

# **Shari'ah and Tariqat<sup>1</sup>: Inseparable and Indivisible**

**BY SHAIKH-UL-HADITH MAULANA MUHAMMAD ZAKARIYA**

**TRANSLATED BY ASIM AHMAD**

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<sup>1</sup> *Tariqat* is an alternative name for *Ihsan* (to worship Allah as if you see Him (Bukhari)) or, we can say, the acquisition of the attribute of *ihsan*.



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ  
وَعَلَى كُلِّ مَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers and upon his family and  
companions, and all those who followed them in righteousness, until the Day of Judgment*

## PREFACE

After *hamd* and *salat*, this useless person (i.e. the author) was born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, 1315 A.H. (February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1898) at 11 p.m. in my mother's step-grandmother's house in the town of Kandhala. My mother's step-grandmother was known by the name of Maryam. She was a worshipful, austere, and extremely freehearted woman. The elders of Kandhala came to her home immediately after *taraweeh*, congratulated her and asked for sweets. She ordered many sweets and gave them out benevolently to her guests. The house was full of hustle- bustle and joy on that day.

The town of Kandhala is situated in Muzzafarnagar County. *Du Abba*, the popular name for this area in the past and which is widely used to this day, was once the headquarters of Shari'ah and *tariqat*. It is a name often found in the writings and speeches of our elders. This area includes Delhi, Meerat, Muzzafarnagar, and Saharanpur counties. *Du Abba* geographically refers to the confluence of the famous Yamuna which flows from the west and the Ganges that merges in from the east.

This area was the fountainhead of Shari'ah and *tariqat* which began with the noted Waliullahi family<sup>2</sup> whose *faiz* (blessing) spread through the spiritual family of Haji Imdaadullah. One of the smallest effects of the blessing of this area was that the most unlettered of Shaikh Gangohi's *murideen*<sup>3</sup> became strict followers of the *sunan* (plural of Sunnah). I saw some of the

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<sup>2</sup> Spiritual descendents and *murideen* of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi.

<sup>3</sup> *Murideen*- plural of *murid*, a person who makes *bayah* to a shaikh.

most illiterate people so devoted to tahajjud<sup>4</sup> prayers that one rarely sees this type of devotion amongst the elders. This was in matters of Shariah. As for *tariqat*, 56 washermen would gather by the famous Gadda Lake next to Shaikh Gangohi's khanqah. Instead of singing or humming, they would chant the name of Allah ﷻ loudly. I myself have never met anyone from the Waliullahi family though I did meet many of the elders and younger members of the Imdaadi family<sup>5</sup>.

I was not able to visit Syed-ul-Taaifa Haji Imdaadullah because he had passed away only two years after my birth on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> of Jumada' Thani in 1317 A.H. (September 18<sup>th</sup> 1899) in Makkah. Likewise, I did not meet Hujjat-ul-Islam Shaikh Naunutwi since he passed away 18 years before my birth on the 4<sup>th</sup> of Jumada' Awwal in 1296 A.H. (April 27<sup>th</sup> 1879) Similarly, I did not meet Shaikh Muhammad Ismail Jahnjahnwi, Kandhelwi then Dehlawi because he passed away in Dehli in Nawab Wali Masjid on the 4<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal in 1315 A.H. (March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1898), approximately 20 days after my birth. I heard from our elders that when my paternal grandfather heard the news of my birth he said, "My replacement has come and now it is time for my departure." I have heard numerous stories about the elders of the Imdaadi family.

I was able to meet Shaikh-ul-Masha'ikh, Fakhr-ul-Muhaditheen, Hadhrat Gangohi many times because he passed away when I was eight years old on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Jumada' Thani in 1323 A.H. (August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1905) in Gangoh. I clearly recall his countenance and how he would sit cross-legged on the grounds of the khanqah. Once he wrapped his hands around me and embraced me. I remember eating with him on various occasions and sitting with him in a carriage carried by the greatest *shuyukh* of the time to the Eid *musallah*. This was the enlightened era of Shari'ah and *tariqat*. After that I was able to remain with my shaikh, Hadhrat Khalil Ahmed Saharanpuri, from Rajab 1328 A.H. (July 1910) to Zul-Qa'dah 1345 A.H. (December 1926), excluding the year in which Shaikh-ul-Hind (Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan) and my Shaikh Khalil Ahmed Saharanpuri stayed in Hijaz. I left Madinah on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Zul-Qa'dah 1345 A.H. (May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1927) whereas my shaikh passed away in Madinah on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' Thani 1346 A.H. (October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1927) Although I was present during the lifetime of Shaikh-ul-Hind Mahmud-ul-Hasan (he passed away on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' Awwal 1339 A.H. (November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1920)), I saw little of him since he was imprisoned for many years in Malta. The only time I was able to see him was when he visited Deoband before and after his imprisonment. Though, I met his students, disciples, and the elders of Deoband numerous times.

I also saw much of Ra's-ul-Atqiyah wal Asfiyah Hadhrat Shah Abdul-Raheem because he passed away on the 24<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' Thani 1338 A.H. (January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1920) I also spent a lot of time with *Mulhaq-ul-Asaaghar bil Akaabir* (the one who linked the younger *shuyukh* to the older

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<sup>4</sup> Superogatory prayers performed late in the night until dawn. According to the hadith, tahajjud is *da'b saleheen* or the habit of the pious.

<sup>5</sup> The *murideen* of Haji Imdadullah (rah).

*shuyukh*) Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanvi because he passed away on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rajab 1362 A.H. (July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1943). I attach the title of “*Mulhaq-ul-Asaaghar bil Akaabir*” to his name because Hadhrat Thanvi gained his *khilafat* from Syed- ul-Taaifa Haji Imdaadullah, which means that he was the prime link between the younger (i.e., his *murideen* (disciples) and *khulafaah* [deputies]) and older generation (i.e., Haji Imdaadullah) of *shuyukh*.

In Shari’ah, Hazrat Thanvi obtained permission to transmit ahadith from Maulana Fazlul-Rahman Gang Muraadabadi who obtained permission from Shah Abdul-Aziz. Therefore, it is narrated in the book Arwaahi Thalaatha, that Hakim Ni’matullah asked Maulana Gang Muraadabadi, “Did Hadhrat read anything of the ahadith from Shah Abdul-Aziz?” “Yes” he replied. Hakim Ni’matullah said, “If you give me permission, I can also gain the blessings of this *sanad* (chain of transmission).” After narrating a few ahadith from Mishkat-ul-Masabih, he (Maulana Gang Muraadabadi) said, “I give you permission.” After that, he gave *naseehat* (advice) on the importance of practicing upon ones knowledge.

I always desired to get permission from Hadhrat Thanvi to claim his strong *sanad*. I even journeyed many times to Thana Bawan for this purpose, but was too ashamed to ask. How was I going to ask for permission when I didn’t know anything? Though I never obtained a *sanad* from Hazrat Thanvi, many of my own students did, thus claiming a higher *sanad* than myself.

Additionally, I also saw much of the life of Ra’s-ul-Mujahideen Shaikh-ul-Islam Hadhrat Hussain Madani because Hadhrat passed away on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Jumada’ Awwal 1377 (December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1957) A.H. in Deoband. I also observed the life of my guardian, the Imam of humility, Shaikh Abdul-Qadir Raipuri because he passed away on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Rabi’ Awwal 1382 A.H. (August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1962). I was fortunate to sit in his company on numerous occasions. I also spent a great deal of time with my respected uncle, the Imam of tabligh, Maulana Ilyas because he passed away on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Rajab 1363 A.H. (July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1944)

## Reflection

I needed to mention the era of these *shuyukh* to show that every inch of *Du Abba* was the headquarters of Shari’ah and *tariqat* through the blessings of these guiding lights. It was through their blessing that people understood Shari’ah and *tariqat* to be inseparable and that they could never be independent of each other.

## Inseparability

Thus, this understanding of the oneness of Shari’ah and *tariqat* was embedded in me from childhood and had become an indelible part of my nature. It is a rule that whatever makes its mark during one’s childhood is like a “carving on a stone.” Though most people have never seen a lion

tearing the flesh of its prey or a snake when it bites, no one can remove the fear and terror associated with such thoughts since they are inbred from childhood.

During my student years when I was studying Mishkat Sharif, I read the famous hadith of Jibrael. He came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to teach the Ummah the basics of Deen. After Iman and Islam we read:

ما الاحسان قال أن تعبدوا الله كأنك تراه

“What is ihsan?”

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied,  
“To worship Allah ﷻ as if you see him.”

*Ihsan* is also known as *tariqat*, *tasawwuf*, and *suluk*, all of which are embodied in the definition of *ihsan*. Then, as I continued studying different books of ahadith, the inseparable nature of Shari’ah and *tariqat* became so strong in my heart that if I heard anything against it, I considered it ignorance and indifference towards the subject. Likewise, if I ever heard anything against the pure and pristine Shari’ah, which is derived from the Quran, the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ which is the most authoritative exposition of the Quran, and then fiqh which is the pith of both the Quran and Sunnah, I disregarded it and thought it unworthy of my time.

When I would hear some people, ignorant in matters of the Deen, say, “Whatever immediate meaning we understand from the Quran is its true meaning, there is no need for all these *tafaasir* (exegeses of the Quran),” I thought it was madness. If it was truly that easy to deduce meanings from the Quran, then what was the need to send a prophet of Allah ﷻ? The Quran could have been hung from the Ka’ba and people would take whatever meaning they understood from it. One of the main reasons for sending prophets was that they embodied and also demonstrated the meaning of their revealed books in their practical life. Through their lives, the the Deen was given a perfect complete form and became a ‘way of life’.

## No doubts

In this regard, it is Allah’s ﷻ great blessing upon me that I never doubted any of the injunctions or rulings of the Shariah. I had gained insight into the rules and matters of Shariah in such a way that there was no room for doubt. This is because the Blessed Prophet ﷺ came to this world to give the Shari’ah a practical shape. Therefore, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was made to perform acts which did not relegate the status of his Prophethood.

## An important lesson

For example, once in *lailatul-taree* (a stopover to rest during a journey in the night), the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and the Sahaba ﷺ who had accompanied him on this journey missed Fajr salah. This is in sharp contrast to the lives of many of the *ummati* (followers from the Ummah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ) who followed after them, who could not sleep after two o'clock in the morning. The *muhadditheen*<sup>6</sup> disagree as to whether the Blessed Prophet ﷺ missed Fajr once or more than once. This is mentioned in detail in Aujazul Masaalik (1/25). My own opinion is this occurred on three different occasions.

There is an important lesson of *tasawwuf* in this incident. It was not the habit of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to ask who is going to wake him up for salah. It is narrated in Bukhari (83) that the Sahaba ﷺ requested, "O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, rest for a while." The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, "I fear Fajr salah may be missed," but Hadhrat Bilal ﷺ assured him, "I will wake you up."

This incident raises two issues of *tasawwuf*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ feared he would miss Fajr salah though Arab custom was to travel in the first part of the night and rest in the last. Why did the Blessed Prophet ﷺ say, "I fear Fajr salah may be missed?" This indicates that the *masha'ikh* are sometimes forewarned of events before they transpire or feel some doubt in their heart. Hadhrat Bilal ﷺ said, "I will wake you up." In Aujaz (1/25) it says that this incident was a stern message to Hadhrat Bilal ﷺ for saying "I will wake you up." When the Blessed Prophet ﷺ sensed they would not wake up for Fajr, his fear materialized with Bilal ﷺ's assurance, "I will wake you up".

But this raises an objection that if *lailatul-taree* happened several times, as is the opinion of many scholars, this statement of Hadhrat Bilal ﷺ could not have been said more than once. It is obvious that his statement relates to one of the occasions only; as far the other occasions are concerned, the reasons behind them were different.

Likewise, never did an objection enter my heart about the Blessed Prophet ﷺ forgetting in his salah since he himself said,

إني لا أنسى ولكن أنسى لاسن

**I do not forget but am made to forget to show the way.**

Meaning that I am to teach you the rulings related to when you forget in your salah and the rulings of *sajda sahw* (prostration of forgetfulness). A lot of explanation is given on this hadith in Aujaz (1/217) under the chapter of *al-a'mal fil sahw* (What to do when one is mistaken in salah).

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<sup>6</sup>*Muhadditheen*- Plural of *Muhaddith*, a scholar specializing in the science of hadith.



Likewise, some Sahaba ﷺ committed major sins without any guilty feeling in their hearts, whereas, the great *shuyukh* could not even imagine committing such sins. Though the best of *shuyukh* cannot reach the level of the lowest of the Sahaba ﷺ, the narrations which narrate the sins of the Sahaba ﷺ did not incite me to object to the Sahaba ﷺ. It was the blessed company of my elders and also study of the ahadith that my mind was always at peace regarding the Sahaba ﷺ. I believed that whatever sins the Sahaba ﷺ committed, was destined for them. They were made to commit sins in order to perfect the Deen of Allah ﷻ. These blessed souls surrendered their whole lives in the path of Allah ﷻ as if to say, “Perfect the pure Shari’ah. We are willing to be stoned, have our hands cut off, and throw ourselves in the way of anything to fulfill this noble cause.” In my view the ayah:

فاولئك يبدل الله سيئاتهم حسنات

**They are the ones for whom Allah changed their bad deeds into good deeds**

and the hadith of repentance when Allah ﷻ will say, “convert every bad deed into a good deed” is most applicable to them.

Abu Zarr ﷺ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,<sup>7</sup>

One person will be presented before Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgment [this is not reference to a specific person but to a type of people. Every person in this group will be dealt with in the same manner. This is confirmed in another hadith where we find the word *naas* (people) instead of *rajul* (man)]. The angels will be ordered to inform him of his small sins but no mention will be made of his major ones. He will be reminded that you did this on this day and on this day you did this. He will be forced to admit his faults. At the same time, he will be fearful about the disclosure of his major sins. Allah ﷻ will say, ‘Change every one of his sins to good deeds.’ At that moment, he will let it slip, ‘O my lord, many of my sins remain.’ Abu Zarr says, “I saw the Blessed Prophet ﷺ smiling, the front of his blessed teeth visible, when he (the Blessed Prophet ﷺ) narrated this part of the hadith.” (Muslim; Tirmizi, Shamaail).

In another Hadith, Abu Huraira ﷺ narrates the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

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<sup>7</sup> Muslim 12/106

“On the Day of Judgment, some people will wish they had committed many sins in this world.” The Sahaba ﷺ asked, “Who are these people?” “They are the people whose sins will be converted into good deeds.”

### **An important reminder**

We should remember that this conversion of sins to good deeds on the Day of Judgment is like an amnesty granted by an official in a high position. If a president wishes he can even pardon the murderer while he is being lead to the death chamber. But at the same time, you will not find a person exploiting such clemency to commit murder and think himself free from the consequences of his action. However, the exception to this are the Sahaba ﷺ; I have full faith in that all the Sahaba ﷺ will be granted amnesty because their excellence and greatness as narrated in the ahadith prove they are deserving of it.

### **Sahaba ﷺ attain complete forgiveness**

Once Hadhrat Maa'iz ﷺ fornicated. He came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, purify me.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Go ask for forgiveness and repent to Allah ﷻ.” He walked a short distance, became restless, and returned to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ repeating the same question. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ returned the same reply.

This happened three times: the Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked him to repent and beg for forgiveness and told him to return. On the fourth time, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, applied the rule of Shariah and ordered he be stoned to death. After his execution, two Sahaba ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ hid his sins, but he revealed them and died like a dog.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ heard this but remained silent. After a short while they saw a carcass of a donkey, his stomach bloated and his leg jutting upward. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ called out, “Where is so and so person (naming the two men he heard previously)?” They said, “We are here.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ pointing towards the carcass said, “Eat from this carcass.”

“How can anyone eat from this?” they asked. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ retorted, “Your backbiting of your brother is worse than eating from this carcass. I swear by the one in whose hands is my life, he is swimming in the rivers of Paradise at this moment.”

Likewise, once a woman from the Ghamidi tribe presented herself before the Blessed Prophet ﷺ with the same request. She said, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, please purify me.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ told her to return, repent, and beg for forgiveness from Allah ﷻ. She said, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, you want to turn me back the way you turned Maa'iz ﷺ back. I swear by Allah ﷻ I am pregnant by fornication.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ responded, “You cannot be stoned until you deliver the child.” When she delivered the child, she returned to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, I have delivered the child, please purify me.” He said, “Breastfeed the child

until it is weaned.” After she weaned the child, she returned holding the child in her hands. The child had a piece of bread in his hands. She said, “The child is now eating bread.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ ordered she be stoned to death. Hadrat Khalid was amongst the stoners. When some blood spurted on his cheek, he cursed her. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ chided him saying, “Do not say such things, her repentance is such that if a tyrant made such repentance it would have sufficed him.”

In a similar incident, Hadrath Omar ؓ said, “Are we to pray her funeral prayers when she was a fornicator?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “She has made such repentance that if distributed amongst 70 men of Madinah, it would suffice for them all. What bigger repentance can there be there than giving her life?”

### The superiority of the Sahaba ؓ

In the books of ahadith, one finds these kinds of narrations in the chapters of *hudud* (criminal law). Is anyone amongst us as pious and God-fearing as them that one sin would make them so restless for retribution? Hadrath Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ said, “When a *mumin* (a believer) commits a sin he feels himself under a mountain and fears it may fall upon me any minute. When a *fajir* (a profligate) commits a sin he makes light of it as if a fly flew upon his nose and he waves it off with his hand.”<sup>8</sup>

Allah ﷻ is the knower of the unseen. He is aware of the sins of mankind and also of the remorse and guilt that arose from the perpetration of these sins. This is why He was pleased with the Sahaba ؓ despite their perpetration of sin, mentioning it repeatedly in the Quran:

والسابقون الأولون من المهاجرين والأنصار والذين اتبعوهم باحسانا رضى الله عنهم و رضوا  
عنه وأعد لهم جنات تجري تحتها الأنهار خالدين فيها ابدًا

**And the first to lead the way of the *muhajireen* and the *ansar*, and those who followed them in goodness—Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him. And he hath made ready for them Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever**

In Bayanul Quran, it is stated with reference from Durri Mansur regarding the ayah of the Quran:

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<sup>8</sup> Mishkat, p. 206

## والذين اتبعوهم باحسان

Ibn Zaid said:

“This includes all the Muslims until the Day of Judgment who follow the Blessed Prophet ﷺ with *ihsan*. This is why criticizing the Sahaba ؓ or the *masha'ikh* is useless because they repented and were forgiven by Allah ﷻ. Those who continue to criticize and chase after their faults after this are a forsaken people.

In various verses of the Quran, Allah ﷻ mentions the repentance of the Sahaba ؓ, the promise that they will enter into Paradise, etc. Therefore, it is foolhardy to make the mistake of criticizing the Sahaba ؓ for their sins. It is even more foolish to take their example as justification for our own sins because forgiveness of their sins is assured from the Quran whereas ours is not. Therefore, taking their example to justify our sins is only calling for our own destruction. Allah ﷻ says in the Quran:

ولكن الله حبيب إليكم الإيمان وزينه في قلوبكم وكره إليكم الكفر والفسوق والعصيان أولئك هم الراشدون فضلا من الله ونعمة والله عليم حكيم

But Allah has endeared the faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and has made disbelief and lewdness and rebellion hateful unto you. Such are they who are rightly guided.

It is a bounty and a grace from Allah; and Allah is Knower, Wise

In Bayanul Quran, *fusuq* is translated as major sin while *i'syaan* as minor sin. This clearly proves that the Sahaba ؓ were forgiven for their major and minor sins. It also means that holding their sins against them and, likewise, justifying our sins by their example is a danger to our iman.

In the conquest of Makkah, Hadhrat Hatib bin Abi Balta' quietly informed Quraish of the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ plan to attack Makkah. The letter (informing them of the plans) was intercepted. Hadhrat Omar ؓ said to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, give me permission to behead him.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “He is amongst the Sahaba ؓ of the Battle of Badr. What do you know; maybe Allah ﷻ said to the Sahaba ؓ of Badr, ‘You are forgiven, go and do whatever you wish.’”

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (rah) writes in Aqeedah Wasitiyah:

It is one of the fundamental rules of the *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'h* that their hearts and tongues are pure about the Sahaba ؓ.”

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Never criticize my Sahaba ﷺ. I swear by He in whose hands is my life, if any one of you spend gold equal to Mount Uhud in the path of Allah ﷻ, it will not equal (in rewards) the one *mudd*<sup>9</sup> or even a half a *mudd* of gold they spent in the path of Allah ﷻ.” The *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'h* accepts whatever the Quran, Sunnah, and consensus say about the Sahaba ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said to the Sahaba ﷺ of Badr, “Go do whatever you wish, I have forgiven you.” We accept this and believe that all the Sahaba ﷺ who took the *Bayah*<sup>10</sup> in *Hudaibiyah* will not enter into the Hellfire (as narrated in the ahadith). Allah ﷻ is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allah ﷻ. Approximately 1400 Sahaba ﷺ took *Bayah* in Hudaibiyah.

The *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'h* does not concern itself with the internecine feuds of the Sahaba ﷺ. As for the narrations which accuse the Sahaba ﷺ of wrongdoing, many of them are lies while others fabrications. As far as the mistakes mentioned in authentic narrations, the Sahaba ﷺ are excusable in this regard. They are either correct or mistaken in their *ijtihad* (legal interpretation). Despite this, the *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'h* does not believe they were *mas'um* (infallible); as humans they were susceptible to sin.

### Allah's ﷻ pardon of the Sahaba's ﷺ past and future sins

Despite their susceptibility to sin, their excellence in Deen was such that if they sinned, it would be forgiven, including those sins which are not forgiven for later people. This is because they possessed such virtue that erased their sins and which was not to be observed in the people after them. And even if they committed a sin, they surely repented for it or replaced it with good deeds. Another reason is that they were the pioneers of Islam (which is sufficient reason to gain forgiveness) or that they have secured the intercession of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ since they were most worthy of it. A third reason is that persecution and poverty and many other such hardships wiped out their sins.

All the above reasons relate to those sins which it is known they committed. As for those mistakes where they did *ijtihad*, it is clear that if they were correct, they will earn two rewards, and if they were mistaken, they will still gain one reward and the mistake will be forgiven (as is the ruling for all *mujtahideen*<sup>11</sup>). Then the objections raised against them do not compare to their virtues and accomplishments, their noble attributes, their strong faith in Allah ﷻ and his Blessed

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<sup>9</sup> 3.18 kilogram/ 796 gram

<sup>10</sup> To pledge allegiance in the name of Allah ﷻ to someone for the fulfillment of whatever the allegiance is made for.

<sup>11</sup> *Mujtahideen*- Plural of *mujtahid*, a scholar who puts all his effort by the order of the Shari'ah to derive an opinion from the Quran and Sunnah. The conditions to be a *mujtahid* are outlined in chapter four.

Prophet ﷺ, their struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ, their migration, their assistance, their beneficial knowledge, and their righteous deeds. Those who study the biographies of the Sahaba ﷺ with clear insight and knowledge, recognizing the beautiful qualities Allah ﷻ granted them, will know they hold the highest station after the Prophets of Allah ﷻ. There will be none like them before or after them. They are best of the chosen ones from this Ummah.<sup>12</sup>

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (rah) spoke the truth about the Sahaba ﷺ. Allah ﷻ praises them repeatedly in the Quran and many ayaat were revealed that prove the forgiveness of the Sahaba ﷺ for all their sins. Allah ﷻ says in the Quran:

### للفقراء المهاجرين الذين

...some part is due to the indigent *muhajireen*. Those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking grace from Allah and his good pleasure, and aiding Allah and His Apostle such are indeed the sincere ones. But those who before them had homes. And had adopted the faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the latter, but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their own lot. And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity<sup>13</sup>

In another ayah He says:

### فالذين هاجروا وأخرجوا من ديارهم

So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed, I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to Gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward<sup>14</sup>

There are many ayaat similar to the one above about the forgiveness of Sahaba ﷺ for all their sins. Allah ﷻ, in this ayah, says, “I will surely forgive for them all their sins,” but as the saying goes ‘*Mudai sust gawaah chust*’ (the witness is fiery, the plaintiff is retired). The foolish ones amongst us still relish finding faults in them, saying, “They were sinful, they were this, that, and other such things.”

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<sup>12</sup> Aqeedah Waasitiyah, p. 142

<sup>13</sup> Hashr 8-9

<sup>14</sup> Al-Imran 195

## The status of the Sahaba ﷺ and dangers of criticizing them

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ says, ‘I declare war on whoever makes my *wali*<sup>15</sup> his enemy.’” Moreover, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Fear Allah ﷻ, fear Allah ﷻ regarding my Sahaba ﷺ. Do not make them the target of your objections. Whosoever loves my Sahaba ﷺ, loves them because he loves me, and whosoever hates them, hates them because he hates me. Whosoever hurts my Sahaba ﷺ hurts me, and whosoever hurts me hurts Allah ﷻ, and whosoever hurts Allah ﷻ, the time is near when he will be in the clutch of Allah ﷻ.”<sup>16</sup>

Hafiz Dhahabi (rah) says:

Only those who have read the biographies of the Sahaba ﷺ will know their status. Their progression in faith, their struggle against the *kuffar*, their propagation of the Deen, their declaration of Islam and raising the banner of Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and their knowledge of the obligatory acts and the *sunan* of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, within his lifetime and after his demise. Had they not lived the fundamental and ancillary sciences would not have reached us. Without the Sahaba ﷺ we would be ignorant of the obligatory acts, the *sunan* and would have no knowledge of the ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and the details of his life. Therefore, whosoever denigrates their status leaves the folds of Islam and is deviated from the path of the *muslimeen*. When one denigrates them, it is because of the hatred he harbors in his heart and the grudge that is created by his criticalness of the Sahaba ﷺ. This denigration is a sign of his rejection of the ayaat which extoll their high status and also of the love the Blessed Prophet ﷺ had for them and his praise and mention of their lofty status in the ahadith. Another reason a denigrator leaves the folds of Islam is because the Sahaba ﷺ are the most reliable and respected narrators of the narrations of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Denigration of the narrator is necessarily denigration of the one narrated (i.e., the Blessed Prophet ﷺ). These words can only reach a person who thinks, tries to understand, and whose belief is not darkened by hypocrisy and heresy. Everything the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in praise of the Sahaba in the ahadith should suffice for anyone. For example, Anas ﷺ narrates that some Sahaba ﷺ complained to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, ‘People speak ill about us’, and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘The curse of Allah ﷻ, his angels, and all of mankind is upon he who speaks ill about my Sahaba ﷺ.’ In another place, Anas ﷺ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, “Allah ﷻ chose me and chose the Sahaba ﷺ for me, and he made them friends, brothers, and relations for me. In the future, a people will come who will criticize

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<sup>15</sup> *Wali*- Short for *waliullah* (friend of Allah ﷻ)

<sup>16</sup> Tirmizi

and denigrate them. Do not eat or drink with them, do not marry them, do not pray with them, and do not pray funeral prayers upon them.

Hafiz Dhahabi (rah) narrates many other similar narrations in his book Kitab-ul-Kabaair and quotes many scholars that those who blaspheme the Sahaba ﷺ, find fault with them, publicize or discuss their sins, or attribute any ignoble act or statement towards them is a hypocrite.

This brief book cannot cover all of that which has been said about those who criticize or publicize their mistakes and sins.

The narrations about the gardens of *Fidq*<sup>17</sup> never stirred any resentment in my mind against them. I heard many objections, but always thought that how could the daughter of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ who spent her life grinding grain in a grinding mill and bruised her body carrying waterskins, become a slave of the dunya and boycott the righteous Khalifah Hadhrat Abu Bakr ﷺ because of a insignificant thing of the *dunya* (worldly life)? My heart was always clean about this issue and other such contentious issues that arose amongst the Sahaba ﷺ; in my view it was simply a manifestation of the strength of their Iman.

How could an evil trait like greed have anything to do with Fatimah ﷺ, Ali ﷺ, and Abbas ﷺ especially when even their servants and servant's servants had nothing to do with it? All the wars that took place between the Sahaba ﷺ was a demonstration of their faith, knowledge, and belief. Regarding the *fidq* issue, the disagreement between Fatimah and Abu Bakr Siddique ﷺ was of a juridical nature and they held a difference of opinion on whether there is inheritance in the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ wealth or not. Omar ﷺ and Abu Bakr ﷺ believed the hadith, "We do not leave inheritance" was a general rule which applied to everyone. Ali ﷺ, Fatimah ﷺ, and Abbas ﷺ, on the other hand, believed it was meant for specific people. These were disagreements in interpretation of the hadith and knowledge of the Shari'ah. Fatimah's ﷺ refusal to speak to Abu Bakr ﷺ regarding the issue of the gardens of *fidq* means that she never spoke to him again about these properties (of *Fidq*). Hafiz ibn Hajar (rah) mentions this in Fathul-Bari and narrates many ahadith in support of this view. This is the opinion of many respected commentators of ahadith books. The opinion of this person (i.e. the author) is that it was not love of wealth which brought her to Abu Bakr Siddique's ﷺ doorstep, but implementation of the Shari'ah because she believed she had a *shari'* (legal) right over that wealth. This is why she became angry and stopped talking to him. In my opinion, this was her firmness in Deen and this is also why Ali ﷺ and Abbas ﷺ appealed their case in Omar's ﷺ *khilafat*. They hoped that Omar ﷺ might agree with them on this issue though his final verdict was the same as Abu Bakr Siddique's ﷺ.

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<sup>17</sup> *Fidq*- A plot of land the Blessed Prophet ﷺ owned in Khaibar. Fatimah ﷺ came in the *khilafah* of Abu Bakr Siddique ﷺ to claim this land as an inheritance. Abu Bakr ﷺ refused because of the hadith that *Ambiya* do not leave inheritance.



The period of the first three *khulafat* was a time when many crucial matters of Deen were being demonstrated through them. Once these issues came to a close and the period of the first three khulafat ended, the ummah needed to be instructed on another issue which was to be demonstrated in the time of the last khalifah, Ali ؑ. This was the issue of “opposition to the *khilafat*”. For the completion of the Deen, all these issue had to be decided within the period of the Khulafa Rashideen. It was for this reason that the *mushaajarat* of the Sahaba ؓ never raised doubts in my mind that tribalism or love for wealth played a part in their differences of opinion. In fact, it proved their greatness and the strength of their Iman. They were firm on whatever they believed to be the truth and fought to defend it when they had to. This is why I always looked upon a person who considered the actions and statements of the Sahaba ؓ as a sign of human nature with indifference as would anyone who has studied the books of ahadith in some depth.

### The *mushaajarat* of the Sahaba ؓ

I wrote extensively on the *mushaajarat* of the Sahaba ؓ in my book, Al-I'tidaal. The Battle of *Jamal* (Camel) was a fierce war that took place between Ali ؑ and Aishah ؓ. Over 20,000 men died in this battle. Before the war began and the two armies pitched into battle, Ali ؑ walked to the front-lines and called out for Zubair ؓ. When Zubair ؓ stepped forward they both hugged and cried. Ali ؑ asked, “What forces you to come here and oppose me?” Zubair ؓ answered, “The blood of Uthman ؓ.” They both continued their discussion for a short while. This is the conduct of the commanders of two armies who were ready to swing their swords at each other at any moment. After this, they fought and Ali ؑ was victorious capturing many prisoners. Many of Ali’s ؓ companions insisted these prisoners be put to death, but Ali ؑ refused and took *bayah* from them and forgave them. He allowed their wealth to be taken as spoils of war, but refused to enslave them (as was the custom of victorious armies at the time). Many soldiers objected, “If you are going to make their wealth spoils of war, then you should also enslave them.” At first Ali ؑ rejected this proposition, but when they insisted, he said, “Tell me, who amongst you is willing to take your mother, Aishah ؓ, as your slave?” They replied, “That’s not possible, *nastaghfirullah* (We ask for Allah’s forgiveness)! We can’t do that.” Ali ؑ said, “And I also ask Allah ﷻ for his forgiveness.”

Do we ever keep the respect of the one who opposes us? Do we even respect one who opposes us in our personal matters as the Sahaba ؓ did in times of war? At the very end of this battle, Aishah’s ؓ camel fell. Ali ؑ immediately announced, “Watch out and make sure the Mother of the Believers is not hurt!” After this, Ali ؑ reached the camel of Aishah ؓ and said, “O mother, are you injured or hurt, may Allah ﷻ forgive you for your mistake.” Aishah ؓ replied, “May Allah ﷻ forgive you as well.”

This was the conduct of the Sahaba ﷺ towards their opposition and their respect for them. What would we do if our rivals came in our hands? Would we spare them their lives, their wealth, or their honor?

The Battle of *Siffeen* was the famous battle that took place between Ali ﷺ and Mu'awiyah ﷺ. Many historians narrate that the two armies would fight throughout the day but when darkness fell the soldiers of one army would walk out to the other, and participate in their funeral prayers and the burial of their dead<sup>18</sup>. And if one party was confused on some rulings of the Shari'ah, they would send some of their men to learn the rulings from the other side.<sup>19</sup>

The emperor of the Byzantine Empire tried to exploit this first division within the Ummah. When Amir Mu'awiyah ﷺ found out, he sent a letter to the Byzantine Emperor, "If you have made the decision to attack, then I swear by Allah ﷻ I will make peace with Ali ﷺ, and when his armies are dispatched against you, I will be at the front of every squadron. We will destroy the city of Constantinople and uproot your government like carrots and turnips."<sup>20</sup>

The story behind this is that the Byzantine Emperor wrote a letter to Mu'awiyah ﷺ saying, "Ali ﷺ is a thorn in your side, I will dispatch an army to aid you." In reply, Mu'awiyah ﷺ said, "O *nasari* dog! You want to take advantage of our difference of opinion. Remember, if you squint your eyes in the direction of Ali ﷺ, Mu'awiyah ﷺ will come as a soldier of Ali's ﷺ army to gouge out your eyes." Likewise, it is narrated that Mu'awiyah ﷺ said, "I swear by Allah ﷻ, Ali ﷺ is better and greater than me, and my opposition to him is only because of the blood of Uthman ﷺ. If he revenges the blood of Uthman ﷺ, I will be the first of the people of Shaam (Syria) to take the *bayah* on his hands."<sup>21</sup>

Once during the rule of Mu'awiyah ﷺ, a man named Ibn Khaibari caught his wife with another man. Unable to control himself, he killed the adulterer. When the case went to Mu'awiyah ﷺ, he could not decide what to do. Though the Shari'ah decrees that the murderer be executed, it was difficult to pass that ruling under these circumstances. Mu'awiyah ﷺ wrote to Abu Musa Al-A'shari ﷺ to ask the correct ruling on this issue from Ali ﷺ.<sup>22</sup>

Could we ever admit our ignorance in front of our rival? Would we be able to inquire from them something we did not know? The truth is that we would not trust him in any situation.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Ihsan of Ali ﷺ**

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<sup>18</sup> Al-Bidayah Wal Nihayah 7-227

<sup>19</sup> Tareekh ul Khulafah

<sup>20</sup> Tareekh ul Uroos 7-208

<sup>21</sup> Al Bidayah Wal Nihayah 7-129

<sup>22</sup> Muwatta of Imam Malik (rah)

<sup>23</sup> Al-I'tidal, p. 230

Many incidents of the kind mentioned above occurred between Ali ؑ and Mu'awiyah ؑ. Shaikh Yusuf compiled many of them in his book Hayaatus-Sahaba. Hadhrat Dharar bin Dhamura Kannani (who was one of the main supporters of Ali ؑ) went to Mu'awiyah ؑ after Ali's ؑ death. Mu'awiyah ؑ said, "Describe Ali ؑ for me." He asked, "*Amirul-Mumineen*, will you excuse me from describing him?" "I will not excuse you, you must describe him to me," replied Mu'awiyah ؑ. Hadhrat Dharar ؑ spoke:

If I must tell you then listen! Hadhrat Ali ؑ, I swear by Allah ﷻ, was an exalted person and very strong. He was straightforward in whatever he said and he ruled with justice. Knowledge streamed from his every angle, and intelligence poured forth from every part. The *dunya* and its beauty and ornamentation disquieted him. I swear by Allah ﷻ, he cried copiously and pondered a lot. He would flip his palms while addressing himself. He liked simple cloth and preferred coarse food. I swear by Allah ﷻ, he lived amongst us as if he was one of us. When we visited him, he would sit us near him and whatever we asked, he would answer. Despite his simplicity and mingling with us, we did not have the courage to speak to him because of our reverence and awe of him. And when he laughed, his teeth were like stringed pearls. He respected the pious and loved the poor. Never did a strong and rich man hope to win in his wrongdoing nor was a poor and weak man unhopeful of his fairness and his ability to mete out justice to him. I am Allah's ﷻ witness that I saw him in the darkness of the night, in the *mihrab* (prayer niche), clutching his beard, shaking as if he was bitten by a poisonous animal. He was crying like a mourning person and his voice echoes in my mind to this day when he said and kept on repeating, 'O my Lord, O my Lord, and he was humbling himself before Allah ﷻ. Then he addressed the *dunya* saying, 'You want to deceive me only and you beautify yourself for me only. Get out of here, go and deceive someone else. Your sittings are wretched and your hardships are easy. O my, O my! The preparation for the *Akhirah* is little, the journey is long, and the path is dangerous.

When he was done, Mu'awiyah ؑ began to cry so much his beard was soaked with tears which he kept on wiping on his cuffs. People nearby also were sobbing. Mu'awiyah ؑ said, "You spoke the truth, Abul Hassan was like this, may Allah ﷻ forgive him." Then he asked, "Dharar! How much do you mourn the death of Ali ؑ?" Dharar ؑ replied, "Like a mother whose only child is slaughtered in her lap. Her crying cannot stop and her grief can never diminish." After this, Dharar returned.

Since *ihsan* is one of the basic foundations of Deen, it is also a part of the completion of Deen. This is why the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "I am the source of wisdom and Ali ؑ is its door," meaning that Ali ؑ is the portal for all the different lines of *tasawwuf*, *suluk* and *hikmah* (wisdom). Therefore, those who say *tasawwuf* is taken from pundits and saadhus are truly ignorant of Deen. *Tasawwuf* began in the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and its succession in a specific form reaches

us through Ali ؑ (as will be mentioned later). This is a lengthy topic, but my health will not allow me to explain it to the fullest.

### **The shortcomings of our understanding**

One should not deduce from all that has been said that an objection never arose in my mind about a hadith. I had objections, but whenever I could not find an answer I would blame it on my lack of knowledge. I have already written in my autobiography about my daughter when she was small and reading the Qaidah Baghdadi she would connect the letters and say, “*Alif madda, aa, noon fath na- aana, Ba alif fath, baa, noon fath, na-baana,*” and likewise she went on *taana, thaana,* etc. Her mother then taught her: *hamza madda-aa, noon fath, na-aana.* My daughter jumped up and said, “How could this be *aana* mother, it should be *hamzaana.*” Her mother quickly put it on me saying, “When your father comes, ask him.” And when I was tired of explaining to her, I said, “You do not have the understanding at this time, when you get older everything will be clear to you.”

Likewise, when I had an objection regarding a hadith, I remembered my answer to my daughter: “You do not have the understanding at this time.”

*CHAPTER ONE*

*THE HOLY QURAN*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Knowledge of the Quran

Abdullah bin Mas'ud said, "If you seek knowledge then ponder into the meanings of the Quran." The Quran is a trove of sacred knowledge that is guidance for all times, but to acquire this knowledge one must fulfill the necessary conditions and etiquettes of the Quran. Unfortunately, we live in an era that once a person learns a bit of the Arabic language and rote the translation he thinks he has the right to offer his own opinions on the Quran. The Blessed Prophet said, "Whosoever explains the Quran from his own opinion is wrong even if it is right."

Modern thinkers generally ignore the opinions and *tafsir* of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen* (Pious Predecessors) issuing their own fatwas based on their own whims. In our time, the modern thinker desires to embody all the greatest attributes in every field. If he can write simple Arabic, articulate himself in his native language, or deliver impromptu speeches he sees himself the teacher of Junaid and Shibli in *tasawwuf* and a *mujtahid* in Fiqh. He will introduce novel ideas in the *tafsir* of the Quran without concern for the opinions of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen* or that his opinions contradict the ahadith of the Blessed Prophet.

He is whimsical in matters of Deen. He says his heart's desire no matter how much it contradicts the Quran and the Sunnah. Despite this, no one discredits him, protests his incompetence, and shows him his deviation. If one gathers the courage to say, "This is against the teachings of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen*," he is immediately branded a sycophant of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen*. He is condemned as ultra-orthodox, anti-intellectual, and someone not attuned to the modern world. Conversely, if a person rejects the explanations of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen* and lays out his own views on matters of faith he is looked upon as a *muhaqqiq* (an expert who establishes the truth from extensive study) of the Deen. This is despite the fact that the *mufasireen* (exegetes) listed 15 sciences that must be mastered before one can authoritatively interpret the Quran:

1. *Classical Arabic*: Is how one learns the meaning of each word. Mujahid (rah) said, "It is not permissible for one who holds faith in Allah and the Day of Judgment to speak on the Quran without learning classical Arabic." In this respect, it should be known that classical Arabic must be mastered in its entirety because one word may have various meanings; a

person may only know two or three of them whereas the meaning of that word in the Quran may be altogether different.

2. *Arabic Philology*: Is important because any change in the diacritical marks affects the meaning, and understanding the diacritical marks depends on the science of Arabic philology.

3. *Arabic Morphology*: is important because changes in the configuration of verb and noun forms change the meaning. Ibn Faris said, “A person who misses out on Arabic morphology has missed out on a lot.” Allama Zamakhshari (rah) writes in A’jubaat Tafsir that,

One man recited the ayah:

**On the day when we will call everyone by their leaders.**<sup>24</sup>

Because of his ignorance of Arabic morphology, he mistranslated the ayah:

On the day when we will call everyone by their mothers.

He thought the word *imam*, which is singular, was the plural of *umm* (mother). If he knew *sarf* (morphology) he would have known that *imam* is not the plural of *umm*.

4. *Al-Ishtiqaaq*: should be learned because sometimes one word derives from two root words, the meaning of each root word being different. This is the science of etymology which explains the reciprocal relation and radical composition between the root and derived word. For example, *masih* derives from the root word *masah* which means “to feel something and to touch something with a wet hand,” but also derives from the root word *masaahat* which means “to measure.”

5. *Ilm-ul-Ma’ani*: is the science by which one figures the syntax through the meaning of a sentence.

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| <sup>24</sup> Bani Israel: 71

6. *Ilm-ul-Bayaan*: is the science by which one learns the similes, metaphors, metonymies, *zuhoor* (evident meanings) and *khafa* (hidden meanings) of the Arabic language.
7. *Ilm-ul-Badi'*: The science by which one learns to interpret sentences which reveal the beauty and eloquence of the spoken and written word. The above mentioned three sciences are categorized as *Ilm-ul-Balagha* (science of rhetoric). It is one of the most important sciences to a *mufassir* because he is able to reveal the miraculous nature of the Quran through these three sciences.
8. *Ilm-ul-Qira't*: Dialecticisms of the different readings of the Quran. This science is important because one *qirat* (reading) of the Quran may differ in meaning from another, and one learns to favor one reading over another based on the difference in the meanings.
9. *Ilm-ul-Aqaa'id*: is important because we cannot attribute the literal meaning of some ayaat to Allah. In this case, one will be required to interpret the ayah as in '*the hand of Allah ﷻ is over their hand*'.
10. *Usul-ul-Fiqh*: are the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. It is important to master this field so one understands the methodology of legal derivation and interpretation.
11. *Asbaab-ul-Nuzul*: is the field by which one learns the circumstances in which an ayah is revealed. It is important because the meaning of the ayah is more clearly understood once the circumstances in which they were revealed are known. Sometimes, the meaning of an ayah is wholly dependent on its historical background.
12. *Ilm-ul-Naskh*: is knowledge of the abrogated ayaat. This field is important because abrogated rulings must be separated from the applied rulings.
13. *Fiqh*: Jurisprudence. This field is important because one cannot gain an overview of any issue until he has understood its particulars.
14. *Ilm-ul-Hadith*: is knowledge of the ahadith which explain *mujmal* (general) ayaat.
15. *Ilm Laduuni*: Last but not least is the endowed knowledge which Allah grants to his closest servants. They are the servants indicated in the hadith: "Allah ﷻ will grant one who acts upon whatever he knows from a knowledge he never knew."



## The knowledge needed to follow the Shariah

The scholars of *Usul*<sup>25</sup> (scholars who regulate juridical principles) write that to follow the Shariah, one must have knowledge of the four foundations upon which it rests. They are:

1. Quran
2. Ahadith
3. Ijma (scholarly consensus)
4. Qiyas (analogical reasoning) which is derived from the above three.

Then, to act in accordance to the Quran one must know four things:

1. *Nazm-ul-Quran*: Linguistics of the Quran and the inflections within each individual word. *Nazm-ul-Quran* are of four types:

- a. Khaas
- b. Aam
- c. Mushtarak
- d. Muawwal

2. *Wujub-ul-Bayan*: The Quran's methodology of presenting its message. This is also of four types:

- a. Zaahir
- b. Nass
- c. Mufassar
- d. Muhkam

Then, these four types are contrasted with four other types:

- i. Khafi
- ii. Mushkal
- iii. Mujmal
- iv. Mutashabi

3. Knowledge of application of *Nazm-ul-Quran*. This is also of four types:

- a. Haqeeqat
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<sup>25</sup> *Usul*- plural of *asl* which means principles/rules.

- b. Majaaz
  - c. Sareeh
  - d. Kinayah
4. The methodology of understanding the intended meaning of the Quran. This is also of four types:
- a. I'baarat-ul-Nass
  - b. Isharat-ul-Nass
  - c. Dalaalat-ul-Nass
  - d. Iqtidha-ul-Nass

After all of this, there is one more category that encompasses all of the above. This category is also of four types:

1. *Ma'khaz-ul-Ishtiqaag*: Knowledge of the sources from which the derivation is made.
2. Knowledge of the terminological concepts of the sources of derivation.
3. Knowledge of the sequence of the sources of derivation.
4. Knowledge of the rulings deriving from the sources of derivation.

## Conclusion

It is important to know when *amr* (an order) indicates obligation, permissibility, desirability, or when it is merely for repetition. In the Quran, the word "*adaa*" implies "*qadaa*"<sup>26</sup> while at other times vice versa. Furthermore, *amr* can be a general or restricted order. A restricted order is of four types. One will find the details of this in the books of *Usul*. Whatever has been mentioned above is taken from Nur-ul-Anwar.

Mu'az bin Jabal said in a hadith of Abu Dawud:

After you, the times of *fitan* (tribulation) will appear; there will be an abundance of wealth, the Quran will be opened by everyone: a m'umin, hypocrite, a man, a woman, old and young, slaves and freeman will all read it. Then one amongst them will say, 'Why don't people follow me even though I am learned in the Quran? They will not

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<sup>26</sup> *Adaa*- is the fulfillment of a *wajib* (an act made obligatory by order) itself. *Qadaa*- is the fulfillment of something like the *wajib*, but not the *wajib* itself. In the Quran, an order may obligate the fulfillment of the order itself or sometimes, as is being mentioned above, the fulfillment of something like the order. For examples, look in Nur- ul-Anwar.

follow me until I bring something new.” Mu’az then said, “Save yourself from the *bidaa’t* (innovations) because every *bida’t* will be a deviation.

According to the above mentioned hadith, those who talk big about how they are spreading the message of the Quran around the world are deviant people. Translating the Quran for the blessing of translation is good, however to derive rulings without sound knowledge of the different sciences (as quoted above) is forbidden. Rulings can only be derived when one gains complete knowledge of these sciences upon which derivation of rulings from the Quran are based. In Durr-ul-Mansoor, it is narrated from Ibn Abbas that he said of the ayah:

### **He gives wisdom to whomever he wishes**

“This is reference to gnosis of the Quran, knowledge of abrogating and abrogated ayaat, *muhkam* (clear) and *mutashaabih* (obscure) ayaat, the chronology of each ayah, what is forbidden and what is permissible and knowledge of other matters of the same type.”

*CHAPTER 2*

*AHADITH*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Knowledge of the Hadith

The scholars of *usul* state that the same sciences of knowledge necessary for the Quran (as previously mentioned) are necessary for the ahadith. As for the ahadith which are *dhanni* (presumptive), it is necessary to be learned in some additional sciences to gain mastery over the *dhanni* hadith.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani writes in his book of *usul-ul-hadith* (Principles of ahadith), Nukhbat-ul-fikr:

A hadith is *mutawatir* if it is narrated by a multitude of people that it is unthinkable for one to believe they conspired to forge it, and that the number of narrators throughout the times was significant. Such a hadith is authentic and equivalent to an ayah of the Quran.

The hadith is *mashhoor* if the number of narrators dwindled at some point (in the chain of transmission) and did not remain numerous.

The third type of hadith is *aziz* in which the number of narrators throughout the chain of transmission is two people. If it is only one narrator, it is called *gharib*.

The last two types of hadith (*aziz, gharib*) are categorized as *khabr wahid* some of which are accepted while others rejected. The process of rejection or acceptance of a *khabr wahid* is based on a complete background check of each narrator. Then there are many types of *gharib*. The *gharabah* (when the number of narrators is only one person) may be in the beginning or end of the chain of transmission. The *khabr wahid* is authentic if the narrator of a *khabr wahid* is trustworthy in his memorization of the hadith. The transmission of the hadith must be continuous (it does not break anywhere

with a missing narrator) and it is not *muallal*<sup>27</sup> or *shaaz*<sup>28</sup>. *Muallal* is a hadith which contains a hidden weakness within it. A hadith is *shaaz* when a trusted narrator brings a hadith that opposes the narrations of other trusted narrators. The level of authenticity of the hadith varies depending on the amount of *shaaz* and *muallal* present in the hadith.

The highest level of authenticity is *sahih lizaatihi* while the second level is *sahih lighairihi*. Likewise there is *hasan lizaatihi* and *hasan lighairihi*. Another aspect of science of ahadith is whether the hadith is *ma'ruf*, *munkar*, *mahfooz* and if it contains *mataabi'* and *shahid* or not. The definition of these different types of ahadith should be known to measure the veracity of the hadith. If a contradiction between two ahadith can be explained away it is called *mukhtalif-ul-hadith*. If it is not possible but we know the chronology of the two hadith, it is called *naasikh* and *mansookh*. If the chronology is unknown, we will favor one hadith over the other using the tools of *tarjih* (the principles by which we prefer one hadith over another).

Allama Hazmi writes in his book Kitab-ul-I'tibaar that there are 50 tools of *tarjih* by which we ascertain which hadith is more acceptable. Allama Suyuti in Tadreeb-ul-Raawi writes that other scholars have mentioned over a hundred tools of *tarjih*. Later, we will read a detailed essay by Allama Ibn Taimiyah in which he outlines ten reasons for rejecting a hadith. He then says:

These reasons are apparent. Though, some ahadith are of the kind that a prodigious scholar will see reason for us to not follow them without revealing the reason. This is because the plains of knowledge are vast and we cannot understand everything that was in the minds of these scholars. At times he presents his proof while at other times he may not. Even when he does present his proof, many times we hear his proof while at other times we do not. Even if his proof reaches us, sometimes we understand his proof and sometimes we do not.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani said, “We will not adopt any opinion if there is no reason to favor one hadith over the other.” Sometimes a narration is rejected because of a missing link between two narrators and sometimes because of some poor quality in a narrator. A narration is *mursal* if the missing link of one narrator is found from the Sahaba's ﷺ end in the chain of transmission. It is

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<sup>27</sup> *Muallal*: A hadith that has weakness of some kind in the transmission which is not easily detected without careful examination by the scholars of *Jarh* and *Tadeel*.

<sup>28</sup> *Shaaz*: An authentic hadith which opposes a much larger number of ahadith as authentic or stronger than itself which combined together are equivalent to an ayah of the Quran.

*muallaq* when the missing link appears from the other end (from the teacher of the author ex. Bukhari, Ibn Majah). If the missing narrator is in the middle of the chain, the hadith is *munqati'*. If two or more than two narrators are missing, the hadith is called *muadhal*. If the missing link is evident, it is a *munqati'* however, if it is hidden, it is *mudallas*.

## The true knowledge and scholarship of Ahadith

Then there are ten reasons a narrator is criticized. To use the ahadith as evidence it is important to know the principles of ahadith. We mentioned a few types of ahadith as examples. Besides these, Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani mentioned:

- *Maqloob*
- *Mudhtarab*
- *Mushaf*
- *Muharraaf*
- *Marfoo'*
- *Maqtoo'*
- *Musnad*
- *Al A'luw-ul-Mutlaq*
- *Al A'luw-ul-Nasabi*
- *Al Muwaafaqa*

Then within these one must be learned in discussions on:

- *Badl-ul-Musawaat*
- *Musaafaha*
- *Nuzul*
- *Aqraan*
- *Mudbaj*
- *Rawayat ul akaabir a'nil Asaaghir*
- *Al Saabiq-wal-Laahiq*
- *Musalsal*
- *Mutafaq*
- *Muftariq*
- *Mu'talif*
- *Mukhtalif*
- *Mutashaabih*

In the study of a hadith, it is unacceptable to be a “pseudo-muhaddith” and begin deducing rulings from the ahadith after study of a hadith book. Regarding the aforementioned discussions, Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani himself writes that the *usul* cannot be condensed; one must study the *mutawwalat* (i.e., encyclopedic works on the principles of ahadith). Merely reading the translation of a hadith or reading a book on the virtues of ahadith is surely not enough. Becoming a *muhaddith*<sup>29</sup> is one of the most arduous tasks.

Likewise, reading the translation of the Quran does not give insight into the Quran until one learns all the necessary sciences related to the Quran. Otherwise, there is a chance of making grave mistakes in the Quran. One Ahle-Hadith<sup>30</sup> was of the habit that whenever he returned from *istinja* (answering the call of nature) he would perform *wudu* and pray *salat-ul-witr* (three *rakat* salah). Someone asked him, “What do you pray?” He said, “It says in the hadith:

من إستجمر فليوتر

‘Whosoever performs *istinja*, should pray *witr* salah.’

However, the meaning of this hadith is that whenever one goes for *istinja* one should use *witr* (odd) number of clods to gain cleanliness. The mistake he made was to translate the word فليوتر as *witr* salah.

Likewise, one man would not allow the water from his well to be channeled into the fields of another because the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in the hadith:

ولا يسقى احدكم ماءه زرع غيره

‘Your water should not feed the fields of another.’

However, the meaning of this hadith is that when a woman, for example a slavegirl becomes pregnant by one man and another becomes her owner, he (the owner) should not have intercourse with her. The word *maa* refers to semen and *zar’a* refers to the woman’s private part. There are many more examples like this which Allama Ibn Jauzi has mentioned in his book, Talbees-ul-Iblis.

A hadith is narrated in Abu Dawud that someone asked Imran Bin Husain ؓ, “You narrate many ahadith which have no mention in the Quran?” This angered him and he said, “Have you read anywhere that you must pay one dirham for every forty dirham in zakah, and that you must

<sup>29</sup> *Muhaddith*- Singular of *muhadditheen*. The scholars who dedicated their lives to the preservation of ahadith.

<sup>30</sup> Ahle-Hadith- an errant sect, also known as *ghair muqallideen*.



give so many goats when you own so many goats in zakah, and this many camels if you own a certain number of camels. Are all these in the Quran?” The man replied, “No.” Imran ؓ said, “Then where did you get these rulings from? You learned it from us and we learned it from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.”

Likewise he mentioned many other specific rulings on various issues besides zakah that are not mentioned in the Quran. This indicates that in order to understand the Quran it is necessary to know the ahadith. And to know both the Quran and ahadith it is necessary to learn all the various sciences and fields of knowledge mentioned above.

I would like to conclude this chapter with Imam Bukhari’s quartet better known as the Rubaaiyat Bukhari, which is also mentioned in the *muqaddama* (introduction) of Aujazul-Masaalik and in my other book, Ikhtilaf-ul-A’immah. It is reproduced here from Ikhtilaf-ul-A’immah and Aujaz:

The *muhadditheen* established the strictest rules on *ilm-ul-hadith* for one who wishes to busy himself, gain insight into, and speak or write on this subject. They also established rules to aid the student in his study of the ahadith. Their rules and restrictions are most heavy upon the teacher and *muhaddith* more than anyone else. Though this chapter has drawn on quite a while, it is an opportune time to relate the interesting story of Imam Bukhari. It is a story which shows us the struggles the *Salaf-us-Salaheen* expected one to overcome to gain knowledge of ahadith. He himself was a person who struggled hard in this path while as a student and who achieved the status of a shaikh and *muhaddith* in this field.

Muhammad ibn Ahmad says:

When Walid bin Ibrahim was dismissed from his position as the Qazi of Rai (Tehran), he moved to Bukhara. My teacher, Abu Ibrahim Khattali, took me to meet him. When we came to him we requested that he narrate all the ahadith he had heard from our *shuyukh* and elders. Walid said, ‘I did not hear any narrations or any ahadith.’ My teacher was shocked. He asked, ‘You are such a great *faqih* (jurist) and you say such a thing?’ Walid then told his story; he said, ‘When I reached adulthood and I was eager to study *ilm-ul-hadith* I came to Imam Bukhari and explained my situation to him. He (Imam Bukhari) advised me and said, ‘Listen, my son. Whenever you begin a subject you first learn the prerequisites of that subject. Make the intention to learn the subject after understanding the prerequisites and also the objectives. Now listen! A man cannot be an accomplished *muhaddith* until he writes four things with four thing like four things with four things as four things in four time periods in four situations in four places on four things to four types of people for four reasons; and these quartets cannot be gained

but with four things which must be with four other things. When all these are attained, then four things become easy upon him and he is put into hardship by four things. And when he is patient with these four things, Allah ﷻ honors him with four things in the *dunya* and four things in the *Akhirah*.’

I (Walid) said to him, ‘May Allah ﷻ have mercy upon you. Please explain these quartets for me.’ He said, ‘Of course, listen!’ The four things which one must write are:

1. The blessed ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and his rulings
2. The sayings of the Sahaba ﷺ and the status of each sahabi
3. The sayings of the *Tabieen*<sup>31</sup> (i.e., the *Salaf-us Salafeen* who met the Sahaba, but did not meet the Blessed Prophet ﷺ). The level of each of the *Tabieen*. Who amongst them was reliable and who was unreliable
4. Knowledge of all the narrators who narrate ahadith and their history

The history of the narrators must include four things:

1. Their *Isma-ul-Rijjal* (biographies)
2. Their *kunniyaat* (surnames)
3. Their place of settlement
4. Their date of birth and date of death (to verify whether this person met the people whom he narrated from)

These four things are as necessary as four things with four things:

1. *Khutbah* (religious speech delivered on *jumu'ah*) with *hamd* and *thanaa*’ (praise and exaltation of Allah ﷻ which is mandatory in *khutbah*)
2. *Salah* and *salam* (sending greetings and blessings upon the prophets) with the prophets (as)
3. *Bismillah* with a Surah
4. *Takbir* (the first *Allah-u-Akbar* pronounced at the beginning of salah) with salah

And like four things:

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<sup>31</sup> *Tabieen*- Those who met the Sahaba ﷺ but did not gain the companionship of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

1. *Musnadaat*: ahadith with an unbroken chain of transmission to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
2. *Mursalaat*: ahadith narrated by one of the *Tabieen* with the name of a sahabi omitted
3. *Mauqufaat*: sayings of the Sahaba ﷺ
4. *Maqtu'aat*: sayings of the *Tabieen*

These are four different branches in *ilm-ul-hadith* which can only be attained in four different periods:

1. Childhood
2. Near adulthood
3. After adulthood
4. Before old age

And the meaning of attaining these four branches in different situations is:

1. In preoccupation
2. In free time
3. In poverty
4. In affluence

In essence, a person should be incessantly preoccupied with the attainment of these four branches, in four places:

1. In the mountains
2. In the rivers
3. In the cities
4. In the rural areas and jungles

In essence, a person should travel wherever a *muaallim* (teacher) of hadith may be to learn the hadith from him on four things:

1. On the rocks
2. On oysters
3. On leather
4. On bones

In essence, he should learn from him on anything until he obtains paper and has the chance to write on it. He should write on whatever he finds so that the essence of the knowledge is not forgotten. And he must learn this from four types of people:

1. One who is older than him
2. Younger than him
3. Equal to him
4. From the books of his father with the provision that he understands his writing style

In essence, he should learn from whoever he can. He should not hesitate, thinking it beneath him, to learn from his equal, or someone younger than him. He should do all this with four intentions:

1. For the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. It is an obligation upon the servant to keep his master happy.
2. Acting upon all the knowledge that is in accordance with the Quran.
3. To transfer knowledge to students and earnest knowledge seekers.
4. To keep the torch of guidance alight after putting it into writing.

And all of these things cannot be gained but with four things:

1. With his efforts and toil.
2. The art of penmanship or writing.
3. Linguistics: by which he learns meanings and concepts of words.
4. Arabic morphology and philology: by which one can discern the correctness of words and sentences.

All of these four things are dependent on four things which are otherwise unattainable except by the mercy and gift of Allah ﷻ:

1. Health
2. Ability
3. Eagerness for knowledge
4. Sharp memory

And when all these are attained four things become contemptible to him (because of his thirst for knowledge):

1. Wife
2. Children
3. Wealth
4. Home

And then this person is tested by four things:

1. Enemies who rejoice at his bad fortune
2. Criticism of his friends
3. Contempt of the ignorant
4. Jealousy of the scholars

And when a person is patient with these four things Allah ﷻ grants him four things in the *dunya* and four things in the *Akhirah*. The four things of the *dunya*:

1. Respect with *qana'at* (satisfaction)
2. Dignity and the ability to inspire with *yaqeen* (certainty)
3. Sweetness of knowledge
4. A long life

The four things of the *Akhirah* are:

1. Intercession on behalf of whomever he wishes
2. Shade under the throne of Allah ﷻ on the day when there will be no shade
3. Give water from the basin of *Kauthar* to whomever he wishes
4. Proximity to the Prophet of Allah ﷺ in the *A'laa I'lliyeen*<sup>32</sup>

This is all my son. I have simplified for you everything I heard in different gatherings from my elders. Now it is your choice whether you choose to or choose not to busy yourself in the knowledge of ahadith.”

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<sup>32</sup> *A'laa I'lliyeen*- The highest level of *Jannah*

*CHAPTER 3*

*FIQH (JURISPRUDENCE)*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The Islamic science of Fiqh

The most recognized definition of Fiqh amongst the jurists is: Fiqh is knowledge of derivative rulings taken from in-depth evidences of the Quran and Sunnah. Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) said, “Fiqh is knowledge of that which is beneficial and detrimental to the soul.” This, though, is a broad definition which includes everything from beliefs to outward deeds to spiritual rectification.

The succeeding scholars brought all the branches related to matters of belief under the umbrella of *Ilm-ul-Kalaam*. The branches related to spiritual rectification under *Ilm-ul-Akhlaaq* or *Tasawwuf* and the branches related to outward deeds under Fiqh.

In the introduction of Kanzul Daqqaiq, Maulana I’zaaz Ali narrates from *Haawi Qudusi* that Fiqh linguistically means *wuquf* or “to be aware of.” In the Shariah, it refers to a specific awareness as well as awareness of the meaning of the text (i.e., the Quran and Sunnah), its intimations, sense, and requirements. In another place, he writes that Fiqh is a quality, an aptitude by which one can discern the correct evidences from the Quran and the Sunnah and by which one can sense what is intellectually sounder.

The sources of Fiqh are: the Quran, the authentic Sunnah, *ijma’* (scholarly consensus), and *qiyas* (analogical reasoning) which have already been cited from Nur-ul-Anwar. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of all the sciences and fields that are required for understanding the Quran and Sunnah (as previously mentioned) are also required for the understanding of Fiqh.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rah) writes in his book Al-Takashuf, “Shariah is the name of the complete and comprehensive collection of actable rulings.” This definition is inclusive of all deeds, both inward and outward. In the language of the *Mutaqademeen*<sup>33</sup> the term Fiqh was used in this sense. For example, Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) defined Fiqh as:

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<sup>33</sup> *Mutaqademeen*- The scholars of the era closer to the period of the *Salaf*

## معرفة النفس ما لها وما عليها

“Gnosis of the *nafs* (soul), knowledge that is beneficial for it, and that which is obligatory upon it.”

Then Fiqh became known amongst the *Mutakhireen*<sup>34</sup> as knowledge of the outward deeds. Knowledge of the inward deeds (related to the heart) became better known as *Tasawwuf* and *Tariqat*<sup>35</sup>. Hazrat Thanvi presents this same point in Imdaad-ul-Fataawa.

Allama Abdul-Wahhab Al-Shiraani wrote a book called Al-Mizan-ul-Kubra. I enjoyed this book; I read it repeatedly during the last of my student years and the beginning of my teaching years. The main theme of his book is that there is essentially no disagreement amongst the *Mujtahideen*. Whatever apparent disagreement one sees is due to the difference in people’s circumstances.

For example, Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) negated the *rafa’ yadain* (raising the hands at different junctures in salah) according to his time period while Imam Shafi’ (rah) necessitated it according to his time. The era of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) was the *khair-ul-quroon* (the best of all generations) and the meaning of *rafa’ yadain* was “throwing the *Dunya* away behind one’s back.” In his time, the salah was prayed in perfect harmony; once salah began there was no room for the *dunya* to return. In the time of Imam Shafi’, (rah) who was born the year Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) passed away, the *Dunya* returned once it was thrown out (with the first *rafa’ yadain*). This is why he ruled that the *rafa’ yadain* should be performed repeatedly to keep the *Dunya* away from the salah. Also, Imam Shafi’’s view was that touching the private part broke *wudu*. This ruling applied to the saintly scholars while the more liberal ruling, that it did not break *wudu*, was applicable to the general public. However, the *Hanafia* exercise caution in this regard and say that if the private part is touched then *wudu* should be performed to distance oneself from any disagreement between the *A’immah* (plural of imam).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Mutakhireen*- The scholars of the era after the *mutaqadimeen*. However, there is no precise time or date by which the era of the *Mutaqadimeen* is separated from the *mutakhireen*. In general though, the scholars closer to our time are referred to as the *mutakhireen* while the scholars closer to the period of the *Salaf* are called the *mutaqadimeen*.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Takashuf, p 184

<sup>36</sup> Mizan-ul-Kubra, p 130



*CHAPTER 4*

*IJTIHAD  
(JURIDICAL REASONING)*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The definition of true Ijtihad and the requirements for a Mujtahid

On the question of *ijtihād*, Mufti Shafi' wrote in Jawaahir-ul-Fiqh that the *Salaf-us-Salaheen* designed a criterion for the *mujtahid* who is to be followed. Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlavi wrote in A'qd-ul-Jeed, that the most precise definition of *ijtihād* understood from scholars is, "to work arduously to yield derivative knowledge from specific sources." These specific sources are:

1. Quran
2. Sunnah
3. *Ijma'*
4. *Qiyas*

One of the conditions for one engaged in *ijtihād* is that he should be well-versed in those areas of the Quran and Sunnah from which rulings are derived. He should also be well-versed in the areas of *Ijma'*, the conditions for the correct use of *Qiyas*, a broad and deep knowledge of Arabic linguistics, the abrogated and abrogating ayaat, and to be learned in the biographies of the narrators. In *ijtihād*, knowledge of *Ilm-ul-Kalaam* (theology) and conventional Fiqh is not necessary. The conditions of *ijtihād* are covered in the books of *usul*. At this point, there is no harm in narrating the conditions that Imam Baghawi laid out for *ijtihād*. He said:

*Mujtahid* is a scholar who is proficient in five fields of knowledge:

1. Knowledge of the Quran
2. Knowledge of the ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ
3. Knowledge of the sayings of the *Salaf-us-Salaheen*; that is to know which rulings they disagreed and upon which they were unanimous.
4. Knowledge of Arabic linguistics

5. Knowledge of *Qiyas*, the knowledge by which one learns the method of deriving a ruling from the Quran and Sunnah. In this case, the above mentioned ruling (which is derived from the Quran and Sunnah) should not be apparent in the Quran and Sunnah or *Ijma'*. If there is no derivation involved due to the explicitness of the ruling in the Quran and Sunnah, than such a person is not by definition a *mujtahid*.

Now, it is important for us to know how much of each of these fields of knowledge a *mujtahid* should have mastered. As for the Quran, it is *wajib* (obligatory) upon the *mujtahid* to know all that has already been mentioned in the chapter on the Quran and the abrogated and abrogating ayaat. As for the ahadith, he should know the sciences necessary for knowledge of ahadith and also the ability to distinguish between authentic and weak ahadith. It is also *wajib* upon him to be fully versed in Arabic linguistics. This means that he has an almost perfect knowledge of the words used in the ayaat and ahadith related to *ahkamaat* (commandments). However, he need not necessarily have memorized and learned the whole vocabulary of classical Arabic. It is best that he busy himself in learning the language to the extent that he becomes familiar with the meaning and message of classical Arabic discourse. This is because the medium of the Shari'ah is Arabic, therefore, the person who does not know Arabic will not understand the underlying meanings of the sayings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

He should also have learned the sayings of the Sahaba رضي الله عنهم and *Tabieen* regarding the commandments of Deen. He should also have knowledge of the fataawa of the *Fuqaha* (jurists) in order to avoid deriving rulings that contradict their opinions and the decisions upon which there is *Ijma'* of the Ummah. If and when a person is learned in these five fields of knowledge he will be considered a *mujtahid*. Though, it is not expected of him to have covered the infinitesimal of these fields of knowledge. However, if he is lacking in any one of them, he must follow someone else.”

Allama Ibn Qadama Hanbali writes in Mughni<sup>37</sup>:

“There are six conditions for being a *mujtahid*.

1. Mastering the knowledge of the Quran
2. Mastering the knowledge of the Ahadith
3. Mastering the knowledge of *Ijma'*
4. Mastering the knowledge of the *Qiyas*

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<sup>37</sup> Mughni 11/383

5. Mastering the knowledge of the difference of opinions
6. Mastering the knowledge of classical Arabic linguistics

Of the Quran he must know two things, *khaas* and *aam* (which have already been mentioned). In the ahadith, one should know the ahadith related to the commandments of Deen, not necessarily every hadith, as in the ahadith on *Jannah* and *Jahannum*, etc. All the sciences that are necessary for the Quran are also required for ahadith. Besides this, there are different types of ahadith, such as *ahaad* (details have been mentioned previously). They must also know the rulings upon which the scholars were unanimous and upon which they disagreed. In *Qiyas*, they must know its conditions, the different methods of derivation as well as other things. They should also be acquainted with Arabic linguistics in as much as is related to the aforementioned fields.

Hafiz Ibn Qayyim writes in I'laam-ul-Muwaqi'een<sup>38</sup>:

Khatib quoted Imam Shafi' in his book Al-Faqih wal Mutafaqqi, as saying that it is not permissible for anyone to give fatwa on any matter of Deen except if he is a scholar of the book of Allah ﷻ, is learned in abrogating and abrogated ayaat, *muhkam*, *mutashaabih*, *ta'weel*, *tanzeel*, *Makki and Madani* ayaat, and has insight into the underlying meaning of the ayaat. After all this, he should be learned in the ahadith, in the abrogating and abrogated ahadith, and all the different sciences required for the Quran. After this, he should be skilled in Arabic linguistics and poetry. He should be an expert in all fields that are required for a complete understanding of the Quran and Sunnah. After this, he should be acquainted with the sayings of the scholars. All of these fields should become second nature to him due to his mastery over them. When the knowledge (of these fields) establish themselves in him, he may then give fatwa otherwise it is forbidden for him to issue fatawa. Salih Bin Ahmad says, 'I said to my father (Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal (rah)), 'what do you think of a person who when asked a fatwa, issues it according to the hadith but without any knowledge of Fiqh?' He replied, 'It is absolutely necessary for one who sits on the place of *ifta* (issuing fataawa) to know the ways of the Quran, to be impeccable in his knowledge of the ahadith and to be a scholar of authentic chains of transmission.' Then Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal (rah) quoted everything Imam Shafi' mentioned previously. Once someone asked Abdullah bin Mubarak (rah), 'When is it permissible for someone to give fatwa?' He replied, 'When he carries *baseerat* (profound insight) in his opinion, and likewise carries *baseerat* in the ahadith.'

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<sup>38</sup> I'laam-ul-Muwaqieen 1/ 46

Hafiz Ibn Qayyim says,

By opinion, he is referring to true *Qiyas*, the underlying meanings and reasons upon which the whole foundation of the sayings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ are based. This makes the rulings of the Deen effective'.<sup>39</sup>

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi writes in A'qd-ul-Jeed:

Whoever is erudite in the greater part of these branches of knowledge is a *mujtahid*." Rafee', Nawawi and so many others scholars (that cannot be enumerated) say, 'There are two types of *mujtahid*: *mustaqil* and *muntasib*.' It is evident from their writings that a *mujtahid mustaqil* is greatest in three things:

1. He regulates the *usul* of his *madhab*<sup>40</sup>.
2. He studies, researches, and engrosses himself in the verses and ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to find proof for issues that confront him. He favors one proof over the other when they contradict each other. He also expounds on the references from which he derived his rulings.
3. He confronts new issues which have not yet been discussed and presents them in light of evidence (from the Quran and Sunnah).

A *mujtahid muntasib* is one who is a follower of his teacher in the *usul* and who takes help from him in seeking evidence on rulings. He knows the rulings in light of their evidence and is fully capable of deriving rulings from the evidence. Whoever is below these two (i.e., *mujtahid muntasib* and *mujtahid mustaqil*) is a *mujtahid fil madhab* (a *mujtahid* within a *madhab*). He is a *muqallid* (follower) of his Imam in any ruling attributed to the Imam, but is also fully aware of the *usul* his Imam used to derive the rulings. If he cannot find a ruling on an issue from his Imam, he does *ijtihad* based on his (teachers) *usul* and derives rulings based on the framework of these *usul*.

The last level is of the mufti who is infused with the knowledge of his *madhab* and has the competence to prefer one opinion over the other (in one ruling within a *madhab*).

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<sup>39</sup> I'laam-ul-Muwaqieen 1/46

<sup>40</sup> *Madhab*- Singular of *madhaaib*- literally means place of departure. Also used in the meaning of opinion, view, belief. Conventionally, it means school of Fiqh as is mentioned above by the author.

## Types of Fuqaha (Scholars of Jurisprudence)

Allama Ibn Abedeen in his booklet, Sharhul Uqood Rasmul Mufti, explains the seven types of *fuqaha*:

1. *Mujtahideen fil shara'*: These are the four Imams who devised the *usul* and derived rulings from the four sources (i.e., Quran, Sunnah, *Ijma'*, *Qiyas*) without being *muqalideen* (followers) of anyone in fundamental or derivative rulings.
2. *Mujtahideen fil madhab*: As in Imam Abu Yusuf (rah), Imam Muhammad bin Hassan Shaybani (rah) and all the students of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) who derived rulings using the *usul* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) which he derived from the main sources. Although they disagreed in some derivative rulings with Imam Abu Hanifah (rah), they are his *muqallideen* (followers) in the *usul*. The difference between them (*mujtahideen fil madhab*) and *mu'aaredheen fil madhab* (parallel scholarship) like Imam Shafi' (rah) is that they (*mujtahideen fil madhab*) are his (Imam Abu Hanifah ؒ) *muqalideen* in *usul* while Imam Shafi' (rah) is not.
3. *Mujtahideen fil masaail*: They practice *ijtihad* in the rulings in which there is no known opinion of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah). This category includes scholars like Khassaaf, Tahawi, Shams ul-Aima Halwani, Shams ul-Sarakhsi, Fakhr-ul-Islam Bazdawi, and Qazi Khan, etc. This group of scholars follows Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) in his *usul* and his derivative rulings, but derives rulings, based on his *usul*, on issues in which there is no known opinion or ruling by Imam Abu Hanifah (rah).
4. *Ashaab-ul-takhreej*: As in Abu Bakr Raazi, etc. They are capable of correctly interpreting a general ruling which carries the possibility of two different interpretations.
5. *Ashaab-ul-tarjeeh*: As in Qudoori and Sahib Hidayah, etc. They are best at putting different opinions of one ruling in their respective places. For example, they may categorize an opinion as *sahih*, the most virtuous, or the easiest upon people based on their situations.
6. *Muqalideen*: They can examine and discern the strongest or the weakest of opinions of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) on one issue. They also can distinguish which of the opinions in one ruling is *zaahir-ul-rawaayah* (the most reliable opinion of the *madhab*) and which is *naadir* (estranged opinion).
7. This category consists of *muqalideen* who do not possess any of the capabilities of the aforementioned categories. They cannot even differentiate between the more and less reliable opinion, the preferred or the rejected opinion.”

## Importance of the tools of Ijtihad

Maulana I'zaaz Ali (rah) said of the different aspects of *ijtihad*, "The technical definition of *ijtihad* is to put all one's effort by the order of the Shari'ah to reach an opinion." Then he mentions the various conditions of *ijtihad* which we have already covered. After this he says:

These are the tools of the *mujtahid*. Whoever claims to practice *ijtihad* but does not possess these tools is like the example of a person who claims he can reach the skies without any stairs. After this, it is important that this individual exerts himself in these fields of knowledge and ponders deeply on the evidence from wherein he is capable of deriving rulings. Once he is capable of deriving rulings it is important he devises *usul* by which he derives rulings from the evidence like the *usul* of Imam Shafi' and the other Imams. It is precisely these *usul* which stop people from understanding the essence of *ijtihad* because one does not obtain the skill of *ijtihad* by merely gaining mastery over the different fields of knowledge. It is most important that the skill of *ijtihad* be an innate quality and that one devises the *usul* upon which he will derive the rulings. Therefore, one cannot claim to be a *mujtahid* if he is deficient in any field of knowledge, or he gained mastery over all the fields of knowledge but does not possess the skill of *ijtihad*, or that he possessed the skill of *ijtihad* but did not devise the *usul* by which to derive rulings from the evidences. Despite his eminence, when Allama Suyuti claimed to be a *mujtahid* the scholars of his time broke ranks with him and challenged him to a debate, but he refused and withdrew his claim."

## False claims of Ijtihad

Allama Ibn Hajar Makki writes:

As soon as the contemporary scholars of Allama Suyuti learned of his claim they condemned him. They selected a set of issues for him each of which contained two opposing opinions of the *Salaf*. This was to test if he was gifted in the lowest level of *ijtihad*. As a true *mujtahid* he would be able select the most preferred of the two opinions by deriving from the evidences using the *usul* of the *mujtahideen* (i.e., the four great imams). Imam Suyuti returned the paper unanswered saying he did not have time to answer the questions.

After this Ibn Hajar Makki says, "Think about the burden one must take upon himself as a *mujtahid*, and this was only the lowest level of *ijtihad*.' This shows that whosoever lays claim to even the lowest level of *ijtihad* let alone *ijtihad mutlaq*, is a vain person, mired in self-deception, and his arms and legs are flailing about in the darkness (meaning that he does not know what he is doing).

Whosoever understands the greatness of the position of *ijtihad mutlaq* will be ashamed to attribute this to anyone in this time. In fact, Allama Ibn Salaah and his followers say the doors of *ijtihad mutlaq* have been closed for 300 years.<sup>41</sup> Ibn Salaah quotes some scholars of *usul* as saying there is no *mujtahid* after Imam Shafi' (rah). He adds that the uleme disagree as to whether Imam-ul-Haramain (Imam Juwaini Shafii') and Imam Ghazali, two illustrious and eminent scholars belong in any row of the *mujtahideen* or not. The *A'immah* (scholars) state regarding Imam Rauyani, the author of Bahr-ul-Raiq, that he was not amongst the *mujtahideen* though he often said, 'If the narrations of Imam Shafi' (rah) are lost, I can recover them by memory.' When such eminent scholars could not reach the level of *ijtihad fil madhab*, then how can one who does not even understand the writings of these scholars claim a higher level of *ijtihad*.

سبحانك هذا بهتان  
عظيم

It is narrated by Imam Rafii', "It is almost a consensus of the scholars that there are no *mujtahids* remaining today."

### **The possibility of Mujtahids in our time**

This is a long article which is worth reading. An essay written by Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman A'zami, in the magazine Al-Daai of Deoband, was published in the end of Sha'ban in 1396 A.H. which covers this subject succinctly. He says:

The *ijtihad*, which many ulama say has gone extinct, is reference to *ijtihad mutlaq*. This is plainly stated by Ibn Hajar Makki and Ibn Salaah. In fact, Ibn Salaah quotes from many scholars of *usul* that there has been no *mujtahid mutlaq* since Imam Shafi' (rah). Allama Shi'raani says, "After the four Imams none has laid claim to being *mujtahid mutlaq* except for Imam Ibn Jarir Tabari, but he has been denounced by all.

This is what is known historically. As far as whether it is realistically possible for any *mujtahid mutlaq* to be born after the four Imams, Imam Sh'irani says, "No doubt, there is a possibility

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<sup>41</sup> Ibn Salaah was a scholar from the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.H. which means that according to him *ijtihad mutlaq* had ceased from the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.H.



because Allah ﷻ is All-Powerful, and there is no evidence to prove otherwise.” Maulana Abdul Hai says,

Whosoever says no *mujtahid* can be born after the four Imams is surely mistaken. On the other hand, if he proclaims there is no such person who claimed to be a *mujtahid* who was accepted by the majority of scholars after the four Imams, then that is an undeniable reality.

*CHAPTER 5*

*RESTRICTING THE  
A'IMMAH MUJTAHIDEEN TO  
FOUR IMAMS*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Importance of the Four Imams

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi writes in his book A'qd-ul-Jeed:

Know that there are many reasons behind restricting (the ummah) to four Imams. There are many problems with following any other besides the four Imams (of Fiqh). We will prove this with evidence. Firstly, this Ummah is unanimous that we must trust the *Salaf* in understanding the Shari'ah. This is why the *tabieen* always trusted the Sahaba ﷺ just as the *taba'-tabieen*<sup>42</sup> trusted the *tabieen* in understanding the Shari'ah. Even the rationale supports this arrangement because the Shari'ah can only be learned by narration and derivation. Narration can only be authentic when it is acquired from the people who precede us. In derivation, one is dependent on knowledge of the *madhaib* of the *mutaqadimeen* (generally the scholars in the first two centuries after the hijri); this is so as to avoid splintering from them by holding an opinion that opposes the *ijma'* (upon which they were unanimous). To gain the knowledge of the earlier scholarship (of the first and second century hijri) one will take help from the people before them because the many arts, skills, and sciences such as *sarf* (Arabic morphology), *nahw* (Arabic philology), *Tibb* (traditional medicine), poetry, blacksmithing, carpentry, and dyeing do not come to someone without spending time with an expert in the field. Although it is rationally possible for one to be self-trained in any field, it is unlikely to happen.

Now when it is understood that we must rely on the sayings of the *Salaf*, it is also important that these sayings have an authentic chain of transmission, that they are compiled in reliable and dependable books, and that the ulama have written commentaries and footnotes in these books to specify and favor one meaning where many meanings exist. In

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<sup>42</sup> Those who met the *tabieen* but did not gain the companionship of the Sahaba ﷺ

some places, *aam* should be made *khaas* and *mutlaq* into *muqayyad*<sup>43</sup> and the evidence of the rulings should be derived thus.

The second proof is that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Follow the *sawad-i-azam* (the largest party)”. Thus, when every *madhab* besides the *madhaaib* of the four Imams disappeared, following the *madhab* of one of the four Imams is the *sawad-i-azam* and to part from them is to separate from the *sawad-i-azam*.

The third proof is that a long time has past and trustworthiness in people has disappeared. We certainly cannot depend on the ulama *suu*’ (wicked ulama). They would attribute false statements towards the *Salaf* whose trustworthiness and truthfulness is known. Since this transmission (through the ulama *suu*) is not dependable, we will reject whatever is narrated by them. As for the four *madhaaib*, it is necessary for us to adhere to them because their *madhaaib* are organized and systematized; their books are endorsed by the scholars and are dependable. Therefore, no one can attribute anything wrong towards them.<sup>44</sup>

Mufti Muhammad Shafi in his book Jawahir-ul-Fiqh, responds to why we only follow the four Imams (of Fiqh). Is there no other Imam who can be followed? And is following the four Imams evidenced in the Quran and Sunnah? He says:

“Restricting *taqlid*<sup>45</sup> to the four Imams was not a rational or *shari*’ choice but something which evolved over time incidentally. It was by the will of Allah ﷻ that every *madhab* besides the four *madhaaib* disappeared and became like *كأن لم يكن* (as if they never existed). Even if 10, 30, 50, or 100 rulings from their *madhab* are preserved, one cannot establish a complete *madhab* based on such a small number of rulings. If one decides to follow them in these rulings, then what are they to do in thousands of other issues in which their opinions have been \_\_\_\_\_ erased \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ time?

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<sup>43</sup> Words in the Quran are defined as *aam* and *khaas*. Then *khaas* has two branches: *mutlaq* and *muqayyad*. The benefit of these classifications is to assist derivation of legal rulings from the Quran and Sunnah.

*Aam*: The word is a general meaning that may include an infinite number of something.

*Khaas*: A word that is by design meant to be applied to a single thing, class, or genus. The main attribute of the specific word is that a limit comes to mind (Islamic Jurisprudence, p. 296).

*Mutlaq*: A derivative noun or an adjective used as a noun, for example the word murderer. This may be indeterminate because we cannot answer the question, “Which murderer?” The reason is that there are a number of murderers and we do not know which one is intended. Thus, *mutlaq* is defined as an indeterminate word.

*Muqayyad*: When the meaning of an indeterminate word is limited or determined it is called *muqayyad* (Ibid, p. 296-297).

<sup>44</sup> A’qd-ul-Jeed, p. 14

<sup>45</sup> Acceptance by one who does not possess the ability of *ijtihad* to accept the derivative juristic rulings of a *mujtahid* without asking for proof and with full faith in that he possesses the proof to support his ruling.

When every other *madhab* besides the *madhaaib* of the four imams disappeared it became clear that following our Deen would be subject to following one of the four *madhaib*. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun writes in his Muqaddama Tareekh (Introduction to History) regarding the *Zaahiria* (Literalist) *madhab*:

ثم درس مذهب اهل الظاهر اليوم بدروس ائمة و انكار الجمهور علي منتحليه و لم يبق الا  
في الكتب الجديدة

Then the *madhab* of the *Zaahiria* vanished because their Imams died out and because the *jamhoor* (majority) rejected their followers and now their names are only in the books.

Ibn Khaldun adds:

ووقف التقليد في الامصار عند هؤلاء الاربعة ودرس المقلدون بمن سواهم الخ  
“In all the different regions, only the following of the four Imams is found and the followers of all other Imams have died out and following of the four Imams is unanimous.”

When terminologies increased in the sciences, reaching the level of *ijtihad* became difficult (because of the inability to fulfill the conditions). When *ijtihad* was about to go in the hands of inept, untrustworthy people and in the hands of those who did not possess the character of Deen, the ulama declared the door of *ijtihad* closed. They informed people to follow one of the four Imams and prohibited them from conjoining *madhaaib* (because it is fickleness and *talfiq* [combining two rulings from different Imams on one issue which is prohibited]). Thus, the rulings and opinions of other Imams only survived in the books, nothing of their own Fiqh ever developed, neither were there any books that preserved all their rulings. Every follower then began practicing the *madhab* of their Imam after filtration and incorporation of the *usul* and authentication of the chain of transmission to the Imam. Then the word Fiqh, in that time, became the epitome for following only one Imam. The claim to *ijtihad*, especially in this age, is absolute nonsense and following such a person is unwarranted. The scholars of Islam are now unanimous upon following one of the four imams.

### Impermissibility of following other than the Four Imams

Sheikh Ibn Hammam writes in Fath-ul-Qadeer:

انعقد الاجماع علي عدم العمل بالمذاهب المخالفة للائمة الاربعة

The consensus is upon not following any other *madhab* except the four Imams.

Allama Ibn Hajar Makki writes in Fath-ul-Mubeen Sharh-ul-Arbaeen:

اما في زماننا فقال ائمتنا لا يجوز تقليد غير الائمة الاربعة الشافعي و مالك و ابي حنيفة و  
احمد بن حنبل

And in our time our ulama say it is not permissible to follow anyone except Imam Shafi', Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifah, and Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal.

Now, for someone to ask for proof as to why *taqlid* is restricted to four Imams only is feeble-mindedness and is like the example of a father who had many children. All the children died in childhood except for four sons who survived their father. It is obvious that any inheritance the father leaves behind will be distributed amongst the four sons only. The children who died in childhood will not receive a share of this inheritance though no one will deny that they were his children. In this case, you will never hear a person ask why the inheritance is being distributed amongst the four sons only and why the deceased children are not getting their share. In any case, should someone ask this question, we will say that this is how fate had it.

Mullah Jeevan wrote in his Tafsir A'madi:

والانصاف ان انحصار المذاهب في الاربع فضل الهي و قبولية من عند الله تعالى لا مجال  
فيها للتوجيهات والادلة

The truth is that the restriction to four Imams is nothing but the grace of Allah ﷻ and a sign of his acceptance of the four Imams. There is no place for evidence and reasoning in this matter.

*CHAPTER 6*

*TAQLID*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The reality of Taqlid

When the doors of *ijtihad* closed and all the *madhaaib* were incorporated into the *madhaaib* of the four Imams, their *taqlid* became incumbent upon the Ummah. Those who say *taqlid* is *shirk* (polytheism) do not understand the reality of *taqlid*. *Taqlid*, نَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ, is not an independent authority which stands level with the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. *Taqlid* is nothing more than acceptance of all the rulings the *mujtahideen* derived from the Quran, the Prophetic ahadith, and the sayings of the Sahaba ؓ. This is because the definition of *taqlid* is given as,

Acceptance by one who does not possess the ability of *ijtihad* to accept the derivative juristic rulings of a *mujtahid* without asking for proof and with full faith in that he possesses the proof to support his ruling.

In Abu Dawud, Jabir ؓ narrates:

“Once we went on a journey. A stone hit and injured one of the men on his head. Shortly after, the obligatory *ghusl* (bath) became *fardh* (obligatory) on him. He asked his friends (i.e., the Sahaba ؓ), ‘Am I allowed to perform *tayammum*<sup>46</sup>?’ They replied, ‘No, you cannot perform *tayammum* when water is available.’ He then performed *ghusl* and died shortly thereafter. After they returned from the journey, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was notified about the incident. He said:

قَتَلُوهُ قَتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ

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<sup>46</sup> A ritual purification of the body using elements of the earth, such as dirt, sand, etc., which substitutes for ablution and *ghusl*.



‘They killed him, may Allah kill them.’

When they did not know the ruling why did they not ask a scholar since asking is the *shifa* (cure) of an incompetent person?”

These people derived their opinion from the apparent meaning of the ayah, فلم تجدوا ماء, “and you did not find water,” even though, as previously mentioned, there are many conditions for *ijtihad*. This is why Shaikh-ul-Islam Allama Ibn Taimiyah says in his Fatawa<sup>47</sup>:

The opinion of the *jamhoor* of the Ummah is that *ijtihad* and *taqlid* are both permissible, *ijtihad* for the one who has the ability to do so and *taqlid* for the one incapable of *ijtihad*.

In another place he writes:

It is permissible for a person to follow a specific Imam when he is unable to gather information about the Shari’ah from any other source. If it is possible to gain knowledge of the Shari’ah through other means then it is not *wajib* upon him to follow the *madhab* of that Imam.

Allama Abul Walid Baji Maliki, the commentator of the Muwatta writes in Kitab-ul-Hudood fil Usool<sup>48</sup>:

*Taqlid* means to accept the one you are following without asking for proof even after one learns the proof. This is mandatory upon a person who is incapable of *ijtihad*.

Maulana Gangohi writes in one of his writings<sup>49</sup> which Mufti Shafi reproduced in his book Jawaahir-ul-Fiqh:

You say: *taqlid* of a specific Imam is a *bid’a sayiah* (evil innovation). I say: according to you *taqlid* of a specific Imam is permissible and you have admitted to this yourself. It is only that you do not understand the meaning of ‘permissibility.’ Listen for a minute, you just rejected

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<sup>47</sup> Fatawa 20/203

<sup>48</sup> Kitab-ul-Hudood fil Usool, p. 64

<sup>49</sup> This is a letter written in response to someone who wrote Maulana Gangohi claiming *taqlid shakhsi* was a *bida’* and that the most we could say is that it is permissible; he also added that *taqlid mutlaq* was *fardh*.

the textual and rational evidences of *taqlid* (by pronouncing that *taqlid* of a specific Imam is *bid'a sayiah*). *Taqlid* by nature (i.e., *taqlid mutlaq* means to follow and does not circumscribe one to a specific Imam), is mandated by the ayah:

فاسئلوا اهل الذكر ان كنتم تعلمون  
Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.<sup>50</sup>

And the hadith:

إنما شفاء العي السؤال  
Verily the cure of an incompetent (that is: not having the necessary means or skill or know-how) person is in asking<sup>51</sup>.

It is also clear that Deen cannot be attained without learning; it is not something acquired by the senses or the intellect. Therefore, *taqlid mutlaq* is itself mandatory (for one who does not possess the ability of *ijtihad*). Surely you will accept this much but if you do not, than I shall prove it in another way:

*Ijtihad mutlaq* is of two kinds:

1. *taqlid shakhsi* (of a specific person)
2. *taqlid ghair shakhsi* (of any person)

Both of these originate from the same root (i.e., *ijtihad mutlaq*) regardless of how you word it. You may call it a root and its two branches, *mutlaq* and two *muqayyads*, or one whole and its two parts; put it however you wish. Anyhow, both of the two *muqayyads* are subordinate to *ijtihad mutlaq*, which is mandatory. Now I ask you, how a part or branch of something which is mandatory can be itself a *mubah* (permissible). O servant of Allah ﷺ (said in incredulity), *fardh*<sup>52</sup> and *mubah* are two parallel branches from the root of *hukm* (commandment), then how can one branch of *mubah* simultaneously be a part or

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<sup>50</sup> 21: 7

<sup>51</sup> Bayhaqi 1/227, Dar-i-Qutni 1/189, Abu Dawud 1/93

<sup>52</sup> *Fardh* singular of *faraidh*: Obligatory practices of Deen. *Wajib*: similar to the *fardh* except that its rejector is not declared a kafir..

*Sunnan muakaddah*: The Sunnahs which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ practiced perpetually.

**branch of its parallel** (meaning *fardh*). Think for a minute, *taqlid mutlaq* is *fardh* and *taqlid shakhsi mubah*, though *taqlid shakhsi* is a part of *taqlid mutlaq*. Therefore, the discrepancy in your thinking is all based on this one misunderstanding. Now use your head. Both types of *taqlid* are *fardh*. There is no *mubah* except between the option of choosing between *taqlid shakhsi* and *taqlid ghair shakhsi*. If you take one there is no need for the other, but should you leave both you are sinful. The option of choosing between one of the two is figuratively called *mubah* not that *taqlid shakhsi* itself is *mubah*. The example of this is like expiation for one who breaks his *halaf* (swearing by the name of Allah ﷻ to something). Expiation for breaking the *halaf* is itself *fardh*, but one is permitted to expiate for it by feeding the poor or clothing them or freeing a slave. It is *mubah* for him to do any one of the three, but to refuse to do any one of them is a sin. Likewise is the case with all the general principles of the Shari'ah. All that the Shari'ah regulates as *mutlaq* (a general order) are *fardh*. The *ibahat* (permissibility) is only between the option of choosing one of its many parts. It is not the contradiction you assumed by declaring *taqlid shakhsi* as *mubah* when it is *wajib*. If this is the case, then by the same token that *shakhsi* is *mubah*, those who say *shakhsi* is *wajib* will respond that *ghair shakhsi* should be a *bid'a sayiah*. This is because *ghair shakhsi* is in the same meaning as *shakhsi* in being *mubah* since they both are branches of the same root.

### Why even the great Ulema follow Taqlid

The letter is lengthy but worth reading. Mufti Shafi similarly reproduced a letter of Maulana Qasim Naunutwi who wrote:

“Listen to this important point on *taqlid*. Undoubtedly, there is only one Deen of Islam and all four *madhaaib* are on the truth. Ayurvedic and modern medicine are all the same essentially. The ayurvedic doctor diagnoses and prescribes treatments like the modern physician. When both diagnose a disease and prescribe different treatments, the only treatment taken at the time depends on who is in charge of the patient. At that time, nobody takes the opinion of the other be it the ayurvedic doctor or the modern physician. Likewise, in general matters or at the time of disagreement between the *madhaaib*, the *muqallid* will follow his *mujtahid* whoever it may be. Yes, it sometimes happens that we leave one physician and go to another for treatment, but then we adhere to whatever treatments the new physician prescribes for us. Likewise, sometimes in the past, some of our *Salaf* left their *madhab* for some reason and took to another. After changing their *madhab*, they stayed with that *madhab*. They never took one opinion from here and another from there as if cooking up their own fifth *madhab*. Imam Tahawi, an eminent jurist and *muhaddith*, was previously a Shafi' then became a Hanafi. However, without *taqlid* there is no way out. This is why millions of *muhadditheen* and scholars were *muqallid*. Take the

example of Imam Tirmizi who was a great scholar, jurist, and *muhaddith*. He is also the author of the renowned hadith collection, Tirmizi. Despite this, he was a *muqallid* and if you do not believe me read his hadith book, Tirmizi. When such illustrious scholars were *muqallid* (Imam Tirmizi was a *muqallid* of Imam Shafi (rah); Imam Abu Yusuf (rah) and Imam Muhammad (rah) were *muqallid* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah)) then which scholar of our time can be independent of *taqlid*? And what difference does it make anyhow if one of the previous illustrious scholars did not do *taqlid* of one of the Imams? Who looks at one or two people when millions are doing *taqlid*? If you ask anyone with any understanding you will be told that the correct way of doing things is to follow the practice established in our Ummah since the *Salaf*. Furthermore, it is foolish for us to allow ourselves to switch between the *madhab* because a few scholars did so in the past. It is like the example of a sick ignorant person who observes a physician diagnosing and treating his own ailment. Suddenly he gets the bright idea that he should do the same. After all, if the physician can diagnose himself then why can't he do it too and save himself a trip to the doctor? Would you call this person smart or foolish? Similarly, if a *ghair muqallid*, an ignoramus, rejects *taqlid* on the basis that some scholar in the past did his own *ijtihad*, would you not say, regardless of whether he truly possesses knowledge or not, that he has no common sense in matters of Deen. And forget the ignorant ones, believe me, even the scholars of today, most if not all are completely ignorant. In fact, some of these scholars are more ignorant than the ignorant. With two Urdu books under their arms, they go around giving speeches without possessing an iota of knowledge. Knowledge of Deen is when one can teach any subject of Deen to the students of Deen.”<sup>53</sup>

Amongst many of the letters of Shaikh Hussain Ahmad Madani<sup>54</sup> is a long letter written in response to the former *amir* of *Jamaat-I-Islami* in India, Maulvi Abul Laith. He writes:

Maulana Muhammad Hussain Bataalwi was one of the fieriest leaders of the *ghair muqallideen*. He was a staunch anti-*taqlid* campaigner and of the foremost propagators of this movement in India at the time. He (Maulana Bataalwi) writes in his magazine Ishaa't-ul-Sunnah (v.2: p. 20, 51-53):

‘After 53 years of experience, I learned this much: those who ignorantly renounce following a *mujtahid mutlaq* and belief in *taqlid mutlaq* eventually say *salaam* (farewell) to

<sup>53</sup> Jawahir-ul-Fiqh 1/135

<sup>54</sup> Makateeb Shaikh Hussain Madani, p. 416

Islam. Some of them convert to Christianity while others renounce all religions and become independent of any religion or belief. The lowest level of this renunciation is rejection of and deviation from the rulings of Shari'ah, some of these heretics go as far to reject *jumu'ah*, *jama'at*, *salah*, and fasting. They do not save themselves from alcohol and usury. Some of them avoid open confrontation with the Deen for some worldly reason but are still quietly engaged in it. They entrap women, wedding them illegitimately, and usurping people's wealth through impermissible means, hold up the wealth owed to Allah ﷻ and violate His rights. There are other ways of inviting *kufr*, apostasy, and heresy, but the most effective way of removing Deen, from the people who are ignorant of Deen, is the rejection of *taqlid*.<sup>55</sup>

This excerpt of Maulana Muhammad Hussain Bataalwi's words taken by Shaikh Hussain Ahmad Madani shows what Shaikh learned after many years of experience. In another book entitled Sawanih Qasimi, another incident is written about him that Maulana Hussain Ahmed Bataalwi wrote a letter to Maulana Qasim Naunutwi saying, "I need to talk to you privately about some important matters, but under the condition that none of your students will be with you when we talk." Maulana Naunutwi accepted and replied, "Please do come." Therefore Maulana Bataalwi came to Maulana Naunutwi, the door of the room was closed, and the conversation began.

Maulana Naunutwi said to Maulana Bataalwi,

Whatever you say, be aware of two things. First, you will narrate the *madhab* of the Hanafis in whatever issue is discussed while presenting the proofs will be my responsibility. Second, I am a *muqallid* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) so whatever statement you raise against me should be that of Imam Abu Hanifah's (rah) only. You will not disprove me by issuing forth something written in Shami<sup>55</sup> or that the author of Durr-I-Mukhtar said this and that because I am not their *muqallid*.

Thereafter, many controversial issues of *rafa yadain* (raising the hands after *ruku'*), *fatihah khalf al-imam* (reciting *fatihah* behind the imam in a *jahri salah*), *ameen bil jahr* (saying *ameen* aloud), and other issues were discussed. As per instruction, Maulana Bataalwi would narrate the ruling of the Hanafi *madhab* on the issue and Maulana Naunutwi presented the evidence from the Quran and Sunnah. During the course of this private talk, whenever Maulana Naunutwi presented his arguments and evidences Maulana Bataalwi would become ecstatic, frequently crying out, 'Subhanallah, Subhanallah' and almost stand up in wonderment. When the talk finished, he let it

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<sup>55</sup> A shorter appellation for the famous text of the Hanafi *madhab*, Radd-ul-Mukhtar

slip, “I am amazed that a person like yourself and then a *muqallid!*” Meaning that with all this knowledge, insight, and ability to derive from the Quran and Sunnah how can you be a *muqallid*. Maulana Naunutwi replied, “And I am amazed that a person like yourself and a *ghair muqallid*.” I also heard this same incident from some elders. They said that at the end of their talk, Maulana Naunutwi said to Maulana Bataalwi, “Your saying what you just said about me while I am a *muqallid* is reasonable proof of the importance of *taqlid*.”

One of my classmates who graduated from Mazahirul-Uloom<sup>56</sup> and was later employed as a librarian in the madrasa library but left because of the low salary, went to work in Aligarh for a Ph.D doctor who was a *ghair muqallid*. He sent me a letter three or four days after being hired, explaining how he was enjoying it in Aligarh and said that the salary was decent. He also said:

“He (i.e., the doctor) is very good; he loves me and always calls me to eat dinner with him. Since I have arrived though, I have a big burden on my head. When he prays and rises from *ruku*, he raises his hands in *rafa yadain* and keeps it frozen in that position until he is in *sajdah* (prostration). He never falls because he is used to it, but whenever I try it out I fall on my face. When I tell him that Maulana Thanauallah Panipati and Maulana Nazir Hussain<sup>57</sup> wrote in their *fatawa* that one should drop his hands after *rafa yadain* he exclaims, ‘Am I a *muqallid* of Maulana Nazir and Maulana Panipati? If I wanted to do *taqlid* why shouldn’t I have just followed Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) who was greater in his knowledge, his deeds, and his *taqwa* than them?’ Could you kindly send me a hadith that proves that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ dropped his hands immediately after *rafa yadain* before going into *sajdah*? I am in a very difficult position.”

At the time I was teaching a whole session on ahadith. At the moment neither do I have the letter nor do I remember the whole incident, but I do remember sending some ahadith of Abu Humaid Sa’adi ؓ from Bukhari. In the hadith the Sahabi describes the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in *qauma* (standing briefly after *ruku*):

فاذا رفع راسه استوي حتي يعود كل فقار مكانه

**When he stood up he would stand straight until every limb of his body was in its proper place.**

This can only be true if the Blessed Prophet ﷺ dropped his hands after *rafa yadain*.

<sup>56</sup> A madrasa in Saharanpur, India

<sup>57</sup> Two famous *ghair muqallid* scholars

## CHAPTER 7

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*



الحمدُ لله رب العالمين  
والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The madhab of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah)

The *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah), the most prevalent *madhab* in the Indian subcontinent, spread through the first Muslim conquerors who were Hanafis. Therefore, the Hanafi *madhab* spread wherever Islam spread throughout the land. There are many other reasons why the Hanafi *madhab* flourished in the subcontinent which I have mentioned in the introduction to my book, Aujazul Masaalik. One of these reasons being that of all the Imams, the period of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) was closest to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ (as is previously mentioned in the essay about the birthdates of the four Imams and many of the *muhadditheen*). He was born in 80 A.H., the same century in which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ lived.

In Bukhari, the ahadith of *thalaathiyaat* (plural of *thalathi*) are the most authentic and famous of all ahadith and many books have been authored on them. *Thalathi* is a hadith in which only three narrators exist between the *muhaddith* and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. One is the teacher of the *muhaddith*, then a *tabie'* (singular of *tabieen*), and lastly a sahabi. According to the Hanafis, Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) was a *tabie'* therefore only a sahabi came in between him and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ; and it is said of the Sahaba (عدول) (عَدُول) (All the Sahaba were righteous'). Those who consider Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) a *taba'-tabie'* (singular for *taba'-tabieen*) say the Hanafi *madhab* is a *thanai'*,<sup>58</sup> the first one being a sahabi (وهم كلهم عدول) and the second a *tabie'* who is also the teacher of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah)); and a student is more informed about his teacher than anyone else. Therefore, to accuse the Hanafi *madhab* of weakness is a fair sign of incompetence in the science of hadith. One cannot fault narrations in evidence of the Hanafi *madhab* if a weak narrator is found in the third or fourth level down the chain of transmission. For this reason Shaikh-ul-Islam Allama Ibn Taimiyah writes in his Fatawa<sup>59</sup>:

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<sup>58</sup> Two people between the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and Imam Abu Hanifah (rah).

<sup>59</sup> Fatawa Ibn Taimiyah 20/239

“The Imams who came before the collection of ahadith books knew the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ more than the *mutakhireen*. This was because many of the ahadith, which reached them and were authentic in their opinion, often times reached us with a broken chain of transmission or through an unknown narrator. At that time, their hearts carried a larger number of ahadith and *uloom* (sciences) than are collected in the books of ahadith.

Another notable point is that Imam Bukhari (rah) compiled 23 *thalaathiyaat* ahadith. Twenty of them consist of students or students of the students of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah). Eleven ahadith are narrations by Makki bin Ibrahim who was a student of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah). It is known that once he narrated a hadith saying ‘حدثنا أبو حنيفة’ (‘Abu Hanifah (rah) narrated to us’). Someone from the crowd shouted, “We do not want to hear the hadith of Abu Hanifah (rah), narrate the hadith of Ibn Juraij.” He replied, “I do not narrate my ahadith to idiots and it is *haram* (forbidden) upon you to write any of my narrations.” After this, he refused to narrate another hadith until the objector was expelled from the gathering.

Six ahadith are by Abu Asim Al Nabeel Dhahaaq bin Mukhlid who also was a student of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah). Three ahadith are by Muhammad bin Abdullah Ansari who was a student of Imam Zufar and also Imam Abu Yusuf (rah). Two narrators remain. I was not able to determine whether they were students of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) or not.

It is narrated in the introduction of Aujaz that Imam Shi’rani said that whatever ahadith Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) brought in support of his *madhab* were taken from the greatest *Tabieen* of his time. It is unimaginable for anyone of them to be *mutaham bil kizb* (i.e., suspected of lying regarding the ahadith) and if someone finds *dhu’f* (weakness) in the evidence of the Hanafi *madhab*, it is because of the *dhu’f* in narrators after them. Therefore, the *dhu’f* has no effect on the narrations which Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) chose in support of his *madhab*.

In Aujaz, we explained the *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) in detail. In the ninth note it was explained that the *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) was based on strong *usul* (principles). The following article is taken from the work of Ibn Hajar Shafi’. He said,

“It is essential that you are not deceived regarding the term scholars sometimes use about Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) and his companions being *ashaab-ul-raai*<sup>60</sup> (i.e., scholars of opinion in juridical issues). Do not be fooled into thinking that Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) favored his own opinion over the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ or the sayings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ because he has been exculpated from any such accusation. This is because it is understood from different sources that Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) first took from the Quran and then looked in the ahadith. Then if nothing was to be found in the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ he would look in the sayings of the Sahaba ؓ. If the Sahaba ؓ disagreed on an issue he took the opinion which was closest to the Quran and Sunnah, and would never overlook the sayings of the Sahaba ؓ. When an answer could not be found in the sayings of the Sahaba ؓ he would perform his own *ijtihad*. Like other *Tabieen* of his time, he would not follow his contemporaries but resorted to *ijtihad* in the final analysis.

Imam Abdullah bin Mubarak said that Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) said,

We first take a hadith when it is available otherwise we look into the sayings of the Sahaba ؓ, but never go beyond that. If we find the opinions of the *Tabieen* then I will compete with them.

It is also narrated that he said, “It is surprising that people say my fatwa is a product of my own opinion even though I derive my fataawa from the ahadith.”

He also said,

It is not permissible for anyone to say anything from his own opinion when a ruling is to be found in the Quran. The same is true when a hadith is available on an issue. Likewise, if the Sahaba ؓ agreed on anything, it is not permissible to form a different opinion on that issue. It is only when the Sahaba ؓ were in disagreement that we will choose from their opinions whichever is closer to the Quran and Sunnah.

Somebody once said to Imam Abu Hanifah (rah), “Stop using *Qiyas* (analogical reasoning), Satan was the first to rationalize!” Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) turned towards him and said,

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<sup>60</sup> It is often used derogatorily in contrast to *ashaab-ul-hadith* (the People of ahadith) implying a loose membership of scholars with faint knowledge of the science of hadith and related subjects.

O so-and-so, your argument is irrational because Satan rationalized to reject the order of Allah ﷻ and became a *kafir*. My rationalization is to follow the commandments of Allah ﷻ. This is because my *Qiyas* is based on the Quran, the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, the Sahaba ؓ and *Tabieen*. Thus, we are adherents of the Quran and Sunnah, how then can we be equal to the accursed Satan?

The man replied, “I was mistaken, I repent to Allah ﷻ. May Allah ﷻ enlighten your heart as you enlightened mine.”

## False Accusations

Ibn Hajar Makki said,

The accusation against the Hanafis that they oppose the authentic ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ without any proof is because the accusers did not research the *usul* and principles of the Hanafi *madhab*.

He elaborated on the *usul* of the Hanafi *madhab* as has been quoted in the introduction of Aujaz, saying:

One of the many *usul* of the Hanafi *madhab* is that a *khabr wahid*<sup>61</sup> will not be accepted if it contradicts an agreed upon injunction. Also, a narration will be considered abrogated if the narrator’s own practice is against it. Likewise, a narration will be rejected if a narrator narrates something exceptional and out-of-the-ordinary which has not been narrated by any of his contemporaries. Another *asl* (singular of *usul*) is that a ruling against a criminal will be overturned if a *khabr wahid* raises any doubt about the ruling. This is because the Hanafis do not accept *shubah* (doubt) in matters of *hudood kaffaaraat* (criminal ordinance). Another *asl* is that a *khabr wahid* will be considered abrogated if the Sahaba ؓ disagreed upon an issue and ignored the *khabr wahid* in that matter. Also, a *khabr wahid* hadith will be rejected if it contradicts the apparent meaning of an ayah of the Quran; this is because the Quran is

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<sup>61</sup> *Khabr wahid* is a hadith with one chain of transmission which does not deny the possibility of the hadith being authentic. If every narrator in the chain of transmission is trusted the hadith is generally authenticated by scholars. Therefore, authenticity of a hadith does not negate it being a *khabr wahid* and likewise vice versa. This hadith is of a lower level than other *sahih* ahadith with various chains of transmission.

definitive while the *khaibr wahid* is presumptive and it is mandatory to choose the stronger evidence over the weaker one. Another *asl* is that a *khabr wahid* is rejected if it opposes a known Sunnah.

These *usul* vindicate Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) from the false accusations (that he threw out *khabr wahid* without justifiable reason) which rose against him from the hearts of jealous men and from those ignorant of his *usul* and of the concept of *ijtihad*. This also clarifies that Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) never ignored a hadith until he found evidence stronger than it.

Allama Ibn Hazam Zaahiri says,

All the Hanafis are unanimous that the *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) is that a weak hadith is more preferable than any opinion.

It is narrated that Allama Shi'rani said:

Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) was the most *mutaqqi* (God-fearing), the most scholarly, the most pious, the most careful in matters of Deen, and the furthest of all people from interjecting his own opinion in Deen. He would never decide an issue until he gathered all his companions in one group, and when they were unanimous that it fell according to the rules and *usul* of the Hanafi *madhab* he would say to Imam Abu Yusuf (rah), 'Write this issue in this and this chapter.'

It has been mentioned in Aujaz, that whenever an issue was raised before him, he would ask his companions in a gathering, "What ahadith do you have in this matter?" When everybody had narrated whatever they knew and Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) narrated whatever he knew, he would take the opinion with the most narrations. In the introduction of Aujaz, I wrote at length on the various accusations leveled against Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) and their answers. The *usul* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) that *khabr wahid* should not oppose the apparent meaning of an ayah or a known Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ is actually taken from the words of Omar ؓ regarding the divorce of Fatima bint Qais ؓ. Fatima bint Qais ؓ complained to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ that her husband divorced her. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ ordered that she would neither receive *sukna*<sup>62</sup> nor *nafqa*<sup>63</sup> Omar ؓ said,

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<sup>62</sup> To stay in her husband's home while completing her *i'ddah*.

We cannot ignore the injunctions of the Quran and Sunnah because of one woman. Who knows whether she still remembers or has forgotten what he told her.

According to some narrations, he said, “Maybe she is getting *wahm* (superstitious).”<sup>64</sup>

### If the hadith is authentic it is my *madhab*

This is a famous quote from the four Imams which has been narrated with different wordings. Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani in his book Fathul Bari, elaborates on this under the chapter of “Raising both the Hands When Standing from *ruku*’.” He narrates a quote from Ibn Daqeeq-ul-E’ed who said, “According to the *usul* of Imam Shafi’ (rah) raising the hands<sup>65</sup> should be desirable.” Hafiz comments on Ibn Daqeeq-ul-E’ed statement by saying,

As far as the statement that this ‘Should be the *madhab* of Imam Shafi’ (rah) because Imam Shafi’ (rah) said, ‘When a *hadith* is authentic, it is my *madhab*’ is objectionable.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar continues,

The reason for objection is that we can only practice upon this statement of Imam Shafi’ (rah) when it is known that the hadith did not reach him. But if it did and he did not accept it or made some interpretation to it, then we cannot accept this statement.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani spoke the truth.

Imam Malik (rah) narrates in his book, Muwatta, the narration of Ibn Omar رضي الله عنه that when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ raised himself from *ruku*’, he would perform *rafa yadain*. In Mudawwana, Imam Malik (rah) is famously quoted as saying that according to him *rafa yadain* is weak in salah except in *takbir tahreemah*<sup>66</sup>. Also he said, “I do not find *rafa yadain* anywhere else except in *takbir tahreemah*.” I have expounded upon this issue in Aujaz.

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<sup>63</sup>Expenditure paid by husband during the wife’s *i’ddah*. The narration of Fatima bint Qais رضي الله عنها contradicts numerous authentic narrations which state that a divorced women will receive *sukna* and *nafqa*.

<sup>64</sup> Bazlul Majhood 3/322

<sup>65</sup> After standing from the first *qa’da*

<sup>66</sup> *Takbir tahreemah*- the first *takbir* by which one enters into salah.

In Bazlul Majhood<sup>67</sup>, many ahadith are narrated about executing a thief who steals repeatedly under the chapter of “Thief Who Steals Repeatedly,” It is further narrated by Ibn Qayyim that Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) was asked, “Why did you reject these ahadith?” He replied,

Because of the hadith of Uthman ؓ who narrated from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ that a Muslim can only execute for three reasons and stealing is not mentioned amongst them.

There is a lengthy discussion on this subject in Bazlul Majhood. The only thing I want to mention is that Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) was aware of the ahadith of ‘executing a thief who steals repeatedly’, but himself did not act upon it. In the ruling on water, the *madhab* of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) is on *qillatain*<sup>68</sup> though Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) authenticates the *hadith* of Bi’r Budha’a (which is against his *madhab* of *qillatain*) as mentioned in Al-Mughni<sup>69</sup>. Therefore, whatever Hafiz Ibn Hajar said about the statement of Imam Shafi’ (rah) was accurate.

Shaikh-ul-Islam Hafiz Ibn Taimiyah in his booklet Rafu’ Al-Malaan, gives ten reasons why the Imams do not accept a hadith. One of them being that the hadith reached the Imam, but it was not authenticated by him or that he implemented certain conditions for a *khabr wahid* hadith which this hadith did not fulfill. Another reason is that he received the hadith, but he interpreted it to remove a contradiction between this and another hadith. After narrating the ten reasons, Allama Ibn Taimiyah says:

These are self-evident reasons for not taking a hadith. There is a possibility that a scholar had another reason which we are unaware of because the sea of knowledge is very deep and we cannot grasp all the secrets that are hidden in the hearts of these scholars. Sometimes the scholar may reveal his proof while at other times he may not. Sometimes he reveals it, but sometimes it reaches us and at other times it does not. Even if it does reach us sometimes we

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<sup>67</sup> Bazlul Majhood 5/137

<sup>68</sup> The *Salaf* agreed that if impurity falls in a small body of water, the water becomes impure. But the definition of a large and small body of water is disagreed upon amongst the *A’immah*:

- Imam Abu Hanifah (rah)- Any amount of water in which movement from one side does not cause movement on the other.
- Imam Shafi’ (rah) and Imam Ahmad (rah)- Any amount of water more than *qillatain* (two large containers the size of which is in disagreement within the Shafi’ *madhab*)

The Hadith of Bi’r Budha’a is authenticated by Imam Ahmad though it opposes his (and Imam Shafi’s) *madhab*. Therefore, the concept that we must act upon a hadith because it is authentic is a false notion and those who propagate this ‘*madhab*’ are rejectors of the *Salaf*. Rather, there are many things we must consider before acting upon a hadith and it is for this reason we follow a specific *madhab*.

<sup>69</sup> Al-Mughni 1/25

are able to figure the method of deriving evidence while at other times we are not; and this is regardless of whether the proof is correct or incorrect. This is something that can only be disclosed to one who is erudite in the hadith as in the four Imams. Many authentic and clear ahadith reached them, but because of strong proofs they did not take them. There are many authentic narrations on *rafa yadain*, but neither the four Imams nor the majority of *muhadditheen* took them.

The issue of *rafa yadain* is mentioned in Aujaz.

## Reminder

One important point worth remembering is that a *muqallid* of any *mujtahid* is not allowed to disrespect any *muhaddith* on the basis that his opinion opposes the opinion of their own Imam. In fact, there should be no feeling of disrespect whatsoever in the heart for them. Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah dedicated a whole booklet, entitled Rafu' Al-Malaam a'n Ai'matil A'laam, on this matter which is important and worth reading. This booklet is available separately and is also appended to his collection of fataawa. In this booklet, he says it is incumbent upon all Muslims to befriend the *mumineen* as they do Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ since it is the order of Allah ﷻ in the Quran. This is especially regarding the ulama of Islam who are the inheritors of the Prophets of Allah ﷻ and who are like the stars in the sky. It is the stars that guide us in the darkness of the night when it descends on the land and the seas. The Ummah is unanimous in agreeing upon their insight and their guidance.

Of the ummah, the ulama of the Muslims are the most excellent because they are *khulafah* of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and revivers of the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The Book of Allah ﷻ is alive through them and they are given life by it. It should be understood that none amongst the accepted *A'immah* wantonly rejected the ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. This is because they are all unanimous that adherence to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ is obligatory, and the statement of every man can be accepted or rejected, but none can reject the ahadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. If the opinion of any scholar contradicts a hadith, there is certainly a reason behind it. (End of quote)

After this, Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah narrates ten reasons why the *A'immah* did not accept a hadith. After this, he says these are only the apparent reasons; there may be many other reasons we have no information about. In this booklet, he specifically rebuts those who are critical of the *A'immah*. He also writes that a *mujtahid* receives one *ajar* (reward) when he is mistaken in his *ijtihad* and his mistake is also forgiven. If he is correct in his *ijtihad* his *ajar* is doubled. If he is not among the people of knowledge and does *ijtihad*, he will be sinful. This is like the example of the hadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ about the man who received a head



injury and asked if he could perform *tayammum*. He was told that he must perform *ghusl*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to them, “They killed him, may Allah kill them.”

Furthermore, there is a long discourse in the fataawa of Ibn Taimiyah in response to the question that, ‘Is Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani among the loftiest of the *auliya-allah* (friends of Allah) and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) the greatest of the Imams?’ This article is also worth reading. In this article, Allama Ibn Taimiyah writes that one who believes that *taqlid* of Imam Shafi’ (rah) is the most virtuous should not criticize those who believe that *taqlid* of Imam Malik (rah) is the most virtuous. Likewise those who believe that *taqlid* of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (rah) is the most virtuous should not criticize those who believe *taqlid* of Imam Shafi’ (rah) is the most virtuous. Therefore, it is important for one to be cautious in *taqlid* of the Imam he believes to be closest to the truth and also for the *mujtahid* when he follows what he believes to be the closest to the truth. The most important thing is to never follow your *nafs* (ego) and to never speak on an issue without prior knowledge of it. (End of quote)

Shaikh-ul-Islam Hafiz bin Taimiyah (rah) also wrote that those who accuse Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) and other Imams of deliberately taking *qiyas* over the authentic ahadith are being antipathetic towards the Imams because they are only speaking from conjecture and desire. Take the example of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah). They say that on many occasions he inclined towards *Qiyas* over authentic hadith. Then Allama Ibn Taimiyah narrates examples of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) taking authentic ahadith over *qiyas*.

In Tazkirat-ul-Rashid, Maulana Ashiq Ilahi Merathi elucidates the hadith sessions of Qutb-ul-irshad Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi and says Maulana Gangohi would say, “I have a special place in my heart for the *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) and am at peace about its being on *haqq* (the truth).” Despite this love and affection for the *madhab* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah), it was unthinkable of him to disrespect another *madhab* or the Imam of another *madhab*. If he ever saw any one of his students inclined towards spurning another *madhab*, he would correct him both verbally and practically. Even in *taqlid* itself he disliked the rise of sectarianism and discrimination. If he felt some students being biased towards the *muhadditheen*, he would change the direction and pattern of his speech. When any of the students raised an objection or he heard any of them make a cutting remark his look would change, and during the session of hadith he might begin narrating the evidences supporting the opinion of Imam Bukhari. In that case, he would completely ignore the evidences in support of the opinion of the Hanafi *madhab*. This was in order to inculcate love and respect in the students for the *muhadditheen*.

In Aap Beti<sup>70</sup> (i.e., the autobiography of Shaikh-ul-Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya Kandhelwi), a story is mentioned with reference from Hakim-ul-Ummah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi's book Idhaafaat Yaumia, that one Maulvi sat in Maulana Gangohi's session. After hearing Maulana's speech, he became zealous and cried out, "Maulana, in your session even a hadith becomes Hanafi. If Imam Shafi' (rah) was alive he would have no response." Maulana became angry and said,

What are you saying? If Imam Shafi' (rah) was alive you think I would have the courage to speak? If he was here at this moment I would not dare speak in front of him. In fact, I would become his *muqallid* and would reject the *taqlid* of Imam Abu Hanifah (rah) because it is not permissible to follow a deceased *mujtahid* when another *mujtahid* is alive.

In the response of Maulana Gangohi I remember this much more from what I heard from the elders that Hadhrat said, "Before Imam Shafi' (rah), my speech is like a childish objection."

### The basic Ten Etiquettes

During my studies in Mazahirul-Uloom, classes would usually begin on a Wednesday. When I taught, I would also begin on a Wednesday and continue talking until the next Wednesday on the *muqaddamatul-ilm* (Introduction to Knowledge), *muqaddamatul-kitab* (Introduction to the Book), and other miscellaneous topics. At the very end, my last topic of discussion was the basic etiquettes required of every student during his studies. I would emphasise ten basic *adaab*. I was young at the time and as the hadith says,

الشباب شعبة من الجنون  
Youth is one part of insanity,

I was strong and full of energy. After explaining and emphasising the ten basic etiquettes in the beginning of the year, if I saw any student violating them, I would get up from class, slap him, and return to my seat. The students who learned the basic ten etiquettes understood what was happening, but if a guest or students from another class (who came in large numbers to attend my class) saw me slapping a student and walking calmly back to my seat without uttering

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<sup>70</sup> *Idhaafaat Yaumia* pg. 439

a word, they would be confused and would later ask the students what was going on. The students would say, “He probably slept or leaned his elbow on the book.” The other etiquettes are:

1. Sincerity of intention.
2. Regular attendance in class: One could see my attendance register from those days that none of the students, for many years, had a *ghain* (abbreviation of *ghaaib* or absence) after their name.
3. Sitting in a straight line in class: Students should sit with respect in a straight line.
4. To avoid sleeping in class.
5. To avoid leaning on a book.
6. To be careful not to miss any hadith. For this reason, truancy was a major sin in my class.
7. One of my habits was that if a hadith, for example in the chapter of *hudood*, contained a profane word, I would translate it exactly the same in Urdu. The only condition was that no student was allowed to laugh. Then I would expound upon it. This is because it was always in my mind that the Urdu word was an exact translation of the Arabic, the way it was spoken by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ. Should I consider my own dirty and impure tongue to be above the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr Siddique’s ؓ? When they did not hesitate to say it then how could I, thinking it offensive, avoid translating it? For example, when words like ‘انكتها’ and ‘امصص بظر اللات’ came in the hadith, I would translate them exactly the same in Urdu but, again, under the condition that no student laughed.
8. Granting the full respect that scholars of Fiqh deserve, that is, to never raise an objection against them, to never utter disrespectful or derogatory remarks about them, and most importantly to never keep anything in the heart against them. Some people, in their defense of the Hanafi *madhab*, debase the scholars and some idiots go as far as to criticize the *muhadditheen*. This is something I have no patience for.
9. To not feign respect, but truly carry it in the heart for the teacher, otherwise one will be deprived of knowledge.
10. Do not raise objections against the *muhadditheen*.

I enumerated these briefly. Shahid published my lectures on Bukhari which include more details on the etiquettes of the student. Also, it is narrated in Aap Beti in more detail. Among the etiquettes, one of them is related to clothing and appearance. Therefore, I put a lot of emphasis on the beard in this particular etiquette. Anyone with a trimmed beard could not enter my class and study hadith from me. There was one Maulvi, who trimmed his beard and was registered to attend my hadith classes. The madrasa administration did not notice, but I told him that I had deleted his name from the list of students in my Abu Dawud class. In the first exam, his name appeared on the register of every teacher except in the Abu Dawud class.

The dean thought it had probably been erased absentmindedly. He called me to ask about it. I happened to be in the exam room at the time. I told him the Maulvi's name had not been removed forgetfully; his beard was trimmed and therefore I erased his name from the Abu Dawud register. The rule was that teachers could not erase names (i.e., only the dean had the discretion to remove a name from a register). However, due to the love of my elders for me they gave me the freedom to remove it at will. If a student skipped my class I would erase his name and tell him, "I have erased your name, go to the dean and complain to him. I will talk to him myself." The love and devotion of my elders for me had made me audacious. May Allah ﷻ grant all of them the highest rank in *Jannah* and forgive me for my shortcomings.

A year or two later, I received his letter that, "I want to take *bayah* on your hands." I replied, "You have already experienced my attitude. My elders, Hadhrat Thanwi, Hadhrat Madani, and the *khulafah* of Hadhrat Raipuri, are much better than me and certainly of the best character. Go and take *bayah* on their hands." He then sent another letter saying, "You are the only one who can rectify the heart of a person as hardheaded as myself." This article has become more of an autobiography. The point was to mention that in my class debasing the four Imams, the *muhadditheen*, and the scholars was unforgivable.

*CHAPTER 8*

*TARIQAT*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

### **Ihsan by any other name**

As has been mentioned previously, Jibrael عليه السلام came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and asked him, “What is *ihsan*?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied:

إِنْ تَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكُمْ تَرَاهُ  
**That you worship Allah as if you see him**

*Tariqat* is another name for *ihsan* or, we may say, the acquisition of the attribute of *ihsan*. It is also called *tasawwuf* and *suluk* or whatever else you want to call it. These are merely different expressions of the same essence.

My grandfather, Maulana Muhammad Ismail Kandhelwi asked Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, “I need to talk to you in private.” When they were alone he said, “I am a *mureed* of Maulana Muhammad Ya’qub Dehlavi and a student of Maulana Muzaffar Hussain رحمته الله Kandhelwi. They taught me according to the Naqshbandi method. When I applied the method, my *lataaif sitta*<sup>71</sup> began turning like a spinning wheel. But I was eager to follow the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and was diligent in reading authentic supplications from the ahadith. For example, the supplication when entering and exiting the bathroom or going to the bazaar, etc. This is why I had little interest for the practices devised by the *masha’ikh*. I would sometimes meditate for ten or fifteen days, but nothing more. This is my situation and now I am weak and ask that you prescribe for me certain practices.” Maulana Gangohi said, “Have

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<sup>71</sup> The six esoteric essences of the soul occupy different locations on the physical body. The Naqshbandi teach meditation of the name of Allah ﷻ in the six essences. After considerable time and practice, the six essences are rejuvenated with the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. This may, at times, result in involuntary and unprovoked pulsation of the body. This pulsation is the dhikr of the physical body which has been infused with the constant remembrance of Allah ﷻ. It is this physical response which is being described as “turning like the spinning wheel.”

you achieved *ihsan* through your own practices or not?” He replied, “Yes, I have.” Maulana Gangohi replied, “Then you are done, you do no need to be prescribed anything because practicing the different practices of the *sufiah* after attaining *ihsan* is like reading Kareema (i.e., an introductory Persian text) after reading Gulistan and Bostan<sup>72</sup> which is obviously a waste of time. For you, getting into the practices and exercises of the *sufiah* is sinful and a waste of time.”<sup>73</sup>

I have heard from my elders and also from Hadhrat Gangohi (rah) that, “What if a *hafiz* said, ‘Teach me the *qaida*<sup>74</sup> because I have not read it?’” Hadhrat Gangohi (rah) says in another place,

The power of the Blessed Prophet’s ﷺ spirituality was such that once a *kafir* recited the *kalimah* he would reach the level of *ihsan*. An example of this is that the Sahaba ؓ said, ‘How can we go to the bathroom and how can we denude ourselves before our Lord?’ This was the extent of their *ihsan*. They were not in need of painful exercises and exhausting practices. They received all this by the blessing of the Blessed Prophet’s ﷺ companionship, but of course their *ihsan* was less than that of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and it decreased significantly during the time of the *Taba’ Tabieen*. It was to put a brake on this declination and to revitalize this aspect (of Deen) that the *masha’ikh* invented exhaustive exercises and practices. For a while these exercises and practices were no more than mediums to achieve an end, but as we drifted away from the *khair-ul-quroon*, they became ends unto themselves. Time after time, these exercises were increased which led to a growth of doctrinal and practical *bid’at* (innovations) and also *bid’at* that penetrated into the knowledge of Deen. The *muhaqqiq sufiah* rectified many of these, but this only decreased the number of *bid’at* rather than uprooting them altogether. Hadhrat specifically took the names of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, Shaikh Shahaabuddin Suhrwardi, Mujaddid Alf Thaani, and Syed Ahmed Shaheed that they made every effort to curb the tide of *bid’at* but were unable eliminate it completely.

Hadhrat Gangohi also said, “Allah ﷻ opened the path of the Sunnah for them.” He said,

One of the blessings of the Sunnah is that shaitan has little chance to plunder in this path. Therefore, it is clear that if a person is strict upon the Sunan, which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ

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<sup>72</sup> Two advanced books on Persian pros and poetry.

<sup>73</sup> Arwahi Thalaatha, p. 299

<sup>74</sup> Introductory booklet to reading Arabic.

practiced and upon the *faraidh*, *wajibat* (plural of *wajib*) and the Sunan *muakaddah*, shaitan does not put *waswasa*<sup>75</sup> in the heart. He will neither begin to exalt himself and feel he is a *wali* nor will anyone else think of him in that way. But if anybody becomes perpetual in practices which the Blessed Prophet ﷺ did not perpetuate, as for example, *dhuha* (prayer before noon), *ishraq* (prayer after sunrise), or *awwaabeen* (*nafl* prayer after *maghrib*) he begins to think he is pious and others also start thinking the same of him.

During this speech Hadhrat Gangohi also said,

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ designated the goal *ihsan* while the *sufiah*, *istighraaq*<sup>76</sup>.  
Hadhrat Hakeem-ul-Ummah writes in a footnote:

اقول روى البخاري في كتاب التفسير عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال اناس كانوا يستحيون ان يتخلوا فيفضوا الي السماء وان يجامعوا نساءهم فيفضوا الي السماء فنزل ذلك (اي قوله تعالى الا انهم يثنون صدورهم ... الاية) فيهم قوله

I say: Imam Bukhari (rah) narrated in *Kitab ul Tafsir* from Ibn Abbas ؓ that people were ashamed of exposing their *satr* (the area of the body which one is obligated to cover) even in private and when going to their women. At that time the ayah was revealed: 'Beware when they cover up themselves with their clothes, He knows what they hide and what they expose' (11:5) Instead of this the *sufiah* ... I say this is a reference to the unlearned *sufiah*.

## The view of our Salaf

In the view of my elders, I have written in the beginning that *tasawwuf* and *ihsan* was one and the same thing and that *ihsan* is one crucial part of the Shari'ah *mutahhara*. This topic is covered extensively in the writings of the elders.

Hadhrat Mujaddid also emphasized this in his letters. I have also published three of his letters. The first letter which is long and detailed is addressed to the sons of his shaikh, Hadhrat Khawaja Baaqi Billah. It is worth reading. In it he writes:

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<sup>75</sup> Whispers of shaitan into the hearts of humans

Absorption in the name of Allah ﷻ that one becomes unaware of his surroundings.



Attainment of purification is based on the fulfillment of good deeds which achieve the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. This also rests on the sending of Prophets. Therefore, without sending of Prophets true purification is not attainable and the purification which the *kuffar* and wretched people achieve is not really purification of the heart but purification of the *nafs* (ego). One who achieves purification of the *nafs* is destroyed and deviated. The *kashf* (clairvoyance) which some of the *kuffar* and wretched people see after attaining purification of the *nafs* is *istidraaj*<sup>77</sup>.

After writing on the importance of beliefs he says:

After rectification of beliefs, there is little choice but to learn the rules of Fiqh. It is also important to learn *wajib*, *fardh*, *halal*, *haram*, *Sunnah*, *mandub*, *mushtabah*, and *makruh*<sup>78</sup> and to perform according to the requirements of *ilm-ul-fiqh*. Once one has acquired the two branches of beliefs and Fiqh then, if Allah ﷻ permits, there is also the path of the *sufiah*. *Suluk* (i.e., the path of the *sufiah*) is not to gain a new knowledge independent of Fiqh and beliefs. It is to establish a certainty of heart and strength of belief in the doctrine that protect one against doubtfulness when someone tries to put him in doubt. Also, the faith is not destroyed even when one becomes doubtful of his belief. Another benefit of *suluk* is that it puts ease in performing good deeds, and eliminates lassitude and rebelliousness which stem from the *nafs ammaara*<sup>79</sup>. It is not of the objectives of this path that different celestial forms and shapes of the unseen appear before him or that the *anwaar* (light) and *alwaan* (colors) become perceptible. They are only diversions and foolery of the *dunya*. These tangible shapes and *anwaar* are dangerous if one engages in exhaustive exercises to see such things. This is because these visions or openings into the unseen and the *anwaar* are all creations and only signs that prove the existence of Allah ﷻ.

I said in the very beginning that the first thing Jibrael (as) taught was *iman* meaning beliefs, then *Islam* meaning *a'mal* (deeds), and then *ihsan* meaning *suluk*. Hadhrat Mujaddid mentions these three in the same order in his aforementioned letter.

In letter # 36, he writes:

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<sup>77</sup> *Mu'jizat*- Supernatural acts performed by Ambiya (as)

*Karamaat*- Supernatural acts performed by the Auliya

*Istidraj*- Supernatural acts performed by the *kuffar*

<sup>78</sup> *Mandub*- desirable *mushtabah*- dubious *makruh*- undesirable/reprehensible

<sup>79</sup> the *nafs* which resists good and incites towards evil

The Shari'ah guarantees success of the *dunya* and the *Akhirah*, and *tariqat* and *haqiqat*<sup>80</sup> are two servants of this Shari'ah." He also says, "The Shari'ah is made up of three parts: knowledge, deeds, and sincerity. Until these three are not rooted (in the life of a Muslim) the Shari'ah is not established. Once the Shari'ah is established the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is guaranteed. This pleasure of Allah ﷻ is paramount and above the successes of the *dunya* and the *Akhirah*,

ورضوان من الله اكبر

And the pleasure of Allah is the greatest achievement<sup>81</sup>,

and so the Shari'ah guarantees the successes of the *dunya* and the *Akhirah*. Now, there is no other purpose higher than adherence to the Shari'ah and therefore one should not be dependent on anything else (to achieve salvation). The *sufiah* have excelled in *tariqat* and *haqiqat*; they perform the completion of the third branch of *ikhlas* (sincerity). The purpose of the completion of this branch is for none other than to achieve completion of the Shari'ah. It is not for the purpose of *ahwaal*<sup>82</sup> and gnosis of Allah ﷻ which *sufiah* often acquire during their journey on this path. In fact, they (i.e., gnosis of Allah ﷻ and *ahwaal*) are like the thoughts beginners experience during their upbringing in this field. It is important to move beyond all this to where the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is achieved because this is where the journey of *suluk* and *jazb*<sup>83</sup> culminates. This is because the purpose of covering the different steps of *tariqat* and *haqiqat* is to achieve total *ikhlas* and nothing else. **Attaining the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is intrinsic to *ikhlas*.**

Of many thousands, very few actually are taken through the visions and gnostic manifestations to reach the wealth of *ikhlas* and the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Shortsighted people take *ahwaal* as the objective and spiritual manifestations and clairvoyance as worthy causes to acquire. Such people are imprisoned in their superstitions and are deprived of the entire Shari'ah. This much is true that the acquisition of *ikhlas* and the attainment of *radha* (pleasure of Allah ﷻ) is intertwined with the reality of the *ahwaal*, celestial knowledges, and gnosis of

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<sup>80</sup> *Haqiqat*- Another name for *tariqat*. *Tariqat* takes one towards the realization of the self and everything else around us, therefore, it is also called *haqiqat*, which literally means "reality."

<sup>81</sup> 9:72

<sup>82</sup> *Ahwaal*- Plural of *haal*, spiritual states.

<sup>83</sup> *Jazb*: An inclination towards fulfilling the orders of Allah ﷻ. It is a gift of Allah ﷻ which He grants to whomever He wishes.

Allah ﷻ. Therefore, these *ahwaal*, celestial knowledges, and gnosis are preliminaries of the true objective, but they are not the objective themselves. This reality and the status which the Shari'ah is most deserving of became transparent to me, by the blessings of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, ten years after being on this path. Though I was never overwhelmed by *ahwaal* and *mawaajid* (psychic states) and there was no such objective in my sight besides attainment of the Shari'ah, the truth became apparent to me after ten years.

الحمد لله حمدا كثيرا طيبا مباركا فيه مباركا عليه

I am grateful to Allah ﷻ that my response to Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman's (the leader of the *Abraar* group<sup>84</sup>) question about the reality of *tasawwuf* was the same, that *tasawwuf* is rectification of the intention as has already been mentioned in detail in Aap Beti (2). Many other incidents of this kind have already been narrated in Aap Beti.

A lot of emphasis is laid on keeping the objective the pleasure of Allah ﷻ in the letters of Khawajah Muhammad Ma'soom also. In letter # 60, he writes,

Achievement of perfect *wilayat* (closeness to Allah ﷻ) is by adherence to the Shari'ah and achievement of the highest level of Prophethood is by adherence to the essence of the Shari'ah. Thus, there is no concept of perfect *wilayat* and achievement of the highest level of Prophethood outside the realm of Shari'ah.

In letter # 11, he writes:

After rectification of the beliefs, adherence to the correct opinion (derived from the Quran and Sunnah) is extremely important. Furthermore, there is no shortcut from performing the *faraidh* and the *wajibaat* and preventing oneself from the *muharramaat* (forbidden acts). Islam is based on five pillars (as mentioned in the hadith of Jibrael (as) in the explanation of *iman*). If any one of these five pillars is destroyed, the house of Deen will become weak and insecure. After rectification of the beliefs and practice of Deen, taking the path of the *sufiah* is also necessary so that one gains gnosis of the truth and is saved from the harmfulness of the prurient desires of the *nafs*. I do not understand how a person can live who is deprived of the gnosis of Allah ﷻ and does not recognize him, and how he can be so attached to other things.

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<sup>84</sup> A political party in India

In another letter, he writes:

Brother Mullah Hasan has asked about something I wrote in my letter to Ubaidullah Baig and wants me to address it. His question is that the Shari'ah defines right from wrong; therefore, he read somewhere that in *tariqat* there is only friendship with everyone whereas in the Shari'ah there is hatred towards the enemy and friendship towards the friends. It is a most despicable question. Since when is there a difference between the Shari'ah and *tariqat* and since when where they equals? The Shari'ah is founded on divine revelation. There is neither doubt in it nor any adulteration in its laws. It will remain the same until the Day of Judgment.

Fulfillment of the requirements of Shari'ah is necessary for everyone, the majority and the minority. *Tariqat* does not have the audacity to lift the commandments of the Shari'ah and to free the followers of the *tariqat* from following them. One of the most firm beliefs of the *Ahle-Sunnah Wal-Jama'h* is that no one, while conscious and sober, can reach a level that frees him from adherence to the commandments of the Shari'ah. Whoever believes differently from this has left the fold of Islam. Befriending one who is a recognized enemy of Allah ﷻ, and is subject to the harshest ruling by the Shari'ah, has left the rule of Islam. This and the claim of love for Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ cannot be combined in one place because adherence to the beloved and befriending the friends of the beloved while hatred towards the enemies of the beloved are all requirements of love. This much can be said that on occasion something<sup>85</sup> may appear amongst the *salikeen* that goes against the Quran and Sunnah. At that time, the *salik* should not break off from the Shari'ah, but rather hold to it firmly with his teeth. He should do *taqlid* of the *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'h* and adhere to their practices and beliefs while opposing his own *wijdaan* (psychic perceptions) and *mukaashafat* (clairvoyances). Sometimes the worthless ones of the path of *suluk* declare *اني انا الله* ('Verily, I am Allah') misguiding the naive *salik* from the loftiest objectives towards worship of themselves. At this time, it is necessary for the true *salik* to declare like Ibrahim (as), *لا أحب الافلين* ('I like not those that disappear') and race through the savannah of the unseen<sup>86</sup> towards the Creator in spirit of the ayah:

اني وجهت وجهي للذي فطر السماوات والارض حنيفا وما انا من المشركين

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<sup>85</sup> plural of *salik*- traveler on the path of *tariqat*.

<sup>86</sup> do not get preoccupied in the *ahwaal*, *mukaashafat*, *wijdan* etc.)

Indeed I have turned my face toward He who created the heavens and the earth, inclining toward truth and I am not of those who associate others with Allah<sup>87</sup>,

He should follow the Blessed Prophet ﷺ completely so that he is not entrapped in *zaigh-ul-basr* (an inclination towards other besides Allah, although literal translation means roaming of the eyes).<sup>88</sup>

In this letter, Hadhrat Khawajah Sahib is indicating an incident that is mentioned in Aap Beti with reference from Maulana Qasim Naunutwi in the book Arwaahi Thalaatha. There was a famous shaikh by the name of Khawajah Ahmed Jaam who was *mustajaab-ul-da'wah* (the one whose every dua' is accepted). One woman brought her blind child to him and said, "Wipe your hands over his face and repair his sight." At the time, he was overwhelmed by the feeling of servitude to Allah ﷻ and so humbly said, "I am unable to do such a thing." She insisted but he again declined. This continued back and forth three or four times. Finally, when he saw she wouldn't listen, he stood up and left saying, "This was the miracle of Isa (as); he cured the blind and healed the lepers. I cannot do such a thing." He had only walked a little when he received an *ilhaam* (divine inspiration) that, "Who are you, who is Isa (as) and who is Musa (as)! Go back and wipe your hand over his face. You cannot cure, nor can Isa (as), *maa mi kunaim* ('we do it')." He heard this and returned repeating the words '*maa mi kunaim, maa mi kunaim.*' He wiped his hand over the child's face and his blindness was gone.

After narrating this incident Maulana Naunutwi said,

Stupid people think he himself was saying '*maa mi kunaim,*' though it was not his own statement but the words of Allah ﷻ. When someone hears a beautiful poem from a poet, he repeats it over and over again in delight. Likewise, he was enjoying the words of Allah ﷻ *maa mi kunaim* and repeated it over and over again.

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in the footnote of Maulana Qasim Naunutwi's comment "This was the words of Allah ﷻ" that, "I say, this is the best interpretation of Mansoor Hallaj's declaration,

انا الحق  
I am Haqq.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> 6: 79

<sup>88</sup> Maktubaat Khawajah Muhammad Ma'soom, p. 121

In Aap Beti (v. 5), there are many sayings of this kind from the elders. After that I wrote,

The purpose of writing all that has been written is that a person should only be concerned with himself. One should not criticize others and find faults in them especially in the pious elders, ulama, and *masha'ikh*. One should not be on the look out for mistakes in their actions and statements. No one is to be followed in anything which is against the Shari'ah, but at the same time their actions and statements are not our responsibility.<sup>90</sup>

### Importance of the Shari'ah and the Sunnah

In another letter Hadhrat Khawajah writes:

One should tie tightly the belt of vigor to fulfill the commandments of the Shari'ah. He should make *amr bil ma'roof* and *nahi a'nih munkar* (ordaining good and forbidding evil) his habit and his nature. He should think it an exalted task to revive the extinct Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. He should make effort to suppress every *waarid*<sup>91</sup> that overcomes him. He should not rely on dreams and things one sees during spiritually heightened states. Nothing happens from seeing oneself a king or the *qutb*<sup>92</sup> of his time in his dream. A true *qutb* or king is one who is in reality a king or a *qutb*. Even if one becomes a king and this whole world his kingdom, the punishment of the world and the hereafter will not be waived for him.

People with vigor and people of strength do not care for such things. They remain focused on achieving the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. They focus all their effort and exhaust themselves in achieving the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, selflessness and perennial *waaridat* (plural of *warid*). I hope from friends like yourself that you will not forget this sinful one and you will ask for the mercy, forgiveness, and pleasure of Allah ﷻ for him (referring to himself).<sup>93</sup>

In another letter, he writes:

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<sup>89</sup> Aap Beti 5/197

<sup>90</sup> Aap Beti 5/198

<sup>91</sup> strong inspirational feeling that pierces the heart when one exercises against the *nafs*

<sup>92</sup> *Qutb*- the hierarch of the Auliya of any given period

<sup>93</sup> Makhtoobat Khawajah Muhammad Ma'soom, p. 174

Because of the gap in time between us and the period of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and the closeness of our time to the Day of Judgment, *bid'at* are becoming widespread and their darkness is engulfing the world. The Sunan have become scarce and their light is fading away. It is important that we tighten the belt of effort and vigor in reviving the extinct Sunan and spreading the knowledge of the Shari'ah and understand that this means to gain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Furthermore, also attain closeness to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ through this. It is mentioned in the hadith that whosoever revives a Sunnah which has waned in practice will receive the reward of 100 martyrs. The first step in reviving a Sunnah is to practice it oneself, then to spread it and encourage others to follow it.<sup>94</sup>

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in Taleem uddin:

Rectification of the false belief that following the Shari'ah is not important for the attainment of *sufiat* (becoming a sufi) is originally from the book *Futuhaat*<sup>95</sup> in which it also says, "Anything that opposes the reality of the Shari'ah is falsehood.

In the same book it is written that,

Whosoever says there is another path to Allah ﷻ besides the Shari'ah is a liar. Therefore, such a person should not be chosen to be one's shaikh who does not have etiquette." It also says in this book, "There is no way for us except the Shari'ah and there is no other way besides which He has taught us in the Shari'ah.

Hadhrat Baayazid Bustami says,

Do not be fooled if you observe a person bestowed with *karamaat* (ability to perform supernatural feats) even if he flies in the sky unless you see he is strict upon the commandments, in avoiding the forbidden acts, and meticulous in staying within the boundaries of the Shari'ah.

Hadhrat Junaid says,

All the different avenues are closed to the world except the one who follows the Blessed Prophet ﷺ every step of the way.

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<sup>94</sup> Makhtoobat Khawajah Muhammad Ma'soom, p. 290

<sup>95</sup> By Allama Ibn Arabi (rah)

It is also written in Futuhaat,  
He has no position in the eyes of Allah ﷻ who does not know His rule because Allah ﷻ has never made any ignorant person a *wali*.” It is also in Futuhaat, “It is better to commit a vulgar act in knowledge than doing something in ignorance.

Hadhrat Thanvi says,

This is because even if a scholar utters something offensive, it will not reach the borders of *kufir*. Since he is aware of the offensiveness of the statement, he will most likely repent. On the other hand, an ignorant person sometimes performs the necessary worship incorrectly and unintentionally perpetrates acts of *kufir*, but is not fortunate enough to repent because he is not aware of his wrongdoing.

Hadhrat Thanvi wrote at length on this topic in his book Taleem Uddin.

### **The difference between the Alim and Jahil**

Once my father was bathing on a hot and humid day and two or three students were pouring buckets of water over him. One man sitting nearby said, “Hadhrat, isn’t this *israaf* (wasteful)?” He replied, “It is *israaf* for you, but not for me.” The man said, “How is that possible?” My father replied, “I am an *alim* and you are a *jaahil* (ignorant person).”<sup>96</sup> The man then said, “Then it is true what is said that Maulvis make everything permissible for themselves.” My father said,

This is true. Maulvis defend themselves against this truth without reason. One thing will be impermissible because of the *jahl* (ignorance) of the *jaahil* while the same thing will be permissible because of the *ilm* of the *alim*.

Abu Saeed Khudri ﷺ narrates that Bilal ﷺ brought a basket full of premium quality dates. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked, “Where did you get this from?” He replied, “I had some

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<sup>96</sup> The ruling is that if one bathes to gain coolness from the heat, he may use as much water as necessary for him to gain coolness. If however, it is only for the purpose of *ghusl*, then one may not use more water than is needed to fulfill the requirements of *ghusl*. Here, Maulana was bathing for coolness; therefore, it did not fall under *israaf*.



low quality dates; I exchanged two kilos of the low quality dates for one kilo of the premium quality ones.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

Oh no, this is usury! Don't ever do this! If you ever wish to do this (buy and sell) again, first sell the low quality dates for a certain amount and then purchase the premium quality dates with that amount.

It is obvious that a *jaahil* will not know the difference. He would only understand that one kilo of premium quality dates were purchased with two kilos of low quality dates. An *alim*, however, will use the permissible way to make the purchase. For example, he will sell the low quality dates for two rupees and will then purchase one kilo of premium quality dates with the two rupees.

Hadhrat Shaikh-ul-Islam Maulana Madani also emphasizes in his letters that the objective of *suluk* (i.e., the path of *tasawwuf*) is the attainment of *ihsan*. In one letter, he says:

“My respected brother! The real objective behind *suluk* is the attainment of *ihsan*:

أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه

**That you worship your Lord as if you see him**

Meaning that *malik-i-raasikhah* (the trait of achieving the feeling of perpetual presence of Allah ﷻ) is born from *suluk*. As far as the ultimate goal, it should be to attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. As a poet says:

What is this closeness and separation you search for? Find the pleasure of the Beloved (Allah ﷻ) that Hope for any other than beloved is a sorrowful thing

Working diligently to inculcate true love for Allah ﷻ and to nurture it to the extent that the heart withdraws from everything else is one of the methods to gain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Likewise, all the methods, the exercises (in which one suppresses the *nafs*), and the rectification of morals are also means to achieve the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. The *mutaqaddimeen sufiah* gave priority to moral rectification; however, sometimes a person dies before achieving *wusul ila Allah* ﷻ (closeness to Allah ﷻ), and as a result one is deprived of this great blessing, departing from this world before attaining this gift of Allah ﷻ. The *mutakhireen*, though, were more sagacious in their approach; they gave precedence to *wusul ila Allah* ﷻ and focused on the essence of Allah ﷻ. In creating a stronger attachment to Allah ﷻ, they helped produce *huzur daaim* (i.e., the trait of awareness of the perpetual presence of Allah ﷻ) in which the *malika* (trait) becomes deep-rooted and bad moral

qualities slowly dissipate. Anyhow, you should always be engrossed in the essence of Allah ﷻ, whether it is by engrossing oneself in the being of Allah or any one of his complete attributes, and maintain the state of

الذين هم على صلاتهم دائمون  
Those who are diligent in their prayers.

It is only natural for a human to have shortcomings in his deeds and actions, but it his responsibility to make every effort to eliminate these shortcomings and to recite **واياك نستعين** ('and we ask for help from you only') with sincerity. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in one of his supplications:

ما عرفناك حق معرفتك ولا عبدناك حق عبادتك  
We did not gain knowledge of You as was Your right nor did we worship as was  
Your right

Thus, it is our responsibility to perpetually rectify our actions, purify our intentions, and repent to Allah ﷻ because of the reality of our continuous shortcomings (in our worship and in fulfillment of His rights). While hoping for His mercy one should also always be fearful of His wrath because

الايمان بين الخوف والرجاء  
*Iman* is between fear and hope.

Always, be constant in adhering to the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in every situation. Although, you are not in need of the *adhkaar*<sup>97</sup> it is better you continue those of the *muraaqaba ma'looma* (the prescribed meditations), which you find more suitable to gain spiritual strength. Also, read Sirat-ul-Mustaqeem and Imdaad-ul-Suluk often.<sup>98</sup>

In another long letter, he writes:

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<sup>97</sup> *Adhkaar*- plural of *dhikr*. The means by which one gains remembrance of Allah ﷻ.

<sup>98</sup> Maktubaat Shaikh-ul-Islam 3/66

Hold to the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in your heart and in your sight as best as you can. Never be ignorant towards *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ. Always be repentant to Allah ﷻ for your ignorance and sins. Do not waste this precious time. As a poet says:

Whatever you do besides remembrance of your Friend is a waste of time  
What ever you read besides the secrets of love is a waste of time  
Wash the slate of your heart from everything besides *haqq*  
Any knowledge which does not show the way to Allah ﷻ is ignorance.

In the next letter, he writes:

Is it not true that you have left the prescribed *adkhaar*? When you are in the mood you go at it for a month or two and soon after you quit. Is it not true that you are not punctual in the congregational prayers? Is it not true that you miss the Fajr prayers in the morning and sleep until sunrise? Do these types of events in your life not hurt those who wish the best for you? Anyhow, it is important that you rectify yourself. Spend all your effort in adherence to the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and revival of the Shari'ah. When you face hardship then you remember Allah ﷻ and when Allah ﷻ grants you ease and comfort, you become indifferent. Make the *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ your habit as much as you can.

In another letter, he writes:

The different spiritual states and situations you wrote to me are comforting and good, but الاستقامة فوق الكرامة ('Perseverance is better than *karamat*'). Dreams, *anwaar*, or *ilhaamaat* (divine inspiration) are only to keep the spirits of the *salik* high like a toy given a child to keep it happy. The famous saying of the elders is:

تلك خيالات تربي بها اطفال الطريقة

'They are toys by which the children of the path are raised'<sup>99</sup>

The only thing required of us is worship, perpetual *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ, adherence to the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and following the Shari'ah. The completion of *iman* is diligence upon these requirements and attaining the level of *ihsan*. Fear and hope of Allah ﷻ

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<sup>99</sup> Maktubaat Shaikh-ul-Islam 3/168, Letter # 57

are two signs of the completion of *iman*. The characteristic of *bukaa* (crying from fear of Allah ﷻ) and grief (that causes convulsive movements or trembling of the whole body) are the unique quality of the *Chishtia* order.<sup>100</sup>

In the letter after this, he writes:

O respected one! Hardships of the world are also His mercy by which He brings His servant closer to Him, otherwise this person would become *Firau'n* and *Haamaan* declaring أنا ربكم الاعلي (I am your great Lord'). The evidence of his rebelliousness to Allah ﷻ (if hardship does not befall him) is the ayah:

ولو بسط الله الرزق لعباده لبغوا في الارض

If Allah had extended provisions (excessively) for His servants, they would have created tyranny on the earth.<sup>101</sup>

Allah ﷻ is testing us all the time, sometimes through riches and at other times through hardship:

ونبلونكم بالشر والخير فتنة

And We test you through the good and the bad

In another place Allah says,

وبلوناهم بالحسنات والسيات

And We test them through goodness and hardships

Thus, this world is a trial in which we are tried in different ways. We should make effort to overcome these trials and should not enamor ourselves with anything but our Everlasting True Master. Make the correct intention for anything you do and it will become an act of worship. As the hadith says, "Verily all actions are based on intentions." Even your sleeping, eating, drinking, and doing anything of necessity can be converted into an act of worship. Any medium that leads to an *ibadah* is itself an *ibadah*. The purpose of *dhikr* and *fikr*

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<sup>100</sup> Maktubaat Shaikh-ul-Islam 3/168, Letter # 57

<sup>101</sup> 42: 27

(cogitation) is only to attain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. Fulfillment of a desire, purification of the heart, gaining the abilities of *kashf* and *karaamaat*, feeling the blessings and *anwaar*, attainment of *fanaa*<sup>102</sup> or *baqaa*<sup>103</sup>, rising to the position of *qutubiyat* (becoming a *qutb*), or *ghuasiyat* (becoming a *ghaus*)<sup>104</sup> are all subjective experiences and are not the objective. To aim for these things and to make them one's objective is dangerous. As a poet says:

What is this is *firaaq*<sup>105</sup> and *wasal*<sup>106</sup> you look for?  
 Look for the pleasure of the Beloved  
 Because desire from the Beloved for something besides the Beloved is sorrowful

All the above mentioned qualities are only pathways. The only true objective is the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. It is the goal of the servant to achieve total servitude to Allah ﷻ. Be strong and strive on this path and keep in mind the goal of sincerity and servitude to Allah ﷻ.<sup>107</sup>

In another letter, he writes:

This lifetime and every second of it are precious stones. We are wasting them in our ignorance and nothing will come of this except regret and grief for our actions. And what will happen when we are asked:

اولم نعمركم ما يتذكر فيه من تذكر وجاءكم النذير فذوقوا فما للظالمين من نصير  
**But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember and the warner had come to you? So taste the punishment for there is not for the transgressor any helper**<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Signifies the end of travelling to Allah (swt) that is: the thinking away of the self; it is the death of passion, of self-will, of self-consciousness. This is a lower state than that of *baqaa*.

<sup>103</sup> After *fanaa* of desire and will, the will becomes the will and desire of Allah (swt). Thus, *baqaa* is travelling in Allah (swt). In *fanaa*, the salik is aware of his effacement while in *baqaa* he is unaware of his own effacement.

<sup>104</sup> *Ghaus*- is sometimes used synonymously with *qutb* but also sometimes indicates a lower level than the *qutb* in the hierarchy of the Auliya. It should be remembered that this hierarchy does not come about by design; it is an arrangement in which even the Auliya of this hierarchy are unaware of their own positions.

<sup>105</sup> A spiritual state in which the salik finds himself separated from his beloved (Allah ﷻ) by a barrier which he tries to remove by humbling himself and crying before Allah ﷻ.

<sup>106</sup> A spiritual state in which a salik attains oneness with Allah ﷻ and all barriers between him and Allah ﷻ are lifted.

<sup>107</sup> Maktubaat Shaikh-ul-Islam 3/ 59, p. 129

<sup>108</sup> 35:37

My respected friend, wasting this time because of your friends and loved ones is such a foolish mistake. Ponder on this and try to understand the importance of this matter. This frivolous merrymaking seems exciting, but at the time of death and after that one will be cursing these a thousand times over. Try as much as you possibly can to abstain from such wasteful and petty pastimes:

لا تلهكم اموالكم ولا اولادكم عن ذكر الله

**Do not let your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah<sup>109</sup>**

Ponder upon this:

المال والبنون زينة الحيات الدنيا والباقيتت الصالحات

**But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for ones hope (of success in the *Akhirah*)<sup>110</sup>**

Do not throw these ayaat behind your back. This period of youth and good health are great blessings that you must not allow to go to waste. Every second is an opportunity for you to return to Allah ﷻ. If you don't care about any of this, then it is your own loss. Do not waste these precious moments and do not allow heedlessness to grow in the city of your soul

نعمتان مغبون فيهما كثير من الناس الصحة و الفراغ

**'Two blessings of Allah in which many people are at a loss: health and free-time.'**

Value this time and continue with the *paas anfaas*<sup>111</sup> until it becomes permanent and until the heart remembers Allah ﷻ perpetually and the path of *suluk* is traversed.<sup>112</sup>

## The cure for our hearts

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<sup>109</sup> 63:9

<sup>110</sup> 18:46

<sup>111</sup> A method of the sufiah in attaining permanent remembrance of Allah ﷻ, in which the salik inhales breathing in the majestic name 'Allah ﷻ,' and exhales breathing out the letter 'hu'.

<sup>112</sup> Maktubaat Shaikh-ul-Islam 2/188, p. 48

The *masha'ik*, in their writings, have articulated that the only objective of this path is attaining *ihsan*. The different exercises and tedious practices which the *sufiah* designed are for sicknesses of the heart. It is similar to the various sicknesses and diseases of the physical body which physicians and traditional healers seek to cure by prescribing new medications. Just as no one calls their latest treatments *bid'at* likewise it is our misunderstanding of this field to call the treatments of the *sufiah* as *bid'at*. They never were objectives, but only treatments for specific illnesses of the heart.

Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (rah) wrote extensively on the actions of the heart in his booklet, Al-Tuhfat-ul-Iraqiyah fil A'malil Qalbia. He says:

These few words elucidate the actions of the heart which are called *ahwaal* and *maqamaat*<sup>113</sup>. They are the pillars of faith and the foundation of Deen, such as love for Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ, *tawakkul*, *ikhlaas*, *shukr*, *sabr*, *khauf*, *raja*, (reliance on Allah ﷻ, sincerity for Allah ﷻ, gratefulness to Allah ﷻ, patience, fear of Allah ﷻ, and hope in Allah ﷻ), etc. The attainment of all these qualities is *fardh* on the Ummah; and in this matter there is no difference of opinion.

There are three types of people when it comes to the inner qualities as there are three types of people in the actions of the physical body: *zaalim* (transgressor), *muqtasid* (moderate), and *saabiqul khairaat* (one who surpasses others in goodness).

1. *Zaalim* is a person who neglects the orders of Allah ﷻ and commits forbidden acts.
2. *Muqtasid* is one who fulfills the orders of Allah ﷻ and avoids forbidden acts.
3. *Saabiq um bil khairat* is one who struggles to his utmost to gain nearness to Allah ﷻ. He is not content with fulfilling the *wajibat* and avoiding *muharammaat* only, he strives to perform all the *sunnan* and the *mustahabat* and to avoid all the *makruhaat* (plural *makruh*). Even though the *saabiq um bil khairat* commit sins they are forgiven either by repentance, good deeds, or trials and tribulations. Both of these people, the *saabiqeen* and the *muqtasedeen*, are amongst the *auliya-allah* who are mentioned in this ayah of the Quran:

الا ان اولياء الله لا خوف عليهم ولا يحزنون الذين امنوا وكانوا يتقون

**Unquestionably, for the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve**<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> *Maqamaat*- plural of *maqam*. High spiritual stations one reaches in the path of *tariqat*.

<sup>114</sup> 10: 62

Therefore the *auliyallah* are the *mumineen* and *muttaqeen* (the people of *taqwa*) who are of two types, *aam* (general) and *khaas* (specific). The *aam* are the *muqtasedeen* (plural of *muqtasid*) and the *khaas* are the *saabiq um bil khairat*.”

After this Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (rah) wrote a short treatise of the actions of the heart. He wrote about truth and falsehood and that love of Allah ﷻ, sincerity towards Him, reliance on Him, pleasing Him, and other actions of the heart of this kind are obligatory. He then talks at length about reliance on Allah ﷻ, of the obligations of faith, and that love of Allah ﷻ and love of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ are paramount. Furthermore, he mentions the one who loves Allah ﷻ, the attributes of those who are loved by Him, and that the basis of love of Allah ﷻ is adherence to His Deen. He explains that hope and fear of Allah ﷻ are both the substance of *iman* and narrates the sayings of the *sufiah* and *qudamah* about the love of Allah ﷻ. One of the manifestations of the love of Allah ﷻ is adherence to the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and that adherence to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ will outwardly and inwardly create love of Allah ﷻ. He talks about this last point in detail. It is a book worth reading.

Allama Ibn Qayyim, in Al Waabil Sayyib Minal Kalim Tayyib<sup>115</sup>, states the conditions of being a shaikh. One of them is that if a person wants to take *bayah* at the hands of a shaikh, he should first see if the person is amongst the people of *dhikr* and is not amongst the people of *ghafla* (heedless of Allah ﷻ). He should be strict on the Sunnah, not a follower of the self, and should be cautious in his matters. If such a shaikh is met, he should hold on to him tightly and then narrates the habit of Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (rah) that,

Once I went to my shaikh. He sat after praying Fajr salah, doing the *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ until midday. He said to me, ‘This *dhikr* is my breakfast in the morning. If I do not eat this food (i.e., *dhikr*), I will become weak and I only avoid *dhikr* to give my *nafs* some breathe to prepare it for *dhikr* at another time.’

Another one of Allama Ibn Qayyim’s (rah) books, Madaarij-ul-Salikeen, is written on *tasawwuf*. It is a commentary of the famous book of *tasawwuf*, Manazil-ul-Salikeen, written by

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<sup>115</sup> This text is about the *adkhaar* and *ahwaal* of the *sufiah*.



Shaikh Abu Ismail Abdullah Harawi Hanbali Sufi (481 A.H.). All the discussions in this book are on *tasawwuf*. He writes,

Servitude of a human is divided into branches: the heart, the tongue, and the other limbs. The essentials of the heart are: sincerity, reliance on Allah ﷻ, love, patience, fear and hope, true and strong belief, and the purity of intention. It is the consensus of the Ummah that these actions of the heart are obligatory.

After this he mentions the obligatory acts upon which there is disagreement:

Accepting our destiny and contentment towards everything written in our fate and *khushu'* in salah. For example, is the salah invalid if there is no *khushu'* in salah? He also talks about the *muharammaat* (prohibitions) that they are of two types, the first being *kufir* (disbelief) and the second being *ma'siat* (sin). The example of *kufir* as in: doubtfulness, hypocrisy, paganism, etc. *Masi'at* is of two types: major and minor. Major as in:

ostentation, vanity, arrogance, haughtiness, despair in the mercy of Allah ﷻ, to be fearless of the punishment of Allah ﷻ, to enjoy seeing other Muslims in pain and anguish, to express one's satisfaction at seeing a Muslim in turmoil, to desire for the spread of promiscuity amongst Muslims, to be jealous of Muslims, and other sins which are more heinous than observable major sins like fornication and drinking alcohol.

Without repentance to Allah ﷻ, the heart cannot be purified of such spiritual evils. If one does not repent, the heart will be severely corrupted, and when the heart is corrupted, the whole body in turn will be corrupted. Purification of the heart precedes purification of the body, and if the heart is not purified it will be filled with the opposite of that which is in a purified heart.”

Allama Ibn Qayyim (rah) speaks on this subject at length. We we should know that it is for this same purification of the heart that the *masha'ikh* of *tasawwuf* put their *murideen* through such exhaustive practices and exercises.

### **The Morals of the Sufi**

Maulana Merati in his biography of Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rah), Tazkiratul Rashid, quotes him on this subject. Maulana Merati says,

“I found a note in which Hadhrat Gangohi scribbled something with his own hands. He wrote it sometime in his early years for some unknown reason.” He wrote:

علم الصوفية علم الدين ظاهرا و باطنا و قوة اليقين وهو العلم الاعلى حالهم اصلاح  
الاخلاق ودوام الافتقار الي الله تعالى حقيقة التصوف التخلق باخلاق الله تعالى وسلب  
الارادة وكون العبد في رضاء الله تعالى اخلاق الصوفية ما هو خلقه عليه الصلاة و السلام  
بقوله إيك لعلي خلق عظيم و ما ورد به الحديث وتفصيل اخلاقهم هكذا : التواضع ضده  
الكبر – المداراة و احتمال الاذي عن الخلق – المعاملة برفق وخلق حسن وترك غضب و  
غيض – المواساة و الايثار بفرط الشفقة علي الخلق و هو القديم حقوق الخلق علي حظوظه  
– السخاوة- التجاوز- العفو و طلاقة الوجه والبشرة- السهولة ولين الجانب- ترك التعسف و  
التكلف – انفاق بلا افتتار و ترك الادخار – التوكل - القناعة بيسير من الدنيا – الورع-  
ترك المراء و الجدال و العتب الا بحق- ترك الغل والحقد والحسد- ترك المال والجاه –  
وفاء العهد –الحلم – الاناءة – التواد و التوافق مع الاخوان والعزلة عن الاغيار – شكر  
المنعم – بذل المسلمين  
الصوفي يهذب الظاهر والباطن في الاخلاق والتصوف ادب كله – ادب الحضرة الالهية  
الاعراض عن سواه حياء واجلالا وهيبة اسواء المعاصي حديث النفس و سبب الظلمة

Maulana Merati translates:

“The name of the science of the *sufiah* is the inward and outward knowledge of Deen and strength of belief and this is the greatest of sciences. The way of the *sufiah* is perfecting their morals and to be perpetually absorbed in Allah ﷻ. The essence of *tasawwuf* is to be embellished with the *akhlaaq* of Allah ﷻ, to eliminate the will of the self, and a perpetual infatuation to please Allah ﷻ. The morals of the *sufiah* are the same as that of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ as mentioned in the Quran, “Undoubtedly, you are of a great moral character<sup>116</sup>.” All that is mentioned in the hadith is also inclusive of the morals of the *sufiah*. Here is a description of the morals of the *sufiah*:

1. To think lowly of oneself and this is the opposite of arrogance
2. To be compassionate to the creation of Allah ﷻ and to overlook the transgressions of the creation against oneself

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<sup>116</sup> 68: 4

3. To treat others with kindness and warmth and to avoid anger and irateness
4. To sympathize with others and to prefer them over oneself because of one's overwhelming love for them, this means to favor the rights of others over one's own rights
5. To be generous
6. To forgive others and to overlook their mistakes
7. To be sanguine and cheerful
8. To be soft-spoken
9. To avoid ostentation
10. To spend without stinginess and to avoid spending to the extent that one becomes needy
11. Reliance on the Creator
12. To be content upon whatever little of the *dunya* one possesses
13. To be austere
14. To avoid arguments and altercations and to avoid criticizing another unless it is with *haqq*
15. To avoid jealousy or hatred of another
16. To fulfill promises
17. Forbearance
18. To have insight
19. To love fellow Muslims and to have good relations with them and to avoid others
20. To be grateful when someone does a favor
21. To exhaust oneself for the good of other Muslims

Regarding *akhlaaq* (moral character), the *sufi* purifies his inward and outward and *tasawwuf* is the name of *adab* (etiquette and moral perfection). *Adab* of the Creator is to turn away from everyone besides the Creator out of modesty, awe, and fear of His might. The worst of sins is to deliberate with the *nafs* which spreads darkness over the heart.

*CHAPTER 9*

*BAYAH*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The Sunnah of Bayah

People raise objections to many practices of the *sufiah* such as taking *bayah*, even though *bayah* is not even required by the *sufiah*, as I will mention later. However, the practice of taking *bayah* is deeply rooted in the Quran and the Sunnah. In Surah Mumtahana, Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ  
الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يَبَايِعْنَكَ

When believing women come to you to take oath of fealty to you, that they will not associate in worship any other thing whatever with Allah, that they will not commit adultery, that they will not kill their children, that they will not utter slander intentionally forging falsehood. And that they will not disobey you in any just matter, then do you receive their fealty and pray to Allah for the forgiveness for Allah is oft-forgiving, Most merciful.<sup>117</sup>

In the commentary, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rah) writes,

This ayah is clear proof of *bayah* and a repudiation of the ritual *bayah* which is bereft of any desire to perform good deeds.

In a hadith of Bukhari it says:

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<sup>117</sup> 60: 12

عن عباده بن صامت و كان شهد بدرًا وهو احد النقباء ليلة العقبة ان رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم قال و حوله عصابة من اصحابه بايعوني علي ان لا تشركوا بالله شيئاً و لا تسرقوا و لا تزنوا و لا تقتلوا اولادكم و لا تأتوا ببهتان تقترونه بين ايديكم و ارجلكم و لا تعصوا في معروف فمن وفي منكم فاجره علي و من اصاب من ذلك شيئاً فعوقب في الدنيا فهو كفارة له و من اصاب من ذلك شيئاً ثم ستره الله فهو الي الله انشاء عفت عنه و انشاء عاقبه فباعيناه علي ذلك

Ubadah bin Saamit ؓ who participated in the Battle of Badr and was one of the leaders in the night of Aqabah, narrates that once when the Sahaba ؓ had gathered close by him the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said:

Come make bayah to me upon the belief that you will not equate anything with Allah, will not steal, fornicate, or murder your own children. And that you will not accuse anyone of anything and will stand against one who speaks the truth. Whosoever fulfills this bayah will receive the reward from Allah and whosoever commits anyone of these will taste retribution in this world. This punishment in the world will be atonement for his sin. And if Allah hides his sin, he may forgive or punish in the Akhirah. This is Allah's discretion.

Hadhrat Ubaidah ؓ says, "We made *bayah* to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ on these deeds." This *bayah* was not *bayah* of Islam or *bayah* to struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ. It is the *bayah* made by the *sufiah* to emphasize practicing upon the tenets and commandments of Islam.

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi wrote extensively in his book Al-Qaul Al-Jameel on the subject of *bayah*; this was later translated into the book Al-Shifa-ul-A'leel. He says:

قال الله تعالى ان الذين يبايعونك انما يبايعون الله .....

Allah ﷻ said:

Verily those people who took *bayah* in your hands took *bayah* in the hands of Allah. The hands of Allah is upon their hands therefore, those who break the oath break it to their own detriment and those who fulfill the oath will, verily, receive a great reward from Allah ﷻ.

It is also in the ahadith *mashhoora* that the Sahaba ؓ sometimes took *bayah* at the hands of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ upon Hijra (migration from Mekkah to Medinah), upon struggling in the path of Allah ﷻ, upon adherence to the pillars of Islam like salah, fasting, hajj, zakah, upon steadfastness in the battlefield against the *kuffar* as in the *bayah* of *Ridwaan*, upon

adherence to the Sunan of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and upon avoidance of *bid'at* and to earnestly and passionately perform good deeds. Therefore, it is mentioned in a *sahih* hadith that the women of Ansaar took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to cease the custom of *nauha* (i.e., wailing, tearing clothes, and self-mutilation when someone died).

In the narration of Ibn Majah, it is mentioned that some poor *muhajireen* took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to avoid asking anything from anyone. It was the blessing of this *bayah* that when anything as much as a whip fell from their mount, they would dismount to retrieve it themselves, refusing to take help from anyone. One thing is certain, and it is that when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ did anything as an act of worship and not by habit, it is nothing less than a Sunnah. Now we need to discuss how to classify this *bayah*? Some people believe that *bayah* pertains to accepting someone as the *khalifah* and sultan and that the *bayah* which is taken by the *sufiah* holds no status in the Shari'ah. But we know this to be false because of the previous narrations that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ sometimes took *bayah* to establish the pillars of Islam. At other times he ﷺ took *bayah* for adherence to the Sunan. Even the hadith of Bukhari is proof of this, namely that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ stipulated to Jarir ؓ during the *bayah* to be kind and loving towards all Muslims.

The Ansaar took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to never be concerned of the criticism of people in matters of Deen and to speak the truth wherever they may be. Therefore, some of them were fearless in publicly criticizing and rejecting the ruthless governors and amirs when they did wrong. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ also took *bayah* from the women of Ansaar to abstain from *nauha*. *Bayah* is a fact which is proven in many other matters. Many of them are related to issues of purification of the heart, and *amr bil ma'roof* and *nahi a'nil munkar*. This method of *bayah* (i.e., the *bayah* of the *sufiah*) was discontinued during the reign of the sultans because if they had learned of the *sufiah* taking *bayah*, they would have clamped down on them. During that period the *sufiah* resorted to distributing *kharqahs* (thick, coarse uniforms with patches) to their *murideen*. When the custom of *bayah* died out amongst the sultans, the *sufiah* revived the Sunnah of *bayah*.

After this Shah Waliullah opens a new chapter on whether *bayah* is *wajib* or Sunnah. The Sahaba ؓ took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and gained closeness to Allah ﷻ through it. There is no evidence that one who does not make *bayah* is sinful or that any of the *Salaf-us-Saliheen* reprimanded one who does not perform *bayah*.

Shah Waliullah says in Al- Qaul Al-Jameel:

“The *bayah* which is customary amongst the *sufiah* is of many kinds. The first kind is *bayah* in which one repents for all his past sins. Another kind is where one makes *bayah* to gain blessings from the line of the pious predecessors. This is like the *barakaat* (blessings) gained by transmitting ahadith because the chain of transmission of ahadith also contains *barakaat*.

The third kind of *bayah* is to strengthen the intention to achieve total sincerity towards Allah ﷻ and to prevent oneself from committing evil deeds of the heart and the body, and to establish a relationship with Allah ﷻ. This is the main *bayah* while the previous two are forms of *ibadah* (worship). Fulfillment of the third *bayah* means to be staunch upon *hijrah* (avoiding all sins), *mujahadaat* (struggling against the *nafs* to perform good deeds), and *riyadhat* (exercises to discipline the *nafs* against shirking from good deeds) until one is infused with the effervescent light of *itminaan* (tranquility) which eventually becomes his nature.”

In Al-Takashuff, Hadhrat Thanvi writes:

عن عوف من مالك الاشجعي قال كنا عند النبي صلي الله عليه وسلم تسعة او ثمانية او سبعة فقال الا تبايعون رسول الله فبسطنا ايديناو قلنا علام نبايعك يا رسول الله قال علي ان تعبدوا الله ولا تشركوا به شيئا وتصلوا الصلوات الخمس و تسمعوا و تطيعوا و اسر كلمة خفية قال و لا تسئلوا الناس شيئا فلقد رأيت بعض اولئك النفر يسقط سوط احدهم فما يسأل احد يناوله اياه اخرجه مسلم و ابو داؤد و النسائ

Hadhrt Auf bin Malik Ashjai’ narrates,

Once we were sitting with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. We were nine, eight, or seven men. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘You are not going to take *bayah* with the Prophet?’ We spread out our hands and said, ‘What should we do *bayah* upon?’ ‘That you will worship Allah ﷻ alone, you will not commit shirk, you will pray all five *salawaat*, and will listen and follow upon all the commandments.’ Then he said quietly, ‘And that you will never ask anyone for anything.’” The narrator says that I have seen some of them that if a whip accidentally fell from their mount, they would not ask someone to pick it up and return it to them.

NOTE: The *bayah* of the *sufiah* is of the kind in which one makes firm resolution to adhere to the obligations of the Deen, and to be persistent on the good deeds of the heart and the body. In common parlance this *bayah* is called *bayah tariqat*. Some of the *Ahle-Zaahir* (literalists) say it is *bid’a* because it is not proven in the Sunnah of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and that the only type of *bayah* proven from the Sunnah is the *bayah* of struggling in the path of Allah ﷻ or upon embracing Islam. However, in the aforementioned hadith, the *bayah* of the *sufiah* is clearly proven because it was performed by the Sahaba ﷺ so it surely was not *bayah* upon embracing Islam. If it was, it would mean performing *bayah* on something already attained. Likewise, this could not be *bayah* for struggling in the path of Allah ﷻ because the



words are clearly emphasising importance upon doing good deeds. Thus, the objective is made clear.

It is the habit of the majority of elders to conduct the *taleem* (instructions) to the newly initiated in private. This is because it is usually beyond the comprehension of the general public. Thus, if it was ever made public it would cause *fitna* and disorder. Conducting the *taleem* in private is beneficial because it gives the *murid* undivided attention and shows consideration towards him which engenders love and respect in his heart (for the shaikh). It also warns others from following the instructions customized for him since they require instructions that correspond to their specific conditions. This way of privately instructing *murideen* is found in the aforementioned ahadith. Furthermore, most *murideen* will naturally be inclined to exaggerate their understanding of the instructions of their *murshid*. Aside from the true meaning, they may also take the literal meaning of their shaikh's words.

The existence of this characteristic is affirmed in this hadith that the purpose was to prohibit them from asking for others' things, not that they were prohibited from taking help for their own possessions. It is evident from the context that this was not meant by the hadith. However, since the possibility of the literal meaning existed, it would not be wrong for the Sahaba ﷺ to believe they should not ask for their own thing from anyone either. In one hadith it says that once the Blessed Prophet ﷺ told everyone to sit down during a *khutba*. At that moment, a sahabi walking through the doorway of the *masjid* sat down on the spot. It is clear from the hadith that this was not what the Blessed Prophet ﷺ intended, what he meant was that everybody should enter the *masjid* and nobody should be left standing. (End of quote)

This is the type of veneration for the shaikh which is absolutely essential to attaining spiritual benefit from one's shaikh. After this hadith, Hadhrat Thanvi narrates Hadhrat Ubadah's hadith which has been previously narrated. One of the points he makes regarding this hadith is that it clearly states that the people ordered to take *bayah* with him were all Sahaba ﷺ. This clearly proves that aside from the *bayah* for struggling in the path of Allah ﷻ and embracing Islam, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ also took *bayah* for shunning evil deeds and staying firm upon good deeds. This is the same *bayah* which is called *bayah tariqat* that is customary among the *sufiah*. Therefore, rejection of this *bayah* is foolishness.

Another point made clear from these two ahadith is that it is permissible for a shaikh to order his *murid* to take *bayah* with him for specific reasons. My relative, the respected Maulana Yusuf Kandhelwi collected many fine ahadith in the chapter of *bayah* in his book Hayatus-Sahaba. This book contains a chapter on *bayah* for struggling in the path of Allah ﷻ, a chapter on *bayah* of Islam, and an entire chapter titled "*Bayah* on the Deeds of Islam." The narrations, their references, and their chains of transmission altogether are extremely

long. We will suffice here with a few short narrations. For more narrations and references to these narrations one may refer to Hayatus-Sahaba.

## Narrations

1. Bashir bin Khasaasia ؓ says, “I came to take *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. I asked him, ‘What things should I make *bayah* with you upon?’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ stretched out his hands to take *bayah* and said, ‘Bear witness that there is no God besides Allah ﷻ and that Muhammad ﷺ is his servant and Prophet, that you will pray five times salah in their respective times, pay the zakah, fast in the month of Ramadan, perform Hajj, and that you will go out in the path of Allah ﷻ.’ He said, ‘O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, I can do everything but two things. First, I cannot pay zakah because I own only ten camels which I ride on and milk to feed my family. Second, I cannot go in the path of Allah because I am weak-hearted and people say whoever runs away while in the path of Allah ﷻ will face the wrath of Allah ﷻ. I fear that if I go in the path of Allah ﷻ, I will run away and face the wrath of Allah ﷻ.’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ pulled back his hands and said, gesturing, ‘O Bashir, when there is neither zakah nor struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ then how do you expect to go into *Jannah*.’ I said, ‘O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, okay, spread your hands I will take *bayah* with you.’ Then the Blessed Prophet ﷺ spread out his hands and I took *bayah* with him upon the aforementioned deeds.”
2. Jarir ؓ narrates, “I took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to establish salah, to pay zakah, and that I will always be good with all Muslims.” In another narration the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “O Jarir! Spread out your hands.” I asked him, “For what O Blessed Prophet ﷺ?” “Upon adhering to all the commandments of Allah ﷻ and to be good to all Muslims.” Jarir listened carefully to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and being farsighted he said, “I will do whatever is within my ability, O Blessed Prophet ﷺ.” After this, anyone taking *bayah* would find some latitude in the words, “I will do whatever is within my ability.”
3. Abu Usama ؓ says the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said “Is there anyone wanting to take *bayah* with me?” Thauban ؓ said, “We will take *bayah* with you.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ accepted his *bayah* upon the pledge to never ask anything from anybody. Thauban ؓ asked, “What will the person who fulfills this *bayah* get?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “*Jannah*.” Then Thauban ؓ took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Abu Usama ؓ says, “I saw his whip fall from his hand when he was in a large gathering. Sometimes it even fell on someone’s shoulder and that person would stand up to hand it to him, but he would refuse to take it. Instead, he would dismount and pick it up himself.”

4. The narration of Abu Zarr رضي الله عنه is narrated with various chains of transmission. He says, “I took *bayah* with the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم five times that I would not fear the criticism of any person in fulfilling the rights of Allah ﷻ.” In another hadith the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to Abu Zarr رضي الله عنه, “Wait for six days and come to me on the seventh and I will tell you something. Make sure you understand what I say properly.” On the seventh day the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “First, I advise you to fear Allah ﷻ, when you are alone or in a gathering; whenever you commit a bad deed immediately erase it with a good deed; do not ask anyone for anything even if your whip falls; and do not safeguard anyone’s possessions.”

*CHAPTER 10*

*THE CUSTOMARY MUJAHADAAT (EXERCISES) WERE UNNECESSARY IN THE  
TIME OF THE BLESSED PROPHET ﷺ*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الحمدُ لله رب العالمين  
والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The effect of the company of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ

For people in the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, being in his presence was sufficient to produce the state of *ihsan*. This is found throughout the books of the *mutaqademeen* and the *mutakhireen*. . However, as time passed and the *nur* of the enlightened period dissipated, the hearts of Muslims became enveloped in the darkness of *zulumat* (evils). In Tirmizi, it is narrated by Anas ؓ that everything in Madinah was infused with *nur* the day the Blessed Prophet ﷺ entered the city and was covered in darkness the day he passed away. We had not even brushed the dirt from our hands after burying the Blessed Prophet ﷺ that we felt a change in our hearts (meaning that the Sahaba ؓ did not feel the *nur* and purity of heart which they felt when they were in the presence of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ).

Hanzala ؓ narrates,

I came from my house and met Abu Bakr ؓ. He asked me, ‘O Hanzala, how are you doing?’ I said, ‘Hanzala is a *munafiq* (hypocrite).’ He exclaimed, ‘what are you saying, O Hanzala?’ I said, ‘When we are sitting with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and he is talking about *Jannah* and *Jahannum*, it is as if *Jannah* and *Jahannum* are right in front of us. However, when we leave his presence and return to our families and are busy in our business, we forget everything.’ Abu Bakr said, ‘I swear by Allah ﷻ, I feel the exact same way.’ Then Abu Bakr and I both came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and I said, ‘O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, Hanzala has become a *munafiq*.’ He said, ‘What are you saying?’ Then I explained to him our situation and he replied, ‘I swear by the One in whose hands is my life, if you remain in the state when you are with me and are perpetual in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ, the angels would shake hands with you in your beds and on the pathways, but Hanzala this happens only on occasion.’ He repeated three times, ‘A person never remains in the same state.’

This is referring to the state of perpetual consciousness of Allah ﷻ. It is the same with the *masha'ikh* that the *murideen* who attain a certain spiritual experience in their presence do not hold it for long after they leave their shaikh. The word *dhikr* used in the above hadith includes the gatherings of *dhikr*. Frequent *dhikr* helps in attaining the level of *ihsan* and abundant *dhikr* can substitute for being in the presence of one's shaikh.

It is mentioned in Al-Takashuf that Abu Talha Ansari ؓ was once praying salah in his garden when he saw a bird fluttering about, unable to free itself from the entwined branches. Abu Talha stared at it fixedly, amazed that the trees of his garden were so thick and lush that even something as small as a bird could not free itself from his garden. When he returned his attention to salah, he realized he had forgotten how many *rak'at* he had prayed. He said to himself, "I have been put in difficulty because of my property." Thereafter, he came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, explained the entire matter and then said, "O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, I give this garden in the path of Allah ﷻ. Spend it wherever you wish." This hadith is narrated by Imam Malik (rah).

#### NOTE:

1. One of the many practices of the *sufiah* is to be vigilant of the heart and to make amends when the heart is forgetful of the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. The excellence of this practice is understood by the sahabi's act and the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ approval. It was his vigilance towards his heart which resulted in his donating the garden to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.
2. Hatred towards a thing which diverts one's attention away from Allah ﷻ is called *ghairat*; a superb quality for any mumin to possess.
3. Removing from one's ownership anything which makes one forgetful of Allah ﷻ. It is often observed in the stories of the *auliya-allah* that they confiscated from the *murideen* anything that made them forgetful of Allah ﷻ. The evidence for this is found in the abovementioned hadith. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ approved of the treatment the sahabi prescribed for himself (of removing from his ownership the thing which made him forgetful of Allah ﷻ). In hadith terminology, the tacit approval of an act by the Blessed Prophet ﷺ is called *taqrir*.

#### Incidents of the Sahaba ؓ

There is another incident of this kind narrated in the Muwatta from the time of the *khilafat* of Uthman ؓ. An Ansaari sahabi was once praying salah in his garden. The dates had ripened and were hanging in clusters on the date-palm trees. He took side glances at the clusters and his heart became distracted by thoughts of the garden. When his attention returned to salah he realized he could not remember how many *rak'at* he had prayed. He said to himself, "I have been put in extreme confusion because of this garden," and came to Uthman ؓ. He narrated the whole incident to Uthman ؓ and said, "This garden of mine is *sadaqa* in the path of Allah

ﷺ, spend it wherever you wish.” Uthman ؓ then sold the garden for 50,000, named the garden *khamseen*, and gave away all the money in *sadaqa*.

There are not hundreds but thousands of such incidents in the biographies of the Sahaba ؓ which prove that the Sahaba ؓ reached the level of *ihsan*- without any specific practices or exhaustive exercises. Shah Waliullah Dehlavi wrote in his commentary of the Muwatta, “These incidents are manifestations of *nisbat*<sup>118</sup> after it is born in the heart. They gave priority to the worship of Allah ﷻ over everything and felt *ghairat* in keeping possession of the things which turned their attention away from Him. Allama Abul Walih Baji says, “Such incidents are very few in which the Sahaba ؓ attention was diverted while performing *ibadat* but if it ever did, they would feel a huge burden on themselves.” What about us who are constantly forgetful of Allah ﷻ in our salah? May Allah ﷻ forgive all our mistakes.

In the fifth chapter of my book Hakayaat Sahaba, there are many incidents about the concentration of the Sahaba ؓ during their salah. One of these stories is about Abdullah bin Zubair ؓ (one of the younger Sahaba ؓ) who was once praying salah while his infant son Hashim was lying next to him. A snake fell from the roof onto Hashim and he began to scream. People raised a hue and cry. They ran for the child and killed the snake. In the meantime, Abdullah bin Zubair ؓ continued to pray his salah in peace. After the *salam*, he asked, “I heard some noise?” His wife said,

May Allah ﷻ have mercy on you, the child was about to lose his life and you didn't even know?” He replied, “Woe to you! If I was to divert my attention in salah I would be breaking my salah.

There are many incidents of this kind in Hakayaat Sahaba. What need did the Sahaba ؓ have for practices and exercises when they already had reached the level of *ان تعبد الله كأنك تراه* (‘That you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him’).

My respected Maulana Yusuf also narrated many incidents in his excellent book Hayatus Sahaba, under the chapter of “*Haqeeqat-ul-Iman*” (The Reality of *Iman*). The first incident in this chapter is of Harith bin Malik ؓ who was once praying salah in the *masjid*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ entered the *masjid* and nudged him with his foot. Harith ؓ raised his head and said, “May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, what is it O Blessed Prophet ﷺ?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked, “In what condition did you wake up this morning?” He said, “O Blessed

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<sup>118</sup> *Nisbat*- relationship with Allah ﷻ. The objective of *Ihsan* is to strengthen the *nisbat* with Allah ﷻ.

Prophet ﷺ, I woke up in the state of being a *mumin*.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked, “What is the reality of what you just said?” He replied,

I turned myself away from the world, spent the whole day thirsty (i.e., fasting), and stayed awake the whole night. I see the throne of my Creator and the dwellers of *Jannah* visiting each other, and the dwellers of *Jahannum* that they are enemies of each other.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “You are a man whose heart Allah ﷻ has enlightened. You have *ma’rifat* (gnosis) of Allah ﷻ.”



*CHAPTER 11*

*THE MUJAHADAAT OF THE SUFLAH*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Attainment of Ihsan

As Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi was previously quoted, one sitting with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was enough to produce the attribute of *ihsan*. As the rift in time between the Ummah and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ grew, the attainment of *ihsan* became a farfetched aspiration, and spiritual physicians (i.e., *sufiah*) were required to devise spiritual remedies to help acquire it.

In Shifa-ul-Aleel (the translation of Al-Qaul A- Jameel), the translator comments:

By his unparalleled examination of the subject and his passionate discussions, the author (Shah Waliullah Dehlavi) has removed the objections of the feebleminded. Some feebleminded people say that the ways and exercises of the Qadiria, Chishtia, and Naqshbandia are not to be found in the Sahaba ؓ or *Tabieen* therefore they are *bid'a sayiah* (evil innovations). The summary of his response is simple. The reason *shuyukh* devised these methods was to attain a quality that existed in the time of the Prophethood. However, the method of attaining this quality (of *ihsan*) changed with the times. Thus, the *auliya* of *tariqat* did not deviate from the Shari'ah. Just as the *A'immah mujathideen* established certain principles for deriving legal rulings from the *zaahir* of the Shari'ah the *auliya* of *tariqat* similarly established specific principles to achieve from the *baatin* (inner spiritual aspect) of the Shari'ah. This *baatin* of the Shari'ah became known as *tariqat*. How can this be called *bid'a sayiah*? What a ridiculous claim. Although, this much can be said that the Sahaba ؓ were not in need of such exercises because they acquired it directly from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ himself. The people after them, however, were required to devise certain exercises to attain *ihsan* because of the rift in time between the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and them. The Sahaba ؓ did not need *ilm-ul-nahw* (Arabic philology) or *ilm-ul-sarf* (Arabic morphology) to understand the Quran while non-Arabs and the Arabs now require them to understand it.

In the footnote of Al-Qaul Al-Jameel, Nawab Qutbuddin Khan Dehlavi explains this with an example. He says:

When the sun is out, a person can read without the need of artificial light. Though, when the sun sets the person needs light to read. In the time of the Sahaba ؓ the sun was out, there was no need to perform certain exercises to achieve *huzur ma Allah* ؓ (consciousness of Allah ؓ). This was achieved by one sitting with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ; something that cannot be achieved in many months now. Now, as the sun has set, the exercises are performed to achieve *ihsan*.

After this, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi says:

I heard from my blessed father who would often mention seeing Ali ؓ, Hassan ؓ, and Hussain ؓ in his dream. 'I asked Ali ؓ, is our *nisbat* the same as yours in the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ?' Ali ؓ asked me to go into a state of *istighraaq* (a state of meditative engrossment in Allah ؓ). After meditating for a while he said, 'It is the same *nisbat* without any difference<sup>119</sup>.'

## Spiritual States

Then one should know that whoever maintains the state of *nisbat* reaches lofty states at times. Sometimes they reach one type of heightened state while at other times another type. One should appreciate these heightened states and know that such *ahwaal* are signs of the acceptance of one's good deeds. One of these *ahwaal* is to steadfastly perform good deeds, give priority of the commandments of Allah ؓ over all other things and to be diligent in this matter. Therefore, Imam Malik (rah) narrated in his Muwatta from Abdullah Bin Bakr that Abu Talha Ansaari ؓ would pray salah in his garden (this incident has already been mentioned). After this he says, "The story of Sulaiman (as) mentioned in the ayah:

فطفق مسحاً بالسوق و الأعناق

is a well-known incident." The translator of Al-Qaul Al-Jameel writes,

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<sup>119</sup> Durr Thameen 61

In brief, what happened was that once Sulaiman became so busy inspecting his horses that the sun set and he missed his Asr salah. Sulaiman (as) ordered ‘Cut the necks and hamstrings of the horses.’

In essence, following the commandments of Allah ﷻ supersedes everything else for the righteous. If anything impedes the path of fulfilling the commandments of Allah ﷻ, the *ghairat* of the righteous begs that it be removed immediately. Therefore, Abu Talha ؓ donated his beautiful garden and Sulaiman (as) cut down his horses.

In Bayan-ul-Quran, under the ayah

فطفق مسحاً بالسوق والأعناق

Hadhrat Thanvi writes,

This incident is worth remembering. When the robust horses, trained in the path of Allah ﷻ, were brought before him he became so engrossed in their inspection that he didn't realize the day was over. He missed some of his daily routine of supererogatory prayers (according to the narration of Ali ؓ in Durre Mansur). Though his servants were aware of his routine, none of them had the courage to bring it to his attention because of his imposing character (according to the narration of Ibn Abbas ؓ). However, when he realized it himself he said, ‘Woe to me that I became forgetful of my Creator because of my love for wealth. He then ordered his attendants to bring the horses back in his presence. He unsheathed his sword and began cutting them down at the neck and hamstrings (as mentioned in the narration by Hassan ؓ in Durre Mansur). In the terminology of *tasawwuf* this is called *ghairat* which means eliminating anything which removes one from the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.

Then he (Shah Waliullah) says:

And one of the heightened states is fear of Allah ﷻ that manifests in the limbs and body. The memorizers of hadith narrate a hadith that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Ten people will be placed underneath the shade of His throne, the fifth being one who remembered Allah ﷻ in a desolate place and tears flowed from his eyes.’ In another hadith, once Uthman ؓ cried profusely while standing before a grave. It is also mentioned in the hadith that a sound like the simmering of food (in a pot) came from the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ chest during the time of *tahajjud* (nightly prayers).

Shah Abdul Aziz says,

It is narrated in a hadith that one who cries from fear of Allah ﷻ will not enter into *Jahannum* until milk reenters the udder. Abu Bakr ؓ was one who cried profusely. He could not stop crying whenever he recited the Quran. Jubair bin Mutim ؓ said, ‘When I heard the ayah from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ,

ام خلقوا من غير شئ ام هم الخالقون

Is it that they are created by none, or are they themselves the creators?<sup>120</sup>

It was as if my heart burst (from my chest) from fear of Allah ﷻ.’

## The Objective

There are many sayings of the *qudamaa* and the *mutakhireen* that *mujahadaat* themselves are not objectives. The true objective is attaining the level of *ihsan*. In the process of attaining *ihsan*, a *salik* is treated according to the spiritual illness that disables him (from attaining *ihsan*). Likewise, every nation identifies with a certain culture and every culture breeds its own type of spiritual illnesses. Therefore, the *masha'ikh* of the time will prescribe treatments accordingly. When *bid'at* increased, the *masha'ikh* added the statement “to save oneself from *bid'at*” in their *bayah* like the Blessed Prophet ﷺ sometimes added “and not to ask anyone for anything” or occasionally “to never wail.” Likewise, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ prescribed specific rulings for different Sahaba ؓ. In *Mishkat* (12), Sufyan bin Abdullah ؓ once asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, “O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, tell me something inclusive and concise in Islam that I don't need to ask anyone again?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “Say ‘I believe in Allah’ and hold strong to this.”

In another narration, Abu Amaamah ؓ narrates, “One person asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, ‘What is *iman*?’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘When your good deeds makes you happy and your bad deeds make you sad, you are a *mumin*.’” Once Amr bin Anbasa ؓ asked, “What is *iman*?” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “To be patient with something you do not have and to be generous with what you possess.” In this same hadith he was asked, “What is the highest level of *iman*?” the Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “Good habits.” When Mu'az bin Jabal ؓ asked the same question the Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, “To love for the sake of Allah ﷻ, to despise for the sake of Allah ﷻ, and to keep your tongue in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.”

In another narration Abdullah bin Busr ؓ narrates,

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<sup>120</sup> 52:35

One person asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, ‘O Prophet, there are many rules of Islam, tell me one that I may hold on to tightly.’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘Keep your tongue busy in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ.’

In another narration, Abu Huraira ؓ narrates,

One person asked the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, ‘Give me advice?’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘Do not be angry.’ He asked again, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said the same again. When he asked the same question repeatedly the Blessed Prophet repeated the same reply. In another narration, Abu Ayub Ansari ؓ narrates, “A man asked, ‘Give me some short advice?’ The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘Pray salah as if it is your last, do not say something you will feel regretful for afterwards, and do not hope for anything which is in the hands of others.’

## Specific Remedies

In essence, these narrations illustrate that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ customized his answers to the person he was addressing based on his specific situation. Likewise, the wordings the *masha'ikh* of *suluk* use or the clauses they add to the standard *bayah* depends on the person taking *bayah* with them. It also depends on the culture they live in and the area they are from. In areas where people are accustomed to *ta'zia* (a *bid'a* in which a simulated funeral procession is observed in memory of a famous deceased person) the *masha'ikh* add the words of “repentance from *ta'zia*.”

In the physical body, sometimes a ‘hot’ medicine is suitable for some while for others living in a different region ‘cold’ medicines may be more effective for the same sickness. Two patients sometimes have the same same sickness but the physician prescribes two different medicines, the goal in every case being the same: to cure the patient. Similarly, the treatments of homeopaths and medical physicians vary, but their objective is the same. Likewise, the *ahwaal* of the Chishtia and Naqshbandia orders are different because they prescribe treatments according to their methodologies. All these *mujahadaat* (regardless of whether it is according to the Chishtia or Naqshbandia methodology) are all treatments for the same spiritual sicknesses. Thus, to demand where such a method is found in the Quran and hadith is like asking a physician where is proof in the hadith to prescribe *gule banafshi* (a traditional herb) for colds. It is like asking a physician, “Which ayah of the Quran and which hadith prove the use of penicillin for infections?” When it is understood that a person is sick and a physician prescribes something for him, it becomes incumbent on the patient to take that medicine. In fact, in some cases scholars even permit the use of a forbidden medicine for treating an illness when a qualified physician insists no other medicine will help treat that illness. If a morsel of food gets stuck in the throat and there is nothing except alcohol, it becomes *fardh* on this person to take the alcohol to save his life. It is the same idea with spiritual sicknesses.

If the spiritual ‘physicians’ prescribe something for a spiritual sickness none has the right to ask whether or not this is from the Quran and Sunnah. Whoever says it is *bid’a* is not aware of the definition of *bid’a*. *Bid’a* is the name of an “innovation in Deen” not an “innovation for Deen.” People unable to differentiate between the two have no understanding of the Deen. “Innovation for the Deen” is so important it sometimes becomes *wajib*. For example, swords, bows, and arrows were used in the past for war, but to fight with these weapons today is ludicrous. It is *wajib* to be equipped with guns, tanks, and modern weaponry if one wishes to gain victory.

Hazrat Mujjadid writes in one of his letters (taken from Tajaliyaat Rabbani):

You wrote that you were uninformed about the special *nisbat* of your shaikh (Shaikh Baqi Billah) and even asked about it. Listen my friend; these types of queries are not advisable in written form or even orally. Who knows (after reading the reply) what others will make of it and deduce from it. In order to understand the *nisbat* of the sheikh one must stay in their company for a lengthy period of time and not be sceptical of them, meaning that they must be held in the highest regard. Every question deserves an answer whatever it may be, therefore, I will tell you this much that every *maqam*<sup>121</sup> is unique in the effects it produces, the changes it brings in the heart and into the actions. Each *maqam* is characterized by a type of gnosis, spiritual realizations, *ahwaal*, and feelings. The most appropriate *ibadah* for one *muqaam* may be *dhikr* and *tawajjuh* (concentration on Allah ﷻ). For another, it may be recitation of Quran and salah. Also, one *maqam* may only be attained through *jazb* while another through *suluk*. A third type of *maqam* may be reached through both while another type of *maqam* is independent of both, meaning that it has no affiliation with *suluk* or *jazb*. This *maqam*, however, is rare. This *maqam* was the hallmark of the Sahaba ﷺ. Anyone who possesses this *maqam* is of the most excellent character. The holders of this *maqam* have little resemblance to the holders of other *maqamat* unlike the other *maqamat* which are similar to each other in one way or another (as mentioned previously). Few of the *masha’ikh* of the three orders (i.e., Chishtia, Naqshbandia, and Qadiria) claim to have possessed this *maqam*, meaning that few can communicate the feelings and the gnosis that is attained in this *maqam*.

ذلك فضل الله يؤتيه من يشاء

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<sup>121</sup> *Maqam* unlike *ahwaal* do not come and go. A *maqam* is a station or state that once reached becomes permanent unless it is forsaken through sin and disobedience.

## Attainment of Nisbat

The Sahaba ﷺ attained this powerful *nisbat* and peaked in it within the first moments of their companionship with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Anyone other than the Sahaba ﷺ would have to tread the path of *suluk* or *jazb*, gain knowledge and *ma'rifat* (gnosis) before attaining this *nisbat* of the Sahaba ﷺ. The attainment of this *nisbat* early on is the exclusive trait of the blessing of the *subbah* (companionship) of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. However, it is possible to attain this lofty *nisbat* in the very beginning if one sits in the *subbah* of one who has received this blessing.

ومن بعد هذا ما يدق صفاته  
وما كتمه احظي لديه واجمل

**After this is mention of those things which are intricate, and it is better and more beautiful if it is left unsaid.**

As it is necessary to consult physicians for physical illnesses, because no one reads medical books to treat oneself, it is similarly necessary to have spiritual physicians for spiritual illnesses. As many *mujtahideen* came who established *usul* and derived rulings accordingly from the Quran and Sunnah, likewise many *masha'ikh* of *suluk* developed methodologies for *tariqat*. As there were many *mujtahideen* for the *zaahir* of the Shari'ah, likewise there were many *masha'ikh* for the *baatin* of Shari'ah; and as the *zaahir* of Shari'ah became confined to four Imams likewise for many reasons the *masha'ikh* of *tariqat* became confined (within most of the Muslim world) to four paths: the Qadiria, Chishtia, Suharwardia, and Naqshbandia.



*CHAPTER 12*

*THE NEED FOR A SHAIKH AND THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR  
MASHEEKHAT (TO BE A SHAIKH)*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The need for a competent doctor to treat the sick

In Al-Takashuf, Hadhrat Thanvi writes,

One should know that it is necessary for one who treats an illness to be in good health and competent enough to treat others as the saying goes, *رأي العليل العليل* ('the opinion of an incompetent person is weak'). Therefore, even if he is a physician, his opinion holds no weight. Likewise, if he is healthy but incompetent, he cannot help anyone though he himself is in good health. Likewise, in the treatment of spiritual ailments, a good shaikh is required, one who is *mutaqqi* (a person of *taqwa*), not a transgressor or an innovator in Deen. He should also be competent enough to help others attain *ihsan*. If this person is corrupt in his *aqeedah* (beliefs/doctrine) or actions (i.e., if he amongst the people of *bid'a* or transgressors) it is fair to say he will not be any good for his *murid* in matters of Deen. In fact, it is most likely he will try to proselyte him; and then if he is not practicing his Deen what is the likelihood he will guide his *murid* towards good deeds. He will say to himself, 'What will he think of me if he sees that I do not practice upon what I preach?' If anything, he will justify his actions to appear righteous before his *murideen*, and this is a major source of misguidance. Second, his teachings will not be illuminated with *anwaar*, blessings, or the divine help of Allah ﷻ. If this shaikh is *mutaqqi* and pious, but does not possess the necessary skills to instruct the *murideen* in spiritual matters, he will be unable to help the *talib* (student) in his affairs.

How do we recognize when someone is truly a physician? If he is accredited, completed his residency, people come to him for treatment, and many of them are nursed back to health. Likewise, the signs of a true spiritual shaikh are when he has spent a considerable amount of time with and benefited from a recognized shaikh, and the ulama and people of intelligence think highly of him, come to him in times of need, and feel an increase in love of Allah ﷻ and decrease in love of the *dunya* when sitting in his presence, and the situation of those who sit in his company is continually progressing. When one observes all these signs in a person, he should know that he is worthy of being made a shaikh. He should consider

him a panacea for his spiritual ailments and believe that visiting and helping such a person is a great honor. Thus, a complete overview of the characteristics of a shaikh is: He is *mutaqqi* and pious. He is a follower of the Sunnah, knows a sufficient amount of the knowledge of Deen, remained in the company of a recognized shaikh, the scholars and intelligent people are inclined towards him, his company is efficacious, and the *murideen* are improving in his company.

In Al-Qaul Al-Jameel, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi narrated harsher conditions for being a shaikh. The summary of this is mentioned in Al-Shifaa ul-A'leel. Below is mention of some of those conditions for one who takes *bayah* (i.e., a *murshid*).

1 .Knowledge of the Quran and hadith, and this does not mean a comprehensive knowledge of the Quran, but sufficient enough that he has understood the Quran through one of the *tafsir* like Tafsir Madaarik or Jalalain or some other voluminous or summarized *tafsir* and that he has studied the said *tafsir* from a learned scholar. He should also be knowledgeable in the field of ahadith that he has studied Kitab Masaabih or Mashaariq and knows the opinions of the scholars on the different ahadith.

The translator (of Al-Qaul Al-Jameel) says that the condition 'knows the opinions of the scholars' is to know that any opinion aside from the opinions of the four Imams is a deviation and against the consensus of the Ummah. Shah Abdul Aziz says that one who is informed of the position of scholars (on issues) fulfills the condition of having sufficient knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah.

After this, Shah Waliullah Dehlvi reminds us that the condition for the *murshid* to be an *alim* is that the purpose of *bayah* itself is to guide the *murid* towards goodness and prohibit him from wrongful things, to break his bad habits and to imbue in him good ones. Then the most important is to get the *murid* to retain these good habits and practice them in all the different aspects mentioned above. Thus, how can a shaikh who is not an *alim* and does not possess the knowledge of good and bad, right and wrong, be able to guide a *murid* to the right path?

The translator says:

*Subhanallah!* Look at how the situation has changed in our times. The *fugara* of today are obsessed with the notion that *ilm* is unnecessary in *tasawwuf* and, in fact, think it is a hurdle in this path. They say that Shari'ah is one thing and *tariqat* is another. How can they say such a thing when all one finds in the books of the past *sufiah* like Qut-ul-Quloob, A'waarif, Ihya-ul-Uloom, Kimiyah-il-Sa'adat, Futuh-ul-Ghaib, and Ghaniyat-ul-Talebeen (by Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani), is that Shari'ah is a condition for *tasawwuf* and *tariqat*. Even ignorance cringes at such examples of grave ignorance. They don't have any idea what is written in the books of the *sufiah* whose names they chant night and day, more than they recite the Quran. (End of quote)

Maulana Nawab Qutbuddin (the translator of Al-Qaul Al-Jameel) writes in a footnote:

It says, in the book Tariqat Muhammadi that the forefather of the family of *sufiah*, Shaikh Junaid Baghdadi says,

Whoever has not memorized the Quran and written ahadith cannot be followed in *tasawwuf* because this path and knowledge of ours is mutually intertwined with the Quran and Sunnah.

Another one of his sayings is, “Any *tariqat* which opposes the Shari’ah is *kufr*.”

Siri Saqti said, “*Tasawwuf* is the name of three qualities:

1. The *nur* of *ma’rifat* (gnosis) does not extinguish the *nur* of *taqwa*.
2. One does not speak the secrets of the *baatin*<sup>122</sup> if they violate the explicit meanings of the Quran.
3. The *karamaat* of a person does not transgress the *mahaarim* (prohibitions) of Allah ﷻ.

Many other sayings of the famous *auliya-allah* are mentioned in Jaami ul Jaami ul Tafaasir.

Shah Waliullah continues:

Then the *murshid* must be one who has remained in the company of the *mutaqqi* ulama, learned *adab* from them, and diligently studied *halal* and *haram*. He trembles in fear when he hears the orders and prohibitions from the Quran and Sunnah, and transforms his sayings, actions, and his whole life in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah. If a *murshid* is not a scholar it is expected of him to possess that much knowledge as is necessary to ensure he leads his life according to the Quran and Sunnah.

2. The second condition is that he must have *a’daalat* (justness) and *taqwa*. It is *fardh* upon him to abstain from major sins and to not continuously commit minor ones.

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<sup>122</sup> Knowledge of the *baatin* refers to the secrets of the soul, the different stations the salik reaches on his journey towards Allah ﷻ, his spiritual experiences etc,

Shah Abdul Aziz says:

*Taqwa* is a condition for the *murshid* because the purpose behind *bayah* is to purify the heart. Humans are naturally inclined to adopt the ways and habits of those with whom they spend time. In rectification of the heart words without actions will not do. Therefore, a *murshid* who is not characterized by good morals, the *a'maal* (actions) of *khair* (goodness) and who only talks and delivers speeches has not realized the whole purpose behind *bayah*.

3. The third condition is that he strives for the *Akhirah* and abstains from the allures of the material world. He is steadfast in practicing the *muakkadah* (strongly emphasized practices) and the *adhkaar* (means of Allah's ﷻ remembrance) narrated in the authentic ahadith. His heart is connected with Allah ﷻ and he possesses the *malika* (gift) of perpetual awareness of Allah ﷻ.

4. The fourth condition is that he only orders what is permissible and prohibits what is forbidden. He is strong of opinion and not wishy-washy, trying to please everyone. He is also extremely intelligent and one who can be trusted.

4. The fifth condition is that he has stayed in the company of a *kamil* (complete) *murshid* and learned *adab* from him for a lengthy period of time. He gained *nur* of the heart and tranquility from him. The company of the *auliya-allah* is necessary because the Sunnah of Allah ﷻ is that one cannot acquire something unless he is in the company of those who already possess it. A person cannot gain knowledge unless he sits with the ulama, and likewise we can say the same of every skill that is learned; one cannot be a blacksmith until he learns from a blacksmith and a carpenter unless he is in the company of a carpenter.

5. It is not necessary that the shaikh is able to perform miraculous deeds or does not work (i.e., have a job). This is because miraculous acts are the result of exhaustive *mujahadaat* and spiritual exercises. They are not a sign of *kamal* (perfection) in the shaikh, and to leave one's work or occupation is against the Shari'ah. One should not be deceived by the *darwaish* (dervishes) who are overwhelmed by their spiritual states and do not strive to make a living; their lifestyle cannot be taken as evidence of permissibility to withdraw from worldly life and making a living. Islam teaches us to be content with whatever we have, to be careful of how we earn our wealth, to avoid unlawful wealth, a job that earns *haram*, and to avoid doubtful wealth.

Shah Abdul Aziz says:

It is not necessary for a shaikh to lead a monastic life or devote himself to harsh and difficult conditions and devotions like perpetual fasting, spending the night in prayer, practicing celibacy, avoiding delectable foods, and running off into the jungle or mountains as many people of our time think is required to be a true *sufi*. This is because these acts fall under *tashadud fil Deen* (extremism in the Deen), and *tashadud ala nafs* (hardship on the Self) is not permissible. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not restrict yourself so rigidly that Allah ﷻ grabs you harshly.” He also said, “Monasticism has no place in Islam.”

## Struggles of our past Shuyukh

The conditions put by Shah Waliullah for shaikh-hood are comparatively harsher than those put by Hakim-ul-Ummah Thanvi. Before Shah Waliullah, the elders put their *murideen* through strict measures and harsh conditions before granting them *khilafat*<sup>123</sup>. This is known to any one who has read the biographies of the *auliya-allah*. The story of Shah Abu Saeed Gangohi is well known and I have added it to many of my booklets. In summary, the story is that he went to Shah Nizamuddin Balkhi. When Shah Nizamuddin learned that his shaikh's grandson was about to arrive, he set out to receive him from one of the stations. Shah Nizamuddin treated him with the utmost respect and returned with him to Balkh. He sat him on an elevated place and himself sat where the servants sat on the ground. When Shah Abu Saeed asked permission to leave, Shah Nizamuddin placed a gift of gold coins at his feet. Then Abu Saeed said, “Hadhrat, I do not need this worldly stuff nor have I come here for this purpose. I want the wealth which you came and took from us” (referring to the spiritual wealth Shah Nizamuddin took from Shah Abu Saeed's grandfather). No sooner had he said this that Shah Nizamuddin changed his look. He said rashly, “Go to the barn and prepare food for the hunting dogs.”

Thus, he was placed in charge of watching over the hunting dogs, washing, bathing, and keeping them clean. Sometimes he was told to blow into the fires (that warmed the water for the bathrooms) and at other times made to accompany the shaikh on his hunting trips, holding the leashes of the hunting dogs while the shaikh rode his horse. One of the servants was instructed, “Give the servant who lives in the barn two pieces of barley bread twice a day from the house.” Now whenever Shah Abu Saeed came in the presence of Shah Nizamuddin, he would not look up at Shah Abu Saeed. He told Shah Abu Saeed to sit far from him and refused to acknowledge his presence when he came in.

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<sup>123</sup> *Khilafat*- A shaikh's certification that the disciple possesses the qualities to keep spiritually progressing on the Path as long as the disciple continues following Shari'ah, struggling against *nafs*, and maintaining *m'amoolat* (see page 237 for definition).

Once the shaikh ordered the *bhangan* (i.e., the lady who removed household waste) to purposely drop some garbage over him and note his reaction. When she passed by and purposely slipped some garbage over him he grew red with anger and said, “I would have showed you if we were in Gangoh.” The *bhangan* informed the shaikh of Shah Abu Saeed’s response. The shaikh said, “There is still some odor of arrogance in him.” Two months later, the shaikh ordered the *bhangan* to do the same again. This time he only glared at her then quietly lowered his head. When the *bhangan* came and told the shaikh, “Today, he did not say a thing. He glared at me and then lowered his head”. The shaikh said, “There is still some odor left.” After a few months, he ordered the *bhangan* to “Throw a whole basket of cow dung on him until he is covered in it from head to toe.” But now Shah Abu Saeed was a made man. When she came and threw the whole basket over him, he stood up concerned and said humbly, “The poor woman hit me accidentally and fell. Tell me, are you okay? Are you hurt anywhere?” He then scooped all the cow dung in his hand saying, “Here let me put this back in for you,” and carefully put it back in the basket. The *bhangan* narrated the whole incident and said in astonishment, “Today, instead of getting angry, Shah sahib pitied me and scooped up all the dung and put it in the basket.” The shaikh said, “Now he is made.”

Later that day, Shaikh Nizamuddin sent a servant to Shah Abu Saeed, “Today we will go hunting, prepare the dogs for the trip.” In the evening, the shaikh rode out into the jungle with his servants. Shah Abu Saeed was guiding the hunting dogs by their leashes. These were well-fed dogs while Shah was thin and fragile. He tied the leashes to his waist and tried to hold them back but fell and dragged on the jungle floor. Branches, thorns, and rocks bruised and cut his body, but not a sound came from his mouth. When the other servants pulled in the dogs and raised him to his feet he was trembling from fear that, “The shaikh will be angry with me,” and will say “You didn’t follow my orders! Why didn’t you control the dogs?” But the shaikh was only testing him and this he had done.

That night Shah Nizamuddin saw his shaikh Qutb-ul-Alim Shaikh Abdul Quddus (the grandfather of Shah Abu Saeed) in his dream. He (Shah Abdul Quddus) said to him in a sad tone, “Nizamuddin, I didn’t put you through as much as you did my children.” Early the next morning Shah Nizamuddin called Shah Abu Saeed from the barn and held him to his chest. He then said, “I brought with me the *faizaan*<sup>124</sup> of the Chistia family from India, and you are now taking it back with you to India. *Mubarak* to you, you may now go home.” Thus, he granted him *khilafat* and sent him back to India.

This story is summarized; the original is much longer. There are many famous stories similar to this one of *mujahadaat* in the books of history, but our physical strength has given

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<sup>124</sup> The outpouring of blessings and *ruhaniyat* (spirituality).

away and we do not possess the same *iman* as our predecessors did. Therefore, the elders after Hadrat Thanvi have become very lenient in this matter. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to the Sahaba ﷺ,

You live in a time that one will be ruined if he does not fulfill a tenth of ‘what is required of him’, but there will come a time when a person will be saved when he performs a tenth.<sup>125</sup>

In his commentary of Mishkat, Mullah Ali Qari writes “what is required” in this aforementioned hadith refers to *amr bil ma’roof* and *nahi a’nil munkar*.

I think it is a general statement and refers to all the commandments of Deen. By *nuqsaan* (deficiency) is meant *nuqsaan* of *khushu* (humility) and *ihsan*. In a hadith of Abu Dawud, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “A person prays salah and one tenth the reward of salah is written for him while for others, up to half the reward of salah.” This *nuqsaan* (by which they are gaining one tenth the reward for salah) is because of a deficiency in *khushu* and *khudhu* (submissiveness and concentration).

Due to the deterioration of *iman* and intolerance of our bodies to hardship, the *masha’ikh* have reduced the amount and intensity of the *mujahadaat* and also the conditions for being a shaikh. This topic is lengthy and though I feel like writing more on it, who is going to read it? Therefore, I shall stop here and write no more.

## Terminology and Objectives

The introduction that Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi wrote for Sufi Iqbal’s Urdu book, Akaabir ka Suluk o Ihsan, is superb therefore I will end this chapter with his words. He says:

When reading history, we see two difficult phases came upon movements, ethics, academics, modernization, and the sciences and arts:

1. When the ways or methods by which we attain certain objectives become objectives themselves.
2. When terminologies inhibit our understanding of realities.

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<sup>125</sup> Mishkat, p. 31



These methods and terminologies are extremely important. They are not adjuncts to the objectives, but evolved from them. Without them, these exalted objectives could not be propagated, promoted, or understood. Despite their importance, terminologies or methodologies are never objectives, but rather agents for the objectives. They are used temporarily for the fulfillment of an important cause (and that is attainment of the objectives) and are occasionally emphasized more than the objectives they are promoting. However, when the expert in any field or science deems it appropriate, he will not only filter the terminologies and methodologies from the objectives, but actually delete them. The expert will also try to maintain equilibrium between the terminologies and methodologies inhibiting the path to the objectives and guiding towards them. But one matter that must be realized is that this difficult stage came upon every exalted objective. In such cases, the methods often became the objectives and the terminologies inhibited the path to realizing the objectives and its realities.

Sometimes the objectives fade into the background as our emphasis on the terminology increases, but worse than that, bitter experiences with standard-bearers of these terminologies and their misuse of these terminologies led to gross misunderstandings about the objectives. A great swath of people became so distrustful of these objectives, that convincing them of their greatness became an arduous task. When you talk to them about the importance of acquiring these objectives or in the least to remove their doubts about them, the methodologies which self-styled and vain claimants have exaggerated and insisted upon, fall upon them. These self-styled claimants became so obsessed with the methodologies that the objectives themselves were forgotten.

Likewise, terminologies come in the way when people are called to the realities that are self-evident truths and in which there is no second opinion. The reality of such terminologies is that they are terms devised in certain conditions and circumstances; unlike the realities they serve, they are disposable and allow a difference of opinion. They were devised to bring certain realities (which are profoundly deep) to the mind in a timed-release manner (so as to not immediately overburden the mind with heavy and deep concepts) and with certain objectives in the minds of their makers. The first standard-bearers of these realities, whose lives were a living example of them, had no knowledge of these terminologies. They explained and implanted these realities in the conscious of the people using different meanings, methods, and in a different style. From *sarf*, *nahw*, *qawaa'id*, linguistics, *balaaghat* (rhetoric) to rectification of the heart and *haqeeqat* and *ma'rifat* (gnosis of Allah ﷻ), whoever studies the history of these fields and compare the *mutaqadimeen* to the

*mutakhireen* (in relation to these fields), will realize that the *mutaqadimeen* were independent of these *masaail* (methodologies) and thus were in control of their field. The *mutakhireen*, on the other hand, were dependent on the terminologies and thus controlled by them. The *muhaiqqeen*<sup>126</sup> are the true propagators of the *haqaiq* (realities) and the *ghair muhaiqqeen* (those who are unlearned because of lack of attention towards gaining an in-depth understanding of the subject) are prisoners and worshippers of the terminologies. In *deeniyat* (religious affairs), the arts, education, and *akhlaakhiyat* (ethics), these exalted objectives are a tragedy and a tribulation for their seekers, and this is a tragedy that has repeated over time throughout the centuries.

*Tasawwuf* is in the same predicament. As far as objectives and the realities of *tasawwuf* are concerned, they are an undeniable truth, but these two things (i.e., methodologies and terminologies) have harmed it the most. The first harm came by overuse of the methodology and the second by overemphasis on the terminology. If someone is asked: Are good morals and sincerity important or not? Is building *iman* to the level of *yaqeen* (certainty) good or not? What about attaining virtuous qualities and eliminating wicked ones? What about being saved from jealousy, hatred, keeping a grudge, love of wealth, love of the Self, and other immoral traits? Is liberation from the clutches of the *nafs ammaara* (the evil *nafs* which misguides) a good thing or not? What about *khushu* in salah, *tadharu'* (crying in humility) in dua, and watching over the *nafs*? What about the most essential qualities for a mumin like love for Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ? How about physically tasting the sweetness of love of Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ or in the least, to strive and work towards attaining it, to be honest in relations and transactions, truthfulness and trustworthiness, concern for fulfilling the rights of others, to be in control of the *nafs*, and to prevent outbreaks of irrational behaviour like exploding in a rage? Are these not traits we should strive to attain?

Every decent good-natured person, and especially a Muslim, who does not have the blindfold of prejudice over his eyes will tell you the same thing, that these qualities are not only good, but are actually objectives of the Shari'ah and that the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah encourage one to attain these qualities. However, the moment you explain that these qualities can be attained through a field that is known by the name of *tasawwuf*, you will see them frown and get upset. This is because of their repugnance for the terminology and also because of their observations and bitter experiences with the claimants and standard-bearers of this terminology. When the term is uttered, it revives their bad experiences with such claimants and their personal observations of them. But this is not a problem only of

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<sup>126</sup> Scholars who study and devote themselves to a subject matter in order to reach its reality.

*tasawwuf*. This is a problem common to every field and art, for every revivalist movement and every pure and sincere objective. They all have true workers and propagators as well as claimants and pretenders. There are the genuine and the counterfeit, the *muhacqiqs* and the *ghair muhacqiq*, the experienced and the inexperienced, and the truthful and the hypocrites within them. However, a realistic person will not reject the objective, field, or art on the basis of this dichotomy. The same goes for worldly matters like business, farming, or a skill; there are the good and experienced and also the bad and inexperienced among them. But the way Allah ﷻ runs the system of *dunya* and Deen is that people take what they need. The claimants and pretenders do not stop them from achieving the objectives nor does a misunderstanding of the terminology turn them away from the reality.

There are two parties in regards to *tasawwuf*. The first party accepts the different aspects of *tasawwuf*, but rejects it when they are incorporated under one name. Some of the objectives and characteristics we mentioned earlier are examples of things everyone accepts in their individual form, but when incorporated under the name of *tasawwuf* they are repulsed by it and say, “We don’t believe in *tasawwuf* and *tasawwuf* has caused a lot of *fitna*.”

The second party accepts the reality of *tasawwuf* but only when it is given a different name. For example, if they are told that the Quranic term for this reality is *tazkiya* and the hadith term is *ihsan* and the term used by the *mutakhireen* scholars is *fiqh baatin* (Fiqh of the heart), they say, “There is no reason to disagree with this and it is all supported by the Quran and ahadith.” The reality is that nothing from any book can be erased nor can the tongue of mankind (which has also been called the manifestation of Allah’s ﷻ voice because Allah ﷻ makes what He wants be to heard or said from the tongue of mankind) be silenced, otherwise if it was in our discretion we would call it *ihsan* and *tazkiya* and would remove the name *tasawwuf*. However, this name has become the convention and this is common with all fields and sciences. History is full of such examples where the conventional name differs from the original name in a science or field.

The *muhacqiqeen* of each field always emphasized the objectives and kept the methodology as secondary. Likewise, they boldly rejected those things which harmed its spirit and sublime objectives. In every era of the history of Islam, the teachers, propagators, and people of knowledge separated the flesh from the shell, the realities from the unreality, and the objectives from the customs. From Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Shihab-ul-Deen Suharwardi to Mujjadid Alf Thaani, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, Syed Ahmad Shaheed, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, they all clearly emphasized the need to distinguish non-objectives from objectives, and the flesh from its shell. They also forcefully rebutted the customs and rituals that seeped in through mixing with Hindus and false *sufis* and which people eventually believed were the pillars of *tasawwuf*. Whether it is Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani’s Futuh-ul-Ghaib and Ghaniyat-ul-

Talibeen, Shaikh Shihab-ul-Deen Suharwardi's A'warif-ul-Ma'arif, Shaikh Mujjadid Alf Thaani's Maktubaat Rabbani, the work of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, Syed Ahmad Shaheed's Siratul-Mustaqeem, Maulana Rashid Gangohi's Maktubaat, or Maulana Thanvi's Tarbiyat-ul Salik and Qasd-ul-Sabeel, one finds their articles and writings drawing the line between *haqq* and *baatil*. Shah Waliullah Dehlavi went as far as to say, "The *nisbat baatini* of the *sufiah azaam* is the greatest blessing, but their customs (which are not proven in the Shari'ah) hold no weight." Likewise, every one of these scholars emphasized, without exception, the importance of morals, dealings with others, and fulfilling the rights of others, and made these essential conditions for rectification of the heart and closeness to Allah ﷻ. Their writings overwhelmingly emphasized these points while their gatherings were hubs for their propagation.

I found the *buzurg* (elders) whose lifetimes I lived in, whom I was fortunate to meet, and whose lives convinced me of the righteousness of *tasawwuf*, more than the embodiment of *tasawwuf* and *tariqat*, they were also exemplars of the Shari'ah. Their morals mirrored the morals of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and their actions, their dealings with others, and their entire lives were perfect models of the Shari'ah. I always saw them separating the *wasaa'il* (methodology) from the objectives, undermining the terminologies, stressing the importance of the realities, ignoring the customs, and rebuffing the *bid'at*. Their adherence to the Sunnah was not limited to the *ibadaat* (acts of worship), it also entailed their habits and transactions. They were not the followers but rather the *mujtahideen* of this path of *tasawwuf*; through their divine intuition and extensive experience they sometimes omitted or added, and selected or summarized the field of *tasawwuf*. They discreetly prescribed treatments according to the attitude and personality of each *murid*, and carefully considered the situation, the personality, and the preoccupations (of the *murid*) in the prevention and treatment of spiritual illnesses. They were the founders, the spiritual doctors, and the *mujtahideen* of this field; they were the masters of their field, not those who submitted to it. Their main objective was to treat and revive the sick; they were not among those who followed the beaten path and rote the lessons. In their view, the true objectives of *tasawwuf* included perfecting one's morals, being true and honest in dealings with people, being moderate in one's disposition and behavior, controlling one's *nafs*, sacrificing for others, submitting and adhering, being sincere, and ultimately attaining the pleasure of Allah ﷻ in everything one does. The *adhkaar*, *mujahaadat*, *bayah*, and *subhat* of the shaikh are pursued to achieve these purposes, and if none of these purposes are achieved then all these efforts are in vain. (End of quote)

## The effects of ignorance

Everything Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi said is the truth. The *akaabir* (elders) have said the same that there is no disagreement in the objectives; only the name is offensive to some. People run from the name of *tasawwuf*. Some of them run because of their ignorance of the objectives and others because of the way the word *tasawwuf* has become associated, in their minds, with wrongful behavior. The whole eleventh volume of Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah's Fataawa is about the subject of *tasawwuf*. He writes:

The name *sufiah* was not known in the third century A.H. It became famous sometime after. This word is found in the writings of the *A'immah* and *shuyukh* like Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Abu Sulaiman Daraani, Sufyan Thauri, and also Hassan Basri. The ulama disagree on the etymology of the word.

After narrating various opinions, he says:

This word is associated with the wearing of *suf* (wool). The first appearance of a group of *sufiah* was in the city of Basra and the first to open a *khanqah*<sup>127</sup> were the *murideen* of Abdul Wahid bin Zaid...and Abdul Wahid bin Zaid was one of the *khulafah* (disciples) of Hassan Basri. Of all places, Basra was the city where people were the most austere, pious, and God-fearing and this is how the saying, "Fiqh is Kufi (a dweller of Kufa) and worship is Basri (a dweller of Basra)" was born.

## Spiritual States

Then Allama Ibn Taimiyah narrates various incidents of the *sufiah* from among the people of Basra. These incidents narrate how some would fall unconscious and sometimes even die while reciting the Quran. Some of the *akaabir* of the time opposed this thinking it was pretentious while others argued it did not have precedent in the Sahaba ﷺ. The view of the majority of scholars is that a person who says or does something while unconscious cannot be denounced. Though, one who keeps his bearings is certainly better. When Imam Ahmad was asked about *gashi* (unconsciousness) and *wajd* (spiritual ecstasy) he said,

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<sup>127</sup> a lodge where *sufiah* reside and perform their various prescribed practices.

Once Yahya bin Saeed Qattan fell unconscious when someone recited the Quran to him. If anyone was able to control himself at that moment it would be Yahya bin Saeed because I have not seen anyone as intelligent as him.

It is also narrated about Imam Shafi' that he fell unconscious and the story of Ali bin Fuzail bin Ayyaz is also famous. In brief, these types of incidents also happened with the most respected *Salaf* whom we trust in their integrity and piety.

The description of the different states of the Sahaba ﷺ are mentioned in the Quran; these states are higher than those which have been previously mentioned, like the trembling of their hearts and shedding tears, etc. But people whose hearts have hardened and rusted and who have no attachment to Deen have even objected to this. They are the worst type of people. On the other hand, there are those who believe they (those who fall unconscious and who cannot keep their bearings) held the most perfect spiritual state. Both of these groups (the ones who object and those who believe they held the most perfect spiritual state) are in two extremes—one of *ifraat*<sup>128</sup> and the other *tafreet*. But if we look further there are actually three positions in this matter. The first are *zaalim-ul-nafs* (transgressors of the *nafs*) who have hardness of heart. They are the people whose hearts are not affected by the recitation of Quran or by the remembrance of Allah ﷻ, and they are like the *yahud* when Allah ﷻ said about them:

ثم قست قلوبكم

Then your hearts hardened<sup>129</sup>

The second are the *mumin muttaqi* whose hearts are weak. They cannot withstand the feelings that overwhelm them (when reciting Quran and remembering Allah ﷻ). They fall unconscious and sometimes die because of the weakness of their heart and the intensity of the *waarid* that overwhelmed them.

Such states are not confined to Deen only, it also happens to people in matters of *dunya*; for example in extreme joy or grief. There is neither sin for their reaction nor any reason to be doubtful of their condition if there is no deficiency in this respect. “If there is no deficiency” means that he lost consciousness or died from an act that was permissible and was not in violation of the Shari’ah, such as listening to recitation of the Quran. In this manner, he was

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<sup>128</sup> *Ifraat* and *tafreet* refer to two extremes in any situation. For example, regarding Isa ﷺ one group is in *ifraat* believing he is god while the other does *tafreet*, denigrating his status as a prophet.

<sup>129</sup> 2:72

overwhelmed by a feeling that is termed *sakr*<sup>130</sup> and *fanaa*, or something similar overwhelmed him and he fell unconscious involuntarily. If the cause behind his falling unconscious is not forbidden, then his unconsciousness is not objectionable and he is excused.

The fatwa in this situation is that a person is praiseworthy if these *ahwaal* are induced by means that are not forbidden and the person in this state is a true mumin, but is unable to control himself. Likewise, he is excusable for any condition like unconsciousness that befalls him involuntarily. The people in this class are higher in status than those who do not reach this state because of the weakness of their *iman* or hardness of their heart. Though, they (the ones who fall unconscious) are higher than the people who have hardness of heart or are weak in their *iman* (and are not affected by recitation of the Quran etc.) they are of a lower and less perfect state than the *mumineen* overwhelmed by the same feelings (that lead to unconsciousness) but who keep their bearings and do not fall unconscious. This last type of people (who do not fall unconscious when overwhelmed by such feelings) are the Sahaba ﷺ and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ ascended the heavens in the *miraj* and experienced incredible things, but his condition did not change. Thus, the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ *haal* was better than Musa's (as) who fell unconscious after seeing the *tajali* (revelation) of Allah ﷻ on Mount Tur. Undoubtedly, the *haal* of Musa (as) was exalted, but the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ was greater and more perfect.

Anyhow, states of this kind induced by intense fear of Allah ﷻ first occurred in Basra, and since such people wore *suf* (wool) they became known as the *sufiah*. But their path and ways are in no way symbolized by *suf*; this attribution was only because of their outward appearance. *Tasawwuf* to them was a name of some realities and known *ahwaal*. They have written much on what it means to be a *sufi* and the way of life of a *sufi*. For example, some said a *sufi* is one who is pristine, all impurities have been removed from him, he is perpetually engrossed in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ, and silver, gold, pebbles and dirt are all equal in his sight. Some say *tasawwuf* means hiding spiritual meanings and to refrain from making claims. There are many other statements like this. These people eventually attain the level of *siddiq*<sup>131</sup> and the *siddiqeen* are the best of creation after the Prophets of Allah ﷻ. They are the very roots of *tasawwuf*. After this, people changed and branched out into three distinct types:

1. *Sufiahtul khalaaiq*: These are the people mentioned above.

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<sup>130</sup> *Sukr*- Literally means intoxication. Among the *sufiah* it refers to a state of losing one's senses which may lead to unintentionally uttering something that contradicts the Quran and Sunnah

<sup>131</sup> One of the highest levels of *iman*, as in the *iman* of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ.

2. *Sufiahtul arzaaq*: They live in the *khanqah* and few of them have knowledge of the realities of *tasawwuf*. For them, there are three conditions:
  - They fulfill the obligations of Deen and abstain from all prohibited acts.
  - They possess the *adaab* (etiquettes) of the elders of this path.
  - They do not involve themselves in the *dunya* more than is required. They possess good qualities and do not hoard wealth or commit sins.
3. Pretenders: They are only *sufi* by name. Their purpose is nothing more than wearing the dress of the *sufiah* and contriving new things, etc. They are like a *jaahil* (ignoramus) wearing the dress of an *alim* (scholar) or *mujahid* (martyr). They have learned a few words and sayings here and there convincing people that they are also *sufiah*, though they are nothing of the sort.

## The Key to Paradise

Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardi narrates a hadith from Ibn Omar رضي الله عنه that the Blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

“Everything has a key and the key to *Jannah* is love for the *masakeen* and *fuqaraa*. These people will be in the company of Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgment.”

Thus, *faqar* (dependence on Allah ﷻ) is in the essence of *tasawwuf* and *tasawwuf* is based on this *faqar*. Hadhrat Ruwaim said,

*Tasawwuf* is based on three qualities:

1. To be imbued with *faqar* and *ihhtiaaj* (dependence and powerlessness)
2. To spend in the path of Allah ﷻ and to sacrifice for Him
3. To refrain from involvement in others’ affairs and to abstain from that which one loves.

Hadhrat Junaid was once asked, “What is *tasawwuf*?” He replied, “To establish a direct relationship with Allah ﷻ” and Hadhrat Ma’ruf Karkhi said, “*Tasawwuf* means to understand the realities and to lose hope in what others have.” Therefore, whoever has not attained the quality of *faqar*, his *tasawwuf* is not true *tasawwuf*. Hadhrat Hassan Basri said, “I met 70 Sahaba رضي الله عنهم who participated in the Battle of Badr who wore *suf*.”



## CHAPTER 13

### *ASHGAAL*<sup>132</sup> AND *AHWAAL*<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Plural of *shughl*: In the terminology of the *sufiah* it refers to the different meditative exercises by which one achieves *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ. They are not objectives, but rather means by which one achieves the objective of *ihsan*.

<sup>133</sup> Plural of *haal*: Different temporary states achieved as one progresses towards the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The Panacea of the Heart

The greatest of all *ashgaal* is the *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ and the greatest of *adhkaar* is the *kalimah: la ilaha illallah*. This is why *dhikr* is central to all the different *sufiah* orders though the methodology differs amongst them. It is similar to how *attiba* (traditional doctors) prescribe different dosages of one medicine with specific instructions. For example, I have observed a strange thing amongst *attiba* that a patient was prescribed something by a *tabib* (singular of *attiba*) which had no effect on him. He went to another *tabib* who kept the same prescription, but made small changes in the dosage and timing. It is amazing that with a few small changes the same prescription helped cure his problem. I have seen this happen not once but many times.

In Tadhkirat-ul-Rashid, Maulana Rashid Gangohi responding to Hadhrat Thanvi said,

“The specifications and restrictions devised by the *masha’ikh* in the *ashgaal* are not *bid’a*. It is shocking from someone as intelligent as yourself to make analogies between the conditions for the permissibility of *milad* (celebration of the birth) of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ upon the *ashgaal* when you know that the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ is *ma’moor min Allah* (an order of Allah ﷻ) [and the *milad* is not]<sup>134</sup>. Although this *ma’moor min Allah*<sup>135</sup> is a *kuli mushaqiq*<sup>136</sup> the lowest state of which is *fardh* and the highest state desirable, it is incorrect to

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<sup>134</sup> Therefore one cannot analogize the restrictions which allow for the practice of *milad* upon the restrictions for the *ashgaal* since the objective of the *ashgaal* is *fardh* and the *milad* itself is not *fardh*.

<sup>135</sup> *Ma’moor min Allah*- The order of Allah ﷻ here is reference to attainment of the *nisbat* which is *fardh* (compulsory).

<sup>136</sup> A term of logic. *Kuli* means something which includes many elements in which all are equal. For example, the word human includes every human being equally. *Mushaqiq* is a type of *kuli* in which a specific trait or quality does not fall equally upon everything. For example, whiteness in white humans is not equal because some are whiter than others.

In this case, *nisbat* is a *kuli mushaqiq* because it is common to all the *mu’mineen* yet each *mu’min* possesses a different type of *nisbat* of which the lowest state is *fardh* and the highest state desirable.

analogize the *milad*, which is *bid'a*, with this. Numerous ahadith and ayaat prove that *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ is *ma'moor min Allah*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and Allah ﷻ (in the ayaat of the Quran) demonstrated the *nisbat* in so many different ways, forms, and situations that the entire Shari'ah is itself a manifestation of the *nisbat*. This is something we cannot dwell into because it would become a lengthy discussion. If you think deeply you will observe how every ayah and hadith (implicitly or explicitly) demonstrates the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ.

Therefore, if there is so much evidence of it being *ma'moor min Allah* (an order of Allah ﷻ), the methods devised and specified to achieve this *ma'moor min Allah* ﷻ will also be *ma'moor min Allah*.

One method may be favored over another according to the times. Thus, in one period, the *nisbat* was easily achieved through *salawaat*, recitation of the Quran, and the *adhkaar* of the ahadith. Though the newly devised methods of *ashgaal* (along with their restrictions and specific conditions) were permissible at that time, they were certainly not required to achieve the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ. However, after some time, people changed (i.e., *iman* and *taqwa* deteriorated and people were more inclined to the *dunya*) as they drifted away from the period of the *khairul quroon*. The method of *nisbat* achieved in such an era would differ from the method of *nisbat* achieved in the *khairul quroon*. In this period (when people changed after the *khairul quroon*), *nisbat* could not be achieved through salah or saum (fasting), therefore the physicians of the *baatin* (soul) devised certain conditions, fine-tuning the volume and frequency of *dhikr* and other such things according to the people of that time. Since the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ, in this period, could not be achieved in any other way, these conditions and specifications cannot be called innovations in Deen. In fact, one would not be wrong if he said it was *fardh* because the attainment of an objective of Deen was not possible without them. Since the objective (which is attainment of *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ) is *ma'moor min Allah*, the method of attaining it clearly became *ma'moor min Allah*; therefore, it can never be a *bid'a*.

Likewise, with the passage of time, another generation of people came who were weaker than the last, and thus the method by which *nisbat* was to be attained would differ greatly from the people before them. Once again, the method of attaining *nisbat* was modified and revised to help achieve the main objective. With the passing of time this paradigm repeated itself: With the passing of time, as people became weaker in their Deen modifications were made in the methods of achieving the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ. It is like a *tabib* prescribing a treatment in the winter that, if prescribed in the summer, would endanger one's health. Thus, a change in the weather forces a change in the type of treatment. The treatments used 100 years ago, found in the older books of medicine are not potent enough to treat people today. Modifications in these treatments comply with the basic principles of *tibb* (traditional medicine) although it opposes the prescribed treatment which it modifies. In reality, this

modification will not be considered an innovation, but rather a fulfillment of the basic principles of *tibb*.

Another example of this is *I'la kalimatullah* (exalting the name of Allah ﷻ). You know that spears, swords, and even stones fulfilled the objective in the past. The use of these weapons is proven in the ahadith, yet arming oneself with these weapons today is outright suicide. Today, one must use guns, rifles, and tanks because it is impossible to reach the objective of *Ila' kalimatullah* without them. Yet, no one calls these changes innovations or declares them forbidden since it is imitation of the *kuffar*. In fact, we consider employing of armaments *fardh*, *wajib*, and *ma'moor min Allah* because attaining the main objective depends on them. Thus, these things in themselves become *ma'moor min Allah* ﷻ; likewise is the case with *ashgaal*.

Of the *adhkaar*, the most important is the *kalimah taiba*. Abu Saeed Khudri ؓ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

Once, Musa ؑ said in the court of Allah ﷻ, 'Teach me some *dhikr* by which I remember you and call you' (He was told) 'Say *la ilaha illallah*.' Musa (as) replied, 'Everyone in the world says this.' Allah ﷻ said, 'Say *la ilaha illallah*.' 'O Allah ﷻ, I ask for something specifically for myself,' replied Musa ؑ. To this, Allah responded,

'If the whole sky and earth are put on one arm of a balance and the *kalimah* on the other, the arm upon which the *kalimah* is placed will be weightier.'

## **Excellence of 'la ilaha illallah' and repetition**

I have mentioned many ahadith on the virtue, excellence, and importance of the *kalimah* "*la ilaha illallah*" in my book Fazaail-i-Dhikr. One of the ahadith is narrated by Jaabir ؓ that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "The best of *dhikr* is *la ilaha illallah*." Mullah Ali Qari says, "There is no doubt that the most excellent of all *adhkaar* is *la ilaha illallah* because the entire Deen is based on this foundation and is balanced on the fulcrum of this *kalimah*." This is why the *sufiah* and *aarifeen* (Gnostics) particularly emphasize the *kalimah taiba* and prefer it over all other *adhkaar*. They stress the use of this *kalimah* the most because its benefits and blessings are not found in any other *dhikr*.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "Constantly revive your *iman*." The Sahaba ؓ asked, "How do we do that O Blessed Prophet ﷺ?" "Recite the *kalimah* abundantly." The *masha'ikh* of *suluk* and the *attiba* of the soul prescribe this *dhikr* in different ways like how physicians prescribe different medicines for different illnesses. Among the Chistia, the "12-tasbih" *dhikr* is famous. First, they recite *la ilaha illallah* 200 times, then *illallah* 400 times, then *Allahu Allahu* 600 times, and finally *Allah* 100 times.

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in Al-Takashuf:

Some people object to the *dhikr* of *illallah* ('except Allah') that the *mustathna* (the exclusion of something from another) without the *mustathna minhu* (the thing from which another is being excluded) and the *aamil* (a governing noun or verb) is meaningless. They say this *dhikr* counts for nothing; it does not increase the reward and is nonsensical, then why even recite it?

In reply: the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in the *khutbah* at the conquest of Makkah, "The grass of the *Haram*<sup>137</sup> should not be cut." Hadhrat Abbas asked, "O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, except *idhkar* (a type of grass)?" The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, "Except *idhkar*." In this hadith, "except *idhkar*" proves that the *aamil* and *mustathna minhu* can be omitted when there is valid reason for omission. Thus, in *illallah*, dropping the *aamil* ("la") and the *mustathna minhu* ("ilaha") is validated by the fact that it was mentioned previously or that the *aqeedah* of the reciter furnishes the missing *aamil* and *mustathna minhu*.<sup>138</sup>

Another reply is that the *dhikr* of *la ilaha illallah* preceded the *dhikr* of *illalahu*. Thus, each time *illalahu* is recited the *aamil* and the *mustathna minhu* (*la ilaha*) will be included implicitly. There is no proof that the emphasized repetition of *illallah* is restricted to a certain number therefore, the more one recites the better and more effective. Therefore, in some narrations it says that the Sahaba ؓ said in certain instances,

ما زال يكررها حتي وددنا انه سكت

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ repeated it over and over until we wished he were quiet

Examples of such repetition are observed in the ahadith. In one incident, when Usama ؓ raised his sword to kill an enemy in the battlefield he recited the kalimah. Usama ؓ killed him assuming he had recited it to save his life. When the Blessed Prophet ﷺ heard of this, he called Usama and asked him, "How are you going to respond when he brings the *kalimah* on the Day of Judgment," and repeated this several times.

In one chapter of Mishkat, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

"There is one such act by which Allah ﷻ will elevate the level of his servants in *Jannah*; the distance between each level being equivalent to the distance between the earth and the skies." A sahabi asked, "What is it O Blessed Prophet ﷺ?" The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied,

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<sup>137</sup> *Haram*- referring to Mekkah and the surrounding area where hajjis must enter in with *ihram* at the time of hajj. It is now officially marked by the Saudi government.

<sup>138</sup> Since every Muslim believes 'there is no God but Allah ﷻ', his saying *illallah* will be reinterpreted as meaning 'there is no God but Allah ﷻ'.

## Struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ, Struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ, struggle in the path of Allah ﷻ!

He repeated this three times. There are hundreds of such ahadith in the books known to the teachers and students of ahadith in which one word is mentioned repeatedly.

Likewise, some people object to the *dhikr* of الله الله because they say “Allah” is singular. They say that when it neither informs of anything (it is not *khabria*) nor does it have an *inshaai*<sup>139</sup> meaning then what is its benefit? However, if we look in the hadith we find the blessed name of Allah ﷻ used in the singular as in the narration of Muslim, “The Day of Judgment will not occur until there is none in the world to say Allah, Allah.” As this hadith indicates, it is permissible to say the name of Allah ﷻ repeatedly. It should also be known that a meaning of a word should not be decided by linguistical concepts only, like that of *khabri* or *inshaai*. After all, how can it be meaningless when the purpose is to gain blessings and benefit? Allah ﷻ says:

واذكر اسم ربك

**And remember the name of your Lord**

In this ayah, the *dhikr* of our Creator includes uttering his name. Another explanation for this is that the *harf-i-nida* (vocative noun) has been omitted as is common in the Arabic language. The *nida* (vocative as in saying ‘O Allah’) is said out of *shauq* (desire), but when uttered without it (as in ‘Allah’) it is intoned to seek enjoyment.”<sup>140</sup>

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in Bawadir:

The closest opinion to my heart on this topic is the example of when someone recites the Quran. When someone reads the Quran for recitation, he is obligated to recite the way it has been transmitted to us (through the *Salaf-us-Saliheen*). Reciting in another manner is a *bid'a*. Sometimes the purpose of reading Quran is not recitation but memorization. The example of this is how one word or ayah is repeated several times. In this repetition, one is not obligated to know the method of the *Salaf* in memorizing the Quran. We have no need

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<sup>139</sup> In Arabic grammar, there are two types of sentences: *khabria* and *inshaai*. *Inshaai* is a sentence in which the speaker cannot be called a liar or truthful. For example if someone asks, “How are you doing?” you cannot say he is lying or is speaking the truth. *Khabria* is a sentence in which the speaker can be called a liar or truthful such as, “Zaid is coming”. Every complete sentence falls under one of these two categories.

<sup>140</sup> Al-Takashuf, p. 702

to go through the hassle of finding out how the *Salaf* used to memorize the Quran and make sure we follow the transmitted method.

Likewise, in the *ibadah* of *dhikr*, sometimes the *dhikr* itself is the objective. If this is the case, then one must take care to follow the transmitted method. However, if the purpose is not *ibadah* but a feeling that one wishes to establish which is relative to the *ibadah*, then it is not conditional to follow a methodology of the *Salaf* (even if there is one). Now, the prescribed repetitions of *illallah* and *Allah* are not *adhkaar* that are objectives themselves. The purpose of these prescribed repetitions is to create and establish a certain feeling. It is the feeling that nothing exists besides Allah ﷻ and to slowly increase one's focus on Allah ﷻ only. Therefore, in the beginning, the existence of everything around us is perceived. When we perform the *dhikr* of *la ilaha illallah* ('there is no other God but Allah') we negate the existence of everything and establish this negation in our heart. When we progress in this negation, we inculcate the certainty of His *zaat* (self) in our mind by repeating the *dhikr* of *illallah*. But since certainty of the *zaat* of Allah ﷻ is not the essence of Allah ﷻ, we reach higher for the *zaat* of Allah ﷻ by firmly embedding Him in the mind through the *dhikr* of الله الله. When one devotes himself to the *dhikr* of الله الله, the love of everything besides Allah ﷻ is eliminated from the heart and this person becomes immersed in Allah ﷻ only. When this feeling permeates the heart, his *dhikr* of الله الله will intensify helping him attain his main objective; and it is for this reason the *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ is prescribed.

By the grace of Allah ﷻ, this article removes all objections on this topic and proves that the claim that it is *bid'a* stems from lack of properly understanding this issue. Now only one question remains and that is: Will one gain reward for this type of *dhikr*? In reply, we will ask: Will the person who repeats the words of the Quran to memorize it, gain reward for memorization? The answer to the first is the same answer to the second. According to the *qawaa'id* (principles), the combined answer to both these questions is that although one may not gain reward for recitation (through repetition) and *dhikr*, but preparation for a perfect (in which one attains full benefit spiritually) recitation and perfect *dhikr* is surely rewarding.

*CHAPTER 14*

*TASAWWUR-I-SHAIKH (ENVISIONING THE  
SHAIKH)*



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

### One of the most important *Ashgaal*

Another name for *Tasawwur-i-shaikh* is *shugl raabita*, *barzakh*, and *waasita*<sup>141</sup>. *Tasawwur-i-shaikh* is one of the most important *ashgaal* to the *masha'ikh* of *suluk* and they have praised it for its various benefits. Some of the elders considered it *haram* except in certain circumstances. However, this is not correct in this servant's opinion because there are numerous ahadith in evidence of *tasawwur-i-shaikh*. Therefore, I cannot understand those who say it is *haram*. In regards to applying perfume in the state of *ihram*, Aisha ؓ says:

كأني أنظر الي وبيص الطيب في مفارق رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم  
It is as if I am seeing the glint of perfume on the parting of the Blessed Prophet ؐs  
head.

In a narration by Ibn Mas'ud ؓ mentioned in Al-Takashuf, (with references from Bukhari and Muslim), he says:

كأني أنظر الي رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم  
It is as if I am seeing the Blessed Prophet ؐ

He said this when the Blessed Prophet ؐ was narrating a story of one of the Prophets murdered by his people.

Under the chapter of 'the narrations on silver rings', Abu Dawud narrates a hadith by Ali ؓ that the Blessed Prophet ؐ said,

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<sup>141</sup> Taleem Uddin

Read this *dua* often, *سدد اللهم اهْدني و*, and when you say *اهدني* ('give me guidance') visualize the path of guidance and when you say *سددني* ('rectify me') visualize the straightening of an arrow.

In Bazl-ul-Majhood, my shaikh and *murshid* (Maulana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri) explained:

By 'imagine yourself on the path of guidance' try to visualize a person walking on a straight path who does not turn right or left. If he does turn right or left, he cannot arrive at his destination. Likewise, when imagining guidance, think that walking straight is a condition for arriving at the destination. When you say *saddid* and imagine 'the straightening of an arrow,' imagine that Allah ﷻ is rectifying and straightening me and removing any crookedness that is in me.

In the commentary of Abu Dawud, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi says:

"The reason the Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked us to imagine these things is so that one's thoughts are focused. Also, visualization and pondering over tangible things is easier than visualization of intangible things. The reason the Blessed Prophet ﷺ stated that one should imagine an arrow and a path while making *dua* is to prevent stray thoughts from distracting a person. This also indicates the permissibility of *tasawwur-i-shaikh* because the status of a shaikh is certainly not lower than an arrow. There is also no harm in love of the shaikh entering the heart when he is visualizing his shaikh. However, it is dangerous and harmful to imagine the shaikh actually effecting changes in the heart, to believe he is omnipresent, or that he is aware of his inner state. This is why the *masha'ikh* disagree about *tasawwur-i-shaikh*, though this is only a rhetorical discussion because those who say it is permissible are referring to the first part while those who say it is forbidden are referring to the latter issue (i.e., to believe the shaikh is ever-present). Though, when the ulama of the *mutakhireen* saw that *tasawwur-i-shaikh* leads to corruption of the *aqeedah* of Muslims, they forbade it in general, and this is correct in light of the condition of the *Ummah*.

There are many narrations of this kind in the books of ahadith. In Hayatus-Sahaba, in the chapter of *hageeqat-ul-iman* ('The Reality of *iman*'), the Blessed Prophet ﷺ asks Harith bin Malik ؓ in his narration, "How was your morning?" He replied, "In the state of being a true *mumin*." The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked, "What is the reality of your true *iman*?" He replied,

I turned away from the world...and I see the throne of my Lord, the dwellers of *Jannah* are meeting each other and the dwellers of *Jahannum* are running from each other.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ has illuminated your heart.”

In another narration he asked Mu’az ؓ the same question. He replied, “I woke up in the state of *iman*.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ asked him, “What is the reality of your *iman*?” He replied,

When I wake up in the morning, I see a nation on its knees. They are being called towards their book of deeds and their prophets and the idols they worshipped are surrounding them. I see the punishment of the dwellers of *Jahannum* and the reward of the dwellers of *Jannah*.

In Shamaail, Aun bin Abi Juhaifa narrates from his father, “I saw the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in red clothing. It is as if I see the radiance of his blessed ankles before my eyes.” Likewise, in the narration of Anas ؓ he says in relation to the gleam of the Blessed Prophet’s ﷺ ring, “I can see the white gleam of his ring before my very eyes.” There are numerous narrations related to visualization of different things in the books of ahadith. For this reason, it is difficult to say that *tasawwur-i-shaikh* is completely *haram*, although it will be forbidden if it leads to something *haram*. Otherwise, it is an excellent antidote for *khatarat* (roaming thoughts which destroy the *iman*) and a person sick with *ishq-i-majazi* (obsession for another creation; often times women).

In Taleem Uddin, it says,

The books on this subject state this much that envisioning the countenance of the shaikh and his qualities develops love in the heart, and strengthens the *nisbat* with his Lord; and this strong *nisbat* produces many blessings. Some of the *muhaddiqeen* say little (on *tasawwur-i-shaikh*) except that one thought repels another thought. So *tasawwur-i-shaikh* repels the *khatarat* and navigates towards Allah ﷻ.

Anyhow, whatever benefits and wisdom there may be in *tasawwur-i-shaikh*, my experience has shown me that this *shugl* is beneficial for the advanced and perilous for the novices because it steers them towards image-worship. Imam Ghazali and other *muhaddiqeen* prohibit the general public and the feeble-minded from doing *asghaal* that produce *kashf*. Therefore, the public should be prevented from this and if the advanced and more knowledgeable try this they should be careful not to exceed its boundaries. They should not believe their shaikh watches over them or is there to help them in times of need. However, it is possible for one to see his shaikh when he envisions him regularly. Sometimes, the image he sees is a figment of his imagination, but at other times a *latifah gaibi* (inspiration from

Allah ﷻ) that appears in the form of his shaikh though the shaikh himself is unaware of it. Many people make mistakes in this regard.

Hadhrat Madani writes:


*Tasawwur-i-shaikh* prevents one from *waswaas* and evil thoughts, and it produces remarkable feelings, though the shaikh is unaware of it. The shaikh is neither intending to help him nor is his attention turned towards him. These are natural influences that Allah ﷻ has created to save one from the *waswaas* of *shaitan* and for the blessings of Allah ﷻ to descend upon him. Since people often err in this matter, the *hukamaa* (the *shuyukh* of wisdom) are exceptionally careful in this regard otherwise, from the Shari'ah viewpoint, plenty of narrations prove it is permissible.




In another letter, Hadhrat Madani writes:

Though Shah Ismail Shaheed prohibited *shugl barzakh* in that it had, at times, negative consequences, however it was narrated to me through Shah Abdul Ghani Mujaddadi that he did not prohibit it. When some of his confidants asked of its permissibility, he narrated the hadith of Hassan ؓ as evidence in which Hassan ؓ asked his (maternal) uncle Hind bin Abu Haala, 'I always asked about the countenance and (physical) attributes of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.' This clearly proves that he wished to replicate an image of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ in his mind and this is exactly what *shugl barzakh* is." This hadith is mentioned in detail in Shamaail Tirmizi, and whoever wishes to read the translation may look in my book, Kasaail Nabawi. In the commentary of this hadith it says, "I wished he would narrate some of his beautiful attributes to me that I make their mention a source of love and a *sanad* (connection) for myself, and if possible I will make effort to build these attributes in myself.


In another place in his Maktubaat, he writes:

To create an image of something in Arabic is called *tasawwur*, regardless of whether the image is animate or inanimate, any person or a specific person, any shaikh or one's own shaikh, mothers or fathers, and regardless of whether the envisioning of this image is beneficial or not. In *urf* (conventional terminology), however, *tasawwur-i-shaikh* refers to creating and maintaining the image of an exalted shaikh. It is by consensus permissible to create and envision an image of one's sheikh. In fact, it is beneficial. The Sahaba ؓ and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ were favorable towards it; Hassan ؓ also on many occasions asked his uncle Hind bin Abu Haala about the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and created an image in his mind through the description he was given. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ also described the clothing and characteristics of Musa (as), Isa ؑ, and Ibrahim ؑ to the Sahaba ؓ clearly proving that

the purpose was to create an image of these blessed Prophets (as) in the minds of the Sahaba .



After this, Hadhrat Madani narrates many ahadith in which the Blessed Prophet  described the countenance, characteristics, and traits of the different Prophets of Allah . Therefore in one narration the Blessed Prophet  says about Musa (as), “He was of a darker complexion, curly hair. It is as if I see him at this moment sitting on a red camel descending from a valley.”

Hadhrat Madani comments:


There are many authentic narrations of this kind which not only prove the permissibility of *tasawwur-i-shaikh*, but indicate that it is favorable and has many benefits. Otherwise had it been forbidden, the Blessed Prophet  would not have described them and would have forbade it unequivocally. It is because of these benefits that the *shuyukh* regulated *tasawwur-i-shaikh* and designed a syllabus that would extract its full benefits.

## The Process


Hadhrat Haji Imdaadullah wrote (in Persian) to his *khalifah* Maulana Qasim Naunutwi:

“If time permits, sit in solitude after Fajr, Maghrib, or Isha salah in some room, empty out your heart of all thoughts, and focus on this: Imagine yourself sitting in front of your shaikh and the *faizan* of Allah  is transferring from his heart to your own. If your heart enjoys it and you feel like continuing then do so, otherwise do *dhikr* of Allah  in *nafi* (negation: *la ilaha*) and *ithbaat* (affirmation: *illallah*) in a mid-tone. Keep this up for approximately two hours.”

In another letter to Maulana Naunutwi he writes:

If you have time after Fajr or Maghrib, spend a little time in *muraqaba* (meditation). Envision yourself sitting in front of your shaikh and that something is emanating from his heart into yours. Inshallah, there will be *tawaju* (undivided attention) on you from this side (i.e., Haji Imdaadullah is referring to himself). If the mercy of Allah  is with us you will see benefit, Inshallah. Please do not worry.

Shah Waliullah Dehlavi says in Al-Qaul Al-Jameel:

The *masha'ikh* of the Chistia say the greatest objective is to imbue the heart with love and respect for the shaikh and to envision this setting. I tell you the manifestations of Allah 

are many. Thus, he manifests himself as the *ma'bood* (the worshipped one) before all, the feeble-minded and intelligent when they worship Him. In view of His greatness and secrets, the Shari'ah has explained His being in the direction of the Qibla and sitting on the *arsh* (throne). The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not spit in front of you whenever anyone of you prays salah because Allah ﷻ is between him and the Qibla." O *salik*, there is no harm if you set your sight on and hope in none but Allah. Also there is no harm in you imagining nothing but His *arsh* and the *nur* surrounding his *arsh*. This *nur* is bright like the illumined hue of the moon. Also, there is no harm if you do not concentrate yourself on anything but the Qibla. The permissibility of all this is indicated in the hadith<sup>142</sup>; and one has done *muraqabah* of this hadith if he does any of this (meditations as mentioned above). And Allah ﷻ knows best.

Then Hadhrat Madani says after a lengthy article,

This method of *tasawwur-i-shaikh* is a tradition inherited from the *Salaf* which yielded powerful results until people came in the latter age who abused it and exceeded its permissible limits. They began adding new things causing major corruption and deviated from the *sirat-ul-mustaqeem*.

After this, Hadhrat Madani narrates four or five fataawa from Fataawa-Rashidia (i.e., the fataawa of Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi) and some excerpts from the letters of Maulana Qasim Naunutwi, and then writes:

In brief, the need to eliminate evil thoughts and *waswaas* and to strengthen willpower, especially in worship, is so important that it need not even be mentioned. Since the effects of *tasawwur-i-shaikh* are profoundly advantageous in this respect, experience and evidence led the elders of this Ummah to put this into practice. The Ummah benefited tremendously from this until some pretenders came in the latter age who added forbidden things to it. One example is the belief that the shaikh is omnipresent or the danger of a *murid* becoming so fixated with the image of the shaikh that he becomes unmindful of the ultimate goal and his true Creator. Other examples include believing that the shaikh is like *baitullah*, salah should be prayed towards him, belief that the shaikh can change the condition of his heart, aggrandizement of the shaikh, or worshipping the shaikh's image as is common among many

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<sup>142</sup> Do not spit in front of you whenever anyone of you prays salah because Allah ﷻ is between him and the Qibla.

ignorant followers of *bid'a peers*<sup>143</sup>. Therefore, it became incumbent on the elders to study the situation and uproot this method of *shirk* and *kufr*. Anyhow, this practice is generally forbidden and unnecessary. When giving fatwa or putting it into practice one should first think it over and then decide wisely.

## Obeying the Shaikh

It is narrated in Arwahi Thalatha that when Syed Ahmad Shaheed went to Shah Abdul Aziz, Shah Abdul Aziz instructed him to begin with *shugl rabita*. When Syed Ahmad Shaheed politely refused, Shah Abdul Aziz recited this Persian poem:

Wet your *musalla* with wine if the tavern-keeper so tells you,  
Because the *salik* (the shaikh) is not uninformed of the different stations of the Path

(Meaning: you may think *tasawwur-i-shaikh* is *shirk*, but you should trust the shaikh because he knows better what is beneficial for you though it may seem otherwise.)

Syed Ahmad Shaheed replied, "If you tell me to commit sin, I will do it, but I will never do this (*shugl rabita*) since it is *shirk*." Shah Abdul Aziz hugged him and said, "Its alright, we will take you through the path of prophethood; you are not consonant with the path of *wilaayat*."

I have heard an incident related to the aforementioned poem from my elders. Once, a student asked the meaning of this poem. First Shah Sahib (Abdul Aziz) said, "Don't worry about such things, just keep to your studies." But when he insisted, Hadhrat gave him ten rupees and said, "Go to a brothel and ask the owner if there is any girl available." At first the student was baffled and hesitated, but since he himself had asked he was obliged to go. The owner said, "A beautiful girl has arrived, she is in such and such room. I will go and talk to her." He went to her, convinced her, and came back to tell the student, "She is willing, but you will have to come at night."

When the student arrived at her room that night, the girl was sitting crying, her head hung low. The student was astonished. He insisted he had not forced her (i.e., he thought she was crying because he was forcing her to commit sin with him and that he was the cause of her grief), but she cried even more. The student didn't know what to do (i.e., he had not come with an evil intention, yet he could not leave because the girl was crying and he wanted to help

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<sup>143</sup>Pejorative used for pretenders and innovators who call people towards themselves.

her). He insisted she tell him why she was crying, but she refused. This continued for some time. Finally, she gave in and said,

I am an oppressed woman and have been treated unjustly. I have been without food for many days now and I am wandering here and there. My husband left me and went somewhere and I do not know where he is. I have been looking for him for many months now.

He asked the name of her husband and where he is from. She discovered that the student standing in front of her was her husband. He asked her, "Raise your head and look at me." When she looked up they recognized each other. One night, the student had quietly slipped out of his house because of his desire to seek knowledge. The student stayed there the entire night. In the morning, he came to Hadhrat and said, "The poem is true."

(Translator: In other words, the shaikh is informed of things that seem sinful, as in the example of sending him to the brothel, but are actually beneficial to the *murid*, as in the example of finding his wife). I have heard other stories similar to this from my elders. The condition, however, is that the narrator is truly a shaikh, an authentic scholar of Shari'ah and *tariqat*, and is informed of the secrets of the Creator. This is not the job of just any claimant to *buzurgiat* (i.e., piety of the level of the elders).

Once, Hadhrat Gangohi was in a fiery mood when the issue of *tasawwur-i-shaikh* came up. He asked, "Should I say it?" When he was requested to speak, he again asked, "Should I say it?" When he was again requested to speak, he said, "For three full years, the image of my shaikh, Haji Imdaadullah, has been in my heart and I have never done anything without asking him first." Then he became even more passionate and asked louder, "Should I say it?" "Please do," was the request. He said, "For many years the Blessed Prophet ﷺ has been in my heart and I never did anything without consulting him first." Having said this he became even more spirited and asked, "Should I say it?" "Please do," was the request. But he remained quiet and when people insisted, he said, "Forget it." The next day when people insisted, he said, "Then *ihsan* was achieved."

In the commentary Hadhrat Thanvi says:

And the reason he repeatedly asked, 'Should I say it?' was probably to check people's eagerness, to test them, and see if they truly would be able to accept a reality that was otherwise unacceptable. And the reason he avoided repeating the question the second time over may be because there was no need to. And the first time he asked is because the answer is absorbed better in the heart when one is eager to know something. And the perpetuation and consultation of an image is the power of the psyche and it sometimes happens that the soul assimilates itself to a corporeal entity. It is clear that the continuation of this thought



does not justify belief in that the shaikh is ever-present and that one can be guided by him. After that, when he said, 'Forget it,' and mentioned reaching the level of *ihsan* with a pause of silence in between may be because the third condition (of *ihsan*) is not higher than the first two in the view of people (those who only look at the outward of things). Therefore, people would not understand the importance and greatness of one who has reached the level of *ihsan*. Upon insistence, though, his reply explained that the last condition is actually higher than the first two. This is because this (*ihsan*) is an objective and a *maqam* while the first two are non-objectives and only transient experiences. In that case, the difference between them is big. And if this explanation is not the reason for the pause of silence then it is that he kept the answer hidden because the general public cannot comprehend it. Perhaps it is one of the *tajalliat* (manifestations) of the Creator; something so magnificent that it would only raise objections the way the secrets of the *sufiah* raise objections for people who look at the outward only.

## CHAPTER 15

### *KASHF SUDUR<sup>144</sup> AND KASHF QUBOOR*

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<sup>144</sup> *Kashf sudur*- the common *kashf* is called *kashf sudur* and *kashf qubur* is *kashf* of the graves.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

### Not to be taken too seriously

*Kashf* (clairvoyance) is a common occurrence among the *masha'ikh* of *suluk* that is sometimes induced by *mujahadaat* (striving) while at other times is purely a gift from Allah ﷻ. The *kashf* that is born from *mujahadaat* is not restricted to *tasawwuf* because any person who practices *mujahadaat* can have *kashf*. This is why *kashf* is not taken seriously by the *masha'ikh*; in fact, they disregard it completely. Sometimes when *murideen* begin experiencing *kashf* the *masha'ikh* stop them from *mujahadaat*.

It is written in Aap Beti, that:

One of my close friends, Maulana Abdul Rahman Gangohi, was also one of my father's best students in Gangoh. When my father moved permanently to Mazahirul-Uloom, he went along with him, and studied the books of ahadith from Mazahirul-Uloom. Finally, he took *bayah* with my sheikh Hadhrat Saharanpuri. He was strict on his *ma'mulat*<sup>145</sup>. He was an imam of one of the *masajid* in Kasoli near Shimlah where he also taught children Quran. Since I was the primary letter-writer for Hadhrat Saharanpuri (and I read the letters that came to him), I saw that his spiritual conditions were excellent. In one letter he wrote about some of his *mukashafaat* (plural of *kashf*) and lofty conditions. After reading this letter, I truly thought that Hadhrat would give him *khilafat*, but instead Hadhrat replied in his return letter, "Stop all *asghaal* and *adkhaar* except your *faraidh* and *sunan muakadah* (emphasized Sunnah)." Even if the *mukashafaat* were purely from Allah ﷻ, my elders believed they were an obstruction in the path of *tariqat*. My Hadhrat (Maulana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri) said,

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<sup>145</sup> customized programs of prayers, *dhikr*, *tasbih*, etc. designed by the shaikh.

This is like a person walking on a path with lush gardens and rosebushes on both sides. If he stops to enjoy the beauties of the garden and continues to do so he is not going to arrive at his destination (i.e., he will arrive late).

This is why my elders generally disliked the *mukashafaat*. Among my elders there were both kinds: those who saw few *mukashafaat* like my Hadhrat and those who always saw them like Shah Abdul Raheem. I have heard the statement of Hadhrat Thanvi many times that,

I have no fear if I sit in Shaikh-ul-Hind Mahmud-ul-Hassan and Khalil Ahmad's (Sahranpuri) lap, but I fear sitting in the gatherings of Shah Abdul Raheem because of what is disclosed to him.

I have also heard many times that there were both types among the *murideen* of Hadhrat Gangohi. Maulana Siddiq Ahmad Anbitwi had many *mukashafaat* though my shaikh had none (which have been mentioned in his letters to his shaikh, Maulana Gangohi, in Makatib Rashidia). Since this is something one gets after exhaustive *mujahadaat* like 40-day retreats and *habs-i-dum*<sup>146</sup> the elders do not consider *kashf* a fundamental of *suluk*; though it is not against the Shari'ah either.

### **Kashf of the grave**

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ passed by two graves and heard the *azab-i-qabr* (punishment of the grave). One of them was being punished because he was not careful about urine and the other because of his calumny of people. This is a famous hadith which has been mentioned in all the hadith books. In Mishkat, under the chapter of "The Certainty of the Punishment of the Grave," Zaid bin Thabit ؓ narrates that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ went to a garden on his donkey. Suddenly, the donkey broke into a gallop and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ lost balance and almost fell off. There were four or five graves in that garden where the deceased were in *azab-i-qabr*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "I fear you will stop burying the dead otherwise I would supplicate that Allah ﷻ allow you to hear the *azab-i-qabar*."

In another hadith, it is narrated that the grave closed upon Saad bin Mu'az. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, "The grave closed upon Saad bin Mu'az until his ribs and bones

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<sup>146</sup> an exercise of holding one's breath and counting the *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ by heartbeats.

became one, then it opened by our *tasbih* and *takbir*.” In another hadith of Miskhat, Ibn Abbas ؓ narrates, “Once some Sahaba ؓ set up their tents in one place. They did not know there was a grave where they had camped. Suddenly, they heard somebody recite the whole Surah Mulk. When the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was informed of this he said, ‘Surah Mulk saves from the *azab-i-qabr*.’”

In Hayatus Sahaba, there is a long story about a youth who was very pious, performed a lot of worship, and spent most of his time in the *masjid*. Once, he prayed his Isha salah and went home. On his way he saw a beautiful woman who fell in love with him. The woman always stood on the path. Once she seduced him and he went along with her. When they reached the door and the woman went inside, he was about to step in when the remembrance of Allah ﷻ broke the spell and he recited this ayah,

**Verily, those who are *Al-Muttaqun* (the pious) when an evil thought comes to them from *shaitan*, they remember Allah and indeed they then see right (7: 201).**

He then fell unconscious. The woman called her slave-girl to help pick him up. They took him to the door of his house and knocked on the door. The old father came out and saw his son unconscious at the door. He called his family out and they brought in the youth. Late at night, he regained consciousness and his father asked him what had happened. The father asked him, “Which ayah did you recite?” The youth recited the ayah and fell unconscious again. When people shook him he had already died. They washed and buried him that very night. When news of this incident reached Omar ؓ he went to the father’s house for condolences and asked, “Why didn’t you inform me?” The father replied, “It was at night, *Amir-ul-Mumineen*.” Omar ؓ ordered, “Take me to his grave.” Omar ؓ went with his companions to the grave and recited the following ayah to the youth, “**But for him who fears the standing of his Lord, there will be two gardens.**”<sup>147</sup> When he finished reciting the ayah he heard a voice from the grave say twice, “O Omar, Allah ﷻ has granted me both of the gardens.”

There is another amazing story mentioned in Hayatus Sahaba, that once Omar ؓ went to *Jannat-ul-Baqi* and said:

السلام عليكم يا اهل القبور

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<sup>147</sup> (55: 46)

“Listen to our situation. Your women have married again, other people are now living in your homes, and all your wealth has been distributed.” Then he heard a voice from the unseen saying,

Now listen to our situation. We have received whatever we prepared for the next world, we benefited from all the money we spent in the path of Allah ﷻ, and lost whatever we left behind.

In another incident from Hayatus Sahaba, Abdullah ibn Omar ؓ said:

“Once I passed by Badr and saw a man rise from a well. He had a chain around his neck and kept on calling me and saying, ‘O Abdullah, give me water to drink.’ From the same well another man rose who said, ‘Do not serve him water, he is a *kafir*.’ He then hit him with a sword and the first man fell back into the well. I returned to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and told him the whole incident. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘That was Abu Jahl and he will be punished in this manner until the Day of Judgment.’”

There are many narrations of this kind of hearing voices from the grave. Therefore, those who reject the *mukashafaat* and *khwaarik* (paranormal incidents) are not educated in the knowledge of the ahadith.

Hafiz Ibn Qayyim has narrated many ahadith about voices from the grave in his book Kitab-ul-Ruh. One of them is that Abu Uthman bin Affan Nahdi says,

Once Ibn Saas went with a funeral and he was wearing thin clothing. He reached a grave, prayed two *rak'at*, and leaned on the grave. He says, ‘I swear by Allah ﷻ, my heart was awake that I suddenly heard a voice from the grave saying, ‘Get out of here and do not hurt me. You living people do things while ignoring the consequences of your actions, and we look for *thawab* (reward) but cannot do anything. The two *rak'at* you just prayed are more valuable to me than such and such amount of *thawab*.’

In another incident Hadhrat Abu Qalaab says,

I was returning from Shaam to Basra. I got off at one place, performed *wudu*, prayed two *rak'at*, put my head on a grave, and fell asleep. When I awoke I saw that the deceased in this grave (which I fell asleep on) was complaining about me and saying, ‘You bothered me the entire night. You people do things not knowing the consequences of your actions, and we know the consequences but cannot do anything. The two *rak'at* you prayed are better than

the *dunya* and everything in it. May Allah ﷻ give the people of the world the best of returns. Please give them our *salam*. Due to their *duas* we receive mountains of *nur* from them.’

Allama Ibn Qayyim has mentioned many incidents; it is difficult to include all of them here. Allama Ibn Qayyim narrates,

One of my friends left his house at the time of Asr and went to the gardens. He narrates, ‘I went into the cemetery shortly before sunset. The sun descended into the cemetery before it set in the horizon. I saw one grave that was like a flame of fire around a glass dish. The deceased was in the middle of this flame. I rubbed my eyes thinking that maybe I am seeing this in my sleep. Then I looked afar and I saw the walls of the city and I knew then that I was not sleeping at all. I reached home, numbed by what I saw. My family brought food for me, but I could not eat. When I returned to the city I inquired about the grave and learned it was the grave of a cruel tax collector.

He also narrates another incident where Abu Quza’ says,

We neared a pond close to the city of Basra and heard the sound of a donkey. I went to the people of the area and asked, ‘Whose voice is this?’ They said, ‘This was a man who would say, ‘You always bray like a donkey’ when his mother would ask to him run an errand. Since he died, every night you hear the braying of a donkey from his grave.

There are many eye-opening occurrences of this kind.

He narrates another incident that Amr bin Dinar said,

In our city there was a man whose sister became sick. He would come and see her everyday. Then she died and he buried her. After the burial he remembered he had left something in the grave. He took one of his friends with him for help and they dug up the grave. They found the thing he had left in the grave. He then told his friend, ‘Move out of the way, I want to see how my sister is doing.’ When he took off one of the bricks from the *lahad*<sup>148</sup> he saw flames of fire. He returned to ask their mother, ‘What did my sister do her whole life?’ The mother replied, ‘Why do you ask? She is already gone from this world.’ When he

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<sup>148</sup> A grave with a hole the length of the grave dug on the side facing the qiblah. After the deceased is placed in the *lahad* the hole is covered with bricks.

insisted she said, ‘She was not punctual in her *salawat* and used to eavesdrop on her neighbors and spread the word to others.’

Ibn Abi Dunya says,

Someone came and asked Abu Ishaq Fizari, ‘Is there any repentance for a grave-robber?’ He replied, ‘When there is true repentance then, yes, there is repentance for him.’ The questioner said, ‘I was a grave-robber and I saw many people whose faces were turned away from the Qibla.’ Abu Ishaq Fizari did not know what to say. He wrote to Imam Auzai who replied, ‘these are the people who turned away from the Sunnah (referring to people who innovated either in *aqeedah* [as in the Shiite] or in practice).’

After narrating numerous such incidents Allama Ibn Qayyim says,

There are many incidents of this kind which cannot be narrated here in which Allah ﷻ showed the punishment or the comfort of the grave to some of his servants...and the heretics and unbelievers have no way to disprove these incidents.

The aforementioned article was about *kashf* of the graves and regarding *kashf* of the *sudur*, Allama Ibn Qayyim writes in his book Kitab-ul-Ruh:

Allah ﷻ praised the people of *faraasat* (spiritual insight) in this ayah of the Quran:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ  
Indeed in that are signs for those who discern.<sup>149</sup>

### Faraasat of the Mumin

Ibn Abbas ﷺ and others say *mutawasimeen* refers to people with *faraasat*. After narrating various ayaat, Allama Ibn Qayyim writes:

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<sup>149</sup> Hajr 75



True *faraasat* is for the person who is purified from all impurities and who has established closeness to Allah ﷻ. Such a person can see with a *nur* that Allah ﷻ has placed in his heart. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Save yourself from the *faraasat* of the *mumin* for he sees with the *nur* of Allah ﷻ’ (Tirmizi). Allah ﷻ gives him this *faraasat* because of his closeness to Allah ﷻ because when the heart is close to Allah ﷻ, all the evil thoughts that come in the way of recognizing and realizing the truth are eliminated. He then gains from the *mishkat* (lanterns) that is close to Allah ﷻ. He gains a *nur* in his heart relative to his closeness to Allah ﷻ and with this *nur* sees things people who are away from Allah ﷻ cannot see. It is mentioned in the *hadith qudsi* that Allah ﷻ says,

A person cannot gain closeness to me in any way better than the *faraidh*. A person gains closeness to me through the supererogatory salah until I make him my beloved. And when I love him I become his ears by which he hears, his eyes by which he sees, his hands by which he holds, and his feet by which he walk. Thus, his hearing, seeing, holding, and walking happens through Me.

When a person reaches this stage, the person’s heart becomes like a gleaming mirror and the reflections of the realities enter into his heart. Then nothing of his *faraasat* is ever wrong because when he sees through Allah ﷻ he sees only reality. When he hears through Allah ﷻ he only hears reality. This is not the knowledge of the Unseen, but a knowledge that Allah ﷻ puts in his heart. When the heart is filled with *nur*, the *faiz* (blessings/effervescence) of this *nur* is seen on his limbs and it travels from his heart to his eye. Then he sees from this eye according to the *nur* of his heart.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ saw *Baitul Muqaddas* from Makkah. While digging the trench in the Battle of the Trench, the buildings of Shaam, the ramparts of the city of Sanaa in Yemen, and the city of Madaain in Persia were shown to him. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ saw all this while sitting in Madinah. When Najashi died in Habsha, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was informed of it. When Saariah ؓ was fighting in Nahaawand, Omar ؓ saw him and called him from the pulpit in Madinah. When some people from the tribe of Banu Mazjah arrived in Madinah, Omar ؓ looked at Ashtar Nakhai up and down carefully and asked, “Who is he?” People said, “Malik bin Harith.” He then said, “May Allah ﷻ destroy him. I see Muslims facing hardship because of him (i.e., he was one of the leaders involved in the assassination of Uthman bin Affan ؓ).”

Once Imam Shafi’ and Imam Muhammad were sitting in Masjid Nabawi when a man walked in. Imam Muhammad said, “I think he is a carpenter.” Imam Shafi’ said, “I think he is a blacksmith.” They both asked him and he said, “I used to be a blacksmith, now I am a carpenter.”

One youth, who lived in the company of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi, could tell others the bad thoughts that passed through their hearts. Somebody mentioned this to Hadhrat Junaid. He asked the youth, “What are these things people are saying about you?” He said, “It is the truth. I want you to think of something.” Hadhrat Junaid said, “I thought of it.” The youth told him what he was thinking, but Hadhrat Junaid said, “That’s wrong.” This happened three times. After the third time the youth said, “It is strange, you are speaking the truth, but I know more about the situation of my heart.” Hadhrat Junaid replied, “You were correct all three times. I just wanted to test you.”

Abu Saeed Kharaaz said,

“One day I entered Masjid Haram. At about the same time a *faqir* entered with two old shawls wrapped around him. When I saw him begging I said to myself, ‘Such people are a burden on the world.’ He looked at me and recited the ayah, ‘**Know that Allah knows that which is in your heart, therefore fear Him.**’ When I repented in my heart, he recited another ayah, ‘**And He is the one who accepts repentance from His servants.**’

A man came to Uthman bin Affan ؓ who had gazed at a woman before he arrived in his gathering. Uthman bin Affan ؓ said, “Some people come to me and the effects of fornication can be seen in their eyes.” The man said, “Is there revelation after the Blessed Prophet ﷺ has left this world?” Uthman bin Affan ؓ replied, “No, but there is true *faraasat* and *baseerat*. This was *faraasat* which Allah ﷻ puts in the hearts; when a thought crosses their heart, Allah ﷻ fulfills it in reality.” (End of quote)

This is a condensed article taken from Allama Ibn Qayyim’s book, Kitab-ul-Ruh. Many similar incidents are mentioned in it. In his Fataawa<sup>150</sup>, Allama Ibn Taimiyah also confirms the *mukashafaat*. He says,

Omar ؓ would say, ‘Come near to the mouths of the pious and listen closely to what they say because the realities are revealed to them.’ These realities that Omar ؓ spoke of are things that Allah ﷻ reveals in their hearts because it is proven that the *auliya-allah* do have *mukashafaat*.

There are two known opinions regarding Imam Abu Hanifah and his view on *ma-i-mustamil* (i.e., used water that falls from *wudu*). His first opinion was that *ma-i-mustamil* was

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<sup>150</sup> Fataawa Allama Ibn Taimiyah 11/204

impure and the second that it was pure. The reason for his first opinion was that he could see sins washing off with the water that dripped from *wudhu*. Imam Abu Hanifah made many *duas* to Allah ﷻ, “O Allah, I do not want to know the sins people commit.” His *dua* was accepted and this *kashf* was taken from him. After this, he took to the second opinion that it was pure.

## CHAPTER 16

### SHATHIAAT<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Is plural of *shuth*. *Shuth* is an utterance or action incompatible with the Quran and Sunnah that is said by one overcome by a haal.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Words uttered while spiritually intoxicated

Some of the *able haal* (people absorbed in a spiritual state) are overcome by their state and thus utter things which are incompatible with the Quran and Sunnah. In this uncontrolled state, anything this person utters which is against the Deen is called a *shath*. Such a person is not sinful, but his *taqlid* is impermissible. There are many sayings of the elders that indicate that someone who judges the *able haal* from their outward state would give a fatwa of *kufr*. However, if such things are uttered in a state of intoxication or in extreme *shauq* (enrapture) it will not be considered *kufr*, but, at the same time, they are also not worthy of being followed.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

“When a person repents, Allah ﷻ is happier than a man traveling with all of his belongings and provisions on his mount. Then this man rides into a jungle where death is certain. He lies down under the shade of a tree and falls asleep. When he wakes up he sees no sign of his camel. He looks everywhere and is getting hungry and thirsty. Then he loses all hope and returns to the same spot to die. He puts his head in his hands and falls asleep. He wakes up again and sees his camel with all his belongings and provisions on it, standing nearby. At this moment, no one can imagine his joy and he says in elation, “O Allah, you are my servant and I am your *Rabb*.”

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ says, “He was mistaken because of his excessive joy.”

This hadith is narrated by Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ and Anas ؓ in Bukhari and Muslim with different wordings. Hadhrat Thanvi says in Al-Tasharuf,

This hadith indicates that a helpless person is forgiven in his mistake because the Blessed Prophet ﷺ quoted this person and did not rebut him. The joy which incited such a statement was born from a thing of this *dunya*. Imagine a person made helpless by the

intensity of his love or *shauq* (for Allah ﷻ) which is one of the *kaifiyaat* (states) that develops from this Deen.

The narration which explains the incident of Aishah ؓ being accused of illicit behaviour narrates that, “When the ayaat of the Quran were revealed which exonerated her of all wrong doing, her mother said to her, ‘Go to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and thank him’ (i.e., she should go and be thankful to him). At the time, she was overcome by emotion and said, “I swear by Allah ﷻ I will not go and I will not be grateful to anyone besides Allah ﷻ. He is the one who has acquitted me.” This hadith is narrated in Nisai, Tirmizi, Muslim, and Bukhari.

Hadhrat Thanvi says, “Sometimes our elders said something in prose or verse that outwardly seemed blasphemous. If it is uttered in a *haal* it is called *shath* and *aulaal*. Aishah’s ؓ statement falls under this category. It resulted from her profound grief because the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, himself a human and uninformed of the Unseen, was confused and doubtful. Aishah ؓ was aware of his feelings about her and was grief stricken that even he doubted her. When she was exonerated by the revelation of the ayah she was fervent and said what she said at that moment. Since the Blessed Prophet ﷺ did not chastise her for this reply, it proves that those who utter *shathiaat* or *aulaal* are exempt from the general rule.

Aishah ؓ narrates,

“The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘I know when you are happy and when you are angry with me.’ I (Aishah ؓ) asked, ‘How do you know Blessed Prophet ﷺ?’ He replied, ‘When you are happy you say, ‘I swear by the Creator of Muhammad ﷺ’ and when you are angry you say, ‘I swear by the Creator of Ibrahim ؑ.’” I replied, ‘You are right, except that I only leave out your name (otherwise I love you as much when I am angry as I do when I am happy with you).’”

These are stories of love and affection. The people of love know that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was aware she was in a certain state when she swore by the name of Allah ﷻ and that this was the coquetry of his beloved. This is why he remained silent and did not rebuke her for her remark.

The story of Khawaja Ahmad Jaam, when he said, “*ma min kunaim*,” has been mentioned in a previous chapter. Khawaja spread his hand over the child and restored his vision as he kept on repeating, “We do it, we do it.” In Arwahi Thalatha (story # 249), it is narrated that once Maulana Yaqub Naunutwi was sitting in his class, extremely sad. Ameer Shah Khan and some others came in class at that time. Maulana said,

I have made a big mistake. I said this and this to Allah ﷻ to which he said such and such. Then I said something (which was outwardly disrespectful towards Allah ﷻ), to which He responded, ‘Quiet! Stop this nonsense.’ Then I was quiet and repented to Allah ﷻ and was finally forgiven.

Hadhrat Qasim Naunutwi was shaken up when he heard this. He said,

“Oh! Maulvi Yaqub said such a thing! *Tawba, tawba, tawba*. He is *majzub*<sup>152</sup>. Only he could say such a thing; had it been us, our throats would be slit.”

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in the footnote:

“In some levels of *majzubiyat*, utterances are categorized as *aulaal* and are thus forgiven. And there are other *majzubs* who are overwhelmed by their *jazb* only occasionally (i.e., it is not a continuous state).”

## Stories of Majzubs

The stairs leading up to the Jamia Masjid in Delhi have always been home to one *majzub* or another. There are many famous stories of these *majzub*, but it is not known when they first settled there. There is a story of Mirza Mazhar Janijaana. He would go to Jamia Masjid for Juma salah entering from the southern gate and leaving from the eastern gate. After Juma, a *buzurgh* (pious elder) would sit there on his *musalla* under the northern portico near the entrance of the eastern gate. He used to keep a small earthen jug covered with a weathered brick in front of him. Whenever Mirza Janijaana passed by him, he would hit his legs, yell at him, pull the *musalla* from underneath him and throw it away. He would lift the jug and brick and smash both of them on the ground, shattering them into pieces and then walk off quietly. People were shocked that someone like Mirza Janijaana could be so cruel, but no one had the courage to ask why he would do it. Finally, someone once asked, “Hadhrat, who is this person and why do you do this to him?” Mirza Sahib replied,

When we were kids he would hang around us and try to join our group. We would hit him and taunt him, but now Allah ﷻ has shown us the path of *suluk* and we have been given

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<sup>152</sup> *Majzub*- A person so permeated with the love of Allah ﷻ that he is often or perpetually unaware of his actions and sayings.

*ijazat* (i.e., *khilafat*) by our *shuyukh*. One day, I thought. ‘I know him for so long and he is close to me, I should put some *tawajuh*<sup>153</sup> (positive spiritual attention) on him. When I did I was immersed in his own reflection and found him to be higher than myself. That got me worried. I started showing him real respect and left my sitting place for him and told him, ‘This place is not really mine, it is yours. Now you sit in my place and I will sit in yours.’ But he refused to listen. When I insisted, he again refused and said, ‘You will continue to treat me like you did when we were kids,’ but I refused. After that he took away all my *kaifiyat*<sup>154</sup> and left me hollow. Now I was even more worried. I said, ‘Give me back my *kaifiyat*.’ He replied, ‘On the condition that you will treat me as you always have and not here, but in public outside of Jamia Masjid.’ I had no choice but to accept his condition.<sup>155</sup>

In the footnote Hadhrat Thanvi writes:

‘Took away all my *kaifiyaat*.’ I say that the method of this *salb* (to wrest, snatch) as I have heard from Hadhrat Gangohi is that the faculty to understand and to perform good languishes, otherwise it is not possible to eliminate someone’s *qurb* (closeness to Allah ﷻ) and their *kamaal* (completeness of their *iman*). I (Hadhrat Thanvi) say that this inertness can be produced by sickness or even medications. It is not harmful in itself except that one does not achieve the same edifying feelings (in *ibadah*) which can lead to disappointment. However, it is harmful in the sense that it decreases one’s spiritual energies to perform *ibadah* which leads to a decrease of good deeds. Therefore, wherever there is a possibility of a *tasarruf*<sup>156</sup> influencing such changes, it (*tasarruf*) will be *haram*; however, *tasarruf* is permissible where *kaifiyaat* become an obstruction in one’s worldly or religious functions. Though, where *tasarruf* is for a permissible purpose, it will be permissible as in this incident.

### **Beware of drawing false assumptions**

I was a member of the *shura* (board) of Darul-Uloom for many years. Shaikh-ul-Islam Madani’s demeanor towards Hakim Ishaq Kathurwi was harsher than this. At first, I was quite perturbed when I saw how Hakim was treated, but after a few days it became clear to me.

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<sup>153</sup> *Tawajuh*: Spiritual attention. Often used in terms of directing one’s spiritual attention towards a person either positively or negatively.

<sup>154</sup> Higher inner states of *iman* in which the sweetness of the closeness to Allah ﷻ is experienced.

<sup>155</sup> Mirza Janijaana’s ill-treatment of this shaikh was a *shath*. It could have easily been misconstrued as a

<sup>156</sup> *Tasarruf*: A function of the spiritual power attained through exercises whereby one can induce a change of feeling in another person.



One thing leads to another, but I meant to narrate an incident of a *majzub* who lived on this flight of stairs in Delhi. He was very pious and righteous. One day he began loudly ranting, “I am not your servant and you are not my lord.” People grabbed him and took him to the *qazi* who was himself a pious and devout man. He asked the *majzub*, “What are you saying?” He replied, “*Shaitan* has been trying to prevail over me and force me to say, ‘You are my Creator and I am your servant,’ but I reject him saying, ‘Neither are you my Creator nor am I your servant.’ The purpose of narrating these incidents is to remind us that we should not draw conclusions on the *shathiaat* until we are sure of what they mean.

## CHAPTER 17

### *SUKR AND GHASHI*<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> *Sakr*: Literally means intoxication. Among the *sufiah* it refers to a state of losing one's senses which may lead to unintentionally uttering something that contradicts the Quran and Sunnah.

*Gashi*: Means to fall unconscious.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The causes of Shathiaat

At times, *sukr* and *ghashi* may induce *shathiaat*. Many of the sayings and states of the *masha'ikh* of *suluk* are uttered in the state of *sakr*. *Sakr* is forbidden if it is induced by a forbidden act. However, sometimes *sakr* occurs when a powerful *warid* (feeling or inspiration) pierces the heart and the heart is too weak to sustain it. But it is not always that *sakr* happens because of a weak heart. At times even a powerful heart is overcome by a *warid* that is stronger than itself and the force of the *warid* makes one fall unconscious. Musa (as) was a strong-minded Prophet of Allah ﷺ, but when he asked Allah ﷻ to reveal Himself and Allah ﷻ manifested Himself in His *tajalli*, Musa (as) fell unconscious. Comparatively, the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ control and forbearance exceeded Musa ﷺ's (as) because the Blessed Prophet ﷺ attained *nisbat ittihadi*<sup>158</sup> with Jibrael (as) at the time of the first revelation; only Allah ﷻ knows best what *ma'arif* (gnosis) and *maqamaat* (stations) he attained during the next 13 years. Thus, in the *mira'j*, when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ ascended the heavens, he left Jibrael (as) behind. As the poem says:

If I ascend one more inch, the *tajalli* of my Creator will burn my wings

The amazing events the Blessed Prophet ﷺ witnessed did not cause any change, transformation, or disintegration of his blessed body. He returned in the same state in which he ascended.

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<sup>158</sup> *Nisbat ittihadi*: The union of two entities into one in their spiritual attributes. In this case, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ achieved union with Jibrael (as) in his spirituality when Jibrael (as) embraced the Blessed Prophet ﷺ thrice, thus, transferring his own qualities to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in Al-Takashuf:

“Unconsciousness can result from forceful blows from the soul as it can by blows from the physical body. This is something all the *attiba* agree upon. Many different states of the soul can affect changes in the mind, and one of these is when *sakr* stuns the mind bringing on unconsciousness. As an insane or unconscious person is excused, likewise a person in *sakr* or one overwhelmed by a spiritual state is also excused in his *shathi* statements, transgressions, and his negligence towards obligatory duties. Many times, this *sakr* is not palpable by a person sitting nearby just as a demented or insaned person’s insanity or dementia is not palpable. As a result, people are sometimes accusatory and judgmental of a person’s conduct or utterances. When we interpret the actions of people (that excuses them from obligations) it is with the understanding that such people are in *sakr* and that they are otherwise virtuous, of the best character, and strict followers of the Sunnah. The only time we will not excuse a person is when he is a *fasiq*, a slave of his desires, and leads a life of sin; in this case, there is no need to interpret his actions or sayings, and the chances of such a person being overwhelmed by *sakr* is remote unless strong evidence suggests otherwise.

In Al-Takashuf, Hazrat Thanvi writes in the footnote of the hadith which narrates the incident of how Omar رضي الله عنه tried to stop the Blessed Prophet ﷺ from leading the *janaza* (the funeral prayer) of Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salool (i.e., the chief of the hypocrites):

*Sukr* is the name of an inability to distinguish between rulings related to the outward and inward because of the torrents of a strong *warid* raging in the heart; *sahw* is the return of this ability. The *wurud* of *bugz fi Allah* (hatred for the sake of Allah ﷻ) so overpowered Omar رضي الله عنه that he was benumbed by it; he was not conscious of his behavior and the words he used with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ appeared as an outward lack of respect (*adab*) on his part. In this situation, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ did not hold him accountable for his behavior. Then when he returned to his normal state of mind, it is narrated in the hadith that he said, ‘I was appalled by my aggressiveness with the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.’ These types of *waaridat* are common amongst the *sufiah*. If the *warid* is weak and the heart is able to withstand it, the effect is unnoticeable, but if the *warid* comes on strong and the heart is strained by it, the effect becomes apparent.

I remember the incident of Maulana Fazlul Rahman Gang Muradabadi, but do not remember where I read it. Though, it says in Tazkirat-ul-Rashid that once in his gathering, people were talking about the biographies of the elders when the name of Hadhrat Gangohi came up. At the time, Hadhrat Shah Sahib said, “Do not even mention him, he drank up the whole river and didn’t even burp<sup>159</sup>.”

Shaikh-ul-Islam, Ibn Taimiyah writes in his Fataawa<sup>160</sup>:

Sometimes people overcome by a certain state are subdued by the *kaifiyat* of *ittihad* or *hulul* (oneness with something). Some forms of *ittihad* are of *haqq* while others are purely falsehood. However, since such feelings usually emerge when a person is subdued by a certain state, is unconscious, or is repudiating the existence of everything around him except his beloved, and this infatuation is with nothing forbidden, he will not be accountable for his actions. There will be no punishment for him on the Day of Judgment because an insane person is exempt from the law. If this person is mistaken in what he says then he will fall under the ayah, ‘O Lord, punish us not if we forget or fall into error<sup>161</sup>,’ and under the ayah, ‘And there is no sin if you make a mistake therein.<sup>162</sup>’

The example of this is like the story narrated about someone who loved another. When the beloved fell into the river, the lover threw himself behind him into the river. The beloved asked, ‘I fell into the river accidentally, but what made you fall in?’ The lover replied, ‘In my love for you, I lost sight of myself and thought you were me.’

This state occurs often among the people of love and the *murideen* with their *shuyukh*. This condition happens more often with love for Allah ﷻ; however, there is some imperfection in the attainment of this oneness with Allah ﷻ. In this state, one becomes so absorbed in his love for his beloved (i.e., Allah ﷻ) that he loses consciousness of his own love and even reaching a level of self-annihilation. He cannot distinguish remembrance from the one being remembered, observation from the one being observed, and presence from the one who is omnipresent. In this condition, one loses awareness of one’s own existence. In this condition, a person may say “*ana al haqq*” (‘I am *haqq*’), or “*subhani*” (‘I am glorified’), or “*ma fil jabati illallah*” or other such delirious statements. Such a person is intoxicated with

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<sup>159</sup> He absorbed the powerful *waaridat* that came upon him (because of his high *maqam*) without any change in his consciousness or his utterances.

<sup>160</sup> 2/396

<sup>161</sup> 2: 286

<sup>162</sup> 33: 5

love of Allah ﷻ. Here, the intoxication was not caused by something impermissible therefore utterances made from this type of condition should not be publicized.

*CHAPTER 18*

*ESOTERIC UTTERANCES OF THE SUFIAH*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

### The true meaning behind the words of the wise

The outward meanings of the utterances of the *sufiah* often conceal their true inner meanings. Because of this, some foolish people not learned in the esoterica of this science make false objections. In Shamaail Tirmizi, Anas ؓ narrates,

Once a man came to Blessed Prophet ﷺ and asked for a mount (i.e., a camel). The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, 'I will give you the calf (of a camel).' The man said, 'O Blessed Prophet ﷺ, what am I going to do with a calf? I need something to ride on.' The Blessed Prophet ﷺ explained, 'Every camel is a calf of a camel.'

In another hadith in Shamaail, Hasan Basri (rah) says,

Once an old woman came to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Pray for me that Allah ﷻ puts me in *Jannah*.' The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, 'Old women will not enter *Jannah*.' When she turned away crying, he said, 'Tell her she will not enter *Jannah* as an old woman, in fact, Allah ﷻ will make all women young and virginal before he puts them into *Jannah*.'

This meaning is also conveyed in the ayah, "**We have made them maidens of special creation. And made them virgins**<sup>163</sup>." It is understood from this ayah that women of *jannah* will always remain virgins because they will reflower after every intercourse.

Abu Huraira ؓ narrates that he once went to the bazaar and said to the people, "I see you people here when the inheritance of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ is being distributed in the *masjid*." People ran to the *masjid*, but came back after a short while. They said, "We didn't

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<sup>163</sup> 54: 35-36



see anything being distributed. We only saw a group of people reciting the Quran.” He said, “This is the inheritance of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.”

Hadhrat Thanvi writes in Al-Takashuf:

Most of the speeches and writings of the elders contain some articles which are different from the apparent meaning. This meaning only becomes coherent once the intended meaning and its explanation are understood. There are various reasons for withholding the real meaning: being overwhelmed by a *haal*, concealment from the public, motivating the addressee because concealing something provokes one to specify whatever is being concealed, and the thing which is specified by provocation engenders a stronger impression on the heart.

The narration of Abu Huraira ؓ corroborates this point. Abu Huraira, at first, concealed the true meaning with intention to motivate the people by using an irrelevant explicit meaning. Concealing the true meaning led people to believe the apparent meaning. This is why they returned complaining they did not see anything being distributed. After he explained the real meaning, they understood what he actually meant. Thus, one should not criticize a shaikh or *buzurg* while he is in *haal* because it is truly one’s own loss.

Also, Ubai bin Kaab ؓ narrates,

One Ansari sahabi lived far from Madinah, but would never miss even one salah behind the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. We pitied him and I said, “It would be so good if you bought yourself a mount that would save you from the hot stones and pebbles, and protect you against the creatures of the earth.” He replied, “I wouldn’t even want my house to be next to the Blessed Prophet’s ﷺ house.” I (Ubai bin Kaab ؓ) was upset at this response. I went to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and complained about him. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ called him. The Ansari sahabi said the same to the Blessed Prophet ﷺ and added, “I hope that Allah ﷻ will reward me for each step I take to the *masjid*.” The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said to him, “You will get what you intended from Allah ﷻ.” (Muslim)

Hadhrat Thanvi says:

The same commentary applies here that applied to the former hadith. Notice that the words of the Ansari sahabi were disrespectful to the extent that it upset Ubai bin Kaab ؓ. We can understand that he may have said what he did to hide his true intentions or for reasons similar to this. Since there was no reason to hide anything from the Blessed Prophet, he

revealed his true intentions to him and it became clear that what he had said earlier (to Ubai bin Kab) was not intended.

In a *hadith qudsi*, Abu Huraira ﷺ narrates the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

On the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ will say to some people, ‘I was sick, you did not visit Me.’ The person will say, ‘O my Creator, how can I visit you? You are *Rabb-ul-Aa'lameen*.’ Allah ﷻ will say, ‘Do you not remember this and this person became sick and you did not visit him? Do you not know that if you had visited you would find Me there?’” Then Allah ﷻ will say, “I asked you for food and drink,” and the person will respond, ‘Oh my Creator, How can I feed You and quench your thirst, You are *Rabb-ul-Aa'lameen*?’ Allah ﷻ will respond, “You would have found Me there if you had fed him and quenched his thirst.”  
(Muslim)

This hadith and the previous examples indicate that such statements are figurative and cannot be taken literally otherwise our beliefs would be corrupted. There are numerous ayahs like this in the Quran. To present a few:

**Then a crier cried, “O you in the caravan! Surely, you are thieves!”<sup>164</sup>**

**So I wished to make a defective damage in it, as there was a king after them who seized every ship by force<sup>165</sup>.**

**And they plotted (to kill Isa (as)) and He planned too<sup>166</sup>.**

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<sup>164</sup> 12: 70

<sup>165</sup> 18: 79

<sup>166</sup> 3: 54

*CHAPTER 19*

*THE MOTHER OF ALL DISEASES: ARROGANCE*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## The perils of Arrogance

I had planned on writing on many different issues and my mind was full of ideas to put on paper, but since arriving in Madinah, my health has been continuously deteriorating. I was extremely sick and bed ridden when I was India and was hoping my health would improve after arriving in Madinah. However, since I have arrived, my condition has not improved at all. After starting this book, I thought about quitting many times, but changed my mind at the insistence of my friends. Due to my sickness, sometimes I had to stop writing for many days, and now, as my health is declining, I have decided to conclude this book with two important topics.

From the very beginning, I had intended to complete this book with both these two topics. One was the mother of all diseases, arrogance, and the second was debasing the *Auliya-allah*. Both these topics are related to Shari'ah and *tariqat*. I borrowed the name "The mother of all diseases" from my good friend Sufi Iqbal who wrote a book entitled, The Mother of All Diseases: Arrogance. The first edition of his book sold out soon after publication and he is now in the process of publishing the second edition. I thought I would give this article to him, but my friends convinced me that every author has his own style; therefore, I should not take from him but write my own article. Many years ago, I wrote a detailed article that explained the two types of *ma'asi* (sins): *shaitani* (satanic) and *haiwani* (base desire). In that article, I explained that the *haiwani* sins are quickly forgiven by the *Rahmah* (Mercy) of Allah ﷻ. The hadith is famous:

فَمَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَ سَرَقَ قَالَ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَ أَنْ سَرَقَ  
'Whosoever says there is no god but Allah, will enter *Jannah*.' A sahabi asked, "Even if he fornicates and steals?" The Blessed Prophet ﷺ replied, "Even if he fornicates and steals."

In my article, I supported this point with ayaat from the Quran and the hadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. It has been my habit to show my work to my friends, especially to

Maulana Abdul Rahman and Qari Saeed. If they deleted anything, I would argue with them, but the final say was always theirs. They filtered out everything not worthy of being published. I do not remember which manuscript it was, but they said it would not emphasize enough the importance of the *shaitani ma'asi* and that it lacked mention of the *haiwani ma'asi*.

Although I was unable to include this topic previously, I think the subject of arrogance is fitting for this book considering its importance; among the sins it is the most dangerous disease not only in my opinion, but also according to the Quran and Sunnah. It is absolutely destructive in the path of *tariqat*. Imam Ghazali dedicated an entire chapter in his book Ihya-ul-Uloom, in which he delineated the importance of this subject. He writes:

Allah ﷻ has stated the dangers of arrogance in many ayaat of the Quran. He says,

**I shall turn from My ayaat those who behave arrogantly on the earth, without a right<sup>167</sup> ... Only he who is truly great has the right to think he is great, and that is no one but Allah. (Bayan ul Quran)**

In another ayah he says, “**Thus, does Allah seal up the heart of every arrogant, tyrant<sup>168</sup>.**” In another he says, “**Truly, He likes not the proud<sup>169</sup>.**” In another ayah he says,

**And your Lord said, ‘Invoke Me, I will respond to your invocation. Verily! Those who scorn My worship, they will enter Hell in humiliation!’<sup>170</sup>**

And the evil of arrogance has been mentioned repeatedly in the Quran; and the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said in the hadith, ‘He will not enter *Jannah* who has a grain of arrogance in his heart.’

Abu Huraira ؓ narrates the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Allah ﷻ says,

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<sup>167</sup> 7: 146

<sup>168</sup> 40: 35

<sup>169</sup> 16: 23

<sup>170</sup> 40: 60

Greatness is my shawl and magnificence is my *izaar* (lower garment). I will throw in *Jahannum* anyone who tries to snatch anyone of these from me and will not care for the consequences.’

In another hadith the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Allah ﷻ will throw facedown into *Jahannum* anyone with a grain of arrogance in his heart.

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘A person exalts himself until he is written among the *jabbareen* (ruthless ones) and faces the same *azab* as them.’

In another hadith, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

On the Day of Judgment, a neck with two ears by which it will hear, two eyes by which it will see, and a tongue by which it will speak will emerge from the fire of *Jahannum*. It will say, ‘three men are mine: every arrogant and obstinate person, the person who committed *shirk* with Allah ﷻ, and the one who made pictures.’

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ also said, ‘*Jahannum* and *Jannah* had a debate. *Jahannum* said, ‘The arrogant and cruel people have been chosen for me.’ *Jannah* will say, ‘The poor, weak, and unknown people have been chosen for me.’

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Nuh (as) called both his sons at his deathbed and said, ‘I order you two things and forbid two things: *shirk* and arrogance.’

Abu Huraira ؓ narrates the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘The tyrants and arrogant ones will be reduced to the size of ants; people will stomp over them.’”

(end of quote)

Imam Ghazali narrates many ayaat of the Quran and ahadith about the evils of arrogance. Here, I mention a few of them:

Hadhrat Abu Bakr ؓ said, Do not ever look down on a Muslim because even a small Muslim is big in the eyes of Allah ﷻ.” Hazrat Dhahab (rah) said, “When Allah ﷻ created *Jaanat I A’dan* (Garden of Eden) he said to it, ‘You are *haram* upon every arrogant person.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah ﷻ does not even look at the person who arrogantly hangs his *izaar* so low it drags against the ground.”

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

A man was walking arrogantly, his two shawls wrapped around him, when Allah ﷻ pressed him into the earth (i.e., the earth swallowed him), and he will continue suffering this punishment until the Day of Judgment.

Hadhrat Mitraf bin Abdullah (rah) saw Muhallab walking arrogantly in a silk dress. Hadhrat Mitraf said to him, “O servant of Allah ﷻ! This swagger of yours is disliked by Allah ﷻ and his Blessed Prophet ﷺ.” Muhallab asked, “Do you know who I am?” He replied,

I know very well who you are. Your beginning was a drop of semen and your end is a corpse that everyone hates, and in between these two stages you carry filth in your stomach.

Muhallab left his haughtiness and walked away.

Hadhrat Omar ؓ said,

When a person is humble, Allah ﷻ raises his status and says to him, ‘Be elevated.’ And when a person is arrogant and exceeds his limits, He drops him and says, ‘You are vile.’ Then this person reaches a state that he thinks something of himself but in the eyes of the public he is contemptible and worse than a swine.

Malik bin Dinar (rah) says,

If somebody came to the entrance of the *masjid* and announced, ‘I want the worst of you to leave the *masjid*,’ I swear by Allah ﷻ you will not find anyone leaving the *masjid* faster than myself.

When Abdullah bin Mubarak (rah) heard that Malik bin Dinar (rah) said this, he remarked, “This is what has made Malik a *malik*.”

My friend Sufi Iqbal, in his book Akabar ka Suluk, narrates the quote of Hadhrat Gangohi who said:

In the past, the *buzurg* put people through difficult exercises to eliminate their evil traits. However, the *mutakhireen*, especially the *buzurg* from our line, prefer that one do so much *dhikr* that his evil traits are suppressed and the *dhikr* permeates into every aspect of one’s life. There are many evil traits, but most have condensed them into ten, the root of every one being arrogance. If this one trait is eliminated, the rest will go on their own.

One man stayed with Junaid Baghdadi for 20 years. One day, he said, “I have remained with you for so many years, but have gained nothing from you.” This man was the chief of his tribe. Junaid Baghdadi immediately understood there was arrogance in his

heart. He said, “Listen, do one thing. Take a basket of walnuts and sit outside the door of the *khanqah* and announce, ‘I will give one walnut to whoever hits me on the head with his shoe. Whoever hits me twice will get two’ and keep on increasing until the basket is empty and then come to me.” The man exclaimed, “*La ilaha illallah Muhammad Rasulallah!* Hadhrat, I cannot do this.” Junaid Baghdadi replied, “This *kalimah* is blessed. If a *kafir* reads it with conviction even after spending a lifetime in kufr, he is a true *mumin*. But since reading this, you have become a *kafir* (rejecter) of *tariqat*. Get out of here. You will not gain anything from me.”

He then narrated the incident of a man who lived with a *buzurg* for several years and complained about the condition of his heart that it had not improved. The shaikh asked, “What do you mean by improving?” The man said, “I will pass on the blessings I gain from you.” The shaikh said,

This is the whole problem; you want to become a peer. Get rid of this filth from your heart and know that we are obligated to be grateful and thankful for all the different blessings Allah ﷻ has bestowed on us. The people who do *dhikr* and *shugl* and pray salah with the intention to profit in this manner (i.e., to become *peers*) are foolish. There is corruption in their intention. How is he going to benefit and how is he going to gain reward? This existence, this body, these eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and the senses Allah ﷻ has granted us; we should at least fulfill our obligation to Allah ﷻ (of being grateful to him) before we look for other rewards and benefits.

### Tricks of the envious Shaitan

Since this path of *tariqat* is the true path of success and progress, *shaitan* tries his best to thwart the efforts and stop the advancement of anyone on this path. His trick is that he allows the *salik* to perform a lot of worship, to fear Allah ﷻ and avoid the major sins, but cultivates the seed of the mother of all diseases, arrogance, in the heart which destroys all the *salik's* piety and actions. It is written in *Ikmaal-ul-Shiyam* that,

Whoever claims his humility is actually arrogant because one can only claim humility when he has observed the loftiness of his rank. Thus, when he claims to be humble it is as if he has observed his exaltedness, therefore, he is arrogant.

### True Humility



In summary, the reality of humility is that one feels himself so wretched that the level of his rank or status never even crosses his mind. From head to toe, he thinks of himself as vile. If a person truly feels this way about himself he will never lay claim to anything, neither humility nor any good quality, because such a claim indicates he is cognizant of his high status.

In reality, humility is not performing a humble act and then thinking of oneself as humble. True humility is that when a humble act is performed, the person thinks it above himself to do such an act. Most people wrongly believe that an act of piety and humility proves one is humble. For example, if a rich man helps a poor man people will say, "Look at how humble he is," even though that person may not have any humility in him. This is why Shaikh (author of Ikmaal-ul-Shiyam) explains the difference between humble and non-humble is that humility is not that a person performs a humble act and thinks it below himself to do such a thing. For example, someone leaves his chair to sit on a rug, and thinks it below himself to sit on a rug. If, due to his self-importance he thinks he deserved to be on the chair and that he has performed a great act of humility, such a person is actually arrogant. A truly humble person is one who does something and thinks himself below the act of humility. For example, he sits on the rug but does not think himself worthy of sitting on it; he thinks he should be on the bare floor. Another example: he helps a poor person and is joyous that the poor man actually accepted his help when it was not worthy of being accepted. This is a sign of true humility. This is a long topic which I have shortened due to my sickness, though I wished to write more.

The sickness of arrogance is dangerous in the Shari'ah but more so in *tariqat*. I saw it was the habit of *shuyukh* that if the idea of *khilafat* crossed a *murid's* mind, they would delay granting him *khilafat* even when he had attained the *nisbat* of Allah ﷻ. They would warn a person who, after receiving *khilafat*, showed signs of arrogance. If the person rectified himself then good, otherwise they annulled his *khilafat*. I saw many people, *khulafah* of major *shuyukh*, who performed a lot of *shughl* and *dhikr* of Allah ﷻ, fall because of arrogance. In fact, there is an even greater need to be cautious after one is given *khilafat*. Even if one's *khilafat* is not taken, very few of such a *khalifah's murideen* are successful and his line does not endure for long. May Allah ﷻ, by His Mercy and Beneficence, save me and my friends and all the *salikeen* from this dangerous disease. It is indeed a dangerous matter. Though arrogance is a serious issue, it is not the only thing to be avoided; even something smaller like *ujb* (vanity) must be avoided because the consequences of *ujb* are no less dangerous. It was because of *ujb* that the Sahaba ؓ suffered during the Battle of Hunain when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ himself was marching forward.

The story of the Battle of Hunain is mentioned in the third *ruku'* of Surah Tauba and has been explained summarily in Bayan-ul-Quran. Allah ﷻ says,

Truly Allah has given you victory on many battlefields and on the Day of Hunain when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you not and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. Then Allah sent down his *sakina* (tranquility) on the believers and sent down forces which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers.<sup>171</sup>

In the war against the apostates, Khalid bin Walid ﷺ stated that people face tribulations based on their utterances. The first battle in the lineup of wars against the apostates was with Tulaiha Kaddaab. Some of his men were killed, but most ran from the battlefield, including Tulaiha himself, boosting the confidence of the Muslims. After that, when the Muslims took on Musailimah, the fighting became vicious. An equal number of Muslims were martyred as apostates killed. Khalid bin Walid ﷺ was commander-in-chief of the Muslim army. He says,

When we finished with Tulaiha Kaddab who hadn't shown much resistance, the words, 'Who is Banu Hanifah (the tribe of Musailmah Kaddab)? They are not any better than the rogues (i.e., Tulaiha's army) we just dealt with,' slipped my tongue and hardship strikes us by our own words. When we fought with them (Banu Hanifah) we realized there was none other like them. They fought us continuously from sunrise to Asr.

Khalid ﷺ himself admits he said something that exacerbated the situation. Likewise, whenever the *Khulafaah Rashideen* congratulated an army for their victory, they always emphasized the importance of avoiding *ujb*. There are many incidents of this kind in Al-I'tidal (p. 121).

On the other hand, Allah ﷻ loves humility which has always been the symbol of the Prophets of Allah ﷻ and the *auliya-allah*. On the day when the Blessed Prophet ﷺ conquered Makkah, the Blessed Prophet's ﷺ bowed his head low as he entered the city, an embodiment of humility. His every action manifested his humbleness though this was the greatest victory against the worst enemy of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ at the time. It was due to this humility that the most hateful enemies of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ became his devout followers. They realized that the Blessed Prophet ﷺ was a mercy and symbol of love from Allah ﷻ. He is presenting us with the blessing of *iman*, it is not a war of territory and power.

In Asir-i-Malta (p. 159), it says:

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<sup>171</sup> 9: 25-26

Hadhrat Shaikh-ul-Hind Mahmud-ul-Hasan loved living with the poor and common people. He wanted to keep his habits, his clothing, his issues, and way of walking, like the poor people, and was afraid of the company of the people of *dunya*, the affluent and pompous people. He was very close to the students of the *madaris* and preferred to sit in the third-class section of the train; however, he was also particular about cleanliness. He always kept camphor with him while traveling because the odors and dirty clothing of people irritated him. He loved the smell of *ittar* (perfume oils), especially rose. He also loved simplicity and keeping company with simple people. He inherently despised formalities and superficiality. He always quoted Maulana Qasim Naunutwi who said, 'the public bathrooms are also a place of blessing; and though the bathrooms of the rich are fragrant and clean, they are an abomination.'

### The obsession of the Nafs

The reality is that the *nafs* (self) is obsessed with its greatness. It wishes to sanctify itself and this is precisely the cause of all evils and the reason behind the downfall of one's *dunya* and *Akhirah*. For this reason, the *auliya-allah* crush the urge from their *nafs* for greatness and praise, and are happy to see something that distresses their *nafs* and humiliates it, especially in public. An offensive smell and physical impurity is nothing compared to the foul odors emitted by spiritual impurities. Among the rich, attending the call of nature increases their self-importance and arrogance while for the public it only increases their humility and contempt for the *nafs*. It also reminds a person of his reality and his filthiness. When this is the situation of filth (that discharges from our body), one can analogize it with everything else such as our possessions, properties, conduct, etc.

The *fugaha* have written it is more virtuous to perform ablution from a *haudh* (shallow reservoirs of water, usually in *masajid*, for performing ablution) because it opposes the Mutazillites, though it is nowhere written that the Mutazillites were against performing ablution from a *haudh*. As far as I understand, it grates the *nafs* because one person washes his feet from one area while another person takes water from the same place to rinse his mouth, clean his nose, and wash his face. This is why people with *nafs ammara* (that inclines towards evil) and the barons of this *dunya* think it beneath them and dishonorable to perform *wudu* from a public *haudh*. This is probably the reason behind the excellence of performing *wudu* in a *haudh*.

The reality is that both of these two, teacher and student (i.e., Maulana Qasim Naunutwi and Shaikh-ul-Hind), were always looking for ways to lower themselves, to crush their *nafs*, and to establish humility in themselves. They fled from places where arrogance, vanity, popularity, exaltedness, and self-independence increase and where it is easy to fall

victim to the *nafs*. They didn't just talk self-deprecatingly like we do. We say *kamtareen khalaaiq* (the worst of creation), *sagg-i-dunya* (a dog of this *dunya*), *zarr-i bi miqdar* (worthless granule), *naabkar* (useless), *nangi khalaaiq* (the destitute of creation) and ascribe other similar epithets to ourselves all the time. But all these ascriptions are sanctimonious because the meanings of these words have no relation to the condition of our hearts. In fact, we think quite the opposite, that '*Hamm chuman deegra naist*' ('we are everything, nothing else but us exists'), and because of this we find faults in others by criticizing and backbiting them. If we ever hear praise of our contemporaries, a fire ignites within us and we begin looking for their faults. We try to relegate this person amongst the people. If anyone ever calls us illiterate, useless, an ass, a dog, or a pig we are consumed by a fire. If we were true to our ascription, *kamtareen khalaaiq* (the worst of creation), then why does it offend us when someone calls us an ass or a dog? After all, they are also amongst the creation. Many times, I faced hardships not for something said, but even thoughts of arrogance and *ujb* that crept into my heart.

### The hardships arrogant words can cause us

In 1382 A.H., the student protests and demonstrations at Mazahirul-Uloom quelled my desire to teach and I never did teach again after that. The inciters of the protests used every method possible; they deceived, lied, and swore false oaths. I truly believe that the axiom, "Whatever hardship befalls you is because of your own bad deeds"<sup>172</sup>, is the root cause behind all the hardships and troubles we face in our life. Although the apparent causes behind these protests may have been something else, but as Khalid bin Walid رضي الله عنه said, **البلاء موكل بالمنطق** ('Hardship is based on what we say'), and thus some things have become clear to me:

1. Approximately one week before the protests started, the topic of protests and strikes came up in one of the classes and the teacher declared, "There is never a strike or protest in Mazahir."
2. The seed of protest was sowed in one of the campuses of Mazahirul-Uloom. A non-Muslim advised an expelled student, "If you students are unified, the teachers and madrasa cannot do anything to you." This student gathered all the students in one of the campus buildings where the gate had been closed. He gave a moving speech. When I discovered this in the morning, I called the supervisor of the campus and explained everything to him. The

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<sup>172</sup> 26: 30

supervisor said, “Don’t worry, he can’t do anything. I’ll go and fix him up right now.” I repeatedly emphasized the seriousness of this issue to him, but saw he was headstrong and too irrational to understand the volatile nature of the matter.

3. When the riots and protests continued for some time and moved from the campus into Mazahirul-Uloom itself, we (the board members) held a meeting and I proclaimed, “Not one student from *daura* (the final year) is involved in this.” The assistant principal of Maulana Abdul Majeed whispered, “Hadhrat, there are also students from *daura*.” This fool (i.e., Hadhrat Shaikh is humbly referring to himself) repeated the same thing but more forcefully, “It is not possible for any *daura* student to be involved in this.” But after investigating, we found few who were not involved in the riots. Even worse and more astounding was that my close friend, who was also one of the closest helpers of *muhtamim* (principal), often met and confided with us on this matter, but we later discovered he was also amongst the agitators.

The reason I was so adamant that *daura* students could not be involved in the riots was that I had stressed upon them the greatness of their rank, their being *naaib* (representatives) of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, and that they would one day be leaders of the people. That year in Bukhari class, I made a point of repeating this message during each class from the beginning of the year, and mistakenly thought they had absorbed this message. But when I saw that almost everyone was involved, this poem came to my lips:

Why doesn’t the one deprived of his desire  
Look into the sleeping skies  
That he sees his hard work failing at every step

Even now, whenever the scene of the strikes plays out before my eyes, I see it a result of my own failing. If I had any sincerity I would have had some influence on my students. Before this, we always sympathized with the students whenever we heard of strikes and riots in the madrasa and the students told us of the abuses against them. However, after seeing the dynamic of the riots in Mazahirul-Uloom, now if I ever hear of a riot or strike breaking out in any madrasa, my sympathies are always with the teachers and staff. The ugly face of riots has left a deep scar in my heart. May Allah ﷻ protect me because arrogance is the mother of all diseases and can destroy the best of all people.

### **The downfall arrogance causes**

I have seen many of the *masha’ikh* of *suluk* fall because of arrogance and the story of Shaikh Abu Abdullah Andlusi is so deeply engraved in my heart that it often inadvertently

flows into my writing. I wish that the *salikeen*, and anyone who has some affiliation to *tasawwuf*, would also preserve it in their hearts. Shaikh Abu Abdullah Andlusi was one of the *akabir* of the *auliya-allah*. Many *khanqahs* ran under his auspices, hundreds of *madaris* operated under his name, and he had thousands of students and disciples. It was the end of 200 A.H. and only 200 years had elapsed since the Blessed Prophet ﷺ passed away. It is as if the era of *khair-ul-quroon* still existed. It is said that he had over 12,000 *murideen*. Once he went on a journey accompanied by great *shuyukh* and ulama like Junaid Baghdadi and Hadhrat Shibli. Hadhrat Shibli says:

Our caravan was moving peacefully and with the blessings of Allah ﷻ. Then we passed by a Christian village. There was little time left for salah and we could not find water in the village. There was a small well on the outskirts of this village where some women were filling their buckets with water. As soon as the Shaikh (Abu Abdullah Andlusi) saw one of the women his situation changed. Shaikh bowed his head and he stopped eating, drinking, and talking to anyone for three whole days.

We were worried and depressed. On the third day, I gathered the courage to say, ‘O Shaikh, thousands of your *murideen* are worried about your condition.’ Shaikh turned towards everyone and said,

‘My friends, how long am I going to hide my problem from you? The day before yesterday, I saw this girl and my love for her has overwhelmed me to the extent that it has gripped my limbs and body. Now it is impossible for me to leave here.’

I replied,

O Shaikh, you are the shaikh of Iraq and are renowned for your austerity, your asceticism, and your wealth of knowledge. The number of your *murideen* exceeds 12,000. By the Quran, please do not disgrace us and everyone here.

Shaikh replied,

‘My friend, your and my fate are foreordained by Allah ﷻ. The *wilayat* (closeness to Allah ﷻ) has been taken from me and the signs of guidance removed.’

Saying this, he began to cry and said, ‘O my people, my destiny is running its course, nothing is in my control.’

We were struck by this statement and began to cry in anguish. The shaikh began crying with us and soon the earth became wet with the flood of our tears. After this, we had no choice but to return to Baghdad. The shaikh's *murideen* in Baghdad were devastated when we explained the whole situation to them. Some of them died in shock and grief then and there. Most of them began begging Allah ﷻ and pleading with Him that, 'O Changer of hearts, show the shaikh guidance and return him back to his original state.' After this, all the *khanqahs* shut down and we spent an entire year in pain and anguish without our shaikh. After the year passed, the *murideen* decided to make a trip to shaikh and find out about his condition. Where is he and how is he doing? Thus, one group of *murideen* traveled to the village and asked the people the whereabouts of their shaikh. They told us, 'He is grazing the pigs in the jungle.' We thought, 'O Allah, what is happening!' The village people explained, 'The shaikh was engaged to the daughter of our chief. Her father accepted the engagement under this condition (i.e., he would graze the pigs) and now he is grazing the pigs.' We were astonished and were about to drown in our sorrow and grief. Tears began flowing from our eyes and we were barely able to suppress our emotions when we reached the outer edges of the jungle where the shaikh was grazing pigs. We saw the shaikh: he was wearing a Christian cap on his head and a girdle around his waist, he was leaning on the stick which he leaned on during *khutbas* and speeches, as he oversaw the pigs. The scene was like salt on our wounds. When shaikh saw us walking towards him he looked down. When we came close, we said, 'Assalamu alaikum,' and he softly replied, 'Walaikum assalam.'" Shibli said, 'O Shaikh, look at your condition after all the knowledge, greatness, and hadith and *tafsir*.' Shaikh replied,

'O my brothers, I am not my control, my *Maula* (Creator) did what He wished with me and after bringing me close, when He wished, He threw me away from His door. Who can avoid what He has destined for you. O my friends fear the Wrath of Allah ﷻ, don't ever become arrogant about your knowledge and status.'

Then he looked towards the sky and said, 'O my *Maula*, I did not think You would do such a thing and throw me out Your door.' Saying this, he began crying and begging for help from Allah ﷻ and said, 'O Shibli, learn from others!' Shibli cried and supplicated,

'O our *Rabb*, we ask none but You for help and in everything we put our trust in You. Please remove this hardship from us. There is none but You who can lift this hardship from us.'

Hearing our pleas and crying, the pigs gathered around us and began squealing. The shaikh was also sobbing. Shibli said, 'Shaikh you were *hafiz* of Quran and recited the

Quran in the seven *qirat* (recitations). Do you remember any now?’ The shaikh replied, ‘O friend, I do not remember anything from the Quran except two ayaat. The first is,

ومن يهن الله فما له من مكرم ان الله يفعل ما يشاء

Whosoever Allah humiliates, there is no one to give him respect. Verily Allah does whatever he wishes.<sup>173</sup>

And the second ayah is,

ومن يتبدل الكفر بالايمن فقد ضل سواء السبيل

Whoever chooses *kufir* in place of *iman*, verily he has deviated from the straight path.<sup>174</sup>

Shibli asked, ‘O Shaikh, you knew 30,000 ahadith with the chains of transmission and could recall them instantly. Do you remember anything from the ahadith?’ The shaikh said, ‘I only remember one hadith,

من بدل دينه فاقتلوه

‘Whoever changes his Deen, execute him.’

Shibli says:

‘Seeing this condition of the sheikh, we decided to return to Baghdad. We had only traveled a short distance when on the third day, we saw the shaikh in front of us, emerging from the bank of a river where he had bathed. He was loudly pronouncing and repeating the *kalimah*,

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله و اشهد ان محمد رسول الله

Only the person who felt our pain and anguish before this could understand our joy at that moment. Afterwards, we asked the sheikh, ‘Was there some reason behind all this?’ The shaikh replied,

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<sup>173</sup> 22: 17

<sup>174</sup> 2: 108



‘Yes, when we stopped by this village we passed by temples and churches. When I saw fire-worshippers and Christians worshipping something besides Allah ﷻ, I felt arrogance in my heart that, ‘We are *mumineen*, believers in the one Creator. Look at these ignorant and foolish people who worship inanimate and unintelligent beings.’ Immediately, I heard a voice from the Unseen that, ‘This *iman* and belief in the Oneness of Allah is not attained by your efforts, it is granted by Our Will. Do you think your *iman* is in your hands that you look down upon others? If you wish We will prove it to you right now (that *iman* is by My will).’ At that moment, I felt as if a bird flew from my heart which in reality was my *iman*.’”

(end of quote)

In this incident I meant to narrate only the last portion since the whole incident has already been narrated in Aap Beti and in Akabar Ka Suluk by Sufi Iqbal. Hakim Ilyas has also written a book based on this incident by the name of Shaikh Andlusi ka Aik Ajeeb au Ghareeb ibratnaak Wakia. This arrogance is dangerous it brought down a shaikh of *shuyukh*. May Allah ﷻ by His Grace and Mercy save us from this deadly disease. Ameen.

*CHAPTER 20*

*DEBASING THE AULIYA-ALLAH*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
*In the Name of God; the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ  
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ  
*All praise is due to God; Lord of all the worlds  
And may peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of messengers*

## Destruction for those who harm the friends of Allah

This last chapter is the most important of all past chapters and also the most critical. It is about debasing the the *Salaf*. The *Salaf* include the *ulama*, the *muhadditheen*, the *fuqaha*, and the *sufiah*. Allah ﷻ says:

وَالسَّبِقُونَ الْأُولُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ  
And the foremost to embrace Islam of the *Muhajireen* and the *Ansaar* and also those who followed them exactly, Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.<sup>175</sup>

There are many ahadith and *athaar* in Durre Mansur which help explain this ayah. One of them is narrated by Imam Auzai. He says,

Yahya bin Kathir, Qasim, Makhul, Abdah bin Abi Lababah and Hassan bin bin Attia narrated that they heard from a large number of Sahaba that, ‘When this ayah was revealed, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘This is for my Ummah and after Allah’s ﷻ Pleasure there is no anger.’

Those *Sufia* who fall under the definition of the hadith of *ihsan* also come under this ayah. This subject has been explained extensively in the book *Al-I'tidaal*. Regarding this matter, I will only add that those who make a career of finding faults in scholars and are proud of it, only hurt themselves not the *ulema* they criticize. And even if they could hurt

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<sup>175</sup> 9: 100

the ulema the most they could do is to deprive them of worldly things (i.e. material possessions) or dignity and respect, all of which are temporary and insignificant. Of course, this can only be done if they have power over decreasing whatever is written in the *ulema*'s destiny (which they do not). In essence, their criticism and prejudices against the *ulema* backfire on them.

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, 'He who does not respect our elders, is not kind to our children, and does not value our scholars, is not from amongst us.'

Some consider themselves of this Ummah; however, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, according to this hadith, does not want them to have anything to do with our Ummah. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, 'Those who carry the revelations (e.g. the scholars) are the *wali* of Allah ﷻ.'

The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

“The holders of the Quran are the friends of Allah ﷻ. Whosoever makes them their enemy makes Allah ﷻ his enemy and whosoever makes them his friend makes Allah ﷻ his friend.”

It is narrated in *Bukhari* that Allah ﷻ said, “I declare war upon the one who troubles my *wali*.” Khatib Baghdadi relates from Imam Abu Hanifah (*rahmatullahi alayh*) and Imam Shafi'i (*rahmatullahi alayh*) that “If the *fuqaha* (jurists) and *ulema* (scholars) are not the Auliyah of Allah ﷻ, then nobody is a *wali* of Allah ﷻ.” Abdullah bin Abbas ؓ says, “Anyone who troubles a *faqih* troubles the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.”

Hafiz Abul-Qasim Ibn Asakar advises:

O my brother, listen to me for a minute! May He grant you and I the ways to achieve His pleasure, and may He include us amongst the people who fear Him the as He should be feared. I have heard that he meant (backbiting) of the scholars is extremely poisonous, and we know how Allah ﷻ exposes the faults of one who ridicules them (scholars). It is Allah's habit that He unveils the secrets of those who ridicule the scholars and destroys the hearts of those who loosen their tongue against them.” (Reference of Ibn Asakar obtained from the book *Belittling the Status of the Mashaikh*)

Shaikh Abdul-Hai writes in his *Fatawa*: “The *fuqaha* decree that one who swears at the Auliya or *ulema* due to his contempt for knowledge is a *kafir*. If there is another reason for his contempt of the scholars, he will be at the very least a *fasiq* or *fajir* (sinner) and will be deserving of the wrath of Allah ﷻ in this world and in the hereafter.”

He further corroborates this with the statements of the *fuqaha*, verses of the Qur'an, and the ahadith.

In brief, those who debase the *Salaf* harm themselves more than anyone else. This point is supported by the ahadith and the sayings of the *fuqaha*. Those who can take out time and are not preoccupied by worldly obligations are encouraged to take out time to read Al-I'tidal.

### **'Their crooked is also straight'**

Shaikh Zakariya writes:

One of the helpers of Shaikh Gangohi would often have *kashf* (clairvoyance) of the graves. When my father<sup>176</sup> passed away he came for condolence. He sat in the cemetery for a while. Later, he came and gave me three messages from my father.

First, "I am not in debt so do not worry." I was very concerned about an 8000 rupee debt my father had left behind him. The second day after his death, after consulting my uncle, Shaikh Ilyas, I sent a postcard to my father's creditors stating that my father has passed away and that I take responsibility for the amount he owed you.

At the time, my Shaikh, Shaikh Saharanpuri, was in Hijaz. He did not like what I had written to the creditors. He said it would have been better if you had written, "My father's inheritance consists of books (Shaikh Zakariya's father owned a small bookstore). Take his books instead of money to finish his debt."

The second message he sent was, "Do not worry about so and so person. It (i.e. his criticism) did not bother me but it was bad for him." This was in reference to a person who hated my father and always criticized him. I was worried he would continue his mission. But, one thing I myself witnessed was the consequences of his hatred and criticisms. He was expelled by Shaikh Saharanpuri from the madrasa.

The third message was, "Be fearful of the Auliya-Allah, their crooked is also straight." I was a school-age pupil and could not make out how something crooked could be anything but crooked, regardless of whether it is said by a pious or a worldly person.

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<sup>176</sup> The late Shaikh Yahya Kandhilwi, one of the highest ranking *khulafa* of Shaikh Saharanpuri.

Ten years later, in 1335 Hijri, I was researching for the book *Bazlul-Majhud* while I was in Madinah. My Shaikh (Shaikh Saharanpuri) would sometimes receive trivial complaints from people about Nazim Sahib (the dean of the madrasa<sup>177</sup>) concerning matters of the madrasa. I was well aware of these people (who wrote the letters) and it so happened that all the letters that came to Shaikh would come through me first.

Shaikh was quiet about these complaints, but since I was responding on his behalf, sometimes I would respond to these complaints harshly. But in Zul-Qadda 1335, I was returning from Hijaz with Shaikh Abdul-Qadir.<sup>178</sup> Shaikh Saharanpuri gave him a letter to give to the Nazim (dean) which stated, “You are mistreating so and so person. Take care of him and behave better with him.” Abdul Qadir gave this letter in my presence to Nazim who retorted, “He writes lies, not complaints” (regarding the person who complained to Shaikh).

Shaikh Abdul-Qadir’s face flushed with anger; it then dawned upon me about the time I received the message from my father (‘be fearful of the pious, their crooked is also straight’) and how I could not rationalize what it meant. Now as I looked upon Shaikh Abdul-Qadir’s face, everything came back to me. It was true; the man was a liar and wrote false complaints, and Nazim spoke the truth.

Shaikh Abdul Qadir replied, “You are right. Wrong is wrong, but remember, if the Auliya-Allah ever have a change of heart towards someone (like yourself), even if it may be an erroneous complaint, it will definitely have an adverse effect on you in some way or another.”

After this incident, I saw many times that their *takaddur* (change of heart) puts one into hardship. I became fearful after this and reminded my friends that,

“Do not be proud that you are on *haqq* (righteousness). Avoid the *takaddur* of these self-effacing people. Always keep your record straight with them as much as possible.”

## Those who declare war against Allah

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<sup>177</sup> Madrasa Mazaahirul-Uloom

<sup>178</sup> Abdul-Qadir Raipuri, *khalifah* of the renowned Shaikh Abdur-Raheem. He stayed in the service of his Shaikh for fourteen years and was known for his strictness in following the Sunnah, for his profound piety, and his humility. He passed away on August 16, 1962.

Shaikh-ul-Islam, Ibn Taimiyah, wrote that in the hadith of Bukhari, Allah ﷻ says, “Whoever makes an enemy of My *wali*, declares me his enemy.” He (Allama Ibn Taimiyah) says:

This is the most authentic of ahadith about the *auliya-allah*. The Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Whoever makes an enemy of the *wali* of Allah ﷻ brings himself in the battlefield to fight a war (with Allah ﷻ).’ In another *hadith qudsi*, Allah ﷻ says, ‘Whoever ridicules My *wali*, challenges Me to a war. I become so angry in My feelings for My *wali* that I become like a furious lion.’ And this is because the *auliya* believe in Allah ﷻ and befriend Him. They like only he who is liked by Allah ﷻ, despise he who is despised by Allah ﷻ, love he who is loved by Allah ﷻ, and are angry with whom Allah ﷻ is angry. They order that which Allah ﷻ orders and prohibit that which Allah ﷻ prohibited.

Hadhrat Gangohi said,

The faces of the people who debase the ulama are turned away from the Qibla in the grave. Whoever wishes may go and see it.

This same topic has been discussed in Al-I’tidal where it is written that the hadith,

من عادي لي وليا فقد اذنته بالحرب

is narrated by Abu Huraira in Bukhari but it is also narrated by Aishah, Maimuna, Mu’az bin Jabal, Anas, and Abu Imamah. Wahab bin Munabah narrates,

I read a verse in the book of Dawud (as), the Zaboor, in which Allah ﷻ says,

‘I swear by My Honor and Greatness, whoever debased My *wali*, has prepared himself for war with Me’ (Durre Mansur).

In one hadith the Blessed Prophet ﷺ said,

Jibrael narrates from Allah ﷻ that He says, ‘Whosoever debases My *wali*, has prepared himself for war with Me. In My love for the *auliya*, I am enraged like a furious lion’ (Durre Mansur).

It is bearable if ones ears are cut, eyes gouged, and legs and arms broken in punishment for this heinous crime, because the difficulties and pains of this world will end. If such a thing was to happen the doors of repentance are still open, but what is one to do if he is corrupted in his *Deen*? The scholars say that aside from these two, no other sin has been recorded which incites war with Allah ﷻ. It indicates the graveness of these two sins and that a person involved in them may die in the state of kufr.”

The author of *Mazahir Haqq* writes, “The declaration of war indicates an unfavorable death. It is the utmost wish of every Muslim to die a favorable death (as a Muslim) which is an eternal blessing from Allah ﷻ. You could only imagine how destructive such a thing could be which brings about death in the state of kufr.”

To be contemptuous of the *Sufia* who follow the Sunnah, break the *bida*, especially those who hold knowledge of the *Deen* and are pious in their actions, and who are the keepers of the esoteric meanings, is a disaster. The dire threat, in Islam, against one who does this is deadly. What a dangerous position, to be in war with Allah ﷻ.

This proves that the heart of such a person is full of defiance and sickness. The chances of this person dying a terrible death are imminent. (May Allah ﷻ save us from this).

Allama Shirani writes in Tabaqati-Kubra:

Imam Abu Turab Nahshabi, who was one of the head of the *sufiah*, says, ‘When any person becomes defiant of Allah ﷻ, objections and accusations against the *auliya-allah* become their friend. Meaning that, any person who loses affiliation with Allah ﷻ becomes accustomed to raising objections against the *auliya-allah*.’

I have already mentioned this at length in Al-I’tidal and it is an extremely important subject. Loving the *auliya-allah* is the best antidote and despising them is a deadly poison. For more information, read my book Al-I’tidal in which I have explained this subject in ten to twelve pages. The advice I always give to my friends is that there are many fields of Deen and to work in every one of them is difficult, namely to be a *muhaddith*, *faqih*, *mujahid*, a person of *taqwa*, to perform a lot of *nawafil* (supererogatory prayers), to fast constantly, etc. But if a person develops love in his heart for the *kamileen* (i.e., the *auliya-allah*) then from the rule of,

المرء مع من احب  
A man will be with whom he loves



he will attain an immense portion (of reward) from each of these fields of Deen.

واخر دعوانا الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين و خاتم النبيين و حبيب رب العالمين و علي اله  
و اصحابه و اتباعه اجمعين برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين. قبيل المغرب يوم الجمعة احدي عشر جمادي الاول  
1397. □ في مسجد النبي الكريم صلي الله تعالى علي صاحبه افضل الصلاة و التسليم  
محمد زكريا عفي عنه



## Glossary

**A'immah-** Plural of imam; usually used in reference to the four great imams of Fiqh: Imam Abu Hanifah (rah), Imam Shafi' (rah), Imam Malik (rah), and Imam Ahmed (rah).

**Adab-** Signifies discipline of the mind; good qualities and attributes of the mind and soul. Conventionally, adab of something is fulfillment of its rights, spiritually and physically.

**Ahkamaat-** Commandments.

**Ahwaal-** Plural of *haal*: Different states that are attained as one progresses in achieving the *nisbat* of Allah.

**Ahwaal-** Plural of haal

**Akaabir-** Elders.

**Amr bil maroof-** Enjoining the good.

**Asghaal-** Plural of *shughl*: In the terminology of the *sufiah* it refers to the different meditative exercises by which one achieves *nisbat* of Allah. They are not objectives, but rather means by which one achieves the objective of *ihsan*.

**Auliya Allah ﷺ** - Plural of wali ullah.

**Baatin-** That which relates to the activity of the soul and nafs.

**Baqaa-** After *fanaa* of desire and will, the will becomes the will and desire of Allah (swt). Thus, *baqaa* is travelling in Allah (swt). In *fanaa*, the salik is aware of his effacement while in *baqaa* he is unaware of his own effacement

**Baseerat-** Perceptive faculty of the mind.

**Bayah-** To make a pledge, or oath at the hands of a shaikh.

**Buzurg-** Urdu for shaikh or elder.

**Fanaa-** Signifies the end of travelling to Allah (swt) that is: the thinking away of the self; it is the death of passion, of self-will, of self-consciousness. This is a lower state than that of *baqaa*.

**Faqih-** Jurist

**Faraasat-** Signifies a faculty which Allah ﷻ puts in the hearts of the pious and muttaqi in consequence whereof they sometimes know conditions or circumstances of certain men

**Fardh-** That which is obligatory and proven by strong (Quran and authentic ahadith) and indisputable evidence; to reject a fardh is kufr.

**Fiqh-** Is knowledge of derivative rulings derived from in-depth evidences of the Quran and Sunnah.

**Ghafla-** Forgetfulness of Allah ﷻ. The opposite of dhikr (remembrance of Allah ﷻ).

**Ghaus-** Is sometimes used synonymously with *qutb* but also sometimes indicates a lower level than the *qutb* in the hierarchy of the Auliya. It should be remembered that this hierarchy does not come about by design; it is an arrangement in which even the Auliya of this hierarchy are unaware of their own positions

**Haal-** State, spiritual state

**Haqq -** Righteousness and truth.

**Ijma’-** Consensus of the scholars.

**Ijtihad-** Mujtahid exerting the faculties of the mind to the utmost for the purpose of forming an opinion in a case of law.

**Ikhlaas-** Sincerity of Allah ﷻ.

**Ilm-ul-akhlaq-** Knowledge and science of the qualities of the soul.

**Ilm-ul-kalam-** Knowledge and science of beliefs and doctrine.

**Istidraj-** Supernatural acts performed by the *kuffar* .

**Jazb-** An inclination towards fulfilling the orders of Allah ﷻ. It is a gift of Allah ﷻ which He grants to whomever He wishes.

**Kaifiyaat-** Plural of kaifiyat- Higher inner states of *iman* in which one experiences the sweetness of closeness to Allah.

**Karamaat-** Supernatural acts performed by the Auliya.

**Kashf-** Literally the lifting of a curtain or veil. In *tasawwuf*, kashf means clairvoyance.

**Kashf Quboor-** Clairvoyance of the graves

**Kashf Sudur-** Kashf in general is also called Kashf Sudur; though khasf Sudur is

**Khabr wahid-** There are two types *aziz* and *gharib*. *Aziz-* in which the number of narrators throughout the chain of transmission is two people and if there is only one narrator, it is called *gharib* .

**Khairul quroon-** From the hadith of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ. It refers to the greatest time period of Islam from the time of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ to the period of the *taba'-tabieen*.

**Khauf-** Fear of Allah ﷻ.

**Khilafat-** A shaikh's certification that the disciple possesses the qualities to keep spiritually progressing on the Path as long as the disciple continues following

**Madhab-** Singular of *madhaaib-* literally means place of departure. Also used in the meaning of opinion, view, belief. Conventionally, it means school of Fiqh as is mentioned above by the author.

**Majzub-** A person so permutated with the love of Allah ﷻ that he is often or perpetually unaware of his actions and sayings.

**Maqam-** Signifies a degree of the path that comes in the way of the salik.

**Mashaaikh-** Extended plural form of shuyukh.

**Mashoora** or **mashoor**- A hadith narrated by a large number, but in which the number dwindled throughout the chain of transmission.

**Mu'jizat**- Supernatural acts performed by Ambiya (as).

**Muhaqqiq**- An expert who brings out the truth from extensive study

**Mujahadaat**- Plural of mujahadah- exercises to attain nisbat of Allah ﷻ. Mujahadaat included physical exertion to suppress the nafs and remove arrogance from the heart. Due to the physical and spiritual weakness of Muslims in our times, the shuykh no longer instruct the murideen to perform mujahadaat as they did in the past. For examples, look in chapter 12 (pg. 188).

**Mujtahid**- Singular of *mujtahideen*, a scholar who puts all his effort by the order of the Shari'ah to derive an opinion from the Quran and Sunnah. The conditions to be a *mujtahid* are outlined in chapter four

**Muqallid**- One who practices taqlid.

**Murid**- One who makes bayah to a shaikh for spiritual rectification.

**Murideen**- Plural of murid

**Murshid**- Literally, one who guides. In tasawwuf, the shaikh who guides the murid.

**Mushajaraat**- Literally, the entwining of branches from the same tree. Since the Sahaba ؓ all spiritually descend from the Blessed Prophet ﷺ their disagreement is looked upon as mushajaraat.

**Mushtabah**- A deed or thing of which one is doubtful whether it is haram or halal.

**Mutakhireen**- The scholars of the era after the *mutaqadimeen*. However, there is no precise time or date by which the era of the *Mutaqadimeen* is separated from the *mutakhireen*. In general though, the scholars closer to our time are referred to as the *mutakhireen* while the scholars closer to the period of the *Salaf* are called the *mutaqadimeen*.

**Mutaqadimeen**- The scholars of the era closer to the period of the *Salaf*.

**Nahi anil munkar** – Forbidding the evil.

**Nisbat-** Literally relationship with Allah ﷻ. The objective of tasawwuf is to attain the level of ihsan in order to strengthen the nisbat of Allah ﷻ.

**Nur-** Light

**Paas anfaas-** A method of the sufiah in attaining permanent remembrance of Allah (swt) in which the salik inhales breathing in the majestic name 'Allah (swt)' and exhales breathing out the letter 'hu'.

**Qudama-** The scholars of the earlier times

**Qutb-** The hierarch of the Auliya of any given period

**Raja-** Hope in the mercy of Allah ﷻ.

**Ruhaniyat-** Spirituality.

**Salaf-I-saleheen-** Pious predecessors. Salaf traditionally, are the scholars of the first, second, and even third century after the hijrah.

**Salik-** a traveler on the path to Allah ﷻ

**Sanad-** A thing against which another leans or rests- a chain of transmission in a hadith is called sanad because the hadith rests on the chain of transmission to prove its authenticity. Also means connection.

**Shariah-** Rulings from the Quran and Sunnah related to the outward deeds.

**Shathiaat-** Plural of shath. Is plural of *shuth*. *Shuth* is an utterance or action said or done by one overcome by a *haal*, which is incompatible with the Quran and Sunnah

**Shukr-** Gratefulness to Allah ﷻ.

**Shuyukh-** Plural of shaikh .

**Suluk-** The path of the salik by which gains wusul ilallah (attainment of Allah ﷻ)

**Sunnah-** According the muhaditheen: the sayings, deeds, description and taqir (deeds or sayings which he approved of) of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

**Taba'-tabieen-** Those who met the *tabieen* but did not gain the companionship of the Sahaba ﷺ.

**Tabieen-** Those who met the Sahaba but did not gain the companionship of the Blessed Prophet ﷺ.

**Tafsir-** Exegesis of the Quran.

**Taqlid-** Acceptance by one who does not possess the ability of *ijtihad* to accept the derivative juristic rulings of a *mujtahid* without asking for proof and with full trust and faith in him that he possesses the proof to support his ruling.

**Tareeqat-** *Tariqat* is another name for *Ihsan* ( that you worship Allah as if you see Him (Bukhari)) or, we can say, it is the acquisition of the attribute of *ihsan*.

**Tasawwuf-** Another name for tariqat, and tazkiyah (purification).

**Tawakkul-** Reliance on Allah ﷻ.

**Ujb-** Being proud of oneself without thinking low of others.

**Usul-** Plural of asl. Rules and principles upon which ijtihad of the Quran and Sunnah is made.

**Wajd-** Spiritual ecstasy in which one is unconscious of his actions.

**Wajib-** That which is obligatory but one who rejects it will be fasiq (transgressor) but not a kafir. Wajib and fardh are also used interchangeably except according the Hanafia.

**Wali-** Short for wali ullah (friend of Allah ﷻ).

**Wali ullah-** Friend of Allah ﷻ.

**Warid-** Inspiration in the sense of spiritual perception.

**Waridaat-** Plural of warid.

**Wusul ilallah-** Reaching Allah ﷻ.

**Zahir-** That which relates to the outwards: actions, and sayings.