allah ﷻ upon entering their house or when eating, the shaitan says to his companions, "Come, all of you, for we have found a place to stay and eat." This highlights the importance of seeking Allah's ﷻ protection through duaa in every aspect of our lives.

28.10 Leave The Sins and The Duaa Will Be Your Fortress and The Weapon

It is true that we often neglect the importance of duaa, and as a result, the shayateen (devils) find their way into our homes. We may experience difficulties and attribute them to "bandish" (obstruction), stains of blood on clothes, clothes getting burnt, or holes forming in them. These occurrences can be attributed to the influence of shayateen, as they have been given power over such matters. I can assure you that when you gradually remove sins from your home, increase the recitation of the Quran within your home, encourage the inhabitants of the house to always maintain wudhu (ablution), and make duaa upon entering and leaving the house, you will witness the protection that Allah ﷻ grants. If we are unwilling to remove the sins from our homes, how can we expect to receive protection? When in every corner of our house, there is food for the shayateen, and on every table spread, we have offerings for them; when our homes are filled with the presence of sinful elements like dirty magazines and music, then how can we expect protection from the

shayateen? Duaa, however, acts as a fortress. When one engages in sincere supplication, they enter a protected fortress.

The morning and evening supplications taught by our beloved Prophet ﷺ have a tremendous effect. There is a story of a companion (may Allah be pleased with him) who, upon hearing that his house had burned down, confidently declared, "My house cannot be burnt." When questioned about his certainty, he explained that he had heard from the truthful tongue of the Messenger ﷺ that whoever recites a particular supplication while leaving the house, Allah ﷻ protects their house. He had unwavering faith in this promise. We too have the same Allah ﷻ present today, with all His strength and power. However, our weakness lies in our lack of trust in Allah ﷻ. Our hearts often lack true conviction; our supplications become mere recitations instead of heartfelt appeals. We have neglected the practice of standing among the righteous friends of Allah ﷻ and making supplications in their company. Therefore, my friends, hold on to these supplications and through them, you will find protection. Your love for Allah ﷻ will grow, your connection with Him ﷻ will strengthen, and your heart will experience peace and contentment. You will be safeguarded from the influence of the Shayateen (devils).

28.11 Summary:

1. Every individual is created with the inherent capability to know and connect with Allah ﷻ. The recognition and closeness to Allah ﷻ have boundless potential, and they expand as one strives to obey Allah ﷻ and refrain from sinful actions.
2. Engaging in shirk (associating partners with Allah) and other sins hinders one's understanding of Allah ﷻ, leading to dependence on others and remaining in a state of neediness. Conversely, those who have recognized Allah ﷻ present their needs only before Him ﷻ, experiencing contentment and peace.
3. Duaa (supplication) should be made in the company of righteous friends of Allah ﷻ, repenting from sins, as sins are characteristics of Allah's ﷻ enemies.
4. There are three conditions for duas to be accepted: complete trust in Allah ﷻ, having a correct subject for the supplication, and removing barriers, such as sins, through sincere repentance.
5. Duaa is the essence of worship, and Allah ﷻ loves those who make duas as it demonstrates complete dependence on Him ﷻ and acknowledges His ﷻ greatness and majesty.
6. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ had the habit of making duas to Allah ﷻ in every situation, from the smallest to the greatest matters. The Prophet ﷺ taught beautiful duas that could only be taught by the Messenger of Allah.
7. Allah ﷻ guarantees that He ﷻ answers duas and holds all treasures in His ﷻ hands. Nothing can benefit or harm us without His ﷻ will. He ﷻ is full of wisdom, knowledge, awareness, and mercy, and grants the best to His ﷻ slaves.
8. Duaa is the greatest practice and a powerful weapon and fortress for the believer. The supplications taught by the Prophet ﷺ have a tremendous effect.
9. Duas should come from the heart, not just be recited with the tongue, as duas reflect the state of the heart.
10. Developing the habit of making long duas leads to recognition of Allah ﷻ and closeness to Allah ﷻ, which is the greatest blessing for a servant.

May Allah ﷻ help us to act upon the good that we hear and preach. Ameen.

29. The Secret to a Pleasurable and Peaceful life

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The worldly man, always in prison and difficulty, is distinguished from the religious man. The religious man consistently prioritizes his faith, regardless of worldly gain or loss. Conversely, the worldly man prefers the material world, disregarding the preservation or forfeiture of his religious beliefs, thus failing to experience the serene tranquility. Only the fortunate slaves of Allah have the privilege of attaining true peace and contentment. They possess a skill, the secret to their liberation from sorrow. The root cause of sorrow lies in unforeseen circumstances, unveiling the reality of anguish and distress. The righteous slaves of Allah ﷻ sever this very root by abstaining from placing expectations on worldly matters. Therefore, why should there be any sorrow? Hazrat Gangohi (RA) advised, "Do not expect anything from anyone." He then inquired of his disciples, "What are your thoughts about me?" They responded, "You are our guardian and benefactor, and we are immensely grateful for your kindness." Hazrat Gangohi (RA) solemnly remarked, "Even in me, do not harbor any expectations; place your trust solely in Allah ﷻ." If the concept of Tawheed permeates every fiber of a person's being, how could they possibly have expectations from anyone?

There is divine wisdom in whatever Allah ﷻ decrees for you. It can be likened to a mother applying medicinal drops to soothe her child's painful eyes. Initially, the child may cry out in pain and feel angry towards the mother. However, once the child gains understanding, they pray for their mother's well-being. Similarly, the pain and difficulties that Allah ﷻ bestows upon you are ultimately for your benefit and welfare in both this world and the hereafter. These trials are essential for us to turn to Him ﷻ and seek His guidance. Without facing hardships in this world, we would not be adequately prepared for the challenges of the afterlife. If we were to pass away without experiencing these trials, our purification would occur through the fire of Hell rather than the tests of this world. It is far better for us to undergo purification here and now. I bring you glad tidings that the punishment of Hell serves as a means of purifying Muslims rather than merely punishing them. Just as a greasy lamp is cleansed by burning it, we, as the lamps of Allah, also have impurities that can be cleansed through the fire of Hell. By purifying our impurities in this world, we can avoid further purification in the hereafter. Allah ﷻ purifies Muslims by sending them trials and difficulties. So, I ask you, is this not ultimately for your own good?

Trials and difficulties have a beneficial impact on both the hereafter and the worldly life, as they serve to rectify and improve a person's conduct and behavior. Through these trials, one develops a good nature and is protected from arrogance, the traits of Pharaoh, and devilish tendencies. The blessings embedded within trials lead to humility, submissiveness, and a realization of one's position when Allah ﷻ admonishes through difficulties. Having upright conduct brings greater peace to an individual, whereas a person with a bad nature brings sadness to others and is perceived as a villain. Trials and tribulations unveil the reality of the world, prompting a person to recognize

that it is not a realm to which the heart should be attached. This realization represents profound knowledge, and the unveiling of the world's reality serves as a gateway to further knowledge. Without attaining this knowledge, one remains immersed in ignorance, which is a significant flaw. May Allah ﷻ grant us all the guidance and knowledge we need. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 24.03.2017.

30. The Profound Connection between Sabr and Eeman

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Sabr (patience) is an integral part of faith (eeman). It holds a crucial position in the life of a believer, comparable to the importance of the head to the body. Without sabr, eeman cannot truly exist. In a hadith, it is mentioned that the one who is granted sabr has indeed received the greatest blessing. Similarly, eeman is also regarded as the greatest blessing. While it may initially appear contradictory, upon reflection, the relationship between the two becomes clear.

Our understanding of sabr is often limited, as we tend to associate it solely with remaining silent in times of grief and loss. However, the concept of sabr is profound and astonishing. It encompasses having control over forbidden desires and impulses. An example can be seen in the case of Abu Talib, the uncle of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Throughout his life, he had immense love for the Prophet ﷺ and faced enmity from others due to his support. During the Meccan boycott of the Prophet ﷺ and the believers, Abu Talib stood by his nephew's side, even though he did not embrace Islam.

On his deathbed, when the Prophet ﷺ urged Abu Talib to utter the words of faith, Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab prevented him from accepting Islam. Abu Talib expressed to his beloved nephew that he recognized the Prophet's truthfulness and acknowledged Islam as the best religion. However, he feared that people would assume he accepted Islam out of fear of death. Consequently, Abu Talib passed away without embracing Islam. Despite his refusal to convert, Abu Talib's love and support for the Prophet ﷺ are remembered with respect.

This incident highlights the significance of sabr, as it was the lack of sabr over his own desires and the fear of people's opinions that prevented Abu Talib from accepting Islam. (It is crucial for us to understand that even someone as noble as Abu Talib faced this challenge. Sabr requires inner strength and perseverance, especially when faced with societal pressures and personal desires).

If we reflect on our own lives, we can observe that when we abandon obedience to Allah ﷻ, it is often due to our lack of sabr (patience) with our own desires and concerns about societal opinions. For instance, when someone is asked to give up engaging in interest-based transactions, they may fear the potential decrease in wealth and the change in their social status, such as going from owning multiple factories to operating a single shop. This fear of society's judgment and the lack

of sabr on their own desires can lead them to continue engaging in practices that they know are prohibited. This lack of sabr can result in a loss of the essence of faith (eeman).

It is evident that sabr is strongly connected to eeman. Sabr is displayed when we refrain from seeking revenge out of anger when someone harms us, particularly through their words. Once someone has spoken hurtful words, the matter is in our hands, and we have a choice: we can use it for the benefit of the hereafter by forgiving them, or we can squander the opportunity by seeking revenge. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never sought revenge for personal reasons throughout his life. When a person establishes a strong connection with Allah ﷻ, the opinions and words of people become insignificant. Neither their praise nor their insults have an impact. Attaining this elevated status means that the people of Allah ﷻ are solely concerned with their standing in the eyes of Allah ﷻ, fearing any form of humiliation in His sight.

This reminds me of the magicians during the time of Prophet Musa (AS). When Pharaoh threatened to kill them for accepting Islam, it did not bother them. Similarly, there is a story about a dervish who visited a king and said something that offended him. When the king became angry and threatened to throw the dervish into prison, the dervish laughed. Perplexed, the king asked him why he was laughing, and the dervish replied, "I do not know how long I will live, and it does not matter to me whether I spend the rest of my life inside or outside of prison. Life after death is not in your hands, so I have no worries."

Hazrat Gangohi (RA) was once compared to Imam Abu Hanifa (RA). When Hazrat Gangohi (RA) did not write any letters for a long time, someone asked him about it. He humbly responded that he did not consider himself worthy of saying anything good. However, he mentioned that he was in a state where he did not care about what people said about him. In today's world, we often focus on the faults of others without considering our own faults. This inability to see our own faults is a major flaw. Just like a person who knows they are sick will seek medication, those who are unaware of their sickness are heading towards destruction. When we recognize our own faults, the faults of others become insignificant in our eyes. It is like someone who has wounds all over their body and is in extreme pain; a scratch on someone else's body will not affect them.

There was a poet who was not religious, but after his death, someone ﷻ him in the highest level of paradise. When asked about it, he explained that before his death, he uttered the following words: "O Allah! I remained heedless throughout my life, but I had faith in You, Your Messenger, and a few couplets." By the generosity of Allah, he was forgiven and granted salvation. This shows that such outcomes are possible, and we should never underestimate others. Instead, we should focus on our own faults and strive to improve ourselves.

When a person establishes a strong connection with Allah ﷻ, their spiritual vision becomes sharper, enabling them to recognize their own faults more clearly. They become preoccupied with self-improvement and refrain from focusing on the faults of others. Even a minor flaw within themselves causes them distress and restlessness. It is similar to someone who becomes more inclined towards cleanliness and becomes highly concerned about even the smallest stain on their clothes. There was a time when they were indifferent to such matters, but now they are deeply bothered by them. Likewise, there was a time when missing a prayer did not affect a person much, but as they progress in their spiritual journey, even missing the first row or the opening takbeer becomes a cause for worry and concern.

When we witness other believers going through trials and tribulations, we should not assume that it is solely due to their sins. Instead, we should understand that Allah ﷻ is elevating their status through these trials. Just as gold is purified through intense heat, getting rid of impurities, and shining brightly, Allah ﷻ purifies believers by subjecting them to trials. In a hadith, it is mentioned that Paradise is a place of immense blessings and enjoyment, yet it is surrounded by trials and tribulations. Conversely, Hell is the most terrible place, filled with torment, yet it is surrounded by desires and luxuries. The trials and tribulations experienced by believers in this world are actually gifts leading to Paradise.

Therefore, we should maintain a good opinion (husn-e-dhan) when thinking about other Muslims and their trials, refraining from assuming their sins as the cause. However, when we ourselves go through trials, it is important to reflect upon our own sins and turn to Allah ﷻ in sincere repentance.

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It is indeed important to surround ourselves with pious and knowledgeable individuals, as their company can have a positive impact on our spiritual development. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was asked about the kind of people one should sit with, and he provided three characteristics to consider:

1. When you see their face, it reminds you of Allah ﷻ. (This implies that the person's appearance reflects piety and devotion to Allah. Being in their presence serves as a reminder of our Creator).
2. They speak good things, including discussions related to religious knowledge, and abstain from unnecessary talks. (This indicates that the person engages in meaningful and beneficial conversations, focusing on matters of faith and righteousness. They avoid idle gossip and vain discussions).

3. Their actions remind you of the Hereafter. (Their behavior and conduct reflect a deep awareness and consciousness of the ultimate goal, which is the attainment of Paradise and the pleasure of Allah ﷻ).

When one encounters such an individual, they should be considered truly blessed and should sit in their gathering. If we search for individuals resembling Junaid Baghdadi or Shibi, we will never come across such people. It is sufficient to find individuals who possess the aforementioned qualities, without seeking those who perform extraordinary feats such as flying in the air or walking on the sea. Such individuals are rare, and if we continue to wait for them, we will remain stagnant in our current state. May Allah ﷻ assist us in implementing the knowledge we acquire and bless us with righteous companionship. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 3.02.2012.

31. Safeguard Eeman

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

There is no doubt that Allah ﷻ emphasizes righteous deeds (amanu amilu salihati), watawasaw bil haq, watawasaw bis sabr (except those who believe and do righteous deeds and enjoin one another to truth and enjoin one another to patience) together with eeman in His ﷻ kalam. Eeman is a precious jewel, and it is through righteous deeds that it is protected and preserved. The sins and disobedience of Allah ﷻ act as adversaries to this wealth, causing it to gradually diminish. When a person persists in sin and fails to discourage others from committing sins in their presence, the aversion to sin slowly fades from their heart. They become weak, viewing sins as insignificant and ordinary, which amounts to disbelief. When sins no longer register as sins in their eyes, and they fail to realize that they have transgressed Allah ﷻ' s commandments, they are completely devoid of the light of eeman. It is akin to a blind person who cannot perceive the difference between a stick and a snake placed before them, demonstrating a complete absence of sight. If they had even a trace of sight, they would distinguish between the stick and the snake, reacting with caution and restlessness upon encountering the snake. Similarly, when a person loses the light of eeman, they are unable to differentiate between a righteous deed and a sin, oblivious to their own actions. This is a sign that they have been emptied of the light of eeman.

The light of eeman possesses such strength that it can extinguish even the fires of Hell. If this is the effect it has on Hellfire, then we can imagine its impact on this worldly life, which holds no real value. When a person carries the light of eeman in their heart, the flames of worldly distress and worries cannot touch them. If one desires to be free from distress and worries, the only condition is to have this light of eeman in their heart. Once attained, Hazrat affirms, "By Allah, the peace and tranquility of both worlds are only for us." The Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate, "O Allah, I seek from You a faith that will saturate my heart and a true conviction that will make me

realize that nothing can befall me except what You have decreed for me. Grant me contentment in whatever You have given me." This supplication emphasizes the desire for a deep faith that permeates the heart and a genuine belief that nothing can happen except by the will of Allah. It also highlights the importance of finding contentment in whatever Allah has bestowed upon us.

To achieve this contentment of the heart, we must view the world through the lens of eeman. We must recognize that Allah ﷻ is not only the All-Wise Judge (Al-Haakim) but also the All-Wise and Merciful (Al-Hakeem, Ar-Rahman, and Ar-Rahim). We should trust that there is wisdom in whatever Allah has provided and bestowed upon us. We can learn from the example of our beloved Prophet ﷺ, who, despite being the best of creations and a Prophet, would still ask for an increase in eeman. We cannot even fathom the immense weight of his ﷺ eeman. By seeking and nurturing the light of eeman in our hearts, we can find solace, contentment, and true peace in both this world and the hereafter.

When we attain the light of eeman, which has the power to extinguish even the fires of Hell, we will be free from grief and sorrow. However, there is one grief that we should seek and embrace, and that is the yearning for the meeting with Allah ﷻ. When we taste this grief, we will find it to be a delightful experience. It will empower us to overcome every calamity that befalls us. Unfortunately, many of us are far from attaining this precious wealth. Those fortunate enough to acquire it perceive the insignificance of this worldly life. The path to achieving this light of eeman, through the grace of Allah ﷻ, revolves around two key concepts: zikr (remembrance) of Allah ﷻ and fikr (thoughtfulness) about meeting Allah ﷻ. Fikr involves contemplating before every action, ensuring that we do not engage in anything that may lead us into significant trouble. We should carefully consider the righteousness and legality of our actions and words, seeking to please Allah ﷻ and avoiding His displeasure. Fikr should be constantly present in our hearts. Additionally, we should regularly take account of our own deeds. If we recognize any act of disobedience from ourselves, we should immediately turn to Allah ﷻ in repentance. We should contemplate the punishment that Allah ﷻ may inflict, which will cultivate a sense of chastity (hayaa) and fear (khauf). Similarly, we should contemplate the blessings of Jannah, as it will ignite love and desire within us.

In today's corrupted society, the concept of progress has been greatly misunderstood by many people. They equate progress with relentless movement forward, without considering whether it violates the rights of others or if it truly serves a meaningful purpose. In the past, people sought power to control and protect themselves from oppression. But now, individuals desire power not only over the earthly realm (dunya) but also over the heavens. They pursue this blind ambition through the reckless expenditure of money and even the shedding of innocent blood. Some even strive to assert control over celestial bodies like the moon. On one hand, people engage in research to acquire knowledge, but on the other hand, they squander millions upon millions of dollars on worthless endeavors, disguising them as research. They are driven by a constant need to keep moving, and they take pride in sacrificing their lives for meaningless pursuits. It is akin to consuming poison and proudly considering it an act of bravery. This behavior is nothing short of foolishness. Similarly, many individuals waste their time on pointless pursuits without understanding what is truly necessary, the purpose of their creation, and the importance of preparing for the hereafter (akhirah). People seem to disregard the pursuit of earning rewards for eternal life in the hereafter, which is the true essence of existence. This worldly life serves to gain rewards in the akhirah and safeguard oneself from the punishment of Hell. Sadly, we observe that

we are squandering our precious time on worthless endeavors instead of focusing on what truly matters.

The common accusation that Muslims are facing today is that Islam is biased and looks down upon people. However, Islam does not support such notions, as it upholds the principles of fairness and equality. Additionally, Islam recognizes the importance of "ghayrah," which is a sense of respect and honor. This concept is not unique to Islam but is inherent in human nature. For instance, if someone speaks ill of our mother, we will naturally distance ourselves from them out of a sense of respect. This does not make us biased or narrow-minded; rather, it demonstrates our sense of ghayrah. Muslims hold immense love and reverence for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, to the extent that we would willingly sacrifice countless mothers in his honor. It is only natural for us to distance ourselves from those who oppose or insult the Prophet ﷺ. This is not an act of bias or looking down upon people; it stems from our deep sense of ghayrah. We cannot be expected to befriend those who harbor enmity towards the Prophet ﷺ. Unfortunately, it is disheartening to see some Muslims imitating the ways of non-believers, disregarding the clear guidance provided by Islam in all aspects of life, including attire, manners, and more. In doing so, we have lost our sense of ghayrah for the Prophet ﷺ and neglected the righteous deeds he taught us. We have turned away from the one who was sent as a mercy and guide to all of humanity by our Creator.

When it comes to the aspect of zikr, Allah ﷻ states in Surah Al-Mulk (67:2), "He who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed." Here, Allah ﷻ emphasizes the importance of "ahsanul amala" (better in deeds) rather than "aksaru amalu" (more in deeds). The focus lies on the quality rather than the quantity of our actions. Merely performing abundant deeds without sincerity or adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ holds little value. Conversely, even a small act carried out in accordance with the principles of Shariah and while fulfilling the rights of family members holds great significance. Progress is attained through the quality of our deeds, not the quantity. Often, we engage in optional acts of worship (nafil) while neglecting our responsibilities towards our sick parents, spouse, or other family members. This renders the nafil acts ineffective and devoid of quality. The Black Stone (Hajar-e-Aswad) holds various virtues, one of which is that it reveals the true nature of the one who kisses it. If a person does not undergo a positive change after performing Hajj, it indicates that their Hajj may not have been accepted.

When we find ourselves more inclined to lecture others in matters of religion, while lacking enjoyment in our personal worship and seclusion with Allah ﷻ, we should recognize that it is our ego (nafs) driving us, and it leads to the destruction of the heart. While it is true that remembering Allah ﷻ while walking or sitting can have some impact on us, the true essence of worship is experienced in seclusion. If our souls are not affected during solitary worship, it is unlikely to have any impact on others when we lecture them. This indicates a decay of the heart. If guiding the Muslims was not obligatory for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he would have likely preferred to devote himself solely to seclusion. We witness how he ﷺ would spend days in the Cave of Hira, engrossed in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. Even today, reaching that place of his meditation is difficult. So, even if we struggle to find seclusion with Allah ﷻ when our hearts are weak, we must strive. If we cannot sit for 10 minutes, let us start by conversing with Allah ﷻ for 5 minutes, and if we cannot sit for 30 minutes, then let us sit for 15 minutes. By consistently making this effort for a few days, Allah ﷻ, by His mercy, will transform our hearts. We will become restless when we neglect seclusion with our Creator, and we will find joy in our worship. May Allah ﷻ fill our hearts with the light of faith (noor of eeman) and grant us love and fear of Allah ﷻ. Ameen.

32. Preserve The Noor of The Heart

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

When a few drops of water fall on iron, a heavy metal filled with strength, it gets rusted, changes its color, and loses its inner strength. Similarly, our minor sins and bad company can be compared to that water. These influences first affect our outer appearance, causing us to deviate from the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. We may begin by neglecting practices such as keeping a beard, wearing hijab, or showing laziness in our salah. Over time, these influences can lead us to abandon salah altogether and engage in forbidden acts, such as smoking, drinking, disobedience to parents, and other immoral activities. The influence of the West has played a role in changing our outward appearance, causing rust in our hearts, and weakening our inner strength.

Reclaiming our inner strength is indeed possible, but it requires two important steps. Firstly, just as rust needs to be removed from iron through polishing, we must sincerely repent to Allah ﷻ to cleanse our hearts from sins. Often, we tend to hold onto certain sins while trying to let go of others, which hinders our progress. This requires steadfastness (istiqamat) in our faith. Merely painting over the iron without removing the rust will not protect its strength, similarly, if we desire firmness in our faith, we must begin by sincerely repenting to Allah ﷻ and making a resolution to lead a sin-free life, seeking His help, and submitting to Him completely.

Secondly, we need to apply the paint that will protect our hearts and keep them from rusting again. This painting comes in the form of righteous company. Surrounding ourselves with pious individuals will inspire us to practice the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet ﷺ and encourage us to engage in more good deeds. By immersing ourselves in a virtuous environment, we can shine both inwardly and outwardly. In today's world, where fitna (temptation) and negative influences are pervasive in schools, colleges, and workplaces, it is only natural that we may become susceptible to rusting. Therefore, it becomes crucial for us to polish our hearts and safeguard ourselves by seeking the company of the righteous, ensuring that our surroundings do not weaken our resolve.

If we consider a newly made clay pot with raw mud, adding water to it would cause the mud to dissolve and create holes in the pot. However, when the mud is strengthened and no longer raw, adding water to it does not result in holes; instead, it retains the water and even cools it. Similarly, when we ourselves become spiritually strong, the company we keep will also be influenced towards righteousness. Just as bad company can have a negative influence on us, we have the potential to positively influence others with our righteousness. The key lies in our own strength and steadfastness.

When we fill our hearts with love and fear of Allah ﷻ, the influence of evil will have no effect on us. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ likened our hearts to iron, emphasizing that they can get rusted. To polish our hearts, we should frequently contemplate the reality of death, which softens the heart.

Sadly, today, we prioritize expensive schools and colleges for worldly education, considering it a status symbol. However, when it comes to our religious education, we either completely neglect it or seek out teachers who charge very little for Quranic instruction. We tend to overlook the importance of quality in our religious education.

When we perform Salah with true devotion and concentration (khushu), our hearts are illuminated with divine light (noor). However, engaging in useless and frivolous conversations diminishes this light. In Surah Al-Mu'minun, Allah ﷻ speaks of the believers who will be successful. After mentioning the importance of Salah, Allah ﷻ highlights the characteristics of these successful believers: they offer their prayers with humility and reverence, and they actively avoid indulging in idle and sinful talk. They turn away from Al-Laghw, which includes any form of impure, false, or vain speech that goes against what Allah has forbidden. By refraining from such behavior, the believers preserve the purity and sanctity of their hearts, enabling them to attain success in this life and the Hereafter.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Successful indeed are the believers.

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

Those who offer their Salat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ

And those who turn away from Al-Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden).

Imam Ghazali Rahimahullah, a renowned scholar, emphasized that if we immerse ourselves in reciting the Quran, performing voluntary prayers, and engaging in other virtuous acts, but fail to experience any positive changes or a deep spiritual connection, it is a clear indication of a spiritual ailment within our hearts. Similar to how a congested nose fails to sense fragrance when one has a cold, a diseased heart is unable to perceive the light and beauty of righteous acts. The presence of sins in our hearts prevents us from sensing the noor, and it is baffling that we can perceive the fragrance of a flower but not the noor, which emanates a greater fragrance than anything in this world. When engaging in unnecessary talks can diminish the noor in our hearts, it serves as a reminder of the potential influence of sins. In the past, approximately 1200 Muslims would come to the mosque of Sheikh Maulana Zakarriya Rahimahullah for itikaf (seclusion in the mosque for worship). The sheikh's main instruction to them was that they were allowed to eat and sleep, but under no circumstances should he see anyone engaging in idle talk. If someone violated this instruction, they would be asked to leave as such behavior destroys the spiritual effort put into worship, extinguishing the noor (light) in their hearts.

Imagine a tank filled with water. If we open a hole at the bottom of the tank, it is inevitable that the water will drain out through that hole. Similarly, when we fill our hearts with the noor (light) of reciting the Quran and performing nafil salah, but then open our mouths for vain and unnecessary talks, we lose all the noor from our hearts. It is like opening the hole that causes the tank to become empty of water. After each salah, it is important for us to reflect on our conversations. If we realize that we have spoken unnecessarily or said something wrong, we should

seek forgiveness from Allah and make a conscious effort to remain silent unless it is necessary to speak. Gaining noor is essential but preserving that noor is even more crucial.

A man once posed a question to a sheikh, comparing the success rate of a driving center where everyone who enters becomes an excellent driver, to that of a religious gathering where only a small percentage of attendees become truly devout. The sheikh responded by highlighting the difference in demands between the two. Attending a religious gathering requires concentration, accepting advice, and engaging in jihad, which is the sincere striving of an individual to the best of their ability. Many of us fail to put in this necessary effort or fully accept the guidance provided, resulting in a lack of the desired benefits. True purification of the heart requires ongoing effort and struggle. For instance, a sheikh advised a student who struggled with immoral glances to immediately offer four units of salah (prayer) as a form of mujahida (striving). It is this continuous striving that we often lack. The more we exert ourselves in this struggle, the greater the benefits we will reap.

A retired man once approached a sheikh with a complaint that he had taken a bribe of six lakh rupees and desired purification. The sheikh advised him to return the money to its rightful owners by any means necessary. The disciple explained that he only had a house worth seven lakh rupees, to which the sheikh suggested selling the house and using the proceeds to repay the bribe. Despite the challenges faced by a retired individual, the man gathered the courage to follow the sheikh's advice. As a result, Allah ﷻ blessed him by enabling him to become a haafiz of the Quran, even in his old age. He performed Hajj, and upon his return, the sheikh encouraged him to write a book, which brought him significant financial success, sustaining him for the remainder of his life. This incident demonstrates that when we seek advice and sincerely strive to rectify our actions, Allah ﷻ assists us, suffices us, and bestows blessings upon us.

In today's world, we often engage in empty talk without corresponding actions. We claim that sustenance comes from Allah ﷻ, yet we resort to unlawful means to acquire wealth. Our words do not align with our deeds, making us liars. Although we may accumulate wealth through illicit means, we ultimately end up spending it on doctors and lawyers. We may possess children and wealth that can be passed down through generations, but Allah ﷻ will make us spiritually impoverished despite our material and familial abundance. Conversely, a person who earns a halal income, even if it is modest, will be enriched in their heart, finding tranquility and contentment. Their children will bring them solace and they will exude a peaceful and calm demeanor, evident in their countenance and lifestyle.

May Allah ﷻ help us in accepting His advice and acting upon it. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

33. The Poisonous Arrow

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has warned us that the evil glance is one of the arrows of Shaytan. When a sin is not prevalent among people, they tend to be more conscious of its severity. For instance, fornication and adultery are not common among Muslims, and thus Muslims are aware of their gravity. Similarly, when we witness someone consuming alcohol, it becomes evident that their reputation is negatively impacted. Moreover, the negative perception extends not only to the person who is drunk but also to those who choose to associate with them. However, the sin of backbiting (gheebat) has become so normalized that people indulge in it without feeling any guilt. Yet, this sin is extremely reprehensible, comparable to consuming the flesh of one's dead brother. What a repulsive act it is to consume the flesh of the deceased, resembling the behavior of animals, and even more disturbing when it involves one's own brother. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ stated that the evil glance is akin to committing adultery with the eyes, but because it has become so prevalent, people often do not take it seriously and easily fall into this sin. Even individuals who have performed Hajj are not exempt from it. The prevalence of television, magazines, and other media filled with haram images and scenes has desensitized people to this sin. However, just as consuming poison, even if one mistakes it for something sweet, will still have its poisonous effect, the evil glance remains a destructive act regardless of how normalized it has become.

When someone desires to safeguard their house, they ensure it has a strong lock. Similarly, when one seeks to protect their heart, they should safeguard their eyes. Allah (Azzawajal) has bestowed a unique ability upon the eyes - when something is brought close to them, such as a finger, the eyelids instinctively close to prevent physical harm. However, the spiritual harm caused by improper gazes is far more detrimental and requires even greater protection. Regrettably, we have disabled the mechanism of our eyelids to automatically close and protect our eyes when it comes to engaging in forbidden glances. Some individuals allow their hearts to indulge in lustful thoughts, which is equally detrimental. We must safeguard both our physical eyes and the inner eyes of our hearts. Some of us, ordinary Muslims, engage in extensive acts of worship like the righteous individuals (walis), but do you know what sets them apart from us? The pious individuals preserve their deeds, while we do not. We squander our good deeds by indulging in immoral gazes and engaging in harmful speech. This is the distinction. It is impossible to maintain steadfastness in worship when one defiles their eyes. Even if a person performs numerous prayers and other acts of worship, their face will lack radiance due to the evil gaze. This is because the one who casts evil glances brings upon themselves the curse (lanat) of Allah (Azzawajal). A person who looks with evil intent and a woman who emerges adorned with fragrance are distanced from the mercy of Allah (Azzawajal).

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ advised Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), saying, "O Ali, do not follow the first glance with another, for the first glance is forgiven while the second is not." In the mentioned hadith, our beloved Prophet ﷺ teaches us that the first glance, when it falls accidentally or unintentionally, is forgiven by Allah. However, the second glance, when it is done deliberately and intentionally, will be taken into account and carries responsibility. This profound guidance was directed towards Ali, a great Sahabi of unparalleled faith. Even if all the scholars and pious individuals of today were gathered, they could never match the spiritual status of a single Sahabi like Ali. Many people claim that they did not see with evil intentions, and by doing so, they indirectly imply that they are holier than a Sahabi like Ali (may Allah be pleased with him).

There is another incident involving the son of Abbas, who was sitting closely with the Prophet ﷺ on a camel. The spiritual light emanating from the Prophet's presence, combined with the sacred

month of Dhul-Hajj and their location in Arafat, creates a highly blessed environment. There were both men and women standing, and Fazal ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) inadvertently glanced at a woman. At that moment, the blessed Prophet ﷺ turned his face away with his blessed hands and asked, "What are you doing, Fazal?" It is important to note that this Sahabi belongs to the noble family of the Prophet ﷺ. Considering the blessed company of our beloved Prophet ﷺ, the sacred place, and the blessed month, we can imagine the virtuous atmosphere. Yet, even in such circumstances, this Sahabi was reminded about the dangers of an inappropriate glance. This incident should make us reflect on our own lives in the challenging environment we face today. A single glance has the potential to deeply affect and harm us spiritually. We must be even more cautious and vigilant than those before us. The impact of an improper glance is not easily shaken off, and its consequences can linger within us.

Some individuals claim that they can find inner calmness by looking at non-mahram individuals when their desires arise. However, this notion is flawed. Hakeemul Ummat Ashraf Ali Tanvi (RA) compares it to the disease of itching, where scratching may temporarily alleviate the discomfort but ultimately worsens the condition. Even if one finds temporary enjoyment in such actions, it does not equate to the benefits experienced by someone who maintains a healthy state. People may have witnessed the apparent pleasure derived from indulging in improper glances, which is tangible in this worldly life. However, they have never truly tasted the sweetness and contentment that comes from abstaining from forbidden glances, which resides in the heart.

Since this pleasure is unseen, it may go unnoticed by many. I urge you to refrain from this act for even a day, and you will witness the positive impact it has on your worship, be it in salah or any other form of worship. Haram glances diminish one's inclination towards acts of worship and righteous deeds. One may perform salah out of obligation and feel burdened by it. It becomes challenging for them to come to the masjid, whereas a true believer, once inside the masjid, does not wish to leave. Even when engaged in worldly affairs, they have a strong desire to be in the masjid, as they find immense pleasure in acts of worship and in the place of worship.

On the contrary, a person who persists in casting evil glances may gradually lose any inclination towards worship and, even worse, develop aversion towards good deeds and the company of righteous individuals. Allah Azzawajal may deprive them of finding pleasure in lawful means due to their engagement in unlawful acts. Hence, such a person may find other people's spouses attractive but not experience the same perception towards their own spouse.

In today's world, it may seem challenging to restrain one's eyes, but when a person understands the severity of the sin and takes the courageous step to avoid it, Allah Azzawajal will surely assist them. Allah is always appreciative of our efforts, and He promises to provide a way out and guide those who strive in His path. Here are some tips to protect oneself from this abhorrent act:

1. Develop the courage to firmly commit that even if your soul tempts you and your desires urge you, you will never cast a forbidden glance. Resolve firmly that you will never cast a forbidden glance, whether it be towards attractive men or non-mahram women.
2. When you are out and about, avoid looking into other vehicles, as it is possible that there may be non-mahram individuals inside. Always lower your gaze and refrain from looking at the faces of women, whether they are wearing a burkha or not.

3. Seek the guidance and support of a knowledgeable sheikh or mentor. One disciple asked his sheikh for help in giving up this sin, and the sheikh advised him to give five rupees in charity for every evil glance. Initially, the disciple struggled and had to give fifty rupees, which is a significant amount of money for a few days, expressing concern about his family's well-being. However, the sheikh encouraged him to have courage and continue with the prescribed charity. Eventually, the disciple was able to completely give up the forbidden glance, and every day passed without any transgression. This story highlights the importance of courage in striving against one's desires.

Courage is essential for any mujahidah (striving individual), and by taking firm steps, seeking Allah's help, and seeking guidance from righteous mentors, it is possible to overcome this challenge and protect oneself from the harm of forbidden glances.

For some, spending money is a form of struggle (mujahidah), while for others it may be performing salah or fasting. Each individual faces different challenges, and the greater the struggle, the higher the reward. If one wishes to give up this sinful act, it is important to make it difficult for the lower self. For instance, one can offer two units of voluntary prayer (nafil salah), give charity, or fast a day for every forbidden glance. Parents and husbands share the responsibility of ensuring that their female family members observe purdah (modesty). Establishing purdah within the household, especially in joint families, is crucial. It is impossible to achieve steadfastness in the religion (istiqamat) without safeguarding oneself from forbidden glances. Understanding the severity of the sin will provide the courage to abandon it. Before leaving the house, offer two units of voluntary prayer specifically with this sin in mind, seeking Allah's assistance in overcoming it. If one falls into sin, they should again perform two units of voluntary prayer and seek forgiveness from Allah. A hadith describes the evil glance as one of Satan's arrows, while another hadith likens it to a poisonous arrow. Just as a single arrow can kill, we can comprehend the grave danger posed by a poisonous arrow. May Allah help us all to refrain from committing this sin and protect us from it. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis 16.12.2011

34. Good Conduct and Character

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ once stood among the people and asked, "Shall I inform you who is the best among you?" The gathering remained silent, so the Prophet ﷺ repeated the question three times. Finally, a person spoke up and said, "O Messenger of Allah, please do tell us who is the best among us." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "The best among you is the one from whom people hope for goodness and feel secure from his evil." When this person is seen, others perceive him as virtuous and righteous. The Prophet ﷺ then said, "The worst among you is the one from whom people do not expect any good, and they do not

feel safe from his harm." Some individuals possess such noble character and conduct that by merely hearing their words, people perceive them as good-hearted. Whether they hold positions of authority, are employers, doctors, or simply attend a gathering, there is an inherent feeling that a virtuous person has arrived, and only goodness is to be expected from them. Conversely, there are others whose nature gives the impression that encountering them will bring only evil, with no expectation of any good.

The beloved Prophet ﷺ described the touchstone of a good man, stating that his beautiful character, pleasant speech, and noble conduct instill in everyone the expectation of goodness and provide security from his harm. On the other hand, the worst man is the one from whom no good is anticipated, and there is no safeguard against his evils. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ has distributed good character among you just as He has distributed provisions. Allah ﷻ grants worldly possessions to both those whom He loves and those whom He does not love. He bestows it upon His righteous servants and His enemies, upon the wicked and even the rebellious. The matter of worldly possessions is separate. However, guidance in religion is bestowed only upon those whom Allah loves. SubhanAllah, Glory be to Allah. Whoever is blessed with guidance in religion, believe me that Allah loves him. This is the most precious treasure from the court of Allah ﷻ, and the one who receives it is the most fortunate. Such a person is truly blessed, as Allah's love accompanies the gift of guidance.

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of protecting one's heart and tongue, stating that a person cannot truly be protected unless these aspects are safeguarded. In other words, one cannot be a true Muslim unless their heart and tongue reflect true Islamic values. Furthermore, a person cannot be a believer (mu'min) unless those around them, including their neighbors, are safe from their harmful actions. The Prophet ﷺ taught that a believer is characterized by love and is loved by others. There is no good in a person who does not love others and is not loved by them. Love is rooted in good character (akhlaq), which fosters affection and breaks down barriers. Conversely, bad character spreads hatred and causes harm. May Allah grant us the ability to practice what we preach and hear. Ameen. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth. May Allah bestow His blessings upon His beloved Prophet ﷺ, his family, and his noble companions. All praise and gratitude are for Allah, and all glory belongs to Him. May Allah forgive us all. Ameen, Ameen, and once again Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Dars

35. Excel in Worshipping Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

35.1 The Rewards of a Worshipper

When a child is born, the call to prayer (Adhan) is recited in both of his ears. The words "Hayya 'alas-salah, hayya 'alal-falah" signify to the Muslim community that true victory and success can only be found in the worship of Allah. Success does not lie in wealth, status, or position, but rather in the worship of Allah. But what does "falah" mean? It refers to a state in which one's prayers are answered. When a person asks for ten or more things and they are granted or seeks refuge from ten or more things and is protected from them, that is "falah." Only those who worship Allah will attain true success, while others will only face humiliation.

It is important to note that we cannot fully experience the complete "falah" as defined above in this world, as it can only be fully realized in the hereafter. Allah promises that in the hereafter, we will be granted whatever we ask for, as we will be His honored guests. The magnitude of His hospitality, being the King of Kings and the Lord of the heavens and the earth, is beyond our imagination. However, in this world, Allah will grant those who worship Him a taste of its fruits. Some of these rewards include:

- ✦ The slave who sincerely worships Allah, the Exalted will be bestowed with a special radiance (noor) on their face. This radiance is a reflection of their inner state and devotion to Allah. If we compare two brothers with similar physical appearances, the one who is a worshipper and obedient to Allah will have a noticeable radiance on his face, signifying his spiritual beauty and connection with Allah. On the other hand, the disobedient brother will lack this radiance, indicating a sense of humiliation and spiritual void. Just as the face can reflect one's emotions of grief, fear, or joy, the face of a worshipper will shine with the light of their devoted heart.
- ✦ The worshipper who dedicates themselves to acts of worship will be blessed with good health. Imam Malik (may Allah be pleased with him), despite being engaged in various activities, used to perform 300 units of voluntary prayers (nafl Salah) every day. The worshipper will be granted exceptional strength even in their old age, leaving people astonished and wondering at their vitality and energy.
- ✦ The obedient slave will never be deprived of rizq (provision). Allah Azzawajal promises, "When my slave dedicates time for my worship, I fill his heart with contentment and provide for him in a secure manner."
- ✦ The worshipper will be bestowed with such honor and respect in the hearts of people that will never fade away. As for others, honor is attained through worldly means such as wealth, status, and position. When an officer retires, they may experience mental distress as they suddenly miss the salutes and respect that were bestowed upon them due to their position. However, for the worshipper, the respect they receive never diminishes. In their youth, the obedient one is held in high regard, with people willingly offering their service, even going as far as handling their slippers. As they grow older and face physical limitations, people show their respect by assisting and lifting them. This is a manifestation of the profound love and honor that Allah Azzawajal instills in the hearts of His creations for His obedient slaves.

35.2 Salah is the Pinnacle of Worship

By placing Salah before other acts of worship, it is emphasized that Salah holds the highest status among all forms of worship. Salah is mentioned before fasting, giving zakat, and performing Hajj. This signifies the significance of Salah. While the command for other acts of worship was revealed in this world, Salah was uniquely granted to the beloved servant of Allah Azzawajal by raising him ﷺ and bringing him ﷺ closer to Him. Upon receiving this gift of Salah, the Sahabahs (may Allah be pleased with them) were filled with joy, as they now had the means to communicate directly with Allah Azzawajal and express their needs and desires. Allah Azzawajal states that when His servant is in prostration, he is very near to Him. Just imagine the feeling of being close to one's father, sitting on a mother's lap, or approaching one's spouse. The love, affection, and joy felt in those moments are beyond words. Similarly, coming close to the Lord of the heavens and the earth during Salah brings a special sense of enjoyment. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ used to say, "O Bilal, call for prayer and comfort my eyes." He ﷺ described Salah as the coolness of his eyes. If a person does not feel any affection or peace when approaching his spouse, there is something wrong. Similarly, if one does not experience tranquility and enjoyment during prostration, there may be a barrier caused by our sins, preventing us from fully experiencing the pleasure of being close to Allah Azzawajal.

35.3 Excel in Salah

The greatness of this ummah is deeply intertwined with the level of worship it upholds. The distinguished individuals of this ummah, such as Umar, Abu Bakr, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them), exemplified their devotion by standing in the first row, demonstrating their eagerness to partake in congregational prayers. Even our beloved Prophet ﷺ, during his prayers, experienced swelling in his blessed feet due to the extended duration of his qiyam (the standing posture in prayer). Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) stood firm like a pillar in his prayer, radiating unwavering dedication, while Umar and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) dedicated their nights to profound spiritual reflection and extended periods of prayer. The greatness of the Muslim ummah is not measured by wealth, status, children, or positions as seen in other communities, but rather by their devotion to worship. There is immense potential for improvement in our Salah (prayer). We can continually enhance and beautify our Salah to the extent we desire. In our worldly lives, we strive for progress and set goals. For example, someone riding a bike may aspire to own a car as their income and status improve. Unfortunately, we often neglect the same level of progress and improvement in our Salah. We rarely think about enhancing the khushu (humility) in our prayer. Khushu involves offering Salah with tranquility, both in our physical postures and in our inner state. Inner khushu is attained by avoiding deliberate engagement in distracting thoughts and performing Salah with a calm and focused mind. This can be achieved by attentively concentrating on the words we recite and dismissing random thoughts that arise, without becoming absorbed in them. Many of us approach Salah like a mechanical process, where we simply go through the motions without true presence of mind and heart. Our words are recited, but our thoughts wander elsewhere. This mindset should be consciously avoided and improved, so that we may experience the true impact of Salah. Our beloved mother Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) once remarked that if the rulers of this world could understand the profound peace and tranquility that Muslims experience in their hearts through Salah, they would mobilize their armies to attain it for themselves.

35.4 Do Not Adulterate Your Salah

When chilli powder or salt, or anything for that matter, is adulterated, it loses its effectiveness in enhancing the taste of food. Similarly, when Salah, the act of prayer, is mixed with wandering thoughts and distractions, its impact is diminished. This is why a person may diligently perform their prayers but still struggle with being honest in their business dealings or displaying good manners. However, when Salah is offered with the correct procedure, following the prescribed guidelines, it becomes a powerful tool to restrain oneself from immorality and wrongdoing. Just as water and fire do not mix well, Salah and sins do not coexist harmoniously. Allah Azzawajal affirms this in the Quran when He says, "Verily, prayer restrains one from immorality and wrongdoing" (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:45). Whenever our beloved Prophet ﷺ was afflicted with any pain, he would immediately turn towards Salah, seeking solace and relief. We are aware of the immense hardships and trials that our beloved Prophet ﷺ endured throughout his life. These trials were as formidable as mountains, testing his resolve and faith. Yet, in the face of adversity, he found comfort and strength in his connection with Allah through Salah. Strange indeed is the Salah and fortunate are the Muslims who are blessed with it. Many of us fail to realize its greatness due to our own negligence, for we have never truly experienced the sweetness of Salah. Like how we cannot make a child comprehend the experiences of adulthood, it is difficult for us to grasp the profound impact of Salah when we do not make a sincere effort to offer it properly. Consequently, we remain unaware of the immense joy and tranquility that Salah can bring to our lives.

35.5 Do Not Behave Like a Disbeliever

When the adhan is proclaimed between every two Salahs, it serves as a reminder and warning to evaluate our commitment to worship during the time between the two prayers. It is a call that alerts us as each new day begins. While non-Muslims such as Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians may remain seated upon hearing the adhan, a Muslim immediately rushes to offer Salah regardless of their location, be it at school, college, office, or any other place. If even a Muslim chooses to sit idly without responding to the adhan, they are essentially engaging in the same inaction as that of a Hindu, Sikh, or any disbeliever. He engaged in the same action as a disbeliever, displaying behavior that is contrary to the teachings of Islam and the commandments of Allah Azzawajal. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ emphasized that Salah is what distinguishes a Muslim from a disbeliever. During the time of the Sahabahs (may Allah be pleased with them), people would offer Salah even if they had a trace of faith in their hearts. Even those who claimed to be Muslims but had no true faith, known as the hypocrites or munafiqeen, would still perform Salah out of fear of being exposed if they did not.

35.6 A Stern Warning

As life itself is a form of worship, and our success lies in worshipping Allah Azzawajal, it is important to increase our devotion by increasing the amount of Salah in our lives. If one has been praying individually, they should strive to join the congregation from the very beginning, increase the performance of Sunnah and voluntary prayers, and start praying tahajjud (night prayer). Engaging in these additional acts of worship will bring one closer to Allah Azzawajal. It is worth mentioning that a righteous predecessor once mentioned that for forty years, he would be present in the mosque before the adhan was called, demonstrating his dedication to Salah. When it comes to having khushu (humility and concentration) in Salah, we may often think that it is a quality

reserved only for pious elders and beyond our own capability. However, this is a deception that we should be cautious of. If we were truly incapable of offering Salah with khushu, Allah Azzawajal would not have commanded us to do so. It is important to remember that we have been warned about the consequences of neglecting the worship of Allah Azzawajal, particularly Salah, which is the pinnacle of worship. Those who fail to worship Allah and neglect Salah will face humiliation in front of the entire world.

Sometimes, when we keep seeing a sin or remain with a person who constantly sins, we may lose the sensitivity towards that sin and we may not realize the severity of sinning, and to make it worse, we might take it as a normal act. Today, the tradition of offering Fajr Salah has come to an end, and people don't even feel guilty or any sense of regret or pain. When a person is tranquilized and their body parts are cut off, they will not feel the pain. They will feel the pain only when they regain consciousness and come to their senses. In the Hereafter, the person will fully regain consciousness and feel the pain right in their heart, for the fire will reach their heart.

"And what can make you know what is the Crusher?

It is the fire of Allah, [eternally] fueled,

Which mounts directed at the hearts." (Quran 104:6-9)

May Allah Azzawajal grant us all the ability and guidance to worship Him in the most beautiful and sincere manner. May He draw us closer to Him and protect us from humiliation and disgrace in both this world and the Hereafter. Ameen, Ameen, thumma Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

36. How to Attain Steadfastness in Deen

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Istiqamat (steadfastness) in the deen of Allah ﷻ is crucial for attaining success in both this world and the Hereafter. The first step towards istiqamat is making a firm resolution to lead a life that is pleasing to Allah ﷻ. We should sincerely pray to Allah ﷻ to grant us the ability to live a life free from unlawful earnings, forbidden interactions with non-mahram individuals, and all forms of immoral actions. Additionally, we should strive to establish istiqamat in performing righteous deeds while refraining from sins. If we have these five aspects in our lives, inshaAllah, we will attain istiqamat.

First, we should seek the company of Muslims who are more pious and righteous than us, as this will inspire and motivate us to increase our own good deeds. In today's society, we often see Muslims associating with those who have higher social status or wealth, which can lead to feelings of ingratitude and dissatisfaction with our own blessings. On the other hand, if we choose to spend time with Muslims who are less religiously inclined than us, it can foster a sense of superiority and

pride, which is detrimental to our spiritual growth. Hanzalah (may Allah be pleased with him) was overwhelmed with emotion, exclaiming, "Hanzalah has become a hypocrite!" But was he truly a hypocrite? If we were to compare his faith and devotion, as a companion of the Prophet ﷺ, to the Muslims of today, his iman would far surpass theirs. The companions, including Hanzalah, possessed an extraordinary level of faith and righteousness. So, what led him to make such a statement? It was the profound impact of the Prophet's ﷺ righteous life, which was constantly before his eyes. Therefore, it is crucial for us to surround ourselves with individuals who excel us in matters of faith, as this will help us recognize our own shortcomings and inspire us to strive for greater righteousness. It is through such companionship that we can strengthen our commitment to good deeds and maintain humility in the sight of Allah ﷻ.

Secondly, we must never neglect our Salah and strive to pray with utmost devotion (khushu). Prayer with khushu helps to purify our souls and removes sins from our lives. We should be steadfast in maintaining our Salah, without faltering. Men should make it a priority to never miss congregational prayers, while women should promptly offer their prayers upon hearing the Adhan.

Thirdly, we must exercise control over our tongues and refrain from backbiting or using hurtful words that may cause pain to fellow Muslims. A person may engage in numerous good deeds, but if they utter a word that earns the displeasure of Allah ﷻ, their good deeds will be rendered void. The honor of Muslims is highly esteemed in the eyes of Allah ﷻ, even more sacred than the Holy Kaaba. Just as we would never dare to remove a single stone from the Holy Kaaba, we should also safeguard the honor of our fellow Muslims, recognizing its sanctity. We would never dare to remove a single stone from the Holy Kaaba, nor can we tolerate others doing so. Let us, therefore, reflect upon the sanctity of a Muslim's honor, which is even more sacred than that of the Kaaba itself.

Fourth, we must maintain constant consciousness of Allah ﷻ, knowing that He is always watching us. We should be aware that He can humiliate us instantly for the sins we commit, and He can even snatch away the precious gift of faith from our hearts if we earn His ﷻ anger. Behind every act of disobedience lies the displeasure and anger of Allah ﷻ. We must recognize that we cannot predict which sin will provoke His ﷻ anger and bring upon us His wrath. There was a man among the Bani Israel who continued to commit sins without repenting, believing that Allah ﷻ was overlooking his actions. However, Allah ﷻ, in response, placed the thought in his mind, "Didn't I take away the khushu (humility and focus) from your Salah? Isn't this sufficient for your sins?" This serves as a profound reminder that we should never be negligent or careless when it comes to our sins. We should always remain cautious, aware that even our acts of worship, such as Salah, can lose their effectiveness if we persist in sinful behavior.

Fifth, when we inevitably commit sins, as we are only human, it is crucial that we immediately turn to Allah ﷻ in sincere repentance. We should engage in two units of Salah as a means of seeking forgiveness. Delaying our repentance can lead to the hardening and pollution of our hearts, making us more prone to further transgressions that can ultimately ruin our lives. It is essential to have a private conversation with Allah ﷻ, seeking His forgiveness and repenting for the sins we have

committed. We should make a firm commitment to never repeat those sins and implore Allah ﷻ's assistance in abstaining from sinful behavior.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

37. Acknowledge and Rectify Your Shortcomings

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

37.1 Do Not Claim Innocence

A person complained about his problems and worries in a letter to a spiritual mentor. The spiritual mentor replied, "It is natural for a human to feel distressed, but I see in your letter that you claim to have never oppressed anyone or caused any harm to others. So why are you facing such troubles?" This is a common state of mind. We often believe that we have never betrayed or harmed anyone, and yet we wonder why we face so many difficulties. Why am I the only one dealing with various troubles, from family matters to business issues, when I have not caused harm to anyone? The person who wrote to the spiritual mentor shared similar thoughts. The spiritual mentor replied, "There are two things to consider. Firstly, the person may not realize their own mistakes. While they claim to have never betrayed or harmed anyone, it is challenging for such a claim to be completely true. Only Allah ﷻ knows how many times we may have unintentionally hurt someone, as the person making the mistake often remains unaware of their own errors. Additionally, individuals have their own perception of what constitutes oppression, and based on that perception, they may believe they have never oppressed anyone. This is a common occurrence, where a person fails to recognize their own mistakes and considers themselves to be pure and free from such wrongdoing." The spiritual mentor wrote, "May Allah ﷻ make it so that you didn't harm anyone, but one should never claim or think that they are free from evils or shortcomings. We should always seek forgiveness and repent from the depths of our hearts before Allah ﷻ for the sins and wrongdoings we have committed. We must never entertain whispers of self-assurance or the thought that we are immune to making mistakes."

37.2 The Cause of Misfortunes

It has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ made a supplication, saying, "O Allah! Forgive me for whichever Muslim I harmed or abused or beat or cursed and turn it into a means of mercy and purification for them, and a means of drawing closer to You." Allahu Akbar! When the Prophet ﷺ, the beloved Messenger of Allah, makes such a heartfelt supplication and seeks forgiveness for his actions, how can we claim that we have never made mistakes or transgressed against anyone? Also, while it is a general rule that misfortunes befall us due to our own evil deeds, as mentioned in the Quran, "Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have wrought" (Quran 41:30), it does not mean that every misfortune faced by a person is solely due to their own misdeeds. If this is the general rule all the time, then the Prophets (peace be upon all of

them) and awliya of Allah ﷻ wouldn't have faced poverty and misfortunes because some of them were innocent and some of them were protected from sins.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The Prophets are the ones who face the worst trials, then those who excel after them and so on." As ordinary people, we should recognize that the troubles we face may be a result of our own misdeeds. Even if we are certain that we have not committed any sins, we should not be distressed by misfortunes. This is because even the Prophets (peace be upon them), the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them), and the close friends of Allah (awliya) faced trials and tribulations. Therefore, it is not appropriate to question why we are facing misfortunes when we have not harmed or oppressed anyone. A Companion of the Prophet ﷺ expressed his love for the Prophet ﷺ, saying, "O Messenger of Allah, I love you." The Prophet ﷺ advised him, saying, "Be cautious of what you say." The Companion repeated his words, saying, "O Messenger of Allah, I love you." The Prophet ﷺ reiterated his advice and added, "Then be prepared to face poverty, for poverty tends to befall those who love me, just as water flows from the top of a valley to its bottom." Thinking that misfortunes are always a result of our misdeeds is not necessarily correct, as misfortunes can also occur due to our closeness to Allah ﷻ. Regardless of the cause, it is certain that misfortunes are bound to happen in this worldly life.

37.3 The Signs of Allah's Closeness and the Effects of Our Sins

O honorable ones! May Allah ﷻ grant us His ﷻ closeness and proximity. If misfortunes befall us due to our closeness to Allah ﷻ, then a sign of that is our hearts remaining tranquil. On the other hand, if misfortunes come as a result of our sins, then a sign of that is our hearts remain restless. If a person faces troubles due to their closeness to Allah ﷻ, it will lead them to become even closer to Him. However, if a person faces problems because of their misdeeds, they may express complaints and negative thoughts, which can discourage them from continuing to perform good deeds. They may question why they are facing difficulties despite their righteous actions, and this negative mindset may cause them to give up on doing good deeds altogether.

It is essential for a person to dedicate more time in seclusion, connecting with Allah ﷻ through prayers and supplications. Relying solely on one's own plans for success can be misleading, as plans are merely a means to an end. It is only through the divine intervention and blessings of Allah ﷻ that a plan can truly be effective. Therefore, it is crucial to place our trust solely in Allah ﷻ, recognizing that He is the ultimate source of all outcomes. While we may make plans and take actions, it is Allah ﷻ who grants them effectiveness and brings about the desired results. It is important for a person to maintain unwavering faith and confidence when making supplications to Allah ﷻ. One should never doubt that their duaa will be accepted. However, it is crucial to understand that sometimes the acceptance of a duaa may come in a way that is different from what was initially expected.

Indeed, trials and hardships are an inherent part of this worldly life, as mentioned in various hadiths. Therefore, claiming that one has never oppressed or transgressed against anyone, or never earned unlawful wealth, may not be entirely accurate. Only Allah ﷻ truly knows the extent to which we may have caused harm to others, intentionally or unintentionally, in our thoughts, words, or actions. It is essential for us to continually seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ and acknowledge our shortcomings. When faced with adversity or difficulties, we should turn to Allah ﷻ with deep regret for our past mistakes and seek His ﷻ assistance in overcoming the challenges we are facing.

37.4 The Reward of Resisting Temptations in Youth

Having hatred towards sins is praiseworthy and an excellent quality. It is based on the rank of a person who can save themselves from sin, even in the face of strong desire for it. This act of resisting temptation is commendable and carries great reward. It is important to note that if one expects to reach a state where they never experience a single evil thought or temptation, this may not be realistic. However, if a person gathers the courage and determination to abstain from sin, despite having a strong inclination towards it, then, by the will of Allah, the strength to commit sin will gradually diminish. The power that once dragged one towards sin will also diminish, leading to greater self-control and a reduced inclination towards sinful behavior. This struggle against committing sin, despite having a strong affinity towards it, will indeed continue throughout one's life. It is important to recognize that complete eradication of this struggle may not be attainable. However, the more one engages in this struggle and strives to resist sinful temptations, the greater the reward they will earn from Allah.

A young man who saves himself from an evil glance earns greater reward compared to an old man who does the same. This is because the young man is more prone to having a strong affinity towards that sin due to his youthful vigor, strength, and heightened desires. By overcoming this temptation and safeguarding his gaze, the young man demonstrates exceptional willpower and earns a higher reward from Allah. During young age, the allurements, and opportunities to commit sins are abundant. The strength and intensity of desires are often at their peak. This stark contrast between the potential for sinning during youth and old age can be likened to the difference between the weight of gold and iron. However, for the elderly individual who consistently worshipped Allah throughout their youth and continues to do so in their old age, the reward remains as valuable as when they were young. Their devotion and steadfastness earn them a reward equivalent to the weight of gold, not iron.

If we consider one "mun" (approximately 16 kilograms) of gold and one "mun" of iron, both weighing the same, the difference in their value is immense, akin to the vast contrast between the heavens and the earth. Similarly, the distinction between the prostration of a young man and an old man is comparable to that of gold and iron. However, when it comes to an elderly individual who consistently pleased Allah ﷻ throughout their youth, their worth is akin to that of gold, not iron. They will not perceive a significant difference as they age, for when one possesses greater strength and vigor and abstains from sin, their reward is also greater. This explains why attaining the closeness and friendship of Allah ﷻ is more readily achieved during one's youth. The prime season for attaining the status of a wali (friend of Allah) is during one's youth, as it is more readily achieved. Therefore, let us muster the courage to save ourselves from sin, despite the strong desires that may arise. By taking this courageous step, we will be rewarded with an increase in divine light and spiritual elevation.

37.5 Allah Appreciates Humility

If something is scarce or difficult to obtain in a particular place, its value becomes more significant in that context. For instance, when mangoes are not readily available in a certain region, people in that area tend to appreciate and relish mangoes more. In contrast, in places where mangoes are abundant, their value may be relatively lower. This contrast in value can be observed in various commodities and produced in different locations across the world. For example, there are places where grapes are scarce, and when a jamaat (group of people set on religious purpose) from such

a place visited a region like Afghanistan where grapes are more affordable than meat, they consumed more grapes due to their scarcity in their own region.

Just as Allah ﷻ possesses only greatness and does not exhibit humility, when a servant demonstrates humility and submissiveness in the presence of Allah ﷻ, it holds immense value. Humility and pleading are not attributes of Allah ﷻ, as He ﷻ is the epitome of greatness. Therefore, when a servant offers these gifts of tears, supplication, and heartfelt pleading to Allah ﷻ, they hold even greater significance. Such acts are rare in the court of Allah ﷻ, where His ﷻ greatness is magnified. When qualities such as humility, sincerity, a broken heart, and deep remorse for committing sins are presented before Allah ﷻ, they hold immense value in His court. These attributes are considered rare and precious in His presence.

37.6 Frugality Vs Miserliness

Frugality and miserliness are two distinct concepts. An incident involving Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) highlights this difference. Uthman was concerned about the lamp burning unnecessarily inside his house. At that moment, a beggar arrived and expressed surprise at the commotion caused over a simple lamp. When the beggar sought assistance in the name of Allah ﷻ, Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) came forward and generously gave him 500 gold coins. The beggar was taken aback and inquired about the reason behind such generosity. Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) explained that regarding his concern over the lamp, he is accountable to Allah ﷻ, while providing assistance to the beggar was an act deserving of reward from Allah ﷻ. This incident exemplifies the distinction between frugality and miserliness, showcasing two distinct approaches to spending. Miserliness refers to withholding oneself from spending on virtuous deeds, while frugality pertains to restraining oneself from excessive and luxurious spending for personal pleasure.

37.7 What is Contentment?

Contentment is the state of being satisfied and pleased with whatever one receives, while greed is the desire for more and constant yearning for additional possessions or achievements. Each of these attitudes carries its own distinct definition and characteristics. Once, a person welcomed a guest and offered him the best he had, which was barley bread. The guest expressed a desire for salt to accompany the bread, but the host did not have any. Determined to fulfill the guest's request, the host took a bowl, exchanged it for salt, and presented it to the guest. After the meal, the guest expressed gratitude to Allah and acknowledged his contentment with the food. In response, the host remarked, "If you had been contenting, my bowl would have remained intact." This story illustrates that contentment is the ability to be satisfied and grateful for whatever one receives, without longing for more or dwelling on what is lacking.

37.8 Go Through the Lives of Pious Elders

May Allah ﷻ grant us a deep understanding of the religion. By studying the lives of the righteous servants of Allah ﷻ, even if we cannot attain the same level of piety as them, we can gain a true understanding of the depth and richness of the religion. It allows us to recognize our own shortcomings and areas where we may fall short in practicing our faith. O beloved ones! Shouldn't we at least have this realization within us? Undoubtedly, those were extraordinary individuals, and may Allah ﷻ instill in us some of their noble qualities. By doing so, we can begin to grasp the true essence of our faith and gain a clearer understanding of how far we are from embodying it fully.

This realization helps dispel any delusions or false beliefs we may have about our spiritual progress. It humbles us and inspires us to strive for greater sincerity, righteousness, and devotion in our journey towards Allah ﷻ. By immersing ourselves in the stories and biographies of the people of Allah ﷻ and the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them), we are able to deeply sense our own inadequacies and shortcomings. This realization invokes within us feelings of regret, shame, and guilt for our past actions and behaviors.

It is advisable to attend religious gatherings that evoke within us a sense of discontent regarding our spiritual state, rather than gatherings that inflate our egos and make us believe we have achieved a lofty status. Unfortunately, our inclination is often to seek validation and praise for our religiousness, finding satisfaction when someone acknowledges it. However, the case of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) is markedly different. They attended gatherings that stirred such profound emotions within them that they were moved to tears, as exemplified by a Sahabi who cried out, "Hanzalah has become a hypocrite; Hanzalah has become a hypocrite." Upon observing the noble exemplar of faith (Prophet ﷺ), the Companions were confronted with the radiant countenance and embodiment of true faith. When they compared themselves to such elevated standards, they humbly regarded their own standing as insignificant. This perspective fostered within them a sense of humility, recognizing their own limitations and shortcomings in the presence of such a lofty ideal. By delving into the lives of the righteous servants of Allah ﷻ, we too can cultivate similar qualities within ourselves.

37.9 Safeguard Against Jealousy

Jealousy, or *hasad*, has a destructive power that can lead individuals to commit heinous and despicable acts. This is why in Surah Falaq, one seeks exclusive protection from the negative effects of jealousy. History has shown us that jealousy can drive individuals to extreme lengths, even causing harm to their own loved ones. For instance, we witness the tragic tale of one of the sons of Adam (peace be upon him) who killed his own brother out of jealousy. *Hasad* is indeed a dangerous affliction that can corrupt the heart and lead to unimaginable harm. May Allah ﷻ safeguard us from jealousy and protect us from the influence of envious individuals. Jealousy is a profound illness that can drive people to commit the most reprehensible acts. The intensity of one's attachment to the materialistic aspects of this worldly life often correlates with the inclination towards jealousy. However, if Allah ﷻ safeguards a person from being excessively consumed by worldly desires such as wealth, praise, fame, and honor, and instead instills in them a sincere aspiration for seeking honor in the sight of Allah ﷻ in the hereafter, then Allah ﷻ will purify their heart from the destructive traits of jealousy and malice.

Indeed, the feeling of *hasad* (jealousy) typically arises in relation to worldly possessions, achievements, and attributes. However, in matters pertaining to religious or spiritual aspects, one does not experience *hasad* but rather a feeling of *gibtah* (envy with a positive connotation). *Gibtah* is the desire to attain similar righteousness and goodness that Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon others, without wishing for them to lose their blessings. This feeling of *gibtah* is praiseworthy, as it reflects a sincere aspiration to draw closer to Allah ﷻ and emulate the righteous examples set by others. *Hasad* is the feeling of longing for something that another person possesses, and even if one cannot attain it, they desire it to be taken away from the other person. This mindset reflects the belief that if they themselves cannot have it, then the other person should not have it either. *Hasad* is an extremely dangerous disease of the heart, as it breeds negativity, animosity, and ill will. We seek

the protection of Allah ﷻ from this harmful trait. May He ﷻ remove this disease from our hearts and safeguard us from the influence of jealous individuals.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

38. The Power of Divine Connection with Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

We, as Muslims, wholeheartedly acknowledge Allah Azzawajal, without whom we cannot identify ourselves as Muslims. We firmly believe that He ﷻ is our Creator and Sustainer, and we bear witness to all His ﷻ attributes as described in His ﷻ revelations. We bear witness to His Messengers, His Angels, His Books, and the Day of Judgement, when we will be gathered to account for our deeds, whether good or bad, on this earth. Furthermore, we firmly believe in His ﷻ decree, acknowledging that all good and bad can only occur with His ﷻ permission, guided by His ﷻ wisdom and justice.

The same witness of faith in Allah ﷻ and adherence to His guidance was observed in our pious predecessors, starting with the Prophets and Messengers of Allah ﷻ (peace be upon them) and followed by their devoted companions. As followers of the beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, we strive to emulate his remarkable qualities, bestowed upon him by the mercy of Allah ﷻ, which serve as an example not only for those who were blessed to be in his ﷺ's presence but for all of humanity throughout the existence of this world. The Prophet ﷺ excelled in every aspect of life, whether it be as an individual with impeccable moral qualities, a devoted family man, a loyal friend, a just leader, or a skillful commander of an army. His ﷺ's teachings encompassed every facet of human existence, guiding us in facing and navigating the challenges of life. However, it is important to acknowledge that there exists a significant difference in the quality of life between the Muslims who were fortunate to be present during the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the Muslims of today. This difference encompasses various aspects of life, including individual conduct, family dynamics, social interactions, and even economic matters.

One thing we know for sure is that all good comes only from Allah ﷻ, regardless of its nature. All the good qualities possessed by our pious predecessors were bestowed upon them solely by Allah ﷻ. They exhibited greater sincerity, piety, honesty, and bravery, facing the mighty armies of Rome and Persia like a vast sea, yet emerging victorious. They exemplified a higher level of contentment, peace, patience, love, and kindness towards fellow Muslims. Their sense of justice and fairness attracted many to Islam, and above all, they were swift in their obedience to Allah ﷻ, willingly and joyfully sacrificing their lives in His ﷻ path to fulfill His ﷻ commands and attain His ﷻ pleasure. All these remarkable qualities were bestowed upon them by Allah ﷻ, who is the same eternal and ever-living Lord present today. So why is there such a stark difference between us and them? This question has crossed my mind numerous times when reading about the beloved companions (RA) and other pious Muslims who followed in their footsteps. The answer lies in the concept of "talluq" or the relationship and connection with Allah ﷻ.

The Prophets and Messengers (peace be upon them) were endowed with exceptional qualities that set them apart from ordinary individuals. They held a unique position as the chosen servants of Allah ﷻ. They possessed the strongest connection and relationship with Allah ﷻ, which enabled them to receive divine wisdom, knowledge, and purification from all evil traits. Allah ﷻ blessed them with exemplary qualities, making them shining examples for all of humanity to follow. The Prophets of Allah ﷻ play a pivotal role in bringing mankind closer to Allah ﷻ. They impart the knowledge and wisdom they receive from Allah ﷻ, guiding and purifying the hearts and souls of their followers. The companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were fortunate to have been guided, corrected, and spiritually purified by the best of all Prophets, our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Through his guidance, they were able to overcome their base desires and purify their hearts from spiritual ailments. As a result, they emerged as men and women of exemplary qualities, and their virtues will continue to shine until the end of time. Those who came after the Prophet's companions (may Allah be pleased with them), following their noble example, also attained a high rank of righteousness and virtue.

Indeed, Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting His verses to them, purifying them, and instructing them in the Book and Al-Hikmah, while before that they were clearly astray (Aal-e-Imran, Chapter 3, Verse 164, Al-Quran).

Thus, we see that it is through obtaining knowledge, wisdom, and acting upon it, as well as purifying our souls, that we can establish a firm connection with Allah ﷻ. This strong connection, known as "talluq," enables us to excel in every aspect of our lives, following the footsteps of our pious predecessors and ultimately attaining the greatest victory—Jannah the eternal bliss. Therefore, it is not solely the recognition of Allah ﷻ that distinguishes us as Muslims today, but rather the strength of our connection with Him. A strong talluq with Allah ﷻ empowers us to radiate in both this world and the Hereafter, freeing us from a life of distress and misery and guiding us towards the path of victory. It is important to acknowledge that the difference between our pious predecessors and us lies in their strong connection with Allah ﷻ, while we often possess a very weak connection with our Rabb.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

39. Seek Raza, the Pleasure of Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Riza is the paradise of this world. Raza is surrendering oneself before Allah ﷻ in wholehearted obedience. The ego (nafs) resists bowing down before others easily, as it desires others to submit to it instead. The ego constantly questions why things happen to it and why they don't unfold as it wishes. However, when we find contentment in Allah ﷻ without any complaints, this worldly life transforms into paradise. If this contentment originates from deep within the heart, one will experience lasting happiness. They will feel a sense of tranquility and serenity within their heart,

which will radiate to those around them, much like the refreshing coolness one feels when a gentle breeze passes by. They will be satisfied with their provisions, but if they are not, they will feel an inner burning of greed and dissatisfaction, leading to continued distress.

How do we know if our heart is pleased with Allah ﷻ? Prophet Musa (AS) once asked Allah ﷻ the same question, and Allah ﷻ responded, "O Musa! Ask your heart. If it is pleased with Me, then consider that I am pleased with you." Therefore, by constantly evaluating our heart's satisfaction with Allah ﷻ, we can gauge His pleasure. A person who is granted numerous blessings but remains discontented, always wishing for more, contrasts with another individual who, despite enduring illness and calamity, finds happiness and contentment in Allah ﷻ' s decree. The latter person is truly blessed, as his unwavering trust and satisfaction in Allah ﷻ brings inner peace and tranquility. During times of trials, such as sickness or calamities, it is important to examine our hearts. If we find ourselves without complaints or resentment towards Allah ﷻ, it is a clear sign of His pleasure. This is precisely how the Sahabah (RA) conducted themselves. Despite enduring intense hardships, such as having hot stones placed on their bodies and having their wealth confiscated, they remained steadfast and never harbored any grievances against Allah ﷻ. This unwavering trust and contentment led Allah ﷻ to declare His pleasure with them, as they were pleased with Him.

Allah ﷻ appreciates it when His ﷻ slaves consistently turn to Him in supplication. Whether or not the slave's requests are fulfilled, their status is elevated in the sight of Allah ﷻ. This elevated status is far superior to merely receiving what was asked for. Often, when we ask Allah ﷻ for something and do not receive it, we become disappointed. However, our role is simply to make our requests known, as we lack the wisdom, knowledge, and generosity of Allah ﷻ. On the Day of Judgment, some people will enter Jannah without going through the process of reckoning or crossing the Pul Sirat. When the angels inquire about how they achieved this status, they will respond that it was solely by the grace and favor of Allah ﷻ. They will further explain that they possessed two qualities in the worldly life: firstly, they feared Allah ﷻ and obeyed Him in private, and secondly, they were content with whatever little they had. The angels will then affirm that these qualities are indeed deserving of the elevated status attained. It is worth noting that as we increase in good deeds, we may find ourselves complaining more because we mistakenly believe that our increased righteousness should lead to the immediate resolution of our problems.

When we encounter more problems and strengthen our connection with Allah ﷻ, it signifies the pleasure and love of Allah ﷻ. Often, we continuously express our problems, which only adds to our distress. When we refrain from constantly talking about them, our hearts remain calm. When we have love for Allah ﷻ, we refrain from complaining. Our pious predecessors would not even mention whether the day was excessively hot or the cold was severe; they were content with every circumstance. We often expose ourselves to negativity and subsequently express negative thoughts, which only deepens our sadness. Therefore, it is beneficial to avoid dwelling excessively on our problems. When we truly love Allah ﷻ, we can even find joy in His ﷻ trials, as we feel His ﷻ love and refrain from complaining. To attain contentment with Allah ﷻ, we should strive to increase our love for Him ﷻ within ourselves. When Bilal (RA) endured the pain of hot stones being placed upon him, he continued to proclaim "Ahad, Ahad" (One, One) because of his profound love for Allah ﷻ. Likewise, when Khubaib (RA) was about to be hanged, he desired to perform two units of prayer to have a conversation with his beloved Lord. He would have prolonged his prayer if he did not fear that his enemies would interpret it as a delay caused by his fear of death. Another companion (RA), when faced with the prospect of being thrown into boiling

oil, shed tears. When asked about his tears, he replied that he only possessed one soul to offer in the path of Allah ﷻ and wished he had more souls to sacrifice for the sake of his beloved.

One way to attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is to increase our love for Him ﷻ. This can be achieved by engaging in more voluntary acts of worship, such as performing additional nafl prayers, and by enhancing our focus and devotion during these prayers. Additionally, engaging in more remembrance of Allah ﷻ (zikr) can also help cultivate a deeper love for Him ﷻ, leading to His ﷻ pleasure.

The second approach is to reframe our perspective when faced with difficulties. Instead of dwelling on the problem at hand, we should remind ourselves that the situation could have been worse. For instance, there is a story of a pious individual who serves as an inspiring example. He was robbed of his possessions, and when people expressed sympathy, he responded with gratitude, saying "Alhamdulillah" (All praise be to Allah). When others expressed surprise at his reaction, he explained that while his material belongings were taken, his faith (iman) remained untouched and unharmed. This teaches us that by focusing on the blessings we still have, even in challenging circumstances, we can attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Additionally, in moments of physical discomfort such as stomach aches, we can redirect our attention to the well-being of our mind and other parts of our body, further cultivating a mindset of gratitude and contentment.

The third point is to recognize that calamities and trials are ultimately for our own benefit. We should trust in the wisdom of Al-Hakeem (the All-Wise) and have faith that there is inherent goodness in every situation. By embracing this perspective, we can find solace and contentment in the face of adversity.

The fourth aspect to consider is that trials serve as a test of our love for Allah ﷻ. It is an opportunity for us to demonstrate the sincerity of our claim to love Him ﷻ. By recognizing this and striving to exhibit true love and devotion during times of hardship, we can strengthen our bond with Allah ﷻ and earn His ﷻ pleasure.

By incorporating these four points into our lives, Insha'Allah, we can attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and find contentment in Him ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ grant us all His perfect forgiveness and bestow upon us His perfect pleasure. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

40. Be Trustworthy

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The foundation of human society is built upon trust, as progress can only be achieved when individuals trust one another. When trust is compromised, life becomes significantly more

challenging. Trustworthiness is a virtue that stems from the quality of eeman (faith). In a society where eeman thrives, trustworthiness prevails. Truthfulness, honoring commitments, and maintaining trust become prevalent. With the presence of eeman, society experiences remarkable progress. Individuals place their trust in one another, leading to a smoother and more comfortable life. Husbands trust their wives, employers trust their employees, and employees trust their employers, thereby creating an atmosphere of ease and comfort. Moreover, a trust-filled life in this world enhances the prospects of a beautiful afterlife. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized that only a hypocrite would speak lies, break promises, and betray trust, as these qualities are incompatible with the attributes of a true believer. Trustworthiness serves as a measure of one's eeman, and as the Prophet ﷺ stated, "He is not a believer who lacks trustworthiness." If an individual lacks trustworthiness, it indicates a deficiency in their true eeman.

Eeman (faith) plays a pivotal role in developing trustworthiness within an individual. Allah ﷻ commands us in Surah An-Nisa, verse 58: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due." This command emphasizes the importance of being trustworthy. When we experience a loss or absence of something in our lives, the associated meanings and concepts connected to it may also diminish or become limited. In the context of trustworthiness, if there is a lack of trust in society, the understanding of its true essence and significance can also become restricted. Generally, trustworthiness is associated with returning entrusted money or possessions. If a person fails to fulfill this responsibility and misuses the entrusted resources, it is considered a breach of trust. However, the concept of trustworthiness extends beyond mere financial matters. "Inna aradna al amanata" means "Indeed, we offered the trust." Allah ﷻ bestowed the trust upon mankind, and when it was presented to them, they accepted it. The simple meaning of "amanah" is that if a person is entrusted with any matter and they fail to fulfill it completely, it constitutes a breach of trust.

If we employ an individual and entrust them with the responsibility of working for a complete 8 hours, but they do not fulfill this commitment while still receiving wages for the full duration, it constitutes a breach of trust on their part. Instead of dedicating their time to the appointed hours for which they are compensated, if they utilize that time for other purposes, it is a breach of trust. Similarly, if someone is entrusted with an office and they misuse the office resources, it is considered a breach of trust. Dealing with government-related tasks can often become challenging as we may encounter situations where the responsible officer is not present or available, leading to delays and uncertainty.

One common complaint we often hear today is that "no one is fulfilling my rights," and this sentiment can be observed in various aspects of life, from household matters to court proceedings. Unfortunately, the focus on fulfilling our own rights has overshadowed the importance of fulfilling our responsibilities and obligations towards others. As fathers, husbands, employees, employers, and rulers, it is crucial for us to reflect on our duties and whether we are meeting the rights of those under our care or authority. Regrettably, this sense of self-reflection and accountability seems to have faded away. We constantly hear demands for "our rights," but rarely do we encounter individuals asking themselves, "What are my obligations?" Unless we internalize this mindset and prioritize fulfilling our responsibilities, the rights of others will remain unfulfilled. Thus, the concept of amanah encompasses a broad spectrum of meanings and implications.

A person may diligently perform their prayers, but due to the corrupt environment that has influenced their understanding of trustworthiness, they believe it is their right to leave their

workplace after only three hours instead of the designated six hours. They may also feel entitled to take government property for personal use, oblivious to the fact that this behavior goes against the teachings of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. It is important to recognize that lacking trustworthiness is an indication of weak faith (eeman). The Prophet ﷺ explicitly stated that a person who prays, fasts, but lies in their speech, breaks promise, and breaches trust exhibits clear signs of hypocrisy (munafiq). Therefore, despite engaging in various acts of worship, such an individual displays the characteristics of a hypocrite.

Allah ﷻ observes even the betrayal of a person's eyes, and everyone is entrusted with the responsibility of caring for their body and soul. Every individual is entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding their body and being. While a person can lend their book to someone or even allow it to be torn, they have no right to write on a legal document and ask someone to harm them, as they do not possess ownership over their own life. Suicide is prohibited because one does not have authority over one's body; it is an amanah (trust) given by Allah ﷻ. The eyes, ears, tongue, and every part of the body are all entrusted to an individual, and their life itself is an amanah. If a person misuses these entrusted blessings in a manner contrary to their intended purpose, it constitutes a significant betrayal (khayanat). Therefore, it is not befitting for a believer to commit acts of betrayal towards the blessings bestowed upon them by Allah ﷻ.

Today, one of the greatest challenges we face is the erosion of trust and integrity in every aspect of our lives, whether it is within families, workplaces, or society at large. The prevalence of betrayal and breach of trust has become widespread. Unfortunately, when individuals observe significant acts of betrayal by others, they tend to perceive their own minor transgressions as insignificant in comparison. This distorted perception arises from the corrupt state of society, where individuals rationalize their actions by comparing themselves to those who commit more severe breaches of trust. For example, someone may justify taking office supplies home because they see others misusing official resources or even taking full control of the office. This culture of corruption has permeated society, contributing to the decline of trust and accountability.

Everyone is prone to betrayal at their own level. It is common for individuals to criticize the betrayal of others in higher positions, but if they were to assume the same position, they would likely exhibit the same level of betrayal. Each person is inclined to breach trust to the best of their abilities. The unfortunate reality is that many individuals engage in such sinful behavior without even recognizing the gravity of their actions. This type of betrayal is considered a major sin, to the extent that our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has stated that such individuals lack true faith (eeman). As believers, it is imperative for us to be conscious of both the rights of our fellow human beings and the rights of Allah ﷻ. We must examine ourselves and hold ourselves accountable if we find any signs of betrayal (khayanat) in our lives. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has explicitly stated that a believer cannot engage in betrayal, lie, or break promises. If we find ourselves exhibiting such behaviors, it is a clear indication of hypocrisy (munafiq) and it is crucial to eradicate these qualities from our lives as soon as possible, as they are not befitting of a true believer. It is important to note that even if a person appears to be fulfilling their religious obligations such as performing salah and fasting, the presence of these negative traits indicates underlying characteristics of hypocrisy.

Indeed, trustworthiness is a significant measure of one's faith (eeman), and it deserves utmost importance in our lives. Everyone should self-reflect and examine if any acts of betrayal (khayanat) are taking place in their own lives. This matter should be treated with great sensitivity, as even a

slight disregard for trust can negatively impact the rights of others. It is crucial to understand that in terms of Allah ﷻ's rights, if we sincerely repent and make changes in our lives, He ﷻ is Forgiving and Merciful. However, when it comes to the rights of His creation, it is their forgiveness that we should seek. Allah ﷻ is the Just, and the consequences of betraying the trust of others can be severe. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to take this matter seriously and strive to uphold trustworthiness in all aspects of our lives.

Once, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked his companions about the identity of the bankrupt person. They replied that a bankrupt person among them is someone who lacks wealth and possessions. The Prophet ﷺ corrected them and said that the true bankrupt individual in his Ummah (community) is the one who will come on the Day of Resurrection with abundant prayers, fasting, and charity. However, despite their virtuous acts, they will find themselves bankrupt because they exhausted their good deeds by reviling others, spreading false accusations, wrongfully consuming others' wealth, causing harm to others, and engaging in physical aggression. As a result, their good deeds will be transferred to those who suffered at their hands. If their good deeds are not sufficient to settle the account, the sins of those they wronged will be added to their record, and they will be thrown into the Hellfire.

Thus, on the Day of Judgment, deeds will be the only currency, and it is through these deeds that the rights of others will be compensated. Therefore, it is crucial for us to rectify any wrongful actions and strive to make amends in this world. We should actively work on changing ourselves and seeking Allah's forgiveness, expressing sincere regret for our past behavior. By seeking Allah's help and guidance, we can distance ourselves from this detrimental habit. May Allah grant us all the ability (tafweeq) to protect ourselves from this sin. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

41. The Success of Both Worlds Lies in the Deen

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

41.1 Luxuries Do Not Bring Peace

Many people often associate luxury and comfort with expensive houses, clothes, and food. However, true comfort in life is connected to the state of the Qalb (heart), and the tranquility of the Qalb does not depend on material luxuries but rather on the wealth of one's faith. It is not guaranteed that having all these material possessions will bring inner peace, as peace is a separate entity that can only be achieved through faith and not through the pursuit of worldly desires. A person may possess all the comforts of life, but still lack inner peace if they do not have faith. If we encounter a person who experiences sleeplessness, it becomes evident that they lack inner peace, leaving no room for doubt. Allah ﷻ, in the Quran, states regarding those who neglect His remembrance: "But whoever turns away from My remembrance, indeed, he will have a depressed life." (20:124).

These words are firmly established, akin to being etched in stone. Our belief in this should be unwavering, surpassing even our belief in the rising of the sun each day. It is essential to understand that no matter how abundant the comforts and luxuries one possesses, without faith, true peace will forever elude them. May Allah ﷻ allow this understanding to deeply penetrate our hearts. It is an undeniable reality that no person in this world can attain true peace without embracing the faith (deen). Even if someone possesses all the material luxuries and comforts, it is impossible to experience genuine peace without a connection to the divine. When Allah ﷻ, the ultimate source of peace, clearly declares that peace cannot be found through worldly means, it becomes evident that searching for peace elsewhere is futile. Therefore, we must recognize that the pathways to comfort and luxury differ from the path to attaining true inner peace.

41.2 Peace Lies in Deen of Allah, the Exalted

The root of peace lies in acting upon the Shariah (Islamic rulings) and abstaining from sins. This is the means to safeguard oneself from corruption (fasad). The foundation of peace (aman) is a righteous life and avoiding sins. Mufti Shafi (rahimahullah) states, "I swear by Allah ﷻ that the one who lives according to the Shariah is a King." Such an individual is a king by heart, as they possess inner peace, contentment, and richness. They may not possess an outward kingdom, yet their heart is filled with tranquility. On the other hand, those who are distant from the Shariah are like trapped individuals in a cage. Despite outward luxuries, they remain constantly worried and restless, pondering over the potential consequences of their actions, uncertainties about the future, and other concerns. Theirs is a life of torment, tasting punishment in this world. The true extent of the worries harbored in his heart is unknown. Despite his outward appearance of regality, he remains plagued by constant concerns, to the point that even when he lies in bed, peace eludes him. His mind is consumed by worries, fearing potential harm from various sources. May Allah ﷻ protect us from acquiring such a kingdom and instead grant us kingship of the heart.

41.3 The Reward of Righteous in the World

Always keep in mind the priority of pleasing Allah ﷻ. The key to attaining peace lies in maintaining a strong connection with Allah ﷻ and distancing oneself from anything or anyone other than Him. By doing so, one can experience peace and tranquility in both this world and the Hereafter. Even if a person faces poverty or external hardships, the inner peace and contentment of the heart make them akin to a king, surpassing any worldly possessions or means. From a hadith of Rasoolullah ﷺ, we learn that when a person abandons a life of sin and embraces righteousness, Allah ﷻ bestows three blessings upon them in this world:

1. Allah ﷻ instills respect and honor for the individual in the hearts of people, regardless of their wealth or occupation.
2. Even without material wealth and possessions, Allah ﷻ enriches their heart with contentment and inner richness.
3. Despite not being beloved or favored by anyone, Allah ﷻ grants them peace and tranquility within their heart.

What more could we desire in this world when we attain honor, richness, and peace? These blessings, as mentioned by the truthful tongue of the Prophet ﷺ, hold a unique sweetness when they emanate from the hearts of people, unlike any worldly attainment. When one finds richness within their heart, they no longer feel impoverished even without vast material wealth; their

contentment surpasses any worldly possession. Do not assume that abandoning a life of sin and embracing righteousness will deprive us of the pleasures of this world. On the contrary, we will experience a level of enjoyment, happiness, and inner peace that far surpasses anything the people of this worldly life have ever tasted. You will see the righteous eating dried bread, but he will have peace and contentment in his heart. On the other hand, you will see another person with a delicious meal spread before him, but he will be restless inside. Who do you think is better: the one who is enjoying dried bread, or the other who is restless while having the delicious food?

It is important to understand that the rewards for righteous deeds are not only reserved for the hereafter. Allah ﷻ, in His infinite mercy, grants a portion of those rewards in this worldly life as well. Through righteousness, one experiences inner peace, contentment, and a sense of fulfillment. Additionally, righteousness brings about honor and glory in the eyes of others. It is not necessarily tied to an increase in wealth or material possessions, but it undoubtedly leads to an increase in peace, contentment, and esteem in the sight of people. Advancements in science and technology have indeed allowed humans to achieve remarkable feats such as flying in the sky, exploring the depths of the sea, and reaching the moon. They have provided us with the ability to harness the power of the sun and hold the wind. However, despite these impressive achievements, true peace, comfort, and tranquility of the heart, as well as peace and security within the family, cannot be attained through scientific advancements alone. Rather, they can only be achieved by adhering to the teachings of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is astonishing to think that just a century ago, people could not fathom the level of progress that science and technology would reach. At the same time, no one could have predicted the extent to which peace and tranquility would diminish, leaving humanity restless and disturbed.

There is only one way to achieve peace, and that is by following the path of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. If we have belief in Allah ﷻ and in the accountability of our deeds in the hereafter, our lives will be infused with peace. The poor Muslim may limit their practice of Islam, fearing the consequences of fully embracing it and abandoning worldly pursuits. They wonder how they will sustain themselves in this world if they fully commit to Islam. It has been emphasized numerous times in the Quran and by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that true success and happiness in this world can only be attained by pleasing Allah ﷻ. The mindset of some Muslims has unfortunately shifted to believe that progress in business, married life, or other worldly pursuits can only be achieved through committing sins. This distorted belief is causing a deviation from true Islamic principles in both thought and action. It can even lead to doubts and fears of apostasy. How did this happen? Some Muslims not only abandon the practice of purdah (modesty), but also view it as an obstacle to progress, ultimately rejecting it altogether. They not only engage in sinful actions, but also hold the dangerous belief that a life without sin is unlivable in this world.

41.4 Do Not Fear and Change Your Mindset

May Allah ﷻ enable us to deeply internalize the fact that true success in both this world and the hereafter can only be attained through adherence to the principles of Islam. When we truly understand this, living a life completely based on the teachings of Islam becomes easier, and we find the motivation to work hard and make sacrifices in the path of Allah ﷻ. In general, human beings work hard and make sacrifices when they have hope and certainty of achieving their goals. For example, when someone needs a costly medical procedure, they gather the necessary funds through hard work, despite their limited income, because they have faith that the operation will

bring about the desired outcome. Similarly, if a Muslim truly believes that success lies in following the teachings of Islam, they will be motivated to work diligently in pursuing their religious obligations and striving for excellence.

The reason why some individuals may not be willing to work hard, make sacrifices, or strive in the path of Deen is because they have not fully grasped the deep understanding that true success comes through following the principles of Islam. Consequently, they are not ready to strive, sacrifice, or work hard in the path of Deen. Therefore, living life according to the principles of Shariah is crucial. By doing so, Allah ﷻ will make everyone respect you, inshaAllah. When you hold respect for the commands of Allah ﷻ in your heart, Allah ﷻ will reciprocate that respect in the hearts of the people. If you believe that you can gain the respect of people without showing respect for the commands of Allah ﷻ, I assure you, it will never happen. People may offer superficial gestures of respect, such as salutations and polite words, but true respect will not reside in their hearts. Even within your own family, including your wife and children, you will not be genuinely respected if you do not uphold the commands of Allah ﷻ.

Stay steadfast in your commitment to the deen, and you will captivate everyone around you. It is important to note that the treatment received from Allah ﷻ differs for believers and enemies. Muslims are held to a higher standard and are subject to strict accountability in all aspects of their lives, including matters of trade, family, and raising children. Sometimes, they may even face punishment in this world as a means of rectification. On the other hand, enemies of the deen are allowed to roam freely, but they will eventually face a sudden and severe punishment that will bring them immense pain and regret.

41.5 Become a Friend of Allah, the Exalted

Allah ﷻ, as the friend of the believers, does not treat His ﷻ friends and enemies equally, no matter how bad the actions of His ﷻ friends may be. Like how a father immediately makes his son understand or a teacher swiftly reprimands a student, Allah ﷻ also corrects and disciplines the believers so that they may feel regret and repent. However, the enemies are given a respite for a while, only to be caught later without any chance of escape. Therefore, the treatment of friends and enemies differs significantly. As long as Muslims have the glory and love of Allah ﷻ in their hearts, they will remain among the friends of Allah ﷻ. However, if their eeman (faith) is weakened and they become hypocrites, they will become enemies of Allah ﷻ. In this world, Muslims may face punishments for their misdeeds, which serve to lessen the burden on the Day of Resurrection. On the other hand, disbelievers (kuffar) and hypocrites (munafiqeen) will be severely held accountable without any lessening of their punishments. If you observe that the enemies of Allah ﷻ are enjoying luxuries and appear to be happy, do not be amazed, as this is a sign of their ultimate loss. When the Prophet ﷺ described this world as a prison for the believers and a paradise for the disbelievers, it signifies that the disbelievers are given freedom to indulge in worldly pleasures, while the believers lead a more restricted and disciplined life.

May Allah ﷻ grant us all the honor and glory of adhering to the principles of our faith and bestow upon us a firm belief that our success in both this world and the Hereafter lies solely in following His commands. Ameen. Let us not tolerate irreligiosity in our children, family, and in our dealings, as we should firmly believe that such actions will only bring us and our loved ones loss. With this belief, we will take every step carefully, seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ assist us in translating our knowledge and preaching into action. May He ﷻ bestow His blessings upon our

beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his esteemed companions (RA). Ameen. All praise and gratitude are due to Allah ﷻ.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

42. A Beautiful Story of a Young Man to Reflect

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The story revolves around a young man who, feeling extremely hungry and tired, comes across a river. He quenches his thirst by drinking water from the river and is pleasantly surprised to find an apple floating nearby. Out of sheer hunger, he quickly picks up the apple and eats a portion of it, expressing gratitude to Allah ﷻ. However, as he consumes the apple, his conscience is suddenly awakened, and a sense of fear overwhelms his heart. He realizes that the apple does not rightfully belong to him, and the portion he consumed was obtained unlawfully. This realization fills him with worry and an intense fear of the consequences from Allah ﷻ, as the Hellfire devours a body that has been nourished by unlawful sustenance.

Motivated by his desire to seek forgiveness and make amends, the young man embarks on a mission to find the rightful owner of the apple before the Day of Judgment, when all deeds will be presented to Allah ﷻ for accountability. He sets off in the direction opposite to where he found the apple, walking along the river. As he continues his journey, he suddenly comes across an apple tree nearby. Intuitively, he concludes that this tree must be the source of the apple he consumed. Looking around, he notices a house near the tree. Believing that the owner of the house is likely the owner of the tree, the young man approaches the door and knocks, ready to confess his actions and seek forgiveness. An elderly man opens the door, and with utmost respect and humility, the young man confesses to him that he consumed his provision without permission, driven by hunger. He admits to eating a portion of the apple in haste and expresses his sincere remorse. The young man has come to seek the owner's forgiveness, recognizing the gravity of his actions.

Upon witnessing the young man's display of piety and honesty, the old man responds that he cannot forgive him unless a certain condition is fulfilled. Anxious and deep in thought, the young man enquires about the condition. The old man states that the young man must marry his daughter, who is deaf, dumb, blind, and lame. Initially distressed by the prospect of spending his entire life with a woman with such disabilities, the young man contemplates the situation. However, the fear of the punishment of Hellfire overshadows his concerns. He realizes that worldly life is temporary and fleeting, while the Hereafter is eternal. No one can endure the torment of Hellfire, even for a moment, and he cannot bear the burden of his sin. Filled with this fear in his heart, he resolves to accept the condition and agrees to marry the old man's daughter.

On the day of their marriage, the young man entered the inner dwelling of his new wife, expecting to find a woman with disabilities. However, to his pleasant surprise, he was greeted by a

remarkably beautiful young lady who radiated piety and moral values. Her face reflected the blessings bestowed upon her by Allah ﷻ, as she possessed perfect hearing, eyesight, and physical abilities. The young man went to her father and told him that she is not as deficient as he described her. The father replied, "Son, I spoke the truth. When I said she was blind, I meant her eyes never fell on any man forbidden for her. She was deaf because she never sat in a place where malicious backbiting, gossip, or taletelling took place out of fear for Allah ﷻ. And she was dumb because she never spoke to men forbidden for her. She was also lame because her arms and legs never headed towards what was forbidden (haram). Having seen her piety, I wanted to give her only to a man of very pious nature, which I saw in you, and so I gave her to you."

The story doesn't end there. Allah ﷻ blessed them with a pious child who was raised by such righteous parents, protected like a precious pearl. This child was none other than Abdul Qadir Jeelani (Rahimahullah), under whose influence approximately seventy thousand people embraced the deen of Allah ﷻ. This is an immense reward beyond imagination, as the Prophet ﷺ said that if Allah ﷻ guides one person through us, it is better than owning a hundred red camels. In those days, a red camel was equivalent to today's luxury car like a Mercedes-Benz. So, we can only imagine the magnitude of reward for guiding seventy thousand individuals and their future generations. Furthermore, the good deeds performed by all those who were guided will also be added to the record of the pious couple, without diminishing the rewards of those who performed the good acts themselves.

Many profound lessons can be derived from this story. We are reminded of the profound fear of Allah ﷻ that the pious young man possessed, which leaves us in awe. We also witness the remarkable modesty and chastity of the pious lady, who safeguarded her purity out of fear of Allah ﷻ. Furthermore, we are inspired by the pious father who prioritized piety over wealth and status when seeking a spouse for his daughter. These are the exemplary traits of our pious predecessors, who lived their lives solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ and prioritized the deen over worldly matters. In contrast, we often find ourselves prioritizing worldly pursuits over our religious obligations.

Through such stories, Allah ﷻ presents us with examples of His chosen friends (awliya) who held a profound fear and reverence for Him, encouraging us to follow in their footsteps. We are also reminded of how Allah ﷻ brought together the pious man and the pious woman and blessed them with a pious child. It is a testament to the appreciation and generosity of Allah ﷻ, the Most Merciful, the Loving, and the Kind.

May Allah ﷻ grant us guidance, piety, chastity, and richness of heart. Ameen, Ameen, thumma Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

43. Acknowledge Allah's Grace and Be Humble

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

43.1 Attribute Goodness to Allah, the Exalted and Be Grateful

Do not attribute any goodness to yourself when you engage in the path of Allah. Instead, express gratitude to Allah ﷻ, for it is He who has chosen and enabled you to serve in His path by His grace and favor upon you. Without His support, you would not possess the strength to carry out the work. If Allah ﷻ blesses you with righteousness, obedience, and steadfastness, do not praise yourself but recognize that these are gifts from Allah's ﷻ abundant grace. Always acknowledge and attribute excellence and goodness to Allah ﷻ whenever you engage in Allah's cause, and refrain from praising yourself. By doing so, you will be safeguarded from arrogance, and through gratitude to Allah ﷻ, you will be granted steadfastness. It is Allah's ﷻ promise that if you express gratitude to Him ﷻ, He ﷻ will bestow upon you even more abundance.

Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA) highlights that sometimes individuals may appear to be deeply devoted to the cause of religion and exert great effort for the sake of Allah. However, their enthusiasm and vigor may stem from personal motivations such as tribal or national pride, or the desire for fame. True devotion to Allah requires that one's actions align with the teachings of the Shariah, the commands of Allah ﷻ, and His pleasure. One must work with the sole intention of seeking Allah's pleasure and keep His pleasure in mind while carrying out their tasks. It is possible for a person to exhibit great enthusiasm and energy in defending and serving Islam, but if their underlying motive is vanity and fame, they will act according to their own desires without distinguishing between right and wrong. Their intention is not rooted in abiding by the Islamic laws, but rather in seeking fame. Therefore, when Allah ﷻ has blessed you with skills and abilities, when you are called upon to engage in religious work, and when you are granted steadfastness, it is essential to express gratitude to Allah ﷻ. Recognize that these blessings are bestowed upon you purely out of His ﷻ grace and generosity. If your true intention is to seek Allah's pleasure, being grateful will protect you from vanity and grant you the strength to remain steadfast.

43.2 Look into Your Heart

Disclosing one's righteous deeds is not inherently evil, just as hiding them is not necessarily virtuous. The problem lies in disclosing them with the belief that the deed is solely one's own, seeking appreciation for it. In such a case, revealing the deed is indeed wrong. However, if one attributes the deed to the Creator when disclosing it, it is not considered bad. In fact, it can inspire and motivate others to perform similar acts of goodness. When you perform a good deed and your ego takes credit for it, considering it a sign of your own superiority, that is pride (kibr). But if you recognize that the deed is a result of Allah's grace and blessings, it becomes an expression of gratitude. Your heart is the judge in this matter, so pay attention to how it feels. If you find joy in attributing a good deed to your own superiority, it is pride. But if you acknowledge that it is by the grace of Allah ﷻ, it is gratitude, and rest assured that such a deed is accepted by Allah ﷻ. When a person's mind is focused on Allah ﷻ, their own deeds become insignificant to them. They will be

constantly worried about fulfilling the rights of Allah ﷻ. On the other hand, when one's mind is fixated on themselves, they tend to develop a high opinion of themselves.

43.3 We are Not Worthy to Complain

As much work Allah ﷻ extracts from us is itself a reward, so why should we yearn for additional rewards? SubhanAllah! When Allah ﷻ grants us His divine help to carry out righteous deeds, and when He ﷻ allows us to engage in deeni work, that in itself is a reward. When this reward is already significant, what other reward are we asking for or yearning for? Rewards are received for good deeds, but in this case, the good deed itself is a reward. When have we ever had the ability to do any good without Allah's help?

When something distressing happens to a person, they may feel a strange sense of righteousness and wonder why such a thing is happening to them. This indicates that somewhere within them, they are thinking highly of themselves for the good deeds they are performing. They consider themselves more worthy, and that is why they feel inclined to complain. However, if they acknowledge that it is due to the divine help of Allah ﷻ that they are able to do good deeds, despite not being deserving of any goodness, they will not have any inclination to complain.

If one truly believes that the divine help provided by Allah ﷻ is a result of His grace and is a reward, and they consider themselves unworthy, there would be no tendency to complain. On the contrary, some individuals are astonished when calamities befall them, as they consider it incompatible with their perceived high level of piety. They fail to recognize any wrongdoing within themselves and question why they experience such hardships. The reality is that if we were to search for a single prayer performed throughout our lifetime with complete concentration, we would not find one. Despite our shortcomings, we still consider ourselves to be pious. Imagine if someone is speaking to you while turning their face away, how hurtful would that be? Would you want to engage with them further? It is the forbearance and generosity of Allah ﷻ that He ﷻ allows you to stand before Him in salah, even when your heart is turned elsewhere. Allah ﷻ still hears your words, and this is solely His mercy and benevolence. It is by His grace alone that He provides divine assistance for our good deeds.

43.4 Accomplished People Never Boast

The feeling of pride over one's accomplishments is a sign that one is devoid of true accomplishment. Truly accomplished individuals are humble and never boastful. When people genuinely achieve success, they are blessed with humility and do not feel the need to boast. If someone is truly excellent, they will possess the quality of not considering themselves excellent. On the other hand, those who are not truly excellent tend to boast about their supposed excellence. Just like a tree laden with fruits bows down, a person with true accomplishment will display humility and modesty. The divine help we receive for righteous deeds is a result of Allah ﷻ's grace. The desire for prayer and the ability to wake up for tahajjud are not our own efforts, but rather it is Allah ﷻ who wakes us up. This divine assistance continues as long as Allah ﷻ's generous gaze is upon us. If Allah ﷻ enables us to perform any good deed, we should attribute it to His ﷻ grace, for all goodness resides solely within His ﷻ control. Therefore, we should never feel superior due to our good deeds, nor should we look down upon sinners. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to maintain piety, as it is not easy to constantly confront our own flaws and eliminate disdain from our hearts towards others. We should regularly examine our own selves and our inner desires.

43.5 Look Down on Yourself

Our Prophet ﷺ taught this duaa to his ummah, "Allahummajalni fee ayni sagheera wa fi a'yunninnaasi kabeera" which translates to "O Allah! Make me small in my own eyes but great in the eyes of others." It is indeed an evil trait to behold one's own excellence and feel proud. While we are conscious of certain sins for which we seek repentance, there are numerous diseases and evils that reside within our hearts of which we remain unaware and fail to repent. These diseases, like hidden poisons, corrode our hearts without us considering them as sins, thereby depriving our righteous deeds of their illumination and diminishing the essence of righteousness. Therefore, it is essential to continually examine ourselves in this regard. We should engage in worship and perform our religious duties, always acknowledging that these actions are only possible through the grace and favor of Allah ﷻ.

43.6 Talk to Allah and Express Your Gratitude

Dr. Abdul Hayy (RA) used to say that the greatest struggle (mujahida) of our times is to express gratitude to Allah ﷻ whenever we receive blessings, whether related to this world or religion. We should be grateful to Allah ﷻ, recognizing that it is due to His ﷻ grace, benevolence, and generosity that we have received these blessings. This gratitude can have a profound effect in uprooting numerous spiritual diseases. Gratitude is not merely expressed through words, but it is a state of the heart. If one is fortunate enough to possess this quality, they can be protected from various spiritual ailments such as jealousy, arrogance, and vanity. Gratitude helps to keep our hearts humble. Dr. Abdul Hayy (RA) also advised engaging in regular conversation and supplication with Allah ﷻ. In the present times, where lengthy and arduous struggles are difficult to undertake, practicing these two acts can lead to the closeness (kurb) of Allah ﷻ. So, let us continuously ask Allah ﷻ and express our gratitude to Him ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ grant us all a deep understanding of the religion. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

Tarbiati Majlis dated 29.01.2017.

44. Control the Tongue

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

It has been narrated in Hadith-e-Tirmidhi that once a Sahabi (RA) asked our beloved Prophet ﷺ, "How can one attain salvation?" He specifically inquired about acts other than the obligatory (farz) and recommended (wajib) acts that lead to Jannah. This significant question was posed by a Sahabi (RA) to none other than the Prophet ﷺ. While there are many acts that can lead to salvation, the Prophet ﷺ replied, "Control your tongue." Unfortunately, we often fail to control our tongues, and instead, it is our tongues that control us. In another Hadith, our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "I guarantee Jannah for the one who can guarantee two things: the chastity of what is between his two jawbones and what is between his two legs (i.e., his tongue and his private parts)."

Muadh (RA), a great Sahabi who was dearly loved by the Prophet ﷺ, was appointed as a governor in Yemen. When bidding farewell to Muadh, the Prophet ﷺ personally accompanied him until the outskirts of Madinah, showing his immense affection. During this occasion, the Prophet ﷺ advised Muadh to take care of his tongue. How precious and valuable must that advice have been! Muadh (RA) then asked the Prophet ﷺ, "O Rasulallah! Will we be held accountable for what our tongues utter?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "O Muadh, may your mother be bereaved of you! Don't you realize that nothing else throws people flat onto their faces in the fire of Jahannam except the harvest of their tongues!" This expression, "may your mother be bereaved of you," is an Arabic idiom used to emphasize the importance of the topic being discussed.

Another Sahabi (RA) once asked the Prophet ﷺ, "What do you fear the most for me?" The Prophet ﷺ pointed to his tongue and said, "This tongue." Each of our faculties, such as the eyes, ears, tongue, and nose, performs its respective functions, but none have as much impact as the tongue, which resides between the jaws. The influence and effect of the tongue are vast, as it directly affects the hearts of others. The tongue serves as a representative of the heart, and through speech, it can either change lives or tear hearts apart. The words of Allah ﷻ also have a tremendous impact on us. If we observe many quarrels and conflicts, we will find that most of them originate from the tongue.

In another hadith, it is mentioned that every morning, all the limbs of a person plead with their tongue, saying, "Fear Allah for our sake, for our fate is tied to yours. If you follow the straight path, so shall we. And if you go astray, so shall we." While physical wounds can be healed with medicine, the wounds inflicted by the tongue on the heart may take years to heal. This highlights the profound effect of the tongue. Sometimes, casual or joking remarks can have disastrous consequences, leading to belittling and hurting others. Allah ﷻ, when describing the qualities of His righteous slaves, emphasizes their avoidance of idle talk. This verse does not refer to sinful speech but rather futile and unnecessary conversation. Its placement between the verse about salah (prayer) and the verse about zakat (charity) signifies its importance. Scholars have noted that the level of khushu (concentration) in salah is directly proportional to one's avoidance of idle and unnecessary talk.

Four diseases have spread widely among the Ummah, even affecting practicing individuals, and these diseases are so severe that they erase righteous deeds. They are backbiting and vilification, suspicion and having a negative opinion about others, forbidden glance, and jealousy. Even religious individuals, whether they perform their salah in congregation or engage in Tabligh or any other religious activity, are often entangled in these sins. Shaytan knows that he cannot prevent people from performing righteous acts, so he works tirelessly to steal these acts by wiping them away through these sins. One should have a negative opinion of oneself but maintain a good opinion of others. Scholars have said that excessive speech often leads to engaging in backbiting, belittling others to elevate oneself, and lying. Even though some conversations may be permissible when they do not involve sin, idle talk can diminish the light in the heart. The light is obtained through righteous acts such as salah, charity, and fasting, and all of this can be lost through such conversations. The one who controls their tongue is wise, and there are only a few who possess this wisdom. Just as unnecessary use drains the battery of a torch, useless talk drains the light of the heart. When a tank is being filled with water and the valve at the bottom is left open, will any water remain in the tank? Similarly, excessive talking depletes the brain's energy and has an impact on memory. When one loses the light in their heart, they will not attain steadfastness (istiqamat).

Imam Ghazzali (RA) said that if one does not find any peace from righteous acts like salah, fasting, etc., he should check his heart, for it is sick. Just as when we have a cold, our nose cannot smell or sense any fragrance. When this is the case with worldly fragrances, how can one not sense the fragrance of closeness to Allah ﷻ? When the disease is severe, the treatment is also tough, and one may need to be admitted to the hospital or undergo an operation. Similarly, when it comes to curing spiritual diseases, if the disease is severe, one must gather more courage to undergo the tough treatment, while a mild disease may require only a few tablets. However, nothing can be achieved without courage.

Is it wise for a person to work hard throughout the day in a factory and waste all his earnings at the end of the day? Similarly, it is strange that someone works hard in performing various acts of worship but loses the reward due to useless and sinful talks. One should think before speaking and reflect afterward if what was said was necessary. Seeking forgiveness after every salah and deeply contemplating the conversations of the day before going to bed, seeking forgiveness, can be challenging for some, but Allah ﷻ is with those who take courageous steps towards Him. One should continuously strive to eliminate futile talks, and Allah ﷻ's help is with those who have the courage to do so. If one falls into sin, they should immediately repent, and if they fall again, they should repent again and keep trying without giving up, for Allah ﷻ's help is indeed with those who strive in His path. May Allah ﷻ help us all refrain from futile and sinful talks and preserve the noor (light) of our hearts. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Tarbiati Majlis dated 29.01.2012.

45. Arrogance is the Root Cause of 90% Sins

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Spiritual diseases are more detrimental than physical diseases. One of the worst diseases is self-exaltation and claiming personal purity. This is the mother of all diseases, and 90% of sins are caused by it. When one thinks highly of oneself, they develop jealousy towards those who possess the qualities they consider superior. The cure for this is to show more favor towards the person we feel jealous of and praise them publicly. Jannah (Paradise) is reserved for those who are free from pride. If we have arrogance (kibr), we should reflect on our humble origins and the fact that we are created from a simple substance, which will help us understand our true status. Just as a person's physical appearance indicates their physical maturity, getting rid of arrogance is a sign of spiritual maturity. The primary purpose of sitting in the company of pious elders (majlis of buzurgs) is to eliminate arrogance and cultivate humility and submission. When a person is afflicted with this disease, they will not be inclined to participate in such gatherings. This disease becomes even more harmful when one fails to recognize it. If a person believes they are intelligent while considering others to be lacking, it is the worst form of the disease. When a person is unaware of their sickness, they cannot seek the help of a doctor. Arrogance deprives a person of finding solutions to their

problems and prevents them from having the courage to confront and stop evil. This is the most detrimental consequence of arrogance.

Our pious elders were such that even when a small child or anyone pointed out a mistake, they would immediately introspect and examine themselves, as they were free from arrogance. In contrast, we often try to justify ourselves and dismiss those who point out our mistakes. Just as our hands can feel the sensation of touching a hot object or an ice cube, our hearts can perceive sin and evil when they are alive and conscious. However, when our hearts are spiritually lifeless, they fail to recognize any wrongdoing.

Similarly, when we wear clean and well-ironed clothes, even a small stain becomes immediately noticeable. But if the clothes are completely soiled, we may not even recognize the stains on them. Imam Shafi (RA), whenever he encountered difficulty in understanding certain matters, would seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ as he understood that his own sins might be hindering his comprehension. Another wise elder explained that Imam Shafi could recognize this because his sins were very few.

The nature of sins is inherently detrimental, and they can deprive us of blessings and spiritual growth. Sometimes we witness individuals who are actively engaged in performing extra voluntary prayers or reciting the Quran, but suddenly they are unable to continue with these righteous acts. This could be attributed to the impact of their sins.

During the time of Prophet Musa (AS), a man from the Bani Israel claimed that he was committing sins, but Allah ﷻ was forgiving and overlooking them. Allah ﷻ revealed to Musa (AS) that the man should be informed that Allah ﷻ had removed the enjoyment and tranquility from his prayers because of his sins. When we experience a lack of concentration and interest in our worship, it may be a result of our own sins. Sometimes, a person may face disobedience or resistance from those under his authority. In such cases, one should reflect upon his own obedience to those above him, as it may be a contributing factor to the disobedience he encounters.

To determine whether we are going through a punishment or a trial, we can observe our level of distress. If we become more distressed, it may be a sign of punishment, whereas if we remain content and at ease, it may be a trial meant to elevate our status. It is like being pressed from behind by an enemy, which causes distress, compared to being pressed from behind by a beloved friend, which brings comfort.

May Allah ﷻ grant us all a life of taqwa (God-consciousness) and bestow upon us the ability to act upon the knowledge. Ameen

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Tarbiati Majlis dated 5.02.2011.

46. Our Salah-Did We Really Perform It?

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Salah, one of the pillars of Islam that holds a significant place in the life of a Muslim, is also referred to as the miraj (ascension) of a believer. It is through salah that a believer can experience closeness to Allah ﷻ, particularly during the prostration when there is no barrier between the servant and their Lord. Unfortunately, we observe that the Ummah of the beloved Prophet ﷺ, has neglected this important aspect of worship. Despite the Prophet's ﷺ continuous emphasis on salah, even towards the end of his life, where he would repeatedly mention salah, the ummah seems to have forgotten its significance. Some have completely abandoned salah, while others perform it without truly understanding its essence or spirit. It is the spiritual essence of salah that grants victory to a believer. In a hadith Qudsi, Allah ﷻ states, "I can guarantee my Jannah only for those slaves who establish salah, and as for those who neglect it, I cannot give any guarantee."

This discourse is primarily intended for those who fall into the second category, who are negligent about the essence of salah, which is khushu (humility) and presence of mind. This is a significant flaw that has often been overlooked by individuals, from the average layperson to those who appear pious. However, the consequences of lacking khushu in salah are far more significant than we may realize. We spend our entire lives performing salah without khushu, unaware that it is a major defect. As a result, our salah lacks strength and becomes so weak that the moment a Muslim step out of the mosque, he is unable to control his eyes from looking at forbidden things. Allah ﷻ, when describing the strength of salah, states in the Quran, "*Verily, the prayers restrain one from immorality and wrongdoing*" (29:45). Salah and sin cannot coexist, just as water and fire cannot mix.

Consider the confidence that our beloved Prophet ﷺ had in the power of salah. When a man came to him and informed him about someone engaging in minor thefts and other evil acts, the Prophet ﷺ asked if the person performed salah. Upon receiving an affirmative response, the Prophet ﷺ advised the man to leave it, as the individual would soon abandon those evil actions. SubhanAllah! Do we possess the same conviction? Years go by, and we continue to perform salah, yet find ourselves in the same position. Neither Allah ﷻ, who speaks the truth, nor our beloved Prophet ﷺ, who is the most truthful among mankind, can be wrong. Therefore, we must direct our fingers towards ourselves and acknowledge that the reason we lack this quality is due to the absence of khushu in our salah.

This is indeed a disease that afflicts the ummah, as our success is dependent on salah with khushu (humility) as Allah ﷻ states, "Successful indeed are the believers, those who have khushu" [Qur'an 23:1-2]. It is evident that the success of believers and the entire ummah lies in the khushu of salah. One of our predecessors stated that when people deviate from the path of faith, the first thing they lose is the essence of worship. This loss neither brings them pleasure in their worship nor distress when they abandon it. It is a serious matter if we no longer find pleasure in worship or feel distressed when committing sins. In a narration, a companion (RA) came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, "O Messenger of Allah, how can I know if I have true faith in my heart?" The Prophet ﷺ

replied, "If you find enjoyment in performing good deeds and feel distressed when committing sins, then consider yourself a believer." It is worth noting that we may experience some satisfaction in fulfilling obligatory acts, even if their quality is not optimal, and we should be grateful to Allah ﷻ for that. However, what we may lack is the blessings, true taste, and enjoyment in salah. The Prophet ﷺ described salah as the coolness of his eyes.

Now that we understand the importance of khushu and how it should bring about a change in our inner and outer selves during salah, let us delve into what khushu truly means and how we can attain it. Khushu can be understood as humbling oneself before Allah ﷻ, and it encompasses both apparent (zahir) and inner (batin) aspects of humility in salah. Outer khushu is evident when we refrain from wandering our eyes, constantly adjusting our clothing, coughing intentionally, or engaging in unnecessary movements such as excessive head movements. However, if these actions are unintentional, such as when one has a genuine cough due to illness, they do not affect our khushu. Inner khushu, on the other hand, refers to having a presence of mind in salah. People generally fall into two categories regarding inner khushu: those who pay no attention to it, and those who acknowledge its importance in drawing closer to Allah ﷻ but believe it is only attainable by saints. The following advice is intended for those in the latter category.

First and foremost, it is important to recognize that Allah ﷻ has made His deen (religion) easy for us. He explicitly states this in the Quran. Moreover, Allah ﷻ mentions in the Quran that successful are the believers who pray with khushu. If khushu was only attainable by Prophets or saints, it would contradict Allah's justice to command something that is impossible for us to achieve. Salah is the cornerstone of a Muslim's life, and without it, the spirit of a Muslim remains lifeless. Allah ﷻ, being the most merciful, would not burden us with something beyond our capabilities.

Therefore, we should firmly believe that attaining khushu in salah is indeed within our reach, and we have control over it. The question then arises: How easy is it? The answer is as simple as the morsel of food entering our mouths. It may seem difficult due to our own ignorance and heedlessness, but the reality is that it is within our grasp. Just as the morsel of food will not enter our mouth unless we intend to eat and our fingers move towards it, similarly, to attain khushu, we must first have the intention to achieve it.

Intention is indeed the key to obtaining attention in our prayer. When we have a sincere intention, it brings a heightened level of focus and presence in our salah. One practical way to observe this is by intending to say, "Subhana Rabbi al A'laa" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) five times, may be in the Sunnah or voluntary prayers, instead of the usual three times. This deliberate intention behind increasing the number of recitations can have a profound impact on our concentration and focus. When we recite a phrase or an invocation multiple times with a clear intention, it helps to shift our prayer from a mechanical and routine act to a more meaningful and engaged experience. Moreover, we should always remind ourselves that we have entered the divine court of Allah ﷻ during our salah. When we prostrate in salah, we are in a state of utmost closeness to Him. By having this intention, we can experience a deeper sense of reverence and connection during our prayer.

Another helpful tip is to intend and focus on each letter we recite, pronouncing them clearly and with contemplation. This mindful approach to recitation can bring a renewed sense of engagement and understanding of the words we are uttering. Additionally, we can enrich our salah by memorizing and reciting three new verses from the Quran daily. By incorporating these verses into

our prayer, rather than relying solely on the usual surahs that automatically come to our tongue, we can bring fresh meaning and intention to our recitation.

The other thing is that many of us think that obtaining khushu means not having any thoughts in salah. When we don't experience a complete absence of thoughts, we may feel that it is impossible for us to achieve khushu. Some individuals even go to the extent of giving up salah, believing that since they lack khushu, there is no point in continuing. However, what we need to understand is that having thoughts during salah is natural, as our minds are constantly filled with various thoughts throughout the day. When we stand in prayer for a few minutes, we cannot expect our minds to suddenly become completely calm and free from thoughts. This is not the requirement for khushu. What is required is that when thoughts arise, we dismiss them and continue with our salah without getting absorbed in those thoughts. This is what constitutes khushu. If we do not intentionally engage with the thoughts that come to our minds and instead let them pass without dwelling on them, inshaAllah, our salah will be considered to have khushu. In many cases, when a thought arises, we tend to fully engage with it, such as planning business or thinking about our studies or other matters. This state of heedlessness is not excusable. Instead, we should continue our salah without becoming preoccupied with the thoughts that cross our minds.

Remember, Allah ﷻ only requires us to make efforts, and the outcome is His responsibility. We should not worry about the result. It is important to understand that Allah ﷻ loves us. Even when we neglect our salah and show little attention, which is highly disrespectful, Allah ﷻ still guides us back to the prayer mat, despite its worthiness of being thrown back on our faces. We do not deserve this guidance and divine assistance, as Allah ﷻ is not in need of our acts of worship. It is purely out of His ﷻ mercy and grace that He bestows His blessings upon us. Among us are those who were born into Muslim families, and we did not have a choice in that matter. It is Allah ﷻ who instilled faith in our hearts and made us Muslims. Likewise, among us are those who embraced Islam after converting from other religions. It is Allah ﷻ who guided them from disbelief (kufr) to Islam. Allah ﷻ does not require any of this. So, when we sincerely intend to attain khushu in our salah and strive for it, Allah ﷻ will surely shower His blessings upon us, as described in the Quran. He will grant us success in both worlds and bring tranquility and contentment to our hearts.

After salah, let us not forget to thank Allah ﷻ for enabling us to perform salah and to seek forgiveness, as we can never worship Him ﷻ as He deserves to be worshipped. When we express gratitude to Allah ﷻ, He will safeguard our good deeds and bestow more blessings upon us. Similarly, when we seek forgiveness, our hearts become humble, and this humility is the essence of our worship, leading us, inshaAllah, to Jannah (Paradise).

O Allah ﷻ, we beseech You for perfection in our ablution (wudhu), perfection in our salah, Your perfect pleasure, and Your perfect forgiveness. Please do not turn our hearts away after guiding us to the truth and keep us steadfast on Your path. Grant us and our family members the ability to establish salah with khushu, and bless our hearts with compassion, humility, and constant repentance towards You. We eagerly anticipate Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful. Ameen, ameen, thumma ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

47. Basirat: The Most Essential Guiding Light in the Times of Dajjal

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

47.1 Basirat Vs Basaarat

My dear esteemed and honorable brothers, elders of Islam, and the mothers and sisters of the sanctified Ummah of Islam, the eyes are among the greatest blessings bestowed upon us by Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ grants this ni'mat (blessing) of eyesight to both His ﷻ friends and His ﷻ enemies. He bestows the ability to see, both the light and glare, upon His ﷻ obedient slaves who worship and obey Him ﷻ, as well as upon those who disobey Him ﷻ. The light of the physical eyesight is called Basaarat, while the light of the heart or inner eyesight is referred to as Basirat. It is important to note that while Allah ﷻ grants Basaarat to both His ﷻ friends and His ﷻ enemies, the Basirat is granted exclusively to His ﷻ friends. We often come to appreciate the value of our eyes when faced with a path filled with danger. Without the blessing of eyesight, many would have fallen into pits or stumbled along the way. It is the one who has been bestowed with the gift of eyesight who becomes more aware of the dangers and can navigate their path more effectively to reach their destination.

During times of fitna, the light of the heart becomes even more crucial. Fitna refers to times of trial and tribulation when the truth may be obscured and appear different from what it is. In such times, it is the Basirat, the inner eyesight, that becomes our guiding light, not just the Basaarat, the physical eyesight. To protect oneself from the fitna of Dajjal and the deceptions of that time, it is essential to sharpen and enhance the light of the inner eyesight, the Basirat. Just as our physical eyes make us aware of dangers in the external world, the Basirat enables us to recognize and navigate through the fitna. Regardless of how the fitna presents itself or disguises its true nature, those blessed with Basirat will see through the veils and discern the reality. This is indeed a great blessing. The time of Dajjal is characterized by deception. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ foretold, "A time will come when there will be only deceptions." In such times, truthfulness may be seen as falsehood, and falsehood may be perceived as truth. The trustworthy may be doubted, while the deceitful may be seen as trustworthy. This is the nature of the time of deception, and during these times, the light of the inner eyesight, the Basirat, becomes even more indispensable than external eyesight. Therefore, it is crucial to nurture and increase this light of the heart, the Basirat.

47.2 Basirat is achieved only by Taqwa

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Beware of the acumen of a believer, for he sees with the light of Allah." The believer possesses the divine light of Allah ﷻ, enabling them to perceive beyond the surface. Therefore, my esteemed brothers and sisters, in these times of fitna (trials) and darkness, where dangers appear abundant and darkness surrounds us, when those with malicious intent masquerade as guides and the wicked disguise themselves as well-wishers, when our enemies present themselves as our own, it is the Basirat (inner vision) that becomes indispensable. Basirat is not attained solely through righteous deeds, but rather through Taqwa (God-

consciousness) and abstaining from sins. Merely performing salah for forty years does not guarantee the possession of Basirat. One may engage in dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and perform voluntary acts of worship, yet still lack Basirat, as it is acquired through leading a life free from sin. Allah ﷻ, the Most Truthful, promises to grant Basirat to those who lead lives of Taqwa, and this promise is not exclusive to acts of worship and righteous deeds alone.

"In tattaqoo Allaha yajAAal lakum furqanan" - If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you Furqan (a criterion to judge between right and wrong). Yes, if you save yourself from sins, you will be bestowed with the light of the heart. It is the Ahl-e-taqwa, the people of Taqwa, who will possess this Basirat. Even if a person worships Allah ﷻ for fifty years, if he fails to protect himself from sins, there is a danger of him falling into the pit due to the absence of Basirat. He might find himself under the banner of a misguided individual, he might listen to irreligious words and be led astray. The danger is severe. However, if we possess Taqwa, we will easily recognize the irreligious even if they come disguised behind thousands of veils. Today, we are in utmost need of Basirat. When we speak of the coming of Dajjal and the need to prepare for him, it is through increasing the light of the heart that we make this preparation.

47.3 Haram Glance and Haram Provisions Erode Basirat

We are currently living in the era of Dajjal, a time characterized by deceit and falsehood, and unfortunately, we find ourselves lacking Basirat when it is most needed. Without Basirat, our decisions in life often go astray, leading us down the wrong path. Immersed in the fitna (trials and tribulations), our decisions lose their correctness. If we desire to sharpen the light of Basirat, the scholars of the past have advised us to protect our eyes from looking at the forbidden and to refrain from consuming haram provisions. By doing so, Allah ﷻ will enhance our Basirat and infuse goodness into every decision and counsel we seek. The misuse of our eyesight and indulgence in haram provisions can destroy our Basirat. In some instances, Allah ﷻ may even take away our inner eyesight because of misusing our physical sight. Today, it has become increasingly difficult to perceive Basirat, and this is primarily due to the pervasive presence of factors that corrupt these eyes. It is disheartening and concerning to witness Muslims making incorrect decisions due to the absence of Basirat. This is evident in matters such as the education of our children and the selection of suitable daughters-in-law for our households. The alarming reality is that many Muslims have brought destruction upon their homes due to flawed thinking and misplaced priorities.

Allah ﷻ has deprived him of Basirat due to his sins, causing his thinking to go astray. In fact, sometimes a person becomes so deprived of Basirat that, I swear by Allah ﷻ, he willingly inclines towards aberrant ways and has no desire for righteousness. He prefers the views of the irreligious and those who have gone astray, while distancing himself from what is right and true. When the eyes are tainted by haram means, the heart becomes corrupted to the worst extent. If one protects their eyes from haram for just forty days, they will undoubtedly experience a light in their thinking and Allah ﷻ will grant them Basirat. Some impoverished youth come to me influenced by their surroundings, filled with misguided thoughts, and asking peculiar questions. I first provide them with answers to their questions, then I advise them to protect their eyes for the sake of Allah ﷻ, and then return, for they will understand what I mean. Live a life free from sins for a few days, and inshaaAllah, your heart will naturally incline towards goodness. However, if you are burdened with sins and carry their stains, your heart will never yearn for goodness. "And if they see the way of righteousness, they will not adopt it as the Way, but if they see the way of error, they will adopt that way. (Al-Quran 7:146)" One single misuse of the gaze can deprive a person of Basirat. The

misguided decision of the youth is a result of distorted Basarat, and what's worse is that he is attracted to the impure and vicious, while having no attraction towards the righteous.

47.4 Recognize Our Dangerous State

Rasoolullah ﷺ said, “What will happen to you during the time when your youth becomes unchaste, and your women and daughters will surpass all limits?” Allahu Akbar. The beloved Prophet ﷺ only speaks that which is revealed to him by Allah ﷻ, and Allah’s ﷻ knowledge is vast. It appears the beloved Prophet ﷺ foresaw the present time through the eyes of his ﷻ prophethood. Fortunate are those young individuals whose youth is protected. Fortunate are those parents whose daughters are pure, chaste, and veiled. When these pure souls (the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ), nurtured in a pure environment, with hearts firm and inclined towards righteousness, heard this from the truthful tongue of the Prophet ﷺ, they were astonished and asked, “Can this really happen?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes, and the situation will be even worse than that.”

He ﷺ said, “What will happen to you during the time when you do not forbid evil and enjoin good?” The Sahabaha, may Allah be pleased with them all, who considered enjoining good and forbidding evil as their priority and spent their days and nights with this concern, asked, “Will this really happen, O Rasoolullah?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes, and the situation will be even worse than that.” Then he ﷺ said, “What will happen to you when you call towards evil and forbid from good?” Today, we witness that there are many who call towards evil, but there are few to encourage righteousness. There are few who support one another in doing good, but there are many who encourage others towards evil. They asked, “Will this really happen, O Rasoolullah?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes, and the situation will be even worse than that.”

Rasoolullah ﷺ said, “What will happen to you when good appears as evil to you and evil appears as good to you?” This is a grave situation where even the ability to seek repentance may be taken away from a person, and there is a fear that even their faith may be lost. In this state, if someone tries to prevent them from evil, they become angry and fight against the one calling them towards the truth, considering them to be lacking intelligence and ignorant. This happens because, in their perception, what is evil is considered good. Therefore, anyone who tries to stop them from evil is ridiculed and belittled. Furthermore, as they perceive evil to be good, when they engage in evil actions, they see it as progress, enlightened thinking, intelligence, foresightedness, modernity, and education. We seek refuge in Allah from such a state. This only occurs when good is perceived as evil and evil is perceived as good.

When this happens, O honorable ones, we will be in such dire need of Basirat that we will undoubtedly fall into fitna if we lack it. That is why today's Muslim, devoid of Basirat, can have his thinking altered by a mere artistic presentation from a certain perspective. He reads a single biased column, and his perspective is swayed. If he listens to the analysis of a deviant individual, his concerns are altered. He lacks the internal discernment to recognize who is right and who is wrong, who possesses a conscience and who is devoid of it. There is no sound reasoning. Muslims are constantly changing their stance and concerns, lacking maturity. All of this is due to the absence of Basirat, without which one is only recognized as being misguided, irreligious, and atheistic.

47.5 Our Pitiful Family State

Basirat is an indispensable attribute without which it becomes exceedingly challenging to safeguard one's eeman. The imminent dangers, as foreseen by our beloved Prophet ﷺ through the lens of his ﷺ prophetic vision, are vividly evident in today's world. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to possess a radiant heart amidst these perilous times. The sharper the light of Basirat, the smoother the journey towards our ultimate destination. The Prophet ﷺ prophesied, "A time will come when people will exploit and treat the public treasury as their personal wealth, they will wrongfully appropriate the belongings of others, people will view zakat as a burden of taxation, religious knowledge will be pursued solely for material gain, men will prioritize their wives over their mothers, they will consider friends as their true well-wishers while harboring animosity towards their own fathers."

In today's time, it is not only sons who bring anguish to their fathers, but even daughters can cause distress to their mothers, despite the special bond between a mother and a daughter due to their close companionship. However, when the heart becomes tainted with sins and immodesty, when the eyes indulge in inappropriate sights, when the ears listen to forbidden things, and when the tongues speak of forbidden love, the reverence for one's parents diminishes. Once Jibra'eel descended and asked, "O Rasoolullah, when will the Day of Judgment come?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "The one who is asked does not have more knowledge than the one who asks." Then Jibra'eel inquired, "What are the signs of the Day of Judgment?" The Prophet ﷺ responded, "When mothers give birth to their own masters." Scholars have interpreted this as daughters asserting authority over their mothers, like how a master commands his slave girls. Such disobedient children will cause great anguish to their parents, tearing their hearts apart. Sons, on the other hand, will prioritize their friendships over their fathers and harbor disdain towards them, just as they despise sins.

47.6 Prevalent Presence of Music in Every House

Prophet ﷺ continued, "Music will be heard from every single house." Unfortunately, we witness this phenomenon even in the homes of those who perform Salah and have performed Hajj. Even the sanctity of the House of Allah ﷻ is not safeguarded from this impurity. It has reached such a dire state that even from the mosques, we hear music. Where are the homes of Muslims where the recitation of the Quran can be heard from every house? The Muslims of today have fallen to such an extent that music emanates from every house. Yet, they expect an atmosphere of love, peace, and blessings in their homes. However, when the camps of Shayateen are established in their homes and these Shayateen are nourished by the provision of music, love is replaced by hatred, blessings are replaced by hardships, problems persist instead of being resolved, hurdles remain standing, and difficulties are only exacerbated. When you provide nourishment for the Shayateen and they gather in your homes, how can blessings manifest? Muslims have a peculiar mindset; they complain about having constraints in their homes when they themselves have invited those constraints. They themselves have prevented the mercy of Allah ﷻ from entering their doors. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ prophesied that music will be heard from every house.

47.7 Beware of Trap of Enemies

He then ﷺ said, "The leaders of the nation will be individuals of immoral character, and the rulers of the people will be individuals of despicable nature". These circumstances will arise only when

people are deprived of Basirat. Such individuals will dominate only when the people lack Basirat. Their existence depends on clouding the people's vision. They spread traps that feed them with haram and make them see only the haram. They cannot survive without these traps. Their sole interest is in corrupting the vision of the people by feeding them filth, so they become deprived of Basirat, and these individuals can thrive. If the people possess the light of iman, will they be accepted? Prophet ﷺ then said, 'People will engage in usury, consume alcohol, women will adopt the manners of men, and men will imitate women.' How true are the words of our beloved Prophet ﷺ! Fifty years ago, no one could have fathomed that these transgressions would be so prevalent in our society. Is there anything mentioned above that is not present in our society? Every single aspect is prevalent in our society today."

47.8 The Corruption of Tongues and the Wrath of Allah, the Exalted

Prophet ﷺ then said, "What will happen during the time when the tongues of the people will become so obscene and their hearts will become so corrupted that even the honor and dignity of Prophets, Sahabahs, awliya of Allah, fuqah, and muhadditeen won't be spared from their vile tongues." They will use objection and judgment against these noble individuals because their hearts are corrupt, and it is evident that their tongues will reflect this corruption. Neither the honor nor the dignity of Prophets, Sahabahs, awliya of Allah, fuqah, or muhadditeen will be protected from their tongues. Their tongues will become utterly defiled. Prophet ﷺ said, "When all these things are observed in society, the wrath of Allah ﷻ will manifest from every direction." The sky will withhold its mercy and cease to rain, the seas will express their displeasure, becoming a source of destruction, and even the weather and wind will transform from symbols of mercy to expressions of anger. Wretchedness and calamities will permeate every corner, akin to the falling beads when a rosary string is severed.

47.9 The Vital Importance of Basirat in Challenging Times

In this dire environment, my esteemed companions, besides possessing Basirat (insight) of the eyes, cultivating Basirat (insight) of the heart becomes exceptionally crucial. I implore you, for the sake of Allah ﷻ, to enlighten the young boys and girls about this matter. Failing to provide them with an environment conducive to Basirat will expose them to the toxic atmosphere prevailing in their education and curriculum, where harmful ideologies permeate. Without nurturing the light of the heart, they may fall victim to thoughts and concerns of apostasy. The contents of certain books are laden with perilous and venomous material, capable of being swallowed without the discernment of Basirat. Hence, in today's world, it is more essential than ever to illuminate our hearts and cultivate Basirat within ourselves.

47.10 Furqaan, the criterion

Allah ﷻ emphasizes, "O believers! If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you furqan." This furqan is the divine light that illuminates the heart and guides one towards the truth. The Qur'an itself is referred to as furqan, as it enables us to distinguish between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. "Tabarakalladhi nazzalal furqan" - Blessed is He Who revealed the furqan. The Day of Badr is also known as the Day of Furqan, as it marked the clear distinction between the truthful believers and the falsehood. Similarly, Taqwa, or God-consciousness, leads to the attainment of furqan, as Allah promises. By safeguarding ourselves from sins, my dear friends, we can free ourselves from confusion and discern who to trust and who speaks the truth.

When one possesses furqan, their inner conscience becomes a guide to discern the truth. However, the presence of furqan cannot be guaranteed if one does not protect their eyes from indecent sights, consumes haram provisions, and leads a sinful life. Embracing Taqwa, or God-consciousness, is essential. Through Taqwa, Allah ﷻ will enable individuals to recognize those who are truthful. Basirat, or insight, is bestowed upon those who have Taqwa and are close to Allah ﷻ, while it is not granted to His ﷻ enemies and those who disobey Him. It is important to note that Basirat is not attained solely through acts of devotion such as tasbeehat and voluntary prayers.

47.11 Do Not Lose Hope but Be Swift in Seeking Forgiveness

The level of Basirat increases as the level of Taqwa rises. If one happens to commit sins, they should not lose hope and should immediately repent to Allah, safeguarding their Taqwa from being endangered. It is said that a person who commits sins but seeks forgiveness promptly can maintain their Taqwa. Seeking forgiveness without delay is crucial. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah ﷻ has provided two means of peace for my ummah: 1) As long as I am alive, Allah ﷻ will not send a widespread punishment upon them. 2) As long as this community continues to seek forgiveness, Allah ﷻ will not send a widespread punishment upon them." Therefore, when one commits sins, they should hasten to engage in istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah).

47.12 Hold Onto Syed-ul-Istighfar

There is a specific istighfar known as Sayed-ul-Istighfar, which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned. If a person recites this istighfar during the day and passes away before the end of the day, Allah ﷻ will forgive them and grant them entry into Jannah. Similarly, if it is recited in the evening and the person passes away during the night, Allah ﷻ will forgive them and admit them to Jannah. The condition is that the istighfar must be recited with sincerity and from the depths of the heart. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to remember and recite this istighfar regularly. This narration can be found in Sahih Bukhari. The Syed-ul-Istighfar is as follows: "Allahumma anta rabbee la ilaha illa anta, anta khalaqtanee wa ana abduka, wa ana 'ala ahdika wa wa'dika mas-tata'tu, a'oodhu bika min sharri ma sana'tu, aboo-u' laka bini'matika 'alayya, wa aboo-u' bidhanbee, faghfirlee fa-innahu la yaghfirudh-dhunooba illa anta." (Meaning: O Allah, You are my Lord, none has the right to be worshipped except You, You created me and I am Your servant, and I abide to Your covenant and promise [to honour it] as best I can, I take refuge in You from the evil of which I committed, I acknowledge Your favour upon me and I acknowledge my sin, so forgive me, for verily none can forgive sins except You.) This istighfar holds such virtue that if a person recites it sincerely, it can lead them to Jannah if recited in the morning and evening. May Allah ﷻ help us recognize the significance of this istighfar. When the people of Allah ﷻ learned about this, they encouraged others to memorize it and made it a regular practice to recite it. It is a simple yet powerful way to seek forgiveness and enter Jannah. This supplication can be found in common dua books, so let us strive to memorize it.

47.13 Preserve the Basirat through Seeking Allah's Forgiveness

Seeking forgiveness immediately not only benefits one in the hereafter but also safeguards Basirat in worldly life. The Prophet ﷺ has emphasized the blessings of istighfar and its ability to alleviate worldly difficulties. He stated that those who adhere to seeking forgiveness will be rescued from every hardship, granted deliverance from sorrow and worry, and provided with provisions beyond their imagination. Allahu Akbar! What should we strive for then? The Prophet ﷺ has advised, "Let

him be happy and content in both worlds who incorporates istighfar (seeking forgiveness) as part of his deeds." Therefore, for the sake of Allah ﷻ, if you happen to commit a sin, waste no time, and immediately turn to Allah ﷻ in repentance. By doing so, you safeguard the most valuable and essential treasure of our time, Basirat (insight and discernment), which serves as a guiding light during times of trials and tribulations. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Just as the night grows darker as it prolongs, similarly, the fitna (trials and tribulations) will increase." In such times, it is Basirat (insight and discernment) that comes to our aid, for through it, Allah ﷻ safeguards us from fitna, allowing our lives to remain pure and distant from its harms. When one's life becomes engulfed in sin, even the children of noble families may fall into disbelief, illustrating the grave danger posed by sins.

All praise is due to Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the heavens and the earth. May Allah ﷻ bestow His blessings upon His beloved Prophet ﷺ, his family, and his honorable companions. All praise and gratitude are for Allah ﷻ, and all glory belongs to Him ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ forgive us all and grant us the ability to act upon what we hear, read, write, and preach. May Allah ﷻ bless us with abundant remembrance of Him ﷻ, gratitude towards Him ﷻ, and the ability to worship Him ﷻ in the most beautiful manner. May Allah ﷻ grant us a life filled with faith, peace, and tranquility. May Allah ﷻ bestow His ﷻ love and connection upon us and keep our lives free from sins. May Allah ﷻ protect us from shameful acts and cleanse our homes from impurities, even those that have entered noble households. May Allah ﷻ purify our eyes, ears, and tongues. May Allah ﷻ safeguard us from forbidden provisions and income and provide us with lawful sustenance. May Allah ﷻ make our children obedient to Him ﷻ and to their parents. May Allah ﷻ shield us from all forms of trials and disobedience. May Allah ﷻ remove hatred, restlessness, and worries from our homes through His ﷻ mercy. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to recite the Quran in our homes and purify them from the presence of music. May Allah ﷻ illuminate our hearts with the light of Taqwa (God-consciousness). Amin, amin, thumma amin.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

48. The Toxic Grip of Music

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

48.1 Music Nurtures Hypocrisy

But among the people, there are those who purchase idle tales without knowledge, seeking to mislead others from the path of Allah and to turn it into a mockery. Quran 31:6

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar, Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah, and Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them all), these great individuals have stated that the above verse was revealed in regard to the blasphemy of the disbelievers. There is a phrase mentioned, "lahwa alhadeeth," and concerning this, these esteemed personalities have explained that it refers to songs and music. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ stated that he was sent to this world to

eradicate musical instruments. He also mentioned that music nurtures hypocrisy in the hearts of people, just as water nurtures the growth of crops.

When a doctor informs us that a specific food can cause a certain disease, regardless of whether the doctor is a Hindu or a Christian, we trust their expertise and immediately abstain from consuming that food. We don't even question the relationship between that food and the disease, as we have complete trust in the doctor's skill. We may have been addicted to that food for forty years, but we give it up in an instant. We believe the words of a Christian doctor, and when our child is addicted to that food, we consider it our duty to protect the child from it. We explain to the child with love and care that consuming that food will lead to illness, and even if the child cries and screams, the mother refuses to give in to their demands.

48.2 Trust the Words of the Prophet ﷺ

And here is the Prophet ﷺ, the leader of all creation, whose truthful words carry the knowledge of Allah ﷻ and whose statements are backed by the divine revelation. He clearly states that hypocrisy is fostered through music, and yet some ignorant Muslims question how that could be possible. They trust the expertise of Hindu, Jewish, or Christian doctors, but despite identifying themselves as Muslims, they hesitate to trust the words of the Prophet ﷺ. Even though they profess to be Muslims, they ask, "How is this possible? Why is music harmful?"

When a doctor advises against consuming certain foods due to the risk of disease, parents take immediate action and prevent their children from consuming those foods. They consider it a good and responsible decision. However, in today's world, when a child cries or becomes agitated, they are often pacified by playing music. It is a strange sight indeed! Instead of addressing the child's distress in a more wholesome and beneficial way, they resort to music to calm them. Is this an act of kindness or enmity? On one hand, when a child is advised by a Christian doctor to avoid certain foods due to health concerns, parents consider it an act of goodwill and ensure the child doesn't consume those foods. However, on the other hand, when it comes to calming the child, they provide them with musical instruments or enroll them in schools where music is encouraged.

Is this well-wishing or enmity? Either he does not wish good for the child, or he does not trust the words of the Prophet ﷺ. Either of the two possibilities should be correct. If he genuinely wishes good for the child and places trust in the Prophet ﷺ, then undoubtedly, he will keep his child away from these instruments and maintain a clean household, free from this corruption. If not, then he lacks trust in the words of the Prophet ﷺ regarding the creation of nifaaq through music. If he truly trusts the Prophet ﷺ and genuinely cares for the child's well-being, then the presence of music in his house would be contradictory. It would indicate a lack of concern for the child's spiritual development and adherence to the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ.

48.3 The Two Sounds Most Hateful to Allah, the Exalted

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ stated that two things are particularly detestable to Allah 1 :*) Music accompanied by singing, and 2) Excessive wailing and lamentation during times of calamity.

Throughout life, individuals experience both moments of joy and moments of sorrow. However, it is unfortunate that some Muslims engage in music and celebration during times of happiness, while resorting to moaning, screaming, crying, and excessive lamentation during times of grief. The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that both sounds are greatly disliked by Allah ﷻ.

If there is an epidemic of cholera and it is announced that the disease is spread through a specific fruit, what would one say to a small vendor who continues to sell that fruit? One might exclaim, "Oh heartless one, what are you doing? Why have you become an enemy of humanity? Why are you risking the lives of people by selling this fruit? The plague is being spread through this fruit, and yet you persist in selling it!" Such would be the reaction and admonishment in such a situation. If, by mistake, a child obtains the fruit in the house, one would be shocked and immediately take action to prevent the child from consuming it. It is crucial to explain to the child the dangers associated with the fruit and the fact that it is believed to spread the plague. In such a situation, there is a great deal of trust and concern for the well-being of others, and it is essential to educate and warn everyone involved, including the seller, the buyer, and those who may be less knowledgeable about the situation.

Nowadays, the vehicle my child travels in is filled with the sound of music. The van he goes to school in and the one he comes back in both play music. Whether he goes to school or attends a wedding, music is constantly present. It seems that this sinful practice has become so widespread that many no longer consider it to be a sin. However, it's important to remember that the Prophet ﷺ referred to it as the nourishment for nifaaq (hypocrisy). This serves as a reminder of its detrimental effects on our spiritual well-being.

48.4 Music Leads to Double Facedness

As this nourishment is readily available everywhere, it has led to the emergence of hypocrisy, where a person's outward appearance is different from their true inner state. This contradiction between their appearance and reality is known as hypocrisy. The constant exposure to this nourishment of music has caused individuals to become two-faced, presenting themselves differently from who they truly are. One wonders how a person who used to pray, fast, and engage in various acts of worship can do such a thing! This is due to the presence of hypocrisy, as the presence of music playing in his house clashes with his ears every day.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ once mentioned that the faces of certain individuals from his ummah will be disfigured to the extent that they will resemble monkeys and pigs when they wake up in the morning. Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked, "O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, won't they be Muslims?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, they will have declared the shahaadah, bearing witness that they believe in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and they will even fast." It was then asked, "Why will this happen to them?" The Prophet ﷺ responded, "They will engage in playing music and consuming alcohol during the night, and as a consequence, their faces will become disfigured in the morning." Thus, music serves as the nourishment for nifaaq (hypocrisy) and it is prevalent in every aspect of life.

48.5 Run Away from Music

Abdullah bin Nafi (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that while he was accompanying Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), they heard a musical instrument. Immediately, Abdullah bin Umar placed his fingers in his ears and moved away, asking Nafi, "Can you still hear it?" Nafi replied, "No." Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) then informed him that he had witnessed a similar situation while accompanying the Prophet ﷺ. When they heard music, the Prophet ﷺ also placed his fingers in his ears to prevent the music from entering.

48.6 Don't Let Calamities Rain on You

The inner self of a person becomes tainted with this music, leading to hypocrisy, which is why his outward appearance differs from his inner state that is accustomed to the influence of Satan. He is unable to rid himself of this filth as it has become ingrained in his habits. Unfortunately, this filth has now permeated every aspect of society. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ prophesied that when music becomes prevalent and widespread, reaching from house to house, trials and tribulations will afflict people incessantly, resembling the falling of beads when a string is cut. One calamity will cease only for another to begin. When the echoes of one calamity have yet to fade, another one swiftly follows.

The Prophet ﷺ spoke the truth. He prophesied that a time would come when the public treasury would be misused for personal gain, trust would be betrayed, people would perceive zakat as a burden and tax, religious knowledge would be sought for worldly benefits, wives would be obeyed while mothers would be neglected, friends would be considered well-wishers while fathers would be hated, voices would be raised within the masjid, and music would become prevalent in every place. Music has become pervasive in our lives, from the driving room to vehicles and even airplanes. It is heard everywhere, despite the fact that our beloved Prophet ﷺ described it as the most detested sound to Allah ﷻ and warned about its potential to lead to hypocrisy (nifaaq) in a person.

Hazrat Fuzayl bin Ayaz (RA) used to say that songs and music are the charm of zina (adultery, fornication), as they ignite sexual desires and gradually corrupt a person's purity, putting their chastity at risk. This is the charm of zina, associated with songs and music. So, music will become widespread, alcohol will be consumed, people will adorn themselves with silk, the most wicked and filthy individuals will become their leaders, and people will honor them merely to protect themselves from their harm, while having no respect for them in their hearts. Those of lower status will speak ill of those in higher positions, women will imitate men, and men will desire to be like women. The Prophet ﷺ further stated that calamities will then befall people rapidly, akin to beads falling off when a string is broken. Today, the voice of calamities is heard from every direction, with one calamity following another. Adversity has engulfed the entire society.

Two sins have become deeply entrenched in our society, and we seek refuge from them: 1) The widespread abandonment of prayer (benamaazi), which is a glaring and open sin, and 2) The prevalence of obscenity (behayaa'i) in every aspect of life. These sins have rendered the entire

environment disastrous. The pervasive neglect of prayer and the open display of obscenity have brought about a state of calamity throughout our society.

48.7 The Society's Degradation is Linked with Musical Instruments

O honorable ones! The Prophet ﷺ has said that music creates nifaaq, and Hazrat Fuzail bin Ayaz (RA) has described it as the mantar of zina. It is our duty to protect our children from this harmful influence and save them from falling into nifaaq. They are innocent and unaware of its dangers, but slowly they can become addicted to it. Once someone develops a habit and even if Allah ﷻ grants them the ability to repent, even a slight exposure to music can draw them back towards it. This is because it contains the influence of Satan. Even after years of abstinence, its allure remains strong. The presence of shaitaan's influence is deeply embedded within it. That is why our beloved Prophet ﷺ declared it as the most detestable sound to Allah ﷻ.

Indeed, the presence of musical instruments in the hands of the youth signifies the degradation and downfall of a nation. On the other hand, the sign of honor and greatness for a nation is when its youth hold arrows and swords, symbolizing strength, and courage. These words of Iqbal highlight the stark contrast between the two scenarios. Unfortunately, in our society today, the youth find joy in dancing with guitars in their hands, and these instruments are wrongly regarded as objects of prestige. Fifty years ago, those involved in this art were considered to be of low social status. People would hesitate to propose marriage to their daughters for fear of association with these individuals. Their musical abilities were despised, but it is important to note that if they were to repent, anyone has the potential to become beloved to Allah ﷻ and even His ﷻ close friend. However, there was a general disdain for this art form at that time. However, in recent years, they have been showered with awards and honors, and they have been brought to the forefront of society, making them idols for the youth of our nation.

48.8 Protect The Children from The Filth of Music

Today, within educational institutions, a specific time is allocated for the teaching of this thing. How does it relate to education? Sadly, the individuals responsible for shaping the minds of our youth and the new generation are not our well-wishers but rather our enemies. This is a truly unfortunate reality. Those to whom our youth are entrusted and from whom our new generation seeks knowledge are, regrettably, not working for their well-being but rather serving as malevolent influences. They provide them with the nourishment of hypocrisy, leading to a stark contrast between their outward appearance and their inner reality. O honorable ones! It is of utmost importance that we protect our children from this filth. When music is heard in a house, it becomes a breeding ground for the devil's camp, as Satan is particularly fond of this sound. It is greatly beloved to him. In such a house, no one can save it from adversity. Calamities prevail, and darkness becomes the predominant atmosphere.

May Allah ﷻ protect us and safeguard us repeatedly, and may He prevent our generation from falling into addiction and perishing in such a state. There are fortunate individuals who return to Allah ﷻ in prostration and while reciting the Quran. However, there are also unfortunate ones who may meet their end while indulging in music, such as hearing it while driving and getting involved

in a fatal accident. A person passes away while being engrossed in that sound. This pervasive influence is present everywhere, even in the vehicles our children use to go to school, exposing them to it from the early morning. Unfortunately, there is a lack of awareness about the negative impact this has on our children and what they are internalizing. It is crucial to note that the state in which a person dies is how they will be resurrected.

48.9 We Will Die as We Live

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ stated that our death will occur in a manner consistent with how we live, and we will be resurrected in a similar state. Whatever actions we engage in at the time of death will be reflected in our resurrection. O honorable individuals! May Allah ﷻ purify the homes, businesses, and educational institutions of Muslims from this filth, as it carries great misfortune. Musical instruments such as the tabla, sarangi, musical compositions, and drums are detested by Allah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ explicitly expressed his mission to eliminate these musical instruments. It is disheartening to witness individuals who claim to be followers of the Prophet ﷺ but stand in opposition to his teachings. He ﷺ came to eliminate these instruments, yet now they are being embraced and even offered as dowry for his daughter. The very things he sought to abolish are now being adorned in his own household. Such audacity! One can only wonder how he will endure the consequences in the fire of Hell! Regrettably, the recognition of this grave sin has waned in our times. It is disheartening to witness individuals who may not be personally addicted to music, yet willingly participate in events where music is being played, unaware of the sinful nature of such actions.

48.10 Know the Demand of Eeman

As believers, it is incumbent upon us to take a stand against evil. If we lack the strength to actively stop it, we should at least speak out against it. And if we are unable to do even that, we should harbor a deep disdain for evil and refrain from associating ourselves with it. When faced with a fire, I personally try to extinguish it myself. If I am unable to do so, I seek the assistance of others. And if no one comes to help and the fire continues to spread, I gather my belongings and remove myself from harm's way. When one loses sight of the gravity of this filth, they become complicit in its presence. For instance, when staying at a hotel where music is played, if one lacks the courage to kindly express their discomfort, they have the option to seek accommodations elsewhere, rather than remaining in an environment that nourishes their hypocrisy.

As the awareness of this sin has diminished, its prevalence has become widespread. Neither individuals cleanse their homes from this filth, nor do the elders take responsibility to put an end to it. It has become alarmingly common. O honorable individuals! The impact of the teachings of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ holds true to this day. If a knowledgeable person were to explain the consequences of certain actions, people would readily believe. However, when the Prophet of Allah ﷺ speaks, the level of trust in his words has weakened to the point where individuals question the connection between music and hypocrisy. The noble Companions of the Prophet (RadhiAllahu anhum) had such unwavering trust in the Prophet ﷺ and firm belief in his teachings that even if something seemed intellectually difficult to comprehend, they never dared to question him about the why and how of it.

When the Prophet ﷺ embarked on the miraculous journey of Isra and Miraj, traveling from Mecca to Bait-ul-Muqaddas and ascending to the heavens, traversing through Jannah and returning, Abu Jahl, known at that time as Abul Hakam, rushed to Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) with disbelief, thinking that Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) would abandon his association with the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Jahl was certain that Abu Bakr would find it incredulous that the Prophet ﷺ could travel such vast distances in a single night. Excitedly, Abu Jahl exclaimed, "Did you hear what your friend is saying?" Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) calmly inquired, "Who?" Abu Jahl replied, "The same Muhammad bin Abdullah, for he claims to have traveled to Bait-ul-Muqaddas, then to the heavens, journeyed through Jannah, and returned on the same night." Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) responded with unshakable faith, stating that if these words were indeed uttered by Muhammad ﷺ, then they were the truth. There was no room for doubt or differing opinions. This unwavering belief is the essence of eeman (faith).

48.11 Recognize the Dangerous Environment of Our Children

O honorable ones! If our beloved Prophet ﷺ has stated that music nurtures hypocrisy, then his words are undoubtedly true. The inner essence (baatin) of a person becomes tainted. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we safeguard our lives and the lives of our children from this harm. The reality is that the individuals our children interact with today do not make any claim or demonstrate any determination to nurture their connection with Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. They do not assert that the children will become true servants of Allah ﷻ, and that their faith and understanding of Islam will flourish under their guidance.

Rather, if we allow our children to be raised in such an environment, in a few years they will start questioning the very existence of faith, disbelief, polytheism, and monotheism. Concepts like divine revelation, the greatness of Allah ﷻ, Prophethood, and the stature of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ will become insignificant to them. This is because the educational institutions they attend make no mention of these fundamental beliefs. On the contrary, efforts are made to eliminate any mention of these concepts. Consequently, the generation that emerges from these institutions and settles in other countries ends up marrying individuals from different faiths such as Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and Qadiyanis.

The reverence for Islam diminishes and the distinction between polytheism and monotheism becomes blurred. Therefore, we should not allow the new generations to be exposed to such environments without restraint. In those surroundings, the conditions are deliberately made conducive for the growth of hypocrisy. The pervasive musical environment is carefully cultivated to desensitize their hearts to disbelief and apostasy. Every sin is being made easily tolerable, and music plays a significant role in desensitizing the heart and making it receptive to all kinds of wrongdoing. Today, nothing is presented without music in order to create a favorable environment in the heart, making it susceptible to accepting every sin. This gradual process of poisoning the heart has led to the acceptance of sins that would have made us uncomfortable twenty or thirty years ago. The constant exposure to music through television, accompanied by the presentation of inappropriate images, has contributed to the widespread tolerance of these behaviors.

Today, there is an alarming level of tolerance for absurdity and sinful behavior among Muslims. We are unaware of the impact this has on the upbringing of our children. The environment has become so conducive to sin that even the most outrageous acts are being accepted. It is imperative, dear honorable ones, that we cleanse our homes from such instruments and filth. We must strive to create an environment of purity and righteousness for ourselves and our future generations.

Our last hope is our beloved Prophet ﷺ, through whom we hope to receive the blessed water from Rawza-e-Kawthar and whose intercession will be accepted. However, it is disheartening to see some Muslims going against the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, as he came to eradicate musical instruments, yet they are promoting and indulging in it. Instead of following his example, they decorate their houses with these instruments. This goes against the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and diminishes our last hope. We hold onto the hope that our beloved Prophet ﷺ will intercede for us, and by aligning ourselves with his ﷺ teachings, we can attain salvation. Therefore, it is crucial to develop a strong aversion to this sin and to instill a deep disdain for it. By doing so, we can protect the new generation from falling into its trap and ensure their well-being.

48.12 Replace Music with Recitation of Quran

O honorable ones! Let us replace the sounds of music in our homes with the beautiful recitation of the Quran. Instead of becoming addicted to music, let us become addicted to the recitation of the Quran. In the past, it was a common practice among Muslims to recite the Quran during the tahajjud time. The mothers and daughters were so dedicated to reciting the Quran that in Madinah Munawwara, when men went to Masjid-un-Nabawi for tahajjud salah, they could hear the melodious recitation emanating from every single house, like the sweet buzzing of bees.

The recitation of the Quran echoed from every single house! The mothers, sisters, and daughters, everyone would engage in recitation. Imagine the joy and pride it would bring to the parents, as their children became a source of comfort and delight, reciting the words of Allah. The house would be filled with an abundance of divine light (noor), illuminating every corner. That is why our beloved Prophet ﷺ, with his truthful tongue, proclaimed that wherever the Quran is recited, angels gather in great numbers, and their multitude extends all the way to the heavens. Those who recite the Quran radiate a luminous light that reaches the celestial beings, just as the stars illuminate the inhabitants of the earth. Such is the brilliance of the houses where the Quran is recited, a radiance that reaches the abodes of the heavens.

48.13 The power of Quran

How blessed are those houses from which such recitation of the Quran emanates! Both men and women used to engage in reciting the Quran. The practice of reciting the Quran in seven parts, known as manzils, was common among Muslims. They would recite one manzil every day, completing the entire Quran within a week. Such was the devotion to recitation. The words of Allah ﷻ resounding within the homes and the recitation of Allah's ﷻ words, SubhanAllah! May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to become masters of Quranic recitation once again.

Just as nifaaq (hypocrisy) grows with music, eeman (faith) flourishes with Quran recitation. Hazrat Ikrima (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that a person who is consistent in reciting the Quran

and reaches old age, Allah ﷻ keeps their mind sharp and sound. Therefore, let the Quran be recited even more in old age so that the light of their mind remains radiant, benefiting from the blessings of the Quran's noor (light), and their heart is filled with strength and vitality. Regardless of their age, their memory and mind remain sharp. The Quran possesses its own inherent power.

O honorable ones! Let the voices of shayateen (devils) and Satanism not be heard in our houses. Instead, let the recitation of the Quran prevail. By eliminating these sinful instruments from our homes, half of our adversities and tensions will cease. Wherever such instruments are absent, the angels start descending, while the shayateen realize there is no more nourishment for them and retreat. The absence of these influences brings about a sense of mercy, affection, love, and peace within the household.

48.14 Adorn Your House with Radiance and Righteousness

When you visit the houses of Allah (masajid), you will experience a unique sense of attachment. The level of devotion and righteousness present within a masjid determines the strength of this attachment. In the past, mothers, sisters, and daughters would create such an environment in their homes that upon entering, one would immediately feel a sense of peace. A person once approached the Prophet ﷺ and expressed their struggle in finding salvation due to the increasing trials and tribulations. The Prophet ﷺ advised them to control their tongue and let their home be their sanctuary. The house should be adorned with radiance and religiousness, so that upon stepping inside, one's faith is safeguarded and strengthened.

Let us establish the practice of Quran recitation within our homes, where every day, all family members gather to read a religious book for ten minutes. This regular practice brings blessings and enhances the atmosphere of motivation for recitation, prayer, and righteousness in the house. Furthermore, in certain situations where it may be difficult for a husband to express certain matters to his wife, or vice versa, or when a father finds it challenging to communicate with his grown-up son, these books can serve as a means of explanation. Therefore, let us allocate ten minutes each day to read religious books such as Faza'il-e-A'maal, Faza'il-e-Zakaat, and other enlightening discourses that can aid in our personal reformation.

If we observe that our family is lacking in certain aspects, we should encourage and motivate them in those specific areas. O honorable ones! In the past, there existed a wonderful environment where visiting one's maternal grandmother's house would offer a righteous atmosphere, visiting one's paternal grandmother's house would provide a similar environment, being with friends would result in righteousness, and educational institutes had a good atmosphere as well. Goodness prevailed during that time. However, in all honesty, today it seems that evil has taken precedence. It is crucial for us to ensure that, wherever we have influence, the environment of our homes remains religious and righteous.

Let us make it a daily practice to engage in religious readings and allocate a few minutes each day to read from a religious book with sincerity and concern. Additionally, let us set aside time every week or every fortnight to connect with a reliable religious scholar and attentively listen to religious teachings along with our children and family members. Approach these sessions with the

understanding that they are crucial for our spiritual well-being and the advancement of our faith and religion. If, despite these efforts, the environment in our homes doesn't improve, it would be advisable to seek guidance from our spiritual mentors and elders on how to enhance the state of the household environment.

When we truly prioritize this and seek Allah's assistance, our children and the overall environment in our homes will become a source of comfort and joy for our eyes. Neglecting this aspect can jeopardize even our own religiousness, especially if influenced by family members. Therefore, it requires effort to establish a conducive environment where everyone is committed to the progression of their faith and religion. Let us remember the supplication of the righteous slaves, "Our Lord! grant us in our mates and offspring the joy of our eyes." O honorable ones, creating a righteous environment in our homes is of utmost importance. Let us strive to keep our lives and houses free from musical instruments and instruments of sin, so that the angels of Allah's mercy descend, and a righteous atmosphere is established. May Allah help us all to act upon what we learnt. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

49. **Be Steadfast, the Greatest Quality of a Muslim**

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Verily, those who say: "*Our Lord is Allah (Alone),*" and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "*Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!*" (Al Quran: Chapter 41, Verse 30)

Many people experience khawf (fear) and huzn (distress). Khawf refers to the fear of the future, pondering about what will happen, while huzn entails dwelling on the past and contemplating what could have been if things had been different. However, these are not qualities befitting a believer. A believer is called upon to have complete faith in Allah ﷻ and to remain steadfast in all their endeavors. By firmly believing in Allah ﷻ and maintaining steadfastness, we can be safeguarded from these two qualities. Allah ﷻ assures us of this in a verse revealed to our wise Prophet ﷺ. Unfortunately, many of us fail to rid ourselves of khawf and huzn because we are akin to individuals who consume healthy food but simultaneously ingest poison in small doses. We cannot expect to be healthy if we continue this pattern, just as eating untimely food will not benefit us.

Once, there was a renowned scholar named Hazrat Sirri who was resting under a tree. Suddenly, he heard a voice coming from the tree. The tree addressed him, saying, "O Sirri, become like us. People throw stones at us, yet we continue to provide them with fruits. Embody this noble character." Upon hearing this, Hazrat Sirri replied, "O tree, you speak with the wisdom of a venerable person. But why do people make you into fuel for fire?" The tree responded, "We possess

one flaw that nullifies all our goodness. Whenever the wind blows, we sway in its direction and fail to remain steadfast. This weakness erodes our positive qualities." In today's world, Muslims also lack steadfastness. They lack isteqamat and behave as part-time Muslims. Inside the mosque, they display one set of characteristics, while outside, they adopt a different persona. They change their behavior according to the situation, whether it be moments of joy or sorrow, and they lack steadfastness in their adherence to the deen of Allah ﷻ.

Once, a companion named Sufyan ibn 'Abdullah al-Thaqafi asked our beloved Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, tell me an action that I can hold onto with all my heart and soul." In another narration, he asked, "O Messenger of Allah, give me a saying in Islam that I won't need to ask anyone else after you." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Say, 'I have believed in Allah,' and then be steadfast." He further advised, "Say, 'My Lord is Allah,' and hold onto this firmly in every action, making it apparent that you are a believer in Allah ﷻ." When we possess this quality of firm belief in Allah ﷻ and remain steadfast in His deen, we will not be consumed by fear of the future or regret for the past. A believer should be determined to trust in Allah ﷻ, regardless of what may come, and demonstrate this steadfastness through their actions. May Allah ﷻ grant us all isteqamat. Ameen, ameen, thumma ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

50. Honor the Sanctity of Masajid

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

It is important to understand that initially one may not lose the performance of a specific action, but there is a risk of losing the sense of greatness, honor, respect, importance, and attachment associated with that action within one's heart. Eventually, this loss of inner appreciation and connection can lead to the abandonment of the action entirely. The person may outwardly perform the action, but without the internal spiritual essence and illumination. For instance, when attending a gathering or gathering in a mosque, if one holds the reverence and significance of that gathering in their heart, they will benefit from it and continue to engage in such actions. Conversely, if one enters the mosque without the sense of reverence and importance, they may physically be present but will not derive any true benefit.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ, with his truthful tongue, proclaimed that for every step one takes when coming to the masjid, a good deed is written, a sin is erased, and one's rank is elevated. Such is the immense blessing of this noble act. The pious scholar Abu Hasan (Raheemahullah) stated, "It is not that people come to the masjid with bad intentions, but rather they may come without a specific intention." When someone goes to court, they constantly have in mind the realization that it is a court and maintain silence while adhering to the etiquette of the court. If this is the case with court, then how magnificent is the Masjid, for it is the house of Allah ﷻ, the King of kings! If a person

enters the masjid with honor, respect, and a deep attachment to the place, they will emerge as a great individual with strong faith. That is why our beloved Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of this act, so that when Muslims enter the masjid, they leave with a multitude of blessings bestowed upon them.

It is mentioned in a hadeeth, "Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, even the size of a bird's nest, Allah will build for them a house in Paradise." Although a masjid may not be as small as a bird's nest, the meaning behind this statement is that even if someone contributes to the masjid with a small space or donation, Allah ﷻ will reward them with a house in Jannah. What an incredible trade-off it is! If a highly trustworthy person, known for keeping their promises, were to say that if someone builds a house in a small town, they will be rewarded with a house in a posh area, people will rush to build their houses. Sadly, Muslims today do not trust the words of the Prophet ﷺ from the depths of their hearts as they would trust anyone else.

In the past, Muslims did not rely on paid servants to clean the masajid, for they themselves would clean the masjid after Fajr salah, considering it a form of testimony to their faith. Today, we have neglected the cleanliness of masajid, making them among the most unclean places. Consequently, Allah ﷻ has allowed our homes to become filled with sins and the presence of shayateen. We must prioritize maintaining proper etiquette in the masjid, even more so than we would in a court, because masajid are the sacred abodes of Allah ﷻ.

It is not permissible to raise one's voice inside the masjid. Sleeping inside the masjid is discouraged except for those observing itikaf and travelers. Conducting any business transactions inside the masjid or disbursing salaries to those working for the masjid within its premises is also prohibited. It is not permissible to recite the Quran aloud when someone is praying inside the masjid. It is prohibited to enter the masjid while eating raw onions, garlic, or anything with a pungent smell. Lighting kerosene inside the masjid or using excessively bright lights is not allowed. When entering the masjid, one should strive to be in a state of tranquility and engaged in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. It is advised to approach the masjid calmly and avoid rushing.

There are two types of itikaf: Sunnah itikaf, which is observed during the last ten days of Ramadan, and nafil (voluntary) itikaf, which can be performed for any duration, whether it is one or two days, or even for just 5 minutes or less. Itikaf should ideally be observed inside the masjid. One can sit for itikaf for a few minutes after every salah, even if it's just for three minutes, and engage in the recitation of the Quran. For those who are unable to read the Quran, they should at least pass their finger over the verses while saying, "This is the speech of my Rabb. This is the speech of my Rabb." Just as one can experience spiritual enlightenment when sitting with pious individuals, how can one not experience the same enlightenment when sitting in the company of angels? Undoubtedly, individuals will feel a noticeable difference in their state when they do so. On one hand, we can perform ablution (wudhu) for salah without much attention or focus.

On the other hand, if we direct our attention to the fact that Allah ﷻ is purifying us from sins during wudhu, and we concentrate on this perspective, we will witness the illumination (noor) that accompanies it. The same applies to the recitation of the Quran. Initially, we may begin reciting

without a proper intention, but when we remind ourselves that Allah ﷻ is attentively listening to our recitation and we pay heed to this, we will experience the divine light (noor) that emanates from it.

In a hadeeth, it is narrated that the most beloved places to Allah ﷻ are the masjid (mosques), while the most disliked places are the markets. Therefore, one should visit the markets only when necessary, and even then, they should recite the following dhikr, "Laa ilaaha illaallaahu wahdahu laa shareekalahu, laahul mulku walahul hamdu, yuhyi wa yumeetu, wahua alaa kulli shay'in qadeer" (There is no god but Allah, alone, without partner. His is the sovereignty, and His is the praise. He gives life and causes death, and He is over all things competent). One should never visit the markets for mere enjoyment.

When describing the greatness of the Kaabah, it is mentioned that even the worst of shayateen (devils) cry at its doors. The cleaning of the Kaabah is a blessed act, so much so that in Surah Hajj, Allah ﷻ asks His beloved Prophet Ibrahim (AS) to clean His house. There was a great buzurg (pious person) who was found cleaning the Kaabah during tahajjud (night prayer) time, and after much effort, he was able to convince the servant to allow him to perform this blessed act. In a hadeeth, it is mentioned that even the removal of a speck of dust from the masjid is considered as a mahr (dowry) for the hoor-ul-ayn (the beautiful maidens) in Paradise.

It was narrated through Abdullah ibn Masud (RA) that one of the signs of Qiyamah (Day of Judgment) is that people will lack respect for the masjid, not giving them the due honor and not praying inside them. In the present times, we witness people entering the masjid to attend to construction work or other tasks but neglecting to perform the Sunnah prayer known as Tahiyatul Masjid. Aa'ishah (RA) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) commanded the construction of masjid among houses and emphasized the importance of keeping them clean and fragrant (What is meant by "among houses" is in neighborhoods and among tribes).

If someone looks down upon those who clean the masjid and abuses them, then they should reflect upon their own actions. There is a story of a pious man who was studying under a renowned sheikh in Delhi. In order to reinforce his lessons, he went into a jungle and stumbled upon a deserted masjid filled with dry leaves emitting a foul odor. Witnessing this, he abandoned his studies and dedicated the entire day to cleaning the masjid. When he returned to his sheikh at night and was asked to recall his lessons, his mind was blank, and he feared disappointing his sheikh. When the sheikh inquired about his whereabouts during the day, he shared the incident of cleaning the masjid in the jungle. Upon hearing this, the sheikh gave him glad tidings that his task was accomplished, and Allah ﷻ would grant him divine mystical knowledge (ilm-e-ludni) directly from Himself. It was the sincere reverence for Allah in his heart that led him to clean the masjid when no one was watching and there was no one to appreciate his actions. As a result, he was blessed with profound knowledge and many esteemed individuals, including Shah Ismail Sahib, sought his spiritual guidance and pledged their allegiance (bayah) to him. The service of the masjid is indeed a tremendous blessing.

When entering a masjid, it is customary for people to say "Allahum-maftahli abwaaba rahmatik" (O Allah, open the doors of mercy). However, it is recommended to begin by saying "Bismillahi wassalatu wassalaamu alaa Rasoolillah" (In the name of Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah). Then one can continue with "Allahum-maftahli abwaaba rahmatik". Similarly, when leaving the masjid, it is recommended to say "Bismillahi wassalatu wassalaamu alaa Rasoolillah, Allahumma inni as'aluka min fadhlik" (In the name of Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, O Allah, I seek from You Your Grace). This is because saying Bismillah and sending salutations upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are part of the Sunnah when entering and leaving the masjid. There are five recommended actions to be followed when entering the masjid: 1) Saying Bismillah, 2) Saying wassalatu wassalaamu alaa Rasoolillah, 3) Entering with the right foot, 4) Saying Allahum-maftahli abwaaba rahmatik, and 5) Having the intention of nafil itikaf.

Three sunnahs are fulfilled by saying "Bismillahi wassalatu wassalaamu alaa Rasoolillah. Allahum-maftahli abwaaba rahmatik" when entering the masjid. The remaining two sunnahs are entering the masjid with the right foot and having the intention of itikaf, which is encompassed by the act of entering with intention. Similarly, there are five sunnahs when leaving the masjid. Three of these sunnahs are fulfilled by saying "Bismillahi wassalatu wassalaamu alaa Rasoolillah, Allahumma inni as'aluka min fadhlik." The other two sunnahs are leaving the masjid with the left foot and placing the left foot over the left shoe. Then, when taking the leg out of the masjid, one should say "Allahumma inni as'aluka min fadhlik" and wear the right shoe.

In this way, one will be blessed with the light of ten sunnahs for every salah, resulting in fifty sunnahs recorded for five salahs, along with their respective rewards. For every good deed, we are promised a minimum of ten rewards. Therefore, multiplying 50 by 10, we obtain 500 rewards for each day. These rewards accumulate to around 15,000 for the entire month. SubhanAllah! In the Day of Judgment, one will truly comprehend the significance and radiance of these sunnahs. Therefore, let us pay attention to and practice these sunnahs diligently.

If one's actions align with the sunnah, it is indeed a great accomplishment. Once, a man approached Junaid Baghdadi (RA) and expressed that he had heard a lot about him but did not witness any extraordinary feats. Junaid Baghdadi (RA) inquired if the man had ever seen him acting contrary to the sunnah, to which the man responded in the negative. Junaid Baghdadi (RA) then remarked that this itself is a great blessing. There is no greater feat of spiritual excellence and greatness than adhering to the sunnah and remaining steadfast upon it, as opposed to performing extraordinary acts like flying in the air or walking on water.

If one forgets to enter the masjid with the right foot, they should come out and re-enter with the right foot, making it a practice every time they enter the masjid. Let us be grateful to Allah ﷻ for allowing us to enter His house every day. Who do we invite to our own houses? Those whom we love, isn't it? And how about someone whom we invite repeatedly to our house? That would be someone with whom we have a close relationship, isn't it? Therefore, let us have reverence and respect for Allah ﷻ and pay utmost attention when visiting His house. InshaAllah, you will be granted steadfastness (istiqamat). As mentioned earlier, initially, it is the reverence and respect

(azmat) that diminishes from one's heart, and then the actions may follow suit, or sometimes the actions remain while the spiritual essence is taken away. Let us pay attention to the sunnahs when entering and leaving the masjid and strive to attain the spiritual illumination (noor). May Allah ﷻ assist us all in practicing what we learn. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Tarbiati Majlis dated 27.01.2012.

51. The Virtues of Muslims

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

51.1 The Significance of Virtuous Attributes

The first thing that comes to a person is aamaal (deeds). Then, the sifaat (virtues) develop as the amal matures, and the weight of the amal is determined by the sifaat. Without sifaat, the amal remains empty. Ikhlas (sincerity) is the final aspect that accompanies the sifaat. This ikhlas is what elevated the sahaba (may Allah be pleased with them) to such a high status that even if we were to spend an amount of gold equivalent to the size of Mount Uhud, we would not even come close to their level. If there are two individuals reciting the same amount of Quran and performing the ruku and sujud in a similar manner during the Fajr prayer, and if one possesses sifaat while the other does not, there will be a vast difference in the weight of their deeds, comparable to the difference between the heavens and the earth. The same applies to the fasting of two individuals: one with sifaat and the other without sifaat. The weight of their deeds will be significantly different.

This sifaat encompasses taqwa (piety), generosity, humbleness, politeness, forbearance, patience, gratitude, and ikhlaas (sincerity). These are all virtues. It is important to note that acquiring these sifaat takes time. The beauty of one's religiousness lies in possessing these sifaat. May Allah ﷻ grant us eeman with sifaat, as it brings attraction and gravity to one's religiousness. Sometimes, we observe individuals who may outwardly practice the rituals of the religion such as offering salah and fasting, but if they lack sifaat, people tend to distance themselves from them and may even wish to avoid their company. However, when Allah ﷻ bestows sifaat upon someone in addition to their religious practices, people are naturally drawn towards them due to the blessings and virtues associated with these sifaat. Therefore, sifaat is indeed essential and holds great importance.

The sifaat comes along with the amal and increases the weight of the amal, the attraction in one's religiousness, and the acceptance of his amal. It is through the sifaat that one's amal is accepted. Innallaaha yuhibbu al-muttaqeen. Allah ﷻ loves the muttaqeen (pious). Piety is the sifaat here. Innallaaha yuhibbu al-muhsineen. Allah ﷻ loves the muhsineen (doers of good). Ihsaan is the sifaat

here. Innallaaha yuhibbu al-saadiqeen. Allah ﷻ loves the truthful. Here sidq is the sifaat. Sifaat exalts a person.

51.2 Humility is the Sifaat of Pious

Sometimes a person may not have their amal accepted, even if it is extraordinary, but the sifaat (attributes) will lead them to acceptance through its special glory. The second level of religiousness is to obtain the sifaat. One of the characteristics of the friends of Allah ﷻ is that they consider themselves to be the worst faasiq (sinner) of all and believe that they are not worthy of Allah ﷻ accepting their duaas (supplications). These are the sifaat of the people of Allah ﷻ. However, sometimes we may say, "I am so righteous, so why isn't Allah ﷻ accepting my duaas?" When we think like this, the friends of Allah ﷻ believe that it is only by the grace of Allah ﷻ that they are granted the opportunity to even sit in front of Allah ﷻ, as they are unworthy of being chosen. Due to the barakaat (blessings) of this sifaat, they always possess humility and politeness within them, and this is a great blessing. Without this mindset, a person's heart will be plagued with numerous diseases, affecting their behavior and speech. But with these thoughts, their heart will remain in control, and they will maintain humility.

51.3 Powerful Tales from the Past

The people of Allah ﷻ hold such a low opinion of themselves that they refrain from socializing with others. It is said that they even avoid attending gatherings for istisqa (praying for rain during times of drought) because they fear that their sins may hinder the acceptance of others' duaas and prevent the mercy of Allah ﷻ from descending upon the people because of them. Allahu Akbar! During the rule of a king in Bani Israel, there was a severe famine. The king arrogantly proclaimed that if Allah ﷻ does not send down rain, he will punish Him ﷻ. The people were astonished and questioned how he planned to punish Allah ﷻ. The king responded that he would kill all of Allah's ﷻ friends and obedient slaves as a means of punishment. This was a daring and audacious statement, deserving of punishment itself. However, despite the king's arrogance, Allah ﷻ, out of His ﷻ grace and mercy, sent down rain to relieve the famine.

Malik bin Dinar (RA) was asked why he did not attend the gathering for istisqa (praying for rain). He humbly responded that he considered himself such a sinner that he feared if he were to pray for rain, instead of rain, stones would shower upon him as a punishment. He would often remark to others, "You think there is a delay in rain, but I fear the delay in the showering of stones upon me."

Once Isa (peace be upon him) went for istisqa (praying for rain) and he fervently prayed for rain, but it did not rain. Upon seeing this, Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) turned to the people and requested that anyone who had committed a sin should leave. Everyone, recognizing their own sins, left the gathering in a display of humility, except for one man. Isa (peace be upon him) asked him, "Have you never committed a sin?" The man replied, "I have not committed any sins, but once my eye unintentionally gazed upon a woman, so as a punishment, I plucked it out with my own finger." Allahu akbar! Hearing this, Isa (peace be upon him) instructed the man to supplicate to Allah for rain. The man then beseeched Allah for rain, and miraculously, the sky became cloudy, and the rain poured down, witnessed by all the people.

Once Musa (peace be upon him) fervently prayed for rain during istisqa for three consecutive days, but the rain did not come. Allah revealed to Musa (peace be upon him) that there was a talebearer among the people, and until that person repented and stopped spreading tales, Allah would not accept their supplications. Musa (peace be upon him) requested Allah to reveal the identity of the talebearer, but Allah replied, "O Musa! I forbid you from engaging in talebearing. Should I become someone who does that? I have concealed that slave's sins and I will not expose him." Musa (peace be upon him) then instructed all the people to seek forgiveness for their involvement in talebearing, and they humbly sought forgiveness. As a result, the rain showered upon them.

Hazrat Sufyan At-Thawri (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that during the time of Musa (peace be upon him), the Bani Israel experienced a continuous seven-year famine. They were in a state of desperation, eating dead animals, and sincerely prayed to Allah to end the drought. However, Allah did not send rain and revealed to Musa (peace be upon him) that even if they were to supplicate and worship Him like a dry well, the drought would not be lifted until they fulfilled the rights of those deserving it among the people.

In another similar incident, Allah did not send rain despite their supplications, and He revealed to Musa (peace be upon him) that He could not accept their supplications while they raised their hands for prayer with bodies nourished by unlawful (haram) food. Similarly, when the Bani Israel were consuming dogs and dead animals due to a severe drought, and they fervently prayed for rain, Allah revealed to Musa (peace be upon him) that even if they walked until their legs grew weary, and even if their deeds reached the heavens, and their tongues became dry from making supplications, He would not accept their prayers nor show mercy to those who were crying out, until they stopped violating the rights of others and returned what was rightfully due. Musa (peace be upon him) commanded the Bani Israel to rectify the violations they had committed, but they denied any wrongdoing and refused to give up their ill-gotten gains. Consequently, Allah's wrath descended upon them, and they perished due to hunger.

Who among us does not possess these traits of the Bani Israel? It is due to the blessed supplication (duaa) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that we are not subjected to such punishments. It is by the mercy of Allah ﷻ that we are spared from facing poverty even for a single day. Otherwise, what traits would be lacking in us or in our society? What are our hands, limbs, and eyes engaged in? This is solely due to the blessed supplication (duaa) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The reality is that those who are recipients of Allah's ﷻ special mercy and grace always remain conscious of their mistakes and sins, considering themselves to be always the worst sinners. This is a sign of Allah's ﷻ special grace upon them. It is indeed a dangerous situation when a person is a sinner but remains content with themselves.

51.4 Discipline Your Nafs and Hold It to Account

Jaafar bin Munabba (RA) used to say, "I would rather feel remorse for forgiving others than feel remorse for punishing them." Another pious individual used to say, "It is an act of injustice on your part to show enmity towards others when they disobey Allah ﷻ, while you do not show the same enmity towards your own self when it disobeys Allah ﷻ." It is unjust that you become angry when others transgress while you do not become angry when your own self (nafs) transgresses. Showing

hostility towards one's own self is to deprive it of comfort and indulgence, just as one would do to someone, they hold hostility towards. One should not show pity towards the nafs, but rather express anger towards its disobedience. One should not treat the nafs as a lover treats their beloved, fulfilling all its desires. A great pious individual once mentioned that when he asked his nafs to engage in acts of worship and it refused, he punished it by reducing his food intake and sleep. This is a form of retaliation, responding to evil with evil.

51.5 Virtues of Tolerance and Forgiveness

It is said that excessive tolerance leads to love (muhabbat). When one displays a high level of tolerance, it can result in love, even from those who were once enemies. Forgiveness and tolerance are exceptional virtues. On one occasion, a man who had committed a crime was brought before Abdullah bin Zubair (may Allah be pleased with him) for punishment. Abdullah bin Zubair (may Allah be pleased with him) requested the whip to be brought, intending to lash the man. However, the man pleaded with Abdullah bin Zubair (may Allah be pleased with him), saying, "I beseech you, by the One before whom you will stand humiliated on the Day of Judgment, to forgive me, as I stand humiliated before you." Upon hearing this, Abdullah bin Zubair (may Allah be pleased with him) descended from his throne and humbly rubbed his face against the ground, declaring his forgiveness. When Hazrat Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked about the highest rank, he replied that it belongs to the one who forgives the most. In another incident, a woman stole a chador (cloak) and a noble Quran from Malik bin Dinar (may Allah be pleased with him) and began to flee. Malik bin Dinar (may Allah be pleased with him) ran after her, calling out, "Listen, I will not punish you. You may keep the chador, but please return the Quran to me." It is advised not to seek revenge against an oppressor, but rather to show mercy and seek forgiveness for them.

When Ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) was being lashed, he forgave the one administering the lashes. Similarly, when Ahmad bin Hanbal (may Allah be pleased with him) was lashed, he forgave his assailant. He used to say, "What will a person lose if Allah ﷻ does not punish someone because of their forgiveness?" By forgiving someone, what will I lose? I will be rewarded, and because of me, the other person will be forgiven. Kab ibn Al-Ahbar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say that when a man shows patience in dealing with difficulties caused by his wife, Allah ﷻ will reward him with the patience of Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him). When a woman shows patience in the face of transgressions by her husband, then Allah ﷻ rewards her like Asiya bint Muzaahim, the wife of Pharaoh. This is because the difficulties caused by those close to us can be especially burdensome.

51.6 The Virtue of Respecting Scholars and Muslims

Another quality of the friends of Allah ﷻ is that they hold great respect for fellow Muslims in their hearts. Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) used to emphasize not looking down upon any Muslim, as even an ordinary Muslim holds a high rank before Allah ﷻ.

Abdullah bin Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) used to emphasize the virtuous act of honoring a companion. He would turn towards the Kaaba and proclaim, "O Kaaba, Allah ﷻ has

exalted and honored you, but the honor of a believer surpasses yours." This is a characteristic of respecting and caring for fellow believers and companions who sit with us. It is through this quality that one's religiousness becomes appealing, and their actions find acceptance.

Ikrimah (may Allah be pleased with him) would caution against tormenting religious scholars, as it would cause pain to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), for the scholars are the inheritors of the Prophet (peace be upon him). This holds true when the scholars are upon the truth. Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) would affirm that the position of believers is much closer to Allah ﷻ than even the angels who are near Him. When a pious man was asked why the punishment of cutting off hands is applied for a value as small as five dirhams, he responded that it is not only about the value of the stolen item, but also the other crimes involved. These crimes include stealing from a fellow Muslim, causing harm to the Muslim, disregarding their dignity and privacy, among others.

Pay attention to your own self (nafs) and reflect on whether you hold respect for the scholars (ulema) and honor the dignity of Muslims. If you have looked down upon Muslims and attacked their honor, then you have aligned yourself with the ranks of the open and rebellious sinners (fussaaq). It is important to seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ and repent sincerely, making a commitment to refrain from such actions in the future.

51.7 The Virtue of Patience and Perseverance in Marriage

One of the characteristics of the people of Allah ﷻ is their patience in the face of difficulties arising from their wives. They perceive the contrariness exhibited by their wives as a reflection of their own opposition to Allah ﷻ. When they oppose Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ reciprocates by making their wives oppose them, so that they may comprehend the unpleasantness of such contrariness. At times, Allah ﷻ enables His ﷻ devoted servants to realize that just as they are displeased with such behavior from their loved ones, their actions may also displease Allah ﷻ, as they too are His ﷻ creations. If the misconduct of our loved ones can cause us such distress, then imagine how much it would displease Allah ﷻ when we engage in wrongdoing. When Allah ﷻ addresses us with "Ya ayyuhalladhina aamanu" (O you who believe), it signifies an intimate closeness, as if saying, "You belong to Me." It is natural for the mistakes of our own people to deeply affect us. Sufyan At-Thawri (RA) used to remark that those who bring the worldly desires into their homes through marriage are essentially welcoming the influence of Satan's offspring. They will inevitably witness the consequences of such a union. Sufyan At-Thawri (RA) is referring to marriages that are not based on religious principles but rather on worldly pursuits. In a hadith, it is mentioned that whoever marries seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ will be sufficient for them and provide protection.

Ali bin Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that there are five factors that contribute to a person's fortune:

1. A wife who is compatible with his temperament
2. Righteous children
3. Righteous friends
4. Good neighbors
5. Having a stable livelihood in his homeland.

Rasoolullah ﷺ would supplicate, "O Allah! I seek refuge in You from three types of people: someone who is heedless of religion, an evil neighbor, and a wife who mistreats her husband." Malik bin Dinar (may Allah be pleased with him) chose not to marry again after the death of his wife. When asked about this, he expressed his fear of any such relationship, stating that if it were possible, he would have divorced himself as he considered himself to be extremely sinful. He desired nothing to hinder his connection with Allah ﷻ.

51.8 The Virtues of a Righteous Woman

A pious buzurg once stated that when a woman possesses the following six qualities, she is considered completely righteous:

1. She establishes five daily prayers.
2. She is obedient to her husband.
3. She brings happiness to her husband.
4. She refrains from backbiting and tale-bearing.
5. She does not have excessive desire for worldly possessions.
6. She demonstrates patience during times of difficulty.

These qualities apply not only to wives but also to fathers who wish for their daughters to develop such characteristics. May Allah ﷻ grant us all these virtues and righteousness. Let us seek righteous attributes from Allah ﷻ, as they make our deeds weighty and bring attraction to our religiousness.

At times, we encounter a fellow traveler whose exceptional manners leave a lasting impact on us. We may not remember their specific prayers, but their character remains engraved in our memories. Similarly, when we engage in business with someone of excellent character, we remember them throughout our lives, acknowledging what a good person we had the opportunity to meet.

Conversely, someone may diligently perform optional prayers but lack truthfulness in their dealings, causing them to be cursed throughout their life. Such individuals tarnish the reputation of religious people. The truth is that the spread of religion is achieved through virtuous attributes, as the fragrance of these qualities permeates oneself. Therefore, let us cultivate these virtues, allowing them to generate inner gravity and attraction through our actions. Let us beseech Allah ﷻ and strive earnestly to attain these virtues. May Allah ﷻ grant us all the ability and guidance to achieve this. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Tarbiati Majlis dated 23.03.2012.

52. Riyaa or Ikhlaas, Decide for Yourself

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

52.1 Riyaa Vs Ikhlaas

It is essential for every Muslim to have sincerity (ikhlaas) in their deeds and safeguard them from showing off (riyaa), as riyaa is considered a form of hidden polytheism (shirk-e-asghar). It involves performing acts of worship for the purpose of seeking fame or boasting. Additionally, it includes doing actions to gain worldly benefits such as earning respect in the eyes of people or receiving praise from their tongues. Worship performed with riyaa is not accepted by Allah ﷻ.

Ikhlaas is the act of doing something solely for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, with no other motives or objectives in mind. It is the ultimate goal and culmination of one's spiritual journey. Initially, one may begin by focusing on outward religious practices, such as adopting a religious appearance and fulfilling religious obligations. As the journey progresses, one gradually develops the characteristics of faith, including humility, politeness, forbearance, generosity, and piety. However, the final stage is the attainment of ikhlaas, where one's intention becomes solely centered on seeking the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. It is the purest form of devotion, where no other thought or desire enters one's mind except to please Allah ﷻ.

52.2 The Power of Ikhlaas

O honorable ones! It is crucial to understand that the greatness of one's sincerity (ikhlaas) can magnify even the smallest of actions. Conversely, an action may appear significant, but if it is tainted with showmanship (riyaa), it becomes utterly futile. There are numerous narrations and ways through which Allah ﷻ communicates with this world. These include revelations to His Prophets, placing knowledge in the hearts of righteous individuals, and even through dreams, which is among the forty forms of revelation. In a dream, a righteous woman named Zubeida appeared to someone after her passing. When asked about her treatment, she told she was treated exceptionally well and continued that although she took many righteous deeds with her, once while she was eating and as she was about to put the morsel of food in her mouth, she heard the azaan (call for prayer) when her head was not properly covered with her dupatta (scarf). Realizing this, she immediately left the morsel of food and corrected her dupatta to cover herself properly out of reverence for Allah ﷻ. This act was so beloved to Allah ﷻ that He ﷻ forgave all her sins based solely on this act. It is worth noting that this act was purely done for the sake of Allah ﷻ, as no one had instructed or asked her to do so. It was her sincere concern for upholding the reverence and dignity of Allah ﷻ. This incident serves as a reminder that the value and significance of an act are determined by the level of Allah's ﷻ pleasure it carries in one's heart.

52.3 Recognize the Worthlessness of Dunya and Attain Ikhlāas

Don't we see in the ahadeeth that someone fed a hungry dog or gave water to a thirsty cat, and how precious those acts can be? Why did they choose to feed the dog or cat? There are three great acts: 1) giving one's life in the path of Allah ﷻ, which is Jihad and not an easy act, 2) spending in the path of Allah ﷻ, and 3) spreading one's religious knowledge. What a blessed service to humanity it is to share the knowledge of the deen!

In the hadith, it is mentioned that some individuals from the aforementioned three categories will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment. Although these are great acts, their intentions were tainted by seeking recognition and approval from others. One desired to be seen as a mighty warrior, another wanted to be perceived as a generous person, and the third sought to be acknowledged as a knowledgeable scholar. They received their desired titles from people, but they will not receive any reward from Allah ﷻ.

O honorable ones! May Allah ﷻ bestow upon us all sincerity (ikhlaas) and grant us the ability to perform deeds solely for His pleasure. When the transient nature of this world becomes apparent and one's focus turns towards the Hereafter and Allah ﷻ, then true sincerity is attained. This worldly life holds no significance, therefore the opinions and judgments of people, whether praise or disgrace, hold no weight. True honor and humiliation are not determined by human beings, but rather they are treasures in the hands of Allah ﷻ. Thus, what importance does this fleeting world hold? Until one realizes the insignificance of this worthless world, sincerity will not be attained. O honorable ones! The matter of sincerity (ikhlaas) is something that requires constant contemplation and reflection. It should be a concern that accompanies us before initiating any action, during the action, and even after its completion.

52.4 Preserve Your Deed

Sometimes, it happens that initially the intention is correct, but then in the middle, it takes a negative turn. Other times, the intention remains good throughout the action, but towards the end, Shaytan tries to waste the wealth of sincere deeds by inspiring the presence of show-off (riyaa). Despite all the hard work, the true value of the action is wasted. True excellence lies in performing the action sincerely and preserving its sincerity until one reaches the grave. It is not considered favorable if one does not earn wealth at all, or if they earn it through unlawful means. However, the situation becomes even worse when one earns wealth through lawful means but ends up losing it all in the end. This can happen when a person performs righteous actions solely for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, but then wastes everything due to the presence of show-off (riyaa).

May Allah ﷻ grant us all His eternal pleasure and be always pleased with us. May we deeply recognize the insignificance of this worldly life and understand that true honor lies solely in the hands of Allah ﷻ. Even if one desires to be honored by the entire world, they will never attain it, for the treasure of honor rests solely with Allah ﷻ. No matter how many attempts one makes to gain fame and recognition in the hearts of people, it will remain unattainable unless it is decreed by the will of Allah ﷻ.

The more one detaches their heart from the allure and value of this worldly life, the more they can attain sincerity (ikhlaas). The provisions and needs of individuals are solely in the hands of Allah ﷻ, not in the control of worldly possessions. So, why should we seek to please the dunya when our aim should be to please Allah ﷻ?

52.5 Do Not Abandon a Deed out of Fear of Showing off

So, let us seek from Allah ﷻ the gift of ikhlaas (sincerity). Let us ponder before every action and examine our intentions. Sometimes, one may be plagued by whispers suggesting the presence of riyaa (showing off), and as a result, one may abandon the action altogether. However, this is a satanic whisper intended to deprive us of performing the righteous deed. Instead, we should strive to carry out the action while simultaneously purging ourselves of any trace of riyaa.

One can attain ikhlaas by seeking it from Allah ﷻ at the outset of an action. When the thought of riyaa arises, it should be dismissed and brushed away. Finally, one should pray to Allah ﷻ at the end, seeking acceptance for the action. It is important to avoid actions or behaviors that may lead to riyaa, as they can render one's efforts wasted. The mere presence of thoughts related to riyaa may not have a direct impact on our actions, as thoughts are beyond our control. However, we should refrain from deliberately engaging in actions that promote riyaa. Riyaa is a baneful disease, and thus, its treatment should be approached with utmost diligence and effort.

52.6 Recognize the Root Cause of Riyaa

Remember that the foundation of riyaa lies in the love for admiration and the desire for praise. Why does one engage in riyaa? It is because they seek the admiration and praise of people. The primary motivation behind riyaa is often not monetary gain, but rather the longing for recognition and praise. Some individuals are even willing to spend millions in order to gain the admiration of others. This excessive craving for praise has become a detrimental illness. Ultimately, the driving forces behind riyaa are either the love for admiration or the pursuit of financial gain.

Riyaa can also stem from excessive concern over people's condemnation and fear. Some individuals engage in riyaa out of fear, seeking to protect themselves from criticism and negative talk. They strive to present themselves as exceptionally pious and righteous to shield themselves from such judgment.

52.7 Only Allah can Honor You

If a person in a battlefield desire to be recognized as a great warrior, and when someone worships, they desire to be acknowledged as a devout worshipper, then this stems from the love and desire for admiration. The remedy for this is to reflect upon the reality of life. Today one may be alive, but tomorrow they may be deceased. The people who praise us and all their praises will remain here, but only the deeds praised by Allah ﷻ and pleasing to Him ﷻ will remain with us after death. If today we seek recognition as great worshippers and receive honor, on the Day of Judgment we may be labeled as libertines, deceitful individuals who show off, and ultimately face humiliation before others. All the deeds will go to waste, even those that were painstakingly done with great effort, as they will be seized. How foolish it is to earn the anger of Allah ﷻ, face disgrace on the

Day of Judgment (mahashar), and experience humiliation, all for the sake of seeking people's approval and admiration from the insignificant dunya (world). It is entirely possible that the person from whom we seek admiration, Allah ﷻ may not instill honor for us in their hearts. Instead of praising us, they may start to disgrace us, for both the hearts and tongues are under the control of Allah ﷻ.

52.8 Analyze: Is Riyaa Worth it?

Why does one prefer praises that last only a few days over the pleasure of Allah ﷻ? One of the reasons is the desire for praise from people, while the other reason is the wish to avoid criticism by portraying oneself as pious, which may deter people from criticizing. Just consider that if we have honor in the sight of Allah ﷻ, why should we concern ourselves with the criticisms of His creations and why should we fear them? Remember that if one acts out of fear of people, thereby angering Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ will humiliate and disgrace that person. The third reason for showing off (riyaa) is personal desires and allure. However, it's important to remember that the things we desire are not within our control to acquire, as we never know for certain if we will attain them. What is certain, though, is that due to engaging in riyaa, we will undoubtedly be deprived of the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

The desire for recognition from people through showing off (riyaa) is uncertain, as we never know if we will attain it. However, earning the anger of Allah ﷻ is certain and definite. Remember that Allah ﷻ is the turner of hearts (muqallibal quloob). The riyaa we adopt to seek honor from people may not be achieved, but instead, we may face humiliation and disgrace in this world, bowing our heads before them and becoming dependent on them. If we keep our hearts free from this desire, Allah ﷻ will make us independent of His ﷻ creations, and as a result, we will receive the blessings of the hereafter due to our sincerity (ikhlaas).

If we firmly instill these truthful words in our minds, there won't be any trace of riyaa. Instead of striving to please people for honor, out of fear, or to gain something from them, if we turn to Allah ﷻ, who holds the treasure of honor and fulfills our needs, without concerning ourselves with His ﷻ creations, then Allah ﷻ will grant us independence from people. Not only will we receive blessings in this worldly life, but also in the hereafter, as there awaits a blessed reward.

52.9 Hide Your Worship Done in Solitude

When we have these thoughts, there will be progress in ikhlaas. However, some may develop a concern that if people come to know about their acts of worship, wouldn't that be considered riyaa? The solution for this is to refrain from publicizing one's worship performed in solitude. Just as one hides their flaws and sinful acts, it is important to conceal the acts of worship done in private. Once, in the gathering of Abu Haddad (RA), a man criticized the dunya and its people. Sheikh Abu Haddad (RA) told him not to sit in his circle anymore as he had exposed things that he should have kept hidden. These are great individuals. It may initially be challenging to hide one's acts of worship, but with continuous practice, it will become a habit. One will then begin to find solace and enjoyment in solitude and prayers. When worship is concealed in private, the individual will start experiencing the sweetness of that ibaadat. Do it solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Always keep in mind that if people come to know about your acts of worship and you feel joy in your heart, immediately remember the words mentioned earlier: revealing my acts of worship to the weak creation will not benefit me in the least. So, whenever people become aware of your acts of worship, remind yourself that it will have no real impact or benefit. Neither will I gain anything from their praise, nor will it make a difference. The most important thing is to seek the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and to earn honor in His ﷻ sight. It is futile to become excessively happy with these meaningless praises, and it is dangerous to incur Allah's ﷻ anger due to them. When we adopt this mindset, inshaAllah, the concern of showing off (riyaa) will diminish.

52.10 Clarification on Riyaa

When we begin to detest riyaa, inshaAllah, our acts of worship will naturally turn towards sincerity (ikhlaas), which is the true purpose. Beyond this, we are not held accountable, and there is nothing to fear even if intrusive thoughts arise or if someone praises us, and even if there is still a sense of joy in our hearts. There is no point in dwelling on these matters since they are beyond our control, and we are not responsible for that which is beyond our control. Our task is simply to refrain from exposing our solitary worship, avoiding its spread among people, and making it popular.

If people come to know about it and you experience joy as a result, make every effort to develop disgust towards such feelings and ensure that they do not affect your acts of worship. Beyond this, whatever condition persists and the things you cannot control, there is no need to worry about them. Now, concerning acts such as salaah, sawm, zakaat, and so on, it is not permissible to abandon them out of fear of showing off (riyaa). Sometimes, Shaytan may attack us from the other direction, making us fearful that people are watching and that there is riyaa. One should not abandon the act due to these thoughts, as it is not allowed.

However, if there is no sincerity (ikhlaas) at all from the beginning when it comes to acts like salah, sawm, and zakaat, and there is no intention to worship Allah ﷻ and seek His pleasure, but rather solely to please the creation, then it is forbidden to perform these acts. Therefore, refrain from doing so. On the other hand, if there is an intention to please Allah ﷻ and one is making duaa to Allah ﷻ for His ﷻ pleasure, then any intrusive thoughts or doubts should not make a difference, and one should not abandon the deed.

If one is habitual of doing certain deed and people get to gather and witness the deed by any chance, then do not abandon the deed considering the riyaa but do that deed as per the habit and try to bury the riyaa as far as you can, and it should not come near you. Then Alhamdulillah you are doing your ibaadat, you are doing your ma'mulaat (prescribed aamaal), people have seen your righteous deeds and there is even a big talk on that but your aim was not that and so you should not leave that amal.

52.11 Our Beloved Prophet's ﷺ Concern

O honorable ones! For every act of worship that Allah ﷻ has enabled us to perform, may He ﷻ also grant us sincerity (ikhlaas) in those acts. This is indeed a great blessing that Allah ﷻ bestows upon us, to have sincerity in every single deed. May the significance and greatness of the dunya and its people be removed from our hearts. Their importance holds no value, as they cannot fulfill my

needs, provide material benefits, or offer praise, for all these treasures are with Allah ﷻ. If it is the will of Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ can turn the hearts of those from whom we expect our needs to be fulfilled. Their tongues, which currently praise us, can start criticizing us. Allah ﷻ has full control over everything. Since everything is in the hands of Allah ﷻ, why should we not make Him ﷻ the primary purpose of our acts of worship? This intention holds great importance. The Prophet ﷺ expressed concern for his ummah regarding the danger of shirk, fearing that they may become immersed in it. He ﷺ mentioned that riyaa is a form of hidden shirk, shirk-e-khafi, where one may not even realize that their deeds are being wasted.

52.12 What are We Behind?

It is known that prostrating before graves is shirk, and dedicating acts of devotion to anyone other than Allah ﷻ is also shirk. Similarly, seeking praise from creations and performing acts of worship to gain their admiration is also a form of shirk, as it involves associating others with Allah ﷻ in our worship. The desire for name and fame, seeking to avoid criticism, and pursuing wealth and status from people are all examples of associating them with our acts of worship, which is also shirk. Often, the desire for praise takes precedence over other priorities such as wealth and status. The desire for praise tends to be stronger.

If we examine our lives, from building houses to everything else, we often seek praise from people. The reason behind many customs and traditions is the desire for praise from others, and out of fear of what people will say or how they will mock us, we hesitate to break away from these norms. Our entire life revolves around the thoughts of people's opinions and judgments. Believe it, this is the reality. This preoccupation has led us astray from our natural state (fitrat), and we have become dependent on people's approval or driven by the desire for their praise. But what do these creations truly possess? Nothing! Even if you strive your whole life to please them, it may not happen if it is not Allah's ﷻ will. Some may offer flattery, but there won't be genuine respect in their hearts.

The created beings have occupied our hearts to such an extent that everything is being done solely for their sake. They only desire their praises and strive to avoid their criticism. They do not consider the dishonor they may receive in the eyes of Allah ﷻ. They lack the realization that they should seek honor in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Before engaging in any action, it is crucial to reflect on the intention behind it and ask oneself, "Why am I doing this?"

52.13 Be Wise-Don't Go Behind Worthless Dunya

It was due to their sincerity (ikhlaas) that the noble Companions (RA) achieved such a high status. The world held no value in their eyes. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ stated that the entire dunya and all its treasures, from what lies beneath the earth to what exists above it, do not possess the worth of even a mosquito's wing in the sight of Allah ﷻ. If this world truly had any value, Allah ﷻ would not have granted even a drop of its water to the disbelievers. Such is the insignificance of this dunya. Therefore, how foolish it is to squander one's hard work and righteous deeds for the sake of something so insignificant.

So, O honorable ones! Ikhlaas (sincerity) is absolutely necessary. We must rectify our intentions before, during, and after performing any deed, ensuring that we do it solely to seek the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Whether we are extending a favor to someone, performing acts of kindness, or engaging in any other good deed, even the smallest of actions can become great through sincerity. Before every single act, let us beseech Allah ﷻ for His ﷻ pleasure. May Allah grant us all the wealth of ikhlaas. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Tarbiati Majlis dated 13.05.2012.

53. Use the Means Within Your Capability and Trust Allah, the Exalted

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Seek the help of Allah ﷻ through the means available to us within our capabilities, and do not exceed one's capabilities, as doing so is a sign of weak faith (eeman) and will only lead to more trouble. Not utilizing any means when one can do so is also considered a sin. Often, people spend money beyond their capabilities for medical treatment. It is not necessary to exclusively seek the services of a renowned and expensive doctor, especially if one cannot afford it. When we have the ability to spend only fifty rupees, it is advisable to consult a doctor within our financial means. It is a characteristic of a believer (mu'min) to make the best use of their abilities and then place their trust in Allah ﷻ, capable of doing so. Once a believer seeks treatment, he or she understands that it is not the doctor or medicine that cures the disease, but it is Allah ﷻ who grants healing. Therefore, one should spend within their means, and Allah ﷻ will put blessings (barakah) in that expenditure, and He ﷻ will provide the cure. It is important to recognize that despite seeking medical treatment, people still pass away even after traveling to distant countries like Germany. Many experienced doctors also make mistakes that cost the lives of patients. Thus, true healing (shifaa) comes from Allah ﷻ, and we should learn to place our trust in Him ﷻ.

Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say, "Do not worry when you don't have money, nor be excessively joyful or proud when you do, as nothing in this world is permanent. The same applies to one's state of health or sickness." When a mother bathes her child, the child may scream, unaware that the mother only wishes what is best for the child and wants them to shine. However, the child's understanding is limited to the sensation of hot or cold water, causing them to cry out. Allah ﷻ is more loving and caring than any mother, desiring even greater goodness for His creation. Allah ﷻ desires to cleanse us from our sins, enabling us to shine and be saved from the punishment of the hereafter. This is why He ﷻ tests us with sickness and other calamities. Just as gold is purified and made to shine by subjecting it to high temperatures to remove impurities, Allah ﷻ deals with His slaves by passing them through trials and tribulations.

The trials of this world are nothing but gifts for the people of Jannah (Paradise). It is narrated that Abu Jahl never experienced fever even once in his lifetime, while our beloved Prophet ﷺ (Peace be upon him) suffered from such a high fever that when he ﷺ would put his hand in water, it would become hot. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said that Allah ﷻ created Jannah (Paradise) filled with pleasures and surrounded it with trials and calamities, while He ﷻ created Jahannam (Hellfire) as the worst dwelling place but surrounded it with luxuries. Thus, one who pursues worldly luxuries enters Jahannam, while the one who endures trials and tribulations enters Jannah eternally. Therefore, if we truly desire to enter Jannah, we have no choice but to pass through the trials and tribulations of this worldly life.

It is Allah ﷻ who, knowing our weaknesses, puts us through various trials according to our capabilities. However, those with a higher level of eeman (faith) were subjected to severe trials, as seen in the example of the Sahabahs (may Allah be pleased with them). Some were exposed to scorching heat with hot stones placed on their bodies, some were torn apart, and others were even cut into two. They would tie stones to their bellies when experiencing extreme hunger, not to satisfy their hunger but to maintain an upright posture. These accounts from their lives are awe-inspiring and demonstrate the immense hardships they endured. We may hear about these trials, but it is crucial to recognize that going through such difficulties is not easy; it requires great strength and resilience.

We are inherently weak, and it is through small trials that Allah ﷻ purifies our sins. If a believer desires to enter Jannah, then all the troubles, sickness, and calamities are gifts from Allah ﷻ to strengthen the faith of the believer. Sometimes Allah ﷻ afflicts us or our children with illness, and at other times He ﷻ takes the lives of our loved ones, among other trials. Through these difficulties, Allah ﷻ purifies us and enables our progress. Therefore, a believer seeks aafiyat (well-being) but does not complain during trials. It is essential to be aware that chasing after worldly luxuries can lead us towards the path of Hellfire. May Allah ﷻ protect us from it. We should seek the company of pious and righteous individuals, as sitting or standing with the ignorant only brings distress. The Prophet ﷺ advised us to let our food be eaten only by the pious, meaning that when our food is shared by the pious, we gain their friendship. When we associate with those who do not fear Allah ﷻ, the Creator, we cannot trust their treatment towards us.

Once, the Sahabahs (may Allah be pleased with them) asked the Prophet ﷺ with whom they should sit. The Prophet ﷺ advised them that if they find a person with three qualities, they should consider him as a treasure. The person whose presence reminds one of Allah ﷻ, whose words and actions evoke concern for the Hereafter, and who avoids engaging in useless talk. Today, many Muslims are deceived by Shaytan, leading them to believe that all scholars or sheikhs are fraudulent, making them hesitant to seek righteous companionship. This is a clear deception from Shaytan. If we search for individuals like Junaid Baghdadi or Shibly, or expect miraculous displays like flying in the air, we will only waste our lives in pursuit. Instead, we should focus on finding individuals who possess the three characteristics mentioned earlier, and inshaAllah, we will be among them. Furthermore, our intention should be correct. We should seek such companionship for the purpose of self-reformation and to establish a closer connection with Allah ﷻ. Even the best person, such as the Prophet ﷺ, cannot benefit someone who approaches without the intention of self-

reformation. If we have the intention to reform ourselves, to draw closer to Allah ﷻ, and to be concerned about the Hereafter, then inshaaAllah, Allah ﷻ will not abandon us in despair, and we will surely benefit from such companionship.

Therefore, when we encounter difficulties in our lives, we should not be distressed, as this world is a place of trials. Instead of worrying about the trials themselves, we should focus on safeguarding our faith (eeman) and ensuring that it remains strong despite the challenges. Additionally, it is crucial to strive for a righteous environment that promotes our spiritual growth and brings us closer to Allah ﷻ. Avoiding the company of irreligious individuals helps prevent us from becoming heedless and experiencing distress.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

54. The Written Destiny

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Masud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "O people, there is not a single thing that will bring you closer to Jannah or take you away from Jahannam except what I have already informed you about. I have warned you against everything that leads to Jahannam and takes you away from Jannah, and I have forbidden those things." He ﷺ then mentioned, "Jibra'eel (may peace be upon him) came down and instilled in my heart that no person dies until they receive the provision destined for them."

Jibra'eel (may peace be upon him) conveys only what is commanded by Allah ﷻ, and when Allah ﷻ decrees something, He ﷻ possesses the power to bring it into effect. So, Jibra'eel (may peace be upon him) delivered the message that no one dies until their provision is complete. A person will not pass away until they have consumed the last portion of sustenance ordained for them. There have been instances where individuals have eaten something seemingly inconceivable given their unfavorable health condition, and shortly after consuming it, they departed from this world. It is predetermined that they would not leave this world until they had consumed that food.

Fear Allah ﷻ and strive to earn your provision through lawful means. Even if you were destined to receive it anyway, why would you want to anger Allah ﷻ and disobey Him ﷻ to obtain it? How foolish it is to think that lying can bring you earnings or that breaking promises and betraying trust can lead to greater savings. Such thinking is ignorant. At times, thoughts may arise, suggesting that if you go for salah at a certain time, a customer may leave and never return, possibly becoming upset. However, Allah ﷻ reminds us that true success does not lie in that customer but rather in attending His ﷻ court and seeking His ﷻ pleasure. If it is written for him, the person will come back to him, or someone better than him will definitely come to him. If not today, the provision will definitely come tomorrow, for the one that is mine will never go elsewhere. If this gets

ingrained in one's mind, then 90% of unfaithfulness will disappear, for the main reason behind this unfaithfulness is livelihood. The wrong facet of his life, whether it's in terms of earning or business transactions, accounts for 90% of the reason for being unfaithful is the stomach, the livelihood.

If we firmly believe in the words of our beloved Prophet ﷺ that our provision will not go anywhere and that we will definitely receive it, imagine how much easier life would become. Many business affairs would become clean and pure. For example, if someone is a watchman and unlawfully takes someone else's money, they cannot consume it because it rightfully belongs to someone else. It is possible for hi, to remain a watchman throughout his life, and towards the end of his life, he may fall ill and use the accumulated money to pay the doctor's fees. He may work for forty, sixty, seventy, or eighty years, but when he is on the verge of death, he spends a substantial amount of money on doctors because that money was not destined for him as it did not rightfully belong to him. However, if he firmly believes that the money, he earns lawfully is his provision, then Allah ﷻ will provide for him and honorably sustain him. That is why the Prophet ﷺ said, "Adopt the correct means of earning provision and do not let the pursuit of provision lead one to commit sins."

Indeed, there is a narration indicating that supplications (du'as) have the ability to change destiny. Du'a is a powerful tool that can even alter one's predetermined fate. However, one cannot attain treasures from Allah ﷻ through sinful actions but rather through righteous deeds. The Prophet ﷺ teaches us that sometimes a person may earn their provision while simultaneously committing sins, but Allah ﷻ does not take away the provision itself. Rather, He withdraws the blessings from it. Deprivation of provision is a consequence of sins, as sins do not provide any sustenance but instead diminish the blessings attached to it. If one desires to receive from the treasures of Allah ﷻ, it can be accomplished through righteous deeds. May Allah ﷻ grant us all the ability to perform righteous deeds. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Dars

55. A Muslim's Honor and Disgrace Lies in His Deeds

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Through the path of sins, a servant becomes despicable in the sight of his Lord and lowers himself before His ﷻ eyes. Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) stated that Allah ﷻ safeguards those who are honorable in His presence from falling into sins. On the other hand, whoever debases themselves before Allah ﷻ, finds that no one in the world truly respects them. Although people may outwardly display respect towards such an individual out of fear of their harm, inwardly their hearts are filled with hatred and disgust.

True respect for an individual is that which originates from Allah ﷻ and permeates through the earth for that person. This respect not only endures during their lifetime but also continues after

their death. Conversely, the consequence of sin or, we can say, the punishment for sin is that a person falls into a cycle of committing further sins, to the extent that even the gravest of sins becomes trivial in their eyes. This is a clear indication of the destruction of the individual, as sins diminish in significance in their own perception while, in reality, they remain significant in the sight of Allah ﷻ.

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (RA) narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: "The believer sees his sins as if he were sitting beneath a mountain that he fears will fall upon him, while the wicked sees his sins like a man who finds a fly settle upon his nose, so he brushes it away." Depending on a person's honor in the court of Allah ﷻ, they are protected from sins and consciously distance themselves from committing them. However, when an individual becomes wretched and contemptible in the sight of Allah ﷻ, they become immersed in sins to the point where even the gravest of sins appears insignificant to them. When this occurs, know that their time of destruction has begun.

The impact of sins is not limited to the individual alone but extends to the surrounding environment, affecting even animals and causing devastation and destruction. The intensity and severity of the effect of sin are such that it creates a catastrophic ripple effect in the vicinity of the person who commits the sin. The sinner not only harms and destroys themselves with their sins but also draws innocent people and other creatures into the negative consequences of their actions. Hazrat Abu Hurairah (RA) states that even birds can perish in their cages due to the oppression caused by a sinner. This illustrates the far-reaching extent of the effect of sins. When a person oppresses day and night, they are not just violating the rights of Allah ﷻ but also the rights of other creatures. Imagine the fire they have ignited with such a catastrophe, one that continues to consume them from within!

Hazrat Mujaahid (RA) states that even animals curse the oppressors when the rain ceases to shower. Even the animals are aware that the suspension of merciful rain is due to the adversity caused by human actions. When a plague spreads in a region, it affects not only the weak but also the healthy individuals. Likewise, the impact of sins is widespread and affects everyone. Hazrat Ikrima (RA) states that even insects such as ants, lizards, scorpions, and others begin to voice their distress, attributing the cessation of Allah's merciful rain to the actions of the children of Adam. The sinner not only falls victim to the consequences of their own sins but also becomes subject to the curses of innocent creatures impacted by their actions. The adverse effects of sins are not limited to the sinner alone, but they also extend to other creatures. Many creatures join in cursing the sinner. Undoubtedly, sins bring humiliation and disgrace without a doubt.

If an individual seeks honor, it is essential to understand that true honor resides only with Allah ﷻ. As mentioned in the Quran (35:10), "Whosoever desires honor, power and glory then to Allah belongs all honor, power and glory." It is crucial to recognize that honor, power, and glory can only be attained by obeying and worshiping Allah alone. This is why the supplication is made: "Allahumma a'izzani bi-thaa'atika wa la tudzillani bi-maa'shiyatika" which translates to "O Allah! Honor me through Your obedience and do not humiliate me through Your disobedience." By seeking Allah's obedience and avoiding His disobedience, one can attain true honor and avoid humiliation.

Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) states that a person may ride in a lofty vehicle, adorned in royal attire, accompanied by servants both ahead and behind, presenting a majestic appearance. However, despite this outward display, he cannot escape the disgrace that his sins bring upon him. None of

these lofty possessions can truly grant him honor, for the weight of his sins envelops and obscures him. Hazrat Abdullah ibn Mubarak (RA) expressed, "I have witnessed how sins can cause the heart to become lifeless. The persistence in committing sins ultimately leads to disgrace. The vitality of the heart lies in safeguarding it from sins. Your goodness lies in refraining from sins, and it is only the presence of corrupt rulers, misguided spiritual leaders, and wicked individuals that taints the purity of the religion.

Intellect is a divine blessing from Allah ﷻ, a source of light. However, the darkness of sins extinguishes this light without a doubt. The sinner engages in foolish actions that leave people questioning their intellectual capacity. Like how a madman perceives sound-minded individuals as mad, the sinner's perspective becomes distorted. On one hand, they persist in committing sins, and on the other hand, they boast about their sinful deeds. They mock those who protect themselves from sins, labeling them as foolish.

Our righteous predecessors have indeed emphasized that when a person persists in disobeying Allah ﷻ, their intellect diminishes because if they truly possessed intellect, it would have prevented them from indulging in sin. When someone is fully aware that the King of kings is constantly observing them, that He can seize them for their actions, and that He has absolute control and knowledge over them, yet they still choose to disobey Allah ﷻ, it implies a lack of intellect, doesn't it? It is a sign of foolishness that fails to restrain them from committing sins. Why do they not comprehend that their life is in the hands of Allah ﷻ, that every blessing they enjoy is bestowed by Him ﷻ, and that their progress and downfall are under His control? Allah ﷻ is fully aware of their deeds, they are constantly in His presence, and His angels surround them. Yet, despite being in the house of Allah ﷻ, they persist in disobedience.

The Quran advises him against such actions, his faith (eeman) urges him not to engage in them, and even death and hellfire serve as warnings to deter him. Despite all these deterrents, if he persists in committing sins, it is indeed a lamentable sign that he has been entirely deprived of intellect and insight. The sins have deprived him of his intellect and understanding, leading him to disobey Allah ﷻ despite the numerous obstacles in his path. A person with sound intellect would never behave in such a manner. When sins accumulate and multiply, the heart becomes sealed, and the sinner becomes heedless and ignorant.

Indeed, as mentioned in the Quran (83:14), it is the earnings of individuals that rust their hearts. The interpretation of this verse explains that it is due to the accumulation of sins upon sins to the point where the heart becomes blind. Just as a person without eyesight is referred to as blind, the darkness of sins blinds the heart and diminishes its insight. Religious scholars have described that when sins multiply, they encompass the heart, resulting in its rusting, and the rust dominates the person. If the sins continue to increase, they become ingrained characteristics of that individual, eventually leading to the sealing of their heart. May Allah ﷻ protect us from reaching such a state. Ameen.

Gradually, the heart becomes enveloped by sins, diminishing its clarity. Without insight, the heart becomes inverted, and the individual becomes completely dominated by their enemy, allowing them to manipulate and control their actions. There is no filth or sin that the person would find challenging to engage in, as their enemy leads them wherever they desire. It is essential to gather courage to save oneself from sins. With courage, what cannot be achieved? However, it is unfortunate that many individuals do not even aspire to lead a life free from sin.

A man may have intentions to engage in virtuous deeds, such as voluntary prayers and other acts of goodness. However, he neglects the importance of respecting the rights of others through his actions, deeds, and words. Additionally, he does not make a resolution to distance himself from his weaknesses and sins. As he fails to resolve to give up sins, despite persistently engaging in righteous deeds, he eventually reaches a point where divine assistance to perform good deeds is withdrawn from him. He continues performing certain good deeds regularly for a few days, only to later become deprived of their practice. For example, a man may attend the mosque for congregational prayers, recite the Quran daily, and give charity, but then the adverse effects of his sins overwhelm him, leading him to abandon these acts of goodness. It is important not only to resolve to perform good deeds but also to introspect and analyze the sins one is prone to committing. If there are sins that can be easily given up, one should abandon them immediately. Regarding sins that are difficult to give up, one should turn to Allah ﷻ for help and courage, just as they sought divine assistance to perform good deeds and strive towards leaving those sins behind.

Steadfastness in performing righteous deeds can only be achieved when one's life is purified from sins. Without such purification, one will not experience the light of righteous deeds or perceive their fragrance. Imagine pouring a whole bottle of perfume onto a dirty cloth that is lying on cow dung—would you expect to sense the fragrance of the perfume? However, if that cloth is removed from the dung and just a drop of perfume is applied to it, how fragrant it will become! Similarly, if a person engages in righteous deeds while simultaneously committing sins, they will be unable to fully appreciate the fragrance of their good actions.

If you distance yourself from sins and engage in even small acts of goodness, you will witness their impact, experience their light, and perceive their fragrance. It is important to note that performing thousands of voluntary prayers cannot be compared to the significance of giving up sins, as abandoning sins is a necessary obligation. Voluntary acts cannot replace or outweigh obligatory acts. However, through voluntary acts, one can gain strength and resolve that make it easier to abstain from sins. But first and foremost, one must have the intention and determination to save themselves from sins.

Sometimes individuals do not even intend to give up sins, as they believe that sins are an inherent part of life and must be accepted as such. However, if life cannot be led without sins, then why did Allah ﷻ declare sins as prohibited? If one feels powerless to give up sins, why would Allah ﷻ command them to do so? Allah ﷻ, in His wisdom, does not burden a person beyond their capacity. It is an expression of His nobility and mercy. Will the Noblest and Most Merciful burden a person with giving up sins without providing them the capability to do so? It is inconceivable. Just as you, as a caring individual, would not burden a child beyond their ability, imagine the care and love Allah ﷻ has for us, surpassing even that of our own mothers.

O people of honor! Indeed, it is well within our ability to save ourselves from sins, which is why Allah ﷻ commands us to do so. Sins only bring destruction and devastation, which is why Allah ﷻ urges us to stay away from them. The negative consequences of sins are not limited to this worldly life but also extend to the hereafter, and that is why Allah ﷻ instructs us to protect ourselves. When a person resolves to engage in good deeds, it is crucial for them to also resolve to abandon sins, for only then will they be fortunate enough to receive the blessings of righteousness. By doing so, the blessings of voluntary acts become more apparent and evident.

O Allah, we beseech Your help to put into practice what we learn. O Allah, grant us a life that is pleasing to You and purify us both inwardly and outwardly. O Allah, make it easy for us to give up sins and enable us to fully practice and embody our faith. O Allah, purify our lives even in moments of seclusion. O Allah, help us to treat Your creations with justice and protect us from violating anyone's rights. O Allah, grant us humility and focus on our prayers, a profound taste in reciting the Quran, and bestow upon us the courage and strength to easily distance ourselves from sins. O Allah, assist us at every step we take forward in Your religion, and support us with Your divine assistance. O Allah, considering our weaknesses, grant us Your special support. O Allah, grant us a life of faith and let our journey end with unwavering faith. O Allah, bestow upon us true faith, its qualities, and a life centered around faith. O Allah, bless us with the noble characteristics and manners of Your beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 24.04.2016.

56. Hirs-O-Hawas, The Root of All Evils

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

56.1 Beware of Hirs-O-Hawas, The Mother of All Evils

Alhakumu alttakathur.

Hatta zurtumu almaqabir.

The mutual rivalry (for piling up of worldly things) diverts you.

Until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die).

My dear esteemed, honorable brothers, and elders of Islam, and the sacred mothers and sisters of the sanctified Ummah of Islam, there exist certain diseases that give rise to other diseases. Likewise, there are sins that give birth to numerous other sins, and there are mistakes that lead to the spread of corruption. Among these diseases, our beloved Prophet ﷺ highlighted one in particular, which is "Hirs-o-Hawas" or whims and desires. A wise person once stated that this is not just a disease but rather "ummul-amraaz," the mother of all diseases. A Sahabi (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that during a sermon, the Prophet ﷺ warned the people, saying, "Protect yourselves from whims and desires, for the previous nations were destroyed due to this disease." It is the same "Hirs-o-Hawas" that led them towards niggardliness and made them misers. It is the same "Hirs-o-Hawas" that drove them to sever their ties, resulting in the destruction of the family system. It is the same "Hirs-o-Hawas" that enticed them towards vicious acts, leading them to become filthy. This destructive disease is the root cause behind the spread of corruption throughout society, and you can observe its presence behind every evil deed.

In today's times, the influence of Hirs-o-Hawas (whims and desires) has intensified, particularly in the form of shahawat (love of passion). As a result, the streets have become filthy and educational institutions have been corrupted. The intense desire for money and wealth has led to the introduction of unlawful provisions within households, while bribery and adulteration have become commonplace, contributing to an overall atmosphere of corruption. Furthermore, the

excessive longing for Jaah (fame), izzat (honor), ohada (official rank or position), and mansab (priority) has led to the erosion of the intrinsic value and dignity of humanity.

There can be no better healer for this Ummah than the Prophet of Allah ﷺ. Who else can accurately diagnose the diseases of the heart and soul better than him? Now, he ﷺ is advising us to protect ourselves from this destructive disease, as the previous nations were destroyed due to it. It is often claimed that thieves and robbers resort to their crimes out of extreme poverty. However, this is a flawed assumption. The reality is that thieves and robbers engage in such acts not because of poverty (ghurbaat) but rather because they lack contentment and patience. They are afflicted with the disease of Hirs-o-Hawas.

Have you ever witnessed a dacoit who ceased robbing once they accumulated a sum of one lakh rupees? Did they abandon their criminal activities, thinking, "Oh, now that I have gathered two lakh rupees, let me quit this job"? Those individuals who are the greatest thieves in the form of corrupt individuals, are they truly impoverished? They have fallen prey to this perilous disease of Hirs-o-Hawas. That is why our beloved Prophet ﷺ described this disease as extremely destructive.

56.2 Extinguish the Fire of Hir-O-Hawas with Contentment

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, successful is the one who embraces the truth of Islam, acquires their daily provision through lawful means, and is content with what Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon them." Such a person finds contentment in the abundant blessings granted by Allah ﷻ. Hazrat Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) recounted an incident where the Prophet ﷺ asked him the same question three times: "Do you think that the one who possesses wealth is truly rich?" Abu Dharr responded, "O Messenger of Allah, indeed that is what we believe." The Prophet ﷺ then asked, "Do you think that the one who lacks wealth is considered poor?" Abu Dharr replied, "O Messenger of Allah, indeed that is what we believe." Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) noted that the Prophet ﷺ repeated this statement three times and then said, "O Abu Dharr, richness and poverty are matters of the heart." Those who possess less money can still be rich in heart, while those who have more money can be poor in heart. The true richness lies in the contentment of the heart, regardless of one's material possessions. If a person of modest means is blessed with this contentment, their life can become more enjoyable and satisfying than that of kings. Conversely, if the wealth of contentment is lost by either the rich or the poor, they will never find peace. The fire of Hirs-o-Hawas (whims and desires) will continue to burn within them.

56.3 Hir-O-Hawas behind the Destruction of the World

It is a misconception to believe that the fire of Hirs-o-Hawas (whims and desires) will be extinguished once it is fulfilled; in reality, it only intensifies. It is akin to attempting to extinguish a fire by throwing dry grass into it. The fire of Hirs-o-Hawas can only be extinguished through contentment. The Prophet ﷺ stated that previous nations were afflicted with this disease, which led to their ruin, miserliness, and the destruction of their family lives. It is due to this Hirs-o-Hawas that today, instead of being a protector, a brother has become a threat to his sister, and elder siblings are neglecting their younger ones. In pursuit of Hirs-o-Hawas, people are even resorting to selling organs of the sick, feeding others poison to acquire material possessions, and polluting food sources. This destructive disease has left no aspect untouched. Even the earth has suffered due to the unchecked desires of mankind, resulting in its destruction and the contamination of food with chemicals and diseases.

The entire world has been engulfed in the flames of Hirs-o-Hawas, leaving mankind with no refuge. May Allah ﷻ forgive us. Even the educational institutions where we send our children to acquire knowledge have become breeding grounds for this fire, teaching them how to amass wealth, attain high positions, and accumulate material possessions. Those who are causing destruction to humanity are not just ignorant tribal people residing in remote mountains, and those leading in corruption are not from the wilderness. Unfortunately, they emerge from the very institutions where they received their education. It is not the ignorant individuals who are solely responsible for engaging in corrupt practices and adulterations. Rather, this disease of Hirs-o-Hawas is prevalent in every sphere of society. The greatest physician of this Ummah, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, came to eliminate this disease and eradicate it from its roots. This is because if this disease takes hold in the hearts of people, the entire society will be ruined, leading to conflicts and disputes. If we study the history of mankind and examine the wars between nations, we will find that Hirs-o-Hawas is often the driving force behind them. Individuals desire to establish more empires, increase their social status, obtain additional ministries, and accumulate greater wealth. This disease is truly destructive in its nature.

56.4 Recognize the True Purpose of this World

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ, in defense against the disease of Hirs-o-Hawas, bestowed contentment upon this Ummah and set himself as a role model for it. Hazrat Jibril (peace be upon him) came and conveyed to the Prophet ﷺ that Allah ﷻ offered to turn the mountain of Uhud into gold and move it wherever he desired. However, if the sole purpose of the Prophet's mission was to provide material wealth and satisfy the desires and passions of his Ummah, he would have arranged for such abundance that no Muslim would ever go hungry or suffer from deprivation. If filling the stomach and fulfilling worldly desires were the ultimate objectives of this life, and if acquiring high positions and ranks defined success, then our beloved Prophet ﷺ would have obtained immense wealth from Allah ﷻ for this Ummah, eradicating hunger and eliminating poverty.

Arya Samaj was indeed one of the significant Hindu movements, and there was a debate between a righteous elder and a member of that movement. Prior to the debate, a meal was served to both individuals. The Hindu man ate plentifully, while the righteous elder ate sparingly and then rested. Observing this, the Hindu man remarked to the righteous elder, "You have lost the debate. If you cannot surpass me in eating, how can you debate with me about Islam?" The righteous elder responded, "If the competition is based on eating, I would have brought an elephant to compete with you. If the measure of excellence lies in eating, then I would have brought an animal. However, the true excellence of a person lies in being content with what he has and seeking the pleasure of his Lord." A person's character attains beauty and elegance when they control their desires, practice patience, and embrace contentment. If one desires to be greedy, then let it be for righteous deeds. Allah ﷻ encourages us to compete in acquiring His ﷻ love, performing righteous actions, and striving for Paradise. This is the true arena of competition where we should strive to excel. So, Hazrat emphasized that if a fulfilling life is defined solely by the pursuit of passions, then there are countless animals whose lives revolve around this same objective.

The true excellence of a person lies in attaching oneself to worldly matters only to the extent of fulfilling one's needs, being content and patient, and competing with others only in drawing closer to Allah ﷻ and attaining the blessings of the Hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ diagnosed the disease of Hirs-o-Hawas in humanity, warning that it would only lead to destruction. Those who engage in usury (interest) do so not only out of greed for wealth but also out of a desire for fame, wanting to

showcase their numerous factories and fearing what others will think if they have one less. This greed for fame leads them to wage war against Allah ﷻ. Many people, driven by a hunger for societal approval, abandon the veil of modesty (hayaa) in their homes, seeking false honor from society. This is nothing but the greed for artificial respect.

This Hirs-o-Hawas has led to strange and unfortunate scenes in this world. Brothers stand against each other in courtrooms due to land disputes, and this rivalry is driven by Hirs-o-Hawas. Families are being torn apart due to the same disease. Today, there are numerous methods employed to seek false honor and recognition. This Hirs-o-Hawas is not limited to the desire for wealth alone, but also encompasses the craving for fame and praise from others. Many individuals go to great lengths, even attempting things beyond their capabilities, to receive this false praise. This highlights the destructive nature of this disease. Allah ﷻ warns us in the Quran:

"The mutual rivalry (for piling up of worldly things) diverts you. Until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die)." (Quran 102:1-2)

56.5 Remember Death, the Destroyer of Pleasures

The entire life of a person is spent chasing after false fame, glory, and the insatiable desires for wealth, honor, and passion. Even if a man has a halal wife, the fire of hirs dirties his youth. Similarly, she may have a halal husband, but the fire of hirs destroys her family. The underlying issue is their lack of contentment. This disease spreads like wildfire, and its cure lies in finding contentment. The Prophet ﷺ advised us to frequently remember the destroyer of pleasures, which is death. Just as a traveler who knows they must embark on a journey strives to lighten their load to make the journey easier, the more control a person has over their life, the smoother their journey will be. When one is in a place where no further journey is required, they expand and progress in their business and affairs. That is why the Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to remember death often, as this journey of life will eventually come to an end.

56.6 Our Desires will be Fulfilled in Akhirah

This world is not a place to spread but a place to gather, and it is not a place of Hirs-o-Hawas but a place of contentment and patience. Yes, there is a place called the next world where one can fulfill all their desires as they wish. "Walakum feehaa maa tashtahee anfusukum" - And therein is whatever you desire. And this cannot happen in this world, and you have to restrain your desires here. Stop the desires of your nafs if you want peace and if you want to uphold the values of Islamic, faith, and humanity within you. Otherwise, this Hirs-o-Hawas will not only remove Islamic and faith-based values, but it will also erode the value of humanity within you, and you will become like an animal. You will become shameless like an animal, and no humanity will be left in you. How strange it is to take advantage of a person's illness and earn money by playing with their life, and to earn money by exploiting people's faith and religion! Can a human being do such things? This Hirs-o-Hawas (greed and desire) won't allow a person to remain truly human. So, have contentment and be grateful for what Allah has provided in your journey. Believe that when a person attains the wealth of contentment and satisfaction, even if they are poor, they can lead a joyful life. This is a pleasure that cannot be attained with millions and millions of dollars.

A pious elder shared a story of a wealthy man who approached him seeking guidance. The elder advised him to stop accumulating wealth, but the man responded, "Hazrat, my desire for more

wealth doesn't allow me to stop." This insatiable greed will continue to consume him until his grave. The true beauty of a Muslim's life lies in liberating oneself from this destructive disease, the mother of all diseases. The pious elder further explained that true success (falaah) is when a servant asks Allah for ten things and Allah grants them all, and when a servant seeks refuge in Allah from all adversities and Allah provides refuge. These individuals are the successful ones. Allah states, "And whoever is saved from the greed and miserliness of his own soul, then those are the successful." This falaah does not mean that he asks for anything in this world, and he receives it. Rather, it signifies that Allah ﷻ will grant him the falaah of the hereafter, where he will receive all ten things if he asks for them, and Allah ﷻ will protect him from every single difficulty. However, in this world, he will experience a glimpse of the falaah of the hereafter in the form of satisfaction, contentment in his heart, and blessings in his life. This can be achieved by saving oneself from this destructive disease.

56.7 Nurture Greed for Righteous Deeds and Spiritual Growth

Whatever Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon a person, whether it is wealth, fame, or honor, a person who possesses contentment views it as a great blessing from Allah ﷻ. There is no room for Hirs-o-Hawas (greed and desire) in these matters, as its proper place is elsewhere, where we should strive to excel. Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) once expressed his strong admiration, saying, "This Siddique (referring to Abu Bakr) surpasses me in the field of righteous deeds, and he never gives me a chance to compete with him." This is Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), known for his greatness and virtues.

One night, our beloved Prophet ﷺ was with his wife Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her), and the sky was adorned with countless stars. Witnessing this majestic sight, Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) asked Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, is there anyone among your Ummah who has accumulated righteous deeds surpassing the number of these stars?" Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, O Ayesha, Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) possesses deeds greater in number than the stars." Upon hearing this, Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) fell silent. Prophet ﷺ, perceiving her thoughts, said, "O Ayesha, I understand why you fell silent. You thought I would mention the name of your father, Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him)." Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) confirmed his understanding. Prophet ﷺ said, "O Ayesha, the righteous deeds of Umar throughout his life are equivalent to the righteous deeds of your father Abu Bakr in a single night spent with me in the cave."

This is why Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say to Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him), "O Abu Bakr, take all my deeds and give me the reward of your migration (hijrah) with the Prophet ﷺ." They had a profound yearning, eagerness, and desire for righteous deeds. An opportunity for competition arose during the Battle of Tabuk, and Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was delighted at the prospect of competing with Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), thinking that today he would surpass Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) in the race. MashaAllah, what a passion we witness! This is how those who prioritize the hereafter demonstrate their fervor. However, when my focus is solely on worldly matters, my competition will revolve around material possessions. People are engaging in fights over cars, houses, and lands. They are willing to take human lives for just a few rupees, revealing their animalistic and cruel nature. It is appalling that someone would be killed for a mobile phone. What an act of rapaciousness!

Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) also possessed great passion, and he gathered half of his belongings to present to the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) arrived with his own belongings. The Prophet ﷺ inquired, "Umar, what have you brought?" Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) responded, "O Rasoolullah, I have brought half of my belongings." The Prophet ﷺ then asked Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him), "O Siddique, what have you brought?" Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) replied, "O Rasoolullah, I have brought all of my belongings." Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) acknowledged, "I can never surpass this individual."

Some Sahabahs came forward with more belongings to present to the Prophet ﷺ, but he ﷺ declined to accept them all, fearing that they might face difficulties in the future. However, the Prophet ﷺ accepted everything from Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) because he ﷺ knew that Abu Bakar Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) had a strong connection with Allah ﷻ and possessed great contentment and patience. The greediness and desires are meant for the field of righteous deeds, and when people have greed in this field, they will only have love and not hatred. When people have greed for worldly possessions, such as wealth, fame, rank, and power, then conflicts and disputes arise, and nations break apart. But when there is passion for righteousness, love blossoms like flowers.

56.8 Competing for Akhirah Fosters Love and Competing for World Breeds Hatred

Take any house where women are competing for righteousness, and you will witness the blooming garden of love. However, when you observe the competition in fashion, it will only lead to conflicts. Unfortunately, this form of amusement can be witnessed in many households today. Similarly, when you encounter a place where conversations revolve solely around worldly matters, you will notice nothing but disputes. Conversely, when you find a place where individuals compete for the sake of the Hereafter, you will witness the love of flowers blossoming. If you observe households where brothers compete with each other for the sake of the Hereafter, you will witness the presence of genuine love among them. However, when they compete for worldly gains, you will never see the same level of love. A nation driven by a passion for righteousness will remain united, while a nation consumed by a passion for worldly pursuits will be plagued by hatred.

There were individuals like Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him), Shuaib (may Allah be pleased with him), Sulaiman (may Allah be pleased with him), and others from various tribes, nationalities, and different colors. Despite these differences, they would surpass each other in righteousness, creating a sense of unity as if they were all siblings from the same mother. However, in today's world, due to the greed for worldly possessions, even the children of the same mother are not united. Even a husband and wife who have lived together for fifty years will not appear united if they are driven by Hirs-o-Hawas. On the other hand, if they were competing in righteousness, you would witness love between them. We often hear complaints about lack of peace in households, siblings fighting, fathers arguing, and mothers living in constant tension. However, this state of discord arises when there is a preoccupation with worldly matters. Every family gathering becomes a platform for competition in fashion, makeup, attire, and jewelry. May Allah grant us patience and solace.

These were not examples of Muslim life, and they did not represent the true style of a Muslim. Muslims used to remember and discuss righteousness in every gathering, learning from one another. They would compete with each other, striving to recite more Quran or attain a higher level

of Taqwa. This is how they embraced Hirs-o-Hawas. However, as people began to prioritize worldly desires, corruption became widespread. Muhaajir Imdaadullah Makki (rahimahullah) used to say, "When two things enter, corruption will prevail, and those two things are Takabbur (pride, arrogance) and Hirs (greed, covetousness)." Whether they enter houses, communities, or any other aspect of life, they will only bring corruption. In fact, the foundation of Takabbur is Hirs. Takabbur leads one to feel superior to others, seeking acceptance and having a self-centered attitude "I" "I" "I". This stems from the greed for fame. Hearts will shatter when both Hirs and Takabbur are present. In contrast to this, when there is eesaar (wishing good for others and prioritizing others over oneself) and humility, hearts will unite. Eesaar and humility stem from contentment, and a humble person does not desire fame.

So, honorable ones, it is imperative to seek refuge from this destructive disease and cultivate the quality of contentment within oneself. An effective way to attain this contentment is by remembering death and reflecting upon the life after death. Although the mention of death may evoke feelings of sadness or distress in people, it is crucial to remember that our beloved Prophet ﷺ, being the ultimate guide and physician, was well aware of this disease and its consequences. Thus, he ﷺ advised us to frequently remember death, as it serves as a reminder that all worldly pleasures are temporary and fleeting.

Remember those who have passed away suddenly and contemplate that you too can depart from this world just as unexpectedly. By doing so, inshaAllah, you will find contentment. Indulging in the pursuit of worldly desires will only intensify the fire of Hirs-o-Hawas. It is essential to exercise control over these desires and extinguish them by frequently reminding oneself of the reality of death and the fleeting nature of worldly existence. Reflect upon the limited number of days you have in this life and consider how long you will truly enjoy the transient pleasures of this world. What value does temporary honor hold if it ultimately leads to humiliation? What benefit is there in attaining worldly ranks and positions if they ultimately bring deprivation? The true taste and pleasure lie in striving for the eternal rank and bliss that await us after death. Therefore, have a fervent desire for that eternal reward and make it your priority.

56.9 Duaa

May Allah ﷻ protect both you and me from the destructive disease of Hirs-o-Hawas and grant us the invaluable wealth of contentment. All praise and gratitude are due to Allah ﷻ, the Lord of all worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and his noble companions. All praises and thanks are due to Allah ﷻ, and all glory belongs to Him ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ make us among those who remember Him ﷻ excessively, express gratitude to Him ﷻ, and worship Him ﷻ in the most beautiful manner. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability to practice what we hear and preach. May Allah ﷻ bestow upon us a life filled with faith, peace, and tranquility. May Allah ﷻ grant us His ﷻ guidance and love, and protect us from sins, instilling in us a strong aversion and disdain for them. May Allah ﷻ bless us with a death upon faith. May Allah ﷻ safeguard us and our homes from all forms of shame and protect our children.

May Allah ﷻ guide our children to be obedient to Him ﷻ and to their parents. May Allah ﷻ protect us from all forms of tribulations and disobedience from our children. May Allah ﷻ safeguard us from all destructive diseases and protect us from a life filled with illness. May Allah ﷻ shield us from the dangers of the heavens and the earth. May Allah ﷻ bless us with lawful provisions through His ﷻ mercy and save us from consuming anything that is forbidden. May Allah ﷻ grant us the

priceless wealth of contentment and a life filled with gratitude. May Allah ﷻ protect us from the destructive disease of Hirs-o-Hawas and instill within us a constant remembrance of death. May Allah ﷻ grant us a genuine concern for the hereafter and prioritize it above worldly matters.

May Allah ﷻ safeguard us from straying after granting us guidance. May Allah ﷻ protect us from humiliation after honoring us and grant us peace in place of worries. May Allah ﷻ prevent us from leaving empty-handed after seeking His ﷻ provision. May Allah ﷻ, by His ﷻ immense mercy and grace, make us solely dependent on Him ﷻ and save us from relying on His ﷻ creations. May Allah ﷻ protect our lives, wealth, and honor and shield us from the hands of oppressors, evildoers, and those who reject faith. May Allah ﷻ encompass us with His ﷻ shade of victory and mercy. May Allah ﷻ guide all Muslims and unite them upon the path of guidance. May Allah ﷻ safeguard our nation and establish it firmly, making it a place of peace and stability.

May Allah ﷻ protect the Muslims from the harm caused by those who create discord and spread corruption among them. May Allah ﷻ grant good health and cure to those who are sick. O our Lord, accept our prayers and deeds, for You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Grant us Your forgiveness and mercy, for You are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Merciful. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. Ameen, Ameen, and once again, Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

57. How to Cultivate Affinity for Good Deeds

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

57.1 Do not be Driven by Personal Preferences in Performing Good Deeds

If an act is compulsory, it must be done whether we like it or not. We cannot wait to perform an act only when we have a desire for it. Just as medicine must be taken for sickness, it would be worshipping our heart if we wait for its desire to perform an act. We should continue to steadfastly engage in good deeds regardless of our desires. Through this consistent practice, an attachment will develop towards that act. Attachment won't happen instantaneously, but it will develop over time through regular practice of the act. Once we develop this affinity, we won't feel content if we neglect to perform that act and may experience discomfort until we fulfill it. This is like the condition of an addicted person who feels compelled to return to their addiction despite attempts to stop. It reflects the strong attachment towards that addictive behavior.

Attachment to good deeds develops gradually and requires consistent practice, regardless of our personal preferences. It is important to recite the Quran regularly, engage in remembrance of Allah (zikr), and perform acts of worship even if we may not initially feel inclined to do so. With time, one can develop a deep attachment to Tahajjud Salah, continuing to perform it for many years. The blessings of remaining steadfast in every state of the heart condition contribute to the development

of this attachment to good deeds. The main problem today is that people abandon acts of worship when they lack the desire to perform them, only engaging in acts that bring them immediate enjoyment. However, Allah wants to see our dedication and persistence. We should continue performing acts that please Allah and His Prophet, even if the whole world opposes them. The remarkable aspect of this is that Allah will make the world and its inhabitants submit before us. Over time, people of good character will naturally be drawn to such individuals, while the arrogance of others will crumble.

57.2 Your Efforts Will Lead to Inner Peace, so Strive for It

The outcome of our efforts will be peace, and the result of our striving will be comfort. As stated in the Quran, "*Verily, with hardship, there is relief. Verily, with hardship, there is relief*" (Quran 94:5-6). Today, you may exert yourself in performing good deeds, facing challenges along the way. However, in due time, those same deeds will bring you peace and tranquility. The task will be accomplished when you actively engage in it. Carry out your duties, and the difficulties will diminish. It is not enough to simply wish for righteousness and piety without acting and putting in the necessary effort. If we desire to lead a life free from sin and full of righteousness, we must engage in righteous actions and work diligently towards that goal. Merely speaking or intending to do something is not sufficient. We must have the courage to act and work hard. It is the way of Allah ﷻ that He grants ease and relief after periods of difficulty.

57.3 Be Steadfast and Witness the Barakah of Your Actions

Do not lose hope and continue fighting against your nafs (selfish desires) and shaitan (Satan). Today, we may have the motivation to recite more ajza (sections) of the Quran, and we act upon it. However, there may be times when we don't feel the same inclination to recite. In such moments, if we still make an effort and force ourselves to recite, it becomes a struggle known as mujaahidah. It is through this struggle that Allah ﷻ promises to open doors of guidance for us. A person sets a goal to perform good deeds for 41 days, and on the 40th day, he finds it challenging to continue. However, if he still perseveres and performs the good deed on that day, he may attain a special spiritual enlightenment (noor) that surpasses the blessings he may have received during the previous 40 days. This is due to his determination and struggle (mujaahidah) to overcome difficulties and fulfill his commitment.

In our case, we tend to give up when faced with such opportunities. However, it is important to remain consistent in our actions, even if they are small, and maintain steadfastness, even when our hearts do not feel inclined towards them. Just like a small drop of water continuously falling on a rock eventually creates an impression, consistent and persistent actions yield benefits over time. Conversely, if we were to pour an entire tank of water on the rock at once, it would not leave any lasting impression. Therefore, the true benefit lies in regularly and consistently performing acts of goodness. When we commit ourselves to perform certain acts regularly, we will inevitably encounter moments when we lack the inner desire or motivation to engage in them. However, it is during these times of persistence and perseverance, despite the absence of longing, that we truly earn the rewards and make progress.

The job at hand can only be accomplished by taking action and not solely by yearning and desiring for it. In our case, our desperate need for performing good deeds becomes the very purpose and outcome of engaging in them. Our objective is to seek divine help, or *tawfeeq*, to perform these good deeds. Therefore, unless we actively engage in righteous actions, we will not attain any progress or benefits. Without giving proper care and attention to our *salah*, and without having the consciousness that we are standing before Allah ﷻ, we cannot excel in our prayer. Similarly, without giving due attention to our *wudhu*, we cannot attain excellence in our *salah*.

Merely listening and desiring in our hearts won't be sufficient; we must take actual action and engage in the deeds. When we consistently perform these actions, the deeds themselves will manifest their blessings. Through consistent and sincere practice, the true essence and blessings of these actions will become evident, and we will personally experience their impact. Some may question the wisdom behind certain acts, but by persistently engaging in these acts, their wisdom and blessings will be revealed to us. We will witness the *barakah* and benefits of these actions firsthand. Therefore, we must actively and wholeheartedly carry out our responsibilities and give importance to our righteous deeds.

57.4 Every Action Counts: Something is Better than Nothing

We should acknowledge that our deeds may not be flawless, but we should also recognize that taking action is better than doing nothing at all. While our *salah* and recitation may not be perfect, we should still appreciate the fact that we are trying. We should not lose hope, as even though our actions may not be exceptional, they are still a step forward compared to our previous state of inaction. Let us express gratitude for the progress we have made and continue striving to improve. The *shaitan* tries to push us towards extremes by either instilling excessive hope in us, causing us to become complacent with our deeds, or by fueling despair, leading us to abandon the acts we are already doing. It is important to strike a balance between fear and hope. We should acknowledge the imperfections in our deeds and strive to improve them, maintaining a constant concern for their shortcomings. Simultaneously, we should express heartfelt gratitude to Allah ﷻ for granting us the ability to engage in those acts, recognizing that even something is better than nothing. It is essential to avoid stagnation and continuously seek progress while appreciating the blessings of any efforts we make.

Even if you don't have 1 rupee to buy sweets in the market, if you have just 50 paise, you can still take it to the market because even 50 paise has its value and will be accepted. You may not get a large quantity of sweets, but you will at least get half of it. Similarly, whatever good deeds you are performing, you may not receive an abundance of rewards, but you will still receive some rewards. Therefore, there should be no hopelessness in giving up your good deeds.

Do not give up on performing *Salah* if distracting thoughts arise during it. If you feel that you lack concentration in your remembrance of Allah and consider giving up until you can achieve perfect focus, that moment may never come. If a person thinks they can only drive a motorcycle when they can drive perfectly, will they ever learn to drive perfectly? You will drive perfectly only if you keep driving. You will sit on the motorcycle, sometimes you might fall off or encounter obstacles, and it is through these experiences that you will learn to drive perfectly, isn't it? It is

unrealistic to expect that you will drive only when you are already skilled. Similarly, you should work on your acts of worship, continuously striving to improve them, while also having the concern to enhance your performance. Additionally, you should be sincerely grateful to Allah ﷻ for whatever acts of worship you are able to perform.

57.5 Keep Doing and Keep Reaping

Man should never lose hope and should have a good opinion about Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ treats His slaves according to their opinion about Him ﷻ. Yes, Allah ﷻ is extremely merciful and generous, but He ﷻ also wants to see the effort and determination in His slaves. Keep doing whatever you can and then Allah ﷻ will reward you by His ﷻ grace. So, continue striving without losing hope. You may stumble and fall, but you must stand up and keep going. Don't give up. Allah ﷻ does not criticize or ignore someone's hard work and quest. There is a saying, "Keep doing and keep getting." He ﷻ will never disappoint you. The court of Allah ﷻ is truly remarkable. A person may commit numerous sins, but when they turn to Him ﷻ with sincerity, everything can change in just a minute. The condition is that one should turn to Him ﷻ with sincerity. He ﷻ is an incredibly generous Lord. So, keep doing it. Yes, we acknowledge our deficiencies, imperfections, and shortcomings in our deeds, but keep doing it. Do not give up. Let the sole quest in you be to attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. "I want to lead a life pleasing to You ﷻ. I want to live for You and die for You." Let this be the true passion within you. So, do as much as you can and remain steadfast. InshaAllah, Allah ﷻ will grant you the desired goal.

Just turn to Him ﷻ with sincerity and determination. Even if a person has never mentioned the name of Allah ﷻ and spent their entire life in sin, the doors of Allah's mercy are still open for them. Whatever may be difficult for the servant, it is very easy for Allah ﷻ. So how can one lose hope in Allah ﷻ? When Allah's mercy descends, all the filth of life is cleansed, but it is the condition of having true quest. There is no doubt that when Allah's mercy turns towards us, the sins of our entire life are washed away, but to attain that turning of Allah's mercy, we must have genuine quest. O Allah! I want to belong to You and be Yours. That's it. It is within the ability of humans to bring forth this quest, and Allah ﷻ takes responsibility in guiding them towards it. So do what is within your ability.

57.6 Embrace Self-Criticism, Cultivate Humility, and Persevere

Hazrat Gangohi (RA) said that when a person sincerely strives to improve himself and feels that he has not accomplished much, he should realize that he has achieved everything. There are no major sins in his life, no persisting in minor sins, and when he examines his good deeds, he perceives their imperfections but maintains a genuine quest for improvement. InshaAllah, he will attain success. Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon Hazrat Gangohi (RA) a lofty status among the pious elders, and he was recognized as "Faqih an-Nafs" (a jurist of the soul). The term "Faqih an-Nafs" is used by the jurists to describe an individual who, after extensive engagement with the science of fiqh, is blessed by Allah Almighty with an innate understanding that allows them to arrive at correct conclusions in fiqh matters without needing to refer to books.

Hazrat Gangohi (RA) was the eldest among the pious elders. It was his (RA) statement that if a person feels that despite their lifelong efforts, they have not accomplished anything, then they have actually achieved everything. Even if a person attains a high status, but still considers themselves insignificant after exerting their utmost to achieve their goal, it is this humility that pleases Allah ﷻ. To consider oneself worthless in every moment of life is an expression of humility and true submission. It is a form of spiritual slavery, where one recognizes their dependency on Allah ﷻ. Therefore, it is important to persevere and continue doing the job, whether it is perfect or imperfect. InshaAllah, imperfections will eventually transform into perfection. For example, consider a person who is learning to write and struggles to properly write the letter "jeem." Upon seeing their inability to write it correctly, they may become frustrated. In such a situation, it is advised to not aim for utmost perfection right from the beginning. Instead, the person should continue practicing and over time, they will be able to write the letter "jeem" properly. Initially, one may not feel a strong attachment to the work, but it is important to keep doing it regardless of the circumstances.

Whenever you are granted the divine guidance and ability (tawfeeq) to perform a certain act, seize the opportunity without hesitation. Do not dwell on thoughts like, "I didn't do it yesterday, so what's the point of doing it today?" Remember that each day is a fresh opportunity to engage in righteous deeds. Even if you miss a day, do not be disheartened. Simply resume the practice without worry. If you find yourself in a pattern of inconsistency, where you perform the act for a few days and then miss it, do not despair. It is still better to miss a few days and resume than to abandon the practice completely. So, keep striving and remain steadfast. If you make a mistake, repent sincerely, and start again with renewed dedication. Even if one does not naturally feel inclined towards a certain task, having perseverance and determination can still accomplish the job. As long as you have a sincere desire for self-improvement and a quest to seek Allah's pleasure, continue doing the task, even if there are times when you feel lazy. Stay committed and dedicated, and you will witness the blessings and benefits of your efforts. May Allah grant us all the divine guidance and ability (tawfeeq) to persist in our endeavors. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 19.10.2012.

58. The Impact of Sins on Our Life and Soul

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Many of us commit sins without realizing their detrimental effects on our lives. Sins act as poison, stripping away not only materialistic blessings but also spiritual blessings from a person. One can never attain steadfastness in their faith when they continuously engage in sinful acts without repentance. We should never underestimate the seriousness of any sin, whether major or minor.

A man from Bani Israel approached Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and claimed that Allah ﷻ does not hold him accountable for his continuous sins. In response, Allah ﷻ revealed to Prophet Musa that He had taken away the khushu (concentration and tranquility) from his salah as a punishment for his sins. Is this punishment not sufficient for him? A man approached Hasan Basri (may Allah be pleased with him) and expressed his difficulty in waking up for tahajjud (night prayer). Hasan Basri advised him to be mindful of his words and actions during the day, as Allah ﷻ will take care of waking him up for tahajjud during the night. Tahajjud prayer is a blessing, reciting the Quran is a blessing, and offering salah in the early time is a blessing. If a person has been granted these blessings but fails to engage in these acts, it is likely due to their sins, which have deprived them of these blessings.

Until we change our condition and rectify our actions, Allah ﷻ may not change our circumstances. When a blessing is removed due to our sins, it is not guaranteed that we will regain the exact same blessing. Time passes, and while repentance may lead to the bestowal of other blessings, it does not guarantee the restoration of the previous blessings we have lost. When a person engages in actions that please Allah ﷻ but then becomes negligent and commits sins, Allah ﷻ, out of His honor and majesty, takes an oath that He will not allow His servant to remain in a state that is pleasing to him until the servant returns to a state of obedience and righteousness.

Thus, we may possess means of attaining happiness such as a house, wealth, and family, but we may not receive the blessings that come with them. Our spouses may not bring us joy and satisfaction; despite a husband's kind approach, he may not receive love and affection from his wife, and even if a wife adorns herself and approaches her husband, they may end up in quarrels. Our children may not be obedient to us, and our money may not bring us assistance, as it may be spent on lawyers and doctors. This is a deprivation of blessings. Allah ﷻ will not allow us to enjoy the blessings, and this is a clear statement from Allah ﷻ. If we do not please Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ will not grant us a state of pleasure. Allah ﷻ is the most truthful in His ﷻ speech.

The loss of spiritual blessings is more detrimental than the loss of materialistic blessings. It is not an abrupt disappearance of blessings. It is similar to how termites gradually consume the strength of wood from within until it eventually collapses. From the external perspective, it may appear as if the wood suddenly falls, but in reality, it is a gradual process of the wood losing its strength over time. Similarly, sins can be likened to termites that slowly erode and weaken the spiritual foundation of a person. A person first loses khushu in salah, then he delays the salah, and eventually abandons the salah, which is a very major sin. Consequently, they move further away from Allah ﷻ and fall into more sins, ultimately leading them towards Jahannam (Hell). The major sin of leaving fardh salah alone is enough to condemn a person to hell. Thus, sins gradually erode a person's deen, and we seek refuge in Allah from such a state.

We should realize the importance of having a firm resolution to avoid sins in our lives. While it is possible for us, as human beings, to commit sins, we must immediately seek forgiveness and strive to eliminate them. Sins are like slow poison, and we should not allow them to linger and hold onto them in our lives. Instead, we should seek repentance and strive to lead a life free from the influence of sins. A young man once approached our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and asked him, "O Messenger of Allah, how can I know if I have true faith (eeman) or not?" The Prophet ﷺ

responded, "When your sins cause you distress and discomfort, then know that you have faith." As long as a believer is burdened by sins and has not sincerely repented and sought forgiveness, they will not experience true ease and tranquility in their heart.

Righteous deeds and keeping away from sins are like a fortress. The moment a person enters, they will feel secure and peaceful, and this inner peace will be reflected on their face and in their life. Conversely, a person who does not fear Allah ﷻ will fear everything and constantly experience insecurity and fear in their heart. Sins have the potential to diminish the spiritual essence (ruh) from our acts of worship, such as salah, zakat, and hajj, rendering them devoid of strength and impact. It is imperative that we fear Allah ﷻ and strive to avoid sins. A beneficial remedy to distance ourselves from sins is to immediately offer two units of voluntary prayer (nafil salah) after committing a sin, and sincerely repent to Allah ﷻ while seeking His ﷻ assistance.

If we find ourselves committing 10 sins in a day and then make an effort to perform 20 units of voluntary (nafil) salah as a means of repentance, we will, by the will of Allah, experience a noticeable difference. This is because the Shaytan becomes disappointed when we take such actions. It is not only through repentance that we rid ourselves of sins, but also by drawing closer to Allah ﷻ through the performance of voluntary prayers. Whenever the Shaytan attempts to lead a person astray through the commission of sins, and the person responds by repenting and engaging in extra righteous deeds, it becomes a source of disappointment for the Shaytan. The act of repentance itself earns the love and forgiveness of Allah ﷻ, and the additional righteous deeds further strengthen the person's relationship with their Creator. As a result, the Shaytan loses hope in such a dedicated and vigilant slave and may shift their focus to targeting others who are more susceptible to their whispers.

If we solely rely on repentance from sins, we may not experience significant improvement in our level of taqwa (God-consciousness). However, by actively engaging in increased righteous deeds, we not only rid ourselves of sins but also address and cure spiritual diseases such as arrogance, jealousy, and others. This comprehensive approach enables us to elevate our status and strengthen our relationship with Allah ﷻ. Normally, when we engage in more good deeds, we might develop arrogance (takabbur), but when we approach these acts with humility, repenting to Allah ﷻ for our sins, and witnessing the increase in our good deeds, we feel humble. This is when we can attain istiqamat (steadfastness) in our faith. Merely repenting for sins alone won't make us steadfast.

May Allah ﷻ purify us from both outward and inward sins, and may He grant us His love, fear, and a life free from sin. May He bestow upon us the ability to remain steadfast on His deen and continuously increase in performing righteous deeds, elevating our status in this world and the Hereafter. Ameen, Ameen, and again Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

59. Shield Yourself from Five Sins and Attain Freedom from All Transgressions

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(If we reflect upon our Ramadan, we would have witnessed ourselves engaging in numerous commendable acts, Alhamdulillah. We stood long for Taraweeh, listened attentively to the recitation of the Quran, recited more Quran ourselves, abstained from permissible provisions and intimate relations, and performed many other righteous deeds. However, let us now contemplate if we are able to maintain the same level of commitment and engagement in good deeds after Ramadan. Are we able to even open the Quran regularly? Are we consistently performing Salatul Fajr as we used to pray Tahajjud during Ramadan? If we observe a lack in these areas, it signifies that we have lost the strength and motivation that we attained during Ramadan. The previous topic, 'The Impact of Sins on Our Life and Soul,' sheds light on this matter. Now that we are aware of the detrimental effects of sins, we should be determined to lead a life free from sin. If you find yourself struggling to navigate this path, this article is for you. It provides a starting point based on a lecture by my Sheikh, Maulana Abdus Sattar Hafizahullah.)

The following is a concise summary of his lecture. By avoiding five major sins, inshaAllah, with the blessings and mercy of Allah, we will be protected from all sins and be able to lead a life of taqwa (God-consciousness), which encompasses the goodness of both worlds. Here is the list of those five sins, along with a brief explanation of each:

1. Safeguard your tongue from backbiting. Today, we observe that many men engage in backbiting, and unfortunately, some women mainly gather for the purpose of backbiting. When one of our Muslim brothers passes away, despite any bitterness we may have felt towards them, we still show compassion and come together for their funeral. How terrible it would be to engage in backbiting, which is akin to consuming the flesh of a deceased brother. When the honor of our fellow brothers and sisters is not safe from our tongues, which are more sacred to Allah ﷻ than the Kaaba, how can we expect that Allah ﷻ will grant us a life of taqwa, which is more honored in both worlds.
2. Save yourself from takabbur, pride, and thinking oneself to be superior. Takabbur is the root cause of many sins. It is through pride that one considers oneself to be superior and, in order to maintain that image, puts others down through backbiting and slander. A person who possesses pride will eventually face humiliation in the eyes of others. Just like soil that remains in its rightful place is useful and beneficial, but when it rises up and becomes elevated, people will sweep it away.
3. Save yourself from anger. When a person becomes angry, they are in the grip of Shaytan, and they speak and act in ways that they later regret, sometimes for the rest of their lives. In an incident that took place in an Arab land, there was an argument between an old man

and a young man. The old man, despite his weakness, became so enraged that he raised his stick to strike the young man. The people present urged him to control himself and advised him to recite durood (blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). As soon as he recited "Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam," his anger dissipated, and he became remarkably peaceful, as if he had never been angry at all. When we send peace and blessings upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), Allah ﷻ bestows His mercy and blessings upon us tenfold. Therefore, it is highly recommended to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from Shaytan, perform ablution (wudu), drink water, recite durood (blessings upon the Prophet), change our physical position (e.g., standing to sitting, sitting to lying down) to help control our anger.

4. Stay away from interactions with non-mahram individuals. This is one of the biggest fitnah of our times. Mobile devices and the internet have exacerbated these interactions. We often hear phrases like "she is like a sister" or "he is like a brother," with seemingly good intentions. However, this is pure deception. Such interactions can easily turn haram, stripping away the honor of families and leading to children becoming rebellious towards their parents, among other detrimental consequences.

When Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ highlight the dangers of such interactions, it is undoubtedly a grave sin. Who can be more truthful than Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ? We should contemplate the exemplary conduct of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. With their proximity to the Prophet ﷺ, their thoughts and intentions were undoubtedly pure. Likewise, the Sahabah, whose Taqwa (God-consciousness) is attested to by Allah ﷻ in the Quran, faced various trials, including hunger, wars, and wealth, yet Allah ﷻ found nothing but Taqwa in them. To these esteemed individuals, Allah ﷻ instructs that if they wish to seek guidance from the wives of the beloved Prophet ﷺ, who are pure and hold the esteemed status of spiritual mothers to the Sahabahs RA and the entire Muslim ummah, they should do so from behind the screen. Can we ever hope to attain their level of piety? Considering that they received divine instructions, where does that leave us? May Allah ﷻ assist us all in maintaining a distance from inappropriate interactions with non-mahram individuals. Ameen.

5. Take care of halal provisions. The utmost care should be taken to ensure that what we earn and consume is strictly halal. People can be categorized into two groups: The first group consists of those whose primary source of income is haram. Such individuals should swiftly repent to Allah ﷻ and make necessary changes in their means of livelihood. Engaging in haram practices invites the wrath and curse of Allah ﷻ, leading to the loss of numerous blessings. The second group comprises those who are blessed with halal income, but due to their greed and love for wealth, they engage in unlawful means of acquiring it.

When we prioritize the avoidance of the five aforementioned sins, inshaAllah, all other sins will be eradicated from our lives. One effective tip is to change our environment and surround ourselves with righteous company. It is in the company of such individuals that we can swiftly attain taqwa. We must remember that when we lead a life of God-consciousness, Allah ﷻ will provide for us in

ways we cannot even imagine. If it is not feasible to be in their company throughout the week, we should strive to arrange gatherings with them for ourselves and our families at least 3-4 times a week, or at the very least, once a week.

The second tip is to always engage in sincere repentance (tawba) whenever we fall into sin. Despite repeated sins, if a person consistently and sincerely repents, Allah ﷻ's mercy is so immense that He elevates even such a person to the status of His righteous servant (wali). Allah ﷻ raises their rank among the people of taqwa (God-consciousness) in both this world and the Hereafter, and they truly embody a life of taqwa. The Shaytan loses hope in such an individual who persistently seeks repentance, and when they perform two units of prayer (salah) after committing a sin, the Shaytan will flee from them.

The final tip is to express gratitude to Allah ﷻ after every prayer, acknowledging that without His assistance, one would have been among those who do not pray. Additionally, when one abstains from sin, they should immediately thank Allah ﷻ for His guidance and protection, recognizing that it is only by His power and control that they were able to obey Him and save themselves from disobedience. This is why the saying "laa hawla wala quwwata illa billah" (There is no power and no might except by Allah) is considered to be a treasure of Paradise according to the teachings of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. By implementing this practice, Allah ﷻ will keep us away from sin and preserve our blessings. May Allah ﷻ grant us all a life of taqwa. Ameen, ameen, and once again, ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

60. Eeman, Its Value, and Ways to Preserve It

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Eeman, the faith, and guidance bestowed upon us by Allah ﷻ, is the most priceless treasure in this world. Allah ﷻ, in His infinite knowledge and boundless mercy, understands the trials and needs of His ﷻ slaves, whether they pertain to wealth, family, or any worldly matter. However, Allah ﷻ, the All-Knowing and Most Merciful, recognizes that above all else, what His ﷻ slaves truly require is His divine guidance. It is this guidance that He ﷻ graciously bestows upon those whom He ﷻ chooses. Such is the significance of guidance that Allah ﷻ, from high above the seven heavens, revealed the Quran, beginning with Surah Al-Fatiha, to teach His servants how to beseech Him ﷻ for His invaluable guidance.

The true value of eeman (faith) is known only to those who have tasted its essence. This profound value can be witnessed through the lives of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them). One such example is that of Khubaib (may Allah be pleased with him) who, in the face of the swords and spears of the Meccan polytheists, was posed with the question: "Wouldn't you wish that Muhammad (peace be upon him) be in your place while you are safe and sound with your family?"

This question shook Khubaib (may Allah be pleased with him) as it undermined his love and faith in the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). In response, Khubaib (may Allah be pleased with him) firmly declared, "By Allah, I would not choose to be safe with my wife and children, enjoying the pleasures of the entire world, while the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is even pricked by a thorn." This powerful response exemplifies the incomparable value that the Sahabah placed on their eeman, transcending any worldly possession or comfort.

When Abu Salama (may Allah be pleased with him) arrived in Madinah to protect his eeman (faith), he was in a state of distress. On his journey, his wife and children were forcibly taken from him by his and his wife's non-Muslim family members. Despite this immense hardship, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) welcomed Abu Salama with glad tidings, acknowledging that he had made a profitable transaction by safeguarding his faith. This incident highlights the incomparable value of eeman, which surpasses the importance of one's family and worldly possessions.

When a person possesses wealth, it can be inherited by their children. However, eeman (faith) is a unique and special blessing bestowed upon an individual by the special mercy of Allah ﷻ. It cannot be passed down from parent to child, like worldly possessions. We witness this truth in the example of Prophet Nuh (may peace be upon him) whose son was not blessed with eeman, despite Prophet Nuh (may peace be upon him) being a great Prophet endowed with wisdom, knowledge, and prophethood. It was the fervent wish of Prophet Nuh (may peace be upon him) that his son would have eeman, but it is ultimately Allah ﷻ who grants this precious gift. Such is the immeasurable value of eeman, which cannot be equated with any worldly possession. In the hereafter, eeman is the means by which Allah ﷻ will save the believers from the torment of Hell. The disbelievers will regretfully bite their nails in remorse, wishing they had embraced eeman in this worldly life.

When a person possesses a valuable item in this world, they exercise extra caution in protecting it, knowing that there are thieves seeking to steal it from them. Similarly, eeman (faith) is of immense value, and the Shayateen (devils) and their allies tirelessly endeavor to steal this precious gift bestowed by Allah ﷻ from the hearts and lives of Muslims. The Shayateen (devils) and their allies, the disbelievers, make relentless efforts to misguide Muslims and remove Islam from their lives through various means of corruption, such as media influence and destructive lifestyles. We can witness the state of Muslims today, being surrounded by such fitnah (trials and temptations). However, there are four simple ways that, if we strive to implement, inshaAllah, our eeman will be protected.

1. Continuously express gratitude to Allah ﷻ while sitting, standing, and lying down throughout the day, acknowledging the immense blessing of having eeman in our hearts. Recognize that we are unworthy of this gift and that it is solely through the grace and favor of Allah ﷻ that we have been bestowed with such a precious faith.
2. Show kindness and serve our family members, whether they are practicing Muslims or not. By doing so, we can gradually create a wholesome Islamic environment around us, which will help safeguard our eeman. It is crucial to refrain from anger and harshness when dealing with our family members, as maintaining harmonious relationships within the family contributes to the preservation of our faith.

3. Strive to excel in our respective fields, whether it is education or business, and let our actions speak of the positive influence of our faith. By demonstrating exceptional performance, whether it is achieving high grades or displaying upright character, we can inspire those around us to be drawn towards the beauty of Islam. Our success should not make us complacent or useless, but rather it should serve to attract others towards the Deen, inshaAllah.
4. Surround ourselves with the company of righteous and pious Muslims and maintain regular contact with them by attending the Masjid for prayers and religious gatherings.

When we strive on the above-mentioned points, inshaAllah, our eeman will be preserved, for verily Allah ﷻ is ever appreciative. All praise is due to Allah ﷻ, who has made us Muslims. May Allah ﷻ keep our iman firm and steadfast. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

61. How to Attain Ikhlāas or Sincerity?

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

61.1 The Hindrance of Ikhlāas: Love for Fame and Wealth

The greatest deed a person can perform is that of sincerity (ikhlaas) for the sake of Allah ﷻ alone. With sincerity, even a small deed becomes a means of accumulating immense reward. On the other hand, when a significant action is done for show, it loses its significance and fails to yield any reward. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (RA) said, "Many small deeds yield great rewards due to sincerity (ikhlas), while many significant actions become insignificant due to improper intentions." A person becomes mukhlis (sincere) only when they no longer value fame and wealth. Achieving sincerity becomes challenging when one is attached to worldly desires. Fame and money are two major aspects of love for the world.

When a person no longer holds value for fame and wealth in their heart, they become mukhlis (sincere). They no longer seek fame or wealth, but instead, their sole yearning is for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. The presence of ikhlāas in a person's actions transforms even the smallest deed into something of immense value. Ikhlāas adds weight and significance to the deed, making it heavier than mountains in terms of reward. However, achieving ikhlāas requires a great sacrifice: letting go of the yearning for fame and wealth. This is not an easy task, as it involves removing the love for worldly possessions and recognition from one's heart.

The acceptance of an action is closely tied to the presence of ikhlāas (sincerity) in that action. When an action is performed with sincere intention solely for the sake of Allah, it becomes deserving of acceptance. Unfortunately, many individuals waste the rewards of their actions due to improper intentions. They may engage in great deeds and provide valuable services, but if their intentions and ikhlāas are neglected, their efforts go to waste. People often become exhausted from

engaging in various actions, yet they gain nothing substantial as a result of their negligence. Prior to embarking upon any deed, it is essential to introspect and ask oneself, "Why am I doing this?" Furthermore, upon completing the deed, it is crucial to fervently beseech Allah ﷻ for its acceptance. By adopting this approach, we can hope for our actions to be accepted by Allah ﷻ. May we always strive to seek the pleasure of Allah.

The nature of fame and wealth is inherently unstable. Those who desire fame are constantly dependent on the opinions and praises of others. If they are praised, they perceive themselves as worthy, but if they face criticism, they feel humiliated. Similarly, wealth is transient and does not remain permanently in anyone's possession. On the other hand, actions performed with sincerity and ikhlaas (sincerity for the sake of Allah) have a more steadfast and enduring nature. Such actions continue to progress in terms of reward and acceptance, both from Allah ﷻ and from the perspective of creation.

61.2 Ikhlaas Amplifies the Weight of the Deeds

It is important to constantly remind people about the importance of ikhlaas (sincerity) as many individuals miss out on the rewards of their actions due to negligence in their intentions. The cultivation of sincerity should be emphasized and encouraged continuously. We often see the construction of grand hospitals, mosques, and religious institutions, but if the sole motivation behind these endeavors is fame and recognition, what is the use?

All these acts are indeed commendable, but without understanding the essence of ikhlaas (sincerity), knowing how to make the proper intention, and recognizing the fundamental basis and soul of our actions, one may unknowingly waste the rewards. The correctness of intention is a precious wealth that transforms a mere permissible act into an act of worship. Ikhlaas is the act of performing an action solely for the sake of Allah ﷻ. When a permissible act is done with sincerity and directed towards Allah ﷻ, it transforms into an act of worship. Even a simple act of worship, when performed with sincerity, carries immense weight, and becomes heavier than mountains. Take the example of Hajj, a tremendous act of worship, but if it is carried out with improper intentions, one gains nothing but exhaustion. Similarly, fasting, a significant act of worship, loses its essence if done for the sake of showing off, resulting in nothing but hunger and thirst. Sadly, many great acts of worship go to waste due to incorrect intentions. In today's time, we may engage in various acts, but we lack the purity and sincerity that is essential for those actions to hold true value.

61.3 Ikhlaas Purifies the Heart

In order to attain true ikhlaas (sincerity), it is necessary for the allure of fame and wealth, the two prominent aspects of worldly desires, to diminish in one's eyes. Without letting go of these attachments, it becomes exceedingly challenging to achieve sincerity in our actions. When the desire for fame and wealth takes precedence over our deeds, it diminishes the rewards that could have been gained. A person worked hard and diligently but wasted the aamaal. What a great loss! Ikhlaas becomes a means for purifying the heart from rancor, malice, and other spiritual diseases, and it becomes a source of acceptance for aamaal. When a person is mukhlis, free from the love

of fame and wealth, their heart is free from rancor, jealousy, and malice towards others, as these diseases or thorns grow on the tree of worldly love.

When a person has no attachment to the worldly possessions in their heart, how can rancor or malice find a place within them? These negative qualities only arise from the love of worldly things. When a person attains ikhlaas and seeks to please Allah alone, their heart remains pure and free from such diseases. Ikhlaas becomes a means of eradicating sins. Hazrat Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be pleased with him) stated, "When a person consistently performs actions with sincerity, Allah ﷻ eliminates their major sins." SubhanAllah! Such is the power of ikhlaas.

In a well-known hadith, it is narrated that a prostitute was forgiven by Allah ﷻ for her act of giving water to a thirsty dog. This act was solely based on ikhlaas, as she sought to please Allah ﷻ without anyone else watching. Despite her past sins, Allah ﷻ forgave her and granted her immense reward due to her sincerity. This serves as a powerful reminder that acts done with ikhlaas have the potential to lead to the forgiveness of major sins. Likewise, removing harmful objects from pathways with sincerity can also serve as a means of seeking forgiveness for one's sins. We engage in numerous permissible acts as part of our daily routines, such as eating, using the restroom, getting married, wearing clothes, and applying perfume. However, without making the correct intention, these acts do not attain the status of worship. By seeking the blessings of proper intention and ikhlaas (sincerity), these very acts have the potential to become acts of worship.

61.4 Ikhlaas Eases Difficulties

Difficulties can be eased through ikhlaas (sincerity). In a hadith, it is narrated that three individuals were trapped in a cave by a massive rock. They sought the help of Allah ﷻ through their deeds, which they performed with utmost sincerity. One of them mentioned how he served his parents solely to please Allah ﷻ. Another shared how he invested a small amount owed to someone and, upon returning to repay the debt, he gave the person all the wealth, cattle, and slaves he had acquired through his business, solely for the sake of Allah. The third individual mentioned that although he had the opportunity and capability to commit a sin, he refrained from it, remembering Allah ﷻ. These three individuals presented their sincere acts of worship to Allah ﷻ, and as a result, He removed the rock that had enclosed the cave, saving them from darkness and suffocation. Indeed, it is Allah ﷻ alone who helps us with His ﷻ power. Ikhlaas (sincerity) holds great strength. Often, we attribute obstacles in our lives to external factors, but it is our own sins that hinder our progress. Difficulties can be eased, and obstacles can be overcome through the blessings of ikhlaas.

61.5 Ikhlaas Amasses Rewards

Due to ikhlaas (sincerity), one can be rewarded for an action even if they lack the ability to perform it. Through ikhlaas, one can attain the rank of a martyr or a mujahid even while passing away on their bed. An example of this is narrated in Sahih Bukhari by Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him). There were some individuals who were unable to participate in a battle and stayed behind in Madinah due to certain constraints. However, due to their sincerity, their correct intention, genuine yearning, and firm determination, Allah ﷻ granted them the same reward as those who actually fought in the battle.

61.6 Person Rewarded for Ikhlaas, Despite Mistakes

Ikhlaas (sincerity) earns one rewards, even for mistakes. When a scholar or jurist makes a mistake, but their intention is correct and sincere, Allah ﷻ still rewards them for their intention. SubhanAllah! This illustrates the immense wealth of ikhlaas. A person is safeguarded from immense trials due to acts performed with sincerity (ikhlaas). Allah ﷻ protected Prophet Yusuf (AS) from a great trial because of his sincerity. Ikhlaas has the power to magnify a small act, transform permissible acts into acts of worship, alleviate hardships, and shield one from trials. Numerous verses of the Quran and hadiths emphasize the significance of ikhlaas.

Our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) stated that when a person performs prostration with sincerity (ikhlaas) and then rises, their rank is elevated by one degree and one of their sins is forgiven. Through a single prostration performed with sincerity, Allah ﷻ raises their status, pardons their transgressions, and increases their reward. The Prophet (ﷺ) also mentioned that when a person wakes up during the night and engages in secluded prayer with faith and hopeful anticipation of Allah's mercy, all their sins are forgiven. In the darkness of the night, when unseen by others, they rise solely to please Allah ﷻ and seek His reward, and in return, their sins are completely expiated.

If a person accompanies the funeral procession of a Muslim, even if they have no familial or neighborhood ties with the deceased and no obligation to attend, but solely intend to please Allah ﷻ, pray the funeral prayer (janazah salah), and remain present until the burial, they will be rewarded with two qirat (a unit of measure) of reward. On the other hand, the one who departs before the burial will earn one qirat of reward. The magnitude of one qirat is greater than the weight of Mount Uhud, as mentioned in a hadith.

Ikhlaas makes the action heavy. A person may perform the same action, but if their intention is directed towards something other than Allah, they waste their efforts. O honorable ones! Ikhlaas (sincerity) is the essence and vitality of every action. Ikhlaas means doing things solely for the sake of Allah, and it can only enter the heart when one's desire for fame and wealth diminishes. As long as a person remains greedy for wealth and seeks fame, attaining ikhlaas becomes extremely challenging. These worldly desires corrupt and diminish the value of one's actions.

61.7 Always Check the Intention Before Action

Before engaging in any act, it is crucial to purify our intention and sincerely dedicate it solely to please Allah ﷻ. Likewise, upon completing the act, we should supplicate to Allah ﷻ, seeking His acceptance. An exemplary example of this can be seen in the actions of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail (AS) when they were building the Kaaba. Despite the magnitude and significance of their noble deed, they humbly beseeched Allah ﷻ to accept their efforts. They recognized that it is Allah ﷻ alone who hears their supplications and sees their intentions.

The soul of every action is sincerity (ikhlaas). At times, the action may be significant, such as building a mosque, a madrassah, a hospital, or feeding hundreds of thousands of people. However, if the intention behind these acts is incorrect, they all go to waste. Shaitan, first and foremost, prevents individuals from engaging in righteous actions. And if someone resolves to perform an action, Shaitan hinders them from doing so with sincere intention. Even if one manages to have a

correct intention, Shaitan tries to corrupt it before they reach their grave by introducing ostentation (riyaa). May Allah ﷻ grant us sincerity in every single action we undertake. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 24.02.2017.

62. Do Your Best and Yearn for What You Cannot

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The glory of believers lies in their commitment to excel in whatever they are capable of and their aspiration for the things they cannot accomplish. This can be compared to a person striving for wealth, putting in great effort to achieve what they can and desiring what remains beyond their reach. Both a disbeliever and a Muslim reside in this world, but their pursuits differ; the disbeliever focuses on worldly matters, while the Muslim directs their efforts towards the Hereafter. There was a righteous individual who, despite his old age, would recite the entire Quran in his voluntary prayers every single day. While we may not be able to achieve such a feat, we can still yearn and aspire to do so. In a hadith, it is narrated that a man had a wealthy neighbor who would generously spend his wealth in the way of Allah. Upon witnessing this, the man longed and wished that he too had the means to spend in the path of Allah. In the Hereafter, both the wealthy man and the yearning man were rewarded equally. The problem we face is that we often lack the longing for righteousness and good deeds.

When we possess the capability to perform certain actions, we should muster the courage to engage in them. If we can offer Sunnah prayers, engage in Tahajjud (night prayer), and prolong our voluntary prayers, then we should be resolute in performing them without negligence. Likewise, when we can reduce our sleep, we should strive to do so, and the same applies to speaking less and eating in moderation. There are individuals whose state of ablution (wudhu) frequently breaks, and if they are unable to perform additional voluntary prayers, they should at least have the yearning for it. Often, we refrain from performing righteous deeds or giving up sins because our nafs (ego) tells us that we are incapable, but this is the deception of our nafs and Satan.

Suppose there is a small boy, and his father asks him to lift 5 kg weight when he cannot. What would we think of that father? We would think it is very unjust of him to demand such a thing from a small child, and he is not in his right mind. Allah ﷻ has given each one of us the ability to abstain from committing every single sin, and that is why He ﷻ has forbidden us from carrying out such acts. Allah ﷻ, being the wisest, wouldn't demand something we cannot do. Just as a father wouldn't ask his child to do something beyond their capabilities, why would Allah ﷻ do so?

It is the law of Allah ﷻ that His help comes when we make efforts. Allah ﷻ knew in advance that the enemies in the Battle of Khandaq would be defeated by fierce cold winds that would uproot their tents. However, Prophet ﷺ and his companions did not simply sit calmly in the mosque

without taking any action. They tied stones to their stomachs, dug the trench with great effort, and then Allah ﷻ's help arrived. Prophet ﷺ personally dug the tunnel with his own hands, using an axe and carrying a stone on his stomach. If Yusuf AS had not made the effort to run to the door, even though it was locked, the doors would not have opened for him. It was through his actions that the doors were eventually opened.

There was a pious person who was imprisoned. Every Friday, he would perform ghusl (ritual purification), wear clean clothes, and then come to the door of the prison, praying, "Ya Allah! I have made all the efforts that I can, and now it is up to You to do as You wish." Although as a pious person, a miracle could have happened where the door would open for him without any effort, he was given an even greater miracle. This miracle was the constant effort he made every Friday to prepare himself for the Jumu'ah prayer, even though the doors were locked. It is indeed a great miracle to carry out any deed with such determination and courage.

Many of us have become weakened by our desires (nafs) and have been deceived into thinking that we are incapable of taking action. We often fail to make any effort or show courage, simply obeying the commands of our desires. For example, when our desires tell us to sleep for 8 hours, we end up sleeping for 9 hours. A wise person once narrated a story about a road flanked by trees. From a distance, it appeared to a man that the road was completely blocked by trees. Feeling hopeless, he did not take any steps towards that road and consequently never found the path. In contrast, another man displayed courage and took steps forward despite the initial appearance of obstruction. As he continued to advance, the path gradually opened up for him, revealing the way forward.

Losing courage before taking any action will deprive us of that opportunity. We should constantly make efforts and strive for righteousness to reap its rewards. If our wives or children do not offer Salah, we should not lose courage. Imagine a situation where a man discovers that his son is stealing money from his pocket every day and his wife is planning to harm him. Wouldn't he make any effort? Will he be unaffected after 21 days, not caring about what his son is doing, or will he worry that this has been happening every day? It is merely our ego (nafs) that deceives us, making us believe that we are incapable of taking any action.

We should constantly make efforts, and eventually things will change. Prophet Nuh (AS) serves as a remarkable example as he dedicated himself to calling people towards Islam for a staggering 950 years. We can imagine how a Prophet would approach his people with utmost care and affection, and despite facing numerous challenges, he never lost hope and continuously strived. It is astonishing to note that in the end, only around 80 people accepted his message. Whether it is the reform of ourselves or our families, we should never give up or lose hope.

We should strive to perform proper wudhu and pray with khushu, leaving the rest to Allah ﷻ. After exerting our best efforts, we should humbly say, 'Ya Allah! I have done what I could, and it is now in Your hands to accept it.' A person may struggle with refraining from backbiting due to that poor being afflicted with this harmful disease, but he should persevere and continue striving. Each time he succumbs to this sin, it is important for him to sincerely repent. By the grace of Allah, he will

eventually achieve success. This same principle applies to individuals dealing with other spiritual ailments.

Some people can pray with khushu without much distraction, while others, even after making significant effort, may still be subjected to wasawis. Every time they experience such wasawis, they ignore them, turn back to Allah ﷻ, and keep trying. Now, these individuals will receive more ajr (reward) than the former group. So, here are two tips to beautify your life: do your best in whatever you can without being heedless and yearning for what you cannot do. If we adhere to these two tips, not only will our own lives change, but thousands of people's lives could change through us. May Allah ﷻ help us all to act upon what we learn. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 10.02.2012.

63. What Should be Our Reaction to Natural Disasters?

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The news of tsunamis and other natural disasters reaches our ears, but it fails to reach our hearts. We provide various explanations for these disasters, such as climate change, wind patterns, and geological conditions, but we never reflect upon the reasons that our beloved Prophet ﷺ provided for such calamities. We overlook this crucial aspect and fail to contemplate upon it. When Allah ﷻ becomes displeased with the people of the Earth, everything, including the wind, sea, land, and everything else, turns against mankind. Today, mankind may boast about their power, technology, and achievements, but in a matter of minutes, Allah ﷻ can utterly destroy us. He can bring about profound upheaval in our lives, altering them completely and causing our faces to become unrecognizable, leaving us in a state of ruin, either buried in mud or consumed by fire. Allah ﷻ possesses immense power, and no one can withstand His ﷻ anger. Only if we ponder that this could happen to us and our society as well, and not just to the people of Japan or any other country. Our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) said that when the following becomes rampant in society, we should expect severe natural disasters one after the other, like beads falling from a chain that has been cut.

1. When people use the money entrusted to them as their own, today we see that people borrow money but lack the sense of repaying it. They find it difficult to return it as if they are giving it away for free, when in fact it is the other person who has the right to it.
2. The most morally corrupt individual in society will govern the people, and individuals will respect him not because of his high moral qualities, but solely to protect themselves from his malevolent actions. This phenomenon can be observed in every corner of the world. Our rulers are incredibly oppressive, spreading corruption and oppressing people, thereby exacerbating the deterioration of our planet.
3. People will pursue religious knowledge for worldly gains. They lack the fear of Allah ﷻ and fail to realize the true value of religious knowledge. They are willing to compromise

their faith for the sake of this fleeting world, similar to the nations of the past whom Allah ﷻ cursed for engaging in such actions.

4. Men will heed and obey their wives, disregarding the commands of their mothers, thereby disobeying them. This scenario is observed in almost every household. May Allah ﷻ forgive us and alter our circumstances. Ameen.
5. Friends will receive more attention and priority than fathers, leading to disobedience and violation of Allah ﷻ' s commandments.
6. Voices will be raised in the masjid (mosques), causing people to lose the sense of magnificence of Allah ﷻ in their hearts. As a result, they will lack the proper etiquettes and manners when being in the house of Allah ﷻ. In the early days of Islam, our devout predecessors would communicate important matters or convey messages in the masjid through subtle gestures, out of reverence for Allah ﷻ and His sacred dwelling. There was a Sahabi (RA) whose facial expression would change upon entering the masjid, and when asked about it, he replied, "I fear that I may unintentionally display inappropriate behavior in the house of Allah ﷻ." Today, people exhibit good behavior when entering others' houses, showing respect and courtesy. However, they often neglect to demonstrate the same level of care and reverence when entering the house of Allah ﷻ, despite the fact that His right is greater and He ﷻ deserves to be feared and respected the most. It is indeed a lamentable situation, highlighting the extent to which we have regressed in our behavior and attitude towards the divine.
7. Music will be heard in nearly every household. It is indeed true that we witness this phenomenon around us, even in the form of musical ringtones on mobile phones. Nowadays, music seems to pervade every space. Our pious predecessors expressed astonishment upon hearing this prediction from the Prophet ﷺ. When music finds its way into our homes, it provides a source of sustenance for the influence of evil spirits. This, in turn, reflects the state of our family life. The divorce rate has increased, and conflicts and disputes between spouses have become common, resulting in a loss of peace within such households.
8. In the early days, the recitation of the Quran could be heard in every household, inviting the presence of angels into their homes. This recitation served as their spiritual nourishment and sustenance, leading to blessings, peace, and love within their families. It was indeed a blessed state to have such a close connection with the Quran and the angelic presence it brought.
9. The consumption of alcohol will become prevalent, and it is evident that this state of affairs exists today as well.
10. The early Muslims, including the noble Companions (RA) and the beloved awliya (saints) of Allah ﷻ, will not be spared from the slanderous tongues of later Muslims who will disgrace them with their malicious words. It is truly a deplorable state when the love and respect for the Companions (RA) diminishes from our hearts, causing us to become distant from the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and the path of Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ protect us from such a state. Ameen.

Indeed, it is important to reflect upon these points and turn to Allah ﷻ in sincere repentance before any further calamity befalls us. May Allah ﷻ grant us the ability and guidance to change our state

and lead lives that are pleasing to Him ﷻ. Ameen. It is never too late to seek His forgiveness and strive towards righteousness. May Allah ﷻ shower His mercy upon us and bless us with a life of goodness and obedience to Him. Ameen

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

64. Worry about the Islaah of Children!

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

64.1 The Tarbiat of Muslim Children Differs from the Children of Kuffar

A Muslim has children, and a kafir also has children. A Muslim raises his children, and so does a kafir, but a kafir raises his children with a focus solely on this worldly life, whereas a Muslim considers both the hereafter and the worldly life. Hence, it is evident that there should be a difference in the upbringing of children between a Muslim and a kafir. When we plant mango trees in a farm far from their native place, we can still recognize them as mango trees. Similarly, when we plant Acacia trees, we can easily identify them by their thorns. However, if the leaves and thorns fall off from all the trees, including mango, orange, or any other tree, it becomes difficult to distinguish between them unless one closely examines them. Similarly, Muslim children should stand out and be distinct from non-Muslim children, just like the trees.

If Muslim children resemble non-Muslim children, then there may be an issue with the way they have been nurtured. Nevertheless, one can still identify a Muslim child from afar, whether they are returning from school or studying abroad in America, as they will exhibit distinct characteristics that set them apart from non-Muslims. There is undoubtedly a distinct difference, for a Muslim always keeps the hereafter (akhirah) in front of them. Unfortunately, in today's Muslim society, our focus is primarily on the worldly matters (dunya) that lie before us, rather than prioritizing the eternal realm of the hereafter.

64.2 Do Not Make the Children the Instruments of Dunya

Today's Muslim has turned his child into an instrument of worldly pursuits. In contrast, the pious predecessors considered children as a means of continuous charity (sadaqa-e-jariya) for the hereafter. However, modern-day Muslims are primarily focused on financial gains through their children. This is evident in their excessive spending on their child's education, even beyond their means. If they perceive their child to be lacking in academic achievements, they alternately provide instruction with affection or admonishment. Their aim is to boast among others about their child studying in a prestigious university, teaching at a certain institution, or holding a high-ranking position. He has completely forgotten how he will face the humiliation in Roza-e-Kawthar tomorrow when the Prophet ﷺ enquires about his children. Tomorrow, darkness will cover their faces out of shame. The upbringing of a non-believer is focused solely on acquiring a comfortable house, indulging in personal preferences, and satisfying worldly desires. They often raise their

children to prioritize worldly matters over spiritual ones. However, Muslims differ in this regard, as there will be a distinct contrast.

Today, can one truly identify Muslim children when they are coming out of educational institutes, working in offices, or involved in business dealings in markets? No, it is difficult to distinguish them. When we don't water the trees, neglect their needs, fail to protect them from pests, and don't provide manure, they will become dry. They will become so dry that they lose all their leaves and distinct features, making it impossible to identify them as acacia trees, mango trees, guava trees, or orange trees.

64.3 The Pious Muslim Predecessors were Never Proud of Worldly Possessions

Today, due to the lack of provision of eeman (faith), the Islamic characteristics have been eroded in Muslim children, making it difficult to identify if a child has truly been raised by Muslim parents or breast-fed by a Muslim mother. Today, just as a tree is not protected from pests affecting its very root, Muslim children were not protected and are affected by the sins of forbidden love, unlawful earnings, and improper provisions. It is only the unbeliever who solely focuses on how to earn, eat, and drink, finding pride in these matters. However, Muslims have never taken pride in such things, as they were never meant to be a source of boasting for them.

There were two brothers, Ahmad, and Muhammad. Once, Ahmad complained to his mother that his younger brother, Muhammad, doesn't stand behind him in prayer as the imam. The mother called Muhammad and instructed him to pray behind Ahmad. However, during the prayer, Muhammad discontinued his prayer midway. This left Ahmad feeling humiliated, and he expressed his disappointment to their mother, pointing out that Muhammad initially refused to pray behind him and now discontinued the prayer, which he considered worse. When the mother inquired about it, Muhammad explained that Ahmad's mind seemed to be elsewhere during the prayer, which made it difficult for him to pray behind him. The mother became extremely worried about the upbringing (tarbiat) of both her children because one's heart was distracted during salah (prayer), while the other's heart was preoccupied with his brother's actions. Neither of them was fully focused on their prayers. This incident reflected the mother's deep concern for her children's righteousness and spiritual development.

Today, we have adopted the standards of wealth accumulation, secular education, and obtaining visas to specific countries as benchmarks for pride. While it may be understandable for non-believers to take pride in these accomplishments, it is not acceptable for Muslims. The standard for Muslims is distinctly different, as their focus lies in matters of the hereafter (akhirah) rather than worldly achievements.

64.4 Luqman-e-Hakeem and the Tarbiat of His Son

Luqman-e-Hakeem made tarbiat of his children, and it was so liked by Allah ﷻ that He ﷻ preserved those words in His Kalam, the Quran, till qayamat, implying that this is how the tarbiat of Muslim children should be. What were those first words? Ya Bunayya! He didn't call him as a son but Ya Bunayya. This word, Ya Bunayya, is filled with so much love. 'Laa tushrik billaah,' 'Do not associate partners with Allah.' Just as a man of more ghayrah (sense of honor) cannot tolerate

associating partners with him in regard to his women, the ghayyoor Rabb cannot tolerate shirkat in His ibadah (worship) and His shifaat (unique characteristics of Allah ﷻ). Just as a man cannot tolerate his wife saying that she has another man as her friend other than him, even after she serves him day and night, Allah ﷻ too cannot tolerate His slaves when they say there is another ilaah (God) other than Him ﷻ, even if they do many good deeds. All their deeds will be destroyed, just like the wife's service to her husband is destroyed with her words and actions. If someone tells the husband all the good things about his wife, how she washes and irons his clothes, prepares food for him, and obeys him at his mere glance, the husband may still not tolerate her and accuse her of disloyalty. Similarly, a person may perform many good deeds, but if they commit shirk (associating partners with Allah), it will never be tolerable to the Ghayyoor Rabb. Allah ﷻ can forgive any sin, except shirk. So, here is a father doing tarbiat of his child, saying, 'O my dear son, do not join in worship others with Allah. Innash shirka lazulmun azeem, meaning, "Verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed".

64.5 Place the Azmat of Allah, the Exalted in the Child's Heart

A mushrik keeps shirk when he doesn't recognize Allah ﷻ. 'Wamaa qadrullaaha haqqa qadrihi' – 'They made not a just estimate of Allah such as is due to Him.' When a Muslim does tarbiat of children, he first implants the azmat (greatness) of Allah and His ﷻ tarruf (recognition) in their hearts, teaching them about Allah ﷻ, that He is Al-Mumin, As-Salam, the One who gives peace; He ﷻ is Al-Muhaimin, the Over-seeing protector; He ﷻ is Al-Maalik, the King; and He ﷻ is Ar-Razzaq, the One Who gives provision. Such tarruf (recognition) of Allah ﷻ is left in the hearts of children. The mothers used to do tarbiat of their children from a young age with the words, 'Hasbi Rabbi Jallallaah maafi qalbi ghairullaah, noor-e-Muhammad sallallaah, laa ilaaha illallaah.' The tarbiat continues by saying, 'Allah is enough for us.' When a child is brought up in such a manner, he will never fear anyone other than Allah ﷻ, he will never bow down before others other than Allah ﷻ, and he will never tolerate humiliation before others. 'Laa mabuda illaallaah. Laa mahmuda illaallaah.' There is none more worthy of worship other than Allah ﷻ. There is none more beloved other than Allah ﷻ. This was how Muslim mothers brought up their children. A mother's lap used to be the child's first educational institute. In fact, well before the child even falls on the lap, Muslim mothers used to worry a lot about their children's islaah (spiritual and moral upbringing).

There was a ruler named Muhammad in Afghanistan. When the child grew up as a young man, his father sent him to war. The father received news that his son had run away from the battle, fearing the enemies, which worried him deeply. When he shared this news with the mother, she firmly denied it. Later, the father received news that his son had fought the enemies bravely and now, upon informing this news to the mother, she believed it wholeheartedly. The father, astonished, asked her why she believed the second news so strongly while not the first one. The mother replied that when she was assured of her pregnancy by Allah ﷻ, she was so careful that not a single grain of haram food entered her mouth. And after the child was born, she never touched him or fed him unless she was in wudhu (ritual purification), and thus she had firm faith that he would have the quality of eeman (faith). Such was the upbringing of Muslim children.

Muslim parents never made their children instruments of dunya but as sadaqah-e-jaariya for their akhirah (hereafter). Such was the attitude of the parents; they never treated them as mere money-

earning machines. Here, a father is advising his son, 'laa tushrik billaah,' for a mushrik (one who associates partners with Allah) is never forgiven. Teach the child about Allah first. How fortunate are those children whose first word is Allah, and whose last word, upon leaving this dunya (world), is Allah! And how fortunate are those parents! It is foolish to plant an acacia tree and expect it to give mangoes; you will only get thorns and not sweet mangoes. When the tarbiat (upbringing) is like a disbeliever's tarbiat, how can one expect that the child will have love and reverence for their parents?

64.6 Allot Time for the Tarbiat of Children and Safeguard Their Islamic Qualities

If only parents would have the fikr (care and concern) of tarbiat for their children today! Many parents don't even have time for their children. Just like a tree gets dried if not taken care of, even the tree of eeman (faith) gets dry when not nurtured. Do people care about what their young daughters and sons are doing? Do they ever consider if the azmat (greatness) of Allah ﷻ is in their hearts, and the importance of salah (prayer) and following sunnah (the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad) are in their hearts? It is possible that the tree of eeman has been completely destroyed within their hearts. Just because a child has Muslim parents, it is not necessary that the child would be a Muslim. One should continuously check for the freshness of eeman in the heart of a child, as well as the type of environment they stay in and the kind of life they are leading. Children are the greatest blessings, and even the Prophets (Peace be upon them) used to pray for children, but they specifically asked for righteous children.

If only parents would have the fikr (care and concern) of tarbiat for their children today! Many parents don't even have time for their children. Just like a tree gets dried if not taken care of, even the tree of eeman (faith) gets dry when not nurtured. Do people care about what their young daughters and sons are doing? Do they ever consider if the azmat (greatness) of Allah ﷻ is in their hearts, and the importance of salah (prayer) and following sunnah (the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad) are in their hearts? It is possible that the tree of eeman has been completely destroyed within their hearts. Just because a child has Muslim parents, it is not necessary that the child would be a Muslim. One should continuously check for the freshness of eeman in the heart of a child, as well as the type of environment they stay in and the kind of life they are leading. Children are the greatest blessings, and even the Prophets (Peace be upon them) used to pray for children, but they specifically asked for righteous children.

Ya bunayya, innaha in taku mithqaala habbatin min khardalin fatakun fee sakhratin aw fis-samaawaati aw fil ardi, yati bihaa Allahu, innallaaha lateefun khabeer." "O my dear son! If it be anything equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Verily, Allah is Subtle (in bringing out that grain), Well-Aware (of its place)." The father said, "O my son, lead a life of cautiousness. Even if a sin was committed by you to the size of a mustard seed or committed when alone, in solitude, or in darkness, deep in the bottom of the sea, behind the mountain, or a tree in a jungle, know that even these sins will become manifest before your eyes tomorrow." This father is instilling the azmat (greatness) of Allah ﷻ in the heart of his child and reminding him that Allah ﷻ is always with him. "Maa yakoonu min najwaa thalaathatin illaa huwa raabiAAuhum, walaa khamsatin illaa huwa saadisuhum, walaa adna min dhaalika walaa akthara illaa huwa maAAahum ayna maa kaanoo."

"There is no Najwa (secret counsel) of three but He is their fourth nor of five but He is their sixth nor of less than that or more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be. Allah ﷻ has put screen on our sins and evils.

Our inner is so terrible but He ﷻ has screened it with beautiful outer appearance. Glory to Allah! But never commit sins with over-confidence on this quality of Allah ﷻ and never be too deceived for if Allah ﷻ lifts this screen, you will become a scene for this whole world. All the screens of nobility will vanish in few minutes and the reality will become apparent. The tarbiat of Muslims used to reflect and show its effect even in the shepherds in the jungle. When a Sahabi (may Allah be pleased with him) wanted to test a shepherd in the jungle, he asked the shepherd if he could give him a sheep. The shepherd replied that he cannot give the sheep, for it belongs to his master. The Sahabi (may Allah be pleased with him) then suggested that he could give him money for the sheep so he could slaughter and eat it, and the master is not here to watch him. The shepherd responded that his master might not be here to watch him, but the master of Dunya, Allah ﷻ, is watching him. We should place this azmat (greatness) of Allah ﷻ in the hearts of our children, teaching them that Allah ﷻ is watching them all the time.

As Muslims, they used to worry about their children's tarbiat and would allot time for them, taking them to good religious educational institutes. Even today, people enroll their children in educational institutes, but often with the sole purpose of making them money-earning machines and instruments of dunya (worldly pursuits). They don't even care if the child earns money in a haram (forbidden) way or a halal (permissible) way. The sole objective is for the child to earn money, even if it is through haram means. Children are thrown into such institutes where they learn merely to earn and make money.

64.7 The Powerful Verse of Allah, the Exalted

And those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as cattle eat." (Quran 47:12). The preoccupation with only eating, drinking, and material pursuits is the way of the disbelievers. In contrast, Muslims used to base their lives on the belief that "Innallaaha huwa Ar-Razzaaq dhul quwwatil mateen" - "For Allah is He Who gives (all) sustenance - Lord of Power, Steadfast (forever)." This verse is profoundly powerful. The worry about livelihood often leads even religious people to compromise their righteousness in the pursuit of wealth and success in the markets. How many parents distance their children from Allah ﷻ due to their preoccupation with livelihood! Allah ﷻ is emphasizing with these strong words, "Innallaaha huwa Ar-Razzaaq dhul quwwatil mateen." Even the term "Raaziq" (Provider) alone would suffice to convey the message, but Allah ﷻ uses 'huwa' to make it even more emphatic. Furthermore, the addition of the Alif-laam at the beginning of "Razzaaq" further strengthens its significance.

Allah ﷻ didn't stop here but continued with even stronger words - 'Zul Quwwa' - and made it even more forceful with 'Al-Mateen.' Allahu Akbar! The strength of this Arabic verse cannot be fully conveyed in another language. Allah ﷻ knows well the nature of the nafs (self) and how livelihood can become a fitna (trial) for individuals. That is why He ﷻ advises with such strong words here. If Allah ﷻ can provide for cats and dogs, surely, He ﷻ can provide for His ﷻ slaves. I swear by Allah ﷻ that even if only one morsel of food is written for me by Allah ﷻ, even if the entire world

gathers to snatch it away, none can take it. Conversely, if the whole world decides to offer me a morsel of food that my Maula (Master) didn't write for me, then none can feed me that morsel. This is clearly destined.

Allahumma innee as'aluka eemaan yubaashiru qalbee wa yaqeenan saadiqan hattaa a'alama annahoo yuseebunee illaa maa katabta lee wariDham minal ma'EEshati bimaa qasamtalee." "O Allah! I ask You for eemaan (faith) that is firmly attached to my heart and true conviction, until I realize that nothing can afflict me except what You have written for me. And (I ask You) contentment with that which You have apportioned to me of livelihood." He ﷻ is Hakeem (the Wise), Raheem (the Merciful), and Rahman (the Most Compassionate), and I can't have better livelihood than what He ﷻ has written for me.

64.8 The Worry of Livelihood and Its Fitna

Today, parents are driving their children into environments solely for livelihood, where their eeman (faith), salaah (prayers), hayaa (modesty), and akhlaaq (morals) are not safe. They are exposing their children to a livelihood that devours their Islamic qualities and eeman, turning them into mere money-earning machines. The relentless worry about livelihood can lead to the destruction of eeman. Allaahu yabsutur rizqa liman yashaa wayaqdiru - "Allah doth enlarge, or grant by (strict) measure, the sustenance (which He giveth) to whomsoever He pleaseth." "Walillaahi khazaainus samaawaati walarDi" - "But to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth." Allah ﷻ has placed the treasures of rizq (provision) solely in His hands. "Wafis-samaai rizqukum wamaa tooAAadoona" - "And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which ye are promised." The decision regarding your provision is made in the heavens.

Today, the kuffar (disbelievers) are targeting the new generation of Muslims with the trap of livelihood. They entice our children to their places, promising to solve their livelihood problems. They seek our children's assistance, as they lack their own youngsters and are predominantly comprised of older individuals. They aim to integrate our children into their machines, making them cogs in the wheels of the kuffaar. Consequently, the Muslims begin to live and die like them, succumbing to their values and lifestyles. They cleverly set up the education system to mold us to fit into their machines and disguise it as a solution to our livelihood problems. However, Allah ﷻ has provided the precise solution for this issue, stating, "Innallaaha huwa Ar-Razzaaq dhul quwwatil mateen" - "For Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance - Lord of Power, Steadfast (forever).

64.9 Nurture Children to Establish Regular Prayers

The tarbiat (upbringing) of children is one of the greatest sadaqa-e-jaariya (continuous charity). 'Ya bunayya aqimi alssalata' - 'O my son! establish regular prayer.' Instruct your children to offer salah and lead by example by joining them in prayer. Our words and advice will have a more significant impact when we ourselves lead a beautiful life. If you wish for your children to become sadaqa-e-jaariya for you, then become a sadaqa-e-jaariya for your parents. The father, like Luqman-e-Hakeem, is saying, 'Ya bunayya aqimis salaah' - 'Establish salah.' It is not only necessary to offer salah but to establish it, ensuring it becomes a consistent and integral part of our

lives. Fawaylun lilmusalleen. Alladheena hum an salaatihim saa'hoon" - "So woe to those worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers." If there is destruction for those who offer salah improperly, we can only imagine what will happen to those who do not offer salah at all. Sadly, there is a lack of proper establishment of salah among many. People sometimes offer salah, and other times they neglect it. They may pray in congregation occasionally, but not consistently. Some may offer three times a day, while others leave out Fajr. Such inconsistency raises questions about the true commitment to Islam. Scholars have defined establishing salah as creating an environment in such a way that when the time for salah arrives, even those who do not regularly pray are motivated to join and offer their prayers.

Luqman (may peace be upon him) then advised his son to forbid evil and become an ambassador of good, demonstrating great courage. 'Ya bunayya aqimi alssalata wamur bialmaAAroofi wainha AAani almunkari wasbir AAala ma asabaka inna thalika min AAazmi alomoori' - 'O my son! establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong: and bear with patient constancy whatever betide thee; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs.' Indeed, becoming a daa'ee (caller) of deen (religion), a safeer (ambassador) of deen, and a khaadim (servant) of deen, especially in an environment where evil is considered good, where those who are meant to preach righteousness may prove to be fraudulent, and where extreme and obscure thoughts prevail, requires tremendous courage. Furthermore, one may face taunts and criticism from people.

64.10 Cultivate Virtuous Character and Morals in Children

In this lesson, the father teaches his son to act courageously, becoming a deterrent to evil and a beacon of righteousness, leading a life guided by these principles. He imparts education (taleem) and teaches good manners (akhlaaq) to his son. 'Wala tusaAir khaddaka lilnnasi wala tamshi fee alardi marahan inna Allaha la yuhibbu kulla mukhtalin fakhoorin' - 'And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster.' The father advises his son not to scold others or act arrogantly, as Allah ﷻ values humbleness. He emphasizes staying within one's limits, treating all humans with respect, and remembering that everyone came into this world naked, and it is Allah's ﷻ generosity that grants more or less to different individuals. There should be no display of pride through actions or words.

Takabbur (pride) is a great misfortune. Shaitaan himself did much sujud (prostrations), but his pride made him cursed. He fell from Allah's sight, and Allah's curse fell upon him. Takabbur can arise due to wealth, beauty, or even when one lacks proper tarbiat (upbringing); it can manifest from performing many tasbiyaat (remembrance) and nafil (optional) acts. It is essential not to belittle anyone for their sins, as belittling others is a worse sin than the one they might have committed. Instead, show mercy and compassion to the sinner, gently guide them with love, and avoid looking down upon them. 'Waiqsid fee mashyika waoghdud min sawtika inna ankara alaswati lasawtu alhameeri' - 'And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the asses.' As a human being, avoid acting like a donkey by being humble and considerate in your demeanor.

64.11 Cherish Children as Divine Blessings

These methodologies of tarbiat for children are truly invaluable. Only a father who seeks to make his children a means of capital for the akhirah (hereafter) can impart such profound guidance. If there were any father who could teach better than Luqman-e-Hakeem, Allah ﷻ would surely have mentioned his name in His kalaam (speech). No father can offer more enlightening thoughts than this father did to his son. It is indeed a great favor of a father towards his child, encompassing great foresight and wisdom. Such was the manner of tarbiat among Muslims. On the other hand, the tarbiat of the kuffar (non-believers) is entirely different, as their knowledge is adulterated and focused solely on this dunya (worldly life). In contrast, the knowledge of a Muslim is complete, encompassing both dunya and akhirat, and his tarbiat is also kaamil (complete) as it encompasses both worlds. When a Muslim grows with such a tarbiat, he becomes a complete individual. Therefore, it is crucial to consider our children as blessings from Allah ﷻ.

For the sake of Allah, guide this new generation towards Allah (ﷻ) and strengthen their eemaan. Otherwise, if the tree of eeman dries up, nothing will remain. Regrettably, the recognition of Muslim children has declined to a point where they cannot be distinguished among others. Whether at airports or among their peers, when the time for salah comes, no one stands up to pray, and it becomes challenging to identify them as Muslims. The responsibility for this lies with parents. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ taught that when the son of Adam dies, all deeds come to an end except for three, and one of them is righteous children. As long as a righteous child lives and the effects of proper tarbiat are seen in their actions, their good deeds will benefit their parents. May Allah ﷻ protect us from a situation where the improper tarbiat of a child leads to the effects of their sins reaching the parents. Therefore, for the sake of Allah, do not put your children in danger for the temporary gains of this dunya (worldly life), and do not ruin the blessings of having such children. May Allah ﷻ help us all to act upon what we have learned. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

65. Be Grateful to Allah, the Exalted and Earn His Love

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

A Muslim wakes up in the morning, just as a Hindu or a Christian does, arising from sleep. However, the morning of a Muslim is distinct from that of a Hindu, Christian, or Jew. The dawn of a Muslim begins with following the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He recites the Kalimah (declaration of faith) as taught by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He offers Salah (prayer) and performs Hajj according to the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ). Upon waking up, he says "Alhamdulillahiladhee ahyana ba'da maa amaatana wa ilaihin nushoor" (All praise is due to Allah, who gave us life after causing us to die, and to Him is the resurrection). He then attends to his needs, performs Wudhu (ablution), and if he wakes up before Subah Saadiq (dawn), he

performs Tahajjud (night prayer), or if he wakes up after Subah Saadiq, he performs Fajr (morning prayer).

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) supplicated to Allah (ﷻ) to bestow blessings in the morning for his ummah. He instructed us to recite Bismillah (In the name of Allah) before beginning any task, whether it is related to religious matters or worldly affairs, as an act started without saying Bismillah is considered incomplete. It is common to observe that when visiting some elderly women, they warmly welcome us by saying, "Welcome, Bismillah." In fact, the work will not only be incomplete, but some work won't be right without reciting Bismillah. For example, if we slaughter a sheep without reciting Bismillah, it would be haram to eat, and it is as haram as consuming alcohol or eating a dog or a cat. Such is the importance of saying Bismillah.

There is a powerful lesson in saying Bismillah while slaughtering the animal. The animals we slaughter, whether it's a cow, sheep, or chicken, have life just like we do. If someone were to slaughter us for their enjoyment, it would be a great injustice (zulm). Every living being, whether an animal or a human, desires to live and avoid suffering. Just as you wouldn't want anyone to harm you with a knife, every living being shares the same instinct of self-preservation. But when you recite 'Bismillahi Allahu Akbar' while slaughtering any living being, disliked by any living being being slaughtered, you are, in fact, proclaiming one reality: 'I am the creation of Allah ﷻ, and so is this animal. Allah ﷻ is the creator of all, and He ﷻ has the sole right to decide who becomes beneficial for whom. It is Allah ﷻ who created this animal for my benefit, and it is by His command alone that I am benefiting from this animal.

We have the right to derive enjoyment from animals, and Allah ﷻ has permitted it. However, He ﷻ created us primarily for His worship. Therefore, we proclaim that we only have the right to take benefit from Allah ﷻ's creations when we worship Him. Otherwise, we do not have any right to seek pleasure or benefit from His creations. Our purpose is to worship Allah ﷻ while taking benefits from these animals.

“And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).”
(Quran 51:56)

The animals are ready to die in obeying the command of Allah ﷻ for the benefit of men for whom they were created. But it is just us who are not ready to worship Allah for which we are created. We can cut the throat properly, making the blood flow, and even the lab tests can confirm this. However, despite all this, if we do not proclaim the reality, "Bismillahi Allahu Akbar," this won't be halal for us; it will remain impure. Such is the importance of Bismillah in some instances.

We perform wudhu by saying "Bismillah," and without saying it, if we wash our hands, face, etc., with water, we might get clean but not pure. It is only in Islam that we have both cleanliness and purity. We can observe cleanliness in other people, but purity is unique to the people of Islam.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said that any work commenced without saying 'Bismillah' will be imperfect and remain adulterated. Our intelligence might not reach the understanding of the Prophet's ﷺ words, for his ﷺ words go beyond our intelligence and commence from there. So we should never judge his words with our intelligence. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ also said that when one does wudhu

saying 'Bismillah' and washes their hands, then the sins committed by their hands are washed away, and the same happens with the face, ears, foot, and so on. Finally, when they finish their wudhu, they are cleansed of all minor sins, and their heart is filled with noor (light) and full of blessings.

A pig can be brought up in a clean environment and fed with clean things, but it will remain impure for us as Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ said that it is impure. Alcohol can be tested in a laboratory and graded to be pure, made from high-grade ingredients, but it will remain impure for us, and it is as impure to us as urine or stool. When we recite Bismillah while drinking water, we acknowledge the fact that it is only by Allah's ﷻ grace and favor that we have the glass of water in our hand.

All living beings are dependent on water, and that is why Allah ﷻ made two-thirds of this world into water and one-third as land where we live. There are so many living beings right inside the sea that live and even die there, but Allah ﷻ has so organized it that He ﷻ made the sea water very salty to prevent it from turning bad and giving off a foul odor. He ﷻ didn't ask us to turn the salty water into drinking water by ourselves, and if we were left like that, it would have cost us millions. But He ﷻ so arranged it that the sea water evaporates, leaving the saltiness behind, and reaches the clouds, raining the water down and benefiting even the poor. He ﷻ didn't ask us again to move the clouds, and He ﷻ does a free cargo service, moving the clouds and showering the rain. He ﷻ didn't ask us to build tanks to save the rainwater; instead, He ﷻ arranged it so that the rain is reserved in the mountains in the form of ice. It doesn't melt altogether, but in accordance with the sunlight falling on it, it forms rivers and streams that flow to different regions. He ﷻ organized the earth in such a way that we can dig paths for the flow of water to any region we wish.

Right inside our bodies, Allah ﷻ has placed very valuable organs. For example, the kidney is an amazing organ that filters and separates the water needed for our body while expelling the rest. In these modern times, even with advanced technology, it is impossible to replicate an organ like the kidney. Even if one could create a minute filter like the one in the kidney, it would cost millions of dollars. But who can replicate the incredible sense that Allah ﷻ has placed in the kidney, allowing it to determine how much water the body needs and how much to expel? What a great blessing indeed!

Just think, if we acknowledge the bounties of Allah every time we use them by reciting the relevant duas taught to us by the Prophet ﷺ, how much we will love Allah ﷻ! Surely, we will love Him ﷻ, and obedience to Him ﷻ will become very easy. When someone continuously does a favor for us, won't we love him?

There was Behlul Raheemaullah, a pious slave of Allah ﷻ, and Harun, who was also a righteous slave of Allah ﷻ. Harun was even granted a kingdom, and despite having wealth, he made a regular schedule of spending some time with pious slaves every day, loved them, and because of this blessing, he remained righteous. In earlier times, even the weak Muslims used to have more respect for pious slaves, loved them, and sat in their majlis, which brought blessings from Allah ﷻ upon them as well. Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said that a person will be raised with those whom he loves. The most unfortunate thing of today's time is that the shaitan has influenced us in such a way that the mistakes of others go unnoticed in our eyes, but even a minor error of pious individuals is highly magnified in our sight. We tend to filter their actions with an ultra-critical lens, forgetting

that they are just human beings and not angels descended from heaven. This is all because the shaitan wants to deprive us of their righteous companionship and guidance.

Now, as Harun was sitting with Behlul and he was about to drink a glass of water, Behlul asked Harun to answer him one thing before drinking. When Harun inquired about the question, Behlul said, "If you find yourself in a situation where the sun is scorching, the earth is unbearably hot, and you are extremely thirsty, and you see a man selling a glass of water asking people to set a price for it, how much would you be willing to pay?" Harun pondered for a moment and replied, "Behlul, even if I have to offer half of my kingdom as the price, I would gladly do so, for what is the use of wealth, power, and position without life?" Harun then drank the water, and Behlul asked him another question, "Imagine the water you drink doesn't come out of your body, and there is a doctor who can save you from this problem. How much would you give him?" We know how restless we would become if urine stays inside our body. Harun thought for a moment and replied, "If I have to give away my entire kingdom, I will do so, for life is indeed more precious." Behlul then responded, "The entire kingdom goes for just one blessing of Allah ﷻ, a glass of water.

Have we ever said Bismillah from the heart when we drank water, considering how many drinks Allah ﷻ provides us every day? Our beloved Prophet ﷺ taught us beautiful duas to recite after using every blessing of Allah ﷻ, so we may gain His ﷻ love and come closer to Him. Just think, if you keep thinking of a person who does you some favor often, won't your heart get inclined towards him? It is the nature of man to incline towards one who shows kindness to him. When we sincerely thank Allah ﷻ from our hearts after using every bounty, we will definitely love Him more. This is a simple deed, but it will help us earn His ﷻ love.

Today, the disease of ingratitude has spread in our society, and as a result, Allah ﷻ has deprived us of the blessings of His bounties. What's even worse is that the doors of these bounties are also closed. If we desire more blessings and wish for the doors of bounties to be opened for us, then we must learn to be grateful to Allah ﷻ. Let us express our thanks to Allah ﷻ for keeping us in better conditions than thousands and lakhs of other people. When we witness people lying on the platform, let us express gratitude to Allah ﷻ for blessing us with a home. When we see a woman knocking on car doors for charity, let us thank Allah ﷻ for providing us with abundant food and sustenance, ensuring the dignity of our women and children. When we witness people suffering in hospitals, let us be grateful to Allah ﷻ for granting us good health.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ has advised us to look at those who are less fortunate than us in terms of wealth or worldly possessions, and in doing so, we will find the inspiration to thank Allah ﷻ for His countless blessings upon us. It is indeed unfortunate that today, many of us only harbor complaints against both the creation and the Creator, without realizing the abundance of blessings bestowed upon us. We look at those who have more wealth, family, and higher positions than us and become worried. Our worries become so overwhelming that we even lose the enjoyment of the blessings we currently possess. Shukr (showing gratitude) is such a great blessing that it not only preserves the blessings we have but also attracts more bounties that we may not currently possess and brings them into our lives. Even in times of difficulty, let us remember the thousands of bounties bestowed upon us by Allah ﷻ that we continue to enjoy.

Muawiyya (may Allah be pleased with him) was suffering from a severe fever that made the water feel hot when he put his hand in it, yet his tongue was still praising Allah by saying Alhamdulillah. When asked about it, he responded that Allah ﷻ had kept all his other limbs healthy, and he was grateful for that. Once, a pious man's house was robbed, and when asked about it, he said Alhamdulillah, as Allah ﷻ had protected his eeman (faith) and honor, and only the wealth was stolen. If one is granted the blessing of being in the company of pious people and having a heart attached to the masjid, they can never express enough gratitude for this blessing, even if they remain in prostration as a sign of gratitude. Today, when people are distressed and facing difficulties everywhere, those who have a pious connection with their hearts attached to the masjid remain content and much more peaceful compared to others.

Wudhu is the weapon of the believer, for it cleanses him from the outside and purifies him from the inside, absolving him of his sins and keeping him protected from the shayateen (devils). In earlier days, people used to pray even tahajjud (night prayer) in the masjid, and on their way to Masjid al-Nabawi, they would hear women reciting the Quran from every house in the early hours, and the recitation would sound like the buzzing of bees. As a result, their lives were filled with blessings, their time was blessed, their health was blessed, their families were blessed, their children were blessed, their markets were blessed, and their entire environment was blessed. This used to be the face of the Muslims, the ascent of Muslims, and the happiness of Muslims.

Today, adversities descend upon the houses where Muslims sleep without offering Fajr salah, and as a result, they are deprived of all blessings. The Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) used to say that no one, other than a kafir who openly proclaimed his kufr (disbelief), even thought of abandoning salah. Muslims used to attend the Fajr salah in the masjid as if they were gathering for Eid, but now we gather more for Eid salah, a wajib salah (obligatory prayer), and abandon the Fajr salah, which is farz (compulsory). Muslims used to give more importance to farz than wajib, but here things have turned upside down.

When the Prophet ﷺ returned from Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj (Night Journey and Ascension), he asked Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him), "O Bilal! Tell me about the best deed you did after embracing Islam, for I heard your footsteps in front of me in Paradise." Bilal replied, "I did not do anything worth mentioning except that whenever I performed ablution during the day or night, I prayed after that ablution, Tahiyatul Wudhu." The Prophet ﷺ then said, "This was the act that Allah ﷻ loved the most in you, and because of this, I heard your footsteps in Jannah."

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said that Fajr prayer may be difficult for a hypocrite (munafiq), but it cannot be difficult for a Muslim. How blessed is Fajr that Allah ﷻ says, "Recite the Quran in the early dawn. Verily, the recitation of the Quran in the early dawn is ever witnessed." (Quran-17:78). Scholars explain that the term "recitation of the Quran" is used here because during Fajr salah, Muslims hear more Quran being recited, and they also read more Quran themselves. This act of recitation and prayer during Fajr will be witnessed by the angels who are in charge of recording the deeds of human beings. There are two groups of angels appointed to record our deeds. The group of angels staying during the night will leave us during Fajr, and how blessed it is that the last thing they record is that we are in worship during Fajr Salah. The group of angels for the day

come to us during Fajr, and the first thing they will record is that we are in worship when we pray Fajr.

As mentioned before, a Muslim's morning is different from a kafir's morning. However, unfortunately today, a Muslim's house cannot be distinguished from a kafir's house, as neither the kafir nor the Muslim prays Fajr. There is no remembrance of Allah in the house of a kafir, and the same has become true for the house of a Muslim. Music is heard in the kafir's house, and it is also being heard in a Muslim's house.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allah ﷻ to put blessings in the mornings of his ummah, and the earlier Muslims received the blessings of the Prophet's dua by commencing the morning with wudhu and salah. They would wake up in fact before dawn and pray tahajjud. They considered wudhu as such a great blessing that they thanked Allah ﷻ for it by offering two rakats of tahiyyatul wudhu, or they would enter the masjid and pray tahiyyatul wudhu and tahiyyatul masjid together. May Allah ﷻ grant us all such a blessed life and help us to act on what we have learned. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)

66. The Four Compulsory Acts in Islam

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

When there is mischief in a place and innocent people are killed mercilessly, and there is a clear violation of law and order, and the police officers who have all the power to control the situation and stop the evils remain silent, won't they share the crime equally? Yes, and so is the case with Muslims who are given the authority of police, and they do not stop the evils around them even though they have the power to do so. They will equally share the wrongdoing. That is why in a hadith, it is said that when people don't forbid evil around them, when the punishment descends, it will descend on them too because they were indifferent with a "don't care" attitude.

The four things in Islam that are incumbent on Muslims to act upon and will bring the pleasure of Allah ﷻ are:

1. Acting on what Allah ﷻ commanded to do.
2. Abstaining from committing sins
3. Enjoining good
4. Forbidding evil

Each one of us should reflect on our actions and assess where we may fall short in the four acts mentioned above. It is essential to take steps to correct ourselves and improve in these areas. For some individuals, performing acts of worship (ibadah) like praying and fasting may come naturally, but giving up sins can be challenging. As we deepen our connection with our faith, we may engage in acts of worship, but struggle to let go of certain sins. Overcoming long-standing

sins can be difficult, and it varies from person to person and their circumstances. In such cases, a person could start by giving up one sin a day until gradually they can let go of all the sins they were struggling with.

When it comes to forbidding evils, we should again understand that the state of each person is entirely different, and so is the family. Not everyone can be approached with the same tactics. One should hate the sins but should not humiliate the person for the sin, as the consequences can be so severe that the person humiliating the fellow Muslim might end up doing the same sin before tasting death. Therefore, one should seek the help of scholars (shuyook) about dealing with the situation. Never show anger for your own sake; often, we become angry for personal reasons but attribute it to our faith. We should not get angry over trivial matters, such as improperly cooked food. Instead, when enjoining good and forbidding evil, we should embrace wisdom and tactfulness.

There are two main things where even the practicing people fail miserably. They might even be a haji, but when it comes to akhlaaq (conduct) and muamalaat (transaction, interaction and dealing with people), they fail terribly. In fact, if one works on just these two things, they will be bringing people to deen. Praying, fasting, and doing hajj are individual things, while these two things are collective. So, when one works on this, the barakah (blessing) too will be collective.

Many are quite negligent and heedless of sins and their effects. If one sees his wealth decreasing and he is aware of theft, he will take necessary steps to protect his wealth. Similarly, when one knows that his wealth is deprived of blessing and decreasing because of sins, he will take steps to correct it. The problem is people are neither aware of sins nor aware of their evil consequences.

Two things can never be seen in a sinner. 1) He will never have blessings in his health, wealth, or time, and 2) He will never have peace in his heart. There will be loneliness and grief in his heart. Allah ﷻ might give him abundance, but He ﷻ will deprive him of barakah. He ﷻ will give all the means of comfort, but He ﷻ won't give him peace and comfort.

We are fortunate to live in an environment where it is easy to give up sins, but do not know why we are not doing so. Do not lie, for there is no need to lie. Stay away from places where backbiting is going on, so you could not hear it, and protect your eyes from seeing haram things. As far as halal earning is concerned, most people's earnings are halal. Protect the tongue, eyes, and ears from sins, and you will be saved. A heart will be cheerful and lively when the soul gets its food, which is taqwa (piety). When we do not have taqwa and commit sins, our heart will be filled with grief, and there will be only loneliness, and this is what people call depression.

There is something called a water-proof watch wherein water will not enter even when thrown in water, and so will be the heart of a pious person, grief-proof. He might be surrounded by trials, tribulations, and worries, but they will not enter his heart, for his heart will be grief-proof. He might not have a good house or enough money, but his heart will be very cheerful and lively.

Someone asked Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), "How was Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)?" He (may Allah be pleased with him) said that his father used to be like a bird, frightened and alert of traps spread for it everywhere. In every step, we have the trap set to

waste our good deeds and to fall into sins and disobedience, and so we should live very cautiously, fearing sins, and inshaAllah, we will be helped by Allah ﷻ. Sins are like poison. Just as poison kills the body, sins kill the heart.

One major sin can bring us down from Jannah to deep down in Hell. Every morning, during the time of Ishraq, we should seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ for the sins we committed in the previous night, and we should seek forgiveness for the sins we committed during the day before we go to bed. We should ask the Creator to forgive us for disobeying Him ﷻ and to forgive us if we cause any harm to His ﷻ creations, and to recompense them on our behalf. When we embrace taqwa, then Allah ﷻ will open ways for us in an unknown manner.

"And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty)." (Quran 65:2)

When Allah ﷻ says something, He will definitely do it, for He has power over every single thing. If we face difficulty in business, He ﷻ might inspire His creations to rush to our shop, or He might inspire us with some new business and marketing tips, and so on. Let Allah ﷻ help us all to stay away from sins and to lead a life of taqwa. Ameen.

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
Morning Tarbiati Majlis dated 2.12.2011.

67. Seize Ramadan's Abundant Blessings by Advanced Preparation

Bismillaahir Rah'maanir Rah'eem. All praise to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our beloved unlettered Prophet, his family, and his noble companions. I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Shaytan, and I begin in the name of Allah, the Mosta Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

67.1 Allah, The Exalted is the Dominant

My respected elders, Muslim brothers, honorable mothers, and sisters, the creator of this whole universe is the one and only Allah. All the power, rule, and governance belong to Allah ﷻ alone. Whatever the course of my life may be, whether it involves honor, disgrace, health, sickness, success, or failure, it is all in accordance with His ﷻ decision and wish. I can make as many plans as I want, but if Allah ﷻ, the Noblest, does not will it, they will remain futile. On the other hand, if Allah ﷻ decides to grant success, even the smallest plan can yield benefits for generations to come.

In the matter of one's honor, if Allah decides to disgrace someone, no one can honor them. If the mercy of the generous Allah turns away from a plan of safety and honor, then no one else can grant the same. Even if all the doors of ways and means seem closed, if Allah, the Merciful, decides to open His door of Mercy, no one can close it. Conversely, if He decides to close that door, no one can open it. Only Allah's decision prevails. When He decrees something, the whole world cannot

withhold it. If He decides to grant something, none can stop it, and if He closes the door, then none can open it.

Whatever of mercy (i.e. of good), Allah may grant to mankind, none can withhold it, and whatever He may withhold, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. Al-Quran: 35:2

If He ﷻ decides to honor someone, none can humiliate him, and if His ﷻ command decrees one's disgrace, then none can honor him. He ﷻ is Al-Qahhar, the only Dominant. The kingdom of heavens and earth solely belongs to Him ﷻ alone. If He ﷻ decides to expand one's provision, none can constrict it, and if He ﷻ decides to constrict it, then none can expand it.

He is Ar-Razzaq, and all decisions regarding your provision are made by Him. He is Al-Mateen, so strong and powerful that if He decides to grant one food, even if the whole world gathers, they cannot reduce the food even by one morsel. This whole universe is governed as directed by Al-Khaliq, the Creator, and Al-Malik, the King. Nothing happens here by coincidence, such as getting honor or the shutting up of the door of provision. His ﷻ is a firm and established rule, in which even the tiniest portion of this earth cannot move away from its position on its own will, a leaf cannot fall from the tree on its own will, and a drop of water in the oceans cannot move away on its own will.

A raindrop falls on the earth with His ﷻ permission, and it benefits the earth with His ﷻ permission. The seed bursts out in the earth with His ﷻ permission, and the taste it brings is also with His ﷻ permission. It is by His ﷻ decision that fruits get colors and taste. Nothing here happens on its own all of a sudden or by coincidence. The entire system goes by His ﷻ command. His ﷻ is the strong, unshakable, and everlasting existence that neither did the sun stop giving out its rays, nor did the moon give up its reflection, nor did the stars give up their light, nor did they shift from their allocated path for thousands of years. Such is the firm and established governance of Allah ﷻ. Look at the sky, centuries have passed, do you see any defect?

Allah ﷻ - Just reflect on this name. The entire system is run by that strong and everlasting Noble Lord. All the plans related to honor, health, martyrdom, etc., come by His ﷻ decision. He is Al-Awwal, Al-Akhir, Az-Zaahir, and Al-Baatin. He ﷻ is the First and He ﷻ is the Last. Nothing was before Him ﷻ and after Him ﷻ. Nothing is like Him ﷻ apparently, and none knows the hidden things as He ﷻ knows.

67.2 Even the Weakest Muslim Recognizes His Rabb

O the honorable ones! This recognition of Allah ﷻ, Alhamdulillah, is in every Muslim's heart, in some corner. That is why, when Muslims sense a special season, they come running towards His ﷻ house in troops after troops. The recognition of Allah ﷻ, that there is one Being, is present in some portion of Muslims' hearts, and that is why both men and women run towards His ﷻ house in herds after herds.

Yes, it happens sometimes that a slave becomes negligent, errs, and distances himself from his Rabb, but, for certain, He ﷻ is in his heart. Allah ﷻ is definitely in his heart. He ﷻ is also a very

Generous Lord, well aware of our weaknesses and the fact that we may forget Him ﷻ. He ﷻ grants such a fragrant season and flourishing moments that even the weakest of Muslims in faith comes to His ﷻ house, sensing that fragrance. Eventually, the slave takes benefit from that flourishing season.

He ﷻ has allotted certain months, days, nights, hours, and seasons in which the elegance of His ﷻ mercy is outstanding and excelling. For example, regarding the night of Barat (middle night of Shaaban), Huzur ﷺ explains the excellence of the rain of forgiveness and Allah's ﷻ mercy falling during this special night through a parable as follows: There used to be a tribe named Kalb who had a large number of sheep. To help us understand, he ﷺ said that Allah ﷻ forgives a large number of people in this night, exceeding the total number of hairs found on the body of all those sheep.

67.3 Allah Doesn't Abandon His Slaves

There are some nights, days, months, and hours when the mercy of Allah flows like a flood, river, and sea. Although a Muslim recognizes his Lord, sometimes a veil of heedlessness falls upon him, causing him to forget Him. In His wisdom, Allah ﷻ sends him such special times and occasions, so he turns towards His house and the veil of heedlessness is torn away. Indeed, He ﷻ allows His slave who has cut off from Him ﷻ to come back to Him ﷻ again. He ﷻ enables His forgetful slave to remember Him again. He ﷻ permits the slave who has distanced from Him ﷻ to become closer to Him ﷻ once more. Allah ﷻ sends such blessed hours when all these miraculous transformations take place.

Parents can keep forgiving a disobedient son for days and even months, but if the son abandons them and disobeys them for years and years and comes back to them very late, they will ask him if he remembers them only now after years have passed by. Strange and amazing is the attitude that Allah ﷻ shows to His ﷻ slaves. For years and years, a slave disobeys Him ﷻ, the entire world rejects him. He becomes old with empty pockets, gets dejected with hatred by his friends and family to the extent that none even replies to his greetings. He becomes weak with a bent hip, carrying his load of filthy sins on his shoulders. In such a state, when he turns to his Rabb, Allah ﷻ says, "O My slave! You might have delayed turning to Me, but there is no delay in Me accepting your repentance."

Not just this, our beloved Prophet ﷺ has said that Allah ﷻ not only forgives this slave who came to Him ﷻ with the wealth of repentance but also He ﷻ erases all the bad deeds from his book of deeds, from the memory of His angels who wrote and remembered his sins, from the portion of the earth where he committed the sins, and from the part of his body that committed the sin. This way, His ﷻ slave does not get ashamed and face humiliation on the Day of Judgement because of his sins.

O the honorable ones! In our hearts, we have the recognition of Allah ﷻ, whom we acknowledge as the possessor of all provision, the controller of our life's decisions, the arbiter of our honor, the bestower of martyrdom, and the determiner of our success. Even the weakest of believers knows and acknowledges all these truths in his heart. It is true that a slave may forget his Lord throughout the week, but he ensures that he comes to His house on Friday. There is something inside him,

right? For months, he forgets his Lord, but in the month of Ramadan, he places his forehead in His ﷺ house, identifying his Lord. In everyone's life, the plateau of weaknesses is distinct. Some are weaker than others, but in everyone's heart, there is definitely a spark of faith.

67.4 Do Not Miss the Blessed Opportunity

O the honorable ones! All this is because of the blessing of the kalimah (words) of my Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ granted us the lap of such parents where the Prophet's (ﷺ) name echoed in our ears. We were able to utter those words and were provided with such an environment. It is because of this that Allah's ﷻ recognition is present somewhere in the heart, which draws us to Allah's ﷻ house in blessed hours and we respond to the call.

O honorable ones! Such hours are not frequently granted in our lives. All that we receive is an opportunity. How many were present with you on a night like this last year but are not alive today? How many? We should appreciate the leisure time that Allah ﷻ grants us to draw closer to Him ﷻ. We must ensure that we are not distant from Him ﷻ at the time of our death, or else we might be deprived of His ﷻ mercy even there. This world is for deeds, and the hereafter will be for rewards. The limit of Allah's mercy for performing deeds is in this world. In the afterlife, only justice will be decided. Allah ﷻ has granted us the opportunity to experience blessed hours again this year.

67.5 Significance of the Night of Baraat

It is crucial to keep in mind that regarding the night of Baraat, there are approximately 10 narrations from the esteemed Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, indicating the worship of Allah ﷻ during this night. The Companions, along with the first and second generations, who form the foundation of our religion, have emphasized the importance of worship during this night. However, it is essential to understand that if you adopt any practice thinking it is part of the religion, even if it appears to be good, but it was not practiced by the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, or their first and second generations, it may lead you away from Allah ﷻ.

These revered elders engaged in voluntary acts of worship, recited the Quran, and made supplications during this night. However, they did not establish any particular or exclusive way of worship, such as praying tasbeeh salah in congregation. It is evident from the life of the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, and their first and second generations that none of them prayed in congregation during this night.

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of praying voluntary prayers in seclusion, all alone, and preferably in one's house. He ﷺ disliked congregation in such prayers. Depending on the strength you have, pray as many voluntary prayers as you can. There are no specific Surahs of the Quran that you should recite in these prayers; you can recite any Surah you remember. Engaging in voluntary prayers is not obligatory; you can also recite the Quran, perform zikr (remembrance of Allah), and remember Allah ﷻ by His beautiful names. Even if you do not have enough strength to stay awake during the night for these acts, Allah ﷻ will not deprive you of His blessings if you consistently pray the obligatory Farz (obligatory) Salah of Isha and Fajr in congregation.

When something goes out of proportion in religion, those who engage in such practices may become deprived of following the true acts of Sunnah. They might spend the entire night in festivities and noise but neglect the obligatory Fajr salah. They may perform exclusive acts of worship after Maghrib, but none will show up for Fajr salah, which is obligatory. Who knows, if a person spends the night following the way of the Sunnah, it may become a catalyst for a positive transformation in his whole life. By pleasing Allah ﷻ and adhering to the Sunnah during this night, there is hope that Allah ﷻ, through His ﷻ mercy, will continue to guide him towards His ﷻ house for the rest of his life, never depriving him of His ﷻ mercy. Until his death, Allah ﷻ might continuously call him towards His ﷻ house, accepting his Sunnah deeds. This, indeed, is the blessing of this night. I spent one night for Him ﷻ and developed such a strong connection with Him that for the rest of my life, I will be accepted into His ﷻ house. There won't be any daring act to miss a single salah in my life after that. Worship for one night can bring a person such closeness to Allah ﷻ.

With Allah ﷻ, quality matters, and not quantity. Small acts of good quality done in accordance with the Shariah and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ can be as huge as mountains in the sight of Allah ﷻ. On the other hand, if you perform many acts of worship but not in line with the Shariah, or against the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, or without following the ways of the Companions, then they won't have any value or worth with Allah ﷻ. There is worship in this night for both men and women, with as much strength as Allah ﷻ grants them. It is not apt to say that there is no worship during this night, nor is it appropriate to start some form of worship that goes against the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ during this night. The real worship is that which follows the example of the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, and their first and second generations. Let us seek to please Allah ﷻ through our worship.

67.6 Unnecessary Graveyard Visits on Baraat Night

For sure, there is worship during this night when the decision of forgiveness takes place. There is only one hadith stating that the Prophet ﷺ visited Jannatul Baqi (graveyard in Madinah) during this night, but there are no narrations affirming that he visited Jannatul Baqi often during the nights of Baraat throughout his entire life. The same was the practice of the companions; sometimes they visited, and sometimes they did not. If a person visits the graveyard with the intention of following the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, to remember his death, and to make dua for the deceased ones, then Allah ﷻ will reward him, provided he does not engage in any superstitious acts there.

Visiting the graveyard should not be considered as an obligatory or essential act during this night. Performing acts within the prescribed limits is part of the religion, and any exaggeration can lead to transgression. Additionally, the Prophet ﷺ did not restrict his visits to the graveyard only during the night of Baraat; he ﷺ visited graves regularly, almost every week, as he ﷺ liked visiting them. There is nothing specific or exceptional about visiting the graveyard during the night of Baraat.

67.7 Prepare for Ramadan with This Special Night

It has been the practice of the Prophet ﷺ to fast more between the 1st and 27th of the month of Shabaan. He ﷺ leaves out 2-3 fasting days before Ramadan so that one enters Ramadan freshly.

The Prophet ﷺ also fasts on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of every month. Keeping this in view, if one fasts for one, two, or three days, it is well and good. So, if a Muslim does an act within the limits authenticated by Shariah, he will have the reward. The truth is Allah ﷻ made this night special before Ramadan so that we may receive the blessings and lights of Ramadan. When the rain of mercy falls, if the bowl is held upside down, one cannot collect the rain. Similarly, if the bowl is held upright but is dirty, the water that falls into the bowl also becomes contaminated. Ramadan is the month of mercy, blessings, lights, and forgiveness, and Allah ﷻ grants generously during this time. Before this month, Allah ﷻ bestows this night upon us so that we hold our bowls upright and keep them clean, making us eligible to collect the blessings of Ramadan. Allah ﷻ granted this night so that we may begin preparing ourselves for the upcoming blessed month. Just like how you prepare in advance for a seasonal sale, with increased production and hard work, this night is given great importance in advance.

SubhanAllah! The season is coming for the people of Eemaan. The season of spring is approaching, and a Muslim prepares for it in advance. This night is undoubtedly a part of preparation for that month. The most significant deed of this night is to seek forgiveness from Allah ﷻ so that the bowl of our heart becomes upright and clean. The greatest sign of acceptance of one's deeds in this world is when Allah ﷻ grants him divine help to perform even better deeds the next day. If anyone's deeds during this night are accepted, then his next night will pass even better than this. The upcoming life becomes better than the past life. This is a sign that this night has been accepted in the court of Allah ﷻ. When a person gets close to a powerful person, he feels content knowing that the powerful person will decide only the best for him. Similarly, when a slave gets close to Allah ﷻ through repentance, he becomes content knowing that Allah ﷻ will only decide what is best for his life. O the honorable ones! When you join the ranks of the friends of Allah ﷻ, all the decisions regarding your life will turn out to be the best. Just distance yourself from the ranks of His ﷻ enemies.

67.8 Join the Ranks of Allah's Friends

Allah ﷻ says in one place, "Allah's enemies do not pay zakat." In another place, He ﷻ says, "Allah's enemies do not offer salah." In yet another place, He ﷻ says, "Allah's enemies do not eat halal and do not save themselves from haram." By avoiding these acts, we have come to the ranks of His ﷻ friends, and these acts will not happen again. I will offer salah, remove the haram from my life, pay any leftover zakat if any, and I have come to the ranks of Your friends. I will not engage in any acts of Your enemies.

We all want our Rabb to make better decisions for our life. The first prescription for this is to come to the ranks of Allah ﷻ through repentance. A person can be highly sinful, but if he decides with utter regret and shame that whatever happened so far is wrong and this will not happen again, then the Prophet ﷺ said that if a person repents, then he is like he did not sin at all. He becomes pure from sins. The lights and blessings of Allah ﷻ are achieved by the friends of Allah ﷻ. Before this night is the night of decision, so Allah ﷻ invites us to join His ﷻ friends. The prescription for this is seeking forgiveness.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ said: "If somebody commits a sin and then says, 'O My Lord! I have sinned, please forgive me!' and his Lord says, 'My slave has known that he has a Lord who forgives

sins and punishes for it, I, therefore, have forgiven My slave (his sins).’ Then he remains without committing any sin for a while and then again commits another sin and says, ‘O My Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,’ and Allah says, ‘My slave has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for it, I, therefore, have forgiven My slave (his sin). Then he remains without committing any other sin for a while and then commits another sin (for the third time) and says, ‘O My Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,’ and Allah says, ‘My slave has known that he has a Lord Who forgives sins and punishes for it, I, therefore, have forgiven My slave (his sin), he can do whatever he likes.’”

Seeking forgiveness is the most significant act of this night. If you have been forgiven and joined His ﷻ friends, then your life becomes colorful like that of His ﷻ friends. You won't be the one who prays only during this night, but you will become the one who regularly offers Salah throughout your life since you have come to the ranks of His ﷻ friends. You won't be like the one who prays only occasionally, such as once a week, month, or year, as you have obtained the friendship of Allah ﷻ.

O honorable ones! I am telling you the truth: Allah ﷻ grants wealth, property, land, position, and rank even to His ﷻ enemies. He bestows beauty and health upon them as well. However, the life that is beloved to Allah ﷻ is granted only to His ﷻ friends. All other things, including wealth, property, land, position, rank, health, beauty, and treasures, are bestowed by Allah ﷻ to both His ﷻ friends and enemies. But the life that pleases Allah ﷻ is granted exclusively to His ﷻ slaves.

When one leads a life pleasing to Allah ﷻ, He grants them a rewarding and pleasant life. Their worldly life becomes enjoyable, their death becomes peaceful, and the afterlife becomes even more pleasant. This is an eternal reward from Allah ﷻ.

On the other hand, Allah ﷻ may grant wealth, health, land, property, and beauty to His ﷻ enemies, but for how long? These worldly pleasures are temporary and fleeting. However, for His ﷻ friends, the reward is beyond this temporary world. It is a life of everlasting bliss and delight, not only in this world but also during their death and in the Hereafter. This is the special reward bestowed by Allah ﷻ for leading a life that is pleasing to Him ﷻ.

O honorable ones! Truth be told, Allah ﷻ may grant wealth, health, land, property, and beauty even to His ﷻ enemies, but how long do these worldly pleasures last? They are fleeting and temporary. However, for those who lead a life pleasing to Allah ﷻ, the reward is beyond the confines of this temporary world. It is a life of "Hayaat e tayyiba" - an eternal and pure life of bliss and delight, not only in this world but also during their passing and in the Hereafter.

67.9 The Rewards of Leading a Life Pleasing to Allah, the Exalted

When one obtains a life pleasing to Allah ﷻ, the rewards are boundless. Their worldly existence becomes truly enjoyable, their passing becomes tranquil, and the afterlife becomes an eternity of happiness. This is the divine recompense from Allah ﷻ for living a life that resonates with His ﷻ will. The religious scholars and commentators of the Quran have said, when explaining about "Hayaat e Tayyiba," that Allah ﷻ will save the person from constriction in rizq (provision), and his heart will never be poor. He will remain protected from deprivation from within, and neither will

he become a beggar before anyone, inwardly or outwardly spreading his hands before others. This is the reward of "Hayaat e Tayyiba" - Allah ﷻ will make his heart rich, and He will grant him the wealth of contentment.

When this is one reward, the other reward Allah ﷻ grants him is tranquility, which he will possess irrespective of having any companion or not. Allah ﷻ will grant him the wealth of tranquility in this world, during death, and the afterlife, which cannot even be described. "Hayaat e tayyib" - a life of tranquility and a death of tranquility.

The third reward he gets is that Allah ﷻ will put respect for him in the hearts of those who are special to Him ﷻ. He will receive love in the court of Allah ﷻ, in the court of angels, and on the earth, Allah ﷻ will put love and respect for him in the hearts of his beloved slaves. O the honorable ones! Ask Allah ﷻ for the most valuable thing from His ﷻ treasure: the life pleasing to Him ﷻ. And the beginning of that pleasant life is repentance - to seek forgiveness by coming out of the ranks of His ﷻ enemies, by proclaiming the hatred for the life of enemies, and by expressing the hatred towards the acts of enemies. He then starts stepping towards His ﷻ friends.

If we attain the wealth of forgiveness in this night by joining His ﷻ friends, our life's color will change from tomorrow. This change signifies that Allah ﷻ has accepted our night of repentance, and this small deed is accompanied by a true regret of the heart. O Allah ﷻ! Whatever has happened so far is wrong, but this will not happen again.

O the honorable ones! While engaging in zikr, offering voluntary prayers, reciting the Quran, giving charity, and performing Umrah are all praiseworthy acts, seeking forgiveness from Allah ﷻ is an obligatory act. Feeling remorse for our sins and seeking repentance is a duty that we must fulfill. Often, some Muslims today show more enthusiasm for voluntary acts while neglecting their obligatory duties. They mistakenly believe that voluntary acts alone define piety. However, seeking forgiveness and repentance for one's sins is compulsory, as it is through this act that a person aligns themselves with Allah's ﷻ friends and proclaims their disassociation from the enemies of Allah ﷻ.

67.10 Seek Forgiveness, the Compulsory Act

O the honorable ones! The greatest deed of this night is to seek forgiveness with genuine remorse in the heart. Once we join the friends of Allah ﷻ, all our voluntary deeds will hold great value. If a clerk neglects his allocated tasks and instead focuses on other work, will he receive appreciation? He will be asked to prioritize his assigned duties first. Similarly, when we prioritize seeking forgiveness and fulfilling our obligatory acts, and then add voluntary deeds, we will be highly appreciated in the sight of Allah ﷻ. When it comes to his real responsibilities, the clerk turns away and indulges in tasks for which he is not responsible, merely to show off. So, will he truly be valued and appreciated in the sight of his boss? No, his true worth lies in fulfilling his actual duties, and if he then goes above and beyond by taking on additional tasks, his value and respect will indeed increase. The primary responsibility is to seek forgiveness through sincere repentance and join the ranks of Allah's ﷻ friends. By doing so, and engaging in voluntary acts, his value and worth will enhance in the eyes of Allah ﷻ. Merely boasting about tasbeeh and extra prayers won't suffice if he neglects his obligatory duties.

O dear! Indeed, all these deeds will hold value and worth only when one fulfills their compulsory acts. Hence, there is a significant and crucial act to be performed during this night. The Prophet ﷺ has warned that committing major sins during this night can lead to deprivation of Allah ﷻ's mercy. Therefore, if a person harbors jealousy and rancor in their heart and fails to repent for it, even the abundant rain of Allah's mercy won't grant forgiveness. Thus, the most paramount deed of this night is to sincerely repent and seek forgiveness. If, in addition, one engages in numerous voluntary acts, their value in the sight of Allah ﷻ will increase greatly. The ultimate sign of our repentance being accepted by Allah ﷻ is evident in the transformation of our way of life. From the following day onward, our life will resemble that of Allah's ﷻ friends.

Will he then dare to have anything haram in his house or dare to leave any salah or err in paying zakat? No, he won't, because all these are the acts of Allah's ﷻ enemies. Now, you will see only the life of Allah's ﷻ friends in him. One will be very fortunate to receive the blessings of this night if he engages in many voluntary acts along with seeking forgiveness, which is to be done during this night. In reality, a person is welcoming Ramadan in advance to attain its blessings by pleasing Allah ﷻ and worshiping Him ﷻ on this night. We express our sincere appreciation for the month of Ramadan and seek to take advantage of the blessings, mercy, and forgiveness granted during this blessed month.

67.11 Get Ready for Ramadan

This is the preparation for the upcoming Ramadan, and we have started changing our plans related to our work and muamalat. We have started giving importance to Ramadan by considering how we want to be during this blessed month. We plan how much we will pray daily, how much Quran we will recite daily, how much time we will spend in Allah's ﷻ house, and how much time a woman would spend in the place of salah. Right from now, he/she plans the strategy for Ramadan so that blessed time is not wasted during Ramadan. Our Prophet ﷺ used to pray for Ramadan even before Shaaban, in the month of Rajab. He would say, "Allahumma barik lana fi Rajab wa Sha'ban wa ballighna Ramadan" which means "O Allah! Make the months of Rajab and Sha'ban blessed for us, and let us reach the month of Ramadan." The preparation used to start right from Rajab because Ramadan was coming. O the honorable ones! Allah ﷻ is granting us this precious opportunity, and we should seize it with the best of our abilities, seeking forgiveness so that favorable decisions are made in our favor. Let us earnestly seek forgiveness not only for ourselves but also for all Muslims, our family members, and all those who are near and dear to us.

67.12 Supplication

Let us pray and hope that Allah ﷻ grants us the ability to act upon what we have learned. May He bestow upon all of us a life that is pleasing to Him and forgive us, along with all the believing men and women. O Allah, forgive our sins through Your grace, both the ones that are apparent and those hidden. O Allah, shower us with Your grace and generosity, granting us complete forgiveness. By Your grace, include us among those who are accepted and beloved to You. O Lord, protect us from the contamination of sins. Just as Your beloved slaves attain blessings during this night, grant us a share in it as well. O Allah, count us among Your chosen slaves, for whom You grant blessings on this night. Do not deprive us of the mercy and blessings of this night, O Allah. Forgive us

completely and forgive all the people of faith. By Your grace and mercy, grant all of us a life that is pleasing to You, a death that is pleasing to You, and place us among the righteous on the Day of Judgment. Provide us with lawful and blessed sustenance and bless our lives. O Allah, protect us from leading a sinful life and experiencing an evil death. Grant us a life and death of dignity, with martyrdom.

O Lord, protect us from the harm caused by jealous, evil, and oppressive people. O Allah, cleanse both our outer and inner selves. Purify our hearts from the contamination of jealousy, hatred, and rancor. Purify our hearts from harboring jealousy or any impurities towards our fellow Muslims. O Allah, cleanse our hearts and purify our sight. By Your grace, grant us genuine love and strong faith for one another. O Allah, bestow upon us the brotherhood of faith and Islam. Purify our hearts from the darkness of jealousy, hatred, and rancor in all forms. O Lord, by Your mercy, fulfill the permissible needs of all believing men and women. O Allah, You are the Knower of the unseen, aware of what resides in our hearts, our desires, and needs. There are those who cannot articulate their needs or share them with others, but You know what lies within their hearts. Fulfill all their needs, alleviate their hardships, and grant us a life of honor, peace, and tranquility. May we pass away with faith in our hearts.

O Allah, accept the supplications of all our brothers and sisters who have requested prayers. Grant good health and well-being to the sick. O Allah, shield us from a life of evil, a dishonorable death, and protect us from distress after tranquility, sickness after health, and hospitalization. O Lord do not leave us in the hands of evildoers, oppressors, or those who are irreligious. O Lord, envelop us with Your merciful shade and aid. Forgive us and our relatives, and grant forgiveness to all our deceased relatives. Make their graves gardens of Jannah. O Allah, bestow upon us the strength to seek true forgiveness before our departure from this world. By Your grace and mercy, instill in us genuine regret and repentance for our sins and wrongdoings. O Allah, grant us perfect forgiveness and forgive the entire Muslim Ummah. Treat all people of faith with Your mercy and protect Muslims from oppression, assisting them against oppressors. Wherever Muslims sincerely engage in religious activities, bestow Your help and mercy upon them. Safeguard the mosques, educational institutions, and scholars. O Allah, guide us to utilize all our means and abilities for Your deen in a manner that pleases You. Accept our lives, resources, and capabilities in the service of Your deen according to Your will. Protect the mosques and educational institutions from the weaknesses of our own and the evil plots of outsiders. O Allah, safeguard our country from all forms of corruption and unite the Muslim community. Show mercy to our country, city, and our overall condition.

O Allah, bless us all with the arrival of the month of Ramadan, along with faith, well-being, and good health. Grant us the ability to prepare for and welcome Ramadan as You desire and bestow upon us the strength and determination to plan accordingly. O Allah, include us among those who truly value the blessings of Ramadan and make the sacred month a means for the progress and success of the Muslim Ummah. Aameen, Aameen and again aameen

-Sheikh Maulana Abdus Sattar (May Allah preserve him)
