

Table of Contents-Booklet Number one

BOOKLET NUMBER ONE	2
FOREWORD TO THE ORIGINAL BOOKLET	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
The subject of a majlis	4
Method.....	4
Who will benefit?	5
Preparation	5
TARTÍB OF SULÚK	6
The place of commerce, industry, agriculture, etc.	6
The place of good morals	6
Khushú' and khudhú'	7
Place of 'ilm.....	8
Akhláqe-razílah	9
Difference between the character of a káfir and that of a mu'min.....	9
Examples of being connected with Alláh Ta'ála.....	10
Istighfár (repentance) and huqúqulláh	11
Performance of qadhá namáz.....	11
Keeping qadhá rozah	12
Payment of zakát	13
Performance of Hajj.....	13
Istighfár (repentance) and huqúqul-'ibád	13
Further explanation of ghíbat	14
An qissah of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه concerning ghíbat.....	15
Ranks of the Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم.....	17
Huqúqul-'ibád and wealth: settling debts, returning illegal gains	18
A qissah of a thief who repented	18
Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí's treatment of Hadhrat Shiblí	19
Testing the muríd before bai'at	20
Qissah concerning Ghulám Yahyá wanting to become bai'at.....	20
Mu'ásharat – social etiquettes are part of our Dín	21
The three faculties of Man.....	23
Kaifiyát – spiritual states – are part of huzúz.....	23

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Nafl ‘ibádat fall in the category of huzúz	24
The isláh of the Ra’ís requesting to become bai’at.....	25
Some acts of mubáh become prohibited when harmful effects set in	25
When faced with two approaches	25
Faná’ is the first step	27
Du’á.....	28
CLARIFICATION.....	28

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Booklet Number One
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FOREWORD TO THE ORIGINAL BOOKLET

A series of discourses of Mas'ihul-Ummat, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Mas'ihulláh Khán Sáhib دامت برکاتہ have been recorded on tape. His unique approach to our Dín in this day and age, make these discourses invaluable to that Muslim who wishes to live a life seeking the Pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá. A number of people have felt that there is a great need for these discourses to be available to the English reader. This humble servant has made an attempt at translating one such discourse from the Urdú. In-shá-Alláh, attempts will be made to translate other discourses as well. The phrase that comes to mind is: *"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread!"*

The dictionary meanings of "dost" are "friend / lover". Which is applicable? Thinking about it, both are applicable. In a lifetime of service to the Ummat, Hadhratjí دامت برکاتہ – as many came to know him – has made untold friends in the Indo-Pak subcontinent as well as in other parts of the world. The word "friend" would apply here. In the special terminology of the súfí: "dost" is that person who is treading the Path of sulúk. Being in love with Alláh Ta'álá, this person has sought out the Real Lovers of Alláh Ta'álá, the Auliyá-Alláh, to get closer to the Loved One. In this sense, the meaning of "lover" is applicable. Hadhratjí دامت برکاتہ once pointed out an interesting fact: Every Muslim has love for Alláh Ta'álá and His Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم, this love coming to the fore whenever an attack is made on the Dín. In this sense, the title "Doston Ke Liye" for these discourses is appropriate for the whole Ummat.

(Not related to the title, may I slip in a word of thanks and say "Jazákalláh" to those friends who prompted, encouraged and assisted in this publication.)

Dr.I.M.

INTRODUCTION

Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhíb دامت برکاتہ needs no introduction. Hadhratjí, as most people have come to call him, is the founder of the Dárul-Ulúm in Jalálábád, U.P., India. Many are the ‘Ulemá who have graduated from his Dárul-Ulúm, arriving here from different parts of India, as well as from different parts of the world. However, it is as a sheikh of Taríqat in the field of Tasawwuf that Hadhratjí دامت برکاتہ has benefited the Ummat to an unfathomable extent.

In Jalálábád, surrounding the courtyard of the Madrasah Masjíd, are some sixteen rooms. Originally built for casual visitors, over the years this area has come to be known as the khánqáh – a residence for those involved in their self-rectification.

An important part of the programme of self-rectification is attendance at the majlis. It is thus, essential to understand what a majlis is. The word “majlis” is translated as “assembly/ committee”. In our context, it refers to the gathering which a sheikh arranges and addresses: A “majlis” refers to the gathering and also to the discourse delivered.

A sheikh will have three types of majális (pl. of majlis):

— majlis-**e-ám**, which is for the general body of Muslims;

— majlis-**e-khás**, which is for the benefit of a selected group; and

— majlis-**e-akhás**, which is attended by a few selected, specially privileged elite.

Those in the khánqáh are expected to attend the majlis-e-ám and the majlis-e-khás.

(The discourse that follows is a translation of a majlis-e-khás).

The subject of a majlis

At a wáz (lecture) a specific subject is taken and discussed in detail. A majlis differs in that no specific subject is chosen. The sheikh may speak “off the cuff” and the topics may well cover a wide spectrum. The main aim is isláh –the spiritual improvement of those that are attending. The discourses will vary from day to day, in subject matter as well as level of discussion. (The titles of the majlis have been chosen by me and reflect the general theme only and not the actual topics discussed.)

It is not unusual to hear topics discussed so simply that even non-Muslims may understand them. On the other hand, with the presence of doctors, lawyers, engineers, university professors, students and ‘Ulemá, the level of talk can be so elevated that not all those attending will understand what is being said. The rule that applies is: *digest and assimilate what you do understand and leave the rest till later*. Topics discussed are not purely “theological”. Islám covers every aspect of life; and every aspect of living has to be according to the Shari’ah. Therefore, guidance from the sheikh is on any and every aspect of life as it affects the Muslim.

Method

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Although the sheikh may speak off the cuff, each sentence is full of meaning and completely relevant. The sheikh will encourage, he will guide, he will correct — through qissas, through reason, quoting Qur’án Sharíf and HadíthSharíf, never by taking the names of those present.(There are exceptions when there is a special need to do so.)

For maximum benefit, each individual present must have the attitude that the sheikh is addressing him personally. Hadhratjí ٻرڪا ته اڏامت aims to remove apathy and to provoke thought and contemplation. An appeal is made to the individual’s reason and logic. He is encouraged to adopt those thought processes that will cause him to become self-motivated. Only when the individual allows the lid of stifling apathy to be removed will he be able to soar into those realms which are so fascinating as to have caused kings to give up their worldly kingdoms!

Who will benefit?

Two groups of people will definitely benefit:

- In the first group are those who have faith and confidence in the speaker. They know that their sheikh is a sheikh-e-kámil and will speak only what is Haqq. They realise that application of his advice will definitely cause an improvement in themselves.
- In the second group are those who attend with open minds. They have neither preconceived ideas, nor prejudices, but will listen and think over what is said and accept what is logical and right, what is Haqq.
- A third group will not benefit at all. In this group are those who listen to criticise, those who are prejudiced and will not allow what is being presented to change their attitude.

Preparation

The basic preparation is to open one’s mind and one’s heart for the Haqq to enter. Any one majlis will have sufficient material in it to benefit anybody, irrespective of who he is. Obviously, the more familiar one is with the subjects discussed, the greater the benefit. Some basic kitábs recommended are:

- “Good Character”;
- “Sharí’at and Tasawwuf” and
- “Hayaatul-Muslimeen”.

For maximum benefit these kitábs have to be read at least three times. This applies to the majlis as well. Those who understand Urdú will benefit more by reading the latter two kitábs in the original Urdú. At this point let me add that the translation of the majlis that follows is not an exact word-for-word translation. A minimal amount of editing has taken place to ensure a reading style that is smooth. Obviously, the spoken word is more effective, more charming and more vibrant than the written word. Apologies for not being able to get these features across.

Not to break the beauty of these discourses completely, a maximum of relevant original terms have been maintained instead of using the English equivalents. Those familiar with the subject will appreciate this fact. Those not familiar are encouraged to familiarise

For Friends-Booklet Number one

themselves with these words to enjoy these discourses to the fullest extent. A glossary has also been included.

Finally: may Alláh Ta'álá give you and me the taufiq to make amal on these teachings.

Dr.I.M.

TARTÍB OF SULÚK

[This is a translation of the majlis of Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib, held on the 21st September, 1988, in Jalálábád, India.]

Our objective: Tijárat for the Ákhirat

We have been sent here, into this world, to be in business (Tijárat) for the Ákhirat. Whatever activity we are involved in here, falls in the category of tijárat for the Ákhirat. The supporting áyet of the Qur'án Sharíf is:

***ARABIC

*And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me.
(S.51.56)*

It is clear that Alláh Ta'álá has brought us into this world for the sole purpose of making His 'ibádat and for no other purpose whatsoever! It follows that our lifestyles – all aspects of our daily lives – are subordinate to and related to the Ákhirat. It then follows that the laws and rules relating to the Ákhirat automatically apply to our lives here and **when our living or lifestyle is in accordance with these rules, our whole existence is now 'ibádat.**

The place of commerce, industry, agriculture, etc.

Now, we have a stomach, which is housed in a physical body. The stomach requires food and the body requires clothing and shelter. The means for attaining these requirements are various – agriculture, Industry, commerce, professional services, employment, etc. In order to fulfil our bodily needs, these worldly activities are necessary.

There appears to be a paradox: on the one hand we have been made dependent on these worldly activities and, on the other hand, the command given to us is that our sole activity should be 'ibádat. The explanation is that fulfilling our bodily needs for the purpose of 'ibádat makes the means adopted also 'ibádat. This means that the activities listed above – agriculture, Industry, etc. will consequently be counted as 'ibádat.

The place of good morals

For Friends-Booklet Number one

As an individual, what does all this mean to you? Involvement in any enterprise, whether in one's individual capacity or whether in partnership with others, means interaction with others. Associating with others becomes unavoidable. Different individuals have different temperaments. To be able to deal with different personalities, to be able to avoid friction with people of different temperaments, the most important factor is one's personality. In order to cope with various situations, a good character is essential – a personality that will know how to respond to different conditions in the correct manner. It should not happen that flaws in one's character disrupt the smooth running of one's affairs. It is obvious that greed and avarice, or pride and arrogance, will result in eventual disunity – such qualities are bound to cause friction and disharmony. Having understood the importance of good morals (i.e. a good character) in our worldly activities involving association with others, we can now proceed further:

The 'ibádat that one is involved in falls into two categories:

- i) muta'allaq-bil-záhir (Connected with the external e.g. namáz, rozah, etc.)
- ii) muta'allaq-bil-bátin (Connected with the internal; with one's character).

We are accountable for both.

Of the two: 'ibádat-bil-bátin, first, has to be established before 'ibádat-bil-záhir. By doing this one will attain tranquillity, steadfastness and permanence in one's 'ibádat-bil-záhir and also khushú' and khudhú.

Khushú' and khudhú

What is khushú'? Khushú' is, to avoid bringing thoughts of anything except Alláh Ta'álá into one's heart deliberately during one's 'ibádat. Note: the emphasis on the word *deliberately*(ikhtiyárí). Those thoughts that are ghair-ikhtiyárí (Come involuntarily) are of no consequence. It is not only in namáz that khushú' is essential, but the concept of khushú' is that, at all times, the heart should be free of ghairulláh, that thoughts not connected with Alláh Ta'álá should not be brought to mind deliberately. This is the original occupation of the heart – Huzúre-Haqq: to be aware of the Presence of Alláh Ta'álá at all times.

Many still have the wrong concept that khushú' is essential only in namáz. Added to this is the misconception that only namáz is 'ibádat. However, the mu'min, that person imbued with ímán, bears the responsibility for performing all 'ibádat. As explained already, our sole purpose in this world is the 'ibádat of Alláh Ta'álá. Namáz is the záhirí 'ibádat of the body, but a more important 'ibádat is the 'ibádat of the heart. This bátiní 'ibádat of the heart is to have the Presence of Alláh Ta'álá in the heart at all times. This is a basic, primary 'ibádat. Linked with this 'ibádat of the heart are other forms of 'ibádat. It follows that all activity carried out with this primary 'ibádat firmly established in the heart, will all be counted as 'ibádat. Now there will be reality in the purpose of one's existence, namely, that we have been brought into existence for the sole purpose of the 'ibádat of Alláh Ta'álá.

All the necessary branches and off-shoots of our lives will then be connected to 'ibádat, whether it is agriculture or commerce, the practice of medicine or law, teaching or lecturing, writing or publishing. This being the case, the primary pre-requisite before

undertaking these activities, is attaining the necessary ‘ilm (knowledge). Whether one works alone or with others in a group, one has to know the Shar’i laws and rules related to that particular activity. The very fact that we are Muslim makes it compulsory for us to gain knowledge. This is a Muslims primary duty. The knowledge that he has to seek is that of the Shar’i laws and rules, which is called ‘ilm. The attainment of ‘ilm is also ‘ibádat. Any person who becomes a Muslim and mu’min has to undertake this essential and compulsory ‘ibádat in the first instance. Without ‘ilm – without this pre-required ‘ibádat – no other ‘ibádat performed will be completely correct and any ‘ibádat not performed correctly has no chance of being accepted!

Place of ‘ilm

How important is this acquisition of ‘ilm? This can be gauged from the following: On occasions of jihád not all the Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم were permitted to proceed into battle at once. (The exception being those situations where there were general hostilities – nafíre-ám):

The Qur’anic áyet states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ
يَلُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلِيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

(S.9.122)

This áyet instructs that one jamá’at from amongst you (The Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم should go forth in jihád and one jamá’at should remain behind with Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم for the purpose of attaining ‘ilm. When the first jamá’at returns then they should be taught. In emphasising the importance of ‘ilm, the áyet also lays down an important principle:

Actions are of two categories: firstly, the removal of harm and secondly, the gaining of benefit. The principle laid down is that the process of removal of harm takes priority over the gain of benefit. To avoid injury, to remove those things which are harmful, to save oneself from injurious items, come first. Then only should one turn to what is beneficial. In other words, firstly remove the bad things from oneself, those things which are filthy and offensive. Then adorn oneself with good.

Here is an illustration: If you wish to fill an empty hauz (pond) with clean water, you will first make sure that it contains no filth, nothing malodorous. You will make sure that it has neither holes nor defects in it, that is, any fault that will cause the water to leak away. You will take care to clean the hauz properly, repair the cracks and then only will you fill it with clean water. This is a common sense method, an instinctive, natural way of going about the work. When it comes to our Díní affairs, the same method applies. When

preparing for ‘ibádat, one will have to look closely at oneself: are there no defects within, any such offensive matters that will prevent good from entering? If not, are there no such factors that will cause the good that has entered from seeping away?

Obstructing factors are of two types:

- Firstly, those that impede good from entering; and
- Secondly, those that dissipate the good already present. What are these obstructive factors?

Akhláqe-razílah

In one’s bátin these are the akhláqe-razílah, also called akhláqe-zamímah – the debasing qualities in a character. These debasing qualities are ingrained. The aim is to control and discipline them in such a way as to avoid their wrong usage. The akhláqe-razílah are obstructing factors, factors that prevent good from coming into a person. These factors have to be removed first, then only can there be any consistency in the good one is aiming at. What is “good”? It is ‘ibádat. The aim is to establish záhiri-a’ mál. The method is that which has been outlined already.

At this point an important axiom has to be borne in mind. This is: *that person whose záhir only is good and his bátin is bad, is better than that person whose bátin is good and his záhir is bad.*

This is from the Shari’ah point of view. This will be explained. In other words, that person who carries out the external commands of the Shari’ah only and his internal character is defective, is better than that person whose character appears to be excellent, but he does not carry out the external orders of the Shari’ah. The reason why the first person is considered to be better is that, at least, he has respect for the Orders of Alláh Ta’álá. This awe and respect that motivates him make all the difference! Secondly, looking deeper, that person whose character appears to be excellent but does not carry out the záhiri orders of the Shari’ah, is, in actual fact, rotten in his bátin as well. This point requires further elucidation:

A bad character is recognised as such even by the káfir. Ask any káfir about takabbur (Arrogance), about hirs (greed) and tama’ (avarice), about ghussah (Anger), about hiqd and kínah (hatred and malice) and he also will tell you that these are bad qualities to have in one’s character. The differentiation from a káfir will not show except in one’s záhiri activities.

Difference between the character of a káfir and that of a mu’min

The question arises: What is the difference between the good character of a káfir and a mu’min, if both appear to have a good character? The difference is that the káfir’s good character has been attained through simple intellectual reasoning. What his reason has told him is bad, he has eliminated. The mu’min, on the other hand, has gone through a process of tazkíyah of his nafs and has ended up with a good character. The motivation in his case has been nisbat-m’ Alláh – a special bond with Alláh Ta’álá. The mu’min has khauf (fear) of Alláh Ta’álá, a quality conspicuously absent in the káfir. The káfir with a “good”

For Friends-Booklet Number one

character will not get into a rage because his intellect and his reason tell him it is bad. The mu'min differs in that his motivation is the firm belief that Alláh Ta'ála is Házir-Názir (Omnipresent and Omniscient.) To this mu'min this concept is not just theoretical but a tangible bond affecting his behaviour. Another point: a person's reasoning can be faulty. Any conclusions arrived at purely from reason – as is the method adopted by the káfir – cannot be taken as valid. Only if there is a Sharí'ah basis for that conclusion will it be valid.

This applies to character as well. A character that is termed “good” based purely on reason is not necessarily good. Only that character can be labelled “good” where the mu'min has cleansed himself of the akhláqe-razílah, based on nisbat-m'Alláh, which means that his behaviour will be according to the Sharí'ah.

This answers the question that arose after stating the important rule that the person whose záhir is good but not his bátin, is better than the person whose bátin appears to be good but not his záhir. (Obviously, a person whose záhir and bátin are both good is better than both.) When it is said that the záhir is good, it means that his záhir is according to the Sharí'ah as far as 'ibádat is concerned, as far as mu'ásharat is concerned, as far as mu'ámulát is concerned, even though he may have takabbur. On the other hand, the statement that a person has no takabbur but his záhir is bad, is contradictory. In truth, if a person had no takabbur then this would automatically manifest in his záhir being good also!

Examples of being connected with Alláh Ta'ála

Take an example:

Somebody comes from behind and, with a closed fist, gives this person a thump on his back. This person ignores the thump, carries on with what he is doing and does not even glance back to see who hit him. He has no takabbur, haqíqatan (basically / fundamentally).

Take somebody else. He is also similarly thumped on his back. He responds by turning round and, with a stern expression on his face, he angrily rebukes the person who hit him. This reaction betrays him. His humble attitude in front of others was mere social politeness. This reaction of his shows that the absence of takabbur was only apparent and not real – súratan, not haqíqatan.. Why did he not maintain his composure? At the time that he was thumped, his true colours showed. Why did he flare up? Why did the expression on his face show displeasure? Why did anger show and unbecoming expressions issue from his lips? Why did he not recognise the opposite party and the occasion? Did he not see that it was his principal, his superior? Did he not recognise that his position demanded that he speak politely? His angry reaction betrays the fact that all the akhláqe-razílah have not been completely removed.

Another example:

Somebody has personal problems. Now, for one to go around trying to get details of his problems from others and then spread these items of gossip, shows that one is still lacking. One has not yet developed that ta'alluq- m'Alláh in one's heart that is the desired state – even though in one's záhir one may have a beard, wear a kurtah and ijár, one may even be a Háfiz or an 'Álim!

For Friends-Booklet Number one

These are simple illustrations to show up takabbur and ghíbat. What is noteworthy about ghíbat is that the backbiter is continually committing sins all the time that he is involved in ghíbat. Compare his situation with that person committing an act of ziná(fornication): his sin lasts for the duration of the act only. Also, the evil act of ziná is condemned by all. Quite rightly so, but what about ghíbat because ghíbat is worse than ziná?

The Qur'án Sharíf is quite emphatic:

Do not spy on one another and do not back bite...(S.49.12)

Knowing full well the gravity of the sin of ghíbat, yet you are still involved in it?

So, firstly, those internal, obstructive factors have to be cleared up. This is to be done in the correct and proper manner – not in terms of social politeness, but in the proper Shari'ah sense. The next step is to assimilate the akhláqe-hamídah. With the akhláqe-razíláh removed, the personality will now shine forth and emit grace and elegance, beauty and adornment. If this method is NOT followed, the result is an odd mixture of the akhláqe-razíláh and akhláqe-hamídah. Saddled with contradictory qualities, how can there be grace and elegance? There can be no adornment. The whole situation is faulty.

Let me ask a question: When is ittar applied? The obvious answer is that ittar is applied when one's clothes have been washed and cleaned, when the dust and dirt have been removed and the sweaty smell has been cleared. When one's clothes come back neatly ironed and pressed, then only is ittar applied. Now do you understand? Similarly, the batin has to be cleansed. How? By an abundance of istighfár – which has many facets (to be detailed later). With the batin cleansed, now is the occasion for Durúd Sharíf – now will the Durúd Sharíf show its full effect.

Istighfár (repentance) and huqúqulláh

Istighfár is analogous to cleansing and Durúd Sharíf is analogous to the application of ittar. Is there any sense in reciting Durúd Sharíf but not istighfár? Istighfár has several aspects. Istighfár, in the context of self-rectification (isláh), has a methodology. We have already mentioned the inspection of one's batin. One also has to inspect one's zahir: From the age of puberty one became mukallaf – the responsibility of following the Shari'ah was laid on one's shoulder. From the age of 14 or 15 years certain a'mál became incumbent on one. Take stock. See if there are any deficiencies in these a'mál.

Performance of qadhá namáz

For Friends-Booklet Number one

The first stage to tackle as far as one's *záhirí a'mál* are concerned, is *namáz*. The performance of *namáz* five times daily became compulsory on reaching puberty. This is why children should be encouraged to perform *namáz* from the age of seven years. We are even enjoined to inflict physical punishment in this respect at the age of 10 years. So that, by the time a child reaches the age of puberty, the performance of *namáz* is ingrained and natural, part of the child's *tabiyet* (Temperament) and he will not neglect his *namáz*.

Tartīb – methodology – is our main theme. Let us re-iterate this *tartīb*:

When realisation strikes a person, when the fear and dread of *Qiyámah* has entered the heart; when he has become aware of a *ta'alluq- m'Alláh*, at this crucial time he should inspect himself and take stock of his situation:

“Have I not neglected some *huqúq*?” is the question he should be asking. Neglected *huqúq* will have to be compensated for. The act of *taubah* will wipe out sins but not neglected *huqúq*. These have to be compensated for.

For example: A person may have committed *ziná* or he may have succumbed to the shameful act of drinking liquor. Both of these acts do not involve *huqúq*. A sincere, proper *taubah* will cause these sins to be forgiven and the person can forget about his misdeeds. Not so with *namáz*. This involves *huqúqulláh*. Missed *namáz* is not overlooked, even after *taubah*. Missed *namázes* have to be performed. The person has to do a simple calculation. For example: He has to say to himself: “I attained puberty at the age of 15 years. I was negligent till the age of 30 years, when I became punctual. Thus, I have missed out 15 years *namáz*.” He now has to compensate for these years of neglect.

This is the correct method. Many people have made *taubah* and thereafter become regular with their *namáz* but they give no thought to compensating for what they have missed. Dirt still remains. Clean this dirt up. How? By performing *qadhá namáz* of those missed.

An easy method is to perform one *qadhá namáz* each time one performs a regular *namáz*. Repeat only the *fardh* of the missed *namázes*. Leave out the *sunnat* and *nafl namázes* but include the *Witr* with the *Íshá qadhá*.

It is important to make a firm intention and resolution to repay and to be steadfast thereon. Death is not in our hands. Should death intervene, there is great hope that *Alláh Ta'álá*, the Generous, the Bountiful, will overlook those *namázes* still not repaid. He is fully aware of our *niyet*. Yes, if one has free time, one may perform as many *qadhá namázes* as one wishes and at any time of the day or night, except at the time of the three prohibited periods. These are the time of the rising of the sun, the time that the sun is at its zenith and the time of the setting of the sun. The sooner you repay, the better.

Keeping *qadhá rozah*

Rozah(fasting) also becomes compulsory at the age of puberty. Unlike *namáz*, *rozah* is not a daily function but is compulsory only during the month of *Ramadhán* annually. There is no emphasis of inculcating the habit of fasting at an early age, as is the case with *namáz*.

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Tackle rozah in the same way as namáz. Calculate the number that had been missed since puberty, whether through neglect, illness or being on a journey, etc. Start compensating for these by fasting regularly, taking into account your health and strength, the climate and environmental factors.

Payment of zakát

Zakát comes next. Calculate the amount of zakát that you were liable for since puberty. Total these amounts and start distributing according to your means. Yes, if you are completely destitute, you have no alternative but to humble yourself completely in front of Alláh Ta'álá and tearfully plead for His Mercy and forgiveness. Also, promise to distribute the missed zakát as soon as you have the means.

Performance of Hajj

This brings us to Hajj. If you were liable for Hajj but neglected to go, then fulfil this obligation as well. If you are very old and sickly and physically incapable of going yourself, you may send another on your behalf, sponsoring him from your wealth. If you do not have the financial means now, although you had the necessary wealth in the past, there is no need to panic! Throw yourself in front of Alláh Ta'álá, prostrate in taubah to Him. There is hope – nay, there is certainty – that He will forgive the sincere tá'ib.

These remarks are directed at that person in whom the khauf of Alláh Ta'álá has entered, at that person who has developed ta'alluq-m'Alláh in his heart. Indifference and apathy have lifted from his heart. He has placed his foot firmly on the path of sulúk. We are speaking to him.

Istighfár (repentance) and huqúqul-'ibád

Thus far we have dealt with the huqúq that Alláh Ta'álá has on one. But what about His creation? Alláh Ta'álá has also ordered us to set right their huqúq. If you have offended anyone, go to him and ask his forgiveness. Do this in the proper manner: clasp your hands in contrition, cap in hand, ask forgiveness from your heart. If not today, then tomorrow; if not tomorrow, then the day after. But do as commanded. Despite this, if the opposite party does not forgive you, do not grieve. It is said: *A person, clearly in the wrong, not asking for forgiveness is a Shaitán, the opposite party not forgiving, is an ass!*

We are still dealing with the tartíb of isláh – the proper manner of rectifying oneself. After taubah one has to remove the accumulated dirt first, eliminate contaminating factors first. Thus the need to compensate for past shortcomings.

A doctor uses the same principle in his methods. For example: a patient presents with intestinal disease. Those factors causing the disease are first eliminated and then khamírah – an invigorating tonic – is prescribed. Only if the intestines are free of the disease-causing factors will they be capable of assimilating the strengthening agents in the tonic. The doctor may prescribe a tonic simultaneously at his discretion, but that is a different situation.

To continue: We are dealing with the rights of the creation – huqúqul-'ibád. The rights that Alláh Ta'álá has – huqúqulláh – have already been dealt with. It has been

emphasised that taubah does not cancel obligations. Past shortcomings have to be compensated for.

Huqúqul-'ibád are more important than huqúqulláh in terms of compensation. This importance can be gauged from the following: A mu'min is obligated to another person for the mere sum of three paisah. The mu'min has neither repaid this sum, nor has he asked to be pardoned if unable to pay. On the Day of Qiyámat 700 accepted namázes of the mu'min will be given to the creditor in lieu of the unfulfilled debt of three paisah. Just think! Are three paisah anything? On the other hand, what is the value of namáz...? Alláhu-Akbar!. ..And 700 namázes? Alláhu-Akbar! ...And such namázes which have been accepted? All to be given to the creditor!

To what extent is this haqq not being deliberately transgressed these days! Houses on houses are taken over; land on land is snatched away; wealth on wealth is usurped.

Just one such example is the case where the father dies. The eldest son seizes possession of the whole estate and the Sharí'ah laws on distribution of the estate are completely ignored. This type of thing is done by Muslims – those having faith and belief in the Ákhirat! Yet, most sorrowfully, their actions show how weak that belief is! How deficient is that concept of Alláh Ta'álá being Házir-Názir. Yes, that person whose ta'alluq-m'Alláh is such that the concept of Alláh Ta'álá being Házir-Názir is part of his conscious and subconscious state, will act differently. The Presence of Alláh Ta'álá will be with him always. His actions will be according to the Sharí'ah, according to the manner shown by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. Neither land nor wealth will be usurped; houses will be distributed justly.

These remarks are directed at the sálik – that person who has come for his tazkíyah, for the cleansing of his bátin, for the adornment of his inner self. He is the primary person one is addressing. This is the order and structure (tartíb and targíb) of attaining ta'alluq-m'Alláh. This is the methodology of attaining that elevation, that status, that strengthening that is the Special Bond one aims to develop with Alláh Ta'álá. Think on it. Contemplate on it. Judge yourself on it.

We are still dealing with huqúqul-'ibád

Further explanation of ghíbat

Ghíbat has been mentioned as a sin. But there is a further point here: One has made ghíbat of another person. One becomes aware that he has come to know of it. Taubah and istighfár are not sufficient. One has to ask that person's forgiveness as well. Once the opposite party comes to know of your ghíbat concerning him, the sin goes into the category of huqúqul-'ibád. If the opposite party is not aware of your ghíbat, the sin of ghíbat remains in the category of huqúqulláh, in which case taubah and istighfár are sufficient. The Ahlulláh, the Alláh-wálá, those who have attained the correct ta'alluq-m'Alláh, should they perchance get involved in ghíbat, their taubah and istighfár are automatic. But they remain perturbed and restless and remain in a state of discomfiture until they have not asked the opposite party's pardon, even if they know that the opposite party is not aware of the ghíbat! Nay! Even though they have not made ghíbat verbally, even though they have not spoken

For Friends-Booklet Number one

about others' faults, but have deliberately brought the faults of others into their hearts, they have breached their ta'alluq-m'Alláh by an act of omission!

This is a very fine and subtle point and needs to be thought over very carefully: Speaking of the fault of another is obvious ghíbat. A person has not done this but he has deliberately and volitionally – on an ikhtiyári basis – brought the thought of another's faults into his mind. This is against the concept of khushú' – khushú' demands that only Alláh Ta'ála should be in his heart and ghairulláh should have no place in his heart or mind on an ikhtiyári basis. Note the emphasis on the word "ikhtiyári". At times, thoughts may crop up involuntarily. Unintentionally, one's thoughts turn to somebody's faults, but immediately there is repugnance for such thoughts. The situation is completely different here. These unintentional thoughts are termed "waswasah". The response to waswasah is an inner distaste for such thoughts and contriteness, followed by a desire to eliminate these thoughts, with "Lá howla..." coming to one's lips immediately. With this understanding of what ghíbat is, that even bringing thoughts of the faults of others into one's heart is included, can there be any question of actually uttering words of ghíbat?

An qissah of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه concerning ghíbat

An incident: Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه saw a handsome young man, fair in complexion and neatly dressed, begging in the masjid. The thought came to Junaid: "A healthy young man and wearing a good set of clothes and yet he is begging?" That night Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه had a remarkable dream. (One notes that persons in the class of such people are corrected very quickly by Alláh Ta'ála!) In the dream he saw a man approaching him and saying: "Eat this meat!" He placed in front of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه a dead body.

Junaid: "But this is a corpse! To eat it is harám!"

Person: "Oh Yes! To eat this is harám! But when you were eating the flesh of your dead Muslim brother, was that not harám?"

Junaid: "I never did such a foul thing".

Person: "Oh No? Let me ask you: does the Qur'an Sharíf not state that one should not make ghíbat: 'Would any of you love to eat the flesh of your dead brother?'"

Junaid: "Yes. The Qur'an Sharíf has stated thus."

Person: "Well, then you have eaten!"

Junaid: "When did I do so?"

Person: "When you saw the young man begging, you brought the thought into your heart: 'A young handsome man, fit and healthy, yet begging!' Did you imagine ghíbat is only when you relate a person's fault to others and when you think of the faults of others it is not ghíbat? You deliberately brought his fault to mind."

To deliberately bring the faults of others into one's heart is also ghíbat. That is point number one.

Point number two is that looking at others' faults has with it an attitude of contempt for them. Contempt for others is also harám.

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Point number three is finer and more subtle. What is the haqq of the heart? The haqq of the heart – its special privilege – is to be connected to Alláh Ta’álá permanently, with the awareness of Him being Házir-Názir. This being the case, why has the heart deviated for that little while to involve itself with the thought of ghairulláh? To be involved with ghairulláh is the direct opposite of ta’alluq-m’Alláh.

Point number four: If this thought was not ikhtiyárí, why was there no repugnance at the thought? Why was there neither contriteness, nor discomfort? This shows that at that moment the ta’alluq-m’Alláh was absent.

We are still speaking in general terms. These points are for our benefit. However the condition of people is such that any attempt to make others leave this habit of ghíbat is difficult. Tell a person involved in spying and carrying tales that it is wrong, that it is against the commands in the Qur’án Sharíf. So, why involve yourself for nothing in such activity? What is his response? In his arrogance he is prepared to go further. “Wáh! I will even go up to him and tell him to his face!” Daring and rash! Persons involved in ziná will be ashamed of their actions. Any normal person will come away shame-faced, regretful of his weakness, contrite. This is taubah.

Somebody involved in ghíbat, on the contrary, is neither ashamed, nor regretful. Instead of being contrite he is more daring! And – if he has some Dín in him – he will even try to justify his sin by saying: “I am doing this for his isláh,” or stating: “I am saying this to save you from the person’s evil!” These are just excuses. There is justification only if there is some connection between the parties or if there is an isláhi ta’alluq. These are the different aspects of ghíbat.

We had digressed while relating the qissah about Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه. To continue with the qissah: The person’s remarks had the desired effect. Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه heart was in turmoil and in this anxious state his eyes opened from sleep. He got up, put on his clothes and went out in search of the youth to ask his forgiveness.

It has to be pointed out here that this compulsion of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه to set out in search of the youth to get his pardon, was a special state related to Junaid’s elevated status. Where the opposite party is not aware, taubah is sufficient.

Approaching the river, Junaid saw a young man strolling along the river bank and recognised him as the same youth he had seen in the masjid. Junaid greeted him: “Assalámo-alaikum.” The youth replied: “Wa-alaikum-salám.” Without a pause, the youth continued: “Having seen a dream you have now come to ask for forgiveness! Without investigating, you jumped to conclusions: ‘A fit young man, dressed in neat white clothes and begging!’ You should, at least, have verified the facts first! How many days have I not spent without food. In spite of searching for work, I found no means. Is it not permissible, under the circumstances, for me to ask? As for these clothes that you see me wearing, they were handed to me just this morning. Seeing externals only, you jumped to conclusions!”

Who is saying all this? The youth! He is not just anybody. He was one who had some rank! It just goes to show that it is not only old people who attain high spiritual ranks.

Nay. This youth had also reached an elevated stage, through ‘ibádat, taqwá, zikrulláh, abstention from sin and ta’alluq-m’Alláh.

The youth further addressed Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه: “I had thought that you had attained a very elevated rank, but it appears that you still have some deficiency!”

The youth was addressing whom? Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه – one of our foremost mashá’ikh! Do not misunderstand. Do not conclude that this act of Junaid’s in any way lowered his rank. No. This was a detail, a fine point, which had to be brought to his notice to enable him to progress even higher. This was his isláh at the pinnacle that he already was on, to enable him to move on to a higher pinnacle. The above point should be well remembered. Students often get confused.

Ranks of the Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم

For instance, when students are studying Mishkát Sharíf and come across the virtues of the Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم they form wrong conclusions. A case in point is that of the status of Hadhrat Abúbakr رضى الله تعالى عنه relative to that of Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه. Some of the virtues of Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه are such that the impression gained is that he has a higher status. The narration of a particularly excellent quality will create this impression. However, one should not look at a virtue in isolation, but one should look at the composite whole, the complete picture. It will then be seen that the virtues of Hadhrat Abúbakr رضى الله تعالى عنه are such that he enjoys a higher rank.

Let us take a specific virtue of Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said that if there was a Nabí to come after him, it would have been Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه. From this one may think: “Oho! What a high rank he has!” Remember, this is stating one particular virtue and is not a verdict over others. Such points are confusing to the student. When teaching Hadíth Sharíf in the madrasah we have to explain these points at length to the students. This digression has a relevance to our qissah.

Although the youth appears to be rebuking Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه, it does not mean that he had outstripped him in rank. Indalláh – as far as Alláh Ta’álá is concerned, he may have – but that is something we cannot know. Lapses in a person may occur. It does not necessarily mean that the person’s rank is lowered, or that there is any difference in his perfection. A walí may have such a lapse as to be involved in an outwardly harám deed. If this is just a momentary lapse, It makes no difference to the perfection in his wiláyet. One may even read of some Sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم having such lapses, but this makes no difference to their rank, or to their wiláyet. The emphasis on the words “temporary lapse” is to be noted – there should be no persistence. And if the person makes proper taubah, where can there be persistence?

We are still dealing with huqúqul-’ibád and the topic of ghíbat. We mentioned that some are not prepared to stop their ghíbat, but will go a step further and tell the person “to his face”. This is worse. It is harám. Such a person is cursed in the Qur’án Sharíf :

Just as ghíbat is harám, reproaching or taunting – telling a person “to his face” – is also harám.

Huqúqul-’ibád and wealth: settling debts, returning illegal gains

Huqúqul-’ibád and wealth: If you are in debt, settle your debts. If you do not have the means, ask your creditor to forgive you. The costliness of unsettled debts has already been brought to your notice – payment of 700 accepted namázes for every three paisah owing! Rather fulfil your trusts and settle your debts.

If a businessman has cheated his clients but now the fear of Alláh Ta’álá has gripped his heart, he should take pen and paper and calculate the sums involved. These amounts should then be returned to his respective clients.

Similarly, unlawfully seized land and houses should be returned to their rightful owners. If the owners are deceased, the heirs become the owners. If you have stolen anything, return the stolen item/s. In business partnerships you may have cheated your partner/s. Calculate the amounts and return these to the respective partners. In a situation where you neither have the means to settle, nor can the creditors be traced, or they have died, make istighfár and du’á for them.

On attaining ta’alluq-m’Alláh and becoming bai’at – or even without becoming bai’at – many people make taubah and start going straight. But what about compensating for past sins? Many give no thought to it. The water in the hauz is still contaminated!

A qissah of a thief who repented

This qissah concerns a person who had become bai’at to Hadhratwálá, Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمه الله عليه.

One day Hadhratwálá spoke to him: “It is a long time since you have become bai’at but, in all this time, you have not related your condition or progress.”

The ta’alluq of bai’at is for the purpose of relating your hál (condition). How can a muríd adopt an attitude of independence while his sheikh is still alive? How can he maintain silence and not relate his inner state to his sheikh?

Once, (I was also present), a khalífah of Hadhratwálá asked him concerning continued correspondence from a khalífah. This is an important point in sulúk. Hadhratwálá replied, with a note of warning: “If one’s contact with one’s sheikh is severed, if one does not maintain this isláhi contact, there is a real danger of a change coming in one’s nisbat, in one’s ta’alluq-m’Alláh.”

The message is quite clear. One should continue relating one’s hál to one’s sheikh even after having attained the rank of khalífah. While in Hadhratwálá’s presence, we used to see isláhi letters coming from prominent ’Ulemá like Mauláná Wasíhulláh رحمه الله عليه and others.

To continue: The muríd answered Hadhratwálá: “What is there to say or ask? I am a poor person. I am performing my five daily namázes. What is shown to me I do. I keep

my rozah in Ramadhán. I do not have wealth, so there is no zakát to give and the question of Hajj does not arise at all.” Hadhratwálá said: “Is that so?”

He then proceeded to question the muríd concerning his past and his business dealings (mu’ámulát.) From what he said his ‘ibádat appeared to be in order, but what about his mu’ámulát? Then only did the muríd’s eyes open.

“Oho! Then I am tainted from the roots of the hair on my head to the nails on my toes! In what way? Well... before becoming bai’at I used to be a thief! What must I do now? I do not have any wealth so as to return the money I had stolen.” Hadhratwálá advised him: “As far as you have knowledge of the people from whom you stole, go up to them and ask their forgiveness. What else is there to do except to get them to overlook what you stole.”

The muríd was a sincere person. He went. His heart had already developed ta’alluq-m’Alláh. The medán of Hashr filled his vision. He went. After a long period of absence he returned, clutching in his hand a piece of paper with a list of names. The names were of the people from whom he had stolen. Next to each name was the amount stolen. What good people they were – they pardoned him and even signed their names to that effect! There was a Hindu person’s name as well – 500 rupees of his had been stolen. 500 rupees of those days would be equivalent to some 500,000 rupees today! The Hindu had written: “Hasbatalilláh, I have forgiven him.” For the sake of Alláh Ta’álá, the Hindu had pardoned him the entire sum!

Having noted all this, Hadhratwálá asked: “How can one be sure that you had gone to them and that these are their signatures?” Muríd: “You may use whatever method you please to confirm it.” Hadhratwálá: “Very well. Go to the post office and get as many reply paid envelopes as there are names on your list. Writing for confirmation will be sufficient.” Muríd: “Very well.” He went to the post office, bought the envelopes and presented these to Hadhratwálá. Hadhratwálá: “No. No. I had no intention of writing to them. But, seeing you have bought the envelopes, I will buy them from you.” Muríd: “I did not bring them to sell to you. I will use them for the mail-order business I am doing. Give them back to me.” Hadhratwálá returned the envelopes to him.

Huqúqul-’ibád! Are you beginning to understand what it means?

This is the tartíb of tazkíyah of the nafs, the methodology for the rectification of the character. How many persons exist so desirous of forgiveness as this muríd? How many are prepared to go around asking to be pardoned by those whom they have cheated?

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí’s treatment of Hadhrat Shiblí

Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه is one of the “Greats” among our mashá’ikh, with countless people having benefited from him. Shiblí came to him, requesting to become bai’at. Junaid Baghdádí replied: “I have no objection to making you bai’at and entering you into the silsilah. However, work should have a methodology. You have been a Ra’ís in your province and you have been a hákim there as well. Firstly, proceed to your locality and ask forgiveness from all those over whom you have ruled. Then we will consider bai’at.”

Nowadays bai’at has become very cheap. It is an everyday request: “Make me bai’at.” This appears to be the only desire – to become bai’at. In these days of our decline as Muslims, some are made bai’at on request, others are given little tasks to perform before

For Friends-Booklet Number one

their request is acceded to. The reason for giving in easily to such requests is the following: in this era of our decline the process of bai'at will, at least, keep the muríd away from customs and bid'ah, get him/her to perform the five daily namázés, get him/her involved in some wazá'if and, simultaneously, it is hoped that others will be saved from any mischief from the muríd. These are some simple objectives attained by the process of bai'at nowadays.

Testing the muríd before bai'at

But before...Oho! Previously great trials and tests took place before initiation into a silsilah. Candidates were scrutinised properly. Among other things, was the candidate capable of eating properly? Unknown to him, he was being “interviewed.” You must know what “interview” is – this is a word very much in vogue nowadays! The mashá'ikh in days gone by used to “interview” the potential muríd. The idea was to see whether he had any worth in him for the important privilege of entering a silsilah.

One sheikh used to provide the applicant with a meal, making sure that the sálin and rotí provided were in proportional amounts. After the candidate had eaten, the sheikh would inspect the remains of the meal. If both sálin and rotí had been eaten, well and good. If the sálin was eaten but the rotí remained or, the opposite, the rotí was eaten and the sálin remained, he would tell the candidate: “There is no equilibrium in you. Our temperaments are not the same and we will not get along together.” He would not make him bai'at. The candidate had failed the “interview”. In worldly affairs, a lot of emphasis is placed on interviews. We hear of people having passed their written examinations, but failing on the results of an interview. Here is anotherqissah:

Qissah concerning Ghulám Yahyá wanting to become bai'at

Ghulám Yahyá is well known to students. He was a great scholar, excelling in philosophy and logic. In fact his kitáb has been and still is, taught as a standard textbook.

He presented himself at the residence of a very well-known sheikh, Mirzá Jánjánah. The doorman went inside to obtain permission for him to enter. Nobody was allowed to enter without permission. The appointment of a doorman was a common practice with the Naqshbandí mashá'ikh of old. When permission had been obtained, Ghulám Yahyá entered and greeted: “Assalámo-alaikum.” Mirzá Jánjánah replied: “Wa-alaikum-salám”. But as he lifted his head and his eyes fell on Ghulám Yahyá, he quickly covered his face with his one arm and shooed Ghulám Yahyá away with the other hand, saying: “There is no place here for a bear!” Quite perplexed, Ghulám Yahyá left the room.

In actual fact, that one glance by Mirzá Jánjánah was sufficient to size up Ghulám Yahyá. The reason for calling him a bear was that he had a big, thick beard which was unkempt and disorderly. Being an ‘Álim, a molvísáhib, the condition of his beard betrayed a streak of disorderliness in his personality. Once outside Ghulám Yahyá paused to ponder over Mirzá Jánjánah’s reaction. “It must be my beard,” he surmised correctly. Straightaway he went to a nearby barber to have it trimmed. When he presented himself again, beard neatly shaped and combed, the response was completely different. Mirzá Jánjánah

For Friends-Booklet Number one

welcomed him happily, asked him to be seated and complimented him: “Má-shá-Alláh! You now look like a human being!”

Did you notice how quick the “interview” was? Just a glance and the “interview” was over. Each person is judged according to the rank he wishes to attain. In our worldly affairs, a candidate applying for the governmental position of Collector will be interviewed with regard to qualities desired in such a person. Is he strong willed? Is he firm and dependable? Etc., etc.

Here is another way a sheikh may “interview” a candidate: provide him with a cup of tea. If he drinks audibly, slurping his tea, he has failed. Our Díní teaching is that water (Or any liquid) should not be drunk in a noisy fashion – animals drink that way! When eating, chew silently.

Mu’ásharat – social etiquettes are part of our Dín

This is also part of our Díní teachings. These etiquettes are also part of Man’s natural temperament, specifically made part of our lifestyle by our Dín. The fact is that others have adopted our teachings, whereas we have neglected these very teachings. Many are under the wrong impression that these etiquettes belong to another culture. A careful study will show that these are from Qur’án Sharíf and Hadíth Sharíf.

Here follow a few other illustrations:

A person lifts up the bamboo door screen and enters without seeking permission first. Failed! Why did he not seek permission? This etiquette is also ours. The Qur’án Sharíf instructs us to seek permission before entering a person’s abode.

Another person leaves the room. In doing so he lifts up the door screen and lets it fall back askew, one corner down and the other corner up. Failed! Why this disorder? Why not depart with serenity? Others now have to take the trouble to set the screen straight.

Do you understand these etiquettes? They are part of our own teachings. These are etiquettes which bring “ádmíyet” into a person.

This discussion has come in incidentally. Let us continue with the qissah of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه and Shiblí. Shiblí had been refused bai’at. Instead, he had been instructed to ask forgiveness from his former subjects. Shiblí departed and did exactly as instructed. He went around for a whole year asking for forgiveness and then returned. Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه was impressed by his sincerity. He now instructed Shiblí to go out and beg alms from the people for another whole year. Just consider: Shiblí, a man from the nobility, a former ruler, told to go and beg! His isláh was in progress. Bai’at will take place at the proper time but, in the meantime, his isláh was in full swing.

In this age ask even a nonentity to go out and beg and see the reaction. The person will feel most offended. He will consider it an insult. He will leave, mumbling: “What kind of sheikh is this? Me, go and beg?” In days gone by, seekers of Truth were sincere.

Shiblí went out begging. A whole year he begged. In all this time he received...nothing! He reported back. Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه: “Ofo! People gave you nothing? What a shame! Never mind. Go out and beg again. But this time, whatever people give you, see that you distribute to the poor!”

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Food was provided by the khánqáh. Those were the times when the khánqáh and the madrasah were sponsored by the Muslim rulers. The expenses of these institutions were specifically budgeted for. This was all done according to the teachings in “Hedáyah”. Now, no more. These institutions are forced to go out for collections in order to continue functioning.

Shiblí set out to beg again. This time people gave, but whatever Shiblí received he gave to the poor. In this way another year went by. How many years had passed by? Three. Yes, three years had passed by since that day that he had come with the request to become bai’at. One year was spent asking for forgiveness; one year went by in begging and not receiving anything; and one year went by in begging and giving to the poor. Now only did he have permission to sit in the majlis. His isláh had been made. The exercises that he had been put through in the three years had made sure that there was no takabbur, no ujub, etc. The correct tartíb had been followed – that is the removal of the akhláqe-razíláh, before going on to the next stage.

Nowadays, people want to be raised to the level of khalífah even before becoming bai’at! A person wrote to me about a dream he had. In the dream a particular buzurg had asked him why was he not making others bai’at. This was now bothering him! Only after three years of effort was Shiblí allowed the privilege of sitting in the majális of Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه Only now was some shaghl shown to him.

Many people come here requesting to be shown some zikr, some tasbít, on the very first day! Very well. In-shá-Alláh, that will be shown, but the tartíb is that isláh comes first! Remove all the debasing qualities first. Remove the akhláqe-razíláh and emblazon yourself with the akhláqe-hamídah. Clean the nafs first. Remove all the dirt and filth, all the malodorous items, all the bad and evil. Get this right first, properly. Remove the deficiencies. Fill up the cracks and the holes. The heart can attain a glow and lustre only after the filth and impurities – the akhláqe-razíláh – have been removed.

What had happened to Shiblí in those three years? The animalism in him was removed, the animalism that is kept in every human being. Students of logic will understand the following: When it is asked: “Man-il-insán?” (What is Man), the answer is: “hayawánun-nátíqun” (An animal having intelligence). Hadhratwálá used to say that the scholars have given the above answer but, in his humble opinion, a more correct answer would be “hayawánun-motafakkirún” (an animal having fikr). “Fikr” means having one’s vision on the eventual outcome at first sight.

The scholars of logic are all agreed that the subject of logic is meant for people like us and not the auliyá. The gaze of the Auliyá-Alláh falls immediately on the correct outcome of a situation without them having to study the science of logic. This human being, this “hayawánun-nátíqun,” whose tazkíyah has been made, has had the animalism removed. This leaves him with the second quality in the “Fore mentioned definition, namely “intelligence”.

This is how he is differentiated from animals. An important point to remember is that the process of tazkíyah removes the “animalism,” but not the “animal” in man. The instinctive animal qualities have not been entirely eliminated by the process leading to isláh

– these instinctive drives have been subjected to intelligence. There is no change in those basic instincts that Man shares with animals. What has changed is that these instinctive qualities will not find expression contrary to the dictates of intelligence. There will be no abuse of one’s faculties.

The three faculties of Man

Man has three basic faculties – Qúwate-Ghazbiyah (Rage), Qúwate-Shahwiyah (Passion) and Qúwate-Aqliyah (Reason). Each of these can exist at any one of three levels – deficiency, equilibrium or excess. Should Qúwate-Ghazbiyah be in a state of deficiency and be absent, the person will not be able to express any anger. Who is then going to wage jihád ? Who will make the correct effort to protect his possessions and his life? How will law and order be correctly established in the land?. Should Qúwate-Shahwiyah be eliminated how will offspring be born? The Ambiyá عليهم السلام had offspring, this being proof of the desirability of a certain degree of passion.

The aim is not to eliminate the basic instincts, but to terminate their abuse. This is tazkiyah of the nafs. The purpose of sulúk is the proper and correct Shar’i tazkiyah of the nafs. Isláh, if carried out correctly, will bring about this tazkiyah. This was the process Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه put Shibli through. Huqúqul-’ibád had to be fulfilled through the asking of forgiveness from Shibli’s subjects. Tazkiyah was done through begging, which broke all pride and arrogance in him. After the tazkiyah, or with it, comes tajliyahe-qalb (embellishing the heart) with the akhláqe-hamídah, making sure that both huqúqulláh and huqúqul-’ibád are taken into account.

In the beginning, it was said that Man has been sent into this world for the sole purpose of ‘ibádat. What has been laid out in front of you is the tartíb involved in the fulfilment of this responsibility. Both the sálik and the tabíbe-isláh have to follow this method. Sulúk is not merely reciting wazá’if. Many hanker only for wazá’if and do not look at the tartíb. These people hanker for that for which one will not be called to account and neglect that which comes first and for which one is accountable. One bears responsibility for fulfilling huqúq and not for huzúz. The mustahabát, the mustahsanát, are all parts of the huzúz.

Kaifiyát – spiritual states – are part of huzúz

Similarly, kaifiyát also form part of the huzúz. These are not parts of the huqúq. Some tend to run after kaifiyát. Kaifiyát produce enjoyment and delight. Sometimes there is crying. At times the heart is also crying. Some or other emotional state overwhelms the person. But remember, kaifiyát are also part of makhluq. So, how can the sálik pursue the makhluq when his objective is the Kháliq? Alláh Ta’álá is not going to ask: “Why did you neglect your wazá’if? Why did you neglect your nafl ‘ibádat?”No. But Alláh Ta’álá is definitely going to ask: “Why did you neglect the necessary Shar’i commands of the Dín? Did you perform your namáz?”If you did, why did you not perform it with jamá’at? What Shar’i excuse prevented you from making your namáz with jamá’at?”Etc., etc. Do you understand this difference between huqúq and huzúz?

For Friends-Booklet Number one

Let us illustrate it in another manner: Food that we eat can be put into two categories. The one category is essential for the proper nutrition of the body. In this category we have items like rotí, meat, dhál, etc. It is the huqúq of the body to have these basic foods in order to thrive properly. If one interferes with this right of the body by not eating – staying hungry for no valid reason – one will be questioned for one’s neglect. To eat your fill and maintain your health and strength falls in the category of huqúq.

The second category of foodstuff contain items prepared in addition to the basics. These items are not essential for the nutrition of the body. Examples of such items are chutney, achár, halwá, murabbah, etc. This is the category of huzúz. These items add taste, whet the appetite. If a person leaves out the rotí, dhál and meat and eats only chutney and achár, a bit of fruit and murabbah, will he be able to maintain his health and strength? No, obviously not. Yes, he may experience some temporary pleasure, but the eventual outcome will be injurious. In a similar manner, one’s rúhání nutrition can be categorised into the category of basic and essential – the huqúq – and the category of huzúz – what is additional to the basic. The huqúq cannot be neglected; the huzúz may or may not be performed.

Nafl ‘ibádat fall in the category of huzúz

Nafl ‘ibádat, whether namáz or rozah, fall in the category of huzúz. Like chutney and achár, they add to the taste and delight! Nafl namáz may be those that are performed at the times of the five daily namázes, or they may be those at other prescribed times – Ishráq, Chásht, Awwábín, Tahajjud.

The nafl rozas are kept in the months of Shábán (15th), Shawwál (any six days), Zil-Hajj (9th), Muharram (9th & 10th or 10th & 11th). One may keep three nafl rozah every month too (13th, 14th & 15th).

Being nafl, if not performed, one will not be answerable. However, nafl and wazá’if bring joy and light to one’s ‘ibádat. That is one reason why they are prescribed. Another reason for recommending them is to fill in any deficiencies in our necessary ‘ibádat. Just like condiments, salad, fruit and halwá will provide vitamins and minerals lacking in the basic food, similarly the nafl is there to fill in any shortcomings in our huqúq.

The following comes in Hadíth Sharif: When one’s namázes are weighed on the Day of Qiyámat and are found to be deficient, Alláh Ta’álá will ask the malá’ikah to see whether there are any nawáfil in one’s Book of Good Deeds. The malá’ikah will look and say: “Yes, there are”. Alláh Ta’álá will then order: “Compensate the deficiency in his fardh with the nawáfil!” And this will be done. The nawáfil will have been of benefit. This is an even more important reason than the first for performing one’s nafl. Who is there who can say that his fardh is absolutely perfect? The importance of performing even more nawáfil is obvious. In this manner one may be able to compensate for the weakness in one’s huqúq.

To summarise thus far: What has been presented to you today is the tartíib of tazkíyah, the method of isláh. This has two parts to it: Firstly, tazkíyah – the removal of the akhláqe-razílah from the nafs: Secondly, following tazkíyah comes embellishment of the heart with akhláqe-hamídah. The isláh should not be merely superficial. It should be done in such a way as to be permanent.

For Friends-Booklet Number one

How to judge? How to see if there is permanence in one's isláh? In the case of deep rooted tazkíyah, at the time of any inclination towards akhláqe-razíláh, the person will immediately stop himself without consciously devising any specific plan. Understand this last phrase well. The person will stop himself without consciously telling himself "Alláh Ta'álá is watching me!" This is done without consciously looking through the different remedies for that particular unseemly inclination. This is the standard! This is the criterion! You may not have reached this level. In that case, the second level is good enough. This is to stop the nafs immediately when it inclines towards the akhláqe-razíláh, by consciously putting into operation any of the procedures prescribed for that particular bad quality. This will indicate that the person has attained the objective of isláh of the nafs.

Thus, today the tartíb of sulúk has been laid out in front of you. Supporting áyát from the Qur'án Sharíf and Hadíth Sharíf and qissas of the akábir, the Auliyá-Alláh and their muríds have been quoted. It was emphasised that, with our akábir, isláh took place before the formality of bai'at.

The isláh of the Ra'ís requesting to become bai'at

The following qissah will further go to illustrate this point: Hadhratwálá had gone to some place. A Ra'ís residing there had requested to become bai'at. Hadhratwálá had acceded to his request and had appointed a specific time for the Ra'ís to present himself for the formal ceremony of bai'at. Because the muríd-to-be was a Ra'ís, he felt he had to distribute mitháí to mark this happy occasion. This is not part of our custom – when a person becomes bai'at, he is not expected to distribute mitháí. On the other hand, if the person does distribute mitháí, there is no objection either. But still, it is not part of our practice.

Some acts of mubáh become prohibited when harmful effects set in

Let us digress to elucidate this point further: Some acts which are mubáh are prohibited when harmful effects set in. An example of this is the distribution of mitháí at the khatam of Qur'án Sharíf – at the completion of the recital of the Qur'án Sharíf in Taráwíh during Ramadhán. This distribution is mubáh. If it was not mubáh, Hadhratwálá would not have been a party to it: In the early years he gave consent but when harm intruded he put a stop to the practice. What started happening was that people not making namáz came just for the mitháí; others used to perform their Taráwíh elsewhere and arrive there for the mitháí; very young children started coming on that night; the floor of the masjid and courtyard became strewn with mitháí, with people trampling all over the mitháí; others again, started queuing more than once for the mitháí; etc. Because of the harm, this practice came to be prohibited. The principle involved is that a permissible mubáh act will become prohibited when harm and corruption sets in.

When faced with two approaches

This principle must not be confused with the following: certain acts have two opposing approaches. Both are permissible. When one approach is adopted the other one does not fall into the category of being prohibited.

Examples of these are:

a) The imám facing the jamá'at after the Fajr and Asr namázes: He sits with the congregation on his right. To sit in such a way that the congregation is on his left, is permissible. However, I have not seen our akábir adopting this latter position.

b) Qirá'at khalfe-imám: This is permissible by the ruling of Imám Abú Hanifa رحمه الله عليه but he has chosen the opposite viewpoint. This is a long and complicated mas'alah.

c) Rafa'-e-dein. This is not so complicated. Imám Abú Hanífah رحمه الله عليه has never said that it is harám. What he has said is that leaving off Rafa'-e-dein is superior (afzal). A person who has never in his life practised Rafa'-e-dein, should occasionally do so, ensuring that one has acted on the Hadíth Sharíf in support of Rafa'-e-dein as well.

d) Position of hands in namáz: Imám Málik رحمه الله عليه has ruled that the hands should be at the side, not folded. Imám Sháfi رحمه الله عليه ruling is that the hands should be folded on the chest. Imám Abú Hanífah رحمه الله عليه ruling is that the folded hands should be placed over the lower abdomen. If you have never followed the other rulings, do so occasionally. They are not prohibited.

e) To recite “Ámín” loudly is also not prohibited. Occasionally say “Ámín” loudly as well. All these alternate rulings have Hadíth Sharíf to support them. The difference that exists between the four Imám's is in the question of “afzaliyet” – which would be superior. Each Imám has placed his own ruling as superior, but has not categorised the other rulings as “ná-já'iz”. These issues are thoughts, for the thoughtful.

This topic is incidental. Let us go back to Hadhratwálá and the Ra'ís: The Ra'ís arrived at the appointed time for the ceremony of bai'at. A basketful of mithái, carried by his servant on his head, was also brought for distribution. The servant placed the basket on the floor and departed. Hadhratwálá said: “A certain person has requested to see me and I have to proceed there now. You come with me. In-shá-Alláh, if I have the opportunity, I will make you bai'at there.” The servant had gone. Who was going to take the basket of mithái along? The Ra'ís bent down, lifted the basket and placed it carefully on his own head. Walking thus, he followed Hadhratwálá. The process of isláh had started, before the formality of bai'at. The rúhání tabíb, Hadhratwálá, had recognised the temperament. “Coming to become bai'at himself, but getting the servant to carry the mithái! Ofo! This will not do!”

The treatment was commenced immediately. Arriving at their destination, Hadhratwálá attended to his work. When finished, he said: “Ofo! I have another appointment as well. There is just not enough time to make you bai'at now. Never mind. Come with me. In-shá-Alláh, if I have time there I will make you bai'at.”

In this manner Hadhratwálá got the Ra'ís to go with him three to four different places, the Ra'ís carrying the basket of mithái on his head and onlookers marvelling at this unique parade. Hadhratwálá told us later in his majlis: “Knowingly, I led him through such places where his friends and acquaintances could see him.”

Finally, they returned to their starting point. Hadhratwálá told the Ra'ís: “Ofo! Unfortunately I had no time to make you bai'at at any of the other places. I have the time and opportunity now”. Hadhratwálá went on to make him bai'at. Yes, the mithái also got

distributed! The Ra'is was, after all, a man of nobility and, therefore, a man of understanding. Once outside, he told others: "I had understood immediately. The treatment of takabbur in me had started. I recognised my *faux pas* in getting the servant to bring the mitháí. I should have brought it myself."

Faná' is the first step

Here you have seen the way the rúhání illness was treated by the rúhání doctor – how the treatment had commenced before bai'at? Hadhratwálá used to say: "In my methods, the first step is faná." Mauláná Abdul Bárí Sáhíb, who was present at the time, was puzzled. "But the kitábs have faná' as the final stage." Hadhratwálá replied: "Yes, that is true. But with me, faná is the first step. Until there is no faná, isláh will not take place."

Junaid Baghdádí رحمه الله عليه had put Shiblí through a process which led to faná. Hadhratwálá did the same thing with the Ra'is. One has to work oneself up to such a stage. So much so, that if a person comes from the back and gives you a thump with his fist, you will not even turn around to see who it is. Not even for that moment must the heart be distracted from the remembrance of Alláh Ta'álá. This awareness of Alláh Ta'álá, this *khushú'*, is to be maintained all the time, not only in namáz.

That is why it was said, right in the beginning, that Alláh Ta'álá had sent Man into this world for the sole purpose of making His 'ibádat. Our objective is to be in His 'ibádat during all our activities. To put it in another way, Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "When you eat and drink according to My laws and instructions, it is 'ibádat; when you answer the call of nature, according to My laws and instructions, it is 'ibádat," and so forth. This can only happen when the nafs has been cleansed of the akhláqe-razíláh. Remember that the basic instincts will remain, manifesting themselves when ordered to do so.

The Qází Sáhíb will be told: "When you enter the court room, do so with dignity, seat yourself with pomp, lean back in your chair with majesty." These instructions for the Qází appear in the kitábs – if you so wish you may check them. The critic may say: "But these are all signs of takabbur!" Yes, very much so. The Qází has been ordered to adopt this attitude. This is an occasion for such behaviour – so that awe is created in the public for this office, so that the administration of justice does not become a sport and game. The majesty of the Qází and the courtroom has to be maintained. Should the head of state, the khalífah, be called to give evidence, then too, he will have to stand and give evidence, while the Qází is seated. The fact that the Qází has been appointed by the khalífah, who is his superior, does not alter the situation. The takabbur that the Qází exhibits is *súratán*, not *haqíqatan*.

From this one can deduce another important rule: Do not judge yourself against the behaviour of the Ahlulláh – they may exhibit certain characteristics which may appear haughty. Their haughtiness is *súratán*, yours is *haqíqatan*! The Ahlulláh have gone through the process of tazkíyah. They are aware of the Greatness of Alláh Ta'álá at all times. They bear the thought of presenting themselves in front of Him constantly. We cannot draw an analogy with them. Their anger is *súratán*, our rage is *haqíqatan*. The lives of the Ahlulláh are according to the Shari'ah, whether one looks at 'ibádat, mu'ásharat or mu'ámulát.

For Friends-Booklet Number one

While the creation is lost in slumber, they are awake. Their mu'ámulát are clean, their mu'ásharat is such that they do not cause any inconvenience to others. On the contrary, they bring ease and comfort to others. Their temperaments are even, changing their attitude only when others deliberately break the relationship. It certainly appears in the Hadíth Sharíf that when Alláh Ta'álá loves somebody it is announced on earth that the creation should love that person, too. The mufasssírín write that this does not include that situation where somebody has caused a breach in the relationship because of some worldly affair. How is it possible to be affectionate to such people?

To end, let us recapitulate: Why has Man been sent to this world? For 'ibádat. What should one's every breath and act in this world be? 'ibádat. These subjects have been explained at length to you. Many have categorised agriculture, commerce, etc. As "worldly" activities, whereas, in fact, they are all 'ibádat. Only when these activities go beyond the limits of the Sharí'ah, do they become the opposite of 'ibádat. We are to blame for taking them outside the bounds of the Sharí'ah and making them "worldly" activities instead of 'ibádat. You will find the virtues of agriculture and commerce listed in our Díní kitábs. If these activities were not 'ibádat, why would their virtues appear in Hadíth Sharíf? We have been created for 'ibádat. It is in this light that each one of us should judge and assess ourselves.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all taufiq with ikhlás and sidq, continuously.
Khudá háfiz.

CLARIFICATION

Reading through page 16 of this booklet may cause some people to conclude – erroneously – that it is permissible to jump from one mazhab to another. This is incorrect.

[Hadhrat's kitáb: "TAQLEED AND IJTIHAD," explains the question of taqlíd fully. Obtainable from the Y.M.M.A. P. O. Box 18594, Actonville, 1506, South Africa.]

NOTE: Careful reading of the introductions to the booklet will avoid such misconceptions.

It will be obvious that not all the advice given in a majlis is applicable to everybody present. It may be that certain remarks are directed at just one group of individuals, or even just to one person in the whole gathering. To see whether any comments apply to oneself, one has to refer back to one's sheikh. The fact that such misconceptions can arise, demonstrates the need for a sheikh-e-kámil to guide one.

These translations are not meant as a substitute for direct guidance from one's sheikh. Any serious seeker has to establish a direct contact with a sheikh-e-kámil in order to seek solutions to his particular problems. These booklets will assist in highlighting certain aspects of Tasawwuf and the areas that the seeker has to attend to in his own isláh.

A sheikh-e-kámil tailors a student's progress according to his level. Many instructions from a sheikh may be incomprehensible to the layman, but the purpose behind

For Friends-Booklet Number one

is the isláh of the sálik. This was seen in the treatments of Hadhrat Shiblí رحمة الله عليه and the Ra'ís, respectively narrated in this booklet.

Dr. I.M