

WORDS OF WISDOM

from the pious of the past

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Foreword

Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said: “Fear the intelligence of a Mu’min, for verily he sees with the noor of Allah Ta’ala” (Tirmizi). The “Mu’min” referred to in the above Hadith is a true Mu’min – one who is obedient to his Rabb and has recognised his Creator and Sustainer, he is a person of true knowledge and taqwa, he has adorned himself with the akhlaaq of Rasulullah ﷺ and his entire life is an embodiment of the Sunnah and, in short, he sincerely fulfils the rights of Allah Ta’ala as well as the servants of Allah Ta’ala. Personalities blessed with the above-mentioned qualities see with the noor of Allah Ta’ala and also speak with the tawfeeq (ability) from Allah Ta’ala. While they are not infallible, their words and statements are almost all the time a reflection of the lessons of the Qur’aan and Hadith and their actions are a practical demonstration and application of the Shari’ah and Sunnah. Thus their statements illuminate the heart and provide guidance. Among the greatest benefits of sincerely reading about their lives and studying their works and statements is that one is imbued with great himmat (courage). Stony hearts are melted and weak hearts are strengthened. Laziness gradually dissipates and the zeal for engaging in ibaadah and refraining from every sin is

instilled. One is propelled towards emulating them in their sacrifices for Deen and in becoming the true flag-bearers of Islam. Their lives and words inspire one to strive for improvement and betterment in every facet of life, including ibaadaat, mu'aamalaat (monetary dealings), mu'aasharaat (social life) or akhlaaq (character).

There were numerous personalities of this calibre in every era. Among the giants of the recent past were Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ، Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ and Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ. The legacies of these personalities speak for themselves. A short biography of each of these personalities is included in this booklet, which gives a slight glimpse of their status as well as their works and achievements.

For some time, every week one or two selected statements of these Akaabir were posted on the Ihyaauddeen and Alhaadi websites. Initially the statements of only the latter two Akaabir were posted. Recently, the statements of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ were also added to the posting. This booklet is a compilation of all the statements posted to date on the website.

May Allah Ta'ala accept this great effort and make it a means of tremendous benefit for the Ummah. Aameen.

(Hazrat Moulana) Muhammad Ilyas Patel

Senior Ustaaz of Hadith

Madrasah Ta'leemuddeen

Isipingo Beach – South Africa

Biographies

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

(Born 1280 Hijri – Demise 1362 Hijri)

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ spent his entire life serving Deen. Moulana was one of the great A'immah of the Ummah and was amongst the great Ulama and luminaries of India.

After qualifying, he spent approximately fourteen years in Khanpur, India, teaching, writing and propagating the knowledge of Deen to the people. During this period, thousands of students quenched their thirst at the feet of this “ocean of knowledge”. In the year 1315 after A.H., Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ left Khanpur and on the advice of his spiritual mentor, Haji Imdaadullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, settled in Thana Bawan where he devoted most of his time imparting spiritual benefit to the masses.

Moulana was greatly talented and authored many books in nearly every science of Deen. The total number of books that Moulana authored in the various sciences of Deen is said to be over a thousand. It is for this reason that he has received and been honoured with the titles ‘Hakeemul Ummah’ and ‘Mujaddid-e-Millat’. Many books in the field of Hadith were prepared under his

guidance and supervision, such as the masterpiece “I’laa us Sunan” which was prepared to explain the proofs of the Hanafi mazhab. Two of Moulana’s famous books, “Behisti Zewar” and “Munajaat-e-Maqbool”, are found in many Muslim homes. His Tafseer “Bayanul Quraan” is a Tafseer which is unparalleled. Moulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، who was famously known as the walking library on account of his photographic memory and the vast ocean of knowledge that he possessed, bore testimony to the excellence of Bayanul Quraan.

Although Moulana wrote such a large number of books, he did not earn a cent from them. All his work was solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta’ala. Out of gratitude to Allah Ta’ala for the khidmat of Deen that Allah Ta’ala had taken from him, Moulana used to say, “Alhamdulillah, all the necessary work has been done. The path towards Deen has been cleared for centuries. Insha-Allah, my books, discourses and advices will be of assistance in Deeni matters for future generations.”

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

(Born 1303 Hijri – Demise Hijri 1363)

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was a revivalist of the 14th century Hijri. Allah Ta'ala used him to bring Deen alive, not only in India, but throughout the world. When Moulana noticed a rapid degeneration in the Deeni condition and religious values of the Muslims of Mewat, south of Delhi, to the extent that it was difficult to differentiate between their beliefs and practices and the beliefs and practices of the kuffaar, Moulana became extremely concerned and commenced the work of dawat and tabligh. Moulana felt that the only way to reform and correct the Mewatis and bring them back onto Deen was through working among them and directly propagating Deen to them.

Thus, with great difficulty Moulana commenced the work of dawat and tabligh thereby motivating and encouraging people to join in the effort. In the initial stages, people were unfamiliar with the effort and were reluctant to respond. However after seeing that this effort was in total conformity to the Sunnah and was aimed at reviving the entire Deen in the Ummah at large, numerous people wholeheartedly embraced and joined the effort. The work of dawat and tabligh gained divine acceptance from Allah Ta'ala. Moulana's efforts and sincerity bore fruit during his very lifetime and within a few years a peaceful revolution was witnessed in the length and breadth of India. This revolution continued thereafter and has now reached the four corners of the globe.

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhelwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

(Born 1315 Hijri – Demise 1402 Hijri)

Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was a personality endowed with great qualities and sublime character. Allah Ta'ala granted him superb courage and zeal and he served the Deen of Allah Ta'ala throughout his life. Allah Ta'ala accepted him in the service of Hadith to such an extent that his mastery and expertise in the various sciences and fields of Hadith became accepted by one and all. The title 'Shaikhul Hadith' became synonymous to him and this title was conferred upon him by none other than his Ustaaz, spiritual mentor and the great Muhaddith and Faqih of the age, Hazrat Moulana Khaleel Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He began teaching Saheeh Bukhaari at the tender age of twenty six. He authored many kitaabs in Arabic and Urdu which serve as a guidance for the Ummah towards the path of the Sunnah. His works demonstrate his deep knowledge of Deen and understanding of the Sunnah. Among his works that gained worldwide popularity and recognition were the following: Laami'ud Diraari, Al-Hallul Mufhim, Al-Kowkabud Durri, Faizus Samaa'ee, Awjazul Masaalik, as well as the Fazaail kitaabs that he prepared (i.e. Fazaail-e-A'maal, Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat, Fazaail-e-Durood, etc). Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had immense love for the Sunnah, thus Allah Ta'ala used him to spread the light of the Sunnah to many parts of the world.

Ikhlaas – Sincerity

Ikhlaas - The Basis of Acceptance of all Deeni Works

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

The Qur'aan and Ahaadith have emphatically declared that the Deen of Islam is a religion that is extremely easy to practise upon. In all conditions, practising on the laws of Islam is easy and manageable. Hence Shari'ah has taken into consideration the nature of the injunction and the condition and the circumstances in which it has to be carried out, and accordingly made it easy. Similarly, correcting one's intention before carrying out the action and adopting ikhlaas (sincerity) when doing the action is not only extremely essential but is the very spirit and cause for the action gaining acceptance. Therefore this also has been made extremely easy. It is this very ikhlaas (sincerity) that forms the basis of acceptance of all Deeni works and spiritual practices. When we understand that adopting ikhlaas (sincerity) is easy, it becomes clear that treading the path of Deen is also extremely easy. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ pg. 12)

Encouragement and Sincerity

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

When a person engages in the work of Deen, his intention should be solely to acquire the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and earn reward in the Hereafter. However, the worldly benefits that are promised for the one who engages in the works of Deen should also be mentioned as a means of encouragement. Some people are such that they initially get involved in Deeni work with the hope of obtaining worldly benefits, but through the barakah and blessings of the Deeni work they are involved in, Allah Ta'ala blesses them with true sincerity. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 77)

The Ingredient of Love

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

As a young child, I would often hear my respected father utter the proverb:

محبت تجھکو آدابِ محبت سکھاوے گی

Love itself is sufficient to teach the lover the etiquette and conduct of love.

Although I was too young at the time to truly understand what this proverb meant, I still memorized it. Now that I have advanced in age, this proverb often comes to mind and I recite it with great enjoyment and pleasure. Remember my beloved brothers! Love is a very great quality which is not guided by rules and principles.

When a person possesses true love, his actions reveal it and people naturally perceive it even though he does not make a verbal expression of it. O Ulama! You are aware of the great love that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddeeq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had for Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddeeq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was a wealthy and successful merchant. His excessive love for Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ caused him to sacrifice all his wealth for Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 1/65)

Exercising Caution in Deeni Matters

Ascertaining and Verifying Information

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states:

Haji Abdur Raheem used to work for my late brother. When my first wife once complained about him, I immediately summoned him and asked him to stand at the entrance. I thereafter in her presence addressed him saying: “She has complained about you.” I then said to her, “You have made a claim regarding some person. Hence you should be able to prove it.” However, she didn’t have any proof and began saying: “You have made *fazeehat* of me (disgraced me).” I replied, “I do not make *fazeehat*, rather I give *naseehat* (advice).” This practice of complaining about others is evil. It creates enmity within the hearts of people. It then leads to one having doubts as to whether the next person has said something regarding him or not. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah 1/173)

Translating the Mubaarak Ahaadith of Rasulullah ﷺ

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned to an Aalim:

May Allah Ta'ala accept the Deeni services that you are engaged in. However I wish to share some important advice with you. I regard translation work as extremely difficult, especially translating the Mubaarak Ahaadith of Rasulullah ﷺ. The reason for this is that if one incorrectly translates the Mubaarak Ahaadith, he will be attributing something to Rasulullah ﷺ which he did not say. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 450)

Refraining from Samaa'

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

A Sufi from Ilaahabad, who would often listen to samaa' (nazams and naats), once enquired from me regarding its status. I replied, "I will not engage you in an academic discussion. Rather, I will simply ask you a question which you can answer through your own personal observation. Tell me, what is the essence of the path of tasawwuf?" The person replied, "The essence of the path of tasawwuf is mujaahadah (i.e. opposing the desires of the nafs)." I then said to him, "The second question I now wish to ask you is whether or not your nafs feels inclined to listening to samaa' (nazams and naats)." The man replied, "Yes, my nafs does feel

inclined.” I thereafter concluded asking, “So tell me, are you the people making mujaahadah or are we? Are we the true Sufis or are you people the true Sufis? Despite our hearts desiring to listen to samaa’, we do not do so, whereas, despite your hearts desiring to listen to samaa’, you do so.” The man then submitted saying, “Only today have I really understood this mas’alah.” Saying this, he began to make tawbah and repented to Allah Ta’ala in front of me.

Hazrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ further mentioned in relation to samaa’:

One of my friends had begun performing tahajjud Salaah, reciting the Qur’aan and performing other virtuous deeds. However, he soon thereafter went to a certain place in the capacity of a government official. The place he went to would often hold programs of samaa’ (nazams and naats), and on account of his prominent position, he would also be invited to attend. He would accept the invitation and attend the program. He himself thereafter said, “I noticed this to be the effect of samaa’, that I would previously be motivated to perform Salaah, recite the Qur’aan and engage in ibaadaat. However, after I began listening to samaa’, the motivation and enjoyment towards these virtuous deeds no longer remained. I thus understood samaa’ to be harmful to my Deen.” (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 14/159)

Refraining from Giving Preference to One Effort of Deen Over the Other

An Aalim once wrote a letter to Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ in which he asked the following question:

I was recently pondering over the thought that if Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had to be present in the world at this time, which work of Deen would he turn his attention to? Would he engage in the work of dawat and tabligh or would he be involved in the work of teaching and imparting the knowledge of Deen as is done by Ulama in the madrasahs? Would Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ author kitaabs and compile Deeni literature for the masses to benefit from or would he establish khanqahs and encourage people to join in its effort? After pondering over this, I felt convinced that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would undoubtedly isolate himself from all other works of Deen and turn his attention to dawat and tabligh whereby he would repair the damaged structure of Deen and reform the condition of the Muslims. He would not merely turn his attention to this work. Rather, he would sacrifice his blessed life in fulfilling this goal. The reason for this is that every person who has the true value for Islam knows the great amount of sacrifice that was given for the establishment of the structures of this Deen. When Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would experience so much of anxiety and pain over the state of the disbelievers in his Mubaarak era, then one can well imagine the pain and concern he would feel over the degeneration of the Muslims had he been present today. Had he witnessed the decline in the Ummah today, the extent of his anguish and pain

would certainly be inconceivable. At this moment in time, there is a great need to sacrifice everything for the sake of preserving the Deen of Rasulullah ﷺ. Without sacrificing our lives, it will be practically impossible for us to revive the Deen of Rasulullah ﷺ. When the books of deeds of his sinful Ummah are presented to him, what pain must be overcoming his blessed heart! When this thought occurs to me, you can imagine the pain I experience and you can imagine what goes through my own heart. O Allah! Accept this sinful servant to be sacrificed in your path!

Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ wrote the following reply:

There is no need to waste your time entertaining such unnecessary thoughts about which effort will be given preference over others, etc. Be it the work of dawat and tabligh, the work of imparting Deeni knowledge or the work of the khanqah, they all aim towards fulfilling the mission of Rasulullah ﷺ. The mission of Rasulullah ﷺ entailed all these Deeni khidmaat. You think for yourself that if those committed to imparting Deeni knowledge in the madrasahs had to abandon their responsibilities and duties, will the knowledge of Deen ever be preserved? When the knowledge of Deen will not be preserved, how do you expect people to correctly practice upon Deen? Allah Ta'ala himself draws our attention towards the importance of imparting the knowledge of Deen and preserving it in the following aayat of the Holy Qur'aan:

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَآفَّةً ۗ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

Nor should all the Believers set out (at once in the path of Allah Ta'ala in jihaad): if a group (of Believers) from every community remained behind in order that they devote themselves to thoroughly studying the knowledge of Deen and admonishing the people when they return to them, that thus they may (learn to) guard themselves (against wrong).

When Allah Ta'ala himself showed the importance of imparting Deeni knowledge and preserving it, then we should never take this department of Deen lightly and consider it insignificant. Just as this is an essential, important work of Deen, similar is the case of the khanqah and all other works of Deen. Show appreciation to Allah Ta'ala for allowing you to at least be involved in one work of Deen by ensuring that you devote yourself to that work and take it seriously. To trivialize other works of Deen and consider them insignificant is actually from the ploys of Shaitaan. Hence ensure that you totally avoid this and safeguard yourself from it. Ponder over the work of the khanqah and its basis being established from the Mubaarak life of Rasulullah ﷺ. Did Rasulullah ﷺ not sit in i'tikaaf for many days? Is the life he lived in i'tikaaf not the basis of the khanqah? The blessed personality of Rasulullah ﷺ was so comprehensive and complete, that on account of the divine assistance and help which he received from Allah Ta'ala, he was able to attend to all the works of Deen at the same time and fulfil them with perfection. In today's times, if certain people, on account of their limited capacity, devote themselves to certain works of Deen and are unable to involve themselves in other efforts of Deen, we should not raise objections against them, and their involvement in certain works of Deen will not mean that there is

any shortcoming in them. Do not put your mind in these types of baseless thoughts as they generally lead one to pride. (Tarbiyatus Saalikeen pg. 417)

Adab and Respect

How will one Determine Adab in Deen

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was once asked regarding placing Deeni kitaabs in a bathroom and toilet that was built but not yet used. Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied:

“This does not apparently seem to be correct. Although the bathroom and toilet have thus far not been used at all, however since they have been built for the purpose of one relieving oneself and bathing, it is against the dictates of adab (etiquette) to place Deeni kitaabs therein.” Upon hearing this answer, an educated person, who was present at that time, enquired, “Doesn’t the impermissibility apply to when the bathroom and toilet are already in use?” Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied by explaining that the Fuqaha had used the words المَعْدُ لِدٰلِكَ (i.e. the Qur’aan, Hadith or Deeni kitaabs should not be taken to any place that has been designed and prepared for such a purpose). By pondering over the statement of the Fuqaha, one understands that the ruling will relate to a place that has been built for this purpose, irrespective of whether people have commenced using it or not. Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ further explained that just as it is impermissible for one to place a pair of new shoes

on a Deeni kitaab, though one had not yet began using the shoes, similar will be the ruling in this case. Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned that etiquette revolves around the general practice of society. One should see whether something is regarded as etiquette in society or not. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/36)

The Adab of Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Take a look at the level of respect that Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ possessed. Someone had once asked him whether Aswad was more virtuous or Alqamah (two illustrious students of Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ)? He replied by saying: “When our mouths are not worthy of even taking their names, how can we ever imagine drawing a comparison between them.” Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was overwhelmed and engulfed with basic etiquette which was natural in him. Similarly, a Sahaabi was asked whether Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was bigger or he was bigger. The intention of the questioner was in regard to age; however he used the word أكبر which means bigger or greater. The Sahaabi replied that Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is bigger and greater than me however I am older (in age). (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/49)

Acquiring Perfection in Deen through Adab

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

A complete and perfect person is one who is soaked in ilm and conducts himself with adab (etiquette). Our pious predecessors were a combination of both. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/49)

Adopting Adab and a Respectful Attitude when Correcting a Senior

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

On one occasion, while I was seated in the Musjid, I remembered that I required some small change. One person had some small change and I therefore handed the notes over to him and he in return, gave me the change. Present nearby was one of my students, Moulana Muhammad Rashid Saheb. Witnessing this deal taking place in the Musjid, he came up to me and asked me, in a manner of the utmost respect, whether or not this deal fell under the ambit of a business transaction? I at once realized my mistake and thanked him for bringing it to my attention, and said that I did not realize that this was a business deal in Shari'ah (bay'us sarf) and thus impermissible to be transacted in the Musjid. I thereafter cancelled the deal by returning the small change to that person and taking my money back. Subsequently, I asked that person to come out of the Musjid and renew the transaction. Nevertheless, we went out of the Musjid and I gave him the money while he gave me the change that I required. I was really pleased by the manner in which Moulana Muhammad Rashid Saheb conducted himself. It was necessary for him to inform me that the transaction is

impermissible; however he expressed it with utmost respect by asking me whether it fell under the ambit of a sale or not. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/65)

The Adab and Respect Deen Deserves from a Believer

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned that the true respect of Deen is that one accepts the command of Allah Ta'ala in every situation without subjecting his obedience to his own logical reasoning and understanding. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/423)

Bringing Comfort to People – The Essence of Adab

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I am always concerned and mindful that I should, at no time, become the means of causing any inconvenience to others, thereby overstepping the limits of Deen. It is for this very reason that while serving some of my elders, I did not carry their shoes, as I felt that they may feel uncomfortable through this action. Due to my causing them the slightest discomfort and inconvenience, I will be overstepping the limits of Deen. It is the grace of Allah Ta'ala that despite my worthlessness, my elders still nevertheless showed me their special attention and consideration. As far as the aspect of

khidmat is concerned, serving people in general and making their khidmat is not fardh. However, ensuring that others remain in ease and comfort at all times and are not inconvenienced through one's actions is compulsory. Otherwise, bringing discomfort to them while trying to serve them is certainly not khidmat. Hence, if their comfort lies in not serving them, then do not serve them, and if their comfort lies in your serving them then serve them. The point is that we should never cause them any discomfort and inconvenience and should always keep them comfortable and at ease. This is the essence of adab. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/263)

The Preservation of Deen lies in Recognizing the Salafus Saaliheen and Showing Utmost Respect to them

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I wish to inform you of an extremely important issue that has been addressed by the Ulama. The foundation of our Deen and its preservation lies in recognizing the works of the pious predecessors (Sahaabah, Taabi'een, A'immah-e-Mujtahideen, etc.), revering them and showing utmost respect to them. On account of them being the foundation upon which Deen rests (due to them conveying Deen to the coming generations) and due to these personalities being the means through which Deen has reached us, we should exercise extreme caution when discussing them and ensure that no

disrespect is shown to them at any time. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/270)

Keeping a Clean Heart for the Ulama and Pious

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Even if one does not carry out many good deeds, then at least one should try to keep a clean and open heart towards the Ulama and pious. In this way one will benefit in Deen. At no point should one ever show disregard for the Ulama and the pious or be averse towards them. Showing disregard to the Ulama and the pious is extremely detrimental to one's Deen. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/123)

Disrespecting the Ulama and the Pious

Disrespecting the Ulama and Seniors of Deen

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Let alone showing disrespect and having ill-feelings for the Ulama and A'immah-e-Mujtahideen, even disrespecting a normal person or Muslim and having ill-feelings for him is not permissible under any circumstances. Allah Ta'ala forbid, if one disrespects any of these seniors, then remember that one will lose everything. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/62)

Disrespect to the Ustaaz is the Means of being Deprived of Knowledge

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My beloved brothers! I wish to say a few words with which I continue to remind people. It is an established fact and often mentioned by our elders, that a student who disrespects his Ustaaz will always remain deprived of the ilm of Deen (Deeni knowledge). The extent to which you respect your Ustaaz is the extent to which you will be successful in attaining knowledge. During my childhood days, I recall the time where even after qualifying and holding prominent government positions, non-Muslim students would be seen showing respect to their Muslim teachers and Muslim students would be seen showing respect to their non-Muslim teachers. Whether a person held the position of a judge or a mayor, as soon as he would see his Ustaaz, he would immediately stand up out of respect and reverence for his Ustaaz.

Beloved brothers! We need to once again acquire these qualities of adab and respect. It seems that these qualities are gradually diminishing in the Ummah over the last fifty years. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/36)

A Frightening Incident regarding a Haafiz

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

From my childhood days, I have seen many debates among the Ulama concerning whether the Shia are able to memorize the Qur'aan or not. On one occasion, some non-Muslims and Shia got together and intended to pay a Muslim (who was a Haafiz of the

Qur'aan) a large sum of money to present himself as a Shia and recite the Qur'aan by memory (since there were no Shia that were Haafiz of the Qur'aan). On the day of the debate, the Muslim (who was paid to act as a Shia) arrived. He told the audience that he was a Shia and began to revile and curse the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in the presence of the entire gathering. As soon as he began cursing and reviling the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, the Qur'aan was immediately erased from his heart and Allah Ta'ala deprived him of the blessing of the Qur'aan. Addressing the audience, Hazrat Shaikh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then said: "Beloved friends! This is the disastrous outcome of showing disrespect (to the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ)." (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ 1/38)

Adherence to the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ

The Sahaabah's Adherence to the Sunnah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

In current times, the amassing of wealth and possessing the capability to acquire it is deemed as true progress, whereas Islam has discouraged one from making the amassing of wealth his primary goal. The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ emulated Rasulullah ﷺ in every facet of their lives. However, when we examine their lives, we find that they neither attached importance to the accumulation of wealth nor did they regard it as being their main goal in life. Instead, their idea of true progress and success was always obedience to Allah Ta'ala and His Messenger ﷺ and upholding Deen. Likewise, we will neither come across any situation where Rasulullah ﷺ went on accumulating wealth during his Mubaarak life nor will we find him exhorting the Ummah in his Mubaarak Ahaadith to do the same. The outcome of

the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ upholding Deen was that Allah Ta'ala not only blessed them with progress in Deen but even bestowed upon them the wealth of the world. Allah Ta'ala blessed them with such wealth that the wealthy of these times cannot even dream of. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 3/149)

Endeavour to Inculcate the Mubaarak Sunnah in Every Facet of One's Life

While addressing a gathering of Ulama, Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ mentioned:

My beloved friends, you all should endeavour to study the Shamaa'il of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (i.e. the blessed character and noble qualities of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his Mubaarak Sunnah). One should inculcate in his life as many Sunnats as he is able. If one is unable to practise on any particular aspect or Sunnah of the Mubaarak life of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, then one should at the very least love that Sunnah from the bottom of his heart and feel it to be the greatest quality and action, better than which there is nothing. He should feel that it is on account of his own weakness that he is unable to practise upon this Sunnah.

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ once said: "My respected uncle (Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللهِ) advised me to emulate the Sunnah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and constantly encourage others to do the same." (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 1/33)

The Sunnah of the Beard

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Beloved brothers! Listen attentively to what I have to say and regard my advice as a bequest to you. During the majlis that was conducted after the Asr Salaah (wherein the kitaab was read before you), the aspect of good character and sublime conduct was repeatedly discussed. I would like to share some advice related to that. In various places of the Qur'aan Majeed Allah Ta'ala makes mention of the sublime character of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ himself mentions:

إِنَّمَا بَعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

“I have been divinely sent to perfect good character”

However one should understand that it is not in keeping with the dictates of good character that one sees wrong taking place before him, and yet he does not forbid the evil. In this day and age, people feel that if someone sees a person cutting or trimming his beard (less than a fist) and he does not prevent him and instead is lenient towards him and turns a blind eye to the wrong, then he has shown excellent character. They regard this gentle attitude to be part of the Mubaarak character of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. However, it was not the Mubaarak character of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, when seeing wrong taking place before him, to overlook the sin or turn a blind eye. The tendency of people nowadays has become such that they regard not

advising and reproaching people over the wrongs they carry out to be part of good character. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/27)

Hazrat Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ Firmness in regard to the mas'alah of the Beard

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Towards the end of his life, Hazrat Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ became more strict and firm with regard to the beard. Some of his companions said to me, “We notice that your approach is completely different to the approach of Hazrat Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in regard to the beard. Why was it that Hazrat Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was so staunch in regard to keeping the beard, as though the only thing in Deen to him was the beard?” The person objecting to Hazrat Madani's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ approach was one of my associates. I responded to him saying: “O ignorant one! My not being so firm in regard to the beard is due to my own weakness. However Hazrat Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ being so firm in regard to this Sunnah (i.e. keeping the beard) was a reflection of his perfect Imaan. Remember, for one to reprimand someone due to not adhering to the commandments of Deen is excellent character and not bad character. Not reprimanding someone (for doing something against the Sunnah) is a sign of weak Imaan. On the other hand, if in a certain place there is a fear that by reprimanding someone, it will cause a commotion or it will lead to

the situation getting worse, then that is a separate issue. In that situation, one should sincerely make dua for that person. This is also a branch of Imaan. If one turns a blind eye without any valid reason, then this is a sign of hypocrisy. Continue examining yourself to see whether you are overlooking and favouring your near and dear ones.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/27)

The Harm of Shaving the Beard

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Today, people do not regard the shaving of the beard as a sin. Once, two kaafir messengers, with shaven beards, came to Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ turned his blessed face away (from them). Oh my beloved friends! After death when one appears before Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, then if at that time Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had to turn his blessed face away from one, what will one do? (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh 2/160)

Treading Upon the Path of the Sunnah

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My beloved friends! As long as you are treading upon the Sunnah, do not be concerned and worried about what people have to say; whether they have a low opinion of you or regard you to be insane. The Ambiyaa were not spared by the people and similarly our pious

predecessors were also labelled with many names. Hence if you become a target of people’s criticism (due to treading on Deen), then why do you let this worry you? Keep your pious predecessors before you as your example – those pious predecessors who remained devoted and committed to the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ under all circumstances. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رحمه الله 1/136)

Adopting the Sunnah – The Formula for becoming the Beloved of Allah Ta’ala

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رحمه الله once mentioned:

One should endeavour to emulate every Sunnah of Sayyidina Rasulullah ﷺ. Apart from the Sunnah, one should strive to even carry out the mustahab acts of Deen. This is my advice to you in my lifetime and after I leave the world. Through this one will receive the promise of becoming from among the beloved servants of Allah Ta’ala. Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’aan:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

(O Muhammad ﷺ inform your Ummah), If you love Allah Ta’ala, follow me (i.e. Muhammad ﷺ), Allah Ta’ala will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah Ta’ala is Most-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

(Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رحمه الله pg. 397)

The Rank of the Mubaarak Sunnah in the Sight of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I heard my respected father, Moulana Muhammad Yahya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, mention on many occasions, “The reward that one acquires through following the Mubaarak Sunnah of Sayyidina Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ surpasses the reward that one acquires through carrying out any other optional ibaadah not recorded in the Sunnah. Hence, if one enters the toilet and relieves oneself in the Sunnah manner, and one does so with the niyyat of emulating the Mubaarak Sunnah of Sayyidina Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, one will earn more reward than performing nafl rakaats of Salaah which have not been recorded in the Sunnah.” (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 70)

The Sunnah of Exchanging Gifts

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

To exchange gifts is a Sunnah practice in Islam. When exchanging gifts is a Sunnah practice, then how can it not be a means of attracting barakah (blessings)? However, just as other acts of worship have conditions for their acceptance and for one to acquire the full reward, similarly the practice of exchanging gifts also has certain conditions for its acceptance. One should therefore adhere to the conditions laid down for the acceptance of the gifting.

Among the conditions, one important condition is that the one making over the gift should neither be compelled to offer it nor should he do it for show. Only when a gift is given with complete sincerity and without show and compulsion will the true spirit and happiness of exchanging gifts be experienced. Even more important than the gift itself is the appreciation that needs to be shown when receiving the gift. If at the time of receiving the gift there is no appreciation, gratitude and love shown, then what good is there in such a gifting? (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/195)

Adherence to the Sunnah in all Facets of Life

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My respected uncle, Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had called me one day prior to his demise and given me the following advice:

“Strive to the best of your ability to inculcate every Sunnah of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in your life and also encourage your associates and friends to adhere to the Sunnah of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in their lives.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/142)

Following the Ahlullah and our Pious Predecessors

Our Pious Predecessors – Living Examples of the Sunnah

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Strive to emulate our pious predecessors and follow in their footsteps. I have seen great barakah in emulating our pious predecessors. I myself have studied and closely examined the life of Hazrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and the four great senior personalities who succeeded him viz. Hazrat Sahaaranpuri, Hazrat Thanwi, Hazrat Raipuri and Hazrat Kandhelwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his illustrious Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ lived in an era far and distant from our era and their Deeni condition and level was extremely lofty and high. Their level of Deen can never be matched by us. The era of our pious predecessors, however, is close to our era. Therefore study their lives carefully and try your utmost

to follow them. We should follow them because they were living examples of the Sunnah and their lives closely resembled the lives of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. The example they left for us through their strict adherence to the Sunnah had certainly made it easy for us to follow Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as it is easy for one to emulate and follow something when one has a practical example before him. Hold firm to the taqwa and piety of these pious predecessors. Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'aan Majeed:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۗ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ط

And for those who fear Allah, Allah Ta'ala prepares a way out for him, and He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine.

If you hold firm to their piety, you will, in this world, receive your sustenance with ease and will receive your reward in the Hereafter as well. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحِمَهُ اللهُ 2/163)

Advantages of adopting the appearance of the pious

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ mentioned:

“Beloved friends! It is not something to be said, however I feel that I should mention it to you. Undoubtedly, we are not pious people; nevertheless we endeavour to adopt the appearance of the pious and truthful. We have hope that through adopting the appearance of the pious and truthful, Allah Ta'ala will also favour us and will not deprive us of His grace. Look at the incident of Moosa

عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ and Fir'aun. In the era of Fir'aun, the magicians confronted Nabi Moosa عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ (with the intention of opposing him). However on account of them imitating his clothing and outward appearance, Allah Ta'ala gave them taufeeq to embrace Islam and Allah Ta'ala favoured them.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/107)

Studying the Lives of the Pious Predecessors Leads One to the Sunnah

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Continuously study and examine the lives of our Akaabir (our pious predecessors and seniors). After studying the lives of Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, I reached the conclusion that all the Sahaabah were superb. Though each Sahaabi possessed a unique “colour”, all were common in emulating the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Similarly, I have also witnessed that our Akaabir (our pious predecessors and seniors) possessed different magnificent qualities and all diligently held on to the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. These great luminaries can be compared to the flowers of a garden. The splendour of the garden can be gauged through the fragrance and beauty of it's flowers. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/25)

Valuing the Company of the Ahlullah

Whilst discussing the life of Hazrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ، Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned:

“Compared to the benefit I acquired through studying, teaching and carrying out spiritual exercises in self reformation, I found greater benefit in remaining in the company of these great luminaries and closely observing their lives. After closely examining their lives, one acquires a true understanding of Islam.”
(Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ 10/344)

The Outcome of Serving the Pious Servants of Allah Ta’ala

Once Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned:

Whenever I carry out any good action then Alhamdulillah I do not feel within my heart that this action is my achievement. Rather, I remember the teachings of my pious seniors. It was on account of the teachings of my pious seniors and their effort upon me in guiding me correctly that I was able to carry out such an action. The feeling then enters my heart that this is all the outcome of remaining in the company of the pious and serving them.

Hazrat then said: “The truth of the matter is that I had received the duas of many pious servants of Allah Ta’ala, and whatever I have achieved is the fruits of their duas. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ 1/86)

Acquiring the True Love of Allah Ta'ala in the Company of the Ahlullah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

The path of Deen and the path leading to the true love of Allah Ta'ala will only be understood in the company of the Ahlullah (i.e. those who have the true love of Allah Ta'ala and the correct understanding of Deen). Though the kitaabs of Deen contain the laws and aadaab (etiquettes) of Islam, however through merely studying the kitaabs one will not succeed in acquiring the true understanding and essence of Deen. One will be in need of the guidance of a spiritual guide who will demonstrate the practical application of Deen to him. This principle is not confined to Deen and the matters of Deen. Instead it also applies to worldly matters. One fully understands that by merely studying medical journals and textbooks one will not succeed in acquiring sound health, rather one is in need of the guidance of a qualified, expert physician to guide him in acquiring good health. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 4/100)

The Preservation of One's Deen Depends on Remaining in the Company of the Ahlullah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

This era is one of great corruption and vice. One is faced with trials and tribulations from all sides and one's Imaan is being constantly attacked. Therefore I regard it compulsory for the preservation of

one's Deen that one aligns himself with the pious and righteous servants of Allah Ta'ala and remains in their company. I even issue the fatwa of it being fardh to remain in the company of the Ahlullah in these trying times. What doubt can there be in this? When the preservation of one's Imaan depends on the protection of one's Deen and with experience it is proven that one's Deen will only be safeguarded and protected through remaining in the company of the Ahlullah, then what doubt can one have in it being fardh? (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/107)

Self Reformation

The Need to Follow the Correct Procedures

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The mistake people tend to make nowadays is that they regard the following of the correct Deeni procedures to be difficult and therefore avoid them. Without adopting the correct Deeni procedures, one cannot attain Deeni success. In worldly matters also, one is required to follow the correct procedures to achieve one's goal. Even the simplest of tasks cannot be accomplished without adhering to the correct and suitable procedure. Take the example of aeroplanes, ships, trains and cars – they all operate and function once the correct procedure is followed. Even the roti on the stove is prepared according to a procedure. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 12)

Engaging in Excessive Zikr without Reforming One's Actions

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Through merely engaging in excessive zikr, one will not succeed in gaining reformation in one's life. Gaining reformation is dependent on correcting one's actions and reforming one's conduct (i.e. correcting one's relationship with Allah Ta'ala and His servants). The effect caused in one's heart through a'amaal is only strengthened through the zikr. Zikr only serves as a motivation to assist one towards the path which one is treading. However, in today's times, many people who are ignorant of Deen confine their effort to zikr and do not pay any attention towards improving and correcting their actions and bringing them in conformity to the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah ﷺ. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/171)

Revival of Islam

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once said: "I don't know how to explain this aspect to you but it is my heart's desire that every person should come onto the straight path of Islam, in such a manner that the beauty of Islam becomes manifest in every facet of his life. Just as people by merely witnessing the lives of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ embraced Islam, similarly each and every Believer in this time should become a living role model of Islam for the world. The success of one's Deen and dunya lies in this. Undoubtedly, if a Muslim reforms his life and remains totally committed to the Deen of Islam, then let alone him acquiring Deeni success, even his worldly problems and difficulties will be solved." (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/69)

Without Effort a Person Cannot be Successful

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once addressed some associates and said:

“My beloved friends, make an effort to acquire the friendship of Allah Ta’ala. A poet exclaims:

The one who wishes to acquire any lofty position has to burn the midnight oil.”

Thereafter, Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned that a person once spent some time in the company of Hazrat Moulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He engaged in zikr and spiritual exercises, etc. One day he said to Hazrat Raipuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, “I am carrying out my zikr, etc., but I do not feel the zikr having any effect on me as yet.” Hearing this, Hazrat Raipuri replied, “Continue to strive. Piety and acceptance is not a type of medicine that I can administer to you. You will have to continue striving to acquire it.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/108)

Striving for Deen

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I have heard our buzrugane-deen and pious elders say, “Those who only look at the last portion of our lives and aspire to become like us will not succeed in acquiring their goal. On the contrary,

those who look at the earlier phase of our lives and wish to emulate us will be successful. The reason for this is that the earlier part of our lives was spent in continuous striving in the path of Allah Ta'ala and making great sacrifices for Deen. As for the latter part of our lives, Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with great ease and comfort and allowed the fruits of our efforts to spread far and wide. Hence, the one who views the latter portion of our lives and makes that the standard for himself to follow will not succeed in acquiring his goal.” (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 55)

The Difference between Jihaad of the Nafs and Jihaad against the Enemy

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The jihaad of the nafs in certain respects is even more difficult than the jihaad against the enemies on the battlefield. The reason for this is that when one fights against the kuffaar, despite it being an exceptionally great sacrifice, however very quickly one is slain through the sword and earns the rank of martyrdom. On the contrary, the jihaad against the nafs is extremely difficult. Every moment one has to perpetually oppose the nafs in fulfilling the orders of Allah Ta'ala and refraining from His displeasure. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 5/206)

Ignoring the Whispers of Shaitaan

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned:

The way to repel stray thoughts and the whispers of Shaitaan is to deal with them with courage and determination. Dealing with them with courage and determination is to totally ignore them and not pay any attention to them. This is similar to a stray barking dog. If you interfere with it and try to silence it, it will continue barking at you. However, if you ignore it, it will automatically stop barking. Hence the best way to deal with stray thoughts and the whispers of Shaitaan is for you to totally ignore them and not pay any attention to them. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ 7/210)

Making an Effort to Remove Pride from One's Heart

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mentioned:

Once a person wrote a letter to me asking, “What is the sign that pride no longer remains with a person?” I replied that if any person finds fault with you, then you are not overcome by anger. Instead you begin to examine within your heart whether what the person has said is true or not. If after pondering and reflecting over the situation, your heart tells you that the statement the person made was correct and you suffer from that weakness, then you are immediately prepared to accept your mistake and correct yourself. If this is your condition, then this is a sign that pride has left you. However, on the converse, if after hearing the statement of that

person, you are overcome by rage and anger without even taking a moment to think whether what was said was correct or not, then this is a clear sign of you having pride. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/71)

Being Concerned of One's Own Islaah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Nowadays we find a common sickness prevalent everywhere, that most people are worried about the faults and weaknesses of others, but do not pay any attention to their own weaknesses and inner maladies (whereas we are commanded in Shari'ah to be more concerned about our own islaah [reformation]). If only each person could focus on his own weaknesses and correct himself, he will save himself from a great amount of problems and difficulties. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 6/399)

Keeping the Heart Pure at all Times

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

In order to acquire the true love of Allah Ta'ala, I consider it extremely important for one to keep one's heart pure at all times from wrong feelings and sinful thoughts and be focussed towards the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. The reason for this is that the beggar needs to keep his begging bowl empty and show his need in order to attract the sight of mercy of some generous person. Likewise is

the case of the lover of Allah Ta'ala, whose heart remains pure at all times, emptied of all wrong feelings and sinful thoughts, aspiring the love of Allah Ta'ala. Perhaps the moment may strike where the sight of Allah's mercy will fall on him and fill his heart with the special love of the beloved. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/244)

The Sign of True Imaan

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The sign of true Imaan within a person is that he begins to find total pleasure and comfort in the things that are pleasing to Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he finds total displeasure and discomfort in the things that are displeasing to Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Just as pain is felt by the strike of a sword, similarly pain is perceived by the poke of a needle. Just as Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ become displeased with major sins such as kufr and shirk, similarly they become displeased with the minor sins committed by the servants. We should therefore hate sinning and feel pain when we commit sins. (Malfoozaat Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 123)

Prerequisite of Deriving Full Benefit from Zikr

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Zikr is a means of acquiring great blessings. However, one will derive the full benefit from the blessings provided one refrains from evil actions and sins. This could be understood through the following illustration. Consider the example of a person who does not perform his faraaidh and performs nafl Salaah. Though he will receive reward through performing the nafl Salaah, however the sin of neglecting the faraaidh will outweigh the reward received through the nafl, to such an extent that the benefit of the nafl will not be seen. Furthermore, he will not find any stability and firmness in all other righteous actions. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/164)

Do not Feel Complacent over any Action

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

My beloved friends! Exercise extreme caution in regard to your actions. Do not become boastful over any action that you carry out (for everything you do is through the grace of Allah Ta'ala). Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is reported to have said that no person who is living is safe from danger (until he passes away with Imaan).

Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ thereafter mentioned, with tears in his eyes, that Shaitaan eagerly strives and constantly endeavours to mislead every person. Make dua that Allah Ta'ala bless me to remain steadfast upon Imaan until my end. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/25)

An Easy Prescription for Self Reformation

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

In this era the Mashaayikh do not emphasise upon their disciples to make a lot of sacrifices. Though, when I was young, I used to see many pious people and Mashaayikh labour hard and render great sacrifices for Deen. However, in this day and age, an easy prescription that we are taught is to focus towards the reformation of our hearts. One should protect one's heart from sin and not allow his heart to be distracted and diverted from the obedience and remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. At all times one should protect his heart. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/110)

Punctuality on Daily Practices

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

It is imperative that one show paramount importance to one's zikr and daily practices. I had witnessed Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and my beloved uncle (Moulana Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) punctually carrying out their zikr despite their old age. Furthermore, I noticed my father and Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ being punctual upon their tahajjud in the early parts of the morning, sitting in isolation and crying bitterly, beseeching Allah Ta'ala. They cried in the same way that a child in maktab cries when he is being reprimanded. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/112)

Completing one's Ma'moolaat with Punctuality

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Regardless of whether you find the motivation and drive towards righteous deeds and pious actions or not, you should still continue to be committed and should not pay attention towards any feelings. Diligently complete your daily ma'moolaat with punctuality (the tilawat of the Qur'aan and zikr that you have stipulated for yourself). (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 454)

The Investment that Always Pays

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

All worldly pursuits, regardless of whether they relate to trade and commerce, agriculture or any other worldly occupation, can only be attained through striving hard and making an effort. One will have to apply himself and undergo some type of difficulty in order to achieve his goal. Similar is the case of Deeni efforts. The work of Deen and its progress cannot be accomplished without striving and working hard. However, the difference between striving for Deen and striving for the world is that despite one making the necessary effort and applying himself in worldly pursuits, one will not always achieve his goal. On the contrary, in the case of Deen, one is always

successful as he is rewarded for the effort he makes and the hardship he undergoes. There are so many people who attain high degrees in the world but thereafter roam about unable to obtain employment. This is also the case in regards to many people who open up businesses with the hope of becoming affluent but to their dismay, find that the business does not turn out to be a success for them. However, when it comes to the work of Deen, the effort and toil that one puts in, will never go unrewarded and in vain. Hazrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned, “Even if the name of Allah Ta’ala is taken in a state of negligence, it will not be void of effect and reward.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/126)

Reformation – The Basis of Allah Ta’ala’s Mercy

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

How can the advice of a spiritual mentor benefit the one who has no interest or desire to change his life? The people who paid the most attention to the reformation of the people were the Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام. However, despite receiving the attention and advice of the Nabi, those who had no desire to change remained unaffected. The basis for Allah Ta’ala blessing a person is the level of desire and thirst within the person to change and reform his ways. Without this desire, absolutely nothing can be achieved. This is the system of Allah Ta’ala. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/272)

The Need to Progress

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaaas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

There is no stagnation in Deen. One is either progressing or retrogressing. If a person does not strive and make effort in Deen, his spiritual condition will gradually begin to weaken. To understand this concept, consider the example of a garden. When the water and air are favourable, the lushness and fertility of the garden improves. However, when the weather is unfavourable and the water insufficient, you do not find the previous lushness and fertility remaining. Rather, the condition of the garden immediately begins to deteriorate. Similar is the condition of one's Deen. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaaas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 80)

Akhlaaq – Adopting Good Character

Obedience to Parents is a means of a Life of Contentment

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My beloved friends! I wish to share something with you. Respect and obedience to one's parents is a means of increase and blessings in one's life and sustenance. If a person is obedient to his parents at all times, he will never live a difficult and problematic life. On the converse, if a person is disobedient to his parents, then someday he will definitely be afflicted with some difficulty. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/37)

Fulfilling the Rights of Parents after their Demise

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The Hadith has shown a way to those who did not fulfil the rights of their parents during their parent's lifetime, as to how they may make amends after their demise. The Hadith states that such a person should seek forgiveness on behalf of his deceased parents, send esaal-e-thawaab for them and keep in contact and show kindness and respect to all those who were close to his parents (i.e. family, friends and associates). Through carrying out these actions, one will be forgiven by Allah Ta'ala and be blessed with the good fortune of being counted from amongst those children who were obedient to their parents. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/39)

Akhlaaq (Sublime Character) and Nisbat (Special Connection with Allah Ta'ala)

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Nisbat and akhlaaq (sublime character) are both distinct attributes. Each one is unique in its own way. As far as nisbat is concerned, it is a special connection one has with Allah Ta'ala. The more one strengthens one's relationship with Allah Ta'ala (through carrying out pious deeds), the stronger one's nisbat grows. On the contrary, if one falls short in this relationship (through committing sins), his nisbat with Allah Ta'ala weakens. On the other hand, akhlaaq (sublime character) relates to the beloved lifestyle of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Emulating the Mubaarak lifestyle of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and inculcating his Mubaarak qualities is referred to as sublime character. At this juncture Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ recited these couplets:

The colour of henna will only show its true effect once it permeates (i.e. the beauty of the Sunnah will only show itself through a person's sublime character, when the Sunnah permeates a person's heart and life)
(Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/111)

Exercising Patience and Refraining from Causing Inconvenience

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

One should increase his istighfaar and durood (i.e. sending salutations upon Sayyidina Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and ensure at all times that he does not become the means for any inconvenience being caused to any person. If perchance he is inconvenienced through someone's negligence, then he should exercise patience and adopt an approach of overlooking and forgiving the faults of others. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 379)

Making an Effort to Improve one's Character

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Through studying the lives of our pious predecessors, we learn that one should not suffice upon expressing grief over one's shortcomings and weaknesses. Rather, one should make a

concerted effort to rectify oneself and improve one's character. Together with making istighfaar, one should impose a monetary penalty on oneself in order to discipline the nafs. For instance if one had wrongly expressed anger upon a person, (then together with making istighfaar and seeking forgiveness from the person) one should impose a monetary penalty upon oneself. If one does not have the money to give in charity, then one should perform between four rakaats to twenty rakaats nafl Salaah as a penalty for the wrong one has committed. By merely expressing grief and not making an effort to improve one's character and ways, one will not achieve any good. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 389)

The Sublime Character of our Pious Predecessors

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Many of our pious predecessors led such pious and righteous lives that those who merely observed their sublime character and honest dealings were forced to embrace Islam. Unfortunately, in today's times our condition has become such that people are turned away from Islam after observing our dealings and character. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/63)

Destructive Qualities

Factors that Cause one to become Deprived of the Love of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

Listen attentively to what I am going to say to you. I say this to you with deep concern for your spiritual progress and welfare. There are two factors in this path that are extremely detrimental for the saalik (i.e. the one who is treading the path of acquiring the love of Allah Ta'ala) and can cause him to become completely deprived of all good. The first is the sickness of covering up for one's mistakes and presenting interpretations to defend one's wrongs. The second is the sickness of raising objections against one's elders, ustaazs and spiritual mentors. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 8/231)

The Noor of the Heart Cannot co-exist with Sins

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

It is possible that there be good deeds in a person's life despite him also being involved in sins. However, the noor of the heart cannot co-exist with sins. Where sins are perpetrated, immediately the light of the heart is affected. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 6/113)

Adopting a Compromising Attitude in Deen Due to the Love of Wealth

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

According to Shari'ah, it is not forbidden for one to derive pleasure from the permissible things of the world, nor is it impermissible for one to accumulate wealth and keep it in one's possession. However, it should be borne in mind that the abundance of wealth and luxuries creates a strong affinity and bond for wealth within one's heart, to such an extent that it becomes difficult for one to live without it. As a result, in order to acquire the wealth to fulfil one's desires, one has to occupy himself in searching for additional means to increase one's livelihood and income. Often, in the passion of wealth one adopts a compromising attitude in his Deen and becomes a victim of sin. (Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat [urdu], Part 2 pg. 486)

The Temptation of my Ummah lies in Wealth

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه writes:

Wealth is beneficial as well as harmful; it is both a cure as well as a poison. Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “For every Ummah (People), there has been a trial and a temptation; the temptation of my Ummah lies in wealth”. Hence it is necessary to guard oneself against this temptation and its harmful effects. If someone possesses a poisonous snake and he makes an antidote, it will be useful both for himself and for other people. Otherwise, its poison will prove fatal for himself and will also harm others. It was in view of these harmful effects of wealth that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ once remarked, “This wealth is pleasant and attractive to see and inviting to the heart; it is beneficial for him who obtains it by rightful means (in the manner prescribed by Shari’ah) and spends it properly; but he who obtains it by unlawful means is like one suffering from a disease in which one goes on eating without being satisfied.” (Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat [urdu], Part 2 pg. 366)

Despondency – The Trap of Shaitaan

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه once mentioned:

The nature of many people is such that it very quickly inclines towards despondency and despair. The reason is that once a person loses hope and becomes despondent; he regards himself to be free from all responsibilities and therefore neglects his obligations.

Remember that causing one to lose hope and become despondent is one of the main traps of the nafs and Shaitaan. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 80)

The Most Despised and Abhorrent Action is Pride

Once Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

According to my understanding, nothing can be more despicable than pride. I detest the sin of pride more than any other sin. Even though there are many grave sins such as committing adultery, consuming intoxicants, etc. which are extremely serious, however, I have a natural aversion and hatred for pride due to it being a branch of shirk. Despite Allah Ta'ala being the greatest, by regarding oneself to be great and better than others, one has attributed greatness to oneself. Hence is this not a type of shirk? A proud person, who is a mere slave, is in actual fact attributing a quality (greatness) to himself which is exclusive for Allah Ta'ala. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 54)

The Pride of Abu Jahl

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned that the pride of Abu Jahl was even worse than the pride of Fir'aun. At the time of his death, Fir'aun's heart softened to some extent, even though his Imaan was not accepted. On the other hand, Abu Jahl's pride

exceeded all limits, to such an extent that even at the time of his death he was proud. Thus he expressed his regret upon being slain by a farmer (and not being slain by a person of high status and position as this would have been a means of honour after his death). He lamented since the person responsible for killing him was a youngster from the Ansaar who were well-known farmers.

Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ further says that I had heard from my Ustaaz that when the Sahaabi was about to sever the head of Abu Jahl from his body, he (Abu Jahl) desired that his throat be cut more closer to his chest in order that his head stands out from the rest of the heads of the kuffaar when they are placed in line after their death. There are no limits to this pride. Nevertheless, when his head was brought before Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said that the Fir'aun of this Ummah has died. Thereafter Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ said that even in today's times, we find people with the outlook and mindset of Fir'aun. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 54)

The Evil Traits of Pride, Jealousy and Haughtiness

Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ while addressing the audience in his majlis once mentioned:

“Beloved brothers! Let me inform you about the evil traits of pride, jealousy and haughtiness. These evil traits have no limits and are extremely serious in the sight of Allah Ta’ala. Pride, jealousy and haughtiness are among those sins whose punishment is extremely

severe. These are connected to the spiritual being of a person. There are some sins which relate to the physical being of a person, e.g. one's lust and carnal desires. The punishment for getting involved in such sins are indeed detrimental, however they are not as severe as getting involved in these spiritual maladies (i.e. the sin of pride, haughtiness and jealousy). (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 1/70)

Ibaadaat

The Position of Fardh and Nafl in Islam

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

The position of a fardh action is higher than that of a nafl action. In fact, the very purpose of a nafl action is to perfect the fardh action or to compensate for any weakness or shortcoming which entered the fardh during its performance. In essence, fardh actions are the primary acts of worship and nafl actions are secondary acts of worship. However, despite the fact that priority should be given to the fardh actions, there are people who neglect the performance of fardh actions and instead show more importance to remaining engaged in nafl actions. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ pg. 13)

The Effect of Zikrullah and Durood

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

I have personally witnessed that in order for peace to prevail on the land, one effective method is turning to Allah Ta'ala and reciting

abundant durood upon Nabi ﷺ. When a person turns to Allah Ta'ala, reforms his ways and engages in zikr and durood shareef, Allah Ta'ala removes his difficulties and misfortunes and causes good conditions to prevail. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 400)

The Purpose of Acquiring Deeni Knowledge

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaa رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The first and most important demand of Deeni knowledge which one acquires is that it should serve as a means to assist one in taking stock of one's life and becoming conscious of one's Deeni obligations and responsibilities towards Allah Ta'ala and the creation. It should be a means for one to realize one's weaknesses and shortcomings and create the desired level of concern to correct and reform one's character and ways. However, if the Deeni knowledge one acquires does not enable one to see one's own weaknesses and look for solutions to correct oneself, but instead becomes a means of searching for the faults in people's actions and scrutinizing their lives, then the outcome of such knowledge is that it will breed pride and haughtiness within a person. This in turn will lead to one's destruction. (Malfoozaat Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaa رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 16)

Importance of Taking Part in Collective Deeni Aa'maal

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Due to being engaged in collective Deeni a'amaal, if one was unable to fulfil some nafl act (e.g. performing tahajjud), then there is no problem in this as this is also an important aspect of Deen and carried out for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 400)

Protecting One's Wealth through Discharging Zakaat

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

If one does not discharge one's zakaat from one's wealth, then that zakaat eventually will destroy the entire wealth, either by a fire burning it, or by being spent in court cases, or on medical expenses or some other unnecessary purpose. On the other hand, if one discharges the zakaat, then Allah Ta'ala will bless one with barakah in one's wealth and the wealth will not decrease." (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/39)

Performing the Sunnat Salaah in the Musjid

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

Apart from the fardh Salaah being performed in the Musjid, our Aslaaf used to perform their Sunnat Salaah in their homes. Certainly there is great virtue in performing one's Sunnats at home. However on account of the fact that nowadays there are many people who deny the Sunnats and have began discarding it completely (i.e. they do not perform it in the Musjid nor at home), the Ulama have advised that in order to oppose this group we should perform our Sunnats in the Musjid (in public) so that we do not resemble those who discard their Sunnats. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 8/222)

Devotion and Concentration in Salaah

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes:

The Sufiya have written that Salaah in reality is an ibaadah wherein one supplicates to Allah Ta'ala and communicates with Him. Therefore one needs to have concentration during Salaah as the Salaah cannot be discharged with negligence. In case of other ibadaat, even though one does not possess a high level of concentration, the ibaadah will take place. Consider the example of zakaat, the essence of zakaat is to spend money for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Spending in itself is so hard on a person that even if he does it inattentively he would feel the pinch of it. Similarly, fasting requires giving up eating and drinking and sexual satisfaction. All

these restrictions are extremely difficult on the soul. Even if they are not observed with proper attention and devotion, the ibaadah will be discharged. On the other hand, zikr and recitation of the Qur'aan are the chief constituents of Salaah. If these are not done attentively with devotion and concentration, they will not constitute supplication and communication with Allah Ta'ala. (Fazaail-e-A'amaal [urdu], Fazaail-e-Namaaz pg. 87)

Remaining Committed to the Recitation of the Qur'aan throughout One's Life

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned to an Aalim:

Undoubtedly it is important to fulfil your duties and obligations you owe to the Madrasah. However, despite your busy schedule and commitments it is necessary for you to avail yourself for some while to recite the Qur'aan. Not reciting the Qur'aan is a great loss to a Believer. As for a Haafiz of the Qur'aan, he does not need to look in the Qur'aan and recite; rather wherever he is, he can recite from memory. I observed some of my elders that they never left out the tilaawat of the Qur'aan. Even while travelling by train, I used to see them reciting the Qur'aan. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 466)

The Qur'aan – The Speech of the Beloved Master

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

People express their nobility and dignity by virtue of their family lineage and other worldly things, whereas the Qur'aan is the greatest source of nobility and pride for the Ummah. Reciting the Qur'aan, memorising it, teaching it and acting upon it are all means of conferring great honour upon the Ummah. Why should it not be so? After all, it is the word of the Beloved and the message of the Master. Its honour and dignity excels all worldly honours, despite how great the worldly honour may seem to be. The achievements of this worldly life, however splendid they may be, will sooner or later vanish, while the splendour and honour of the Qur'aan is eternal. (Fazaail-e-A'amaal [urdu], Fazaail-e-Qur'aan pg. 28)

The Blessing of Ramadhaan

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

The Mubaarak month of Ramadhaan is a very great blessing and favour of Allah Ta'ala for the Muslims. However, the full blessing of this favour will be reaped by valuing it and appreciating it. Otherwise Ramadhaan will come and go without us gaining anything. (Fazaail-e-A'amaal [urdu], Fazaail-e-Ramadhaan pg. 2)

Fulfilling the Rights of Ramadhaan

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

We should observe our ibaadah during the month of Ramadhaan. How much importance are we showing to the faraaidh and how much additional nawaafil do we carry out in this Mubaarak month? As for the faraaidh, we clearly witness that many people after partaking of sehri go to bed and forego their Fajr Salaah. Others perform it, but not with jamaat in the Musjid. As though this is the appreciation we give to Allah Ta'ala for the sehri food He has blessed us with, that we neglect the most important obligation of Deen. Either we make the Salaah qadha by not performing it at all, or we discharge it with great deficiency by abandoning the Salaah with jamaat in the Musjid. (Fazaail-e-A'maal [urdu], Fazaail-e-Ramadhaan pg. 6)

Nikaah

Simplicity in Weddings and Functions

On one occasion Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

In the era of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the nikaahs used to be carried out with so much of ease and simplicity that we find that Hazrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Auf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ got married, yet the news of his marriage did not even reach Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. In this day and age, through the elaborate functions and high standards of nikaahs, people have made the issue of marriage very difficult. People have to bear much difficulty to get their daughters married on account of the high expenditure and unnecessary costs incurred in carrying out the nikaah. This results in many girls' nikaahs being delayed, despite them having reached the right age of nikaah. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/92)

Nikaah – An Extremely Easy Ibaadah in Deen

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

“I had arranged approximately sixteen to seventeen nikaahs (i.e. two of my own, my sister’s, my children’s and my grand children’s). In every marriage, Allah Ta’ala blessed me with His grace to such an extent that one could not tell (on account of the simplicity) whether it was a nikaah or two rakaats of nafl Salaah. Nikaah is an ibaadah which, unfortunately, people have converted into a calamity. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/93)

The Manner in which Nikaahs used to take Place in the Mubaarak Era of Rasulullah

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Ulama have written that there are two such ibaadat which commenced with Hazrat Aadam عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ and will continue till Qiyaamah. In fact, they will remain in Jannah as well. The first is Imaan and the second is nikaah. However, when we brought unnecessary and futile practices into our weddings then we have transformed this blessed Sunnah into a calamity. The love that the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had for Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is evident and well-known to all. Hazrat Abdur Rahmaan bin Auf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was a well-known Sahaabi. He was amongst the ‘Asharah Mubasharah’ and one of the most dedicated Sahaabah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Despite this honour to his name, let alone inviting Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he did

not even inform Nabi ﷺ of his nikaah (due to nikaah being regarded as a simple affair).

How sad it is that we have complicated this blessed Sunnah with our customs and unfounded practices. In some places, the wedding procession leaves at the time of Salaah due to which the bridegroom, bride and the entire procession fail to perform their Salaah with jamaat or, even worse, miss out their Salaah completely. May Allah Ta'ala reform our ways and bless us with true guidance. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/93)

Customary Practices Introduced in Today's Wedding Functions

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I am not in favour of the manner in which the wedding functions of today are conducted. People have unnecessarily made things difficult for themselves. One enlists the name of a person one wishes to invite; thereafter one remembers the next person and then the third. In this way, a lengthy list of the names of many people is written and one eventually holds an elaborate wedding function. Often this is all done for name and fame. Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned the incident of a wealthy Hindu Banya whose daughter was getting married. For name and fame, he gave each guest a gold coin. He thought to himself that he had made a name for himself and was now famous. When the guests were departing,

he sat in a hidden place, waiting to hear the praises of the people as they left. As the people passed by, he heard one person saying: “He is so wealthy yet he is a miser. He only gave one gold coin whereas he could have given a little more through which we could benefit.” He heard another person say something else and a third person criticizing him in another way. Each person condemned and criticized the gift. After hearing all of this, the Hindu Banyan put his hands on his head and said, “Now I have seen the reality and true outcome of such elaborate functions. Despite my warmth, hospitality and generosity, instead of praising me, all I heard and received was criticism.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/99)

Elaborate Wedding Functions

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I always had a natural aversion for elaborate wedding functions. My friends and close associates are witness to the fact that I sometimes receive 200 to 250 guests at my home and at times, even more than that. Large degs (pots) of food are prepared for my guests. However, whenever a wedding function was held at my home, then I cannot recall even one deg of food being prepared for the guests on account of the simplicity of the nikaah. (i.e. which was in conformity to the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/99)

The Gifts given to the Daughter at the time of her Nikaah

Regarding giving gifts to one's daughter at the time of her nikaah, Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ expressed his feelings and sentiments in the following words:

“At the time of my daughters' nikaahs, I had given them some shawls, duvets and beddings which were of a good quality. Together with that, if there is a need, then I am not opposed to one giving his daughter the necessary dishes, utensils and cutlery. Giving jewellery to one's daughter is also good; however one should be more concerned of the weight and value of the jewellery rather than the workmanship, since if there is a need for her to sell the jewellery to purchase necessary items, she may do so. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that each person should give according to his means.” (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 1/97)

Mu'aamalaat (Business Transactions and Dealings)

The Honest Dealings of our Pious Predecessors

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Many of our pious predecessors led such pious and righteous lives that those who merely observed their sublime character and honest dealings were forced to embrace Islam. Unfortunately, in today's times our condition has become such that people are turned away from Islam after observing our dealings and character. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/63)

Upholding the Laws of Shari'ah in one's Business

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

As long as one does not acquire sound understanding in Deen and become firmly established upon Deen, there will always be the fear that such a person will transgress the limits and boundaries in his actions. Since such a person does not know the limits, if he befriends someone he will transgress the limits in friendship and if he has enmity for someone, he will transgress the limits in his enmity. Both situations are extremely detrimental. In essence, the outcome of dealing with such a person who is not firmly established in Deen and does not know the limits can prove disastrous. There was once an Aalim who was of the opinion that Muslims should go into partnerships with Hindus. When he expressed his opinion to me, I told him, “We cannot, with certainty, say what will be the outcome of such a Muslim’s dunya. However, the harm that will come to his Deen is quite clear and evident. This is due to the fact that Hindus, in reality, don’t have any Deen and hence do not adhere to the limits of Shari’ah. If the Muslim tries to uphold Deen in the partnership, then how will the partnership continue? On the contrary, if the partnership continues in the way the Hindu wishes, then how will the Muslim uphold his Deen? The reason is that every decision the Hindus will make will be centred around dunya and material progress even if it opposes the laws of Deen. They will do whatever they deem necessary in order to boost their business in the pursuit of worldly progress. How then can a Mu’min’s Deen be secure and safe if he has to adopt their ways? (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah 8/239)

Exercising Precaution in Monetary Affairs

During a discussion which related to an Aalim who refrained from accepting doubtful wealth, Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Nowadays, the required level of taqwa and caution is not seen among people in matters relating to wealth. There are many people who confine piety to their ibaadaat (i.e. virtuous deeds and actions). Many are even punctual on tahajjud, chaasht and ishraq and in completing their wazifas. However the inordinate passion and love for wealth within their hearts does not seem to decrease. As a result, they do not exercise the required level of precaution in their business dealings and monetary affairs and continue to consume doubtful wealth. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/27)

Spend According to your Means

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Through experience I can safely say that one should first examine one's financial condition and accordingly spend. Spending within one's means will save one from falling into financial constraints. Spread out your feet in accordance to the length of the blanket you use to cover yourself with. This point has been deduced from the Hadith. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/25)

Refraining from Haraam Wealth

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

It is compulsory upon every person to refrain from haraam wealth. However the pious servants of Allah Ta'ala do not confine their caution to refraining from haraam wealth. Rather they exercise extreme caution even in regard to doubtful wealth. By consuming haraam wealth, many evils are created within the soul. This is what destroys man. (Behishti Zewar Pg. 417)

Doubtful wealth

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (a great luminary and ascetic, who was the student of Hazrat Imaam Abu Hanifah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) says: "I prefer returning one Dirham which is obtained through a doubtful source than giving 600 000 Dirhams in charity." Hazrat Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned that from this statement of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ we understand the serious nature of doubtful wealth. It is extremely sad to find that nowadays let alone doubtful wealth, people do not even refrain from that wealth which is categorically declared haraam in Shari'ah. All that they are interested in is in increasing and accumulating their wealth, regardless of the manner or means through which the wealth is acquired. (Behishti Zewar Pg. 417)

An Important Principle to Remember before taking a Loan

Hazrat Shaikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned that it is essential when one takes a loan that he pays back the loan on the appointed time. In the beginning, my close friends would lay down strict conditions before giving me a loan (which I needed in order to pay for my deceased father's debts). Thereafter, after a short period of time when the creditors were confident regarding my paying back the loan on time, they did not hesitate in giving me a loan. It is mentioned in a Hadith that when a person takes a loan with a firm intention of paying back the loan upon the appointed time, then Allah Ta'ala's divine assistance will be with such a person. On the converse, if a person takes a loan and casually says that he will see if he can pay or not, then he will not be able to settle even a small debt.

Remember this principle! When taking a loan, the responsibility of settling the debt is on the debtor and not for the creditor to pursue him. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ 1/24)

The Benefit of Recording a Transaction or Asking for a Receipt when Dealing

Once Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mentioned that a well-known proverb in the Arabic language is:

“Live like brothers but deal like strangers”

There are many advantages and benefits through one adopting clarity and system in one's dealings, whether one takes a loan, gives a loan, or one settles an outstanding debt – in all cases one should ensure that one reduces it in writing and one keeps a record of the transaction. In this way one will save oneself from inconvenience or incurring any loss. For example, when one hires the services of the washer-man (laundromat) then he should ensure that he asks for a receipt as a proof of the transaction. In doing so, one benefit one receives is that in the event the clothes get misplaced by the washer-man (laundromat), the washer-man will not be able to deny that you gave your clothes to him, as you have proof of the transaction. Another benefit one receives is that even if one loses the receipt, since one had taken a receipt from the washer-man, the washer-man will remain constantly aware and conscious that he had given you a receipt for your clothes, hence he will certainly return your clothes to you. These beautiful teachings of Shari'ah (i.e. recording the transaction, business dealings, etc.) that we have received are all favours and bounties upon us from Allah Ta'ala. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 62)

Fulfilling a Debt is a Means of Ease

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once said:

“If you are compelled to take a loan then ensure that you have the intention to pay back the loan at the time the loan is due. When the appointed time approaches, then immediately settle the debt (even if it means that you have to take another loan to settle the current

loan). Remember, if one's heart is clean and ones intention is to pay back the loan at its due time, then Allah Ta'ala will certainly assist him." (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/23)

Illegally Travelling without Purchasing a Ticket

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Once, a person wrote to me that nowadays it has become a norm in society for people to illegally travel by train without purchasing a train ticket. Hence, there is a need that concession be granted by the Ulama for this situation.

I replied that through an impermissible practice becoming common among people, how can that be a reason to declare that practice as permissible? Hazrat Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned that unfortunately the public feel that whenever they are involved in any impermissible practice, then they expect the Ulama to find some loophole to legalize that practice and thereby remove it from the list of impermissible practices. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/43)

Do not Look Down at the Worker

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

How strange it is that people don't look down upon a trader when he trades, yet they look down upon a worker who is engaged in his

employment. Logic and justice both demand that if we do not look down upon the trader, we should similarly not look down upon the worker. The only difference between both of them is that the trader provides his merchandise while the worker provides his services. When they are both, in essence, doing the same thing, then why do we look down upon the worker? (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 6/173)

The Importance of Fulfilling People's Rights

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The issue of huqooqul ibaad (the rights of the servants of Allah Ta'ala) is an extremely serious matter. One will not be forgiven by merely repenting to Allah Ta'ala (i.e. until and unless one does not make amends by discharging the outstanding rights one owes to the servants of Allah Ta'ala or seeking their forgiveness, one will not be forgiven). Just as you are the servant of Allah Ta'ala, so is the person whose rights you have trampled. On the Day of Qiyaamah, in exchange of two rupees taken unjustly, seven hundred accepted Salaahs of the person who had usurped the rights will be taken and given to the person whose rights were usurped. If the one who unjustly took the rights of another does not have sufficient accepted Salaahs in his account, the sins of the one whose rights were usurped will be loaded onto the usurper in proportion to the injustice he had committed. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/162)

Mu'aasharaat (Social Etiquettes)

Etiquette Revolves Around the General Practice of Society

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned:

Etiquette revolves around the general practice of society. One should see whether something is regarded as etiquette in society or not. Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned that on one occasion he reprimanded a servant for carrying both a Deeni kitaab and his socks in the same hand, allowing them to touch each other. Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that in this day and age basic etiquettes of Deen have left the lives of people. Moulana Ahmad Ali Saharanpuri Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes that students who carry their Deeni kitaabs in their left hand and their shoes in their right hand are showing disrespect to the kitaabs of Deen, on account of this being contrary to Islamic etiquette. It seems as though they are showing respect and giving preference to their shoes over the Deeni kitaabs. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 10/ 36)

Returning People's Items after Use

On one occasion a person had placed a gift in an ordinary basket and presented it to Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Once the person departed, Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ told the khaadim (servant) that, although this basket seems simple and ordinary, however ensure that you return it. Thereafter Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ addressed those present and said that I don't even ask the person whether he wishes to have it back or not, rather it is my habit that I always return it. Hence, if the person does not want it, he may return it to me. On the other hand, if you ask the person whether he wants it back or not then there is the possibility that he wanted it, however due to feeling ashamed of asking for it, he will unwillingly and grudgingly let you keep it. Nevertheless, this fact was established once while I was travelling to Rewari. A person had given me a small used ghee canister. I instructed some of my companions to empty the contents and return the canister to the owner. They told me that this seems to be a simple ordinary canister, what is the need to return it? I replied that only the womenfolk of the house will know the true value of this. A new canister will not be as well greased as this canister due to it being used so much. Nevertheless, later the person who gifted the ghee attested to this and said that his wife stressed upon him to bring back the canister. However he did not have the courage to take back such an ordinary canister. Did you see how the Deeni principles that we are asked to adopt in our lives proved beneficial? In short, whoever adheres to the Sunnah of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the principles of Deen, he will never regret. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 73)

Maintaining a Balance after Marriage

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

On one occasion, Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Yaqoob Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned that when a person gets married, it is generally noticed that he spends more time with his in-laws. In doing so, there is a fear that he does not observe the due rights of his own family members. One should therefore be mindful in this regard, ensuring that he maintains a balance and ensures he fulfils the rights he owes to both parties. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/71)

Making Salaam at the Time of Entering the Home

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Some people enter their homes without greeting the household (e.g. with salaam) and making their presence known to their families. This manner of entering the home is incorrect. It is part of the etiquette of Islam that at the time of entering the home, one enters with making salaam aloud. The benefit of this teaching is that the wife and the inmates of the house will be able to make themselves presentable if they are not in a state in which they wish to be seen. Similarly, it is possible that there could be non mahram women of the locality present in the home, and without informing them of one's presence, one's sight could fall on them. It is for this reason that Shari'ah teaches us to make our presence known at the

time of entering the home. (i.e. through salaam). (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/210)

An Important Principle in the Upbringing of Children

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

A person once mentioned to me an important principle in the upbringing of a child. I found much wisdom in it and I feel it to be such an important principle that it is worthy of being inscribed in gold. He said that if a child asks for something and you wish to give it to him, then give it to him at the first instance. However, if you refuse him at the first instance, then after refusing, despite how much the child persists in asking for it, do not give it to him. If you do not adopt this method and give in to the demands of the child whenever he persists, then the child will get spoilt and this bad habit will be formed in him that whenever he wants something in life, he will feel that he should go on persisting till he gets it. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/343)

Muslims are Unaware of their Own Legacy

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

These sublime etiquettes which I have prepared regarding interacting and socializing with people are in reality the sublime etiquettes of Islam. These etiquettes are explained in order to bring

ease and comfort to people and save them from the least amount of inconvenience. Some people are under the impression that Muslims have acquired these sublime etiquettes from the West. This is totally incorrect; rather the West only discovered this from Islam. How unfortunate it is that we have today regarded our legacy to be the wealth of others. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/228)

Learning How to Conduct Oneself with People

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

It is compulsory upon a person to learn the etiquettes of being a human being and how to conduct oneself with people. If one does not learn this, one will be a means of inconvenience and distress being caused to people. As a result, one will have to bear the evil consequence in the Hereafter. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 8/265)

Adopting Moderation in One's Conduct

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I neither like the quality of boastfulness and pride, nor the display of such humility where one disgraces himself before people. In Deen, there is no place for such qualities. Similarly, one should not express humility before people with the intention of becoming popular and famous for one's piety. This is also a branch of pride.

Shari'ah has commanded us to adopt moderation in everything. An easy method to acquire this is that when one conducts himself among people, he should neither, at any time, exhibit pride through his actions nor display such humility whereby people get the impression that he is putting up an act or doing it for show. Nevertheless one should conduct oneself in an informal manner while adopting the humility that conforms to Shari'ah at all times. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 8/175)

Thinking Before Carrying Out any Action

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

One should think and ponder before uttering any word or carrying out any action. Through thinking and pondering before doing any deed, one will save oneself from errors and mistakes. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 8/270)

The Need for Adopting Moderation in Friendship and Enmity

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Moderation should be adopted in all relationships. To exceed the limit in anything is reprehensible and disliked. The Hadith teaches us, "Adopt moderation in your friendship when dealing with your friend as he may perhaps one day become your enemy, and adopt moderation in your enmity when dealing with your enemy as he

may perhaps one day become your friend.” If one does not adopt moderation and later on finds his enemy becoming his friend, he will feel ashamed and embarrassed over the manner in which he had treated him in the past. In essence, every teaching of Islam contains kindness and consideration for the creation when dealing with them. How beautiful and pure are the teachings of Islam! (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 8/311)

Sublime Qualities of a Believer

The Method to Gain Acceptance in the Sight of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

A respected Aalim once arrived and requested some advice. I said to him, “You are an Aalim of Deen. What advice can I offer you?” After requesting for the second time, I told him that I only remember one lesson which I continue mentioning. The lesson that I have learnt from my elders is that to the best of your ability, regard yourself as a complete non-entity (i.e. if you wish to gain acceptance in the sight of Allah Ta'ala, then do not attach any importance to yourself and do not have pride). These words had such an impact on the Aalim that he immediately began to weep. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 10/ 33)

The Value of Humility in the Sight of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

“Whenever something is found in abundance, it is not shown the level of appreciation and value that is required. On the contrary, if something is scarce, then people generally value it. I will relate an incident through which we may be able to understand this point. Approximately 50 years ago, the first tabligh jamaat left for Kabul. It is my habit that whenever a jamaat returns I look forward to hearing the report of their trip. Nevertheless, when the jamaat returned, they informed us that during the trip the food supply was depleted for a number of days and the only food they were able to obtain was grapes and some other fruits. They mentioned that for 4 aana’s (1/6 of a rupee), they were able to purchase two kilograms of grapes. Now ponder, that in a place where grapes are found in such abundance at such a low price, do you think the people in that area will appreciate and value it? The lesson we learn from this is that wherever something is found in abundance, it is generally not appreciated. On the contrary if something is very scarce in a place, then great importance is attached to it and it is valued immensely. In the same vein, we should understand that the treasures of Allah Ta’ala are unlimited and there is nothing that is short in the treasures of Allah Ta’ala. However, the only thing that Allah Ta’ala does not possess in His treasures is humility and weakness. Allah Ta’ala is the greatest and there is no weakness within Him. All pride

and greatness belongs to Allah Ta'ala alone. Therefore when a servant humbles himself before Allah Ta'ala (i.e. he regards himself as insignificant and he fulfils every command of Allah Ta'ala), Allah Ta'ala greatly appreciates it. To the extent that a person lowers himself, Allah Ta'ala will elevate his status and rank. Every person should take time to ponder and reflect over this. It is reported that Nabi ﷺ mentioned:

من تواضع لله رفعه الله

“Whosoever adopts humility for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will elevate his status.”

We often refer to ourselves, verbally or in our letters, as “the worst of creation”, “the lowest person”, “worthless person”, etc. However, only Allah Ta'ala knows what we really regard ourselves to be. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رحمه الله 1/70)

Contentment – The Key to Curbing Man's Desires

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رحمه الله writes:

It is a common observation and a fact proven through experience that man, regardless of how much wealth he may acquire, never remains satisfied and content with his lot. With the exception of a few blessed servants of Allah Ta'ala, this is the general condition of man. It is for this reason that we find earnest exhortation and encouragement towards contentment being given in various places

of the Holy Qur'aan and Ahaadith. This is essential in order for man's insatiable appetite for wealth to be curbed to some extent. (Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat [urdu], Part 2 pg. 369)

Showing Compassion and Mercy Towards the Creation

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaaas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Those involved in the work of tabligh should strive to inculcate a very high level of tolerance and patience within them. The desired level of tolerance and patience will be created when one has true love and concern for the Ummah. This quality will be engendered within their hearts by focusing and reflecting over the infinite mercy and compassion of Allah Ta'ala for his creation. Thereafter, due importance should be shown towards one's tarbiyat (i.e. improving one's character). (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyaaas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 40)

Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ Level of Independence

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned that the lessons of Hadith that were conducted in Gangoh by Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ were done purely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. Hazrat Moulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ ran the madrasah purely on tawakkul (i.e. he placed his reliance totally on Allah Ta'ala and did

not turn to the creation). At the time Moulana discontinued the lessons of Hadith and closed down the madrasah due to his eyesight deteriorating, people who were under the impression that the madrasah was still in operation donated large sums of money for the madrasah. Hazrat Moulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ immediately returned the money stating that the madrasah was no longer in operation. Some people tried to explain to Moulana that the money should not be returned, rather the donor's permission should be sought, and then the money could be spent in another Deeni cause. Upon this, Moulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ said that why should I go around asking people for permission (to spend their money in Deeni causes)? If they wish, they may spend it in any Deeni cause they desire.

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ then explained that by asking people permission to spend their money in this manner is a type of begging. However, the correct method is that when the money was not going to be used for the purpose it was donated for, it should immediately be returned. Upon receiving the money, if the donor himself wishes that the money should be used for another Deeni cause, he should resend the money with a note stating that he wishes that the money be spent for another Deeni cause. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 10/ 277)

Observing Purdah

A praiseworthy Quality in Women

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

“Women who are pure-minded and simple in their ways (on account of them not being exposed to sin and observing strict purdah from strange men) are generally extremely chaste. Such women resemble the hours (damsels) of Jannah in their purity and chastity. They neither come into contact with strange men nor do they even cast glances at them. Hence they could be resembled to the hours of Jannah whom Allah Ta’ala has described in the Qur’aan saying:

فِيهِنَّ قَصِرَتُ الطَّرْفِ

In the palaces of Jannah reside such hours (damsels) who lower their gazes from all strange men besides their husbands.

Further, Allah Ta’ala expresses the excellence of those women who are unaware of the world and focus on the Hereafter by describing them as الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ (Chaste, believing women who remain unaware of the attractions of the world). From this verse of the Qur’aan, we understand that it is a praiseworthy quality in

women and part of their nature that they remain aloof from the attractions of the world. Though this verse primarily refers to women remaining aloof from the attractions of sin and this is also desired from men, through the fact that Allah Ta'ala expresses this quality as a praiseworthy quality of women, one understands that it should be found in women to a greater extent.

Unfortunately, those who are totally ignorant of Deen feel that the success and progress of women lie in abolishing the concept of purdah and exposing women to the world. However, this notion is totally incorrect. I sincerely feel within my heart that Allah Ta'ala will assist Deen and never cause such people to become successful in their effort. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/151)

The Serious Consequences of Abandoning Purdah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The non-observance of purdah has, nowadays, become rampant and rife in every place. The era we are living in is an era of great fitnahs and trials.

Some people raise an objection against the law of purdah. They claim that through purdah a woman is kept in imprisonment. The answer to this objection is that the law of purdah is not an imprisonment for a woman, but rather a means of security and protection. If one has something which he greatly values, then it is only sensible and logical for him to be concerned about adopting

the correct means whereby he will secure and protect it. A person who travels by train (or any public transport) with a lot of money will never go about displaying his money openly. Rather he will take great pains in looking after it and keeping it as safe as possible. Accordingly, in Islam the most valuable thing is the respect of the women. Hence, neglecting the law of purdah, removing the women from their homes and allowing them to intermingle freely in public, is exposing them to great danger. Dangers similar to those that are feared through exposing one's wealth before people are feared here as well.

Another objection raised by some is that one benefit of keeping women in purdah and concealed from men is that her chastity will be safeguarded and her respect protected. However, we do find situations where despite purdah being observed, wrongs do occur. The answer to this is that as long as the laws of purdah are correctly observed, then it is guaranteed until the day of Qiyaamah that there will never arise a situation where wrongs will take place. It is on account of not observing purdah correctly that wrongs take place. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ 7/128)

The Outlook of a Believer

The Mindset of a Believer

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

The spirit and mindset of a person should always revolve around how he can be of service to the creation and how his actions can be a means of preserving Deen. We should not do things to earn popularity among people. As far as popularity is concerned, we should hope and desire that neither in our lifetime should people come to know of the good works we carried out nor should they speak of our good deeds after our demise. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/19)

Keeping the Rewards of the Hereafter in Mind

A person once asked Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ something related to Hazrat's domestic life for the benefit of gaining a lesson. After Hazrat responded, the person asked forgiveness for posing such a question. Hazrat Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied, "No, you have not caused me any grief or pain." Hazrat

then mentioned: ‘Alhamdulillah Allah Ta’ala blessed me with such a mindset through which I am not hurt or grieved through people asking me questions relating to Deen. I say to myself that I will be greatly rewarded by Allah Ta’ala through advising the person in matters of Deen.’ (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 280)

Obedience to the Command of Shari’ah

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned that he received a letter from a person enquiring whether it would be permissible for him to travel with one of his elderly female relatives who wished to accompany him for hajj. Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied that as long as there is no mahram accompanying her on the journey, it will be impermissible for her to travel.

An Aalim present asked, “Is it not the case that the reason for the prohibition of a woman travelling alone for hajj is due to being alone? (Hence if she is in company, it should be permissible).” Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied in the negative. Thereafter, he explained that the reason for the prohibition (as explained by the Fuqaha) is that many difficulties and evils generally occur during the journey. In the case where a woman travels alone, there is no one to assist her or come to her aid. On the contrary, in the case where she is accompanied by her mahram, then she feels (mentally and physically) secure that in the event of some difficulty, she would be able to easily call out for him and seek his assistance. However, Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

then said that these explanations which we present are merely logical explanations which appeal to our comprehension and understanding. The reality of the matter is that this is the law of Shari'ah which we are unable to fully comprehend and we are unable to encompass its divine wisdom. We are bound to believe in it being correct and accept it, whether we understand its wisdom and logical reasoning or not. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/87)

Imparting the Knowledge of Deen

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned:

“At present, the best occupation is that of imparting Deeni ilm, especially for the one who has been endowed with ilm. This is the need of the time. The virtue of it is also so great that perhaps no other amal is equivalent to it in virtue. As long as the knowledge which a person imparted continues to be practised and imparted, rewards will continue accumulating in his book of deeds.” (Tuhfatul Ulama, vol. 1, pg. 45)

Being a Means of Mercy to Mankind

Once Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned to a certain Aalim:

If a person wishes to practice upon a certain action of Deen wherein permission has been granted, I do not impose upon him to practise

on something that has been regarded as superior and higher in Deen (e.g. mustahab), as this will be a means of causing inconvenience to him. I feel that the thing upon which he wishes to practice has been allowed in Deen, hence he has all the right to practise upon it. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/210)

Fulfil the Rights of Others and Seek your Rights through Begging from Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I wish to explain a very important principle with which I constantly advise my friends. I have heard this important principle from my elders. This principle is also recorded in the malfoozaat of my respected uncle, Hazrat Moulana Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, and further explained and expounded upon by his son, Moulana Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, in his discourses. In reality, this principle is extracted from the Hadith. A person should not be more concerned about how others deal with him and fulfil his rights. Rather, he should be more concerned about how he deals with others. He should constantly ensure that he fulfils the rights of kinship towards his family, the rights of people in general when interacting in society, and he fulfils the laws of Shari'ah placed upon him in regard to the Creation. (Suhbate baa Awliyyaa pg. 93)

Turning One's Heart Away from Worldly Distractions

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

In the year 1338 A.H, I performed my first hajj. From that time onwards, I made it a habit to remain awake in ibaadah throughout the nights during the month of Ramadhaan. However, since the last 5 to 6 years, due to illnesses, I was forced to discontinue this practice of remaining awake throughout the night. Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned: "I learnt this practice from the Arabs. It used to be the way of the Arabs in those days that during the month of Ramadhaan, they remained awake in ibaadah throughout the night. Hence during our stay in Makkah Mukarramah in the month of Ramadhaan, every night after performing the taraweeh Salaah, we used to perform umrah and other ibaadah till the time of sehri. In the year 1344 A.H, when I was blessed with the opportunity to once again be present at the Haramain Shareefain, I found that things had changed. The shopping centres would remain open throughout the night, and during the day there would be complete silence."

Hazrat Shaikh then said: Last year, when I was present in the Haramain Shareefain, I came to know that the television had entered many homes (in Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Tayyibah) and thus the night passes with the sound of the television being heard. However, despite all the attractions of the television (and the other attractions of the world), those who are sincere in their search for Allah Ta'ala will continue striving, and all

these attractions will not distract them from their goal. (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 31)

Fulfilling One's Priorities in Life

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

The one who gets involved in futile activities and vain pursuits often falls short in fulfilling his priorities and responsibilities in life. This has been proven through experience. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 3/87)

Holding on to Imaan

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

The effect of Imaan in the life of a person is such that it prompts him towards showing kindness and compassion to the creation, forgiving and overlooking their weaknesses and adopting courage and bravery at the time of difficulties. As a result of not possessing Imaan, these qualities are not seen in the kuffaar. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 8/136)

Strengthening One's Relationship with Allah Ta'ala

Every Person is Perpetually Dependent on Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned:

Each and every person is perpetually in need and totally dependent on Allah Ta'ala (i.e. for his existence, welfare and continuity in his Deen and dunya). May Allah Ta'ala embed this belief within our hearts and make it a reality. If we constantly reflect and ponder over this fact, then (Insha Allah) one day this belief and conviction will be part of us. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ 10/339)

Having a Good Opinion of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned:

“One should always entertain a good opinion of Allah Ta'ala. In this way, one's love for Allah Ta'ala will increase and Allah Ta'ala will

also be pleased with him. Consider how terrible it would be if despite Allah Ta'ala continuously showering His favours and bounties upon one, one does not think good of Allah Ta'ala." (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/340)

Allah Ta'ala Looks for an Excuse to Forgive

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

An Aalim once cried before me out of the fear that he did not know in which condition he would pass away. Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ thereafter said, I do not generally take oaths in regard to any affair in the future. However, I take an oath with firm conviction that Allah Ta'ala, out of His infinite grace and mercy towards His servants, looks for excuses to forgive a person. Allah Ta'ala does not look for excuses to punish one. Why should Allah Ta'ala want to punish one whereas He Himself mentions in the Qur'aan:

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَأَمَنْتُمْ (النساء: ١٤٧)

What will Allah gain through punishing you, if you express shukr (gratitude) and believe?

(Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/343)

Allah Ta'ala Deals with His Servant in Accordance to the Servant's Expectation of Him

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once mentioned:

At no point should one become despondent of the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Instead, one should hope for Allah Ta'ala's special mercy at all times. Allah Ta'ala deals with His servant in accordance to the expectation the servant has of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala is all forgiving and all merciful. However, the condition and prerequisite to acquire His divine mercy is that one expresses his need (for the divine mercy) before Allah Ta'ala and that one goes on striving to fulfil the orders of Allah Ta'ala. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ 4/272)

The World – An Abode of Trials and Tribulations

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes:

This world is an abode of trials and tribulations. Therefore if any difficulty befalls us, before expressing ingratitude, we should reflect over the extent to which we are all indebted to Allah Ta'ala for His boundless favours. Then we shall realize that instead of us complaining over the small difficulty, we should be expressing our gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for all His bounties. (Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat [urdu], Part 2 pg. 410)

The Basis of Everything is the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala

On one occasion Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ mentioned:

No matter how much a person worships Allah Ta'ala, or adopts taqwa and piety in his life, one cannot feel complacent at any time as one is unaware of one's true status and position in the sight of Allah Ta'ala. Since everything depends on the acceptance of Allah Ta'ala and His pleasure, who can be bold enough to make any type of claim (regarding his position and status by Allah Ta'ala)? Similarly, no person can be confident of his future (i.e. whether one will pass away with Imaan or not). Since the condition of man's heart is always changing and fluctuating and one does not know what the future holds for him, how can one feel confident of his future? (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah 10/33)

The Vital Ingredient of Love

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned:

Without possessing excessive love for Allah Ta'ala and for Deen, despite how simple a command may be, one will experience difficulty in fulfilling it. On the other hand, if the ingredient of love is found within one's life, despite how difficult the command is, it will be completely easy for one to fulfil it. Making any amount of sacrifices for Deen will be simple; even sacrificing one's life for the sake of Allah Ta'ala will become easy. This excessive love is generally obtained in the company of the lovers of Allah Ta'ala.

There is no limit to the amount a person can acquire in the company of the friends of Allah Ta'ala. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 6/147)

The Formula for Success

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned after reciting the following couplet of Hazrat Moulana Rumi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ:

ہم خدا خواہی و ہم دنیاے دوں ایں خیال است و محال است و جنوں

We desire the love of Allah Ta'ala, and yet we continue hankering after this insignificant world (expecting to be successful in our goal). Certainly this is a mere imagination, really impossible and illogical.

O my beloved brothers! In order for one to become successful in anything, one is required to apply the formula of success. Through applying this formula, one will be successful in all fields of life. In the field of medicine, one will have to adhere to the various laws and principles laid down in order to first acquire the necessary understanding of the field and thereafter practice upon it. Similarly, in treading the path of love towards Allah Ta'ala, in order for one to be successful, one will be required to practice self-restraint in all aspects of life. Under the guidance of the Mashaayikh, one will have to regulate one's speech, interaction with people and one's eating and sleeping habits. (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 56)

Expressing Gratitude over the Favours of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My Shaikh, Hazrat Moulana Khaleel Ahmad Sahaaranpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, explained a very important point under the verse of the Qur'aan:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

If you try to count the favours of Allah Ta'ala, you will not be able to encompass.

Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ mentioned that if one has to examine this aayah, he will find the word 'ni'mat' mentioned in the singular form. Hence this aayah indicates towards the fact that if one has to try and encompass all the benefits and favours one receives from Allah Ta'ala through one bounty (e.g. eyesight, hearing, speech, etc.), he will not succeed in encompassing all its good. (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 92)

Inculcating the Love of Allah Ta'ala

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

People generally pay more attention to and show more concern towards the external actions. While the external actions are extremely essential, the thing of greater significance and importance is purifying the heart. We should look at how much of love and reverence there is in the heart for Allah Ta'ala and his

Rasul ﷺ. There are many people from rural areas and villages who despite being uncultured, possess within their hearts great love and reverence for Allah Ta'ala and his Rasul ﷺ. The love of Allah Ta'ala and his Rasul ﷺ has completely penetrated and saturated their hearts. This is what is truly needed – the importance, respect and reverence of Deen to settle in the heart. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 7/218)

Note: There are many who claim to have the love of Allah Ta'ala and his Rasul ﷺ within their hearts, yet the lives they lead totally contradict the commands of the Shari'ah and the Mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulallah ﷺ. The level of love and reverence we have in our hearts for Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul ﷺ will be determined through the loyalty and obedience we show to the commands of the Shari'ah and the Sunnah of Rasulallah ﷺ.

Preparation for Death

Remembering the Spectacle of Death

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Oh my beloved friends! Remember death continuously! Continue pondering over the spectacle of death. At the time one departs from this world, he will leave behind all his belongings and he will leave empty handed. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/153)

Preparing for the True Abode

Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The period of time for which people live in the world is extremely short in comparison to the period of time for which they will remain buried beneath the surface of the earth. Accordingly, one should understand that man's lifespan in this world, compared to the Hereafter, is extremely short and brief. After your demise, the various stages through which you will pass, such as the stage in the grave until the first sounding of the trumpet, the stage from the

first sounding of the trumpet until the second, the thousands of years that will be spent on the plains of resurrection and finally, residing in whichever abode Allah Ta'ala chooses for you in the Hereafter – all these stages are hundreds of thousands of times longer than the brief period for which you live in the world. How can man remain so negligent and unconcerned of his true abode? He makes such effort for the few days he will spend in the world but fails to work and make adequate preparations for the eternal life of the Hereafter! (Malfoozaat Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ pg. 21)

The True Wealth is the Wealth that One takes to the Hereafter

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

My beloved brothers! Constantly take the name of Allah Ta'ala and engage in zikr as this is the thing that will benefit you after you leave this world. My beloved brothers! Listen attentively to what I am saying and accept my advice, as perhaps there will not be anyone else who will advise you in this way. When a person passes away, the people of this world ask, “What has he left behind for his family and dependants?” whereas the people of the Hereafter ask, “What has he brought along with him to the Hereafter?” Therefore send forth to the Hereafter whatever you possess of the world and only hold back that amount of dunya which you absolutely require to live in this world. Each person will have to prepare his own

Aakhirah and will be accountable for his own deeds. When you pass away, your family and loved ones will weep for only a few days, after which nobody will remember you or cry over your demise. People coming to console the bereaved ones will force themselves to shed a few false tears and then they too will leave. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 2/126)

Reflection Over Death – The Remedy for Negligence

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Sickness, death and other similar calamities and difficulties which afflict people, are all things from which we should take lesson and to which we should pay heed. It is as though our sight has been blinded by veils of negligence and unmindfulness. We have become complacent over our condition and express surprise over the condition of others without taking any lesson. When studying the sections of Hadith pertaining to narrations which soften the heart and narrations of abstinence from the world, we fail to ponder and reflect. We study and discuss the Fiqh discussions at great length and merely leave it at that. Before sleeping, a person should take out some time to ponder and reflect over the reality of death. (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 152)

Whose Janaazah is this?

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

We should, at all times, remember that our life is coming to an end. We have also heard our elders say that a person should take stock of his life when going to sleep. He should ponder and reflect over the number of things he will be able to take with him when he passes away and the number of things he will be forced to leave behind. Constantly remember death! Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said in the Mubaarak Hadith, “Remember the thing which severs all pleasures of life, death.” Once a janaazah was passing by when somebody asked a pious person present, “Whose janaazah is this?” The pious person replied, “It is your janaazah.” When the person expressed surprise at this answer, the pious person said, “If it is not yours, then regard it to be mine.” (Merely being concerned about whose janaazah it is, is insufficient. What matters is whether one is prepared for that moment to be the moment of one’s own janaazah.) (Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 152)

The Temporary Life of this World

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The life of this world is temporary and will soon come to an end. While there exists a difference of opinion regarding everything in life, there exists no difference of opinion regarding the certainty of

death. Despite us believing in the inevitability and certainty of death, we still don't find time to work and strive for the eternal life. We find the time to earn our livelihood but don't find any time to engage in zikr. The separation of India and Pakistan (where people were forced to leave India and settle in Pakistan, leaving behind all their properties and wealth) made it easy for us to realize that when a person leaves this world at the time of death, nothing will accompany him. The Mashaayikh have written in regards to hajj that the entire scene of hajj is one that depicts the spectacle of death. A person removes his normal clothing and replaces it with two simple pieces of cloth. People accompany the person leaving for hajj to the station or to Bombay in order to see him off and thereafter return to their homes. People departing for hajj have to leave all their wealth, properties etc. behind. Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ then mentioned,

عافل تجھے گھڑیال یہ دیتا ہے منادی
گردوں نے گھڑی عمر کی ایک اور گھٹادی

“When the clock sounds, an announcement is actually being made: “O negligent person! Every time the needle of the clock goes around, it has decreased a portion of your life.”

(Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 152)

Valuing Every Moment of One's Life

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Every moment of one's life is extremely valuable. Hence, whatever time one finds to carry out righteous actions, one should value that time and utilize it profitably in carrying out good deeds. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mentioned in the Mubaarak Hadith:

فليتزود العبد من نفسه لنفسه ومن حياته لموته ومن شبابه لكبره ومن دنياه لآخرته

“One should prepare provisions (for the journey of the Hereafter) through carrying out good deeds which will benefit him (in the Hereafter), and prepare through his life for his death, and through his youth for his old age, and through his dunya for his Aakhirah.”

(Suhbate baa Awliyaa pg. 79)

Death is Inevitable

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

I always reflect over the fact that death is inevitable. Each person knows with certainty that death will overtake him one day. Why is it that people are still so unmindful about death and hence do not prepare for it? Today, after Asr Salaah, my neighbour had passed away. May Allah Ta'ala forgive him and have mercy on him. He had just performed his Asr Salaah and sat down in order to recite the

Qur'aan when death had all of a sudden overtaken him. No one knows at which moment death will strike. One is unaware of whether one will live to see the next day or even the next hour. I took a great lesson from the death of my neighbour. He was a pious man who was bay'at to my respected uncle, Moulana Ilyaaas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/134)

This Worldly Life is like a Dream

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ while explaining the reality of this worldly life, mentioned:

“This worldly life can be likened to a person who finds himself in an air conditioned room being massaged by many servants while others are at his beck and call, anxiously waiting to serve him. Suddenly his eyes open and he realises that what he was visualizing was nothing but a dream and in reality, he is in a prison cell stuck behind bars. On the other hand, another person has a dream in which he sees himself being severely beaten and lashed and undergoing difficulty upon difficulty. When his eyes open, he sees himself safe and sound and realizes that all the pain and suffering was nothing but a dream. He feels relieved and is grateful to Allah Ta'ala that what he was going through was just a dream and not a reality. Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then mentioned to those present in the gathering: Respected friends! This world is identical to a dream. When a person opens his eyes (i.e. the eyes of the Hereafter), then only will he realize the condition in which he truly is. In the Hereafter, when those who lived a comfortable life in the world will

see the immense rewards in store for all those servants of Allah Ta'ala who bore afflictions and underwent difficulties in this world, they will desire that their bodies had been cut with scissors in the world and they were made to undergo great amounts of hardship and difficulty, so that they may also be worthy of the great rewards of the Aakhirah. (Malfoozaat of Hazrat Shaikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/67)

Exercising Patience Through Trials and Adversities

Remaining Patient in the Face of Adversity

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

There are numerous places in the Qur'aan and Hadith where we are exhorted and encouraged to remain patient in the face of adversity. One should not consider the difficulties and hardships which one undergoes as a sheer misfortune and calamity. Instead, at times, Allah Ta'ala, out of His infinite grace and wisdom, puts one through certain trials during his life in order to bless him with His divine grace. (Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat [urdu], Part 2 pg. 369)

Expediting the Journey of Love through Persevering patiently over Difficulties

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

The saalik progresses in the path of sulook (i.e. the journey of acquiring the love of Allah Ta'ala) far more swiftly through persevering patiently over the grief he experiences (on account of involuntary difficulties and hardships), than the progress through spiritual exercises and striving in nafl ibaadaat. It is on account of the grief one bears patiently within the heart that causes him to excel and become successful. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 1/42)

Being Patient at the Time of Sickness

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned:

Apart from the abundant virtues that have been reported regarding sickness, the Hadith also mentions the immense rewards for the sick. It is well-known that when a person exercises patience, he is rewarded. However, some researchers (Muhaqqiqeen) opine that in sickness, a person receives a separate reward for sickness and a separate reward for being patient. Since sickness is not in one's volition and instead comes from the side of Allah Ta'ala, and patience is in one's volition, both are two separate things and a person will be rewarded for both separately. I always say that in principle, even though a person does not exercise patience when he is ill, he will still receive the reward for sickness. However, he will also be taken to task for not fulfilling the command of Allah Ta'ala with regard to exercising patience. In the month of Ramadhaan, many people fast yet do not perform their Salaah. They will be

rewarded for fasting, though they will be taken to task for not performing Salaah. (Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ 10/ 215)