

HAYAATAN TAYYIBATAN

A Wholesome Life



**FOR THE PRACTISING MU'MIN LIFE ON EARTH AND IN THE
AAKHIRAH IS *HAYAATAN TAYYIBATAN***

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***“WHOEVER – MALE OR FEMALE - PRACTISES
VIRTUOUS DEEDS, WHILST A MU’MIN,
MOST CERTAINLY WE SHALL
BESTOW TO HIM/HER A WHOLESOME
LIFE (HAYAATAN TAYYIBATAN), AND
WE SHALL MOST ASSUREDLY BESTOW
TO THEM THEIR REWARD FOR THE VIRTUES
THEY USED TO PRACTISE.”
(An-Nahl, aayat 97)***

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IBN MUBAARAK AND THE BARKAT OF HALAAL FOOD

MOST MUSLIMS MUST have heard the name of the illustrious Saint, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh). His father, Mubaarak, was the slave of the Qaadhi of the City of Ray. The piety of his slave had made an indelible impression on the Qaadhi who was a very wealthy and prominent member of the community. In spite of high-ranking and elite members of the community proposing marriage for his daughter, the Qaadhi married his daughter to his slave, Mubaarak.

The Qaadhi Saheb too was a pious man, hence he made the decision to have his daughter married to his slave. Taqwa was the criterion for his decision. After the bride was delivered to her husband Mubaarak, the now freed slave, he did not consummate the marriage for forty days. Both he and his wife remained in Ibaadat for this period. Meanwhile Mubaarak ensured that he fed his wife with halaal tayyib food for forty days.

After three days had passed without consummation, his wife complained to her husband. Mubaarak replied: "Undoubtedly, your father is a pious man. However, he is a Qaadhi. I have doubts on the absolute purity of his wealth and what he had fed you. I desire that before consummation of the marriage, any mushtabah food which you may have consumed at your father's home be worked out of your system so that Allah Ta'ala blesses us with pious offspring. When the pious lady heard this explanation she understood, was overjoyed and she joined her husband in the 40 day I'tikaaf. Thereafter the illustrious Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak, the Imaam of the Ummah of the time was conceived.

This is the effect of halaal tayyib food. It is precisely for this reason that Allah Ta'ala emphasizes to His Ambiya the importance of consuming halaal tayyib food. In such food there is *Noor* which brightens the Rooh of the Mu'min. On the other hand, in haraam and mushtabah food there is nothing but *zulmat* (spiritual darkness) which utterly ruins the spiritual fibre of the Mu'min. Taufeeq for A'maal-e-Saalihah is negated despite the realization of the importance of such deeds and despite the intellectual perception of the necessity of righteous deeds. But, the weakened Imaan tarnished and damaged by haraam and mushtabah food cannot generate sufficient energy to fight and thwart the commands of the nafs to be spiritually lethargic and perpetually incline towards evil.

Muslims should realize that consumption of haraam and mushtabah is not a trivial issue. It is a fatal poison for Imaan.

THE REWARD OF PARENTS' DUA

ALLAH TA'ALA INSTRUCTED Hadhrat Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) to go to the seashore to observe a wonderful scene. Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) set off to the sea with a group of companions which included some jinn. On arrival at the seashore, he could not see anything extraordinary. After ruminating for a while, he commanded Ifreet (a powerful jinn) to dive into the ocean to investigate. Ifreet dived into the ocean and descended as far as he could. After a considerable time had passed, he emerged and reported that there was nothing extraordinary.

Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) commanded another jinn to dive deeper into the ocean and investigate. The second jinn obeyed, and after some time surfaced without having observed anything peculiar or extraordinary. Then Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) ordered his Wazeer (Minister), Aasif Bin Barkhiya to dive into the ocean. The Qur'aan Majeed describes Aasif Bin Barkhiya as a man who had the Knowledge of the Kitaab.

Aasif Bin Barkhiyah descended into the ocean and soon reached the very bottom where even the jinn did not reach. To his surprise he saw a beautiful white domed building which had four entrances. Each door was of a different type of precious stone, and all four doors were wide open. Despite the building being at the bottom of the ocean, not a drop of water entered.

After Aasif reported this wonderful discovery, Nabi Sulaimaan commanded Ifreet to bring the building to the surface. Ifreet then descended to a depth which was thrice as deep as he had reached when he first dived into the ocean. From the floor of the ocean he brought the beautiful building to the surface and placed it on the shore. Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) marvelling at this wonder entered the building. He was astonished to find an extremely handsome young man dressed in exquisite white robes performing Salaat.

Making Salaam, Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) asked: "What has delivered you into this ocean?"

Youngman: "O Nabi of Allah! My father was paralysed and my mother blind. I served them for 70 years. Just before my mother passed away, she supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! Grant my son long life and engross him in your ibaadat." When it was time for my father's demise, he supplicated: "O Allah! Let him serve you in such a place where shaitaan cannot reach."

After I buried my father, I passed by this shore and to my surprise I saw this domed building. Its beauty exercised a magnetic effect on me. I entered to view it. When I was inside an Angel arrived and delivered the building together with me to the bottom of this ocean."

Hadhrat Sulaimaan: "In which age did you come here?"

Youngman: "It was the age of Hadhrat Ibraaheem Khalilullah (alayhis salaam)."

Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) calculated and determined that 2000 years had lapsed since then. Despite the passing of thousands of years, the man was so young. Every hair was intensely black. Not a single hair was white.

Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) asked: "What do you eat in this ocean? The Youngman said: "O Nabi of Allah! A green bird brings to me in its beak something yellowish the size of a man's head. I eat it. It contains the tastes of all the bounties in the world. It eliminates heat, cold, lethargy, sickness, fear, hunger, thirst, etc.

Hadhrat Sulaimaan: "Do you wish to accompany us?"

Youngman: "No! "Deliver me to my original abode." And, so was the domed building with the Aabid returned to the depths of the ocean. Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) commented: "Reflect! How wonderfully has the dua of parents been accepted. May Allah have mercy on you. Observe the rights of parents. O Allah! Grant us the taufeeq to serve our parents."

YOUR FATHER

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The pleasure of Allah is in the pleasure of your father."

"Your father is the centre portal of (your) Jannat. Now if you wish destroy it or preserve it."

"Of the noblest of good deeds is to be kind to the relatives of your father's friends after his demise."

"Three duas are maqbool (readily accepted). In this there is no doubt. The Dua of the father; the Dua of the musaafir (traveller) and the Dua of the mazloom (oppressed)."

These Ahaadith also apply to the mother.

A MIRACULOUS REWARD

ONCE THERE WAS a woman whose generosity was her outstanding characteristic. A poor lady with an infant in her arms came to her door begging for a garment to clothe her naked baby. The generous lady of the house also had a small baby, and she too was poor. She removed her own baby's dress and handed it to the beggar. The beggar supplicated: "May Allah Ta'ala clothe your baby with the garment of his mercy and grace." After the beggar departed, a beautiful garment miraculously appeared from above and fitted itself on the baby. This garment remained on the baby for many years. It increased in size with the growth of the baby. In winter it was warm, and in summer cool.

It is mentioned in the Hadith that Allah Ta'ala fulfils the needs of one who fulfils the needs of others.

RESPITE FOR THREE DAYS

"ENJOY YOURSELVES in your homes for three days. This is a promise that cannot be falsified."

(Aayat 65, Surah Hood)

Once Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) with a group of Sahaabah passed by a grave. He said: "Do you know whose grave this is?" The Sahaabah said: "Allah and His Nabi know best." Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "This is the grave of Abu Righaal. He was from the

nation of Thamud. At the time of the punishment which destroyed the entire nation, he was in the Haram of Makkah. He was therefore saved. However, when he left the precincts of the Haram, the same punishment seized him. He was buried with a gold walking stick." The Sahaabah later dug open the grave and retrieved the gold walking stick.

When the nation of Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) rejected his Call of Tauheed and taunted him to bring the punishment he was warning them of, then Allah Ta'ala ordered him to tell his people that the punishment they were demanding would overtake them in three day's time. The evil people continued taunting and jeering Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam), and they plotted to murder him. After a respite of three days, their faces turned yellow on the first day. On the second day, their faces became intensely red, and on the third day black. Then from above came the Mighty Scream – the screech of an Angel. From the earth came a massive earthquake. The entire nation perished. Mentioning their terrible fate, the Qur'aan Majeed says:

"The mighty quake apprehended them, and by the morning they lay prostrate on their faces in their homes (which had been utterly destroyed)."

In our age too there are communities lined up for similar punishment. When the appointed time arrives, the Mighty Scream will suddenly and swiftly eliminate them. In this regard the Qur'aan

Majeed states: *"And, when We intend to destroy a city, We command its opulent inhabitants; then they commit evil in it.*

Then the decree (punishment) becomes justified for them. Thus do We then utterly annihilate them."

(Surah Al-Israa', Aayat 16)

Allah Ta'ala grants them respite to enjoy themselves in their drunken stupor of opulence. They madly indulge in unbridled fisq and fujoor. Then suddenly the Athaab arrives and uproots and destroys them.

ASSOCIATES IN BAATIL

ONCE HADHRAT ISAA (alayhis salaam) together with his Hawariyyeen (Companions) passed by a village. Everything was in ruins and desolate. Human skeletons were lying all over the show. Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) said to the Hawariyyeen that these people were destroyed by the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala. The Companions wished to know more of the condition of the destroyed people. Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) made dua to Allah Ta'ala. He was instructed to call the skeletons during the night time. During the night, Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) mounted a small hill and called out: "O people of the village!" Someone from the village responded: "What is your command, O Roohullaah!"

Nabi Isaa: What is the state of your people?

Skeleton: One night we were sleeping well. Suddenly in the morning we were dumped into Jahannum.

Nabi Isaa: What is the reason?

Skeleton: We were engrossed in the love of the world and followed the transgressors.

Nabi Isaa: To what extent did you love the world?

Skeleton: As much as a baby loves its mother. When the mother appears, the baby becomes happy and when the mother disappears the baby grieves and cries.

Nabi Isaa: Why do your companions not speak?

Skeleton: There are reins of fire in their mouths and the Angels are pulling at these reins. These Angels are of foul temper.

Nabi Isaa: How do you then speak?

Skeleton: I was not one of them. But, since I associated with them the punishment overtook me too. Now I have been hung up on the brink of Jahannum. I do not know if I will be saved or flung into the Fire." (Nazhatul Basaateen)

SADQAH

- ◆ "Sadqah blocks 70 avenues of evil."
- ◆ "Sadqah prevent from an evil death."

- ♦ “Sadqah given to a miskeen has one reward, and Sadqah given to close relatives has two rewards.”
 - ♦ “Sadqah extinguishes the Wrath of Allah.”
- (Ahaadith)

WHAT IS TAQWA AND WARAA'

THE INSANE and excessive indulgence in futility and haraam has completely extinguished the concept of *Taqwa* which is a Waajib attribute to cultivate. The Qur'aan and the Sunnah repeatedly command and exhort the cultivation of *Taqwa*. Higher than *Taqwa* is the state of *Wara'*. The following episode illustrates and gives an idea of the meaning of *Wara'*.

Once Hadhrat Ibraaheem Nakha'i (rahmatullah alayh) hired a horse to go on a journey. While riding, his whip fell from his hand to the ground. By the time he stopped the horse, the whip was a few metres behind. He did not turn the horse around to go riding to the spot where the whip was. He dismounted and walked to the spot to retrieve his whip. Then he walked to the horse. When he was asked the reason for this peculiar action, he said: “I had hired the horse from its owner to proceed ahead, not to come backwards. It is a violation of the right of the owner to retrace any distance already covered.”

NASEEHAT FOR THE HUFFAZ AND STUDENTS OF THE DEEN

HADHRAT FUDHAIL BIN IYAADH (rahmatullah alayh) said: "It does not behove the Haafiz to involve himself in sport and amusement with those who indulge in such futility. He should not join in the company of people who are involved in carelessness."

Futility, sport and amusement are anathema for Ilm-e-Wahi (the Knowledge which stems from Divine Revelation). Indulgence in sport and futility in entirety effaces the *Noor* of Ilm, and severely contaminates the *Noor* of Imaan. Minus this *Noor*, the molvi remains a *jaahil*. Such *jahl* camouflaged with textual or book knowledge is compound *zulmat* (intense spiritual darkness) which will become a great humiliating calamity in the Aakhirah.

It is not befitting – in fact it is haraam – for those who carry Bukhaari Shareef and Hidayah in their hands, those who pursue the Ilm of Qur'aan Tafseer, Hadith and Fiqah, to humiliate and demean themselves kicking and hitting balls and behaving like monkeys. They should remember that the original abode – the initiation venue – of Ilm-e-Deen was *Ghaar-e-Hira*. The true Student of Deen is not in need of rational arguments to understand the villainy and notoriety of indulgence in kuffaar sport. The noor of Aql – i.e. if he possesses such noor – is adequate to understand all transcendental realities and unravel spiritual mysteries.

CONTENTMENT OF THE AULIYA

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “*Of the good fortune of the Son of Aadam is that he is pleased (and contented) with whatever Allah has decreed for him.*”

Whenever Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) would become ill, he would not act according to the advice of the physician. Once when he was sick, and told to call a physician, he replied: “By Allah! If I know that my cure (from this sickness) is simply to touch my ear, then never would I do so. Whatever Allah Azza Wa Jal decrees is best.”

When Hadhrat Shaddaad Bin Hakeem (rahmatullah alayh) became sick, he distributed a hundred dirhams (silver coins) to the poor in gratitude for the sickness.

When Hadhrat Abu Bakr Ayyaash (rahmatullah alayh) became ill, people called a Christian physician to attend to him. However, Hadhrat Ayyaash did not allow the doctor to even touch him. He refused to submit to diagnosis. As the doctor departed, Hadhrat Ayyaash (rahmatullah alayh) made dua: “O Allah! Just as you have saved me from the pain of kufr, do with me as you deem fit.”

This was the attitude of the Aarifeen and the great Auliya. They were always contented with whatever condition Allah Ta'ala decreed for them. While medical treatment is permissible, it is not compulsory. Abstention from medical treatment is based on *Tawakkul* and *Ridha* (being pleased and contented with Allah's decrees). While the masses cannot emulate the Auliya in such lofty attitudes, they should at least adhere to the minimum demand, which is: never to complain in times

of adversity and hardship. While dua for removal of the calamity is permissible, complaining is not permissible. Complaint against the decrees of Allah Azza Wa Jal is unintelligent and it approaches the confines of kufr.

THE CHASTE YOUTH

HADHRAT Ahmad Bin Saeed (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode which is a sombre *naseehat* for those involved in evil:

"In Kufah in our locality there lived an extremely handsome youth. In addition to his physical handsomeness, he was exceptionally pious. He devoted all his time to ibaadat. At all times he was in I'tikaaf in the Jaami' Musjid. His moral character was impeccable. One day a very beautiful woman set eyes on him while he was on his way to the Musjid. Immediately she was captivated by his handsomeness. She fell madly in love with him. For many days thereafter, this woman did not gain the opportunity of revealing her love to this young *Aabid* (worshipper).

One day while the youth was on his way to the Musjid, the woman ventured into the road and blocked his path. She said: "Before you proceed listen to me, then do as you please." The youth did not respond. He brushed past her and continued walking to the Musjid. On his way back from the Musjid, the woman again stood in his path. When the youth neared her, she attempted to say something, but the man spoke: "This is a place of suspicion. I do not want anyone to see me standing here with you. (*Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam -- had said: 'Stay away from places of suspicion.'*) Move out of my way."

The woman said: 'By Allah! I am well aware of your status. I also do understand that meeting in this way is a cause for suspicion. Nevertheless, I have to say that my heart and every limb of my body are in love with you. Only Allah Ta'ala will decide this matter between us.'

The youth, without responding, silently left for his home. At home he decided to engage in Nafil Salaat, but his heart was in a state of agitation. He sat down to write a letter to the woman. After he completed the letter, he went outside and saw the woman standing in a trance-like state in the same place where he had left her. He threw the letter in her direction and quickly went into his home.

The woman opened the letter and read:

"O woman! You should understand that when a bandah (slave of Allah) commits an act of transgression, Allah Ta'ala overlooks it. When the slave commits the same crime a second time, Allah Ta'ala again overlooks it. But, when he repeatedly indulges in the same sin, then Allah Ta'ala unleashes His Wrath which makes all creation shudder with fear. Who can bear Allah's punishment? Who can bear His Displeasure? Present yourself in the Court of Allah Who is the Creator of all the worlds. Submit yourself to This Mighty Being. Cultivate love for Him Alone. He is eternal."

Many days after she had received this letter, the woman once again stood in the road. The youth seeing her, turned to return to his house, but she called: 'Do not go back. This is my last meeting. She recited some heartrending poetry, then said: "Now give me some *naseehat* (advice)." The youth said: "My only advice for you is – save yourself from your own desires and at all times reflect on the aayat: *"It is He (Allah) Who possesses your souls during the night time, and He is well aware of what you commit during the day time. Then He resurrects you during the day, so that the appointed time is completed."* He is aware of the stealthy glances of the eyes and that which the breasts conceal."

The youth departed. The woman remained standing, shedding tears profusely for a long time. Then she too went away and engrossed herself in ibaadat. After a short while she departed from this worldly realm with her Imaan intact."

According to the Hadith, on the Day of Qiyaamah, when there will be no shade, but the shade of Allah's Arsh, chaste and pious young men will be honoured to be in the Shade of Allah's Throne. Besides Divine Love, all other types of love are artificial. Illicit love for the opposite sex is a great calamity. Only if the limits of the Shariah are observed will one be saved from this calamity. Only taqwa can protect the moral purity and chastity of those who suffer the misfortune of becoming enmeshed in this kind of artificial love.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "*Whoever falls in love and maintains his (or her) moral purity, then dies, verily, he (or she) attains shahaadat (martyrdom).*" For the acquisition of this lofty rank, moral purity and chastity are essential. Moral purity is purity of the eyes, the limbs

and even the mind. The grief of this calamity should be borne with Thikrullah and suppression of the inordinate dictates of the carnal nafs.

MOTHER IS YOUR NAFL HAJJ

A MAN LEFT from the City of Farghaanah (in Central Asia) with the intention of performing Nafl Hajj. When he reached Nishapur, he went to visit Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan Al-Khairi (rahmatullah alayh). He made Salaam, but Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan did not respond. Feeling annoyed, the man reflected in his mind: 'It is indeed surprising that a Muslim does not respond to the Salaam of another Muslim!'

By *kashf* it was revealed to Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan what the man was thinking. He commented: "Does a person perform Hajj whilst abandoning his ailing and grieving mother?" Jolted by this truth, the man abandoned his plan for Hajj, and immediately set off to return to Farghaanah. He remained in his mother's service until her death.

After his mother's demise he travelled to Nishapur to be in the company of Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan Al-Khairi. When Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan saw the man, he leapt up, embraced and honoured him. He remained in the company of Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan until the latter's demise.

The rights of a mother, in fact the rights of parents, are sacred. The importance and sanctity of the rights of parents increase with age. The bond of parenthood becomes stronger with time. Even if the son reaches 60 years, he remains a child to his parents and it remains his obligation to keep them happy in all lawful things. It is not permissible for even the adult or elderly son to depart on a journey without the happy consent and blessings of his parents. And a journey in terms of the Shariah is a distance of 77 kilometres or more. Children should not deprive themselves of the wonderful Duas of their parents when they go on a journey. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) described the Dua of parents as '*Mustajaab (readily acceptable), without doubt*'.

Most people indoctrinated with western ideas are oblivious of the Waajib rights of their parents. The western cult of life is the life-style of animals. The parental bond fades into oblivion for animals.

SADQAH – A REMEDY FOR SICKNESS

-The importance of water-

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Protect your wealth (by paying) Zakaat. Remedy your sick ones (by giving) Sadqah. Fortify (yourselves) against calamities by means of Dua."

Sadqah is an efficacious method of treating sickness. A man came to Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) and complained: "I am suffering for seven years from this wound on my knee. I have resorted to every kind of remedy. I have consulted many physicians, but to no avail."

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak said: "Go and search for a place where people are experiencing hardship because of lack of water. Have a well dug for them. I have hopes that with the gushing of water, your wound will be healed."

The man obeyed. He arranged for the construction of a well. After a short while he was completely healed. Imaam Baihqi narrated the following wonderful episode.

"My Ustaadh Imaam Abu Abdullah Haakim's face became covered with pimples. Every remedy failed to cure him. After a whole year passed in this condition, he went to Hadhrat Imaam Abu Uthmaan As-Saabuni and requested: "*During your Jumuah majlis (gathering) do supplicate for my cure.*" Imaam Saabuni that Friday made fervent dua and those present recited 'Aameen'.

The next Jumuah, a lady sent a letter to Imaam Saabuni in which she had written: 'I too had made fervent dua at home that night for Imaam Abdullah Haakim. That very night Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) appeared in my dream and said: 'Tell Abu Abdullah Haakim to make water available in abundance to the people.'

Imaam Baihqi said that he delivered the letter to Imaam Abu Abdullah Haakim. After reading the letter, he immediately arranged for the construction of a well to supply the people with water. Even

before a week had passed, his face began to heal. Very soon there remained not a single pimple nor any blemish on his face. He was completely cured.

THE TAQWA OF IBN SEEREEN

HADHRAT Allaamah Ibn Seereen (rahmatullah alayh) – died 110 hijri- was one of the greatest among the Muhadditheen. He was an outstanding Faqeeh and in the science of dream-interpretation he was an expert. Once, he acquired a loan of 40,000 dirhams to conduct some trade. The oil which he purchased with the money was filled in leather bags. In one of the oil containers a dead rat was found. Hadhrat Ibn Seeraan (rahmatullah alayh) commented: “It is possible that this rat had died in the tank from which the oil was filled into the leather containers..”

He therefore decided that all the oil was *najis* (impure), and had it thrown away. Since he was unable to pay his debt, he was imprisoned and he languished there for a considerable time.

Although in terms of the Shariah he was required to discard only the one bag of oil in which the rat was found, his lofty status of Taqwa constrained him to dump all the oil because of the possibility that the rat could have been in the tank from which the bags were filled.

The guard at the jail advised Hadhrat Seereen to spend the nights at his home, and return in the morning. Hadhrat Seereen said: “By Allah, I shall not aid you by betraying the Sultan.”

His Taqwa was of such a lofty standard that Allah Ta’ala had bestowed to him the ability to act with Taqwa even in dreams. Hishaam Bin Hassaan narrated that Allaamah Ibn Seereen said: “If I see a ghair mahram female even in a dream, I turn away my gaze.”

Ibn Seereen (rahmatullah alayh) was a Taa-biee. However, senior Sahaabah had the greatest regard for him. Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiyallahu anhu), a very senior Sahaabi and a close confidante of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was the Ustaadh of Hadhrat Ibn Seereen (rahmatullah alayh). During his last illness, Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiyallahu anhu) had directed that when he dies, Hadhrat Ibn Seereen should give him ghusl and perform his Janaazah Salaat.

It so happened that when Hadhrat Anas (radhiyallahu anhu) died, Ibn Seereen was still in jail. The ruler permitted him to attend to the ghusl and Janaazah Salaat of Hadhrat Anas (radhiyallahu anhu). After attending to these duties, Ibn Seereen (rahmatullah alayh) returned straight to prison without even meeting any members of his family.

THE TAQWA OF IMAAM AHMAD

ONCE FRESHLY-BAKED bread was presented to Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) by a servant. When Imaam Ahmad asked about the bread, he was informed that the bread had been baked in the home of his son, Abdullah. Abdullah was an Aalim of Taqwa. Despite the piety of his son, Imaam Ahmad refused the bread and instructed that it should be removed from his presence.

The reason for this attitude was that his son, Shaikh Abdullah, used to accept gifts from the Khalifah of the time, and Imaam Ahmad believed that the wealth of the Khalifah was contaminated.

On one occasion he had severed all relationship for a full month with his two sons and paternal uncle because they had accepted gifts from the Khalifah.

On another occasion when bread was presented to him, Imaam Ahmad enquired about the origin of the bread. The cook said: “I used your flour and obtained the yeast from your son, Abdullah.” Imaam Ahmad refused to eat of the bread since he believed that it had become *Mushtabah* (*Doubtful*). The cook asked if he should give the bread to a faqeer (beggar). Imaam Ahmad said that he may do so on condition that he informs the faqeer that the flour was Ahmad’s and the yeast was from Abdullah.

For an entire month no faqeer came to the door. The cook informed Imaam Ahmad that the bread was no longer fit for human consumption. Imaam Ahmad instructed him to throw the bread in the river.

THE MEANING OF GHAI RAT

GHAI RAT (*shame, honour and modesty*) is an attribute which Islam stresses much. Once in the court of Qaadhi Musa Bin Ishaq, a lady covered with her burqah claimed that her husband was

indebted to her for 500 gold coins which were for her mahr. The husband contested her claim. The Wakeel (lawyer/representative) of the lady produced two witnesses to testify as is required by the Shariah to prove a claim which is denied.

Before testifying the witness requested that the lady removes her niqaab because he could not testify without recognizing her. It is permissible according to the Shariah for women to reveal their faces in the presence of the Qaadhi who hears their cases. When the lady stood up and was about to open her niqaab, the *ghairat* of her husband could not tolerate another man looking at his wife. He therefore said: "I testify that I do owe my wife the 500 Ashrafis (gold coins) she is claiming. My wife should never expose her face to a stranger."

The impact of the husband's honour constrained the wife to say: "I have waived the entire debt from my husband." The Qaadhi ordered that this episode be recorded as a lesson for posterity. (*Shu'bul Imaan of Imaam Baihqi*)

THE GHAI RAT OF A PIOUS QUEEN

BEGUM Zaib Baanoo, the wife of Sultan Aurangzeb (Aalamghir), had developed a lump on her breast. The English doctor, Martin proposed that a female relative of his could attend to the Queen. His relative was also a doctor. The Queen agreed on condition that the English lady doctor is not a consumer of liquor. However, it was established that the lady doctor was a drinker of alcohol as are all western non-Muslims. The Queen refusing to be treated by the English lady commented: "*A faasiqah may not touch my body.*"

The Queen chose sickness, but for a faasiqah to touch her was intolerable. She remained without being cured and died two years later.

TO COMPROMISE WITH BAATIL OR NOT TO COMPROMISE?

A DISEASE which has beset the Ulama of the age is compromise with *baatil*. A variety of *baatil* excuses is proffered for justifying this compromise. The following episode narrated by Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) should be sufficient lesson for the compromisers.

When Sultan Mahmud Ghaznawi conquered India, he set about to demolish the Hindu mandir (temple) in Somnath. All the idols in the mandir were smashed. When the biggest idol was about to be smashed, the idol-worshippers passionately pleaded for their idol to be spared. They promised to give in exchange the weight of the idol in gold if it was not smashed.

Sultan Mahmud consulted with his advisors. All of them were of the opinion that since the country was conquered and the idols smashed, it would not really matter if the one idol is spared. The huge amount of gold could be put to constructive use. Sayyid Salaar Mas'ood Ghaazi who was also present said: 'This is tantamount to selling idols. Hitherto Muslim kings were idol-breakers, now they will be labelled idol-sellers.' Although this comment appealed to the Sultan, he still entertained a degree of doubt.

That afternoon during his nap, he dreamt that he was on the Plains of Qiyaamah. An Angel leading him (the Sultan) to Jahannum was saying: 'He is a idol-seller'. Another Angel responded: 'No, he is an idol-breaker. Take him to Jannat.' Suddenly the Sultan's eyes opened. Immediately he issued the command for the big idol to be smashed. When the idol was smashed, its inside was found to be filled with precious stones the value of which exceeded the value of the gold which the idolaters had offered.

Sultan Mahmud profusely expressed his gratitude (shukr) to Allah Ta'ala Who had guided him to smash the idol and at the same time bestowed such a huge treasure to him."

Compromise with baatil is not permissible. The duty of the Ulama is to proclaim the Haqq and not to adulterate it with baatil. The argument of '*hikmat*' to justify compromise with baatil is a despicable carnard.

THE MAGNAMITY AND TOLERATION OF A SULTAN

SULTAN Taajuddeen Yaldoor had entrusted his son to an Ustaadh for his Deeni education. One day, in a fit of rage the Ustaadh struck the prince on the head with his whip. The prince collapsed

and died. The Ustaadh was miserable with remorse and fear. On receiving the sad news, the Sultan immediately hastened to the maktab where he saw the dead body of his son.

Observing the miserable state of the Ustaadh, the Sultan said: "Leave immediately before the news of the prince's death reaches his mother. Migrate to some faraway place where you can pass the days in concealment. Go before I am petitioned to have you executed for this crime."

Shedding tears in profusion and expressing his profound gratitude, the Ustaadh departed as advised by the Sultan.

The Sultan's honour did not permit punishing the man who was the Ustadh of his son. The Sultan's grief did not overshadow his honour and intelligence.

RESPECT FOR THE HADITH

IBN HABEERAH was the *Wazeer-e-A'zam* (Prime Minister) of the 6th century Khalifah Muqtadha Li-Amrillah of the Abbaasi dynasty. Once while Ibn Habeerah was engaged in teaching Hadith, he heard wailing of women from inside his home. He closed the Hadith Kitaab and went to investigate. After a few minutes he returned, and continued with the Hadith lesson.

At the end of the lesson when he was asked about the wailing episode, Ibn Habeerah informed the gathering that his child had died hence the womenfolk were wailing so loudly. He added: "If prohibiting the wailing of the females had not been my obligation, I would not have left the session of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)", i.e. the dars of Hadith.

Since Amr Bil Ma'roof Nahy anil munkar was the Waajib duty of the Prime Minister, he was compelled to prohibit the females from their haraam act of loud wailing.

THREE TYPES OF QAADHIS

THE FAMOUS Qaadhi Kamaaluddeen Shahruzi once went to the camp of Sultan Mas'ood Saljuti. The Sultan was on this occasion conducting a Jihad campaign. The Qaadhi arrived at the camp at the time of Maghrib. He saw in a nearby tent a man engaged in Maghrib Salaat. The Qaadhi entered and joined the musalli. After Salaat, the Qaadhi asked: "Who are you?" The musalli said: "I am the Qaadhi of a certain city." Qaadhi Shahruzi commented: "There are three types of Qaadhis. Two types will enter Jahannum and one type will enter Jannat. The two types of Jahannami Qaadhis are like you and I who humiliatingly run after Sultans, and the Jannati Qaadhi is he whose face Sultans have not seen nor has he seen the face of Sultans."

Qaadhi Shahruzi was drawing attention to the evil attitude of Qaadhis in general. They would frequent and flatter the rulers to gain favours, and in this evil process justice was abused. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said in this regard: "*Verily, the most despised Qurraa' (Qaaris and Ulama) by Allah are those who visit the rulers.*" Qaadhi Shahruzi's comment was made in the light of this and similar other Ahaadith. In fact, it is the advice of the Ulama-e-Haqq that an Aalim should not respond to the invitation of the ruler even if he invites with sincerity, affection and humility. The company of rulers is spiritually calamitous. Ulama who enjoy the company of kings and rulers are most assuredly influenced by the worldly ethos of the rulers. The Aalim frequenting rulers is impalpably influenced. His stance of Haqq becomes compromised. A thread of liberalism – compromise with baatil – becomes conspicuously discernible in his views and fatwas. Ultimately, without realizing, he joins the fraternity of the Ulama-e-Soo' who trade the Deen for a miserable price.

In the morning when Qaadhi Shahruzi was ushered into the royal presence of Sultan Mas'ood Saljuti, he (the Qaadhi) was surprised to realize that the musalli with whom he had performed Maghrib Salaat and to whom he had made the comment was in fact Sultan Mas'ood. Smilingly the Sultan commented: "Please narrate the condition of the three types of Qaadhis." Qaadhi Shahruzi said: "Yes, what I had said is the truth." The Sultan responded: "Undoubtedly, you have spoken the truth. Undoubtedly, you are that pious, fortunate Qaadhi who had not seen my face nor had I seen your face." This was their very first meeting. The statement of the Sultan was therefore factual.

PUNISHMENT FOR A LUSTFUL GAZE

HADHRAT ABU Abdullah Al-Jalaa' (rahmatullah alayh) was a renowned Wali during the early stage of Islam. He was the mureed of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). Narrating an episode which had happened to him during his early years of self-reformation, he says:

"Once whilst walking in the bazaar I saw an extremely handsome Christian lad. I stared and wondered at the beauty of this lad. While I was admiring the lad's beauty, Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) appeared on the scene. I said to him: "Hadhrat, will Allah Ta'ala punish such a beautiful form in the fire?" Hadhrat Junaid said to me: 'Did you look at the lad?' I said: 'Yes.'" He responded: "Your look was not a look of *ibrat* (to derive lesson). It was a look of lust. For deriving lesson there are thousands of universes into which you could look and contemplate to gain lesson. You shall taste the punishment of this lustful glance."

So saying, Hadhrat Junaid departed. As he left me, suddenly the entire Qur'aan Majeed of which I was a Haafiz was snatched from my heart. I forgot the whole Qur'aan from the *Alif of Alif Laam Meem* to the *Seen of Surah Naas*.

Shock, fear and grief overwhelmed me. Thereafter for years, I cried, repented and offered penances. Finally, Allah Ta'ala out of His Mercy restored the Qur'aan Majeed to my heart. Henceforth I never again looked at anything because in looking there are great dangers."

Punishment on the Auliya settles almost immediately when they err, even if the error pertains to Mustahab practices. Their close proximity to Allah Ta'ala makes them liable for a loftier standard which does not apply to the rank and file. The slightest spiritual pollution severely tarnishes their souls, and Allah Ta'ala is swift in taking retribution from His close Devotees. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "*When Allah intends goodness for a servant, He hastens his punishment in this world.*"

HAJJAAJ BIN YUSUF

HAJJAAJ Bin Yusuf, the governor of Iraq, was notorious for his cruelty. He had unjustly and brutally put to death 120,000 persons. He had also killed numerous Sahaabah of our Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Among the senior Sahaabah whom he had martyred were Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Zubair (radhiyallahu anhu). He would frequently remark: "Nothing is more pleasurable for me than bloodshed."

When Hajjaaj was born, he had refused to be suckled by his mother. Shaitaan appeared in the form of the physician Haarith Bin Kald. He advised that a black goat be slaughtered and some of its blood be rubbed into the baby's mouth and on its face. After this prescription was observed, Hajjaaj began drinking his mother's milk.

The last pious personality whom Hajjaaj had brutally murdered was the famous Taabi-ee, Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh). After this murder, Hajjaaj was afflicted with an apparition in the form of Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh). He was literally haunted night and day by this apparition which appeared in front of him, and accusingly asking: 'Why did you kill me?' He would dream of Hadhrat Saeed, and when his eyes opened, Hajjaaj would see the apparition in front of him. He was being driven to insanity with fear.

An internal wound developed in his stomach. The pain was unbearable, and it increased by the minute. Simultaneously he was overwhelmed with such intense cold that despite a fire being positioned close to him, the severity of the cold would not ease. His body would become burnt, but the cold was incremental. He bellowed like an ox with pain.

To diagnose the internal wound, the physician lowered a string with some food substance down Hajjaaj's throat. When the string was retrieved, it came up full of worms. Worms were devouring his inside.

Suffering unbearable pain, Hajjaaj sent for Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh). When he arrived, Hajjaaj pleaded to him to make dua for him. Hadhrat Hasan said: 'O Hajjaaj! Listen! I always admonished you to desist from your cruelty. You are now tasting the consequences of what you had done to Saeed.'

Finally Hajjaaj died with great suffering. When someone saw Hajjaaj in a dream, he (Hajjaaj) said: "I am repeatedly being slaughtered as a punishment for having killed Saeed Bin Jubair. After being slaughtered, I am resurrected and again slaughtered. This process is being continued."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *Beware of the curse of the mazloom (the oppressed one).... Allah lifts his supplication above the clouds, and the doors of the heavens are opened up for it. Allah Azza Wa Jal says: 'By My Might and Power! I shall aid you, even if it is after some time.'*

Never does a *zaalim* escape the consequences of his *zulm*. Besides the punishment in the Hereafter awaiting him, punishment in this world too is mandatory for him.

FATAH MUSALI

HADHRAT Shaikh Fatah Bin Ali Musali (rahmatullah alayh) was among the very senior Auliya of the early period of Islam. He was the contemporary of Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). A salient feature of him was shedding tears in abundance. He would say when asked, that whenever he recalls his sins, he was overwhelmed by tears. Sometimes he would literally cry tears of blood.

Hadhrat Fatah Musali said: "I acquired faidh (spiritual benefit) from 30 Auliya, all of whom were Abdaal. Every one of them exhorted me to flee from people and to eat less." Solitude and hunger are essential requisites for development of spiritual fibre. Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) said that *Hikmat (spiritual wisdom)* does not reside in a person whose stomach is full. Much eating of even halaal tayyib food hardens the heart and results in *zulmat (spiritual darkness)* engulfing the heart.

A WONDERFUL CAT SACRIFICES ITS LIFE

MAULANA Jaami (rahmatullah) narrated in his kitaab, *Nafhaatul Uns Mien Hadhraatil Quds*, a wonderful episode about a cat which belonged to Shaikh Akhi Farh Zanjaani (rahmatullah alayh) – died 457 Hijri. When guests would come to the Khaanqah of Shaikh Zanjaani, the cat would miaow, and the number of miaows always equalled the number of visitors. The cook would then prepare meals for the guests according to the number indicated by the cat.

One day it happened that the guests were more than the cat's miaows. The inmates of the khaanqah were surprised and wondered why the cat had today erred. Suddenly the cat approached the guests and began smelling each one. Whilst smelling one of the guests, the cat suddenly urinated on him. Enquiries about this man established that he was a faasiq (an immoral sinner). The riddle was thus solved. The cat did not regard this man as a pious person.

One day the cook was preparing porridge in a big pot. A black snake appeared and fell into the pot of porridge. While the cat had observed this, the cook was unaware. The cat tried its best to alert the cook to the danger. It made queer noises and circumambulated the pot which was on the fire. Despite the cook repeatedly chasing the cat, it resolutely refused to leave and continued to display extreme agitation. Finally when the cat realized that the cook was unable to understand the message it was endeavouring to convey, it made the supreme sacrifice to save the people of the khaanqah from the poisonous porridge. It leapt into the pot of boiling porridge in full view of the cook, thus sacrificing its life to save the mureeds and guests of the Shaikh. Now the cook was compelled to throw away the porridge. When the pot was emptied, the people were shocked to see along with the cat's dead body, the dead snake. Now everyone understood why the cat had acted so queerly.

In appreciation of the cat's sacrifice, it was buried with respect. People would even visit the grave of the cat. Mullah Jaami (rahmatullah alayh) said that the grave "exists to this day". He mentioned this in his kitaab in about the year 890 Hijri. That was four and a half centuries after the sacrifice of the cat.

OCCASIONS OF CRYING AND SMILING

HADHRAT NABI Isaa (alayhis salaam) and Hadhrat Yahya (alayhis salaam) were contemporaries. Hadhrat Yahya (alayhis salaam) was the cousin of Hadhrat Maryam (alayhis salaam). He was therefore the uncle of Nabi Isaa (alayhis salaam). There was a vast difference in the temperament of these two great Nabis. While Nabi Isaa (alayhis salaam) was always smiling, Hadhrat Yahya (alayhis salaam) was always crying.

One day when the two met, Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) said to Hadhrat Yahya (alayhis salaam): "O Yahya! Have you lost all hope in the mercy of Allah? Your crying never ceases."

Hadhrat Yahya (alayhis salaam) said: “O Isaa! Are you completely at ease regarding the Wrath of Allah Ta’ala, therefore you smile forever?”

Allah Ta’ala sent an Angel to arbitrate in the dispute. The Angel said: “O Isaa! In public remain as you are (i.e. keep smiling). But in seclusion be crying like Yahya.” Then the Angel said to Nabi Yahya (alayhis salaam): “O Yahya! In seclusion do as you are doing now (i.e. cry much). But, in public smile (like Nabi Isaa) so that people do not despair in the mercy of Allah.”

A DIVINELY PRESCRIBED REMEDY

IMAAM Abul Qaasim Abdul Kareem Bin Hawzaan Qushairi (rahmatullah alay) – died 465 Hijri – was among the very senior Auliya of his age. Once his son became so ill that all hope of him living vanished. During that time Hadhrat Abul Qaasim saw Allah Ta’ala in a dream. In his dream he mentioned to Allah Ta’ala about his son’s severe illness. Allah Ta’ala advised him to accumulate from the Qur’aan Majeed the *Aayaat of Shifa (the Verses of Cure)*.

These aayaat had to be recited and blown on the ailing son. In the dream he was also instructed to write these verses on a plate, wash it and give the water to his son to drink. Imaam Abul Qaasim adopted this remedy and very soon his son completely recovered from his sickness.

Allaamah Subki (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that he had seen many Mashaikh prescribing these verses as instructed, for the sick.

(Anyone interested in this divinely prescribed remedy, may write to us – The Majlis)

TASAWWUF IS SACRIFICE

HADHRAT SHAQEEQ Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi (rahmatullah alayh) were among the great Sufiya of the Tab-e-Taabieen era. They lived more than 12 centuries ago. Once when these two Sufiya met, Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi asked: “What is Tasawwuf according to you?” Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi said: “When we are given, we express gratitude (make shukr), and when calamity settles in us, we adopt Sabr.” In other words, Tasawwuf according to him was to express gratitude for the bounties Allah Ta’ala bestows, and to adopt Sabr when Allah Ta’ala imposes trials.

Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi commented: “This is like the dogs by us in Balkh.” (*Balkh is today in Afghanistan*). Dogs are also grateful to their master when he feeds them, and they are patient when food is denied to them. Hadhrat Ma’roof Karkhi asked: “What is Tasawwuf by you?” Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi said: “When bounties are withheld from us, we make shukr, and when bestowed to us, we sacrifice (the bounties).”

Once Hadhrat Khafeef (rahmatullah alayh) asked Hadhrat Abu Muhammad Ruwaim (rahmatullah alayh) for some naseehat, Hadhrat Ruwaim said: “*The least requirement in this Path (of Tasawwuf) is to sacrifice your Soul. If you are not prepared for this, then do not concern yourself with the pure and priceless issues of this Path.*”

Ridha (i.e. to be happily pleased at all times with Allah’s decrees) is the lofty demand of Tasawwuf. In this regard Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “*It is of the good fortune of the Son of Aadam that he is pleased with whatever Allah has ordained for him.*”

THE CONFINES OF AQL

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Allah Ta’ala has divided *Aql (Intelligence)* into three portions. Whoever is within the bounds of these divisions has excellent intelligence. He who is beyond its confines is devoid of Aql (intelligence). (1) Proper ma’rifat (recognition) of Allah Azza Wa Jal. (2) Perfect obedience to Allah Azza Wa Jal. (3) Beautiful patience regarding the commands of Allah Azza Wa Jal.” Thus those lacking in ma’rifat, taa-at and sabr are devoid of Aql.

JUNAID’S CONCEPT OF TASAWWUF

HADHRAT Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) describing a Sufi and Tasawwuf said: “Tasawwuf is a combination of ten acts:

- (1) Reduction in all worldly things which entails abstention from accumulation.

- (2) Dependence of the heart on Allah Ta'ala regarding *asbaab* (ways and means of achievement).
- (3) Enthusiasm for rendering Nafl acts of Ta-aat (Obedience).
- (4) Sabr when lacking anything of the world and abstention from asking and complaining.
- (5) Discretion in acceptance when receiving something. The heart should not hanker for grabbing much.
- (6) Involvement with Allah Ta'ala. In all affairs to turn to Allah Ta'ala and to divert attention from people.
- (7) Thikr-e-Khafi – Silent Thikr in all forms of Athkaar.
- (8) Resolute Ikhlāas (sincerity) at the time of waswasah (satanic whispering).
- (9) Yaqeen (firm conviction) at the time of doubt.
- (10) Attainment of peace and tranquillity with Allah Azza Wa Jal in times of confusion and fear.

When all these attributes combine in a person, then he is deserving of the title (Sufi), otherwise he is a liar.”

THE TRUE MUHAAJIR

“The true Muhaajir (one who migrates in the Path of Allah) is he who abandons all things prohibited by Allah.” (Hadith)

SWEETNESS OF IMAAN

HADHRAT Anas (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that a person in whom there are three conditions tastes the sweetness of Imaan:

- (1) His love for Allah and Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) exceeds his love for all other things.
- (2) His friendship with any person is only for the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. not for any worldly or nafsani motive).
- (3) He abhors plunging into kufr just as one abhors (and fears) plunging into a fire.”

THE SIGN OF IMAAN AND SIN

HADHRAT Abu Umaamah (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that a man asked Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): “O Rasulullah! What is the sign of Imaan?” Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “When your good deeds are pleasing to you and your evil deeds repugnant, then understand that you are a Mu'min.”

Then the man asked: “O Rasulullah! What is the sign of sin?” Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Anything which agitates your conscience, is sinful.”

SIN EFFACES IMAAN

HADHRAT Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “When a person indulges in zina (fornication) his Imaan departs from him and is suspended above him. After he has emerged from this sin, his Imaan returns to him.”

In another Hadith, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) enumerated several major sins having the same consequence of expelling Imaan at the time of indulgence. It is therefore imperative when a person is about to indulge in any major sin, to reflect on this Hadith, and to ask himself: “What will be my condition if maut (death) captures me whilst I am indulging in this heinous sin? If maut should come in the very process of indulgence, I shall die without Imaan.” Such reflection will, Insha'Allah, generate sufficient fear to deter the Mu'min from committing the sin.

SHAITAANI INTERFERENCE

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that shaitaan interferes with every child who is born. It is for this reason that the baby screams when it is born. However, Allah Ta'ala had protected Hadhrat Maryam (alayhas salaam) and Hadhrat Isa (alayhis salaam) from such shaitaani interference.

Parents should supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to protect their children from shaitaani interference

WHAT IS DIVINE LOVE?

SOMEONE ASKED Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) to define Divine Love. Imaam Maalik said that he was able to explain the literal meaning and etymology of the term *muhabbat* (love). "But if you desire to know the *haqeeqat* (the reality) of *muhabbat*, go to a certain Shaikh (who was a Sufi). He will explain to you the *haqeeqat of muhabbat (Love for Allah)*." This was the relationship which the illustrious Fuqaha of the Ummah had with the Auliya who were absorbed in Divine Love.

LOVE IS ENGROSSING

ONCE WHILST a Buzrug was performing Salaat, a sobbing woman with her hair and face exposed passed right in front of him. The Buzrug became very agitated and annoyed. Terminating his Salaat, he exclaimed: 'Have you no shame! You shamelessly expose your hair and face and passed in front of me!' The woman firstly apologized profusely, and explained: "My husband has just now divorced me. His love has made me oblivious of my condition. My love for him and the grief which has settled on me made me oblivious of everything, hence I did not realize my state." Then she added: "But I am bewildered at your state. My absorption in the love for my husband has made me oblivious of everything despite this love being of a transitory (and inferior) kind. What kind of Divine Love do you have, which does not render you oblivious? If your Divine Love is true, how did you observe me in my pitiful state?"

When Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) was informed of this episode, he commented: "I shall always remember her reprimand. Undoubtedly, this is the defective state of our Salaat."

The soldiers of the zaalim kaafir king had killed Nabi Yahya (alayhis salaam) in the room where he and his father, Nabi Zakariyya (alayhis salaam), were engrossed in Salaat. It was only after completing his Salaat that Nabi Zakariyya (alayhis salaam) realized that his son, Nabi Yahya (alayhis salaam) had been brutally killed. This was the degree of concentration and absorption in the Love of Allah Ta'ala. Thus the Sufiya say: "Salaat is the Mi'raaj of the Mu'min."

RETURN TO ITS ORIGIN

NARRATING an episode of *ibrat* (lesson), Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Once I saw a lad with a lamp in his hand. I asked him: "From whence did this flame come?" As I spoke, the lad extinguished the flame and asked: "Where has the flame gone?" It has gone to the abode from where it came." Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) would frequently comment: "To this day I am amazed at the quick-witted response of the lad."

THE FIRE OF DIVINE LOVE

HADHRAT Abdullah Bin Makhzumah (radhiyallahu anhu) supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! I am setting off to join in the Battle of Yamaamah. Let every limb on my body be wounded in this Battle." Then he joined the Muslim army. Allah Ta'ala had accepted his Dua. Every limb on his body was inflicted with wounds which he sustained in the thick of the battle.

When the time for his Soul to depart was imminent, a companion nearby offered to bring him water. Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Makhzumah said: "No. At this time I am fasting. I shall soon make iftaar with the Drink of The Divine Vision." So saying, his noble Soul took flight from this ephemeral human body. The Fire of Divine Love consumes everything in its path.

LOVE ALLAH'S BELOVED

EVEN if you are not a Sufi (i.e. one who loves Allah with every fibre of his heart, body and soul), do not despise Allah's devotees. Love Allah's Beloved one, for then He will love you. Once in a dream, an Angel informed Hadhrat Ibraaheem Bin Adham that Allah loves those who love His devotees.

Those who criticise and mock the mendicants of Allah Ta'ala invite His Wrath and Curse. Love for His devotees is a medium for the attainment of Divine Love.

THE BOND OF DIVINE LOVE

ONCE the great Imaam of Tasawwuf, Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh), after making wudhu set off from his home to the Musjid. Along the road, by way of *Ilhaam*, Allah Ta'ala said to him: 'O Shibli! Do you proceed to My House with such a disrespectful wudhu?' Jolted by this Divine Reprimand, Shibli turned to go back to renew his wudhu. As he started to retrace his steps, came the Divine Voice: "Shibli! Where are you going – abandoning My House?" Fear overtook him. He loudly exclaimed: "Allaah!"

Again came *Ilhaam*: "Shibli! Are you displaying your power to Me?" Hearing the Divine Rebuke, Shibli was overwhelmed. The force of the Rebuke constrained him to buckle and sit down. Once again he heard the Divine Voice saying: "Shibli! Do you demonstrate your Sabr to Me?"

Perplexed and smitten with fear, Hadhrat Shibli said: "O Allah! I supplicate to You (for guidance and aid)."

The Mashaaikh – the accomplished Sufiya – say that Allah Ta'ala loves to commune with His beloved devotees in such ways. In fact, according to the Hadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), on the Day of Qiyaamah too, there will be some light-hearted conversation between Allah Ta'ala and some of His servants. (*Ilhaam is a kind of revelation/inspiration from Allah Ta'ala into the purified and radiant heart of His devotee*).

GIVE WHAT IS PURE AND WITH LOVE

ONCE WHEN Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saw Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) washing some dirhams (silver coins), he was surprised, and he said: "O Humaira! (This was Hadhrat Aisha's name) What are you doing?" She responded: "Labbaika! Ya Rasulallah! I am washing these dirhams." Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "What for?" Hadhrat Aishah: "I have heard you saying that when something is given in the Path of Allah, then before it reaches the hands of the recipient, it reaches the Hands of Allah Ta'ala. Therefore, whenever I give money in Sadqah, I give the coins which I have washed, so that pure and clean coins reach the Hands of my Master (Allah Ta'ala)."

The lesson for us in this attitude of Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) is to give in the Path of Allah Ta'ala happily and cheerfully. Sadqah should not be regarded a burden. Give from the wealth you love, and from halaal tayyib wealth. Some people, feeling Zakaat to be a 'fine', seek to absolve them of this 'onerous burden' with such goods which have become useless for them. This is not the way which devotees of Allah Ta'ala adopt for gaining His Pleasure. Examine your niyyat and understand Who the Being is in Whose Path you are giving your Zakaat and Sadqah.

Among the signs of Qiyaamah, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said is that people will regard payment of Zakaat to be a fine.

LOVE FOR THE SUNNAH

ONCE WHILE in Persia, Hadhrat Huzaifah Bin Yamaan (radhiyallahu anhu) along with some other Muslims, was invited by the rulers for a meal. Whilst eating, a morsel of food fell from his hand on to the ground. He picked up the morsel, dusted it and began eating it. A companion whispered to him that the rulers regard such a practice to be uncultured. Hadhrat Huzaifah (radhiyallahu anhu) commented aloud: "*Should I abandon the Sunnah of my Beloved (i.e. Rasulullah – sallallahu alayhi wasallam) for the sake of these morons?*"

He had observed Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) picking up a fallen morsel and eating it. Confound the 'culture' and cult of the morons! The one in whose heart is embedded the love of Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) do not understand the policy of dubious diplomacy and 'culture'. In terms of the understanding of the molvis and sheikhs of our era, Hadhrat Huzaifah (radhiyallahu anhu) 'should' have acquitted himself with diplomacy and not revile the non-Muslim rulers by labelling them 'morons' (*humakaa*). Whilst the flotsam of today who abandon the Sunnah and the Shariah, are lost in their policies of compromise, dubious diplomacy, interfaith and 'hikmat', the men in whose hearts has settled the flame of Divine Love speak and react in terms of :

Love for the sake of Allah, and animosity for the sake of Allah."

FOUR VILLAINS

HADHRAT ZAINUL Aabideen (rahmatullah alayh), offering *naseehat* (advice and admonition) to his son, Hadhrat Baaqir (rahmatullah alayh), said: "O my son! Never associate with four kinds of persons. Don't walk with them even briefly in the road. They are:

- (1) A bakheel (miser). Never befriend him. He will deceive and strand you at a time when you are in need of him.
- (2) A liar. He will portray a distant one to be close to you, and a close one to be distant from you.
- (3) A faasiq. He will betray you for a morsel of food.
- (4) One who severs family ties. In several places in the Qur'aan Majeed such a person has been cursed.

THIKRULLAAH

WHEN IMAAM Abu Yusuf who had become the chief Qaadhi of the Islamic Empire, was departing from his Ustaadh, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), the latter said: "*O Ya'qoob! Whilst sitting with people, engage abundantly in Thikrullaah, so that they learn from you the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala.*" Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) emphasized the importance of Thikrullaah. Allah's remembrance is the objective of life. The Qur'aan and the Ahaadith are replete with the exhortation of Thikr in abundance. A heart devoid of perpetual Thikrullah, is the abode of shaitaan.

ALLAH IN EVERY DROP OF BLOOD

HADHRAT Shibli (rahmatullah alayh), annihilated in the Love of Allah Ta'ala, was considered to be mad. Once thinking him to be mad for his utterances, he was stoned. Blood flowed from his body. Every drop of blood which fell to the ground formed the Name of Allaah. This was the effect of Divine Love which pervaded every vein and drop of blood in the body of Hadhrat Shibli (rahmatullah alayh).

DIVINE LOVE REPLACES A PERISHABLE LOVE

A VERY handsome young man was a worker in the king's palace. Everyone in the palace commented on his handsomeness. Once when his eyes fell on the princess who was famed for her beauty, the worker fell in love with her. The princess too had fallen in love with him. But there was no possibility of them meeting in the palace. They exchanged letters surreptitiously.

A plan dawned on the princess. She wrote to the young man that her father, the king, honoured pious people. She suggested that he should abandon his work at the palace and take up residence in a hut on the outskirts of the city and engage in ibaadat. Soon the news will spread of a holy man in the vicinity. She will take permission from her father to visit the 'holy' man to gain dua and blessings from him.

The young man acted accordingly. He abandoned his post at the palace, donned the garments of a Sufi and set himself up in a hut in the woods outside the city. Soon word spread in the vicinity

that a pious man had taken up residence near to the city. People visited him and would find him in ibaadat. They requested for duas and sought naseehat. The impostor would satisfy them with his duas and advice.

The king also was informed of the Sufi. The princess asked her father for permission to visit the Sufi to gain his benediction. The king readily granted her permission. When the princess arrived at the hut, there were many people outside waiting to be granted permission to enter. However, being the princess and known to all, she entered alone.

When the young man saw her, he sternly rebuked: "Who gave you permission to enter? Lady, immediately go out! How dare you enter without permission?" The princess responded: "I am your beloved one whose beauty had captivated you, and for whom you had yearned in solitude night and day. I have now come to present myself to you."

The Sufi turning away his face from her said: "Lady that was a bygone time. That time has departed. My heart is now filled with the Love of my True Beloved. Now, I cannot tolerate even looking at you. So take leave."

Although the young man had entered the realm of ibaadat with insincerity, his engrossment with Allah's Thikr effaced the perishable love from his heart. Then Allah Ta'ala bestowed to him the treasure of His Own Love. This was the barkat of Thikrullaah.

FOR WASWASAH

TO COMBAT and eliminate shaitaani waswasah (evil whispering), the Qur'aan Majeed says:

"If you are assaulted by a waswasah from shaitaan, then seek aid with Allah. Verily, He hears and is aware. Verily, those who fear (Allah), when a waswasah of the shaitaan touches them, they resort to thikr. Then suddenly their eyes open (and they realize the deception of shaitaan)." (Al-A'raaf, aayats 200 and 201)

When any kind of shaitaani idea develops in the mind, immediately recite Ta-awwuz and lapse into Thikrullah. Allah's Name puts shaitaan to flight. It is always shaitaan's attempt to disturb the mind of the Mu'min with evil thoughts. With Thikr evil shaitaani thoughts and whisperings are eliminated.

WATER AND SAND

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ***"When barkat (blessing) is not bestowed in the wealth of a man, then he squanders it in water and sand."*** This is a reference to unnecessary construction of buildings – palaces, palatial homes and mansions. When a person intends to squander money in mansions of riya (show and ostentation), he should contemplate on Maut and the Qabr which will be his ultimate worldly abode where his body will be food for worms, and where the dreadful torments of the grave await him.

RIZQ AND EFFORT

RIZQ (worldly sustenance – food, clothing, shelter) is predetermined. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ***"Rizq is sealed and the avaricious one is deprived."*** Regardless of business acumen and effort, everyone will receive only the amount of Rizq Allah Ta'ala has determined for him, nothing more and nothing less.

Rizq is not the product of our efforts. It is the decree of Allah Ta'ala. Whilst effort is a channel through which our predetermined Rizq reaches us, it is not the creator of the Rizq. Another channel through which Rizq is delivered to us is the weak and the poor. In this regard, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) cited the following Hadith Qudsi (i.e. a statement of Allah Ta'ala): ***"Search for Me among your weak ones, for verily, you are being provided Rizq or being helped via your weak ones."*** Assist the weak and the poor. Allah Ta'ala will grant barkat in your Rizq.

CONCEALED CHARITY

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Help (yourself) in your needs by means of giving Sadqah in concealment.”

FASTING LIKE A DOG?

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “*There is many a fasting person in whose fast there is nothing for him but hunger.*” In other words, he ‘fasts’ like a chained dog which is denied food and water the whole day.

Abstaining from food and drink is only one dimension of *Siyaam* (Fasting). It is only the physical side of Fasting. The greater and primary objective of *Siyaam* is the reformation of the nafs – to subdue the evil qualities of the lustful nafs and to adorn it with the attributes of moral excellence. Thus, the one who abstains from food and drink during Ramadhaan, but gives vent to all his bestial dictates, is like a chained dog which is denied food and water.

Sin and indulgence in futility, nonsense, drivel, sport and the like are all destructive of the spiritual dimension of *Siyaam*. Squandering the precious moments of the glorious Nights of Ramadhaan listening to the rubbish disgorged by media such as Radio Shaitaan and Television Shaitaan utterly destroy the benefits and the reward of *Siyaam*. In addition to the destruction of the benefits, the punishment for indulgence in sin and futility is multiplied manifold.

ALLAH’S NAME AND ZUNNUN

ONCE BEFORE his reformation, Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) was on a journey with some companions. At a place where they rested, one of the group removed a boulder. It appeared to them that something was underground where the stone had been. When they dug up the spot, a big treasure of gold, silver and precious stones was discovered. Among the treasure was a frame with Allah’s Name beautifully inscribed.

The friends decided to divide the treasure among themselves. Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh) said: “I shall take the Name of Allah. Divide the treasure among yourselves.” He was thus given the frame with Allah’s Name. That night, a Buzrug appeared in Zunnun’s dream and said: “Since you had sacrificed gold and silver, and had selected Allah’s Name, Allah Ta’ala too has chosen you for Himself.”

When Hadhrat Zunnun’s eyes opened, he perceived that his heart was filled with divine love and the *Ma’rifat* of Allah Ta’ala.

LOVE FOR ALLAH’S WALI

A BUZRUG in a dream saw an evil man who had died, being ushered into the Divine Presence. His Book of Deeds was filled with evil. However, Allah Ta’ala forgave him. The evil one asked: “O Allah! Why have You forgiven Me? All my deeds were evil.” Allah Ta’ala said: “Once a Wali, Bayazid Bustaami, was walking in the road. You were not aware who he was. When someone informed you that he was Bayazid Bustaami, you cast a glance of affection and respect towards him. Since you looked with love at My Wali, I have forgiven you.”

Although we are not among the Auliya of Allah, we should love them. Perhaps Allah Ta’ala will grant us piety and forgiveness on the basis of such love.

A SULTAN IS FORGIVEN

AFTER HIS demise, someone saw Sultan Mahmood Ghaznawi in a dream. (He was the Sultan of Afghanistan). The person saw the Sultan strutting happily in Jannat. He asked the Sultan: “How come you are so quick in Jannat? The condition of kings is usually deplorable and lamentable in the Hereafter?” Mahmood Ghaznawi responded: “Allah Ta’ala forgave me on account of a very small act. Once I visited the khaanqah of Hadhrat Shaikh Abul Hasan Khirqani (rahmatullah alayh). Some persons were sweeping the khaanqah. Dust was flying about. I took some of the dust

and rubbed it on my face. I did so because I believed that it was the dust from the garments and bedding of the devotees of Allah Ta'ala. Allah said to me: "You had honoured even the dust of the Durwaishes who were in My path. By the barkat of that dust I have freed your face from the Fire of Jahannum."

MAUT IN A BEAUTIFUL FORM

A NISBAT (spiritual relationship) with a Buzrug is a Treasure which comes to one's aid even at the time of Maut. Once a lady became bay't to Hadhrat Qaari Muhammad Tayyib (rahmatullah alayh) who was the Muhtamim (Principal) of Darul Uloom Deoband. After becoming his mureed, the lady did not keep contact for 20 years. However, she diligently practised the *ma'mulaat* (acts of *ibaadat*) which Hadhrat Qaari Tayyib had prescribed for her.

Now after 20 years she was on her deathbed. Suddenly she said: "Look! Hadhrat is coming!" After a few moments, she said: "Look! Hadhrat has reached me." Then she said: "Hadhrat is instructing me to recite something." Then she asked the form who had the appearance of Qaari Tayyib Sahib: "Hadhrat", what are you instructing me with?" Then she said: "Good. I am reciting it." Then she recite: "*Lailaha il lallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah*", and her soul took flight from her earthly body

The Angel of Death had assumed the form of her Shaikh to comfort her. This is the value of *nisbat* with a Wali of Allah Ta'ala.

THE BARKAT OF THE AULIYA

AFTER Hadhrat Ahmad Ali Lahori (rahmatullah alayh) was buried, a wonderful fragrance emanated from his grave similar to the fragrance which had exuded from the Qabr of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh). All who visited the Grave were wonderstruck by this phenomenon. Hadhrat Lahori (rahmatullah alayh) was almost always in a state of grief and shedding tears.

After many days, one of his khaleefas saw him (Hadhrat Lahori) in a dream. He enquired of his condition. Hadhrat Lahori said: "When I was ushered into Allah's Presence, Allah Ta'ala said: 'Ahmad Ali! Why were you so fearful of Me?' Hadhrat Lahori said to his khaleefah in the dream: 'When I heard this, I became more fearful and began to cry profusely.'

Allah Ta'ala said to me: "Ahmad Ali! You are still so fearful. Today is not a day to grieve. It is a day of reward. We are today honouring you. We have forgiven you, and all those who are buried in the Qabrustaan where you are buried."

UMAR'S RUMAAL

(Rumaal is a cloth worn on the head).

DURING the khilaafate of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), a huge fire broke out in Madinah Tayyibah. As the fire was raging, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) gave his *Rumaal* to Hadhrat Tameem Daari (radhiyallahu anhu) with the instruction to strike the fire.

Hadhrat Tameem (radhiyallahu anhu) struck at the fire with the *Rumaal* as if he was striking an animal with a whip. With each strike, the fire receded until it was finally extinguished. This was the effect in even the garment of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) by virtue of the Rasulullah's duas.

ABU MUSA KHAULAANI

HADHRAT Abu Musa Khaulaani (rahmatullah alayh) was among the senior Taabi-een. During the khilaafate of Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu), the impostor Musailamah Kath-thaab had claimed to be a nabi. He had captured Hadhrat Khaulaani and had threatened to cast him into a blazing fire if he refused to accept his (Musailamah's) nubuwwat. Hadhrat Khaulaani refused and said: 'Do as you please.'

A huge blazing fire was lit and Hadhrat Khaulaani was cast into it. He exclaimed: 'Allaahu Akbar! Bismillaah!' The fire had absolutely no effect on him. Musailamah had no alternative but to set him

free. News of this episode reached Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) in Madinah.

After some time, Hadhrat Khaulaani decided to make ziyaarat of Rasulullah's Grave. He set off from Yamaamah for Madinah. When he reached Masjid Nabawi, he entered and performed two raka'ts Salaat. Just as he completed his Salaat, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) seeing the stranger, approached him and asked: "Who are you?"

Khaulaani: "I am Abu Muslim Khaulaani."

Hadhrat Umar: "From where are you?"

Khaulaani: "From Yamaamah".

Hadhrat Umar: "We have heard that in Yamaamah there is a man whom Musailamah Kath-thaab had cast into a fire, but the fire had no effect on him."

Khaulaani: "Yes. I am that person."

Hadhrat Umar's face became radiant with delight. He said: "Come! I shall take you to the Khalifah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu)." When they were in the presence of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu), Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) said: "O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Allah Ta'ala has raised today in this Ummah someone who has refreshed the memory of Nabi Ibraahim's Imaan. Subhaanallaah! By virtue of Imaan, Allah Ta'ala has protected him from burning in the fire."

AID FOR THE MAZLOOM (OPPRESSED)

HADHRAT Ali Bin Harb (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: "A group of young men and I were on a boat. When the boat was in the middle of the sea a large fish jumped into the boat. The boat-owner seeing the big fish, sailed towards shore. On disembarking, we went to gather firewood to fry the fish. We wandered off into the woods in search of firewood.

Soon we came to a place where there were a number of dilapidated and destroyed houses. To our surprise we saw a man sitting. Nearby was a dead man who had been slaughtered. Next to the dead man was standing a fully laden mule. We asked the young man to explain what had happened here. The young man narrating his story said:

'I had hired the mule which belongs to the dead person. He had accompanied me. When we reached this spot, he forcibly diverted me to this place. When we reached this desolate place, after tying me securely, he said that he was most certainly going to kill me. Taking Allah's Name, I pleaded with him to spare me. I told him to take all my belongings, and I would not breathe a word of it to anyone. Despite me taking oath upon oath, he was adamant and determined to murder me.

In order to kill me, he grabbed at his sword, but it appeared stuck in its scabbard. Applying pressure, he tugged at the sword. Suddenly the sword came out with such force that it struck him on the neck, killing him. There he lies as you are seeing him.'

We untied him, and advised him to take the mule with all the goods. Then we returned to the boat. As we neared the boat, a wonderful scene greeted us. The fish which had not yet been fried, suddenly came to life, jumped into the water and disappeared. Allah Ta'ala had aided the *mazloom* in this wonderful manner."

ANSWERING THE CRY OF THE MAZLOOM

A BLOOD thirsty serial killer had managed to hijack a poor worker who was travelling on his mule through a desolate stretch of land. He forced the labourer with his laden mule deep into the mountains where numerous dead bodies were sprawled. The murderer informed him of his intention to kill him. The labourer cried and pleaded in vain. Finally he pleaded to be allowed to perform two raka'ts Salaat before being killed.

Mockingly the murderer allowed him to engage in Salaat. During the Salaat, the labourer overwhelmed with fear, was unable to recite. As he stalled, the murderer bellowed at him and exclaimed: 'Your Salaat will not aid you in any way. All of these dead ones had also performed Salaat in vain.' Suddenly, the ayat:

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ
وَيَجْعَلُكُم خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذْكُرُونَ

"Who is there to answer the oppressed one when he calls....." came on to the tongue of the labourer. He recited this ayat at the top of his voice whilst shedding tears in profusion. Suddenly, from nowhere appeared a man on horseback with a spear in his hand. He was wearing on his head a glittering headdress. In a brief moment he was on the murderer whom he struck with his spear. The spot where the murderer fell dead was engulfed with fierce flames of fire.

The labourer fell into Sajdah, expressing his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. Then he said: 'Who are you?' The horseman replied: 'I am the slave of Allah.

You may now go wherever you wish without any fear."

ABSTAINING FROM HARAAM

HADHRAT Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) pledged to Allah Ta'ala that he would never ever consume a haraam morsel. Once he wandered for many days in the wilderness without any food. When he saw a fig tree, he stretched his hand to pick some of the fruit. The tree miraculously exclaimed: "Be firm with your pledge. Do not eat anything from me. I am the property of a Yahudi."

FREED MIRACULOUSLY

THE CHRISTIANS had captured a number of Muslims whom they had enslaved. Among the captives was a young boy. The grief-stricken mother went to a Buzrug and begged him to make dua for the release and safe return of her son. The Buzrug told her to return home, and he would supplicate. At the same time, he focused on the ground and moved his lips with a dua.

After some days, the lady returned to the Buzrug with her son, expressing her heartfelt gratitude. The son explaining the wonderful episode of his release narrated: 'I was together with many other prisoners in the captivity of the Christian king. Every day the guard would lead us into the fields to labour. We all were constantly held in chains. One day whilst returning, the leg-irons miraculously broke and fell from my legs.' *(The lad mentioned the day and the time this had happened. It was the exact day and time the Buzrug had made dua.)* Continuing his story, the lad said:

"Seeing me without the leg-irons, the guard shouted and threatened me. He accused me of having broken the leg-irons. I explained that the leg-irons came loose miraculously. The incredulous guard summoned the blacksmith and I was fitted with much stronger and heavier leg-irons. I took just a few steps, and again the leg-irons broke and fell from my feet.

The guard was shocked and bewildered. He called a monk and narrated what had happened. The raahib (monk) asked me: 'Do you have a mother?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'The prayer of his mother has been accepted. Allah has freed you. We are unable to hold you prisoner.' One of the Christians then accompanied me to the border of the Muslim land."

A TYRANT IS PUNISHED

THE KING of Tabrestaan was a merciless tyrant. Ravaging the honour of young girls in the city was his practice. Everyone feared his cruelty. One day an old lady came crying by Shaikh Abu Saeed (rahmatullah alayh). She exclaimed: 'O Shaikh! Help me!' I have a beautiful young daughter. The king sent a message that he was coming to my home. He will come and ruin the honour and chastity of my daughter.. I have therefore come running to you. Do supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to save us from the evil of the tyrant. Your dua will be readily accepted."

After lowering his head for a moment, the Shaikh said: 'O Old Lady! Among the living, there is no one who is presently *Mustajaabud Da'waat* (i.e. whose Dua is readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala). Go to the Qabrustaan (graveyard) of the Muslims. You will find there a man who will attend to your plea.'

On entering the Qabrustaan, the old woman saw a very handsome young man wearing beautiful garments. After Salaam, the old lady narrated her plight. The young man said: 'Go again to Shaikh Abu Saeed and tell him to make dua for you. His dua will be accepted.' The old woman cried: 'The living send me to the dead, and the dead send me to the living. No one wants to help me. Where do I now go?' The young man said: "Go to him. With his dua your problem will be solved."

The old woman returned to Shaikh Abu Saeed and explained what had transpired. The Shaikh lowered his head and broke into profuse perspiration. He let out a sharp screech and fell down. Simultaneously, there was consternation among the inhabitants of the city. They fearfully cried that the king has set off to the house of the old lady to ravage the honour of her daughter. Suddenly, the king's horse stumbled, and the king fell violently breaking his neck. Thus perished the king ignominiously.

With the dua of the Shaikh, Allah Ta'ala freed the inhabitants from the evil of the tyrant. When Shaikh Abu Saeed regained consciousness, he was asked for the reason of sending the old lady to the Qabrustaan. Why did he not make dua the first time she had approached him? Shaikh Abu Saeed responded: "I disliked that the king be killed with my dua. I therefore sent her to my brother, Khidhr (the young man). He sent her back to me implying that it was valid to curse such a filthy tyrant."

TWO ROADS TO ALLAH

A BUZRUG narrated that once he was in the company of Shaikh Abu Saeed Kharraaz (rahmatullah alayh) on the shores of the sea. The Shaikh observing a man in the distance said to his group: "Sit down. The approaching man appears to be a Wali of Allah Ta'ala." When the person neared him, they saw that he was an extremely handsome young man with a shawl hanging on his shoulder. Hadhrat Abu Saeed said: "Young man! How do we find the road leading to Allah?"

The stranger said: "O Abu Saeed! Know that there are two roads leading to Allah. One is a special road, and one is a general one (for the masses). The general road is the one you and your companions are plodding. The special road is this." So saying, he began walking on the water of the sea until he disappeared from our sight. Hadhrat Abu Saeed remained standing in bewilderment, reflecting on the proximity the young man enjoyed with Allah Ta'ala.

NABI EESA'S MARRIAGE

ONCE WHILST Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam) was journeying in the wilderness a violent storm erupted. Torrents of rain accompanied by thunder and lightning constrained Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam) to search for shelter. In a distance he observed a tent. When he reached the tent, he found a woman inside. He turned away and headed towards the mountain where he saw a cave. When he entered, he found a lion sitting. Placing his hand on the lion's head, Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam) supplicated: "O Allah! You have fixed a place of refuge for everyone, but for me."

Allah Ta'ala revealed to him: "I have established your place of refuge by Me in the Abode of Rahmat. In Qiyaamah, you will be married to a hundred Damsels of Jannat whom I have created with My Own Hands. Your Waleemah will continue for 4000 years. Every day of these 4000 years will equal the entire age of the earth. A caller will proclaim: 'Where are those who had adopted piety on earth? They should participate in the Waleemah of Eesa Ibn Maryam.'

THE DECEPTION OF THE WORLD

THE WORLD once appeared to Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam) in the form of a beautifully adorned old woman. Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam) asked: "How many marriages have you contracted?" The World: "Innumerable! I cannot enumerate them." Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam): "Have all of them died or have they divorced you?" The World: "In fact, I have killed them all." Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam): "Alas! Your remaining husbands do not take lesson from those whom you have killed.. They do not see how you have murdered one after the other. Then too they do not fear you."

A FEARFUL DREAM, GUIDANCE AND THE VALUE OF SADQAH

HADHRAT Abu Bakr Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: "One day whilst on a journey I met a young man. He was as thin as a rake. His hair was dishevelled and he was covered with dust and sand. Dressed in tattered and torn garments he was sitting in the wilderness between two graves in the sand. He was rubbing his cheeks with sand. He repeatedly glanced at the sky, and his lips were moving. Tears were cascading down his cheeks whilst he was engrossed in Thikr, Istighfaar and Tasbeeh.

My heart gravitated towards the young man. When he saw me approaching, the lad got up and fled. I pursued him, but was unable to catch up with him. I exclaimed: 'O Wali of Allah! Be kind to me.' He responded: 'I take an oath by Allah that I shall not be kind to you.' I said: 'For Allah's Sake, stop!' He made a sign with his finger to indicate his refusal, and he exclaimed loudly, 'Allaah!'. I said to him: 'If you are truthful, then demonstrate your truth.' He began exclaiming loudly, 'Allaah! Allaah! Allaah!'. Then he fell down unconscious.

I went up to him. Alas! I found him dead. I marvelled at his condition and truthfulness, and recited the aayat: *"He (Allah) selects whomever He wishes for His mercy."* With the intention of making arrangements for his burial, I went towards a village inhabited by an Arab tribe. When I returned to the spot, the body of the young Wali was nowhere in sight. After prolonged searching, I concluded that someone had arrived before me and had made the necessary arrangements for his burial. Suddenly I heard a voice saying: 'O Shibli! You have been saved from the obligation of burying this young man. The Angels have fulfilled this duty. Engage yourself in ibaadat, and give much Sadqah. This young man had attained his lofty status on account of Sadqah which he had given only once in his entire life.'

I said: 'For Allah's Sake, tell me what was that Sadqah?' The Voice said: 'O Shibli! In the beginning, this person was a great sinner, disobedient and immoral. Once he saw in a dream that his male organ became transformed into a serpent. The serpent reached his face and began biting him whilst flames were leaping from its mouth. In his dream, he was reduced to a burnt out coal. When his eyes opened, he was overwhelmed with shock and fear. Severing all relationship with the world, he fled into the wilderness and engrossed himself in worshipping Allah Ta'ala, repenting profusely for his sins. Today it is twelve years since he had renounced the world. In all these years he has been engrossed in ibaadat in this manner as you have seen.

Yesterday a beggar asked him for some food. The young man removed his kurtah and gave it to the beggar. The happy beggar made a sincere dua of maghfirat (forgiveness) for the young man. Allah Ta'ala accepted the dua of the faqeer whose heart had been pleased. Therefore it is mentioned in the Hadith that one should consider the dua of a faqeer who is given Sadqah a great fortune "

THE BARKAT OF SADQAH

THERE WAS A very wealthy Qaadhi in the Land of Ray. Once on the day of Aashura' a faqeer approached the Qaadhi and explained that he had a family and required assistance. He said to the Qaadhi: "May Allah increase your honour and respect. I am a poor man with a family. On this

blessed day of Aashura' I appeal to you for charity." The faqeer gave the Qaadhi a list of his requirements. The Qaadhi told the faqeer to come back at Zuhr time.

When the faqeer came at Zuhr, the Qaadhi told him to come at Asr time. When he came at Asr time, the Qaadhi did not give him anything. Very sad and dejected, the faqeer left. Along the way, the faqeer saw a Christian sitting in the doorway of his home. Approaching the Christian, the faqeer asked for charity in the name of the blessed day of Aashura'. The Christian asked him to explain what the day of Aashura' was.

After the faqeer explained what Aashura' was, the Christian presented the faqeer with more than what he had requested. He further told the faqeer to come every month to collect all his food requirements. He was doing so because of the blessings of the day of Aashura'.

That night the Qaadhi saw in a dream a wonderful palace of unsurpassed beauty. He said: 'O Allah! Whose palace is this?' The Divine Response came: 'If you had given the faqeer what he had asked, it would have been your palace. However, you had refused. Now it belongs to the Christian.' In the dream the identity of the Christian was revealed to the Qaadhi.

When the Qaadhi awoke from his sleep, he was smitten with remorse, regret and grief. He set off to the Christian's home. When he met the Christian, he asked: 'What charity did you give yesterday?' When the Christian enquired of the reason for his probing, the Qaadhi explained what he had seen in his dream. Then the Qaadhi said: "I shall give you a hundred thousand dirhams (silver coins) in exchange for that good deed." The Christian replied: "If you give me all the wealth of the world, I shall not make the exchange. Then the Christian said: "The bargain with Allah Ta'ala is indeed wonderful. I bear witness that Allah is One and Muhammad is His Rasool."

THE GREATEST WORSHIPPER

ONCE Hadhrat Yoonus (alayhis salaam) requested Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam) to show him the greatest Aabid (worshipper) of Allah Ta'ala. Jibrael (alayhis salaam) delivered Hadhrat Yoonus (alayhis salaam) to a man whose both hands and feet had fallen off because of the disease of leprosy. This worshipper was supplicating: "O Allah! You allowed me to use these limbs as long as You had desired. When you had desired, you snatched them away and preserved me."

Hadhrat Yoonus (alayhis salaam) said: "O Jibrael! I had enquired about a worshipper who spent the days fasting and the nights in ibaadat." Jibrael (alayhis salaam) said: "Before this calamity he was engrossed in such ibaadat. I have now been commanded to snatch away his eyesight." Then he made an indication with his finger, and the Wali's vision was snatched away. The Wali said: "O Allah! You allowed me the eyes until You had desired to snatch them away, and You have preserved me."

Then Jibrael (alayhis salaam) said to the worshipper: "Let us both make dua and supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to restore your vision and your limbs to enable you to engage in ibaadat as you had been doing." The worshipper said: "I do not wish for it." Jibrael (alayhis salaam) asked: "Why?" He said: "Since this is the pleasure of Allah, I am pleased with it."

Hadhrat Yoonus (alayhis salaam) commented: "I never saw a greater worshipper than this man." Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam) said: "There is no better way of ibaadat than this way."

THE SEARCH FOR FIVE THINGS

HADHRAT Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) said: "We searched for five things, and discovered them in five things:

- (1) We searched for Rizq and discovered it in Salaatudh Dhuha (Chaasht Namaaz)
- (2) We searched for the light of the Qabr (Grave) and discovered it in Tahajjud Salaat.

- (3) We searched for the answers to the questions of Munkar and Nakeer and we found them in Tilaawat of the Qur'aan.
- (4) We searched for the way to cross the Siraat (the Bridge over Jahannum) and we discovered it in Saum (Fasting) and Sadqah.
- (5) We searched for the Shade of the Arsh (Allah's Throne) and we discovered it in solitude.

KILLED BY ALLAH'S LOVE

A BUZRUG journeying in the mountains saw a young man. The signs of grief were on his face. Tears were rolling from his eyes. The Buzrug asked: "Who are you?" The young man said: "I am a slave who has fled from his master." The Buzrug said: "Then return to him and seek forgiveness." The young man: "For seeking forgiveness, there should be valid grounds."

The Buzrug asked: "Who is your master?" The young man said: "My Master is the One who had reared and nourished me since infancy. Despite His boundless mercy and kindness towards me, I have been extremely ungrateful to Him. I feel greatly ashamed." Then he let out a piercing scream and dropped down dead.

Almost immediately an old woman appeared and asked: "Who was instrumental in killing this grief stricken and bewildered young man? May Allah have mercy on him." The Buzrug offered to assist with the burial arrangements. The old woman said: "Leave him to lie in disgrace in the presence of his Killer (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Perhaps He will forgive him seeing him in this forlorn state, and bestow His bounties to him."

LA ILAHA IL LALLAAH 70,000 TIMES

HADHRAT SHAIKH Abu Yazeed Qurtubi (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

"I saw in a Hadith that whoever recites *La ilaha il lallaah* 70,000 times will be saved from Jahannum. With the intention of gaining the barkat, I recited this *amal* a few times.

During that time a lad was living with us in the same place. Despite his youth everyone respected him. It was well-known that sometimes Jannat and Jahannum would be revealed to him. However, I entertained some doubts about the lad.

Some Brothers had invited us for meals. The young man also accompanied us. Suddenly, the lad made a fearful sound and let out a piercing cry, and he exclaimed: "My mother is in the Fire!" I said to myself: "Today I shall test the truthfulness of this young man." I made dua asking Allah Ta'ala to bestow the reward of one of my acts of 70,000 *La ilaha il lallaah* to the lad's mother and to save her from Jahannum. I said to myself that this Hadith is Saheeh (Authentic), and the narrators are all truthful. Even before I had completed my supplication, the young man exclaimed with delight: "O Uncle! My mother has been saved from Jahannum."

PURITY IN LOVE IS SHAHAADAT

RAJA' IBN AMR Nakh'i narrated that in Kufa there was an extremely handsome young man who had devoted himself to the ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala. Once he was captivated by the beauty of a girl. Love for this girl disturbed his mental equilibrium. When the girl saw him, she too was overwhelmed by love for him.

The young man sent his proposal of marriage to her father who replied that she was already engaged to marry her cousin. The girl sent a message to him expressing her love and asked if she should leave home to be with him or she could arrange for him to come and meet her. The young man informed the messenger to tell her that he declines both proposals for the fear of Allah Ta'ala. He feared the punishment of the Fire. When the messenger delivered the man's response to the

girl, she said to herself: 'In addition to his handsomeness, he is a man of piety. I take oath by Allah that I too shall cultivate fear.'

She abandoned worldly associations and renounced all luxuries and comforts of this world, donning a dress of coarse cloth and devoting herself to Allah's worship. However, her love for the young man consumed her. Day by day she melted away, and soon death overtook her. After her death she appeared to the young man in a dream. She appeared to be in a very good and happy state. He asked her of the condition in which she was. In response she said: "I am in the midst of such happiness and bounties which will never perish. I am in Jannatul Khuld which is a land which will never be annihilated."

In his dream the young man said: "Remember me there. I too am remembering you here." She said: 'Wallaah! Even here, I have not forgotten you. I am constantly making dua for you.' As she turned to depart, the young man said: "When shall I see you again?" She replied: "Soon!" Seven days after the dream, the young man also died.

In this episode is a lesson for those who become entangled in worldly love affairs. It is essential to maintain purity of the mind, heart and body by reflecting on the punishment of Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the one who falls in love, but maintains purity, then dies in the state of purity becomes a *shaheed* (martyr).

A SINNER BECOMES A WALI

HADHRAT KA'B Ahbaar (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode of a sinner's repentance and acceptance by Allah Ta'ala.

Once a man of Bani Israaeel committed fornication with a prostitute. When he entered into the river to take ghusl, the river miraculously reprimanded: "Have you no shame! Do you not repent?" The shocked man was overcome with fear. He quickly came out of the river and headed towards the nearby mountain. Soon he came across a group of 12 Aabideen (Worshippers) who were engrossed in ibaadat. He too joined them and devoted himself to ibaadat.

After some time they were overtaken by a severe drought and famine. The Aabideen decided to go towards the river in search of grass and plants. However, the man said that he would not accompany them to the river. When they asked the reason, he said: "There is someone by the river who is aware of my sins. I am ashamed of meeting him." The 12 Aabideen, leaving the man departed.

When they reached the river bank, a Voice from the water said: "O Worshippers! Where is your companion." They said: "He is ashamed of someone who knows his sins. He therefore refused to come." The Voice said: "Subhaanallaah! If one of your children or relatives seeks forgiveness for having disobeyed you, will you then not love him? Your companion has repented and is engaged in acts which I love. I now love him. Go and bring him here. Tell him to remain here and worship Allah Ta'ala."

The group informed the man of what had transpired, and brought him to the river. They remained on the river bank for a very long period of time (months or years). Then one day the man died. The river proclaimed: "O Devotees of Allah! Give him ghusl with my water and bury him on my banks so that on the Day of Qiyaamah he will be by me."

The 12 Aabideen, after complying with the river's request, decided to spend the night by the man's qabr, then departed the next morning to return to the mountain. When their eyes opened they saw 12 trees had miraculously grown around the grave. They understood that it was a message from Allah Ta'ala for them to remain and spend their remaining lifetime in ibaadat in that place. When one of them died, he would be buried alongside the man. All of the 12 Aabideen had died one after the other, and were buried there. The people of Bani Israaeel would visit these graves to make dua.

A ROBBER IS REFORMED

ONE NIGHT when Hadhrat Ata' Arzaq (rahmatullah alayh) was walking towards the wilderness with the intention of performing Salaat in solitude, a robber followed him. When the robber accosted him, Hadhrat Ata' made a dua, and the robber's hands and feet became paralyzed. The robber cried and pleaded. Hadhrat Ata' again made dua, and the robber was cured. He pleaded: "For the sake of Allah, tell me your name." He said: "My name is Ata".

The next morning the robber made enquiries in the town and asked if they knew a pious man who performs Salaat in the wilderness. Due to the darkness of the previous night, he could not properly see the face of Hadhrat Ata'. The people said: "Yes. He is Ata' Salmi." The robber went to Hadhrat Ata' Salmi and said: "I have repented for my crimes. Do make dua for me." Hadhrat Ata' Salmi raised his hands and made much dua. Then he said: "O my friend! That person was not me. He was Ata' Arzaq."

ALLAH ACCEPTS TAUBAH AND CONCEALS SINS

DURING THE time of Hadhrat Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) a severe drought and famine had afflicted Bani Israaeel. There was suffering and death of people and animals. Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) accompanied by more than 70,000 people set off to the mountains to supplicate for rain. Despite fervent and prolonged dua, no rain came. In fact, the sky became clearer and the sun's rays became hotter. Then Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) supplicated: "O Allah! If my status has fallen by You, then I plead to You in the name of Hadhrat Nabi Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Nabi of the final age. O Allah! Send rain to us."

Wahi (Revelation) came to Nabi Musa: "O Musa! Your rank has not diminished. However, among you is a man who has rebelled against Me with sins for forty years. Make an announcement ordering the sinner to leave the assembly." Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) said: "O Allah! How will my voice reach all the people in this vast assembly?" Allah Ta'ala said: "Make the announcement, I shall deliver your voice to all."

On hearing the announcement, the man who had sinned for 40 years, looked around, but saw no one getting up to leave the gathering. He was convinced that he was the cause for the drought and the famine. Covering his head with his shawl, he pleaded with Allah Ta'ala: "O My Allah! I had sinned against you for 40 years. You had granted me respite. I have now repented and am Your obedient slave. Accept my repentance."

Even before the sinner had ended his dua, the clouds gathered and the rain came in torrents. Surprised and bewildered, Hadhrat Musa (alayhis salaam) supplicated: "O Allah! No one left the assembly." It was revealed to him that the man who was the cause of the drought was also the cause of the rain. He had sincerely repented, hence the rain. Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) supplicated to Allah Ta'ala to reveal the man's identity to him. Allah Ta'ala responded: "O Musa! When he was sinning, I did not disgrace him. How can I now disgrace him after he has repented? O Musa! I abhor those who gossip. How can I engage in gossiping?"

FOUR DEEDS

HADHRAT HAATIM Asam (rahmatullah alayh) said that he had spent his life in four deeds.

- (1) I was aware that I cannot ever conceal myself from Allah Ta'ala. I therefore was always ashamed of committing any sin in His Presence.
- (2) I was aware that Allah Ta'ala had undertaken the responsibility of my Rizq and that it (my Rizq) would not slip pass me. I therefore, became unconcerned about earning.

- (3) I was aware that there are some obligations on me, which no one else can discharge for me. I therefore, engrossed myself with these obligations.
- (4) I am now involved in the concern of that which I shall receive from Allah Ta'ala – thawaab (reward) or Athaab (punishment).

HADHRAT FUDHAIL'S NASEEHAT

"**IF YOU ARE** able to conceal yourself so that no one knows you, then do so. If you remain unknown and no one praises you, you have lost nothing. If you are virtuous by Allah, then the criticism of people will not harm you. You do not know what will be your lot tomorrow. Disgrace or honour? Why do you not remember your deeds? Why do you not banish your hopes? Why do you not reduce your occupations and burdens? You do not know what is going to overtake you. Congratulations will be for you if you will attain salvation. Alas! If you will be unfortunate (in the Akhirah)."

THE RANK OF IBRAAHIM BIN ADHAM

ONCE HADHRAT Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) in a dream saw Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) with a pen and paper. He said: 'O Jibraeel! What are you doing with the pen and paper?' Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) said: 'I am recording the names of Allah's Lovers.' Ibraahim Bin Adham said: 'Write my name also at the end of the list as a Lover of Allah.' A Voice called out: 'O Jibraeel! Write his name at the top of the list.'

A PIOUS SLAVE GIRL

HADHRAT ABU Aamir (rahmatullah alayh) said: "I saw a pitiful slave girl being sold in the marketplace. She was as thin as a rake. Her hair was dishevelled, and her colour was extremely pale. Out of pity I purchased her and said to her: 'Come let us go to buy some necessities for the month of Ramadhan.' She said: 'Shukr unto Allah Who has made all twelve months equal for me.' She fasted all year round, and spent the nights in ibaadat.

When Eid approached, I said to her: "Come with me to the bazaar to buy some necessities for Eid." She said: 'O my master! You are engrossed in the world.' Then she went inside and engaged in performing Namaaz. When she reached the aayat: "*The people of Jahannum will be given pus to drink.*", she repeated it several times, then letting out a piercing cry, her soul departed from her earthly body."

THE CONSEQUENCE OF AN EVIL GLANCE

THAKWAAN WAS a chief in Basrah. When he died, all the inhabitants of Kufa participated in his Janaazah. After he was buried and the people had left, a Buzrug remained and fell asleep near a grave.

In his dream he saw an Angel descending from the heaven. Addressing the graves, he said: 'O inmates of the graves, rise and take your rewards.' Suddenly all the graves split open and the inmates came out and disappeared for a short while. When they returned, Thakwaan was with them. He was clad in beautiful garments studded with precious stones. A few slaves walked ahead to deliver him to the grave. One of them announced: 'This servant (i.e. Thakwaan) was among the People of Taqwa. However, because of one evil glance, a calamity has befallen him. Fulfil the command of Allah!'

Thus, Thakwaan despite his high rank, was taken close to Jahannum. A serpent emerged from the Fire and bit him on the side of his face which became black. A Voice proclaimed: "O Thakwaan! None of your deeds were hidden from your Rabb. This is the punishment for that evil glance. If you had exceeded it, then We too would have increased the punishment."

Then one of the inmates of the grave, sticking his head out of the grave, shouted: 'Wallaah! This is the ninth year since I had died. The bitterness of Maut is still in my throat. Make dua for me.' Between his eyes, on his forehead was the clear mark of Sajdah.

It is probable that Thakwaan did not repent for the sin of his evil glance, hence the punishment. Always repent for sins – for the sins one remembers and for the sins one has forgotten. We are dealing with a Being (Allah Ta'ala) Who does not forget.

THE ATTITUDE OF A SLAVE

A BUZRUG narrated: "Once, after I had purchased a slave, I said to him: What is your name?"

Slave: "O my master! Whatever name you select for me, is my name."

Master: "What type of work do you do?"

Slave: "Whatever work you impose on me."

Master: "What will you eat?"

Slave: "Whatever you will feed me."

Master: "What does your heart desire?"

Slave: "How can the heart of a slave desire anything in the presence of his master?"

The Buzrug was overwhelmed with grief and he began to cry as his mind was taken to the Day of Qiyaamah when he would be in the presence of his Master (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Commenting on the attitude of the slave, he said: "O my beloved friend! You have taught me how to respect Allah Ta'ala."

IBAADAT AND ILM

A BUZRUG NARRATED that he saw in a dream Shaikh Abu Ishaaq Ibraahim Shiraazi (rahmatullah alayh) after he had died. Shaikh Abu Ishaaq was resplendently clad in glittering white garments and a wonderful crown was on his head. The Buzrug asked: "Hadhrat, why these white garments?" Shaikh Abu Ishaaq said: "It is the significance of Ibaadat." The Buzrug asked: "And the crown?" The Shaikh said: "It is the honour of Ilm (Knowledge of the Deen)."

IMAAM GHAZAALI

SHAIKH ABUL HASAN Shaazli (rahmatullah alayh) said: "In a dream I saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) presenting Imaam Ghazaali with pride to Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) and Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam). Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked the two Nabis: "Is there an Aalim of this calibre in your Ummats?" Both responded in the negative.

A YAHUDI EMBRACES ISLAM

A VAST gathering of people had attended the Janaazah of Hadhrat Sahl Ibn Abdullah Tastari (rahmatullah alayh). Hearing the commotion, a 70 year old Yahudi came out of his house to observe the scene. Staring at the Janaazah, the Yahudi asked the people: "Can you see what I am seeing?" The people asked: "What are you seeing?" The Yahudi said: "I see crowds of beings descending from the heavens to gain benediction from the Janaazah." Then the Yahudi recited the Kalimah and embraced Islam.

JANNAT AND JAHANNUM

ALLAH TA'ALA revealed to Hadhrat Nabi Yahya (alayhis salaam):

"O Yahya! I take oath by My Greatness and Splendour! If you had to become aware of even an iota of Jannatul Firdaus, your body would melt away and your Rooh (Soul) would swiftly exit from your body in the desire for Jannat. And, if you had to become aware of an iota of Jahannum, then from your eyes along with tears pus will flow, and instead of coarse cloth, you would don steel."

DAARUS SUROOR (THE ABODE OF HAPPINESS)

A BUZRUG narrated: "I saw in a dream a man saying to me: 'We have already completed your mansion. If you could see it, your eyes will be cooled. I have already issued instructions for the mansion to be tidied within seven days. The name of the mansion is *Daarus Suroor* (*The Abode of Happiness*). Be happy!'"

The seventh day after the dream, it was a Friday. The Buzrug made wudhu and early in the morning went to the river to take ghusl. As he descended into the river, he slipped and drowned. After Jumuah Salaat, the people retrieved his body and he was buried. Three days after his burial he was seen in a dream. He was wearing exquisite garments of green silk. When he was asked about his condition, he said: "Allah Ta'ala bestowed *Daarus Suroor* to me. It is a mansion which is beyond description. I am unable to describe its beauty and comfort."

BARKAT OF IBAADAT

Hadhrat Ata' Arzaq's wife gave him two dirhams to buy some flour. When he reached the marketplace he saw a slave crying. When he asked the slave the reason for crying, he said: "My master gave me two dirhams to buy something. I have lost the money. Now he will beat me." Hadhrat Ata' (rahmatullah alayh) gave him the two dirhams which his wife had given him.

Then Hadhrat Ata' Arzaq went to the Musjid and remained engrossed in Salaat until the evening. He then left and went to sit at the place of a carpenter who was his friend. The carpenter gave him a small bundle of timber which he could use for firewood. Hadhrat Ata' taking the timber in a bag went home. When he reached his house, he threw the bag of timber through the entrance and headed for the Musjid. He stayed in the Musjid until late to avoid an argument with his wife. Then he left, hoping that she had fallen asleep.

When he reached his home, he saw his wife baking bread. He asked: "Where did you get the flour?" She said: "It is the same flour which you had left in the entrance. Whenever you buy flour, buy it from the same place. This flour is excellent."

By the command of Allah Ta'ala, the timber had miraculously been transformed into flour.

DIVINE LOVE OF A PIOUS LADY

HADHRAT ZUNNUN Misri (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: "One night while I was walking in the Valley of Kan'aan, I suddenly observed a person reciting an aayat of the Qur'aan Majeed approaching me. When the person was close by, I realized that it was a woman who was clad with a woolen cloak and a woolen burqah. In her hands she had a water jug and a staff.

Without the slightest hesitation, she interrogated: "Who are you?" I said: "I am a musaafir." She said: 'O man! Is it possible for someone who is with Allah Ta'ala to be a musaafir? He is the Comforter of the foreigner, and the Helper of the weak." Hadhrat Zunnun began crying. She said: "Why are you crying?" I said: "A balm has been applied to the wound."

She said sharply: "If you are honest, then say why do you cry? May Allah have mercy on you." I asked: "Does a truthful person not cry?" She said: "No, a truthful one does not cry." I asked: "Why?" She responded: "Crying is for the comfort of the heart. It eliminates grief and sorrow. But the sad one seeks refuge from it (i.e. from the elimination of grief and sorrow). According to the Auliya of Allah, crying is a sign of spiritual weakness."

"I was bewildered by her talk." Observing my bewilderment, she reprimandingly exclaimed: "What has happened to you?" I said: "I am bewildered by your talk." She said: "May Allah have

mercy on you. Have you forgotten your sickness?" Hadhrat Zunnun said: "May Allah have mercy on you. Give me some naseehat which will benefit me." She said: "Whatever the physician advises, you cannot be independent of further advice." I said: "I can never be independent of the advices of the Auliya of Allah." She said: 'O Miskeen! (Mendicant) You have spoken the truth. Love your Friend (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Cultivate in your heart a yearning for Him."

After proffering some statements about Divine love, an ecstatic state overtook her. Addressing Allah Ta'ala, she said: "O The Beloved of my heart! How long will you keep me in this world in grief and all alone?" She then quickly set off into the wilderness, calling on Allah Ta'ala until she disappeared from my sight."

A LION BECOMES SUBSERVIENT

HADHRAT SUFYAAN Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Shaibaan Raa-ee (rahmatullah alayh) were on a journey through the desert. They were proceeding to Makkah for Hajj. Suddenly, a lion appeared in their path. Hadhrat Sufyaan said to Hadhrat Shaibaan: "Do you not see this dog in front of us?" Hadhrat Shaibaan said: "O Sufyaan! Fear not."

The lion wagged its tail like a friendly dog and displayed its subservience. Hadhrat Shaibaan went forward and patted it on the head. Hadhrat Sufyaan commented: "O Shaibaan! Are you seeking fame!" Hadhrat Shaibaan said: "No. If I desired fame, I would have loaded my luggage on the lion's back and walked with him right into Makkah."

SEVENTY THOUSAND ANGELS

ONCE, ON an intensely dark night on his way to Makkah through the wilderness, Hadhrat Ibraaheem Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) came across a huge lion. He was filled with fear. Suddenly he heard a Voice saying: "Fear not! There are 70,000 Angels in the vicinity for your protection."

THE RANK OF THE ABRAAR

HADHRAT BASHEER Ibn Haarith (rahmatullah alayh) once in a dream saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asking him: "O Basheer! Do you know why Allah Ta'ala has elevated you above your contemporaries?" He said: "O Rasulullah! I do not know." Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Your obedience to my Sunnah, your service of the Saaliheen, your naseehat to brothers and your love for my Companions and Family have delivered you to the ranks of the Abraar."

(Abraar are Auliya of a special lofty stage).

THE MIRACLE OF THE BLIND WALI

HADHRAT SAALIH Maree (rahmatullah alayh) once decided to visit Hadhrat Abu Jaheez (rahmatullah alayh) who was living on the outskirts of the city. He was blind. The people of the city had built for him a small Musjid wherein he would spend the time in ibaadat. Along the way, he (Saalih Maree) met Hadhrat Muhammad Waasi' (rahmatullah alayh) who was coincidentally also going to visit Abu Jaheez.

Along the way, they met Hadhrat Habeeb Ajmi (rahmatullah alayh) who informed them that he was on his way to visit Abu Jaheez. Soon they met Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) who was also going to visit Hadhrat Abu Jaheez (rahmatullah alayh). After a short while they met Hadhrat Thaabit Bunaani (rahmatullah alayh). He was also on his way to visit Hadhrat Abu Jaheez.

The five Auliya waited in the Musjid for Hadhrat Abu Jaheez. When it was time for Salaat, he emerged from his home and commenced the Salaat. The five Auliya joined him in Salaat. After the

Salaat, Muhammad Waasi' stepped forward and greeted Abu Jaheez. He asked: "Who are you?" Muhammad Waasi' said: "I am Muhammad Waasi". Abu Jaheez said: "You are the one who in Basrah performs the best Salaat." He remained silent.

Thaabit Bunaani then greeted him, and identified himself. Abu Jaheez said: "In Basrah you are famous for performing the most Salaat." He too remained silent. Maalik Bin Dinaar greeted him. Abu Jaheez said: "In Basrah you are known to be the greatest Zaahid." Maalik Bin Dinaar maintained silence.

Habeeb Ajmi then greeted him. When he identified himself, Abu Jaheez said: "You are well-known for being Mustajaabut Da'waat." He remained silent. Saalih Maree greeted him, and identified himself. Abu Jaheez said: "You are famed in Basrah for your voice. I have always yearned to hear you recite the Qur'aan Shareef. Recite for me five verses from the Qur'aan Shareef." After Saalih Maree had recited five verses, Abu Jaheez let out a scream and fell down unconscious. After regaining consciousness, Abu Jaheez asked Saalih to again recite the same aayaat. He did so. Suddenly he let out a piercing scream and dropped down dead.

Abu Jaheez's wife then appeared and asked: "Who are you?" When she was informed of the identities of the five Auliya, she said: *"Inna lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji-oon. What, has Abu Jaheez died?"* They said: "Yes, he has died. May Allah Ta'ala reward you. How did you know that he had died?" She said: "He would frequently make dua: "O Allah, on the occasion of my death, let your Auliya gather by me." Thus, when I realized who you were, I knew that he had died. Allah Ta'ala had accepted his dua and has brought you all here."

The five Auliya gave the ghusl, kafan, performed Janaazah Salaat and buried Abu Jaheez.

PUNISHMENT OF THE GRAVE

IN A VILLAGE near to Baitul Maqdis after a man was buried, his brother heard a painful groan from the grave. In sheer desperation the brother opened up the grave which had become as hot as a furnace. He saw a red hot iron on the waist of his brother. He madly placed his hand on the band with the intention of pulling it off. As he placed his hand on the band, his four fingers were scorched and fell off. There was nothing he could do. He closed up the grave.

A friend who had been apprized of this episode asked Hadhrat Imaam Auzaai (rahmatullah alayh): "O Abu Umar! The Yahood, Nasaara and the kuffaar all die and are buried. Such signs of punishment have not been witnessed among them. But this man was among the People of Tauheed, and died as a Muslim. Why was he then punished so severely?" Imaam Auzaai' (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Yes, they (the kuffaar) are destined for Jahannum. Their fate has already been confirmed, hence there is no need to display these signs of punishment with regard to them. As for you, the People of Tauheed, Allah Ta'ala reveals such punishment so that you derive lesson. May Allah Ta'ala overlook our sins and forgive us. O You, The Kind and Beneficent One."

ONLY ALLAH IS THE GUARDIAN

HADHRAT ABU Ja'far Farghaani (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following very interesting story:

"In the City of Dinwar there was a chief whose wife gave birth to several girls. Once during her pregnancy, the chief said in anger: 'If this time you give birth to a girl, then you are divorced.'

One day thereafter, the chief together with a group of people went on a journey. Along the journey, the chief's wife experienced labour pains. She left the group, saying she would be going to the river to make wudhu. When she reached the river, she gave birth to a girl. She wrapped the infant in a cloth and left it in a nearby cave. When she returned to the caravan, she explained that she had not been pregnant. It was merely a wind in her stomach which had caused the bloating, but it had now been released.

Six months later, the group on the return journey stopped at the same place. The woman driven by fear and anxiety took a jug and pretended to go to the river to fetch water. However, she headed straight for the cave in the mountain. When she reached the cave, she was shocked and amazed to see a wild buck. Her baby was being suckled by the buck. On seeing the woman, the buck took flight. When she picked up the baby, it screamed hysterically. She placed the baby down and it stopped crying. When she went to stand at a distance, the buck returned and sucked the baby.

The woman returned to the camp and informed her people of this episode. The chief and all the people went to the cave and witnessed the baby drinking from the buck. The buck on seeing the people fled, and stood watching the scene from a safe distance. The womenfolk picked up the baby who was screaming at the top of her voice. However, they managed to comfort her. When they departed, taking the baby with them, the buck stood looking at them sadly until they had disappeared from her sight.

The baby grew up quite normally and her father had her married to a pious man. It is only Allah Ta'ala Who protects and guards His creation.

WHO CAN BEAR THE ISM-E-A'ZAM?

ISM-E-A'ZAM (Allah's Greatest Name) is a secret entrusted to select Auliya. Once a Faqeer approached a Shaikh who was aware of the Ism-e-A'zam. When the Faqeer asked to be taught the Ism-e-A'zam, the Shaikh asked: "Do you possess the qualifications for the Ism-e-A'zam?" The Faqeer said: "Yes". The Shaikh instructed: "Go to the city-gate and report to me what transpires there."

When the Faqeer reached the city-gate he saw an old man approaching with a donkey loaded with a bundle of firewood. A soldier appeared and grabbed the pile of firewood. Then he hit the old man with his whip and chased him away. The Faqeer, aggrieved by this episode, returned to the Shaikh and informed him what had happened. Then the Shaikh said: "If you had known the Ism-e-A'zam, what would you have done?" The Faqeer said: "I would have supplicated for the destruction of the soldier who had oppressed the old man."

The Shaikh said: "Know that the same old man had taught me the Ism-e-A'zam. Despite him being aware of the Ism-e-A'zam, he reacted with patience and did not supplicate for the destruction of the soldier."

The attributes which are incumbent requisites for the Bearer of the Ism-e-A'zam are Sabr (patience), Hilm (tolerance), Rahm (mercy) and all the other qualities of moral excellence.

KHIDHR TEACHES A DUA

A BUZRUG narrated: "Once when I was overwhelmed with great fear, I set out walking to Makkah without taking any provisions with me. After walking three days in the desert, I was overcome with hunger, thirst and weakness. The sun was fiercely blazing and there was not a tree in sight. Resigning myself to Allah Ta'ala, I sat down facing the Qiblah in anticipation of dying. Whilst sitting, slumber overtook me. I fell asleep.

I dreamt a man approaching me and saying: "Give me your hand." He shook hands with me and said: "Be happy! You will safely reach Baitullah and also make ziyaarat of the Raudhah of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The Buzrug in his dream said: "May Allah have mercy on you. Who are you?" The man said: "I am Khidhr." The Buzrug said: "Make dua for me." Khidhr said: "Recite this dua three times:

يا لطيفا بخلقه يا خيرا بخلقه يا حكيما بخلقه أَلطَفُ بِي
يا لطيف يا عليم يا خير

O Thou Who is kind to His creation! O Thou Who is aware of His creation! O Thou Who is wise with His creation! Be kind to me, O Kind One, O The Knower (of all things), O The One Who is ever aware!"

Khidhr said: "This is such a wonderful gift by which you will always be wealthy. Whenever any difficulty or calamity befalls you, recite this Dua." Then Khidhr disappeared.

The Buzrug whilst still asleep, suddenly heard someone waking him up by calling: "O Shaikh! O Shaikh!" The sleeping Buzrug woke up and saw a man with a camel who asked: "Have you seen a young man in the vicinity? He has disappeared since the past seven days. I am in his search. We have received information that he is on his way to Makkah to perform Hajj." He described the young man to the Buzrug who responded in the negative. Then he asked: "Where are you off to?" The Buzrug said: "Wherever Allah Ta'ala takes me."

The stranger presented some of his food and water to the Buzrug. After he had eaten, the stranger told him to mount the camel. After a day and two nights, they suddenly saw a caravan approaching. When they linked up with the caravan, the stranger found the young man whom he was searching. After a short while, the stranger together with the young man came to me. Addressing the young man, he said: "O my son! By the barkat of this Buzrug, Allah Ta'ala had made my search fruitful." The stranger gave the Buzrug a gift of five dirhams

He reached Makkah with the caravan, performed Hajj and made ziyaarat of the Raudhah Mubaarak. Whenever he was in any difficulty, he would recite the Dua taught to him by Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam), and his problem would be solved.

SEVERE TRIALS IN THE PATH OF WILAAAYAT

THE AULIYA of Allah Ta'ala are at times subjected to the severest trials which they bear with patience and attain thereby lofty ranks of perfection and divine proximity. Narrating some of his trials, a Buzrug said:

"Once my Shaikh sent me to the butcher to buy some meat for the Fuqara (the mureedeen). After buying the meat, as I came into the pathway, a man with a laden beast approaching from the opposite side collided with me. I fell and landed on a steel peg in the road and was severely injured. The owner of the butchery and two others lifted me and bandaged my wound. Whilst they were treating my wound the man with his mule returned and said that his wallet containing 10 dinars (gold coins) was missing. He accused us of having stolen the wallet when the collision had occurred.

He apprehended the four of us and took us to the police station where we were severely assaulted. The lashes repeatedly fell on my injury. One of the police looked at the basket in which I had been carrying the meat and saw the wallet in it. Now they were convinced that I had stolen the wallet. I was subjected to intense beating and profuse abuse. The police said: "He is the thief." The police captain ordered oil to be heated and instructed that my hand be amputated.

Oil was heated and a crowd of people gathered to observe the punishment which would soon be meted out. People were abusing me and branding me with a variety of vile epithets. Someone proclaimed that the oil is boiling and that I should be made ready for the amputation. I resigned myself to Allah Ta'ala and had *yaqeen* (absolute faith and conviction) that everything is in His control, and everything happens with His decree.

A man stepped forward and gave me such a violent smack in the face that I lost my senses. Nevertheless, even at that time I resigned myself to Allah Ta'ala. Then the man, screaming, "Thief! Robber!", gripped my hand and gave me a violent tug which caused me to sprawl on the ground with my face downwards on the ground. I fell into the Sajdah posture. At that moment in the state of semi-consciousness, I saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) smiling at me. Even before I managed to stand up, it appeared that all the pain and calamity had disappeared.

Someone shouted: "This person whom you have arrested is the Khaadim (Servant) of our Shaikh." All the people looked attentively at me and recited: "*Wa lahoula wala quwwata illaa*

billaahil azeem" expressing their remorse. Everyone now fell at my feet and profusely apologized and sought my pardon. The captain of the police also rushed forward and kissed my feet, and begged for forgiveness in the Name of Allah Ta'ala.

Then came the man of the wallet and also fell at my feet apologizing in profusion. He said: "Hadhrat, for the sake of Allah, forgive me and be pleased with me." I responded: "May Allah forgive me and you. This was a trial imposed by Allah Ta'ala."

It then transpired that the wallet and the load of goods on the mule had been sent as a gift for the Shaikh.

At the time when this trial was being enacted, the scene was miraculously revealed (by kashf) to the Shaikh. He and the Fuqara engrossed themselves in Istighfaar and Dua. None of them had come out. I came to the Shaikh with the meat and the wallet and narrated the entire episode. The Shaikh commented: "He who had adopted Sabr, has acquired *Jamaal* (spiritual beauty) and *Kamaal* (spiritual perfection). O Son! I together with the Fuqara were observing this enactment. This episode was the medium for your attainment of perfection in this Path of Tareeqat. Now wherever you wish, you may journey." He had attained the lofty rank of divine proximity and spiritual accomplishment which had been his intention and objective.

A WONDERFUL EPISODE OF THE ABDAAL

A BUZRUG narrated:

"A friend and I mounted a boat. As the boat began to move, the wind suddenly stopped. There was not a breeze blowing. The boatmen brought the boat to the shore and cast anchor. A young handsome man who was seated next to me disembarked from the boat and went ashore. He went to a clump of trees and disappeared from our sight. After some time he emerged from the trees and returned to the boat.

When the sun had set, he said to me and my companion: "My death is imminent. I have a request to make. When I die, use the cloth in this bundle as my kafan and bury me. Keep with you the clothes I am presently wearing and my jug. When you reach the city of Soor, then give it to the first person you meet who says: "Give me the Amaanat."

After we completed Maghrib Salaat, we found the young man had died. We gave him ghusl on the shore of the sea and clad him with the kafan as he had directed. Then we buried him. When we finally reached the city of Soor, a young lad approached us. After making Salaam, he said: "Give me the Amaanat." I gave him the Amaanat, then requested him to accompany us to the nearby Musjid as we desired to ask him a question. Inside the Musjid, I said to him: "Who was the one who had died, and who are you? Who had given him the kafan?"

The lad said: "He was one of the 40 Abdaal, and I am his replacement. Hadhrat Khidhr had presented the kafan to him. Khidhr had also informed him that he would soon die. The lad then removed his clothes and donned the clothes which the deceased had sent for him.

Suddenly the boatman approached us with a group of people, and led us to a large house where we saw a group of people seated. A very old man was crying. We also heard from the inside of the house women wailing. The old man asked us about the garments. I narrated the entire episode from beginning to end. He fell into Sajdah. After emerging from Sajdah he supplicated: 'Shukr unto Allah Ta'ala Who has created in my progeny such a noble man.' Then he called the lad's mother and asked us to narrate the entire episode to her. After we had narrated the story, the Shaikh told his wife: "Make shukr to Allah Who had bestowed to you such a noble son."

Several years after this incident, I happened to be on the plain of Arafaat. A young man appeared in front of me and greeted. He asked: 'Do you recognize me?' I said: 'No.' He said: "I am the one to whom you had handed the Amaanat in the city of Soor." Bidding farewell, he disappeared from our sight.

A Shaikh whom I knew and who came for Hajj every year approached me and said: "How do you know that young man?" I responded: "He is one of the 40 Abdaal." The Shaikh said: "Now, he is one of ten Abdaals." In other words, he had been promoted to a higher status.

THE SEVEN FORTS OF THE MU'MIN

A BUZRUG NARRATING an encounter with an Abdaal, said: "With ten companions, we wandered in the mountain range of Lakaam (on the Land of Shaam). After wandering in the mountain range for several days we came to a dam of sweet water. On the bank of the dam was a Musjid of white

marble. A fountain of water was gushing from under one of the stones near to the Musjid. This was the source of the dam's water.

We went into the Musjid and waited there until Zuhr time. A man came, recited the Athaan and the Iqaamah. A Shaikh with thirty companions entered and led the Salaat. We followed. After completing the Salaat, the Shaikh departed with his followers without saying a word. The same procedure occurred at Asr, Maghrib and Isha'. Neither did the Shaikh speak a word nor did we say anything to him.

After Isha' the Shaikh departed. Soon thereafter, a man entered with a basket of food for us. Despite all of us having ate, the quantity of the food remained constant. It did not decrease.

At the time of Fajr, the Shaikh appeared, and after the Salaat, he remained to recite the Qur'aan Shareef. After making Dua, addressing us, he said: "Allah Ta'ala has imposed one or two obligations on His servants, but all the people are oblivious of it." I interjected and asked: "May Allah have mercy on you. What are those obligations?" The Shaikh responded: "May Allah Ta'ala forgive your past faults. O Son! Allah, The Glorious One says: *"Verily shaitaan is your enemy. Therefore take him as your enemy."*

I asked: "How can we be saved from him?" The Shaikh said: "Listen! May Allah have mercy on you. Allah Ta'ala has erected seven forts for the Mu'min. The first fort is of gold and that is the Ma'rifat of Allah. The second fort is of silver, and that is the fort of Imaan. The third fort ahead of it is the fort of steel, and that is the fort of Tawakkul on Allah. Encircling this, is the fourth fort of stone. This is the fort of Shukr (Gratitude) and Ridha (Being pleased with Allah Ta'ala in every state). Around this, is the fort of bricks, and this is fifth the fort of Amr Bil Ma'roof Nahy anil Munkar (Commanding virtue and prohibiting vice). Surrounding this fort is the sixth fort of marble which is the fort of Sidq (Truth) and Ikhlâas (Sincerity). Around this, is the seventh fort consisting of pearls, and this is the reformation and adornment of the nafs with the attributes of moral excellence.

The Mu'min is well-protected within the confines of these seven fortresses while Iblees prowls on the outside. From the outside he barks like a dog, but the Mu'min is not concerned with his barking because he knows that he is well-defended within the powerful walls of his seven forts. It therefore devolves on the Mu'min to remain ever alert and not to be oblivious of his Islaah (moral reformation). Whoever becomes lax regarding the Islaah of his nafs will ultimately be humiliated.

Ghaflat leads to laxity in observing the *Aadaab*, and this causes the collapse of the outermost fort. In this manner, Iblees captures fort after fort. When ultimately he captures the seventh fort, the Mu'min is entrapped in kufr and is dispatched forever to Jahannum. We seek refuge with Allah Ta'ala from these calamities."

NASEEHAT OF AN ABDAAL

"STRIVE TO develop attainment of Allah's Pleasure (Ridha') as much as you strive to gain the pleasure of your nafs. Engage in your worldly occupation to the extent of your life. Obey Allah Ta'ala to the extent of your need for Him. Obey Iblees to the extent of his sympathy for you. (Since shaitaan has no sympathy for you and is your avowed enemy, it is obvious that you have to disobey him at all times.) His sympathy is deception. Sin to the extent of your ability to bear the Fire of Jahannum. Prevent your tongue from statements which are devoid of thawaab just as you abstain from such trade which is not profitable."

FOUR THINGS

A SHAIKH said: "Leave four things for four things, then you will be unconcerned with your death (i.e. you will have no fear and will have no regret when Maut arrives).

- (1) Abstain from the lustful desires of the nafs until you reach Jannat.
- (2) Abandon sleep until you go to your grave.
- (3) Abstain from comfort until after you have crossed the Siraat (the Bridge over Jahannum).
- (4) Abstain from pride until after your deeds have been scaled in the Scale of Justice on the Day of Qiyaamah."

THE MYSTERIES OF HADHRAT KHIDHR

(1) **SHAIKH ABU** Imraan Al-Waasiti (rahmatullah alayh) narrates:

"I set off walking from Makkah Mukarramah for Madinah Munawwarah to make ziyaarat of the Qabr of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). After leaving the Haram, I was overcome with extreme thirst. I lost hope in life and sat down under a cactus tree in anticipation of death.

Suddenly there appeared a man on a green horse. The reins, saddle, garments and weapon of the man on the horse were all green. In his hand was a green mug with a green liquid. Offering it, he instructed me to drink. I drank thrice, but the amount of the juice remained the same. Then he asked me where I was heading to. I said that I was going to Madinah Munawwarah.

He said: "When you reach Madinah Munawwarah then say that Khidhr conveys his Salaam."

(2) Another Buzrug narrated:

"I was sitting in Baitul Maqdis near to the mimbar of Hadhrat Nabi Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) on the Day of Jumuah after Asr. Suddenly two men appeared. One of them was of average height and the other one was extremely tall. He appeared to be very strong. His forehead was more than one cubit in width. The one of normal height came to me and made Salaam while the huge one sat at a distance.

I said: "May Allah have mercy on you. Who are you and your companion?" He said: "I am Khidhr, and he is my brother Ilyas." Fear overcame me. Khidhr (alayhis salaam) said: "Don't fear. We love you." Then he said: "Whoever on the Day of Jumuah sits after Asr Namaaz facing the Qiblah and until sunset recites: Yaa Allaah – Yaa Rahman, his dua will be accepted by Allah Ta'ala."

I asked: "Do you know all the Auliya on earth?" He said: "I know the *Ma'dudeen*." I asked him to explain who they are. He said: "On the occasion of the demise of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the world complained to Allah Ta'ala: "Until Qiyaamah I shall be without a Nabi walking on me." Allah Ta'ala revealed to the world: "I shall soon create in this Ummat such persons who will be like the Ambiya. Their hearts will be like the hearts of the Ambiya."

I asked: How many are they?" Khidhr said: "Three hundred Auliya, seventy Najeeb, forty Autaad, ten Nuqaba', seven Irfaa', three Mukhtaar and one Ghauth. (*These are all Auliya of the loftiest ranks whose identities are concealed.*) When the Ghauth dies, he is replaced by one from the three Mukhtaar. He (the promoted Mukhtaar) is replaced from the seven; he from the ten; he from the forty; he from the seventy; he from the three hundred, and the one from the three hundred is replaced from one selected from the world. This system will remain until the time when the Trumpet will be sounded for Qiyaamah.

Among them, the hearts of some are like the hearts of Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) and Nabi Eesa (alayhis salaam). The hearts of some are like the heart of Nabi Nooh (alayhis salaam). The hearts of some are like the heart of Nabi Ibraaheem (alayhis salaam), and like the heart of Jibraeel (alayhis salaam), Dawood (alayhis salaam) and Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam).

Whenever a Nabi had died, Allah Ta'ala had created a man who followed that Nabi, and this system will continue until the Day of Qiyaamah. The *Tareeqah* of that Nabi will be perpetuated."

I asked: "Where do you and Hadhrat Ilyas reside?" Hadhrat Khidhr said: "On the islands in the oceans." I said: "Do you often meet?" Khidhr said: "When a Wali of Allah dies, we participate in his Janaazah Salaat, and when it is the Hajj season, we perform Hajj. Ilyas shaves my hair, and I shave his hair (to be released from Ihraam).

Then Khidhr (alayhis salaam) stood up, and I also stood up. He asked: "Where do you wish to go?" I said: "I wish to accompany you." He said: "You cannot accompany me." I asked: "Where are you going?" He said: "Why do you ask?" I said: "I wish to perform Salaat with you to gain barkat." Khidhr said: "I perform Fajr Salaat in Makkah Mukarramah in the Hateem. Then I sit near to Rukn-e-Shaami until sunrise. Then I perform Tawaaf and two raka'ts behind Maqaam-e-Ibraaheem. I perform Zuhr Salaat in Madinah Munawwarah, and Asr in Baitul Maqdis. Maghrib I perform on Mount Tur, and Isha' on the wall of Sikandari (*Perhaps this refers to Alexandria in Egypt.*)"

THE IBAADAT OF MALAAIKAH

A BUZRUG narrated:

"One night I was under the Dome of Baitul Maqdis. Whilst I was performing Salaat, suddenly the dome split into two sections. I saw a vast concourse of beings descending from the sky. Only Allah Ta'ala is able to enumerate their number. All of them were reciting Tasbeeh.

In the last part of the night, one of them said to me: "What is your intention?" I said: "My intention is to spend the entire night in ibaadat at this place. Who are you all?" He replied: "We are Malaaiakah (Angels). We have just completed making Tawaaf of Baitul Ma'moor (which is the Ka'bah located in the seventh heaven). Until Qiyaamat we shall not again have the opportunity of going there. Every day 70,000 Malaaiakah enter Baitul Ma'moor. On that night, the 70,000 come to Baitul Maqdis, and go to the Sakhrat (Dome of the Rock). Then they visit Baitullah in Masjidul Haraam. After making Tawaaf, they perform two raka'ats Salaat behind Maqaam-e-Ibraaheem., Then they proceed to Madinah Munawwarah to offer Salaam to Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). After this, they take up their positions in the Sufoof (rows) fixed for them."

Just as Fajr dawned, all the Malaaiakah departed, and the two sections of the dome closed up."

A MIRACULOUS CURE

A WALI NARRATING his experience said: "Once while I was on Jabl-e-Noor, a sharp bone penetrated into my foot. All my efforts to remove it failed. It remained embedded in my foot for many days. My foot became swollen, turned black and was full of pus. I was in agony.

One night whilst I was lying under a tree in pain, I fell asleep. Suddenly my eyes opened. I felt something at my foot. It was a large black snake which was sucking at the wound. It sucked the pus and spat it out. I closed my eyes and made no movement. The snake continued sucking and spitting out the pus and dead blood until the swelling had completely disappeared. When it reached the embedded bone, it took hold of it and painlessly removed it. Then I felt a soft sensation on my foot as if some ointment was being applied. I don't know if it was the snake's tongue or tail.

The snake then disappeared. I stood up and saw the pus, blood and bone. But, there was absolutely no pain in my foot, and no mark was left behind. I was completely cured.

A REMEDY BY RASULULLAH (SALLALLAHU ALAYHI WASALLAM)

ONCE A Buzrug was afflicted with a severe illness. He as well as everyone else were convinced that his death was imminent. On a Friday night in a dream he saw a man approaching him. The man sat down at his bedside. He was followed by a large gathering of beings who had the form of birds. After the beings sat down, they assumed the form of human beings.

The man said: "I have come to this city to visit three persons. This man (and he pointed to me). The second one is Saalih Khalqaani and the third one is a woman." However, the name of the woman was not mentioned.

The man then placing his hand on my forehead recited the following Dua:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ رَبِّي اللَّهُ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عِصْمَتٌ
عَلَى اللَّهِ فَوَضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا شَاءَ
اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

Then he said to me: "Recite these words in abundance. In it is a cure for every sickness, a solution for every affliction and success over every enemy. The first who had recited these words were the Malaaiakah who are bearing the Arsh. They were commanded to recite this Dua when they first lifted the Arsh, and they will continue reciting it until Qiyaamah.

One person who was sitting, addressing the one who was speaking said: "O Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "What if someone recites it at the time of encountering the enemy?" Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "In it is help, victory and glad tidings."

I (i.e. the sick Buzrug) thought that the person (who had asked the question) was Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu). I said: "O Rasulallah! (sallallahu alayhi wasallam):"Is he Abu Bakr?" Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "He is my uncle, Humzah (radhiyallahu anhu)."

Then Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made a sign on his left side with his blessed hand, and said: "They are the Shuhada (Martyrs)." Then he pointed to those behind him, and said: "They are the Saaliheen." Then he departed. My eyes opened, and I discovered that I was completely cured. In fact, I was stronger than what I was prior to the illness."

THE OLD LADY IN THE JUNGLE

TWO SHAIKHS were traveling on foot through the wilderness and the desert. After some days they were overwhelmed by thirst and hunger. After days of walking they saw a small hut in the jungle through which they were passing. When they reached the hut, they found a very old lady inside. The hut was completely bare. Outside the hut was a rock which had the formation of a bowl. The old woman was engrossed in ibaadat. The two Shaikhs sat down outside.

When the sun set, she performed Maghrib Salaat inside, then came out holding two pieces of bread and some dates. She told the two Shaikhs: "Go inside and take your share of the food." When they went inside, they found four pieces of bread and some dates. There were no date trees in that place nor was bread available. They were surprised and wondered from where the bread and dates had come.

After they had eaten, they saw a cloud over the spot where the bowl was. Rain came from the cloud and filled the bowl. Not a drop rained out of the bowl. The Shaikh asked: "How long have you been living in this place?" The old lady said: "Seventy years. This is my bond with Allah Ta'ala. Every day the cloud appears and fills the bowl and the bread and dates arrive as you have observed."

The old lady asked: "Where are you going?" They said: "We are going to visit Hadhrat Abu Nasr Samarqandi." She said: "Abu Nasr Samarqandi is a pious man. Come, and meet these people." Suddenly, Hadhrat Abu Nasr Samarqandi was standing in front of the two Shaikhs. They exchanged greetings, and Hadhrat Samarqandi said: "When the servant is obedient to Allah Ta'ala, then He fulfils the desires of His servant."

PEBBLES BECAME GOLD

A BUZRUG and his friend, Muhamnmad Aabid set out from Baitul Maqdis on a Friday to go to Ramlah. While they were walking through a valley, they saw a woman clad in woollen garments with a stick in her hand. After making Salaam, she asked them where they were going. The Shaikh said: "To Ramlah."

The Shaikh took some dirhams from his pocket and presented them to the woman. She asked: "How did you earn these dirhams?" The Shaikh said: "I earned it in a lawful manner." She said: "This is the earning of a weakling." The Shaikh asked: "What is my weakness?" She said: "The weakness of yaqeen."

Shaikh: "What is the sign of yaqeen?" The woman: "You will not gain yaqeen as long as you do not cast off from your body the flesh which developed without Allah's Pleasure."

Shaikh: "Everything has a sign and a proof. What is the proof of your truthfulness?" The woman immediately scooped up a handful of pebbles and exclaimed: "O You who are weak in faith! Take this." Muhammad Aabid accepted it. All the pebbles had turned into solid gold coins. She said: "No hands had ever touched these coins nor have they ever been weighed. I did not give this gold to you because I know that you flee from the world."

Then she again asked: "Where are you going?" The Shaikh said: "To Ramlah." She said: "This is Ramlah." When they looked, they were standing by the wall of Ramlah. They entered and discovered that it was a Friday and people had just completed Jumuah Salaat.

Muhammad Aabid used the gold coins to build a Musjid in Asqalaan where it still stands to this day. The Musjid is known by the name Musjid Mubaahi.

NIKAH WITH THREE HOOR

HADHRAT MUHAMMAD Warraaq (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that Mubaarak was a pious Habshi (Abyssinian) labourer. Frequently he was asked: "O Mubaarak! Why don't you get married?" He would say: "I have asked Allah Ta'ala to arrange my Nikah with a Hoor (Damsel of Jannat)."

Muhammad Warraaq said: "Once we participated in a Jihad campaign. On the battlefield we saw Mubaarak's body. He was martyred. His head was separated from his body and he was lying on his stomach with his hands under his chest. Standing by his body, I said: 'O Mubaarak! With how many Damsels did Allah Ta'ala arrange your Nikah?' In response, his hand came out from under his body and he indicated with three fingers, i.e. with three Damsels."

THE DAMAGED THRONE

HADHRAT ABU Haamid Hallaas (rahmatullah alayh) narrated:

"My mother was a very pious lady. We lived in extreme poverty and hardship. One day my mother said to me: "How long will we have to live in this hardship?" At the time of Tahajjud I made Dua: 'O Allah! If there is anything for us in the Akhirah, then give us a little of it here in this world.'

Just as I had completed my dua, I saw something glittering in a corner of the room. When I inspected it, I found that it was the leg of a throne. It was of pure gold and studded with precious stones. I informed my mother of the wonderful bounty.

I set off to the Masjid. Along the way I thought of ways of arranging the sale of precious stones. When I returned from the Masjid, my mother said to me: "O my son! Forgive me. When you went out, I fell asleep. I dreamt that I was in Jannat. I was taken to a beautiful palace. On the portals outside was inscribed '*Lailaha il lallaahu Muhammadur Rasulullaah*'. There was also inscribed on the wall: '*This is the mansion of Abu Haamid Halaas*'. I asked: "Does this mansion belong to my son?" The Angel said: 'Yes.' I was taken inside and shown the wonderful rooms with their contents. In one room were several beautiful thrones. In the midst of the throne, one throne was lying on its side broken. I commented: 'How ugly! Why is this broken throne in the midst of all these wonderful thrones?' Someone said: 'You have already taken away its leg.' I said: 'Replace it in its place.' When my eyes opened, the golden leg had disappeared."

THE EFFECT OF A DRINK FROM JANNAT

A BUZRUG narrated: "Once I was on a journey with a man who did not eat anything. After eleven days, I asked him to explain why he neither eats nor drinks anything. He said that he would explain when the time comes for us to go our separate ways.

After a few days when we were about to go our own ways, I reminded him about his promise. Then he explained:

"I was with 400 Mujahideen in a Jihad campaign. Each one of them was martyred. I was the only one alive. I was wounded and was among the bodies of the Shuhada (Martyrs). When the sun was about to set, I perceived a wonderful fragrance from above. When I looked upwards, I saw a large group of beautiful girls. Their garments and beauty are indescribable. Nothing on earth is like it. All of them had beautiful glasses in their hands. They poured the contents into the mouths of the Shuhada.

When one of these damsels came to me, she exclaimed: "There is still life in him." Another girl said: "It does not matter. Make haste before the portals of the heavens close, for then we shall be left stranded on this earth." She then poured the delicious juice into my mouth. From that day I have never been hungry nor have the need for food."

A FEW STEPS TO BAITUL MAQDIS

HADHRAT Shaikh Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that once whilst walking through the wilderness on his way to Baitul Maqdis he lost the way. Suddenly an old woman appeared. He said to her: "O Musaafir! (Traveller) are you also lost?" She said: "How can one who

has recognized Him (i.e. Allah Ta'ala) be a musaafir? And, how can one who loves Him ever deviate?"

Then she said: "Hold my staff and walk ahead of me." Shaikh Abdul Waahid said: "I held her staff and walked a few steps ahead of her. I took only a few steps and saw the Masjid of Baitul Maqdis in front of me. I rubbed my eyes. Perhaps I made an error or was dreaming."

The old lady said: "Your journey is the journey of a Zaahid, and my journey is the journey of an Aarif. Whilst the Zaahid walks, the Aarif flies. One who walks cannot reach one who flies." Then she suddenly disappeared from my sight.

A SHEPHERD'S MIRACLE

ONCE Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham passed by a shepherd who was tending to his flock. He asked the shepherd if he had any water or milk. The shepherd asked: "What do you prefer – milk or water?" Ibn Adham said: 'Water'.

The shepherd struck his staff on a rock and water gushed from it. The water was colder than ice and sweeter than honey. Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham drank of the water, and stood bewildered. The shepherd commented: "Don't be surprised. When the servant obeys His Rabb, then everything obeys him (the servant)."

AULIYA PUT TO SHAME BY AN AARIF

(An Aarif is a Wali who enjoys an extremely lofty state of Divine Recognition.)

HADHRAT SHAIKH Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid and Hadhrat Shaikh Ayyub Sakhtayaani (rahmatullah alayhim) who were famous Auliya, were on a journey on foot in the wilderness of the Land of Shaam. Whilst they were walking a Habshi (Abyssinian) labourer with a pile of wood on his head was approaching from the opposite direction. When he was close to them, Shaikh Abdul Waahid said: "Habshi! Who is your Rabb?"

The Habshi said: "You dare ask me this?" He placed the bundle of wood on the ground, raised his eyes to the sky and supplicated: "O my Rabb! Transform it into gold." The wood promptly became gold. Then he said to us: 'Do you see this?' We said sheepishly: "Yes." Then he again supplicated: "O my Rabb! Restore it to its original form." The gold immediately was transformed into timber.

The Habshi said to us: "Do you dare question (to test) the Aarifeen? There is no end to the wonders of the Aarifeen."

Hadhrat Ayyub Sakhtayaani said: "I was bewildered at the state of the Habshi. Never was I embarrassed so much." He asked the Habshi: "Do you have anything for eating?" The Habshi made a sign with his hand. Suddenly there appeared a mug with such honey which was whiter than snow and sweeter than honey. It was more fragrant than musk. He said to us: "Eat! This is not honey from the bellies of bees."

Perceiving our surprise, the Habshi said: "One who is surprised by miracles is not an Aarif. He who is surprised, is distant from Allah Ta'ala. A man who worships Allah on seeing miracles is in reality a jaahil (ignoramus). He has failed to recognize Allah Ta'ala."

HADHRAT ZUNNUN MISRI

HADHRAT Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh), the famous Wali of Egypt of the third Islamic century, was branded a zindeeq (heretic/kaafir) by the people of Egypt. His mystical statements were beyond their intellectual capacity. The people sent a petition to Khalifah Mutawakkil in Baghdad complaining severely about Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh). Many blasphemous statements and beliefs were attributed to him. The Khalifah ordered his arrest and instructed that he be sent in chains to Baghdad which was the seat of the Khilaafate.

Consequently, Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh) was put in chains and dispatched to Baghdad. When he finally was delivered into the court of the Khalifah, he commented: "Today I have learnt how to be a Muslim from two persons: an old lady and a young man." When he was asked to explain, he said: "Along the way to the court, a young water-carrier gave me some water to drink. I indicated to a friend who had accompanied me to give him a dinar. The water-carrier

refused to accept it, and commented: "It is dishonourable to take payment from a stranger in chains."

"When I was ushered into the Khalifah's court, I became a bit apprehensive when I observed the pomp and splendour, the soldiers, guards, etc. As some change overtook me, there suddenly appeared an old lady with a stick in front of me. She reprimanded: "Beware! Never fear! The one to whom they are taking you is a human being just as you. He cannot do you anything without the Will of Allah Ta'ala." Then she disappeared.

The Khalifah ordered that Hadhrat Zunnun be imprisoned for forty days. Whilst in jail, Hadhrat Bishr Haafi's sister who was a saintly lady of lofty rank would daily send one bread to the prison for Hadhrat Zunnun. After forty days when he was released, it was seen that the forty bread were all intact. He did not eat a single piece of the bread. This realization grieved the saintly lady. When she queried the reason for having abstained from the bread which she had prepared from her halaal earning, Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh) said that he was aware that the bread was from her halaal earnings, however, the container in which the bread was sent was contaminated by the hands of an oppressor. This was a reference to the hands of the jail warder who would bring the bread.

After he was released, he fell down due to extreme weakness. His head was injured and blood gushed forth. Miraculously, the blood did not run on to his face nor on his garments, but would run off directly from his forehead on to the ground and the ground would instantaneously absorb it.

Before he was released, he was brought into the presence of Khalifah Mutawakkil and interrogated about his beliefs and the seemingly blasphemous statements attributed to him. Hadhrat Zunnun acquitted himself with such eloquence and elucidation that the Khalifah broke down crying. All the noblemen and scholars present were amazed at the eloquence and the elaboration presented by Hadhrat Zunnun (rahmatullah alayh). So awed became the Khalifah that he became the mureed and devotee of Hadhrat Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) who was sent back to Egypt in great honour and respect.

THE PRICE OF JANNAT

PRIOR TO being appointed the Khalifah of the Islamic Empire, Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz who is known as Umar, The Second, was a man given to luxury and pleasure. When cloth worth a thousand dirhams was brought for him, he would say: "This cloth would have been perfect if it did not have any coarseness in it." After he became the Khalifah and cloth worth four or six dirhams was brought to him, he would say: "This cloth would have been perfect if it had some coarseness in it."

Despite the softness of the thousand dirham fabric he would complain of its 'coarseness' although it was the most expensive material. However, after becoming the Khlaifah, he would complain of the 'softness' of the cheapest and coarsest cloth. In other words, he desired even coarser and cheaper cloth.

When he was asked to explain this transformation in him, he said: "My nafs is a great lover of pleasure and luxury. When it made demands, I would fulfil its desire and taste the luxury and comfort. Then it would make more demands for luxury, and I would satisfy it until finally my nafs tasted the pleasure of Khilaafat. Then it desired something better than Khilaafat, but nothing superior was found besides Jannat which is by Allah Ta'ala. My nafs then yearned for Jannat. The price for obtaining it is renunciation of this world. It is for this reason that I have renounced the world."

Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz (rahmatullah alayh) is one of the Khulafa of the Bani Umayyayyah dynasty. He was a Taabi-ee. He is called Umar, The Second, because he restored the Khilaafat to the Sunnah of Hadhrat Umar Ibn Khattaab (radhiyallahu anhu), the second Khalifah.

APPOINTMENT AND DISMISSAL OF RULERS

SHAIKH Abul Ghaith (rahmatullah alayh) narrated: "A Shaikh and a Faqeeh once came to our Shaikh Ahdal and asked him to accompany them to a certain place. Shaikh Ahdal complied and I accompanied them. Late during the night I observed the Shaikh and the Faqeeh standing high above in midair with drawn swords. Shaikh Ahdal and myself were on the ground.

When I queried this strange and miraculous episode, Shaikh Ahdal said to me: "O Abul Ghaith, these people are on the stage of *Tauliyat* (i.e. empowered to appoint rulers) and *Azal* (i.e. empowered to dismiss rulers). By Allah's command they appoint and dismiss rulers."

SHAIKH ABU ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD AZHARI AJMI

SHAIKH Azhari Ajmi (rahmatullah alayhi) was constantly travelling. His miracles are numerous, bewildering and marvellous. His mureed, Shaikh Kabeer Abul Hasan Ibn Daqaaiq (rahmatullah alayh) narrated:

"Shaikh Ajmi took me to 360 worlds besides the universe of the heavens and the earth. On one occasion he took me to Kooh-e-Kaaf where I saw a massive green python around the mountain. Coiled around the mountain was the python with its head on its tail.

One day when I was with him, he came out from the City of Damascus. We walked and within a very short while we reached Tabriyah. We stood at the graveside of Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam). I said: 'Hadhrat, this is the grave of Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam).' The Shaikh responded: "So is it said." Then he walked ahead and I followed. Suddenly we were airborne. He was in midair whilst I was behind him. Soon we observed a fearful house. Some beings were emerging. They made Salaam to the Shaikh and expressed their pleasure at Hadhrat's arrival. Fear gripped me. The Shaikh looked at me and said: 'O Ali! Be careful and remain close to me. These beings are jinn. We are now proceeding to the grave of Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam).'

We soon reached a city where another group of beings welcomed us. They led us to a huge palace. The Shaikh was ahead whilst I followed him. When we entered the main hall of the palace, we saw a man standing there. Noor and awe radiated from his face. His looks inspired awe in the observer, He was holding a staff in his hand. The Shaikh said to me: "This is Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam)." The Shaikh stepped forward and kissed his hands. Hadhrat Sulaimaan had a ring on his finger. The Shaikh then stepped back.

Hadhrat Sulaimaan's servants who were jinn, led us to another hall where we were served food. After we had meals, the jinn took us on a tour to observe the treasures of Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam). A carpet was spread, and we stood on it. A wind came and took us aloft. We were shown the throne of Queen Bilqees and many other wonders. Thereafter we were taken to a cave from which came a buzzing sound and an awful stench. It was explained to us that in this cave a shaitaan has been imprisoned since the age of Hadhrat Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam).

When the Shaikh intended to return, two platforms were brought. The sheikh mounted one and I the other one. The platforms became airborne. We were unable to see who were those accompanying us. After traversing the ocean in flight, the platforms landed at a place. As soon as we had disembarked, the platforms became airborne and disappeared. The Shaikh and I walked a few steps and suddenly the City of Damascus was in front of us."

ALLAH'S MYSTERIOUS SCHEMES

SHAIKH Mughaadari (rahmatullah alayh) was one of those Auliya who executed various divinely-imposed tasks in mysterious ways. He had the power of becoming invisible. He would enter into the cities of the kuffaar to execute duties which Allah Ta'ala imposed on him. Once Allah Ta'ala ordered him to go to a certain city of the kuffaar to meet a Siddeeq. *(A Siddeeq is a Wali of the highest status. The Siddeeq's rank is close to the status of a Nabi. The Siddeeq of the highest rank was Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddeeq –Radhiyallahu anhu.)*

As Shaikh Mughaadari entered the city of the kuffaar, he was arrested. The captor tied him and took him to the bazaar where he sold him as a slave. A man of rank purchased him and dedicated him to be of service to the main church in the city. Shaikh Mughaadari remained there. Daily he would clean the church and attended to all the duties which had been imposed on him by the management of the church.

One day, there was much activity in the church. New carpets were spread and incense was lit. The church was being adorned. When Shaikh Mughaadari asked the reason for the extra activity and adornment, he was informed that the king comes once a year to pray in this church, and he would be coming on this day. The king would remain alone in the church for prayers. Soon the king

came and entered. Everyone left and the doors were closed. Meanwhile Shaikh Mughaadari had made himself invisible and remained inside.

Shaikh Mughdhari narrated: "When I found the king held the status of the *Siddiqueen*, I asked: 'What is your spiritual state living among these kuffaar?' The king who was a Siddeeq, said: 'O Abul Hajjaaj! I derive great benefit amongst them. My Tauheed and Islam are pure and sincere. No one is aware of it. I consume what is halaal – in which there is no doubt. I am able to benefit Muslims. Even if I was a great king among the Muslims, I would not have been able to benefit them in the way I am presently doing. I am saving them from the evil plots of the kuffaar by being in this guise. I create situations which bring about wars between the kuffaar. Insha'Allah, you shall soon witness such upheavals. (I.e. *Creating wars among the kuffaar nations*).'

SHAHEED NAATIQ (THE MARTYR WHO SPOKE)

(Naatiq is one who speaks)

HADHRAT AARIF Abdur Rahmaan Nuwairi (rahmatullah alayh), a renowned Faqih and Wali, had participated in the Jihaad of Dimyaat. He was martyred in this Jihaad campaign. His killer who was a Christian, said: "After I killed Abdur Rahmaan, I exclaimed: 'O Qissees (i.e. Aalim) of the Muslims! You read in your Book (the Qur'aan), the verse: *"Never think of those who are killed in the Path of Allah that they are dead. In fact, they are alive, and are being nourished by their Creator..."* I said: 'He is your Aalim.' As I spoke, the slain Abdur Rahmaan opened his eyes, lifted his head and exclaimed: 'Yes! I am alive and I'm being nourished by Him.' Then he became silent.

When this episode was enacted, kufr departed from my heart and I became a Muslim. I hope that by the blessings of Abdur Rahman who was the cause of my becoming a Muslim, Allah Ta'ala will forgive me."

Since Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan (rahmatullah alayh) spoke after *shahaadat*, he is called *Shaheed Naatiq*.

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY IS LOST

SHAIKH ABU Muhammad Ibn Kabash (rahmatullah alayh) would frequently meet Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam). A wealthy man who was a friend of Hadhrat Ibn Kabash once said: "You meet Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) often. Ask him to meet me too one day. I yearn to see him." So, when Shaikh Ibn Kabash met Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam), he conveyed his friend's request to him. Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) said: "Your friend does not want to meet me." Hadhrat Ibn Kabash (rahmatullah alayh) said: 'Subhaanallaah! That was what he told me.' Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) said: "Tell him I shall meet him on Friday before the Salaat."

That Friday, the wealthy man who was overjoyed, distributed a large amount of food to the poor in gratitude for his wish having been granted. Then he made wudhu, sat on his musalla and engaged in Thikr waiting for the arrival of Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam). Soon someone knocked on the door. The wealthy man sent his slave-girl to ascertain who it was. When the girl opened the door, she saw a man wrapped in a shawl. He said to her: "Tell your master, someone wishes to see him." When the girl informed her master and described the appearance of the person, he assumed it was a beggar. He instructed her to tell the beggar to return after Jumuah Salaat. She conveyed the message to the person. He went away.

After Jumuah Salaat, the wealthy man met Hadhrat Ibn Kabash and complained that Hadhrat Khidhr had not come as he had promised. Hadhrat Ibn Kabash said: "O unfortunate one! He was Khidhr – the one to whom you had sent your slave-girl to tell him to come after Jumuah. You desire to meet Khidhr whilst you place a guard at your door!" Smitten with regret and grief, he said: "All my slave-girls are free for the sake of Allah Ta'ala." Thereafter whenever anyone knocked at his door, he would attend personally.

READING AND WRITING WITH NOOR

WHEN SOMEONE would come to Hadhrat Sayyid Ahmad Ibn Rifaa'i (rahmatullah alayh) for a ta'weez, and if he did not have ink, he would, nevertheless, write the ta'weez with his finger and give it to the person. One day a young man asked for a ta'weez. After writing without ink, he handed the ta'weez to the person. However, the man could not see anything written on it. He did not believe that anything was written on the paper. Anyhow, he kept the paper. After many days, he went with the paper to test Hadhrat Ibn Rifaa'i. He gave him the paper and requested that a ta'weez be written on it. When Hadhrat Rifaa'i looked at the seemingly blank paper, he said: "My son! A ta'weez is already written on the paper." He handed the paper back to the man without displaying the slightest annoyance.

A GUARANTEE FROM THE HEAVEN

TWO BUZRUGS, Shaikh Ma-aali Ibn Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) and Shaikh Abdul Mun'im (rahmatullah alayh) were spending some time in the wilderness. Hadhrat Ma-ali asked his companion: "What do you wish for?" Shaikh Abdul Mun'im said: "This slave desires that right now we should obtain a written guarantee of safety from Jahannum, and the document should descend from the heaven."

Hadhrat Ma-aali commented: "Allah's kindness and grace are boundless." As he spoke, a document drifted from above. It was a glittering white page. But it was blank. He said: "Let us go to Shaikh Sayyid Ahmad Rifaa'i." Both went to Shaikh Rifaa'i. Placing the page in front of him they explained what had transpired. On looking at the page, he went into Sajdah. When he raised his head, he said: "Shukr unto Allah. He has shown me this document in which I have been informed before Qiyaamah that I together with my mureeds will be saved from Jahannum." Then he kissed the page.

Shaikh Ma-aali said: "Hadhrat! But there is nothing written on the page." The Shaikh said: "Sons! The Hand of Allah does not write with ink. It writes with Noor." He handed the page to Shaikh Abdul Mun'im. When Shaikh Abdul Mun'im died, the page was put into his kafan.

NASEEHAT OF A LITTLE GIRL

HADHRAT Zunnun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: "I was passing through the desert on my way to Makkah Mukarramah when I was overcome by severe thirst. I passed through a village inhabited by the tribe of Bani Makhzoom. I saw a little girl who was humming and reciting some poetry. I said to her: "Little girl, have you no shame!" The girl said: "Be silent, O Zunnun!" (*Although this was the first time he had met her, she knew his name.*) She further said: "Last night I drank of the wine of Divine Love, and this morning I awoke in the state of Divine Intoxication."

Hadhrat Zunnun, then said: "O girl! You appear to be intelligent. Give me some advice." The girl said: "O Zunnun! Make silence incumbent on yourself. Be content with a little worldly provision. You will then behold the Vision of That Established Being who never perishes."

THE PIOUS PRINCESS

IN BYGONE times among Bani Israaeel there was a princess who was famed for her piety. She would spend all her time in ibaadat. Many princes had proposed marriage to her but she had refused. One day she requested her maid servant to search for a pious faqeer with whom she could be married. After searching much, a faqeer was found. Her nikah was performed with the faqeer who had informed her that besides the shawl on his body, he owned nothing else. His hut was barren. But the princess was contented.

The faqeer would work and with the pittance he earned, he would buy some food for his wife who would daily fast. One day he was unable to find any work. He was grieved because his wife was fasting whilst there would be no food whatsoever on this day. He made wudhu, performed two raka'ts Salaat and made Dua: 'O Allah! You are aware that I am not working because of a desire for wealth. Today I have nothing to take to my pious wife who is fasting. O Allah! Grant us Rizq from Your Side.' Whilst he was supplicating, a pearl dropped from above.

Taking the pearl, he went home and presented it to his wife. Being a princess, she recognized that this was no ordinary pearl. She asked him from whence he had acquired the pearl. She had never seen such a pearl whilst she was living in the palace. The faqeer explained the circumstances of his acquisition of the pearl. She instructed him: "Go back to the place where the pearl had descended and supplicate to Allah: "O Allah! If this pearl is part of our Rizq on earth, grant barkat in it. If it is an item from our treasures of the Aakhirah, then take it back."

The Faqeer complied with his wife's wishes. As he made the dua, the pearl vanished. When he reported to his wife how the pearl had disappeared, she said: "Shukr unto Allah Ta'ala Who has shown us something of what is being treasured for us in the Aakhirah. I am not concerned with the acquisition of anything from this perishable world."

IBRAAHIM BIN ADHAM'S CONVERSION

HADHRAT AHMAD Bin Abdullah Al-Muqaddasi once asked Hadhrat Ibn Adham to narrate to him the circumstances which had led to his abandoning the throne of the kingdom of Balkh and taking the road into the wilderness to seek Allah Ta'ala. Hadhrat Ibn Adham narrated:

"One day I was sitting on the balcony of my palace when I observed a faqeer outside. The faqeer took from his bag a piece of dry bread, moistened it and ate it with some salt and drank some water. After offering shukr and hamd (praise) to Allah Ta'ala, he laid down and fell asleep. I instructed a servant to keep the faqeer under observation, and when he wakes up to bring him to me.

When the faqeer woke up, the servant informed him of my instruction. The faqeer was ushered into my presence. I said to him: "O Faqeer! You were hungry, then you ate bread. Are you satisfied?" He said: 'Yes.' I said: 'You were thirsty and you eagerly drank water. Was your thirst quenched?' He said: "Yes." "Then you slept. Did you sleep peacefully?" The faqeer said: "Yes."

Then I focused on my nafs reprimanding myself for all my indulgences in this world I wondered: 'What need do I have with this abundance of the world?' I resolved to repent and to be contented with the lifestyle of the faqeer whom I had questioned. When night approached, I donned simple woolen garments and departed from my palace to set out into the wilderness in search of the capital I shall require for the Hereafter.

Soon I met a well-dressed handsome man from whom a wonderful fragrance exuded. I made Salaam and shook hands with him. He asked: 'O Ibraaheem, where are you off to?' I said: 'I am fleeing from Allah and going to Him.' He asked: 'Are you hungry?' I said: 'Yes.' The Shaikh performed two raka'ts Salaat and instructed me to also perform two raka'ts. After the Salaat, I observed a tray of sumptuous food and water by him. He said: 'O Ibraaheem, eat and express shukr for Allah's kindness.' Despite eating and drinking of the water, the quantity remained the same.

The Shaikh said to me: 'O Ibn Adham! Make use of your intelligence and understanding, and do not make haste in anything because haste is from shaitaan. When Allah Ta'ala desires to do good to a person, He selects that person for His proximity. He ignites the lamp of His Holiness in the heart. By virtue of this lamp, the person is able to distinguish between Haqq and baatil (Truth and falsehood).

O Ibraaheem! When you are in the company of the pious, make yourself a carpet for them (i.e. be humble). Do not displease them because when they are displeased, Allah Ta'ala becomes displeased. When they are pleased, Allah Ta'ala becomes pleased.' Then he taught me the *Ism-e-A'zam*, and vanished from my sight.

Soon thereafter, I met a young man also well-dressed with a wonderful fragrance exuding from him. He said: 'O Ibraaheem, who was the person you have met?' When I described him, the young man cried so much that I too broke down and cried with him. I said: 'Hadhrat! Who was that man, and who are you?' He replied: 'That Shaikh is my brother Ilyas (alayhis salaam), and I am Abul Abbaas Khidhr.

I was delighted. I embraced him and kissed him on the forehead and asked him to make dua for me. He made a dua and vanished from my sight. This was the initial period of my renunciation of the world."

THE SAJDAH OF THREE DAYS

DURING THE Khilaafate of Haaroun Rashid there was a severe drought. The suffering was tremendous. People gathered on the outskirts making dua for rain to no avail. Whilst the people were still assembled on the outskirts, a man with disheveled hair and full of dust and sand emerged from the wilderness. Three very beautiful young girls were with him. After making Salaam, he asked the reason for them having assembled in the wilderness. They said: "O Shaikh! We are here to supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to send the rain, but it is not raining."

The Shaikh said: "Is Allah not present in the city, constraining you to assemble here?" Is Allah not present in every place? Is it not mentioned in His Kitaab: *"He is with you wherever you are, and Allah sees whatever you are doing?"*

When Haaroun Rashid was informed of the Shaikh, he said to himself: "There appears to be a special bond between him and Allah Ta'ala. Bring him to me." After the Shaikh was ushered into the presence of Haaroun Rashid, and Salaams were exchanged, the Khalifah shook hands with him, and said: "O Shaikh! Make dua for us for the rain to fall. Perhaps you have some rank by Allah Ta'ala." The Shaikh smiled and said: 'Do you really want me to make dua?' When the Khalifah said: 'Yes.', the Shaikh said: "Then all the people should join me in making Taubah (Repenting)."

An announcement was made to the public to engage in Taubah. After the population had made Taubah, the Shaikh stepped forward and performed two short raka'ts Salaat. After Salaam, he positioned his daughters on his right and left side. He raised his hands and tears flowed in profusion from his eyes whilst he engaged fervently in dua. Even before completing his dua, the sky darkened with clouds. The thunder began to rumble and bolts of lightning glittered. It rained in torrents. Haaroun Rashid was overwhelmed with joy. All the noblemen gathered to congratulate the Khalifah. He instructed: "Bring that pious Sage to me."

A search was made and the Buzrug was found in the mud in Sajdah. People waited for him for a considerable time, then asked his daughters why he is so long in Sajdah? The girls responded: "This is his practice. When in Sajdah on these occasions, he does not lift his head for three days. When this news was conveyed to Haaroun Rashid, he broke down crying, and he cried much, and supplicated: "O Allah! Grant us the blessing of these Saaliheen. I petition you by the *waseelah* (through the medium) of these pious ones, shower your blessings on us."

ABUL HASAN SHAAZLI

HADHRAT Abul Hasan Shaazli (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that once whilst in the wilderness he had remained without food for 80 days. The thought occurred to him that he had acquired a lofty spiritual rank, hence the ability to abstain from food for such a lengthy period. As this thought was crossing his mind, there emerged from a nearby cave a woman of stunning beauty. She exclaimed: 'Most unfortunate is he! Most unfortunate is he who has remained hungry for 80 days, then seeks to apply pressure on Allah Ta'ala. I have been without food for six months (180 days). Then she vanished.

She was sent by Allah Ta'ala to jolt Hadhrat Shazli (rahmatullah alayh) to realize that his idea was *ujub* (vanity).

ALLAH'S BOUNTIES ARE ONLY FOR ME

HADHRAT ABUL Hasan Shazli (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Once whilst on a journey through the desert, I supplicated: "O Allah! When shall I truly be your grateful servant?" I heard a Voice responding: "When you understand that you are the only one to whom bounties have been bestowed." I supplicated: "O Allah! How is it possible for me to understand that I am the only one on who bounties have been bestowed whereas you have showered your bounties on the Ambiya, the Ulama and the kings?" The Voice said: "If there were no Ambiya, you would not have been guided. If there were no Ulama, you would not have been able to follow the righteous path. If there were no kings, you would not have had safety. Thus, all of these are My bounties for you."

THE MIRACLES OF A BUZRUG

A KAAFIR king had conquered some Muslim cities. He massacred the people, pillaged and plundered the cities. When he intended to execute a group of Fuqara and Mashaaikh, a Shaikh admonished him. The king said that if he was true, he should demonstrate his truth with some miracle.

The Shaikh gazed at the manure of the camel and it turned into diamonds. He made a sign towards a number of empty mugs and all became filled with water and suspended upside down in the air without a drop falling out.

The king became scared. However, his courtiers assured him that the Shaikh's display was magic. He should therefore not be perturbed. The king told the Shaikh to demonstrate another miracle. The Shaikh ordered a fire to be lit. A huge fire was lit. When the blazing fire was a furnace, the Shaikh and his group of Fuqara entered into the furnace. As the Shaikh entered, he took hold of the king's young son and pulled him into the fire. Inside the fire, the Shaikh disappeared from sight with the king's son. The king was shocked with grief and fear.

After a short while, the Shaikh appeared with the child and emerged from the fire unscathed. The child had a pomegranate in one hand and an apple in the other hand. Immensely relieved, the king asked his son where he had been. The child said that he was in a fruit orchard where he had picked the fruit. Again the king's men convinced him that the Shaikh's feat was magic.

The king then said to the Shaikh: "I don't believe in what you have demonstrated. I shall only believe you if you drink the contents in this cup." It was a cup filled with fatal poison. Just a drop would bring about instantaneous death. Without the slightest hesitation the Shaikh swallowed the entire contents of the cup. The effect of the poison was such that all the clothes of the Shaikh were shred into pieces. Another shawl to cover him was given. This shawl too became shred into bits. Several shawls were given to him, and each time the effect of the poison rent the garment to shreds. Finally, a shawl remained intact and the Shaikh perspired profusely. All the poison was thus expelled from his body.

The king was now convinced of the truth of the Shaikh. He honoured the Shaikh and pledged to refrain from harming the inhabitants of the conquered cities, and he embraced Islam.

THE MYSTERY OF A SHAIKH'S REQUEST

ONCE a very great Shaikh visited a wealthy trader in Alexandria (in Egypt). The trader loved and honoured pious men. It was his practice to befriend and entertain the Sufiya. The Shaikh gazed at two extremely expensive imported carpets which had been acquired from Rome. He then requested the trader to give him both carpets. This request was inexplicable. The trader was agitated by the Shaikh's desire. To part with these carpets was very difficult. The trader offered to give the Shaikh the value of the carpets in money. But the Shaikh refused, and insisted that he wanted the carpets. Finally the trader offered him one carpet. The Shaikh took the carpet and left.

Meanwhile, the two sons of the trader had gone by ship to India to purchase merchandise. The trader heard that on the return voyage, both ships were caught in a fierce storm. One ship was wrecked and sank with all the occupants and the goods. The two sons were on separate ships. The one son also drowned when the ship sank. The other ship managed to sail to Aden where the passengers disembarked.

When the news reached the father that his one son had reached the outskirts of Alexandria, he (the father) went out to welcome him. When he met his son, he saw him with the carpet which he had given to the Shaikh. The father asked his son to explain the story of the carpet. Where did he obtain the carpet? The son said that the episode of the carpet was wonderful.

Whilst the ship in which he was, was being tossed on the stormy ocean and it appeared that it would also sink like the other ship, suddenly there appeared a Shaikh with this carpet. He spread the carpet and the ship began to sail smoothly until it docked safely at Aden. The Shaikh gave him the carpet.

The father said: "If you see the Shaikh, will you recognize him?" The son said: 'Yes.' Then the trader took his son to the residence of the Shaikh. When the son saw the Shaikh, he (the son) screamed with shock. The Shaikh passed his hand on the son's head and he became calm. Now the father understood the mystery of the Shaikh's request. If he had given both carpets, his other

son too would have been saved. He said: "O Shaikh! Why did you not inform me of the reality?" The Shaikh said: "That was Allah's command and will."

HADHRAT SHAQEEQ BALKHI – "I AM THE STUDENT OF A SLAVE"

HADHRAT Shaqeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) was among the renowned Auliya of Islam. He was the student of Imaam Zufar (rahmatullah alayh) who was the student of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh). He was the contemporary of Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) and the Ustaadh of Hadhrat Haatim Asam (rahmatullah alayh) Explaining the episode which led to Hadhrat Shaqeeq's Taubah (repentance) and (Zuhd) renunciation of the world, Hadhrat Shaikh Fareeduddeen Attaar (rahmatullah alayh) narrated:

"Once there was a severe drought in the kingdom of Balkh (which is today in Afghanistan). The severity of the drought and famine had reached such a degree that people had resorted to cannibalism. People were killed and devoured. In this difficult and deplorable state of affairs, Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi saw a slave in the marketplace. The slave was walking happily and smiling without a care in the world. Shaqeeq Balkhi, greatly annoyed, asked the slave: "What constrains you to be so happy? Do you not understand and see the suffering around you?" The slave responded: "I have no concern and fear. My master is the owner of a whole village and he has a huge stockpile of food. I am fed comfortably. So why should I worry?"

This response of the slave struck Hadhrat Shaqeeq like an arrow. It dawned on him: "O Allah! This slave is so happy on account of his master's wealth which has set him free from every worry. You are the King of kings and the only One Who is the Raaziq. Why should I worry when You are present."

That very moment, he made a firm resolution to abandon his worldly affairs. He renounced the world, led a life of Tawakkul and piety and reached the limits of moral and spiritual perfection. He would frequently comment: "I am the student of a slave."

THE MEANING OF TAQWA

ONCE HADHRAT Umar Ibn Khattaab (radhiyallahu anhu) asked Hadhrat Ubay Bin Ka'b (radhiyallahu anhu) to define *Taqwa*. Hadhrat Ubay (radhiyallahu anhu) said: "Ameerul Mu'mineen Have you ever walked in a path strewn with thorns?" Hadhrat Umar: "Many a time." Hadhrat Ubay: "What did you then do?" Hadhrat Umar: "I tucked my garments and walked with exceptional care." Hadhrat Ubay: "That is the meaning of Taqwa. This world is cluttered with the thorns of sins. Therefore, walk on earth with such exceptional care so that your garments are not soiled and caught in these thorns. This is Taqwa."

CONSENSUS OF 700 AULIYA

HADHRAT Fareeduddeen Attaar (rahmatullah alayh) said: "I had asked 700 Mashaaikh four questions. All of them gave the same response:

- (1)"Who is the most intelligent person?" They said: "He who abandons sin."
- (2)"Who is the wisest?" They said: "He who does not become proud over anything."
- (3)"Who is the wealthiest?" They said: "He who is the most contented."
- (4) "Who is the poorest?" They said: "He who abandons contentment."

ISTIKHFAAF AND ISTIHZA' ARE DANGEROUS

ISTIKHFAAF in the context of the Shariah means to consider any act of the Deen to be insignificant, 'small' or light. Istihza' means to view with mirth or to make a joke of any Deeni issue, or to mock at it. Both these attitudes are kufr.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned against cupping (*hijaamat*) on Saturdays and Thursdays. There is the danger of contracting the disease of leprosy if cupping is done on these days. A Muhaddith who had classified this Hadith as *Dhaeef* (Weak) had deliberately had himself cupped on a Saturday. In consequence he contracted leprosy.

After some time, he saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream, and he (the Muhaddith) complained about his disease. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Why did you resort to cupping on a Saturday?" The Muhaddith said: "O Rasulullah! (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) The raawi (narrator) of this Hadith is *Dhaeef*." Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "But it was attributed to me." The Muhaddith said: "O Rasulullah? (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) I have erred. I repent." Then Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made dua for his *shifa'* (cure). In the morning when the Muhaddith opened his eyes, there was not a sign of the leprosy on him.

THE CALAMITY OF TESTING RASULULLAH'S WARNING

A MAN went to study Hadith from a famous Shaikh in Damascus. He remained in the company of the Shaikh for some years. However, he did not see the face of his Ustaadh because the Shaikh always had a cloth fully covering his face. One day after the Shaikh had gained a strong bond of affection and confidence with his student, he (the Shaikh) removed the cloth covering his head. The student was shocked and overcome with fear when he saw that the head of his Shaikh was the head of a donkey – a real donkey, not a mere resemblance.

As the Shaikh revealed his face, he sadly commented: "O my son! Beware of being ahead of the Imaam. I read the Hadith in which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned: *"He who lifts his head before the Imaam (in Ruku' or Sajdah) should fear for perhaps his head will be transformed into the head of a donkey."* I considered this far-fetched and put it to test. In consequence, my head was transformed into the head of a donkey as you are witnessing at this moment."

AN AMAANAT IN ALLAH'S CUSTODY

ONCE A man holding the hand of his son came to Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). The appearance of the child was identical to his father. When Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) observed this striking resemblance between father and son, he commented: "I have never seen two crows resembling one another as much as your son resembles you." The man said: "O Ameerul Mu'mineen! I take oath by Allah! His mother gave birth to him whilst she was dead."

Hearing this, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) sat up erect. Intrigued by this statement, he said: "Narrate the whole episode to me." The man explained: "My wife was pregnant. I decided to join the Jihad campaign. My wife lamented: 'Will you leave me in this condition?' I said: 'I assign what is in your stomach to the care of Allah Ta'ala.' Then I departed.

After a long time had lapsed I returned and found the door of my home locked. I made enquiries, and the people informed me that my wife had died. I went to her grave and cried profusely. That night I met my cousins and engaged in conversation with them. The house was situated right in front of Jannatul Baqi (the Qabrustaan in Madinah Munawwarah). The graves were clearly visible. Suddenly I observed a fire rising from the middle of the graves. When I asked my cousins about the fire, they all remained silent and left to go to their homes.

Then I prevailed on one of my cousins who said: 'Every night we see a fire rising from the grave of a certain woman.' It was the grave of my wife. I said: *"Inna lil laahi wa inna ilayhi raaji-oon.* By Allah! She was a pious lady. She fasted much and engaged in Tahajjud. She was a pure and chaste woman. Come with me to the grave." When we reached her grave, we found it open. My wife was sitting inside the grave whilst the baby was crawling around her. Then we heard a Voice saying: *"O you who had assigned your Amaanat to your Rabb, take your Amaanat. By Allah! If you had assigned your wife also to the care of Allah Ta'ala, you would have found her as well."* I took the child and the grave miraculously closed. O Ameerul Mu'mineen! By Allah! He is that child."

THE TAQWA OF IBN SEEREEN

ALLAAMAH IBN Seereen (rahmatullah alayh) who was among the senior Taabieen, said: "If I see even in my dream a ghair mahram female, I turn my eyes away from her (in the dream)."

His Taqwa was of such a high calibre, that his Ustaadh, Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiyallahu anhu), one of the most senior Sahaabah, had directed that when he dies, Allaamah Ibn Seereen should give him ghusl, kafan and perform his Janaazah Salaat.

It so happened that when Hadhrat Anas (radhiyallahu anhu) passed away, Allaamah Ibn Seereen was in jail. The governor granted him permission to fulfil the wasiyyat of Hadhrat Anas (radhiyallahu anhu). After he had discharged the directive of Hadhrat Anas (radhiyallahu anhu), he returned directly to the prison without even visiting his family. Since he was granted permission to attend to the Janaazah, he did not deem it permissible to do anything else during the time of his brief release.

Once Allaamah Ibn Seereen made a profit of 80,000 dirhams (silver coins) in a sale of grain. After the sale, there developed a doubt in his heart. To dispel the doubt, he distributed the whole sum of 80,000 to the poor.

THE TAQWA OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

THERE ARE numerous episodes to illustrate the lofty standard of Imaam Abu Hanifa's Taqwa. Once some bandits had brought to Kufa a large flock of goats which were sold to the butcheries. Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) became extremely worried about the meat in Kufa. There was no way of differentiating the meat. He therefore enquired from experts of the lifespan of goats. He was informed that goats lived up to seven years. Thus, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) abstained from eating goat's meat for seven years.

LOVE FOR THE FUQARA

A BUZRUG narrated: "One day, in mid-winter I visited Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). It was extremely cold. I found him without any warm clothes. He was shivering. I said to him: 'O Abu Nasr! At this time you should be wearing your warm garments. But you have taken them off.' He said: "I am thinking of the Fuqara who are without warm garments, and I do not have the wealth to acquire for them such garments. This is the only way I am able to sympathize and identify with them."

CONCERN FOR THE NEIGHBOURS

THE HOME of Hadhrat Mia Asghar Husain (rahmatullah alayh) was built of mud. Annually during the heavy monsoon rains, his home would be extensively damaged. A considerable amount of money had to be spent to repair it. One day, Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi (rahmatullah alayh) said to him: "Hadhrat, if you build the house with proper bricks, then the amount which is spent in two or three years in repairing the house will cover the cost of the solid brick structure, and you will be saved from all the problems every year."

Hadhrat Asghar Husain (rahmatullah alayh), replied: "Ma-Shaa'Allah! You have acquitted yourself intelligently. I am an old man, hence my mind did not dwell in that direction. However, all my neighbours are poor. If I should build a solid structure, my poor neighbours would become aggrieved at their inability to afford solid houses."

Concern for his neighbours constrained him to abstain from constructing a solid building. He rather opted for the inconvenience and difficulties.

THE NOBLEST JIHAD

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "The noblest Jihad is to proclaim the Haq (the Truth) in the presence of a tyrannical king."

The worst and the most cruel tyrant who appeared among the Muslims was Hajjaaj Bin Yusuf, the governor of Iraq. Killing people was his favourite sport and occupation. Without rhyme or reason he would have people executed. Besides those killed in battles, Hajjaaj Bin Yusuf had executed 120,000 people in his presence. Among those whom he had killed were numerous Sahaabah.

Once when Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) saw Hajjaaj delivering a khutbah on the mimbar, he (Ibn Umar) was overwhelmed by anger, and he proclaimed: "O enemy of Allah! You legalize what Allah Ta'ala has made haraam. You pollute the House of Allah and you kill the Friends of Allah." When Hajjaaj heard this severe rebuke, he asked someone, 'Who is he?' It was said to him: "Abdullah Ibn Umar."

Overwhelmed with wrath, the murderer thundered: "Old man! Be silent! Your mind is deranged." He descended from the mimbar and instructed one of his men to deal with Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). Hajjaaj's man struck Ibn Umar's leg with a poisoned spear. This poison was the cause of Hadhrat Ibn Umar's death.

Whilst Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) was on his deathbed, Hajjaaj came to visit him. He made Salaam, but Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) did not respond to his Salaam.

THE HUMBLE FLY TO BREAK THE PRIDE OF THE ARROGANT

ONCE a fly sat on the face of Abu Ja'far Mansur, the arrogant cruel Abbaasi Khalifah. He warded off the fly with his hand, but the fly returned and sat on his face again. Time and again the fly returned despite the Khalifah's frantic attempts to ward it off. Vexed, Abu Ja'far Mansur blurted out: "What need did Allah Ta'ala have to create flies?" The famous Mufasssir, Hadhrat Muqaatil Bin Sulaimaan Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) who was present, fearlessly retorted: "Allah Ta'ala created flies to break the pride of the arrogant one." Mansur thereupon was reduced to silence.

THE JUSTICE AND COURAGE OF A QAADHI

QAADHI Shamsuddeen was a famous Buzrug during the Uthmaani (Ottoman) Khilaafate. Once in his court the Sultan had to appear to testify in a certain matter. After the Sultan had testified, the Qaadhi rejected his testification (shahaadat). Afterwards when the Sultan had queried the reason for the rejection of his testimony, Qaadhi Shamsuddeen responded: "The Sultan is not regular in the performance of Jamaat Salaat. The testimony of one who neglects Jamaat is *mardood* (rejected)."

THE EFFECTS OF ALLAH'S NAME

ONCE Hadhrat Abul Hasan Khirqani (rahmatullah alayh) was explaining the effects of Allah's Name. He mentioned that the effect of taking Allah's Name was barkat in a person's health, barkat in his deeds, barkat in Rizq, barkat in one's reputation, etc.

The famous philosopher, Ibn Sina happened to be in the gathering. Since he was a rationalist, his mind militated against these statements. At the end of the discourse, Ibn Sina said to Hadhrat Khirqani: "How can the mention of one word bring about so much change?" Hadhrat Khirqani immediately responded: "O you donkey! What do you know?" This insulting statement greatly offended Ibn Sina. His expression conveyed his annoyance. In fact, in anger he began to perspire. Hadhrat Khirqani (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Why are you perspiring?" Ibn Sina said: "Hadhrat! You had made such a statement in this gathering which constrains me to perspire."

The term, donkey, had injured his pride. He felt insulted, hence his annoyance and perspiration. Hadhrat Khirqani (rahmatullah alayh) commented: "In this gathering I only said 'donkey', yet it affected you tremendously to cause you to even perspire. Is there then no effect in the Name of Allah which could create a change in a person?"

THE POWER OF ALLAH'S NAME.

A TARTAR prince with his army was attacking, pillaging and plundering the cities of Muslims. Before he entered the city called Darband, the entire Muslim population had fled in fear. When the prince entered the city, he was extremely pleased, and commented with delight: "The Muslims emptied the city on hearing my name." One of his men informed him that there were still two Muslims in the city. One was an old man and the other one appeared to be his servant. They were sitting in a Musjid.

Greatly annoyed, the prince ordered that the two be brought into his presence in chains. The soldiers entered the Musjid, fettered the two with chains and dragged them out of the Musjid. Soon they were ushered into the presence of the prince. The old man was Hadhrat Ahmad Darbandi (rahmatullah alayh). The prince bellowed: "Did you not know I was coming?" Shaikh Darbandi:

“Yes, I was aware of your coming.” Prince: “Why did you also not flee from the city.” Shaikh Darbandi: “Why should we flee? We are sitting in the House of Allah.”

The prince flew into a rage and thundered: “Who will now save you from my punishment?” Shaikh Darbandi exclaimed with force: “Allaah!” As he pronounced Allah’s Name, the chains broke and fell from both. When the prince observed this miraculous episode, he understood that these two were no ordinary persons. He then said: “You may remain in the city.”

THE VALUE OF LOVE FOR THE AULIYA

SOMEONE saw in a dream a great sinner who was forgiven by Allah Ta’ala. Despite his life of evil and sins, he was forgiven. The sinner asked Allah Ta’ala: “O Allah! Why did you forgive me?” Allah Ta’ala said: “There is one good deed recorded in your Book of Deeds. On account of that deed I have forgiven you.” The sinner said: “O Allah! All my deeds are evil. I had no good deeds. Which of my deeds have been accepted by You.” Allah Ta’ala responded: “One day My Wali, Bayazid Bustami was walking in the road. You were not aware who he was. But you had heard his name and that He was my Wali. When you were made aware that this person was Bayazid, you cast a gaze of affection and honour at him. By the virtue of that gaze, I have forgiven you.”

SINS TRANSFORM PEOPLE INTO ANIMALS

SHAH ABDUL AZEEZ (rahmatullah alayh) who was a great Muhaddith in India was the son of Hadhrat Shah Waliyullah (rahmatullah alayh). He had constructed a Musjid at his home. Here he would perform his daily Salaat and teach his students. However, on Fridays he would go to the Jum’ah Musjid where his mureedeen would generally meet him. He was extremely handsome and *noor* radiated from his face. People would wait alongside the road on Fridays just to gaze at his *mubaarak* face. His *khaadim*, Faseehuddeen would accompany him to the Jum’ah Musjid.

Afterwards Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez would cover his face with a cloth when passing through the bazaar. This deprived the people from viewing him. Aggrieved by this, they complained to Faseehuddeen about being deprived of viewing Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez. One Friday while the two were walking through the bazaar, Faseehuddeen mentioned what the people had said. Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez removed the cloth and cast it over the head of Faseehuddeen. Within a few moments, the *khaadim* fell down unconscious. People lifted him from the pathway. After he had regained conscious, he was asked about his condition. He replied: “When Shah Sahib cast his cloth over me, I did not see any human beings in the bazaar. The place was teeming with dogs, cats, pigs, etc.”

The internal forms of people became manifest to him by way of *kashf*. Due to the type of sins people commit, their nafs internally assume the forms of animals. For example, an immoral person is internally like a pig. A greedy person like a dog. Since he did not desire thinking ill of people, Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez would cover his face to prevent him looking at the bestial forms of the people.

PURDAH IS NOT FOR ANIMALS

ONCE while Khwaajah Abdul Khaaliq Ghajdwaaee (rahmatullah alayh) was walking along a road, there appeared a *majzubah* in front of him. She was not fully dressed. However, as soon as she saw him, she leapt into a nearby blazing furnace. After Khwaajah Abdul Khaaliq was out of sight, she emerged from the furnace unscathed. People asked her: “You usually wander around semi-dressed. Why did you conceal yourself in the furnace when you saw him?” The Majzubah replied: “After a very long time I saw a man. The command is to observe purdah for men, not for animals, hence I concealed myself.” She compared the other people to animals.

THE FRAGRANCE OF MISHAATAH

ON THE occasion of Mi’raaj, when Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was passing through a valley, he perceived a wonderful fragrance. He asked Hadhrat Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) about the fragrance. Hadhrat Jibraeel said that it was the fragrance of Mishaatah.

Mishaatah (rahmatullah alayha) was a slave girl in the palace of Fir'oun. After she had accepted Imaan, Fir'oun had her executed after subjecting her to brutal torture.

One day while Mishaatah was combing the hair of Fir'oun's daughter, the comb slipped and fell to the ground. Reciting, *Bismillaah*, Mishaatah bent to pick up the comb. The princess highly agitated and annoyed, asked: "Don't you believe that my father is god?" Mishaatah said with emphasis: "Never! My God is He Who is the God of Musa."

The princess rushed to report this episode to her father. Fir'oun ordered Mishaatah to be brought to his court. Mishaatah was arrested and ushered into the presence of Fir'oun. When she rejected his demands for her to renounce the Rabb of Musa and to proclaim his (Fir'oun's) godhood, Fir'oun ordered that she be laid on the ground. Huge metal spikes were knocked into her hands and feet to impale her to the ground. Then her breast-suckling infant was brought and placed on her breasts. The baby immediately began to drink from her mother's breast. Fir'oun warned that if she persisted in her 'insanity', the baby would be slaughtered on her breast. But, nothing could deter Mishaatah. Imaan was firmly embedded in her heart. She told Fir'oun to do as he pleased.

The baby was brutally slaughtered on her body. She was dyed red with the blood of her own baby. But she remained steadfast until she attained martyrdom at the hands of Fir'oun.

THE LESSON OF ISTIQAAMAT (FIRMNESS)

ONCE HADHRAT Sarri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) was taking a nap under a tree. When his eyes opened he heard a voice, but no one was in sight. On reflecting he realized that the voice was coming from the tree itself. Addressing him, the tree said: "O Sarri! Be like me!". Bewildered, Hadhrat Saqati said: "How should I become like you?" The tree said: "People cast stones at me whilst I shower fruit on them". In other words, the tree repaid evil with goodness.

This response of the tree increased Hadhrat Saqati's bewilderment. A thought crossed his mind, and he said: "O Tree! If you are so virtuous, then why is your ultimate end the fire? You become fuel destined for the fire." The tree said: "Undoubtedly, I have great excellence. However, within me there is such an evil which overrides and negates my virtues. That evil is so detestable that Allah Ta'ala has made me nourishment for the fire. The evil attribute in me is that I sway the way the wind blows. I have no istiqamat."

In this miraculous way did Allah Ta'ala impart to Hadhrat Saqati the significance and importance of *Istiqamat*

DISCUSSION BETWEEN ABU HAAZIM AND KHALIFAH SULAIMAN BIN ABDUL MALIK

KHALIFAH: "Why do we fear Maut?"

Abu Haazim: "Because you have destroyed your Aakhirat and developed your Dunya. You therefore do not desire to leave your developed abode to go to a place lying in ruins."

Khalifah: "Tomorrow (on the Day of Qiyaamah), how will be the apprehension in the Court of Allah Ta'ala?"

Abu Haazim: "The pious will be going to Allah as a traveller returns to his housefolk. The evil doer will be presented to Allah Ta'ala as a captured slave who had fled from his master."

(Shedding tears, the Khalifah said: "Oh! I wish I knew what Allah has in store for me.")

Abu Haazim: "Scale your deeds on the Kitaab of Allah, then you shall know."

Khalifah: "Which aayat of the Qur'aan indicates this?"

Abu Haazin: "The aayat: *"Verily, the pious will be in Paradise, and the evil will be in the Fire."*

Khalifah: "Allah's mercy is boundless. His mercy encompasses even the evil ones."

Abu Haazim: *(Recites the aayat): "Verily, the Rahmat of Allah is near to the pious ones."*

Khalifah: "O Abu Haazim! Who is the most honoured among the servants of Allah?"

Abu Haazim: "Those who are cultured and possess healthy intelligence."

Khalifah: "Which deed is the best?"

Abu Haazim: "Fulfillment of the Faraaidh and Waajibaat, and abstention from Haraam."

Khalifah: "Which Dua is worthy of acceptance?"

Abu Haazim: "The Dua which a beneficiary makes for his benefactor is closest to acceptance."

Khalifah: "Which Sadqah is the best?"

Abu Haazim: "That which the hard-pressed pauper gives without hesitation and without speaking about his favour."

Khalifah: "Which talk is the best?"

Abu Haazim: "To state the truth to a feared person or to someone whose assistance is needed."

Khalifah: "Which Muslim is the most intelligent?"

Abu Haazim: "He who is obedient to Allah Ta'ala and invites others to the obedience of Allah."

Khalifah: "Among the Muslims who is a moron?"

Abu Haazim: "He who aids his brother in oppression. To achieve the dunya of another person, he barter away his Deen."

Khalifah: "You have spoken the truth. What is your opinion of me?"

Abu Haazim: "It will be best if you absolve me from this question."

Khalifah: "No. Do say some words of admonition."

Abu Haazim: O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Your fathers have imposed domination over people by force and the sword. They have killed numerous people. After perpetrating all these deeds of injustice, they have departed from this world. Would that you be aware of what they are saying after their demise, and what is being said to them."

(One of the Khalifah's henchmen, hearing this proclamation of the truth, interjected: "Abu Hazim! You have uttered a great notoriety.")

Abu Haazim: "You are in error. I did not say anything notorious. I said what I have been commanded to say. Allah Ta'ala has taken a pledge from the Ulama that they will proclaim the truth, and not conceal it."

Khalifah: "Alright! Now what is the method for our reformation?"

Abu Haazim: "Abandon pride. Adopt culture. Fulfil the rights of people with justice."

Khalifah: "Is it possible for you to live with us?"

Abu Haazim: "I seek refuge with Allah!"

Khalifah: "Why?"

Abu Haazim: "I fear that I would incline to your wealth, pomp and position. Then I shall have to bear its punishment."

Khalifah: "Alright! Do you have any need. I shall fulfil it."

Abu Haazim: "Yes, I have one need. Save me from Jahannum and enter me into Jannat."

Khalifah: "This is beyond my control."

Abu Haazim: "I have no other need from you."

Khalifah: "Make Dua for me."

Abu Haazim: "O Allah! If Sulaimaan is your beloved servant, grant him the goodness of this world and the Hereafter. If he is Your enemy, apprehend him by the forelock and direct him towards deeds which are pleasing to you."

Khalifah: "Supplicate more."

Abu Haazim: "I have stated everything in a concise manner. If you are deserving of it, it will benefit you."

Khalifah: "Give me advice."

Abu Haazim: "Keep in sight the might and splendour of your Rabb to the degree that He does not see you at a place which He has prohibited nor should He find you absent from the place He has commanded you to attend."

After Abu Haazim left the Khalifah, the latter sent a hundred gold coins. In his letter he mentioned that the gold was a gift for him, and that he may expect to receive more gifts. Abu Haazim returned the 100 dinars with a letter in which he wrote: *"If these 100 dinars are in lieu of my advice, then it is carrion for me. Blood and pork in dire straits are better than this gold. If the*

gold has been sent on the basis of me having a right in the Baitul Maal, then there are thousands of Ulama serving the Deen. If you have given them this entire amount, then I can accept it otherwise I have no need for it"

Abu Haazim was one of the greatest Taabieen. He died in the year 140 Hijri.

WHO IS AN AALIM?

HADHRAT ABU HAAZIM (rahmatullah alayh) said: "As long as three attributes are not in you, you cannot be an Aalim:

- To search for one who has greater knowledge than yourself.
- Not to despise those who are lower in rank than yourself.
- Not to earn the world with your Knowledge."

THE WORST SIN

ALLAAMAH ZAHBI (rahmatullah alayh) narrated that in Bani Israaeel, once a woman came to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) and said: "O Messenger of Allah! I have committed an extremely vile sin. I have sincerely repented. Supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to forgive me." Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) asked her to mention her sin. She said: "I had committed adultery. A child was born. To save me from disgrace, I killed the child."

Appalled and shocked, Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) said: "O vile woman! Be gone from here this minute. I fear Fire may descend and as a consequence of your evil, we all shall be destroyed."

Dejected and grieving, the woman left. Immediately Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam) appeared and said: "O Musaa! Allah Ta'ala says: 'O Musaa! Why have you expelled one who has repented? Did you not find a greater sinner than her (to expel)?" In surprise, Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) asked: Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam): "Who is a greater sinner than her?" Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam) responded: "One who intentionally abstains from Salaat."

FLAMES IN THE GRAVE

A MAN ASSISTED in the burial of his sister. Whilst filling the grave, his wallet containing money fell into the grave. After the burial when he reached his home, it occurred to him that he had dropped his wallet in the grave. He returned to the grave. Everyone had departed. He began opening up the grave. As he reached a certain level he was met by fierce, scorching flames. Hurriedly he closed up the grave.

Overwhelmed with grief, he explained to his mother what he had observed in his sister's grave. The mother said: "Your sister was in the habit of delaying performance of Salaat. She would generally not perform Salaat on time."

THE VALUE OF JAMAAT SALAAT

HADHRAT UBAIDULLAH Bin Umar Qawaareeri (rahmatullah alayh) who was the Ustaad of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) and of Imaam Muslim (rahmatullah alayh), narrated:

"I always performed Isha Salaat with Jamaat. I had never missed Isha with Jamaat. Once, whilst entertaining a guest, I missed Isha Jamaat. I set out into the streets of Basra searching for a Musjid where Isha Salaat had perhaps not yet been performed. However, I could not find a single Musjid. Isha had already been performed and the Musajaad had been closed.

I was much grieved to have missed the Isha Jamaat. It occurred to me that in the Hadith it is mentioned that the Salaat performed with Jamaat is 27 times superior to the Salaat performed alone. I therefore performed Isha Salaat that night 27 times in the expectation of receiving the reward of Jamaat.

That night in a dream I saw myself on horseback together with a group of horsemen in a race. In the race, my horse trailed far behind. Regardless of my endeavours, I could not catch up with the group. An observer remarked: "Don't burden the horse unnecessarily. You will never reach

them.” I asked: “Why?” He said: “Because you had missed your Isha’ Jamaat whilst all of them had performed Isha’ with Jamaat.” I am overwhelmed with grief for this huge loss which I had sustained.

THREE COMPLEMENTING ACTS

HADHRAT IBN ABBAAS (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that three aayaat (Qur’aanic verses) were revealed in which three acts are complemented with three acts. The one without its complement is unacceptable to Allah Ta’ala.

1. The aayat: “Obey Allah and obey the Rasool.” Whoever obeys Allah and does not obey the Rasool, his obedience is not accepted.
2. The aayat: “Establish Salaat and pay Zakaat.” Whoever establishes Salaat but does not pay Zakaat, his Salaat is not accepted.
3. “Be grateful to Me and to your parents.” Whoever is grateful to Allah, but ungrateful to his parents, his gratitude to Allah is not accepted.

SURAH KAHAF

HADHRAT MUAZ Bin Anas Jahni (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that for the one who recites Surah Kahaf on Fridays, a Noor is created from his feet until the heaven. In another narration it is mentioned that all his sins from the previous Friday to the present Friday are forgiven. In another Hadith it is mentioned that it will save him from the punishment of the grave.

Ameer Saifuddeen Bulbaan Al Husaami narrates: “One day I walked towards the wilderness. When I came to the Qabrustaan, I saw Hadhrat Ibn Daqeeq (rahmatullah alayh) standing by a grave, reciting the Qur’aan and making Dua. He was crying profusely. When I asked him the reason for crying so much, he explained: ‘The inmate of this grave is one of my students. He used to learn the Qur’aan from me. Last night when I saw him in my dream, I asked about his condition. He said: ‘After you had buried me, a huge, extremely terrifying dog-like creature approached me. I was overwhelmed with fear. Suddenly there appeared a tall handsome man who chased away the dog. He came and sat by me. I derived immense solace from him. When I asked him about his identity, he said: ‘I am the reward of Surah Kahaf which you had been reciting every Friday.’”

WALA HOULA WALA QUW-WATA

MUHAMMAD BIN Ishaq (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that the Sahaabi, Hadhrat Maalik Ash-jaei (radhiyallahu anhu) reported to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and said: “The kuffaar have captured my son, Auf.” Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Get a message to him that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructs you to recite *Walahoula Wa la Quw wata il laa bil laahil Azeem* abundantly.”

The father managed to have this message conveyed to his son. Auf lowered his head and began reciting. Soon the fetters miraculously broke and fell off. At the time there were numerous camels of the enemy around him. He mounted one camel, and called to the other camels. All of them followed the leading camel on which Auf was mounted. He headed for home.

His parents were delighted to see their son and all the camels he brought with him. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was informed. He said that they could keep all the camels and he would not take anything (as was the rule pertaining to spoils of war). On this occasion, the following aayat of the Qur’aan Majeed was revealed: “Whoever fears Allah, He opens for him an avenue of safety, and He bestows rizq to him from such a source which did not even cross his mind. Whoever has trust on Allah, verily, He suffices for him.”

MUBAARAK BIN WAADHIH

MUBAARAKH BIN Waadhih was the slave of a wealthy man who owned a fruit orchard. His duty was to tend to the orchard. One day the master came to the orchard and instructed Mubaarak to bring him a sweet pomegranate. Mubaarak picked a pomegranate and presented it to his master. When

the master tasted the fruit, it was sour. In anger he said: 'I asked for a sweet pomegranate, but you brought a sour one!'

Waadhih picked another one from another tree and presented it to his master. This one too was sour. Perplexed and angered, the master rebuked his slave and demanded a sweet pomegranate. Waadhih picked another fruit from a third tree and presented it to his master. When this one too was sour, the master, extremely annoyed said: "What is the matter with you? You still cannot distinguish between sweet and sour pomegranates? Mubaarak said: "Yes, it is so." The master asked: "Why?" Mubaarak said: "I never ate any of the pomegranates." The master said: "Why did you not eat of the pomegranates?" Mubaarak: "You never gave me permission to eat of the fruit."

The honesty of Mubaarak had a profound impact on the master. Highly impressed with Mubaarak's honesty, the master married his daughter to Mubaarak and set him free.

From this marriage was born the famous Muhaddith and Faqeeh, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh).

MUHADDITH KATHEER BIN UBAID

MUHADDITH BIN UBAID (died 250 Hijri) was the Imaam in the City of Hims for 60 years. During his 60-year tenure of Imaamate, he never made a single error which necessitates Sajdah Sahw. When he was asked about this extraordinary feat, he said: *"I never entered the door of the Musjid with my heart focused on anyone besides Allah Ta'ala."*

THE DUA OF THE MALAAIKAH

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "When a person makes Dua for a brother Muslim in his absence, the Malaaikeh say: *"Aameen. And for you the same as you have supplicated."*

If any one wishes to acquire the Dua of the Malaaikeh, he should make Dua for a brother Muslim without the person being aware.

THE CALAMITY OF BEING FORGETFUL OF THIKR

THE LITTLE DAUGHTER of a pious fisherman was sitting alongside him whilst he was catching fish. When the fisherman would catch a fish, he would place it in his basket. While her father was busy with his fishing, the little girl would silently remove the fish and cast it back into the river. After having caught a number of fish, the father looked in his basket only to find it empty. Seeking an explanation from his little daughter, she responded: "O my father! I heard you narrating that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that only those fish which become forgetful of Allah's thikr are caught in the net. I therefore detest eating such fish which had become forgetful of Allah's remembrance."

Tears welled up in the eyes of the pious father. He threw away his net and resolved never to catch fish again.

Ghaflat (being forgetful of Allah's Thikr) is indeed a great calamity. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Verily, shaitaan sits glued on the heart of the son of Adam (i.e. the human being). When he remembers Allah, shaitaan flees. When he becomes forgetful, shaitaan whispers to him."

FREEDOM FROM DEBT

ONCE RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to Hadhrat Abu Umaamah (radhiyallahu anhu): "O Abu Umaamah! Why do I see you sitting in the Musjid when it is not time for Salaat?" The Sahaabi responded: "O Rasulullah! Worry and debt have overwhelmed me."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "Should I not teach you a Dua which will free you of worry and debt?"

Abu Umaamah: "Yes, Rasulullah!"

Then Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) taught him the following Dua, instructing him to recite it during the morning and the evening:

”اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحُزْنِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ
مِنَ الْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَ
أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ غَلَبَةِ الدَّيْنِ وَقَهْرِ الرِّجَالِ“

Translation: O Allah! I seek your protection from worry and grief, and I seek Your protection from weakness and indolence, and I seek Your protection from cowardice and miserliness, and I seek Your protection from being overwhelmed by debt and from the wrath of people.”

Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) also narrated from Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) the following Dua for freedom from debt:

اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِي بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ،
وَاعْنِنِي بِفَضْلِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ-

Translation: O Allah! With Your halaal wealth save me from what is haraam by You, and with Your grace make me independent of others.”

Recite both the aforementioned Duas morning and evening. Insha'Allah, you will gain freedom from debt.

THE BARKAT OF SADQAH

DURING THE ERA of Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) there was a man who caused much distress to the people. Once they approached Hadhrat Saalih (alayhis salaam) and complained about the stress the evil man was causing them. Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) made a Dua, then said: “Go! You are now saved from his evil.”

The indication was that Allah’s punishment had or will be descending on the man. He was a woodcutter who daily went into the field to cut wood. On that day too as usual he had gone into the woods. He had with him two bread rolls. He ate one and gave the other one to a poor person. That evening he returned home. Nothing had happened to him. In surprise, some people went to Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) and reported that the evil man had returned safe and sound.

Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) sent for him. When he came, the Nabi asked: “What good deed did you do today?” He said: “I ate one bread and I gave one bread as Sadqah.” Nabi Saalih (alayhis salaam) said: “Open your bundle of wood.” When the woodcutter opened his bundle, a big, black poisonous snake was curled up among the wood. The snake had embedded its fangs in a piece of timber. Hadhrat Saalih (alayhis salaam) commented: “The Sadqah of the bread has saved him from this disaster.”

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Sadqah extinguishes the wrath of Allah.”

THE HEARTS OF MEN ARE IN ALLAH’S CONTROL

HADHRAT HASAN BASRI (rahmatullah alayh) narrated the following episode.

A man desiring to be known as a pious person, began to display his engrossment in ibaadat. He would always be the first in the Musjid and the last one to leave. His intention was to create the impression of his ‘piety’ in the hearts of the people. For seven months he spent the greater part of his time in the Musjid. However, no one praised him. On the contrary, people would say that he was worshipping for the sake of *riya*.

Dejected at the unexpected outcome of his ostentatious ibaadat, he reflected and realized how he had wasted his time and instead of being rewarded for his worship, he incurred the Wrath of

Allah Ta'ala. He therefore resolved to worship Allah Ta'ala sincerely. He changed his intention and continued with his ibaadat in the same way without adding to it. Very soon, the people were praising him for his piety.

The hearts of people are in the control of Allah Ta'ala. The effect of *Ikhlaas* (Sincerity) is discernible in one's deeds and on one's face.

THE REWARD OF AFFECTION AND KINDNESS

ALLAH TA'ALA, speaking to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam), said: "Do you know why Nubuwwat was bestowed to you?" Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) responded: "O my Rabb! You know best why?" Allah Ta'ala said: "One day one of your goats ran from the flock. You chased after it. When finally you caught up with the goat, then instead of hitting it you said affectionately to it: 'O goat! You have exhausted me, and I have exhausted you.' You were affectionate to the defenceless goat, hence I have bestowed Nubuwwat to you."

Nabi Musa (alayhis salaam) had lifted the goat on to his shoulders and carried it back to the flock.

THE EFFECT OF EMULATION

IN FIR'OUN'S COURT there was a jester/clown who used to imitate Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam), mocking at him. He would dress like Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) to mock and poke fun in Fir'oun's court at Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam). With his mockery he would extract laughter from the people. His mockery caused much grief to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam).

When Fir'oun and his army were drowned by Allah's punishment, this jester was also present. However, he was the sole survivor. Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) in surprise supplicated to Allah Ta'ala: "O Allah! He used to cause more distress to me than the others. Why did you save him from drowning?" Allah Ta'ala revealed to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam): "He was not drowned because he emulated you. When he dressed like you, he resembled you."

Despite the mockery of Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) by the jester, Allah Ta'ala did not punish him with drowning because he resembled Allah's beloved Nabi. Emulation has far reaching consequences. Those who emulate the kuffaar will be among them. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "*Whoever emulates a people is of them.*"

THE PERISHABLE BOUNTIES OF THE WORLD

ONE DAY, the king Nu'maan Akbar went to inspect one of his palaces in Iraq. Highly impressed by the beauty and grandeur of his palace, he asked his companions if anyone else had a better palace than him. A wise man among his companions said: "Will these bounties remain with you forever? People before you possessed these bounties which were snatched away, and bestowed to you. Nu'maan responded: "Undoubtedly, these bounties will not remain with me forever. Soon all this luxury will perish."

The wise man said: "Then, how can you be delighted when all these bounties are perishable and which will be snatched away from you? Nothing but regret will remain." Nu'maan said: "Then what should be done?" The wise man said: "Either you resolve to worship and obey Allah or don woollen garments (the garb of the Sufis) and seek refuge on some mountain until death claims you. Until death remain engrossed in the worship of your Rabb."

Nu'maan asked: "If I do so, what shall I gain?" The wise man said: "You will gain such a life after which there is no death; such youth after which there is no old age; such health which is never followed by sickness; such a kingdom which will never perish."

Nu'maan said: "By Allah! I shall pursue such a life which will never perish." Thus, he abandoned his kingdom, removed his royal dress, donned the simple garb of the Sufis, and with the wise man set off to the mountains where both remained engrossed in ibaadat until Maut.

THE NIYYAT OF THE MU'MIN

RASULULLAH (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "The niyyat (intention) of the Mu'min is better than his deed (i.e. good deed)."

When a buzrug saw Hadhrat Ibraahim Ibn Adham (rahmatullah alayh) in a dream, he asked: 'Hadhrat, how did you fare by Allah?' Hadhrat Ibn Adham replied: "Allah Ta'ala has forgiven me. I am in great comfort and happiness. However, my neighbour has surpassed me although he had never engaged in the moral and spiritual struggles in which I was engaged.

He (the neighbour) was a man with a family. Due to his family commitments he performed only the essential requisites of the Deen. His time was occupied in earning the livelihood of his family. But, he always yearned: 'I wish I was as free as Ibraahim Bin Adham. I too will then become engrossed in the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala as he is.'

His entire life passed in caring for his family and in yearning for free time to devote to Thikrullaah. After he died, Allah Ta'ala bestowed to him such ranks which I envy. Despite the paucity of his virtuous deeds, Allah Ta'ala elevated him to these lofty stages on the basis of his sincere intention."

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF OLD AGE

OLD AGE IS a wonderful bounty of Allah Ta'ala provided that the duration of old age is spent in virtuous deeds. A man asked Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "Who is the best person?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "He who has reached an advanced age and his deeds are virtuous." Then the man asked: "Who is the worst person?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) responded: "He who reached an advanced age and his deeds are evil."

Regarding old age, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also said: "The best of your youth is he who emulates your old people. And the worst of your old people is he who emulates your youth."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had also said that if a young man honours an aged person because of his old age, then Allah Ta'ala will appoint someone to honour him in his old age. In a Hadith it is mentioned that honouring an old man is like honouring Allah Ta'ala

INSOLENCE TO PARENTS

A MAN USED to be so insolent towards his parents that he would address them: 'O dog! O bitch!' When he died and a grave was dug, the grave on completion caved in and closed up. Another grave was dug, and the same thing happened. Even after six attempts, the earth closed up refusing to provide a grave for this evil man.

Some people understood that this was the consequence of his insolence towards his parents. They pleaded with them to forgive him. Only after the parents forgave him, did the earth accept his body for burial.

HONOURING HIS PLEDGE

ONCE THE SAHAABI, Hadhrat Jareer Bin Abdullah (radhiyallahu anhu) purchased a horse. The owner quoted 300 dirhams for his horse. Hadhrat Jareer estimated the value of the horse to be much more than 300 dirhams. He offered the owner 400 dirhams. When the owner accepted, Hadhrat Jareer (radhiyallahu anhu) increased his offer by a further 100 dirhams. When the owner accepted, Hadhrat Jareer (radhiyallahu anhu) again increased his offer by 100 dirhams. He continued increasing the price until 800 dirhams. He tendered the money and took the horse.

Someone asked him the reason for his queer action. When the owner was prepared to sell for 300 dirhams, why did he pay 800 dirhams? Hadhrat Jareer (radhiyallahu anhu) replied: "The owner was unaware of the true value of his horse. I had promised Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that I shall be benevolent to every Muslim. I have therefore honoured my pledge."

THE PIETY OF A KHALIFAH

HADHRAT UMAR Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayhh), known as Umar, The Second, is famed for his Taqwa. He is known as Umar, The Second because he had restored the Islamic government to the exact style and mode of Khilaafat-e-Raashidah of the golden age of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu), the Second Khalifah of Islam. He had totally overhauled the corrupt system of governance. All properties which had been usurped by the previous rulers of the Bani Umayyah Dynasty were restored to their rightful owners, and he had abolished all forms of taxation which Islam disallowed.

Among the haraam taxation was the Jizyah tax which Islam levies on Dhimmis (the non-Muslim citizens of the Islamic state). The previous rulers had retained this tax even after the Dhimmis had embraced Islam. After the abolition of the haraam taxes, the state coffers were quickly depleted. The governor of Iraq wrote a letter to the Khalifah, Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh), complaining about the lack of funds required for roadworks and the upkeep of the Musajid. He complained about the roads and Musajid having fallen into disrepair because there were no funds in the Baitul Maal which was depleted as a consequence of the abolition of the taxes.

The Khalifah wrote in response: "Allah Ta'ala had sent Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as a *Haadi (Guide)* for humanity, not as a tax-collector. Teach the people of Iraq how to perform Salaat correctly with *khushu' and khudhu'*. That is the repair and beauty of the Musajid, and teach the people to conduct themselves as human beings on the roads. That is the repair of the roads.

THE KHALIFAH'S SON CRYING FOR EID CLOTHES

THE MINOR SON of Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez was crying profusely a few days before Eidul Fitr. He complained to his mother that the parents of all the neighbourhood children had bought new Eid clothes for them. The boy therefore cried to his mother for new clothes. She assured him that she herself would wash his clothes. He will therefore have clean clothes for Eid. This did not placate the child who fell asleep crying.

When the Khalifah came home, the Queen sadly said: "O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Next week is Eid. Our son has been crying profusely for new clothes." The Khalifah said: "You are aware that the wage I receive from the Baitul Maal is not sufficient to buy clothes. The Baitul Maal is solely for the poor, orphans and widows. I am merely its Trustee. It is sinful for even a thought to cross my mind regarding appropriation of any money for my personal needs. Don't you have anything which could be sold?"

The Queen responded: "You have taken all my jewels and assigned them to the Baitul Maal, even the valuable necklace which my father (the previous Khalifah) had given me."

Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh), lowered his head in deep reflection. Then addressing a letter to the custodian of the Baitul Maal he requested a month's wages in advance. His servant was despatched with the letter to the Baitul Maal. In response, the Custodian of the Baitul Maal wrote: "O Ameerul Mu'mineen! I am at your service. However, Can you guarantee that you will remain alive for a month? Since you are unable to offer this guarantee, why do you desire to burden yourself with the rights of the poor, orphans and widows?"

When the Khalifah read the reply, his eyes welled up with tears, and he spontaneously exclaimed: "O Custodian of the Baitul Maal! You have saved me from destruction."

When Eid arrived, Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh) walked to the Eidgah holding the hand of his little boy wearing the old clothes which the Queen, his mother, had washed with her own hands.

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