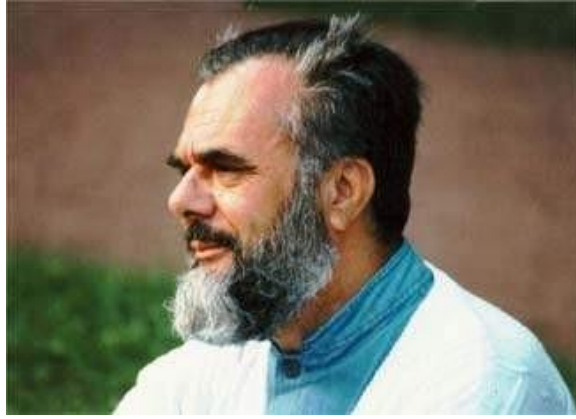


Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN

RAMADHAN AND TAQWA TRAINING



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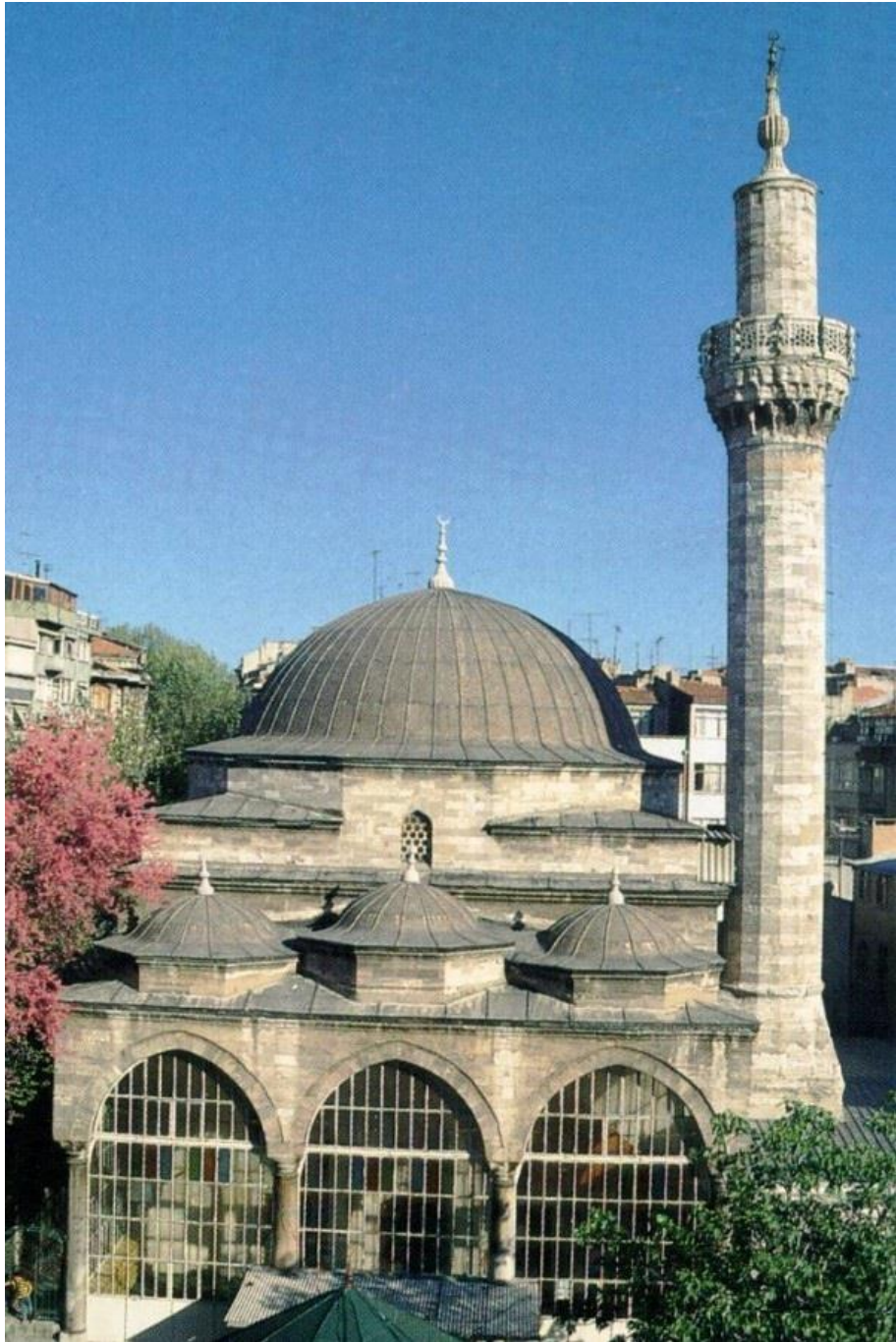
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PREFACE

All sections of our society are sensitive about Ramadhan. When Ramadhan arrives, the mosques are filled, tarawih prayers are performed, Qur'an muqabalas are recited. Ladies go to the mosque with their Qur'an to listen and follow the recitations. There are lines for fresh pita bread when the sunset time is closer. The traffic increases on the roads. At the time of iftar, the streets look empty. Even in the modern districts of large cities one could feel this atmosphere.

Ramadhan preparations in the houses start much earlier. People are invited for iftar. Zakah, charity and other help are directed to the poor and needy. Abundance and serenity are felt at homes. Drummers awaken people at night; lights are turned on at suhur time. Days pass with joy.

Are these enough? What is the wisdom behind fasting? What are the virtues and subtleties of Ramadan? How could one benefit from the goodness and abundance of Ramadhan better? What do we need to pay attention for the acceptance of our worship? With the hopes of providing some answers, we have prepared this book. This book includes some of the discourses given by Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad Cosan in various cities in the Ramadan of 1995.

In the first part of the book, information about the blessed three-months is provided. Then the wisdom and benefits of fasting are explained in the light of verses of the Qur'an and the ahadith of the Prophet SAS. It is stated that Ramadhan is a month of taqwa course and training of nafs. Hadith Qudsîs that suggest having taqwa are explained, and recommendations to benefit from Ramadhan better are given.

It has been more than twenty-five years since the original discourses. As the poet stated:

*Ali gitti Hakk'a yetti;
Zülfikâr'ı derya yuttu...*

*Ali left this world, reached his Lord
Dhulfiqar was swallowed by the ocean...*

Our beloved master, Prof.Dr. M. Es'ad Coşan has left this life (*rahmatullahi 'alayh*). Seha Neşriyat was privatized, printing of the book ceased. As the month of Ramadhan nears this year, we wish to make this book available via internet for those who would like to benefit from the valuable information presented in the book. Thus, we have prepared the second edition of the book to publish in the digital form. The Arabic text have been completed, and the sources of the ahadith are given as footnotes. Also, a discourse dated February 15, 1995 is added to the book.

When we visited our master Prof. Dr. Es'ad Coşan in the evening of February 14, 1995, I asked him if we could prepare a book from the discourses he had while visiting various cities in Turkey. He expressed his consent. He also added that he tries to explain different aspects in the discourses so that the book would be beneficial to the readers. Upon his consent, we contacted brothers in the location of the discourses and asked for the recordings of the discourses. May Allah be pleased with them, they helped us by sending the sound recordings. When I presented the manuscript of the book to our Khawaja, he suggested the title "Ramadhan and Taqwa Training." The first edition of the book was printed by Seha Neşriyat in January 1996.

We thank brothers who provided the audio recordings of the discourses. We also thank olan Abdüllatif Erkaya, A. Enis Erkaya and Lütfullah Erkaya for the transcription of the audio records and some help with technical matters. We hope that this book will be helpful for us to enjoy and benefit from Ramadhan better. Divine guidance is from Almighty Allah.

Dr. Metin Erkaya
Sincan, March 2021

Translator's note:

It has been a true pleasure and a great learning experience for me to translate this book. I am sure it will be a priceless treasure for anyone who is interested in learning about the virtues of Ramadhan and the taqwa training.

The translation of the first edition of this book was completed and published on the web in November 2005. I am indebted to the members of naqshi-bridge e-mail group for their patience and feedback and dear friends for their proof reading. May Almighty Allah open our hearts for His love and have us appreciate the message in this book.

Prof. Dr. Hasan Hüseyin ERKAYA
Eskisehir, March 2021



ABBREVIATIONS

SAS	: <i>Salla'llàhu alayhi wa sallam.</i>
AS	: <i>Alayhi's-salâm.</i>
RA	: <i>Radhiya'llàhu anh/ anhâ/ anhumâ.</i>
Rh.A	: <i>Rahmatu'llàhi alayh.</i>
KS	: <i>Qaddesa'llàhu sirrahû.</i>
RE.	: <i>Râmûzu'l-Ehàdîth</i>
(خ)	: Bukhàrî, <i>Sahîh</i>
(م)	: Muslim, <i>Sahîh</i>
(د)	: Abû Dâwud, <i>Sunen</i>
(ت)	: Tirmidhî, <i>Sunen</i>
(ن)	: Neseî, <i>Sunen</i>
(ه)	: Ibn-i Mâjah, <i>Sunen</i>
(حم)	: Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, <i>Musned</i>
(عب)	: Abdu'r-Razzâq, <i>Musannef</i>
(ط)	: Tayâlisi, <i>Musned</i>
(ش)	: Ibn-i Abî Shaybah, <i>Musannef</i>
(ع)	: Abû Ya'lâ, <i>Musned</i>
(طب)	: Taberânî, <i>Mu'jamu'l-Kabîr</i>
(طس)	: Taberânî, <i>Mu'jamu'l-Awsat</i>
(قط)	: Dâra Qutnî, <i>Sunen</i>
(حل)	: Abû Nuaym, <i>Hilyetu'l-Awliyâ</i>
(ق)	: Beyhakî, <i>Sunenu'l-Kubrâ</i>
(هب)	: Beyhakî, <i>Shuabu'l-Iman</i>
(عق)	: Ukaylî, <i>Duafâ</i>
(عد)	: Ibn-i Adiy, <i>Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ</i>

- (خط) : Khatîb-i Baghdâdî, *Târih-i Baghdad*
(كر) : Ibn-i Asâkir, *Târikh-i Dimashq*
(حب) : Ibn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*
(ك) : Hâkim, *Mustedrek*
(ض) : Dhiyâ el-Maqdisî, *Al-Ahâdîthu'l-Mukhtara*
(در) : Dârimî, *Sunen*
(خز) : Ibn-i Khuzayma, *Sahîh*
(بر) : Ibn-i Abdi'l-Ber, *al-Istiâb*
(غ) : Beghawî, *Sharhu's-Sunnah*
(طح) : Tahâwî, *Sharhu Maâni'l-Âsâr*

PROF. DR. MAHMUD ES'AD COŞAN

(April 14, 1938 - February 4, 2001)

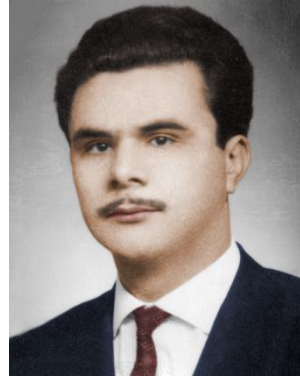
Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad Cosan was born in Ahmetçe Village, Ayvacik County, Çanakkale Province, in the western part of Turkey on April 14, 1938. His father is Halil Necâti Effendi; mother, Shadiye Khanim. From both his paternal and maternal sides, his ancestors were descendents of Prophet Muhammad, and they had moved to Çanakkale from Bukhara.

While Prof. Cosan was a child, his family moved to Istanbul. He had his schooling in Istanbul, graduating from Istanbul Vezneciler Elementary School in 1950 and from Vefa Lisesi in 1956. The same year he was admitted to Istanbul University.

Prof. Cosan attended classes in the Arab-Persian Philology Department of the College of Arts and Literature at the University of Istanbul. He obtained his B.A. in 1960 with four certificates from Arabic Language and Literature, Persian Language and Literature, the History of Middle Ages and Turkish Islamic Arts.

In the same year, he joined the College of Theology of Ankara University as a research assistant in the Department of Classical Turkish Religious Texts. He managed the secretariat work in the College Publication Committee for two years. In 1965, he received his PhD by completing a dissertation on the fifteenth century poet Hatipoglu Muhammad and his works. In 1967-68, he taught Turkish and Humanities courses at the Ankara Yükselis Engineering and Architecture School.

Prof. Cosan served in the military as an officer. He started his military service in Tuzla Infantry School on October 15, 1971. He completed the service on December 31, 1972 in Patnos, Agri as a Second Lieutenant.



After the military service, he returned to Ankara University and resumed his academic activities. In 1973, he became Associate Professor with his thesis on the Maqalat of Hajji Baktashi Veli (The Articles of Hajji Bektashi Veli) and became a faculty member in Turkish-Islamic Literature Department. In 1977-80, while teaching at the College of Theology, he also taught Turkish Language and Literature at the Sakarya Government Architecture and Engineering Academy. He also lectured as a visiting professor at various universities abroad.

In 1982, he became full Professor with his work "Ibrahim-i Muteferriqa and Risâle-i Islâmiyye." In order to devote more time to his social and cultural activities, he asked for his retirement and left the university in 1987.

Prof. Cosan RhA took his early Islamic education in his family. His grandfather Molla Mehmed Effendi was an educated man who had attended the madrasas in Istanbul. He was also a disciple of Hadrat Ahmed Ziyauddin Gumush-khanewi RhA. He was martyred in Çanakkale War during the World War I. Prof. Cosan's father Halil Necati Efendi, too, is an educated person. He



completed the memorization of the Qur'an at an early age while he was in his village. He attended the madrasa of Çirpırlı Hajji Ali Efendi who belonged to the Gumushkhanawi Dargah. He was initiated to the tariqa by Ali Effendi. When the madrasas were closed by the government, he returned to his village and married Shadiye Khanım (1928). Shadiye Khanım, too, was an educated lady from the same village. They had five boys and two girls from this marriage. Prof. Cosan was the fourth child of the family.

In 1942, Halil Necâti Effendi moved to Istanbul in order to send his children to school. He ran a business with his brother-in-law for

a while. Meanwhile, he attended the discourses of Hasib Effendi of Serez at Shahzadebashi Damat Ibrahim Pasha Mosque. After Hasib Effendi passed away, he became a disciple of Abdulaziz Bekkine Effendi of Kazan and attended the discourses at Ummugulsum Mosque. Upon the recommendation of Abdulaziz Effendi, Halil Necati Effendi took an exam and started working for the Mufti's office in Fatih, Istanbul. After Abdulaziz Effendi died in 1952, he attended the discourses of Mehmed Zahid Kotku Effendi. He was a very close friend and student of Sheikh Mehmed Zahid Kotku, regarded as the most influential Islamic figure of Turkey in the late twentieth century.

Having been so immersed in a spiritual environment, Prof. Cosan in his youth attended the talks and discourses of scholars and Murshids and received their material and spiritual blessings.

After graduating from the university, in 1960 Prof. Cosan married Muhterem Khanim, the daughter of Mehmed Zahid Kotku Effendi. In the fall of the same year, he moved to Ankara to start his academic career in Ankara University.



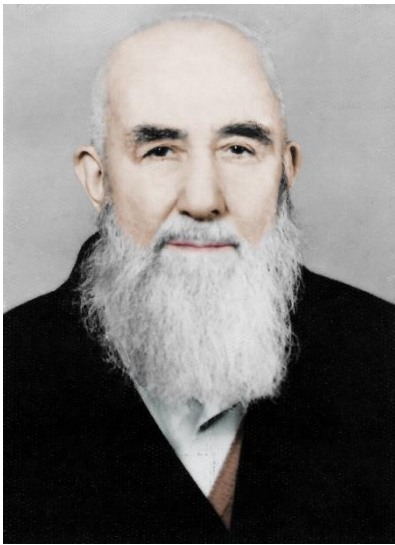
While he was a faculty member at the College of Theology, Prof. Cosan had an "open door" for everybody. He earned the love and respect of students and colleagues. Students would come to him, describe their problems, consult with him, get answers and leave with smiling faces. During the time that there were anarchy and terror at schools, he would talk to the students and ask them to use common sense.

In 1960s, there were no courses on the Qur'an in the College of Theology. Students would try to learn the Qur'an on their own with their knowledge of Arabic and Persian. Prof. Cosan would volunteer to teach them the Qur'an and old Turkish script. He would encourage students to do academic work, to get master and doctoral degrees.

He was highly esteemed among his colleagues, and was an expert in his field. Especially in the Turkish-Islamic Literature field, he was the leading scholar whom everybody consulted. Even his professors would bring him texts that were difficult for them to read and understand. He would try to be helpful to everyone.

During his first years in Ankara, he resided in the Kurtulus section of Ankara. In 1963, he moved to Kalaba section of Ankara. There were no mosques in their neighborhood. He took a leading role in establishing a mosque there. They inaugurated a Qur'an Course and Mosque in a building. He had hadith and tafseer study sessions in that mosque.

He had excellent relationships with his neighbors. Despite his tiring and extended hours of work, he would allocate time to visit his neighbors. He always displayed a smiling face. During the visits, he would take a book from the bookshelf, ask somebody to turn a page, and read something from that page. That is how he would initiate a discourse.



His father-in-law, Shaikh Mehmed Zahid Kotku, would come to Ankara almost every year and stay with them for a while. When he was in Ankara, there would be discourses at various locations within Ankara and in the suburbs of Ankara, as well. Sometimes Mehmed Zahid Effendi would take Es'ad Effendi to go to various cities throughout Turkey.

In 1977, Sheikh Mehmed Zahid Kotku made him sit in the pulpit of Iskenderpasha Mosque (the center of the tariqa) and told the congregation that Prof. Cosan would conduct the hadith discourses from that day on. Thus Es'ad Cosan started the hadith discourses at Iskenderpasha. He would go to Istanbul for the hadith discourse on Sunday and return to Ankara after the discourse.



When Mehmed Zahid Kotku Effendi was sick and hospitalized, Prof. Cosan attended and served him. Mehmed Zahid Kotku appointed him as his successor while he was alive. He undertook all of the responsibilities of the congregation and the guidance duty in the tariqa when Mehmed Zahid Kotku passed away on November 13, 1980.

The tariqa of Shaikh Mahmud Es'ad Cosan is identified through his shaikh Mehmed Zahid Kotku Effendi as the Naqshbandi Tariqa, Khalidiyya Branch and Gumush-khanewi subbranch. He was also authorized to guide in Qadiriyya, Suhrawardiyya, Kubrawiyya, Cheshtiyya, Mawlawiyya, Khalwatiyya, and Bayramiyya tariqas.

In his time, interest in attending the hadith discourses increased considerably, so the Iskenderpasha mosque was expanded and enlarged five or six times. Buildings next to the mosque were purchased and annexed to the mosque. In addition to this, new periodic Hadith discourses were introduced in the cities of Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Sapanca, Izmit and Eskisehir.

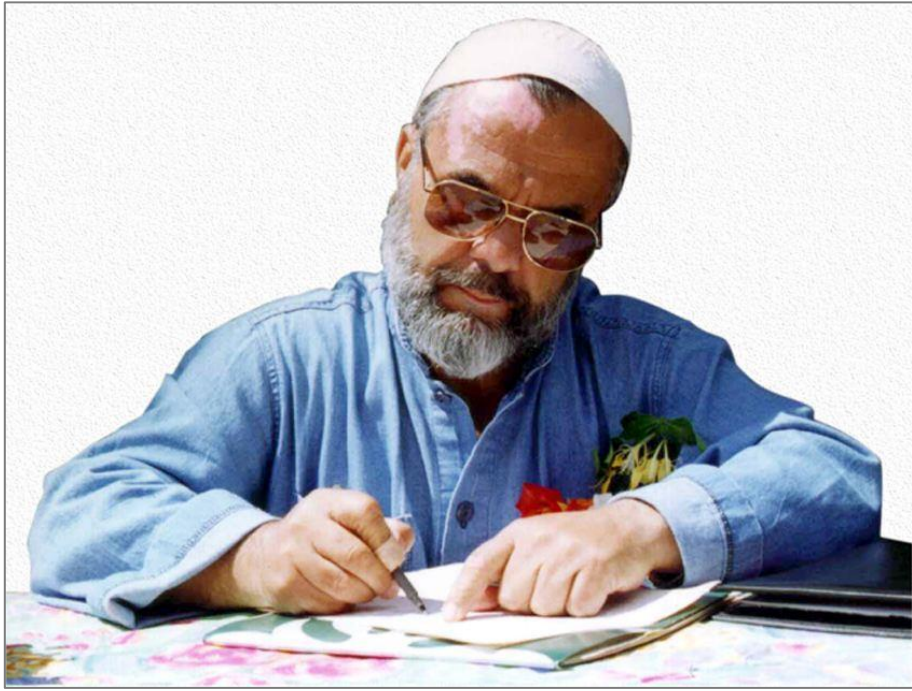
He had established a charitable foundation named Hakyol Egitim Dostluk ve Yardimlasma Vakfi--the True-Path Education, Friendship and Relief Foundation--upon the recommendation of Shaikh Mehmed Zahid Effendi. After 1980, he became personally involved in and improved the activities of this foundation. He opened branches of the foundation in many cities. He worked to spread the activities of education, assistance and cooperation.

He also founded the Ilim, Kultur ve Sanat Vakfi (the Science, Culture and Art Foundation) to conduct activities in culture and art, and the Saglik Vakfi (the Health Foundation) for health related activities. For the education of women, he has had hundreds of women's associations established. He also had hundreds of Ilim, Ahlak Kultur ve Çevre Dernekleri (Science, Morality, Culture and Environment Associations) founded for environmental activities. He aimed to bring people together and to have them organized for common objectives.

Furthermore, he got involved in the restoration and renovation of some historical buildings and works, which were left by Muslim ancestors. He restored them to their original use. Among such works are Ahmed Kâmil Tekkesi, Selami Mustafa Effendi Tekkesi, Shaykh Murad Effendi Dergahi, and Shadiye Khatun Health Complex.

Prof. Dr. M. E. CosanIn order to promote Islamic awareness and education he turned to the media. He established a publishing company: Vefa Yayıncılık. In 1983, the monthly magazine Islam was initiated. Two years later, another monthly periodical Kadın ve Aile (Women and Family) and a bimonthly periodical Ilim ve Sanat (Science and Art) were added to the publications. Gül Çocuk for children and Panzehir magazine for health and science were published later on. Professor Cosan became actively involved in these publications by guiding them and writing editorials for them.

These magazines assumed a leading role in their fields to inform society. They contributed to the formation of Islamic awareness through research papers, news from the country and from the Muslim world, and other articles. They formed an ideal atmosphere in which many good activities were initiated. These publications and the activities of Professor Cosan became topics for dissertations



in western countries. The circulation of the periodical Islam exceeded 100,000 at its peak. These magazines were in publication until June 1998.

He founded Seha publishing house to publish books; numerous books have been published in the field of religion, literature, history and culture. For the development of Islamic printed media, he took further steps. He wanted to initiate a weekly periodical and a daily newspaper. With his efforts, Ahsen printing house and Deha desktop publishing and graphical design firms were established. Later, a daily newspaper called Sagduyu (The Common Sense) was published (May 3, 1998 - July 11, 1999).

In order to broadcast programs which support the Islamic and national values, he initiated the establishment of AKRA (White, Clean Radio) radio station (1992). The radio station broadcasts in Istanbul; however, it can be heard through Internet and via satellite in all parts of Turkey, Europe, North Africa, Middle East and Central Asian Republics. With the encouragement of Prof. Cosan

and for the same purpose, AK-TV television channel was up for local broadcast over the Marmara region (1997).

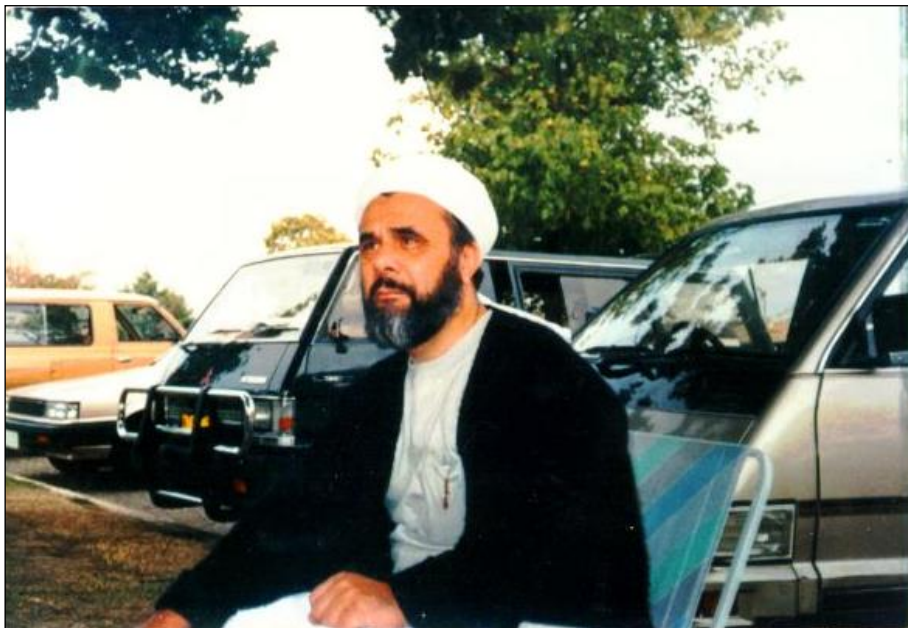
Prof. Cosan urged that private schools be established in order to have quality education and academic excellence. In many cities, private kindergarten, primary and secondary schools have been established. He also encouraged the establishment of private polyclinics and hospitals. As a result, many health facilities have been established throughout Turkey. Hayrunnisa Hospital, Esma Khatun Hospital, Afiyet Hospital, and Shadiye Khatun Polyclinic are just a few.

Prof. Cosan also was effective in the establishment of a travel and tourism agency, Iskenderpasha Tourism (ISPA). He wanted tours to the Muslim world to be organized to make communication and traveling easier among Muslims living in all parts of the world. This agency organized various Hajj and Umra programs, domestic and international trips and educational gatherings.

Having understood the need and importance of independent, knowledgeable and sincere imams, Prof. Cosan founded Fiqh, Hadith and Tafseer institutes in Istanbul, Ankara, Konya and Bursa. Students and graduates of Theology Colleges were admitted to these institutes. Private lecturers and scholars taught Arabic, Hadith, Tafseer, Fiqh, Aqaid and Tasawwuf to the students.

Prof. Cosan traveled extensively inside and outside Turkey because of tremendous interest in his talks and views. He was invited to many parts of the world and participated in many conferences, seminars and talks. He attended numerous educational programs including family and youth camps in Europe, North America, Africa, Middle Asia, and Australia.

Every year Prof. Cosan met and established dialog with the Muslims who came for Hajj and Umrah from different parts of the world. He did not confine himself to one country only but to the entire Muslim world, seeing Muslims as parts of a whole body. He guided and warned Muslims inside and outside Turkey. He offered countless suggestions, recommendations and solutions to the problems Muslims globally face. He did not hesitate even one minute to urge and support the truth, the good, and the beautiful.



He encouraged all Muslims to do likewise.

Furthermore, Prof. Cosan stated the norms of clean politics for Muslims in all countries. Being a non-partisan scholar, he set up the principles and methods for electing truthful, moral, religious, competent and educated public officers from local mayoral candidates to prime minister and president of a country. He believed that only administrators with these qualities could deliver justice, peace and prosperity to a country and humanity.

In May 1997, Prof. Cosan left Turkey to conduct activities outside the country. In 1998, he settled in Brisbane, Australia. He spread his guidance activities throughout Australia. With his leadership, many mosques and educational centers have been established throughout the continent. He started daily hadith discourses (one after Fajr prayer, the second one after Isha prayer) in Brisbane Mosque.

Prof. Cosan maintained his weekly radio addresses. In addition to his Friday Hadith Discourses on the radio, he initiated Tuesday Tafseer Discourses (September 29, 1998). He started from the



Surah Fatiha and explained a few verses in each discourse. He had advanced to the verse 224 of Surah Baqara, yet his life was cut too short to complete the tafseer of the entire Qur'an.

On Sunday, February 4, 2001, around noon, Professor Cosan, headed to the city of Griffith to inaugurate a mosque. While in the vicinity of Dubbo, Sydney, he was involved in a traffic accident. He and his son-in-law, Prof. Dr. Ali Yücel Uyarel, passed away. His sudden departure from this world saddened his family, relatives, disciples and all Muslims who knew of him.

After the funeral prayer at the Gallipoli Mosque in Auburn, Sydney, his body was brought to Turkey on February 8, 2001. On Friday February 9, 2001, another funeral prayer was held at Fatih Mosque in Istanbul. Hundreds of thousands of people attended the funeral. In the company of prayers and tears, Professor Cosan and his son-in-law were buried in Eyüp Cemetary, which is close to the tomb of Abu Eyyüb Al-Ansarî.

Prof. Mahmud Es'ad Cosan spoke Turkish, Arabic, Persian,

English and German. He continued to serve Islam and guide Muslims all around the world in all aspects until his death.

May he rest in peace, and his abode in the hereafter be among the highest ranks of Paradise.

Published Books of Shaikh Mahmud Es'ad Cosan:

01. Matbaaci İbrâhîm-i Müteferrika ve Risâle-i İslâmiye (1982)
(The Printer Ibrahim-i Muteferriqa and Risale-i Islamiyye)
02. Haji Bektashi Veli ve Maqâlat (Hadji Baktash Veli and his Work Maqalat)
03. Gayemiz (1987) (Our Aim)
04. İslâm Çağrısı (1990) (The Message of Islam)
05. Yeni Ufuklar (1992) (New Horizons)
06. Çocuklarla Basbasa (Amongst Children)
07. Basarinin Prensipleri (The principles of success)
08. Türk Dili ve Kültürü (Turkish Language and Culture)
09. İslâm'da Nefis Terbiyesi ve Tasavvufa Giriş (1992) (The Purification of Self in Islam and introduction to Sufism)
10. Avustralya Sohbetleri-1 (1992) (Australia Discourses 1)
11. Avustralya Sohbetleri-2 (1994) (Australia Discourses 2)
12. Avustralya Sohbetleri-3 (1995) (Australia Discourses 3)
13. Avustralya Sohbetleri-4 (1996) (Australia Discourses 4)
14. Yeni Dönemde Yeni Görevler (1993) (New Duties in the New Era)
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18. Sosyal Çalışmalarda Organizasyon ve Başarı (1994)
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20. Güncel Meseleler-2 (1995) (Current Issues 2)
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22. Hacı Bektâsh-i Veli (1995) (Hadji Baktash-i Walî)
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the Path of Success)

25. Islâmî Çalışma ve Hizmetlerde Metod (1995) (Methodology in Islamic Activities)

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27. Ramazan ve Takvâ Eğitimi (1996) (Ramadan and Acquisition of Piety)

28. Teblig ve Irşad Çalışmaları (1996) (Dawah Activities)

29. Islâm, Tasavvuf ve Hayat (1996) (Islam, Tasawwuf and Life)

30. Haydi Hizmete!.. (1997) (Come to Serving Society)

31. Islâm'da Eğitimin İncelikleri (1997) (Subtleties of Education in Islam)

32. Tasavvuf Yolu Nedir? (1997) (What is Tasawwuf?)

33. İmanin ve Islâm'ın Korunması-1 (1997) (The Protection of Faith and Islam 1)

34. İmanin ve Islâm'ın Korunması-2 (1998) (The Protection of Faith and Islam 2)

35. Allah'ın Gazabi ve Rızası (1997) (The Wrath and Pleasure of Allah)

36. Mi'rac Gecesi (1998) (The Night of Ascension)

37. Doğru İnanç ve Güzel Kulluk (1998) (True Faith and Good Servitude)

38. Ramazan ve Güzel Ameller (1998) (Ramadhan and Good Deeds)

01. RAGHAIB NIGHT AND THE THREE MONTHS

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aûzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

Bi'smillâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

Al-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâraken fih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedini'l-mustafâ... Wa alâ âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebi'ahû bi-ihsânin ilâ yawmi'l-jazâ... Ammâ ba'd:

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy Giving.

Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. We praise Him with the best of the praises endlessly.

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad the Chosen, his family, his companions and his sincere followers till the Day of Repayment.

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters!

May Allah Almighty be pleased with you all. May He grant you happiness in this life and in the hereafter. May He honor you in both lives. May He reward you with His Beauty in the highest ranks of His Paradise.

a. Two Spiritual Seasons

A year has four physical seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. It also has two important spiritual seasons. One of these spiritual seasons comes after the Hegira month Shawwal. It starts with the eleventh Arabic month Dhil-Qadah and extends through the months Dhil-Hijjah and Muharram. This is a season people move to perform the Pilgrimage. From distant as well as nearer



lands, in response to the call of Allah, to earn physical and spiritual benefits, to acquire many experiences that are full of wisdom, to observe spiritual states, people, lovers, and unselfish servants start a journey. Saying "*Labbayk allahumma labbayk*--I respond to your call o Allah!" with tears in eyes, the Pilgrims cross the mountains, valleys and seas; they arrive in the blessed lands via the land, sea, and airways. They earn great rewards for performing the Hajj.

Almighty Allah takes an oath in Surah al-Fajr by ten blessed nights:

وَالْفَجْرِ . وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ (الفجر: ١-٢)

(*Wa'l-fajri wa layâlin ashrin*) "By the dawn and by ten nights." These blessed nights are interpreted as the nights of the first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah during which Hajj is performed.

Apart from the verses that instruct performing the Pilgrimage, these verses indicate that this time period is very precious and

rewarding. The worship carried out in this time period is very valuable. Fasting during those days has so much reward. There are reports [of ahadith] that if a person fasts on the day of Arafa, the day before the Eid al Adha, he is forgiven his offences of two years-of the past year and the year to come. This is for those who are not performing the Hajj. Those who are performing Hajj will have their duties on the plains of Arafa. However, for those who are at their homes, fasting on the day of Arafa earns a great reward. Islamic books describe how great to enliven the first nine days and ten nights of Dhul-Hijjah.

The first of the spiritual season is the season of the Pilgrimage. These are the months people abandon their anger, grudge and enmity towards one another so that they can perform Hajj in peace. These are the months people put their weapons and arms away; the months they put a side the unresolved matters among them. These are called Haram months. There is no fighting during these months, nor is any prevention of people from performing the Pilgrimage. Even if an Arab saw the murderer of his father during this month, he would turn his head and overlook. It is all because these months are blessed and respectable months.

We all are aware that Hajj is one of the most important worships in Islam. Both Muslims and non-Muslims, friends and foes, acknowledge that Hajj is a great worship logically, socially, physically, and spiritually. They express their admiration saying: "It is a colossal ritual worship; there is nothing like that in other religions." There are some people who admired the wisdom and beauties of such ritual worship and entered the realm of Islam.

Hajj is a magnificent ritual worship. Muslims from all parts of the world gather in one place. They respond to the call of Allah and come to the blessed places in the same attire, the same humbleness, and the same way. It is a magnificent worship, a colossal opportunity. It is a great ritual gathering that results in many good things. It is an enormous task, an event that shakes the world.



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There is another spiritual season in every year: the blessed season of the three months Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan. The Prophet Muhammed SAS has stated in his ahadith and showed with his actions, conduct and worship how great, how blessed, and how rewarding these three months are as a set. Rajab is the month during which the Prophet SAS fasted the most besides Ramadhan. There are great, magnificent rewards for fasting in the month of Rajab.

Here, this evening, we are entering this spiritual season. We have gathered here to learn something, to improve ourselves so that we can be more beneficial to our Muslim brethren. We have come together to figure out what we can do to be more helpful to our brothers and sisters. While we are here, we are observing the first night of the blessed season. This is the first night of Rajab, the first of the three months. When did we enter the month of Rajab? We entered the month of Rajab as we heard the call for the Maghrib

prayer. We are in the very first hours of Rajab.

b. The Specialties of Rajab

Our Prophet SAS stated how precious the month of Rajab is. It is stated in the Qur'an that there are four blessed Haram months, and Rajab is one of them. The haram months start with Dhul-Qadah, and continue as Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram consecutively. These are the months for preparation for Hajj, performance of Hajj, and return from Hajj. Yet the month of Rajab is a separate month--five months after the other Haram months. Let us name the Hegira months: Muharram, Safar, Rabi-al-Awwal, Rabi-al-Akhir, Jumâdal-ûlâ, Jumâdal-Akhir, Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadhan, Shawwal, Dhul-Qâdah, and Dhul-Hijjah. Since Rajab is a separate Haram month, it is also called Rajab-al-ferd (The individual, solitaire Rajab). The respect, reverence, regard and honor as well as abstinence from the quarrels and fights are to be observed during the month of Rajab, too.

This month is also called Rajab-ul-Asabb. It is a month in which the rewards are poured in plenty to the record book for each servant. The rewards flow like running river. In Arabic, *sabbe* means pouring, *munsab*, is the place where the river running from mountains pours, like a waterfall. It comes from the same root word. Rajab-ul-Asabb is the month that the Mercy of Allah showers the servants, His blessings flood all.

There is another attribute for this month: Rajab-ul-Asamm--Rajab the deaf. That means, people overlook the enmities and what they hear about them. If a person is informed that his enemy is passing some place, he will act as though he is deaf. That is why it is called this way. There have been various explanations of this attribute. In brief, it has been stated in various sources that Rajab is an interesting and important month, and we have just entered it.

The scholars have indicated in their books that this month is a month of sowing. In this month one does righteous and rewarding

deeds such as repenting and fasting. Like cultivating the soil and sowing the seed, this month is the time for sowing. Sha'ban is the month of attending the crop. Ramadhan is the month of harvesting the crop. That means, Rajab is the first step to prepare us for Ramadhan.

Ramadhan is the king of eleven months. One does not enter Ramadhan all of a sudden. One organizes his deeds and prepares himself for Ramadhan. For this he has to repent in Rajab which is also known as the "month of repentance." A servant must turn to Allah: "O my Lord! I failed to understand Your orders. I have disobeyed You. I confess my shortcomings and offences. Please forgive me my sins." Uttering these words, one shall abandon the offenses and be an obedient servant in the path of Allah. He shall remember that Rajab is the month of repentance.

The following month, Sha'ban, is the month of attendance of the worship. Ramadhan is the month of reaping the rewards. These words express the connection among these months.

It is related from the Prophet SAS that Rajab is Shahrullah. In Arabic, *shahr* means "month." There is another use of the word *shahr* in Turkish as in Shahr-i Istanbul and Shahr-i Bursa. This word comes from Farisi, and it means "city, locality." Shahr-i Ramadhan means the month of Ramadhan; Shahr-i Rajab, the month of Rajab. Rajab is Shahrullah--the month of Allah. Of course all months, all years, all time, all space, all beings, all humans, everything belong to Allah. While everything belongs to Allah, what would be the meaning of the sentence: "Rajab is the month of Allah"? These words mean the following: "In the month of Rajab, Almighty Allah forgives countless servants who turn to him in repentance."

We have thus entered a month in which Almighty Allah opens the gates of repentance and forgiveness. This is important for me to remind you about this. It is also an important opportunity for you to pull yourselves together, to do a self-accounting, to consider your shortcomings and deeds, to realize our mistakes, and to turn to

Allah to beg for forgiveness. This is what we shall do in this month.

Fasting in the month of Rajab is also very meritorious. You are aware that fasting corrects the self and illuminates the heart. It has two major effects. First, the fasting limits and suppresses the desires and ambitions of the self. Second, it illuminates and strengthens the heart and spirit. When a person fasts, his stomach gets empty, and then his feelings become clearer--I am sure you have experienced it in Ramadhan. With fasting the heart becomes more attentive, compassionate and sensitive. Then the person can contemplate on the deeper meanings of things. He observes good states.

For these reasons, we shall fast in the month of Rajab and do deeds to incur the mercy and forgiveness of Almighty Allah. Remember the verse:

إِنَّمَا يُوفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (الزمر: ١٠)

(*Innemâ yuwaffas sâbirûne ajrahum bighayri hisâb*) There is a multiplier for the rewards of everything, yet "the patient will be given their reward without account or limit" (Zumer 10).

Since fasting requires patience and perseverance, it will be rewarded without limit. That is why we should try to fast in this month as much as possible. Our beloved Prophet SAS would fast many days in Rajab.

Renew your repentance! The repentance does not mean the mere utterance of the words "*Astaghfirullah wa atûbu ileyh*." The meaning of repentance is making a turn towards Almighty Allah. A repenting person abandons his state and deeds that are unpleasant to Allah, and he follows a path that is pleasing to Allah. If he fails to make that turn and if he does not abandon the wrong deeds, then his repentance will be the repentance of liars--as pointed out Hadrat Ali ibn-Abu Talib.

Once our master, Hadrat Ali ibn-Abu Talib entered the mosque

of Kûfa. He heard a person uttering the words: "*Tawba yâ Rabbî! Tawba yâ Rabbî!*" Hadrat ali went to him and said: "O respectable Brother! The repentance by the tongue alone is the repentance of the liars."

The repentance does not concern the tongue only. The repentance is the total turning to Allah with all parts of the body and with all activities in life. We have to be aware of this! We shall not think of the repentance as something we say only. Even a parrot would utter these words, yet it would not know their meanings. I have seen a parrot who says three times the *kalima* "*Lâ ilâha illallah!*"

*Eylesen tûtîye ta'limi eder kelimât,
Sözü insan olur amma, özü insan olmaz!*

Tûtî means parrot. If you teach a parrot how to speak, its words will be human words, yet its essence will not be human. It still will be a bird. It will keep its nature and remain a parrot.

We shall remember that the condition and state of the person who repents shall change to comply with the consent of Allah. We shall appreciate these days as opportunities to turn to the path of Allah, to become a good Muslim, to become a true Muslim, a Muslim like one of the companions of the Prophet SAS. We should interrogate ourselves and take an account of our intentions and deeds. We should turn to Allah and follow the path he prescribed for us.

Our becoming good practicing Muslims is a must not only for us, but for the entire Nation of Prophet Muhammed SAS. It is necessary for Turkey, for the Muslim world, and for the entire world. It is necessary even for the disbelievers! Our practice of Islam will be a good opportunity for the disbelievers to hear about the truth, understand the path Almighty Allah has prescribed for His servants, and accept the path of Allah. That is why we shall consider our correction, improvement, and salvation as an important world-wide phenomenon. With this in mind, we shall

repent truly, with the *tawba-i nasuh*. *Tawba-i nasuh* is the sincere and heartfelt repentance. That is how we should repent!

This is such a month. "Rajab is the month of Allah-- a month in which Almighty Allah accepts the repentances," said the Prophet SAS. He continued: "Sha'ban is my month, and Ramadhan is of my Ummah." That means we shall repent in Rajab and seek forgiveness from Allah. In Sha'ban, we shall try to be the special Ummah of the Prophet SAS. In Ramadhan, we shall try to receive the grace of Allah and rewards from Him for our deeds as the Ummah of the Prophet SAS.

In a hadith, the Prophet SAS said: "Woe to a person who lived in Ramadhan and yet failed to correct himself and benefit from the blessings of Ramadhan. May his nose be rubbed to dirt --may he be humiliated." To benefit from Ramadhan, we shall prepare ourselves for Ramadhan. It is like the preparation of an athlete before the competition. One prepares for the competition and does the exercises regularly will be in the top positions. One who does not prepare will earn nothing in the competition. Just like that, we have to start our preparation process for Ramadhan early--starting this month.

Tonight is also the Friday night. Tomorrow is Friday; the night belongs to the day that comes after the night. When sun goes down, a day ends, and a new day starts. This is how it is Islamically.

When sun is setting, it completes a day. A new day starts with the call for the Maghrib prayer. If we see the new crescent in the sky soon after the sunset, we say: "Here is the sliver of the crescent moon that became visible in the sky where sun has set. That means tomorrow is the first day of Ramadhan." Since it would be the first night of Ramadhan, we offer the Tarawih prayers after Isha and get up for the *suhur* meal to fast during the day. This is all because a new day starts with Maghrib. We see the crescent in the evening, and we start fasting of Ramadhan.

At the end of Ramadhan, we observe the crescent. If we see the



crescent in the sky where the sun has set, we say "It is Eid tomorrow!" That evening we do not offer the Tarawih prayers because Ramadhan would be over with Maghrib, and it would be the first night of the month Shawwal. The next morning we offer the Eid prayer. Keep this in mind, too.

Tonight is the night joining Thursday to Friday: it is the Friday night. Tomorrow is Friday, and we will offer the Friday prayers. The Friday night is a blessed night throughout the year, every week. It is a night full of spiritual lights. It is a precious and meritorious night, so the Prophet SAS described it as "*Al-laylatul gharrâu*" -- a gleaming night that is illuminated with spiritual lights.

We shall be aware of how precious the Friday night is. We must appreciate every night, of course. We have to spend each and every night in accordance to the consent of Allah Almighty, yet Friday night is the most precious of the nights of the week, and Friday is

the most precious of the days of the week.

Tonight is a triple blessed night. First of all, we are in the first day of Rajab--a blessed day and a blessed precious night. It should be enlivened and appreciated. Second, tonight is a Friday night--a blessed night to be appreciated, too. And third, this is the first Friday night of Rajab which is called Raghâ'ib Night--a very precious and blessed night to be enlivened and appreciated. These three nights coincided tonight. This is a night with three folded blessings.

The first Friday night of Rajab is called Raghâ'ib Night. It could be any night from the first to the sixth night. This year it is the first night of Rajab. *Raghâ'ib* is the plural of *raghîba* which is something that is desirable, a reward, a gift or a favor. During this night, Almighty Allah bestows so much rewards, gifts and blessings for His servants. That is why the angels named this special night as *Laylat-ur-Raghâ'ib*. It is the night of grace and blessings that Allah bestows on His servants. That is we are in such a blessed night.

c. Enlivening a Special Night

I have been asked how one should enliven such a precious night and how one should appreciate this special night in prayers. This is in opposition to the spending the night aimlessly in vain. On one hand, wasting the night; on the other hand, enlivening it as much as possible.

How would one enliven a night? Enlivening a night starts with offering the Isha and Fajr prayers in congregation in mosque. This is also enlivening the day, too. Offering the Isha and Fajr prayers in the mosque equals the enlivening of the night and the day. If a person does that, he receives rewards as though he has spent the entire night and day in prayers.

That is why we must pay special attention to offering Isha and

Fajr prayers in mosque. Our beloved Prophet SAS said: "Try your best to attend these two prayers in the mosque." These are the times people have the lack of zeal to offer the prayer in congregation. A person may lack the eagerness to go to the Isha prayer. His nafs and Satan would prevent him from going to the mosque: "You are very tired! Eat your food and offer your prayer at home. Then go to bed right away. Your eyes look extremely sleepy. What would you do going out in the dark?" That is how they try.

As a matter of fact, the person would be a tired as a consequence of the days work--be it a worker or an employer. After eating dinner, the person becomes sleepy and mellow and falls asleep watching television. Sometimes he may even forget turning the television off. The television may be left on until the end of the day's broadcast. The sleep takes over making it difficult to come to the mosque for the Isha prayer.

The Fajr prayer is even harder to attend. It requires for the person to break the sweet sleep and get out of the warm and cozy bed. It requires overcoming his nafs. It requires a significant amount of effort to do so. It is a difficult task for the person to overcome his own desires, to go beyond himself, and to be superior to himself. This is a matter of training. Those who have not received such training will not be victorious over themselves.

I was told a story during the Hajj. While a sheikh effendi was with his disciples at a meeting, a man entered the room and handed a paper to the sheikh effendi. The sheikh effendi read the message on the paper and said: "No, son. What you want is not possible."

The man insisted: "It has to be!"

All the disciples of the sheikh got up as though they were going to silence the man. How dare a stranger comes to their sheikh and insistently demands something despite the negative response from the sheikh? If the sheikh effendi made a gesture, the man would be removed from there at that instant and perhaps be well beaten up.

When the stranger insisted, the sheikh effendi lowered his head

and stayed in that position and contemplated for a while. Then he lifted his head, inhaled, and said gently: "One who has been patient, one who has overcome his nafs, has been the winner."

A person may get angry; everybody may get angry. A person gets angry when he was wronged: "Are you insulting me? Am I your slave?" He says something and get angry. It is not easy to swallow one's own anger and keep control. It is not easy to be gentle and lenient. Being patient is not an easy task. We have to be patient. If one remains patient and in control of his nafs, if one overcomes his desires, then he will be a mature Muslim.

One has to overcome his own desires. What does his nafs want? It wants to stay in bed with a justification: "I went to bed late. I have slept little. Let's continue sleeping and pray later." One objects the nafs and gets up. Then the nafs starts again: "Get up but don't go the mosque. Pray here and get back to the bed before it gets cold. The mosque will be far and it is hard to go there." This is another excuse.

Nullifying the excuses and attending the mosque for the Isha and Fajr prayers are tasks not for the ordinary people. It is for the Muslims who have the control and power over their nafs. Our beloved Prophet SAS stated: "The hypocrites do not have the strength for these two prayers." they cannot wake up or get up. They cannot spare some sleep and leave the comfort behind. They come to neither the Isha prayer nor the Fajr prayer. They have no problem coming to the mosque for other prayers because they are already awake. If other people notice that they are not attending the prayers in the mosque, their status may be shaken in the society.

"The hypocrites do not have the strength for these two prayers," said the Prophet SAS. That is why performing these two prayers in mosque is for the perfect believers and mature Muslims. Keep this in mind and do not neglect offering these prayers in congregation in mosque.

d. Importance of Offering Prayers in Congregation

What is the difference between offering the prayer in the mosque and offering it at home? For men, offering the prayer in congregation in the mosque is 27 times more rewarding than offering it individually at home:¹

صَلَاةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ تَفْضُلُ صَلَاةِ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ دَرَجَةً
(مالك، حم. خ. م. ت. ه. ن. حب. عن ابن عمر)

RE. 309/9 (*Salâtul jamâati tafdilul salâtel fardi biseb'in wa 'ishrine darajah*) This is an authentic hadith: "Congregational prayer is 27 times more rewarding over the individual prayer." This is for the local mosque. If the prayer is performed at a large mosque where Friday prayer is held, the reward is 50 times more than the individual prayer.

Dear Brothers and Sisters. Let me remind you something else. The congregation is so important that the Prophet SAS stated the following: ki:²

مَا مِنْ خَمْسَةِ آيَاتٍ، لَا يُؤَذَّنُ فِيهِمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ، وَتَقَامُ فِيهِمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ؛
إِلَّا اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ (حم. طب. عن أبي الدرداء)

¹ Buhari, *Sahih*, c.III, s.34, no:609; Tirmizi, *Sünen*, c.I, s.365, no:199; Nesei, *Sünen*, c.III, s.347, no:828; İbn-i Mace, *Sünen*, c.III, s.9, no:781; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.65, no:5332; İmam Malik, *Muwatta'*, c.II, s.177, no:425; İbn-i Hibban, *Sahih*, c.V, s.401, no:2052; Beyhaki, *Sünenü'l-Kübra*, c.III, s.59, no:4734; Begavi, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.II, s.62; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

² Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.VI, s.445, no:27553; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.LIX, s.340, Ebü'd-Derdâ RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VII, s.978, no:20372; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIX, s.153, no:20443.



RE. 381/5 "If there are five Muslim houses in a locality, it is an obligation for them to call the prayer regularly and establish the congregational prayers." The measure is five houses. If there are five Muslim houses in the village, in the plains, in the city, in any locality, Muslims must call Adhan and establish the congregational prayers. "If they do not call Adhan and establish the congregational prayers, (*istahwedhe alayhimush-shaytân*) Satan dominates them." They would enter the dominion of Satan. When Satan takes over a home, then there would be no peace there. They will be manipulated by Satan.

Satan is a skilful creature. It is an expert in deceiving people. He has quite an experience accumulated since the time of Adam AS. When a person falls to the trap of Satan, Satan will ruin his life for him. What is solution for this terrible condition? Adhan should be called and the congregational prayers should be established so that Satan could not get a foot hole or dominate. The prayer is so important; the congregation is so important,

too. Wherever the Adhan is not called and the congregational prayers are not established, Satan dominates that locality.

Once we visited a friend in his village which is located on the Bolu Mountains in Turkey. At the friend's house, we waited for the Adhan. Its time had passed yet there was no call for the prayer. We asked why there is no Adhan. The imam of the mosque had retired, and no imam was appointed to replace him. Because of that, there had been no imam and no Adhan in the village. I told then that was not good. There is a mosque, it has a minaret, and there are people in the village. No prayers are performed in the mosque--people would pray at home. The congregational prayers had not been observed for so long. Isn't there a person who would call Adhan? He does not have to have excellent voice for the call, for it is not a competition. There is no such condition for the call. Get up and with the loudest voice you have, start the call with all of your might. Say "Allahu akbar!" sincerely from the bottom of your heart, and be heard in all directions.

I told the host of the house there: "You are going to call the Adhan and lead the prayers. You are not going to deprive this village from the sound of the Adhan. Let's go to the mosque!" We went to the mosque. A friend of ours walked up to the minaret and called Adhan. Then we offered the prayers in the mosque. We were told later that some women in the village cried because they were happy to hear the Adhan in the village again.

Dear Brothers and sisters! These are important things! You may not appreciate its significance, or some may not appreciate it, yet it is very important. Offering the Isha and Fajr prayers in congregation in Mosque is a way towards enlivening a night.

The second way towards enlivening a night is going to bed after having fresh wudhu and offering two/four units of prayers. In a hadith the Prophet SAS stated: "An angel between the skin and the underclothing of that person prays: 'My Lord! This servant of Yours went to bed in a state of purity with wudhu; forgive him his

shortcomings!" That is what the Prophet SAS stated. We would not know it or see it, yet that is the statement of the Prophet SAS.

Then, "The guardian angels, *kirâmen kâtibîn* angels, register the person as one who prayed throughout the night till the morning. The rewards will be registered in his record book till the morning for going to bed with wudhu." This is also something the Prophet SAS informed us about. Then, "The angels in heaven see the spiritual light of the person and understand that the person went to bed with wudhu. They gather around the person in large numbers forming a crowd." The Prophet SAS indicated that there will be so many angels around the person for his going to bed with wudhu. For this reason, making a fresh wudhu and offering two or four units of prayer before going to bed is a way of enlivening a night.

Yet another way of enlivening a night is the classical way: having slept for some time, getting up, making wudhu and offering night vigil prayers. The Prophet SAS stated:³

رَكَعَتَانِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا

(*Rak'atâni mina'l-layl*) "Two units of the night prayer, (*khayrun minad dunyâ wa mâ fihâ*) is better than this world and everything in it." Who is said this? Our beloved Prophet, Muhammad the Chosen SAS stated this. *Asdaqul qàilîn*, the most truthful of speakers, the most beloved of Allah, Muhammad the Chosen, SAS stated this. These are not the words of an ordinary person. What did he state? He said, "Better than everything in the world."

Dear Brothers and Sisters. What would you do if you were given this great Alâaddin Hotel of Alanya? Imagine that a billionaire

³ Lafız farkıyla: Deylemi, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.III, s.455, no:5404; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummal, c.VII, s.785, no:21405; *Camiü'l-Ehadis*, c.XIII, s.145, no:12782.

generous rich man got up and said: "I like you. I have so much money but no children. I bought this Alâaddin Hotel, and I am giving it to you." What would you do? A person may lose his mind in such a situation because of excessive happiness.

Dear brothers and Sisters! Don't we believe in what the Prophet SAS said? We need to comprehend the meaning the words carry. "Better than this world and everything in it!" said the Prophet SAS. Why is it so? It is because the night vigil prayer is "a *shammatur min ma'rifetullah*--a sniff of the knowledge of Allah," and it is very important. You are going to get up at night and make wudhu. There would be nobody but you in your room. There is no possibility of show-off or fame. You turn to your Lord, the Lord of the universe. *Alhamdu lillahi rabbil âlemîn*--praise is due to the Lord of universe. What a great sentence! You are in the presence of the owner, the creator of the universe, and you say, "Praise is due to You O my Lord!" You bow down and prostrate before Him. You enjoy the taste of the worship as though you sip from an elixir.

If one were to come in the room and looked at you, you would feel embarrassed and uncomfortable. You would not want anybody see you; you would want not to offer the night vigil prayer in the presence of another person. Yet you are alone at night, nobody is watching you. You are on your prayer rug, and you shed tears. The place you put your head in prostration gets wet from the tears. You turn to Allah with words: "O my Lord, forgive me, have mercy on me!" These feelings are very precious. They could make a person one of *awliyâ*. These feelings make a person the most valuable individual in the world. These feelings make a person the most beneficial to mankind with his services. One can enjoy these feeling when he gets up for the night vigil prayer.

Our beloved Prophet ASA was ordered in Surah Muzzammil:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَزْمُولُ . قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا . نَصْفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا

أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا (المزمل: ١-٤)

(*Yâ ayyuhel muzzammil. Qumil layla illâ qalilâ. Nisfahû awinqus minhu qalilâ. Aw zid 'aleyhi wa rattilil qur'âna tertîlâ.*) [O you who wraps himself in clothing. Arise to pray the night, except for a little--half of it--or subtract from it a little, or add to it, and recite the Qur'an with measured recitation.] (Qur'an 73:1-4)

The verses of the Qur'an that were revealed first were the first five verses of Surah 'Alaq. The second group of verses that were revealed was in the beginning of Surah Muddeththir or in the beginning of Surah Muzzammil. Either case, the verses above were revealed to the Prophet in the second or third revelation. In other words, in the third revelation of the verses, the Prophet was instructed to get up in the middle of the night.

The greatness and beauty of the nights... The new generations who live among the piles of concrete building are unaware of it. How beautiful is the grandeur of the nights! How spiritual is the time of the nights!

Our beloved Prophet SAS stated: "At night the gates of heavens will be opened." Are the gates of heavens? Yes there are. During the Night Journey (Isra) and Ascension (Miraj) of the Prophet SAS, they arrived in Jerusalem first. Then the Prophet and the archangel Gabriel AS started the ascension from Jerusalem. When they arrived at the first heaven, an angel stopped them. What is the first heaven?

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ (الملك: ٥)

(*Wa laqad zayyannas samâ-ad dunyâ bimesâbiha*) "We have certainly beautified the nearest heaven with lamps [i.e., stars]" (Qur'an 67:5) says Almighty Allah. The heaven that has the stars is the first heaven. What is in the other heavens is unknown to us. Almighty Allah knows what is beyond the heaven that has the stars.

The guard at the gate of the first heaven stopped the Prophet and Gabriel AS. Gabriel AS is one of the four major angels who brought the revelation to the Prophet AS. The guard angel asked Gabriel AS: "*Man anta*--who are you?"

In Arabic *man* means "who."

"*Ana Jibril!*--I am Gabriel!"

He introduced himself. In the Islamic code of manners, there is the introduction, the statement of the name. You hear a door is knocked, so you inquire: "Who is it?" One who knocks at the door responding: "Me!" Oh no! *Fa subhanallah!* If everybody is to respond as "Me," how would you identify the person? You must state your name instead of saying "Me!" The archangel said, "I am Gabriel!" Here is a lesson in proper conduct.

Here on earth, after receiving the answer "Me!" you inquire: "Who are you?"

"It is me; open the door!"

You need to identify the person at the door. You could not open the door to everybody. We are warned by the police department, "Do not open the door for everybody; they would go in and get your gold bracelets and jewelry." The person at the door could stick in his foot through the opening of the door and pull a knife. You would not know if it is a good person or a trouble maker at the door. The proper conduct would be stating the name at the door.

What happened then? The guard angel at the gate of the first heaven asked: "*Wa men ma'aka*--and who is with you?"

"Muhammad!" Muhammed the Chosen SAS' the messenger of Allah.

"Has he been permitted to go beyond this gate?"

"Yes he has."

"Then, he may pass."

Dear Brothers and Sisters! There are such things in heavens. There are guards who stop Gabriel and ask questions. There are gates of heavens. We do not see or know how they are, yet there are those who see them and understand them. Those who

had seen them informed us that the gates of the heavens will be open during the night. It is such a special treatment: "Here, please, this way!" It is a free pass.

There is the second major event at night that the Prophet SAS informed us. Almighty Allah descends to the lowest heaven. That is, He gets closer to his servants. Then He calls His servants: "Who wants to be forgiven? Ask Me My forgiveness, I will grant it. Who has a request from Me? Ask Me, and I will grant it. Who wants the cure for his illness? Ask Me, and I will grant it. Does anybody want anything? Ask me I will grant it!" The call continues until dawn:

هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ (القدر: ٥)

(*Hiya hattâ matlai'l-fajr*) "Until the emergence of dawn" (Qur'an 97:5). The night ends with the emergence of the dawn. It is similar for the Night of Power, too:

تَنْزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ . سَلَامٌ

هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ (القدر: ٤-٥)

(*Tanzalul malâ-ikati war-rûhu fihâ bi-idhni rabbihim min kulli amrin*) "The angels and the Spirit [i.e., Gabriel] descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter. (*Salâmun hiya hattâ matla'il fajr*) Peace it is until the emergence of dawn." (Qur'an 97:4-5). the dissension of the angels is until the emergence of dawn, the beginning of the Fajr time.

If we do not see it, if we are not familiar with the sky and the night, we look at the time of dawn (*imsak, fajr*) on the calendar. We get up before the time of dawn, make wudhu, and offer prayer. Then we ask from Almighty Allah: "My Lord, I want Your forgiveness. My Lord, I am the needy. May Lord, I have a request from You!"

That is the proper time to ask. It is the time that Almighty Allah says he will grant the requests. Worship at that time of the night is the practice of the prophets, the awliya, and the righteous servants of Allah. One must experience the pleasure of being with Almighty Allah. One should not run away from solitude.

Man takes his jacket and tells his wife: "I will be away for a while."

"Where are you going?"

"To the coffee house."

"Why?"

"I am so bored of solitude."

One should love solitude. One should enjoy solitude and say: "O Lord! Praise to Allah there is nobody here. This is a good time for me to be with my Lord and contemplate." One should take pleasure from solitude. Solitude is the nutrition for the great spirits. Solitude is an important phenomenon. Making connection with Almighty Allah while in solitude is very important deed. That could happen at night in an excellent way.

For this reason, one way of enlivening a night is getting up at night, making wudhu, and offering night vigil prayers--two units, four units, six units, eight units, ten units--as much as Almighty Allah wills. It is a way of enlivening the night because *salâh* is one of the best forms of worship. It is a complex and complete form of worship. The Prophet SAS stated:⁴

⁴ Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VII, s.61, no:3939; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.128, no:12315; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.II, s.174, no:2676; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.V, s.241, no:5203; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.VI, s.199, no:3482; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VII, s.78, no:13232; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.V, s.280, no:8887; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabakâtü'l-Kübrâ*, c.I, s.398; Hatib-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.XII, s.371, no:6812; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.303; İbn-i Hibbân, *Mecrûhîn*, c.III, s.135, no:1234; Ukaylî, *Duafâ*, c.II, s.160, no:666; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.LX, s.454; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.143, no:2733; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VII, s.449, no:18912, 18913; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.73, no:1089; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.IX, s.496, no:8916.

قَرَّةٌ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ

(*Qurrati 'aynî fis salâh*) "Happiness of my eye is in the prayer." That means, "I am in a state of peace and happiness when I perform the formal prayer." While the Prophet enjoys the prayer this much, one should check himself if he does not feel anything while he performs the *salâh*. He should question himself: "Why am I not enjoying the prayer?" He should ponder about the reasons and solutions. He should figure out why he is so insensitive, why he is so ignorant, and why he is still like a beginner.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! We ought to enjoy solitude [at night].

Also, reading Qur'an is also very meritorious. The new generations have failed to make a good connection with the Qur'an. They learn English, German, French; they think one foreign language is not enough. They learn the western languages, yet they have no desire for learning Arabic and studying Qur'an. Those who have the interest and who learn the Qur'an are not well received: "Come here, Hafiz. Sit down and recite! Here, take the money in this envelope. You may leave now."

Perhaps, the person gets angry when he is told, "Hafiz, come here!" That is interpreted as a form of insult. How was it in the past? A hafiz, one who has the entire Qur'an in his memory, used to be well respected in the past. Now memorization is downgraded and posed as something undesirable. The honor of being hafiz and the appreciation for it have been forgotten.

As a matter of fact, the Qur'an is the Word of Allah: one earns reward by just looking at it. When one understands its meaning and practices it in his life, he will earn much more rewards. Reading Qur'an earns rewards for a person. Some have problems with vision, some do not know how to read Arabic, some do not understand Arabic, thus even if they read it, they do not enjoy it because they would not know the meaning.

Another way of enlivening a night is doing dhikr. Dhikr is repeating certain blessed words again and again. What are those blessed words? For instance, "*Lâ ilâha illallah*" is a blessed statement. It can lead a person to Paradise. Likewise, "*Allahumma salli 'alâ sayyidinâ muhammadin wa 'alâ âli sayyidinâ muhammad*" [O Allah! Bless our master Muhammad and the family of our master Muhammad] is a very precious dhikr. When a person says these words, the angels will inform the Prophet SAS spiritually. Another example is "*Astaghfirullah*" which means the person is asking Allah for forgiveness. There are other dhikr words and statements such as "*Subhânallah*" [Allah is glorified], "*Alhamdulillah*" [praise is due to Allah], "*Allahu akbar*" [Allah is the greatest], and "*Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illâ billâhil 'aliyyil azîm*" [There is no power or force except with Allah Who is the highest and the most magnificent]. These are blessed words and clauses. Doing dhikr with them is meritorious.

Saying the greatest name of Almighty Allah or any of the beautiful names of Allah is also dhikr. One could repeatedly say "Allah... Allah... Allah..." or "Yâ Qayyûm... Yâ Qayyûm... Yâ Qayyûm..." Likewise, "Yâ Wadûd... Yâ Wadûd... Yâ Wadûd..." and "Ya Hû..." constitute dhikr. All of these are dhikr, and dhikr is a way of enlivening a night.

Dhikr also means "remembrance." If a person does the dhikr of Allah, Almighty Allah does the dhikr of the person:

فَاذْكُرُونِي اذْكُرْكُمْ (البقرة: ١٥٢)

(*Fadhkurûnî adhkurkum*) "So remember me; I will remember you" says Almighty Allah (Qur'an 2:152). When you say "Allah," Almighty Allah says your name, too. If a servant says "Allah" by himself, Allah says his name by Himself. If a person does the dhikr of Allah in a group of people, Almighty Allah does the dhikr of the person in a better group. This the servant gets closer to Allah, and

Allah loves the servant. Then the love of Allah is formed in the heart of the servant eventually. That is why dhikr is one of the best ways of worship, and a night could be enlivened with dhikr.

There are also some formal prayers (*salâh*) that the Prophet SAS performed. One such prayer is *salât-ul-tasbih*. In this prayer, one says these words 300 times: "*Subhânallâhi wal hamdu lillâhi wa lâ ilâha illallahu wallâhu akbar*" [Glory be to Allah, and Praise be to Allah, and there is no deity but Allah, and Allah is the greatest]. At every 10th or 15th of this dhikr, "*Wa lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illâ billâhil 'aliyyil azîm*" [There is no power or force except with Allah Who is the highest and the most magnificent] dhikr is added. It is a four units of prayer. [The 300 dhikr is distributed to the each part of each unit of the prayer]. This prayer may be performed individually or in congregation. It is stated in some authentic ahadith of the Prophet SAS. It has lots of rewards. One could enliven a night with such prayers.

May Almighty Allah be pleased with you all.

November 23, 1995
Raghâib Night - Alanya, Turkey

02. THE MONTH OF RAJAB

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad Cosan

As-salamu alaikum wa rahmatu'llàhi wa barakâtuh!

May peace, mercy and abundance of Allah be with you.

Dear audience of AKRA: May your Friday be blessed!

In fact, I should say, "May your month of Rajab be blessed, too!" This Friday is also the first day of Rajab, the first month of the blessed three months season. We have just stepped into a beautiful spiritual season. I pray that this season of three months is blissful and beneficial for you.

As you now, many blessed months, Ramadhans, days and nights come and go. What matters is how much a person benefits from them. If the person does not open his heart to the light and blessings of these special times, he will be deprived of the good things. He comes as deprived and leaves as deprived from this life. While everybody else enjoys the abundance of these special days, he will get nothing. May Almighty Allah place us among those who appreciate such opportunities and those who earn great rewards.

a. The Prayer of the Prophet SAS for Rajab

I would like to begin with a hadith of our beloved Prophet SAS. The hadith is reported by Anas RA and recorded in the collection of Ibn-i Asâkir and other sources:⁵

⁵ Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.259, no:2346; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.375, no:3815; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.IV, s.189, no:3939; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.290, no:6494; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.I, s.485, no:1985; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VI, s.269; İbn-i Asâkir, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.161, no:309; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XXXX, s.57, no:4657; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VII, s.138, no:18049; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.186, no:554; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XXXIII, s.24, no:35704.

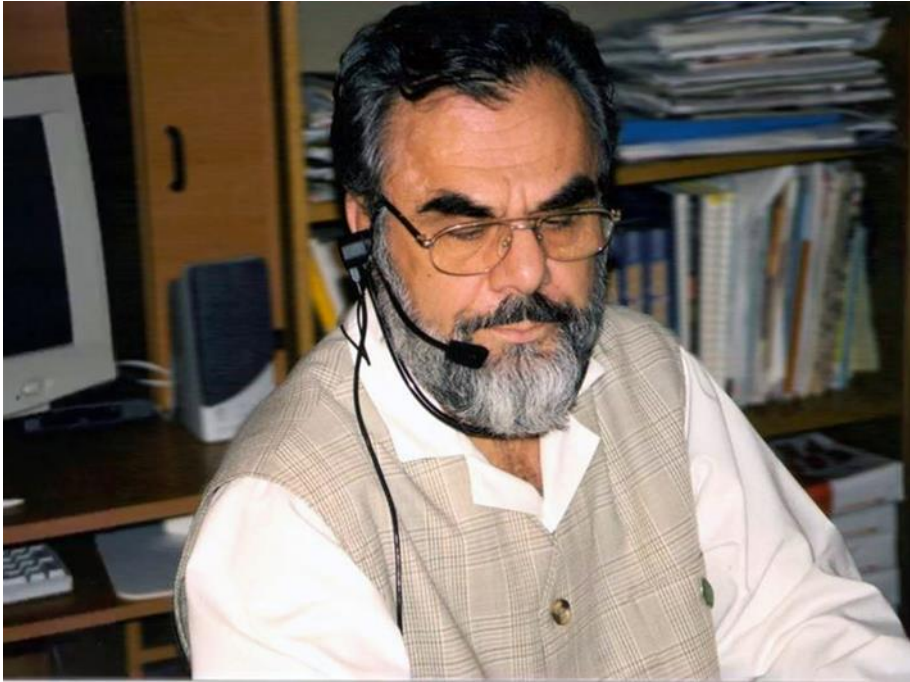
كَانَ إِذَا دَخَلَ رَجَبٌ، قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِي رَجَبٍ وَشَعْبَانَ،
 وَبَلَّغْنَا رَمَضَانَ. وَكَانَ إِذَا كَانَتْ لَيْلَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ، قَالَ: هَذِهِ لَيْلَةُ
 الْغُرَاءِ، وَيَوْمَ أَزْهَرَ (هب. وابن عساكر عن أنس)

RE. 532/10 (*Kâna idhâ dakhala rajab, qâl*) "When the month of Rajab arrived, the prophet used to pray: (*Allâhumma bârik lenâ fî rajaba wa sha'bân wa ballighnâ ramadhân!*) 'O Allah! Make us those who are aware of the blessings and abundance of the months Rajab and Sha'bân and who benefit from them. Make us live through such blessings and enter into Ramadhan.'"

(*Wa kâna idhâ kânat laylatu'l-jumu'ati qâl*) When it was the Friday night, he would say: (*Hadhihi laylatu'l-gharrâu*) "This is such a blissful, glistening, happy spiritual night, (*wa yawmun azhar*) and such a happy and bright day."

Yes now we are in the daytime of Friday. It is a bright blessed, glistening, and spiritually beautiful day. May Almighty Allah have us appreciate this precious day.

We infer from this hadith that the Prophet SAS used to long for Ramadhan from the beginning of Rajab. He would seek the month of Ramadhan and wish that he arrived in Ramadhan. In his prayers he would say, "Bless Rajab and Sha'ban and take us to Ramadhan." As you know, Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadhan are the spiritual season of the three months. Our forefathers named it as "Three Months." May Allah be pleased with them. They have read the books and sources on Islam, and they have tried to do everything in the best way possible. They tried to carry out the orders of Allah and thus earn his consent. May their resting place be illuminated in peace, let their graves be full of light. May their spirits be happy: their ranks in paradise, high.



There are great opportunities, beautiful and special nights in the three months season. The first of the special nights is the Raghâib Night. When is the time for the Raghâib Night? Which day of Rajab is it? It is not a fixed date in Rajab: It is the first Friday night of Rajab--the night joining the first Thursday to Friday. It is a blessed night that must be desired and spent in prayers. We had it last night this year.

There is also the Mi'raj (Ascension) Night in Rajab--the night joining the 26th of Rajab to 27th of Rajab. It is a beautiful blessed night in which our beloved Prophet SAS ascended to heavens (Mi'raj). Then there comes the fifteenth night of Sha'bân, the Bara'ah Night. It is a night in which the events and destinies of the coming year are determined. It is an important night and one should be prepared for that night. We should seek refuge with Allah and ask Him to place us among the righteous and happy ones,

not among the rebellious ones. We should be prepared accordingly.

b. Rajab is the Month of Repentance

Rajab is the month of *tawba*. *Tawba* means turning to Allah:⁶

مَنْ تَابَ إِلَى اللَّهِ، تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ

(*Wa man tâba ilallâhi tâballâhu aleyhi*) "If a servant turns to Allah, Allah turns to him." This is the actual meaning of *tawba*. That is, *tawba* means abandoning the false paths, the deeds of the ignorance and disobedience, the sinful actions, prohibitions, shortcomings and unawareness and turning to a lifestyle that is favorable to Allah. The month of Rajab is a great opportunity for this turning.

Let us read another hadith from the book *Ramûzu'l-Ahadith* which is compiled by our great master Ahmed Ziyauddin Gumushkhanawi--may his abode be Paradise:

This hadith was reported by Sa'id ibn-i Abî Râshid and included in the collections of Tabarânî. The Prophet SAS said:⁷

رَجَبُ شَهْرٍ عَظِيمٍ، يُضَاعَفُ فِيهِ الْحَسَنَاتِ؛ فَمَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا مِنْ
رَجَبٍ فَكَأَنَّمَا صَامَ سَنَةً، وَمَنْ صَامَ مِنْهُ سَبْعَةَ أَيَّامٍ غَلَقَتْ عَنْهُ أَبْوَابُ
جَهَنَّمَ، وَمَنْ صَامَ مِنْهُ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ فَتَحَتْ لَهُ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ،

⁶ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.IV, s.1774, no:4473; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.IV, s.2129, *Tevbe* 49/10, no:2770; Taberânî, *Mu'cemû'l-Kebîr*, c.XXIII, s.69, no:139; Hz. Aişe RA'dan.

Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.4, s.287, no:7663; sahabeden bir şahistan.

⁷ Taberânî, *Mu'cemû'l-Kebîr*, c.VI, s.69, no:5538; Sa'id ibn-i Râşid RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.12, s.558, no:35168; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.110, no:12683.

وَمِنْ صَامٍ مِنْهُ عَشْرَةَ أَيَّامٍ لَمْ يَسْأَلِ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ ، وَمِنْ صَامٍ
 مِنْهُ خَمْسَةَ عَشَرَ يَوْمًا نَادَى مُنَادٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ : قَدْ غَفِرَ لَكَ مَا مَضَى
 فَاسْتَأْنَفِ الْعَمَلَ ، وَمِنْ زَادَ زَادَهُ اللَّهُ . وَفِي رَجَبٍ حَمَلَ اللَّهُ نُوحًا فِي
 السَّفِينَةِ فَصَامَ رَجَبٌ ، وَأَمْرٌ مِنْ مَعَهُ أَنْ يَصُومُوا . فَجَرَتْ بِهِمْ
 السَّفِينَةُ سِتَّةَ أَشْهُرٍ آخِرَ ذَلِكَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءِ أَهْبَطَ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ فَصَامَ
 نُوحٌ وَمِنْ مَعَهُ وَالْوَحُوشِ شَكَرَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ . وَفِي يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءِ فَلَقَى
 اللَّهُ الْبَحْرَ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ، وَفِي يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءِ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى آدَمَ ، وَعَلَى
 مَدِينَةِ يُونُسَ ، وَفِيهِ وُلِدَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ (طَب. عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي رَاشِدٍ)

RE. 288/13 (*Rajabu shahrin azîm*) "Rajab is a magnificent, important month. It is a respected, great month. (*Yudàifu'llàhu fîhi'l-hasanât*) Almighty Allah rewards the deeds that are done in this month in many folds." In comparison to the reward for a deed that is done in other months, there will be a lot more rewards for the same deed when it is carried out in Rajab.

The first thing we plan to do in Rajab is repentance and turning to Allah (*tawba*). With a sincere heart, we repent and try to be one of the beloved servants of Allah. We try to live like the beloved servants of Allah, improve our disposition and direction, and walk in the path of Allah with determination and perseverance.

Then the Prophet SAS used to fast many days in Rajab. He praised and encouraged fasting in Rajab. As you know, fasting has an important effect in shaping the will power of a person. The human being is a living creature which is equipped with a desire for

food. All living beings have this desire. The desire for food and nutrition is a strong desire. In Islam, this desire for food is kept under control, it is prevented while fasting. We prevent ourselves from eating and drinking while fasting despite the fact that eating is our right and we have the desire to eat and drink. We also prevent ourselves from some other desires while we fast.

This requires some effort, yet it teaches a person how to overcome his own desires. It teaches the person self control. That is why fasting is much recommended in Rajab, the month of seeking forgiveness and turning to Allah. How is the ability of self control achieved? By abstaining from eating food, a person strengthens his will power and dominate over the desires of his nafs. He will learn how to dominate the desires of his nafs. Thus his *tawba* will be based on strong foundations. He will maintain his *tawba* and stay in the path of Allah consistently.

(*Fa man sàma yawman min rajabin*) "One who fasts a day from the month of Rajab, (*faka-annamâ sàma sanatan*) earns rewards as though he has fasted a whole year," says the Prophet SAS in the hadith. Our Lord is the Most Gracious of the gracious, the Most Generous of the generous, so He grants rewards in many folds for our deeds which are small in quantity. For instance, if a person enlivens a Night of Power, he will be given the rewards as though he had worshipped one thousand months. Here if a person fasts one day in Rajab, he will be given rewards as though he had fasted an entire year.

(*Wa man sàma minhu seb'ata ayyâmin ghullikat 'anhu abwâbu jahannam*) "If one fasts seven days of Rajab, the gates of Hell are closed for him." As you know, it was reported that there are seven levels of hell, and it has seven gates. These seven gates will be closed for that person. That means the person will not enter the hellfire.

(*Wa man sàma minhu themâniyata ayyâmin futihat lahû themâniyatu abwâbi'l-jannah*) "If one fasts eight days of Rajab, eight gates of Paradise are opened for him." There are eight gates

of Paradise. In the continuation of the hadith it is stated: "If one fasts ten days in Rajab, he will be granted whatever he wants. If one fasts fifteen days in Rajab, a caller from the heavens will say, 'Your offences has been wiped off; start you deeds anew.' If a person fasts more days in Rajab, Almighty Allah will grant him more rewards. Almighty Allah asked Prophet Noah to be on board of the ark, and he fasted the month of Rajab aboard. He asked those on board to fast too.

We ought to tell the story of Prophet Noah AS. While he lived in what is Iraq today, Almighty Allah ordered him to build an ark. As he started the construction, his people mocked at him: "There is no water here, why do you build a ship?"

Almighty Allah is the most gracious, he has infinite knowledge. And the Prophets of Allah do not do anything wrong; they obey the order of Allah. Prophet Noah AS built the ark and the torrential rains started. Prophet Noah took the believers to the ark, and they all were saved--along with the animals aboard—from the flood. According to the hadith, Prophet Noah AS boarded the ark in Rajab. [The ark sailed for six months till the day of Ashura. The ark landed on Mount Judi. On that day, all aboard were fasting in praise of Allah. Almighty Allah split the sea for the Children of Israel on the day of Ashura. Almighty Allah accepted the repentance of Prophet Adam AS and people of Prophet Jonah AS on the day of Ashura. Prophet Abraham AS was born on the day of Ashura.]

c. Rajab is the Month of Allah

With another hadith, I would like to complete my talk about the month of Rajab. According to Hasan of Basra, the Prophet SAS said:⁸

⁸ Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.275, no:3276; *İbn-i Asâkir*, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.114, no:210; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.374, no:3813; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.



Ninova, Musul, IRAK

رَجَبُ شَهْرِ اللَّهِ ، وَشَعْبَانُ شَهْرِي ، وَرَمَضَانُ شَهْرِ أُمَّتِي
 (أبو الفتح في أماليه عن الحسن مرسلًا)

RE. 289/2 (*Rajabu shahru'llah*) "Rajab is the month of Allah. (*Wa sha'bânu shahrî*) And Sha'bân is my month. (*Wa ramadhânu shahri ummatî*) And Ramadhan is the month of my Ummah." Rajab is the month of Allah because Almighty Allah forgives his servants in this month. Rajab is the month of repentance and turning to Allah for the servants. Almighty Allah accepts the repentance of His servants in Rajab. He forgives them their sins. Their book of record is cleared off the offences.

Sha'ban is the month the Prophet claims to be his own. We, as

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XII, s.556, no:35164; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.341, no:1358; *Câmiu'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.109, no:12682.

the Ummah of the Prophet SAS, must pay extra attention to follow his path and say *salat-u selâm* for him during the month of Sha'ban. We should try our best to spend the month with prayers and worship.

Ramadhan is our month, the month of the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad SAS. We must push our efforts to the limit in this month and harvest the rewards for the spiritual activities and rewards that have been accumulating since the beginning of Rajab. In certain books, it is stated that Rajab is the month of sowing, Sha'ban is the month of caring, and Ramadhan is the month of harvesting.

By looking at all these reports, we come to a conclusion. This three-month period is a special time for us to abandon the wrong deeds and turning to Allah in repentance, to follow the path Almighty Allah has ordered for us, to start living as a good Muslim, to train our self by fasting, to strengthen our will power, to cleanse ourselves physically and spiritually, to earn rewards, and to live a good life. In Ramadhan we increase our zeal and harvest the rewards. Then we reach the Eid at the end of Ramadhan in this life and in the hereafter, too. This time period is a special opportunity and means granted for the servants.

d. Three People to be Humiliated

Once the Prophet SAS said "Amen!" three times when he stepped on the pulpit to deliver a sermon. Afterwards he was asked why he said "Amen!" three times. The Prophet SAS responded: "Gabriel AS made three duas, and I said 'Amen' for them. First, the angel said, 'Woe to a child who had his parents or only one of them and he failed to earn the paradise by not serving them well and not getting their blessings. May his nose be rubbed to dirt in humiliation.' I responded saying 'Amen!'"

This means a person must serve his parents, kiss their hands in respect, keep them happy and earn their blessings. This will earn the person admittance to paradise. He will earn the consent of

Allah by earning the blessings of his parents.

"Gabriel AS said the second prayer: 'Woe to the person who fails to say *salat-u selâm* on the Prophet when his name is mentioned. May his nose be rubbed to dirt in humiliation.' I said 'Amen!' to that too."

This means we ought to say "*Sallàhu 'alayhi wa sallam*" or "*'Alayhi's-salâtu wa's-salâm*" or another one of the *salât-u salâm* when we hear the name of the Prophet SAS. Let me remind you also that we should say *salât-u salâm* in plenty on Fridays. That is the recommendation of the Prophet SAS. Remember, today is the Friday, the first Friday of Rajab. You should say one hundred times or one thousand time *salât-u salâm* on the Prophet SAS.

"Gabriel AS said the third dua: 'Woe to the person who reached the month of Ramadhan yet failed to benefit the spirituality and blessings of Ramadhan thus failed to be forgiven by Almighty Allah. May his nose be rubbed to dirt in humiliation.' I said 'Amen!' to that, too."

Yes dear respected Brothers and sister! We have entered the month of Rajab; it is the first day of it today. Sha'ban will arrive and special nights will come too. We are going to do our servitude with prayers and enter the month of Ramadhan. We are going to offer our Tarawih prayers with *salât-u salâms* to our beloved Prophet SAS. Many brothers will retreat to the mosques for *i'tikaf* for the last ten days of Ramadhan. With all the righteous deeds and prayers throughout these three months, we ought to become a servant who has been forgiven his offences and shortcomings. We should aspire to be like that on the day of Eid with all of our zeal and determination.

We ought to complete this three-month course of spiritual training and get our certificate of freedom from the hellfire, and the certificate of admission to paradise. We must try for that. Otherwise, we may be subjected to the condemnation of Gabriel AS. The prophet said "amen!" to that. It is a serious matter. One who fails to benefit from Ramdhan is subjected to the condemnation: "Woe to the person who fails to benefit from the

blessings of Ramadhan. May his nose be rubbed to dirt in humiliation."

If a person had never lifted a finger to do good deeds and never worshipped in Ramadhan, he will be deprived of the blessings. He will be a loser.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! May Almighty Allah keep us on his path establishing the remembrance of his name. We must offer our servitude to Allah from the bottom of our hearts, with love and eagerness. We need it. We need the prayers, the servitude, and the mercy of Allah. We need the grace of Allah. We ought to try and work sincerely.

Servitude to Allah is beautiful. An obedient and dutiful servant of Allah would be showered with blessings and abundance.

This is the first Friday of a blessed month. Almighty Allah has hidden a precious time, in the blessed hours of Friday. Just like the Night of Power being hidden in Ramadhan. If the servants knew when it is, then they would relax and try only at that specific time or night. At the precious time of the Friday, the prayers are answered. That is why we ask Almighty Allah to coincide the time of our prayers with that special hidden time of Friday. May he receive our prayers with the best of receptions. May He grant us and our beloved ones happiness in this life and in the hereafter.

Dear audience of AKRA! I congratulate you for the arrival of the month Rajab. May the month of Sha'ban be blessed and fruitful for you. May Allah take you to Ramadhan in health and happiness. May he make His beloved servants whom He is pleased with. May he honor you with His beauty in His Paradise.

As-salamu alaikum wa rahmatu'llàhi wa barakâtuh! May peace, mercy and abundance of Allah be with you.

November 24, 1995

Friday Discourse -- AKRA

03.THE MONTH OF SHA'BAN

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

We are in the month of Sha'ban, one of the "three blessed months" of the year; Ramadhan is around the corner. We all are delighted to prepare for the Night of *Baraat* and for the king of the months, Ramadhan.

Sha'ban was the month of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh); he would spend the nights with prayers and the days with fasting often in this month. When asked by A'isha, the "mother of the believers," he replied, "O A'isha! This is the month in which the Angel of Death is given the names of people who are going to die this year. I love to have my name given while I fast."

The companions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) -- may Allah be pleased with them -- and the *awliyaullah* (close friends of Allah) who followed the tradition of the Prophet, would fast often and spend many hours with reciting Qur'an and *salawaat* in this month. The rich would pay their zakaat in this month so that the poor would gain strength for fasting in Ramadhan. Some governors would declare amnesty to the prisoners, and the merchants pay their creditors and close their accounts. Most of them would perform *ghusl* and go into *i'tikaf* by retreating into a mosque upon observing the crescent of the Ramadhan.

The Night of *Baraat* is not only the most important night of Sha'ban but also one of the the most blessed, fruitful nights of the year. It is the festival of angels; blessings, mercy and abundance descend on earth during this night. Believers are granted forgiveness except those who commit *shirk* by attributing a partner to God, who keep a grudge in their hearts, who sever the relationship with their relatives and friends, who practice sorcery, who drink, who indulge in *riba*, and who "sell" their honor.

In the Night of *Baraat*, important events to happen in the year are decided. For instance, the sustenance and life spans are

allocated; those who will perform the pilgrimage are decided. Some attain the mercy of Allah and get rewards; some incur the wrath of Allah and get punished. Many will prepare their shrouds and graves unknowingly. There will be so many who expect to have a place in Paradise, yet they will find themselves in Hell.

The Night of *Baraat* is an awesome night; once during such a night, Hassan of Basra left his house extremely pale as if he got out of a grave. He was asked what made him fear and grieve so much. He replied: "I swear that I am in a state worse than that of a man whose ship has sunk because I am sure of the sins that I committed, but I am not sure of the acceptance of my good deeds. That is why I worry so much."

My beloved brothers and sisters! Prepare for this special night ahead of time by fasting, giving charities, paying *zakaat*, repenting, reciting Qur'an and *salawaat*, offering voluntary prayers, and visiting the relatives and friends. Turn to Allah with tears, and seek forgiveness, mercy and blessings. Ask for the plenitude of sustenance, good fortune, and guidance. May He open our hearts to receive His blessings and inspiration. May He save us from disasters, calamities and ill deeds. May He grant victory to the *mujahideen*. May he make us honorable and happy in this world and in the hereafter.

The flurry of this temporary world has no end; the life in the hereafter is eternal. May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* awaken the Nation of Prophet Muhammad from the sleep of unawareness. May He make it easier for them to see the truth as truth and follow it, and the falsehood as falsehood and avoid it. May He grant us a complete preparation for the hereafter.

Islam, January 1996

04. VIRTUES OF RAMADHAN

Prof. Dr. M Es'ad Cosan

As-salâmu aleykum wa rahmetu'llâhi wa berekâtuhû!

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be with you.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Almighty Allah be pleased with you. May He have you benefit from the mercy and blessings of this month that are prepared for the virtuous servants of Allah.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Salmân-i Fârisî RA was one of the closest companions of the Prophet SAS:⁹

سَلْمَانٌ مِّنَّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ (ك. طب. عن كثير بن عبد الله المزني
عن أبيه عن جده)

(*Salmâni minnâ ehle'l-beyti*) "Salmân is from us, my family."

Salmân RA reported:¹⁰

⁹ Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.III, s.691, no:6539, 6541; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.VI, s.212, no:6040; Isfahânî, *Ahbâr-ı Isfahan*, c.I, s.136, no: 125; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XXI, s.408; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.XI, s.251; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabâkât*, c.IV, s.83; İbn-i Hibbân, *Tabâkâtü'l-Muhaddisîn*, c.I, s.203; Küseyr ibn-i Abdullah el-Müzenî Rh.A babasından, o da dedesinden.

Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.293, no:6534; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.337, no:3522; Hz. Ali RA'dan.

Mecmaü'z-Zevâid, c.VI, s.189, no:10137 ve c.IX, s.154, no:14688, 14689; *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.XI, s.690, no:33440; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.490, no:1505; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdîs*, c.XIII, s.284, no:13125.

¹⁰ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; İbn-i Şâhin, *Fadâilü Şehri Ramadân*, c.I, s.18, no:16; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdîs*, c.XXIII, s.176, no:25782.

خَطَبَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي آخِرِ يَوْمٍ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ ، وَقَالَ :
 أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ! قَدْ أَظْلَكُمْ شَهْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ، شَهْرٌ مَبَارَكٌ ، شَهْرٌ فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ
 مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ؛ شَهْرٌ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ صِيَامَهُ فَرِيضَةً ، وَقِيَامَ لَيْلِهِ تَطَوُّعًا ، مَنْ
 قَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِخَصْلَةٍ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ أَوْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً ، كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى سَبْعِينَ
 فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ .

(*Khatabanâ rasûlu'llah SAS fi akhiri yawmin min sha'ban*) "On the last day of Sha'ban, the Messenger of Allah delivered a sermon." According to Salmân RA, the Prophet SAS said:

(*Yâ ayyuha ' n-nâs*) O mankind (*Qad ezallekum shehrun azîmun*) A great month has cast a shadow on you." Since it is still Sha'ban, not Ramadhan yet, the Prophet expressed it that way. (*mubârakun*) "It is a blessed month, (*shahrin fîhi laylatun khayrun min elfi shehrin*) a month in which is a night that is better than a thousand months."

As you know, the Night of Power is better than one thousand months. It is somehow hidden in Ramadhan. The Prophet SAS suggested: "Search for the Night of Power in the last ten days of Ramadhan." He also suggested the odd days of Ramadhan. The Prophet would spend the last ten days of Ramadhan in the mosque. He would not go to his house; he would spend his time in worship. For us to benefit from the blessings of the Night of Power, we must follow the footsteps of the Prophet.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Prophet Mohammed SAS was a messenger of Allah, His most beloved servant, the master of all who lived before and after him, the noblest of all mankind, the leader of

the prophets, and the owner of the highest stage in the hereafter. He was exemplary in code of conduct and in the lifestyle. Everything about his was excellent. Yet during the three months season, he would do more worship despite the fact that he was in a state of worship continuously. This is a great observation for us to take a lesson.

During the month of Rajab, the prophet fasted more days than he did other months. Rajab is the month two months before Ramadhan. There is the Raghàib Night in Rajab. That is a signal for Muslims to realize that three months season has arrived. Almighty Allah grants great blessings during the night of Raghàib. In the twenty-seventh night of Rajab, the Prophet had the Mi'raj. The Prophet was accepted to the Divine Presence and saw Almighty Allah during Mi'raj that happened in Rajab.

The Prophet maintained his worship in Sha'ban. He maintained his fasting, too. There is the night of Bara'ah in the middle of Sha'ban. We have had the Bara'ah Night and reached Ramadhan. The Prophet was delivering His sermon at the end of Sha'ban. I am reading the hadith reported by Salmân RA.

a. The Night of Power and *I'tikâf*

In the hadith the Prophet SAS indicates how great and blessed the month of Ramadhan is. Then, he states that the Night of Power that is better than one thousand months is hidden in the month of Ramadhan. Since the Night of Power is hidden in Ramadhan, we should spend every night of Ramadhan as if it is the Night of Power.

In fact, there is a proverb: "Consider every night as the Night of Power, every person you meet as Khidir." The person you meet could look poor, homeless, be in need of a hair trim, yet you must not look down upon him. He could be Khidir AS. Do not spend your night in unawareness; it could be the Night of Power. Our ancestors recommended us to enliven every night as though it were the Night of Power.



Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN, SWEDEN

The very first thing the Prophet pointed out in this hadith is the Night of Power. Then we must keep the Night of Power in our mind as an important matter. We have the intention: "If Almighty Allah allows me, I would like to do *i'tikaf* as the Prophet did in the last ten days of Ramadhan. I will spend the day and night in a mosque. I can read the jurisprudence books and learn about the manners of the *i'tikaf*. It is a *Sunnah muakkad*. If nobody does *i'tikaf* in a locality, everybody in that locality will be held responsible. I will do it this Ramadhan." Let us have this intention and catch the Night of Power.

Almighty Allah has promised: "You ask from Me, I will give you what you want." Our beloved Prophet SAS said that Almighty Allah would give Paradise for those who want it. That is why we need to turn to Allah in prayers and ask from Him with sincerity and zeal.

There are ahadith that each Muslim should ask Almighty Allah

for martyrdom: "My Lord! Let me give my life for Your sake in Your path. Grant me martyrdom." If a person does not have a desire to die as a martyr, he dies in a state of hypocrisy. Each Muslim should be willing to give up his life for Allah.

If a Muslim dies in his bed with the desires of becoming a martyr, Almighty Allah would elevate his rank to the level of martyrs. This is stated in the ahadith. That means the intentions are very important.

Then we should have the intention of "catching" the Night of Power by practicing *i'tikâf* in the last ten days of Ramadhan. We remind our brothers and Sisters so that they do not miss the opportunities. We reminded about the three months over two months ago. We reminded about Sha'ban and Ramadhan. Now I am telling you about the Night of Power.

b. Sacrifice on the Eid-al-Fitr

Let me tell you something else. As you know we sacrifice an animal on the Eid-al-Adha. Those who are qualified as "rich" from an Islamic point of view would buy a good-looking ram and slaughter it on the day of Eid-al-Adha. May Allah accept their sacrifice. We ought to have the intention about Eid-al-Adha, too: "By the will of Allah, I intend to sacrifice an animal on the next Eid-al-Adha." Let it be our practice to have intentions for good deeds.

Sacrificing an animal on the day of Eid-al-Adha is a must (*wajib*), and every practicing Muslim who is "rich" does that. Yet there is the sacrifice on the day of Eid-al-Fitr. We are on the second day or Ramadhan, and I am reminding you ahead of time: Sacrificing an animal on the day of Eid-al-Fitr has so much rewards—seven hundred folds!

In a hadith the Prophet SAS listed four deeds that are rewarded in seven hundred folds:

1. Spending in the way of Allah is rewarded seven hundred folds: Jihad, Hajj, Umrah and alike.

2. Spending for the parents is rewarded seven hundred folds: their food, clothing, rent and alike.

3. Spending for the family is rewarded seven hundred folds. Isn't that nice? Islam pays utmost attention to the love and affection in the family. Taking a bag of grocery for the spouse and children would make them happy and content, so they would not look at what other people have. They would find all they need at home. All of this spending is rewarded seven hundred times.

4. Sacrificing an animal on the day of Eid-al-Fitr is rewarded seven hundred folds. Why is it so? The Eid is a happy day, a day to celebrate. If one slaughters an animal on that day, there would be an abundance of sustenance in the house. Do not think of Turkey or our time only. Islam is for all times and places. Imagine a desert or a remote village where there are no butcher shops or grocery stores. Think about the times of scarcity.

When an animal is sacrificed, there would be abundance and feast in the house. One could entertain his guests easily by offering them meat dishes. That is also a reminder for you.

I have reminded you two things that we could practice in near future: Practice i'tikâf during the last ten days of Ramadhan so that you could appreciate the Night of Power and not miss it. Then, by the will of Allah, if you have the means, you sacrifice an animal on the day of Eid-al-Fitr and receive seven hundred folds of rewards.

Salman RA, the companion of the Prophet, the crown of our heads, reported from the Prophet SAS: "Our beloved Prophet delivered a sermon on the last day of Sha'ban." First he said that Ramadhan is a great month, it is a blessed month, and he said that there is the Night of Power in Ramadhan. These are very important.

c. Tarawih Prayer

The Prophet SAS continued in the hadith:



Tarawih Prayers

شَهْرٌ جَعَلَ اللهُ صِيَامَهُ فَرِيضَةً ، وَقِيَامَ لَيْلِهِ تَطَوُّعًا

(*Ja'alalàhu siyâmahû farîdaten wa qiyâma laylihî tatawwu'an*) "Allah made fasting during the days in this month obligatory (*fard*) and prayers at night non-obligatory but rewarding (*tatawwu*)." We all fast during the day and offer Tarawih prayers after Ish'a as the *tatawwu'* worship. We practice Tarawih as the sunnah of the Prophet SAS with eagerness and zeal. It is in Ramadhan—not in other months.

Al-hamdu lillâh, we could not find any room inside the Yeni Cami; we offered the sunnah prayer outside, then found some room inside. I congratulate our brothers in Denizli—may Allah be pleased with them. It is the abundance of Islam that Muslims do not fit in the mosques and the congregation spills to the streets. It is an indication that the youth realize the beauty of Islam and practice it. We pray that it is a continuous effort and it increases in

time.

d. Seventy-Fold Rewards for Good Deeds

The Prophet continued:

مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِخَصْلَةٍ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ أَوْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً، كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى
سَبْعِينَ فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ .

(*Men taqarraba fihî bi-hasletin mine'l-khayri aw eddâ farîdaten kâne kemen eddâ seb'îne farîdaten fî mâ siwâhu*) "If a person gets closer to Allah in this month by doing a good deed or fulfilling an obligation, he would be like a person who fulfilled seventy obligations in other times." Zakat, for instance, could be paid in Ramadhan although it is not an obligation to be carried out in Ramadhan.

If a Person goes for Umrah in Ramadhan, he receives much more rewards than he would if went for Umrah other times. This is the abundance of the month of Ramadhan.

Since I am following the hadith, I did not mention other ahadith about Ramadhan that are introductory ahadith. Almighty Allah prepares Paradise, heavens and earth spiritually in Ramadhan. The gates of Paradise are opened for the believers, and the gates of Hell are closed. The sky is decorated. Almighty Allah orders Jibrîl AS: "Go and tie the leaders of satans with chains and throw them to the oceans. There are ahadith on this. It means the satans become weaker and they do not fool believers as much as they would other times. Almighty Allah reduces the temptations for evil.

The decoration of the sky and Paradise, opening of the gates of Paradise and closure of the gates of Hell are good things. All these happen because this month is an important month. A good deed in this month is rewarded as the fulfillment of seventy obligations

outside of Ramadhan. All of this means we should try doing good deeds in Ramadhan as much as we can. This is so encouraging, isn't it?

e. The Month of Patience and Abundance

وهو شهر الصبر،

(*Wa huwa shahru's-sabri*) "And, it is the month of patience." Almighty Allah ordered us not to do some of the pure and good things during the day in Ramadhan:

"—Do not eat food or drink during the day."

We accept the order and observe it. We would not drink water even if we get very thirsty. Well in some places Ramadhan could be in winter and the days would be short. However, in some places, it could be summer time. The days would be long. Our forefathers kept fasting while they harvested the wheat during the hot days of summer. Their mouth got dry and their lips got cracked, yet they kept their patience. It is the month of patience.

Different parts of the world could experience different seasons at a given time. For instance, our brothers in Australia are having summer while you are having winter in Turkey. Your days are short while theirs is long. Nevertheless, all of us undergo some patience test. If we maintain our patience from the morning till the night that would be excellent.

We are patient about not eating food and not drinking water during the day. Another form of the patience is not getting angry. You should not get angry with your children, your spouse, your neighbor or your associates. You have to be gentle, soft and calm towards them. You have to control your eyes and your tongue. These are also parts of being patient.

والصبر ثوابه الجنة؛



(*Wa's-sabru thawâbuhu'l-jannah*) "The reward for patience is Paradise." The patience is very important. It could be hard for a person to maintain patience, yet its reward is Paradise. The Prophet promised Paradise for those who practice patience and fast properly.

شَهْرُ الْمَوَاسَاةِ،

(*Wa shahru'l-muwâsâti*) "This is the month of *muwâsâh*," i.e., helping somebody by giving him food, clothing or other things. We shall spare some money, go to the market, buy few things: half a kilo of cheese, three kilos of rice, five kilos of potatoes, some onions and other things. We shall put them in a box and take it to a poor family. That would be a support for that family.

Ramadhan is the month of helping one another. A believer should look after other believers, help the needy and make them



Mehmed Zâhid KOTKU

happy. He should help them cope with the economical hardship.

وَشَهْرٌ يَزَادُ فِيهِ فِي رِزْقِ الْمُؤْمِنِ؛

(*Wa shahrûn yuzâdu fî rizqi'l-mu'mini fihî*) "Almighty Allah increases the sustenance of the believer in this month." In fact, if you draw a graphic of what you eat in your home and compare the section for Ramadhan with the rest of the year, you can see the increase in Ramadhan. That is because of the blessings of Ramadhan as indicated in this hadith. the sustenance of the believer is increased in Ramadhan. You see a variety of food at the table.

Our late master Mehmed Zâhid Efendi —may his abode be Paradise— used to say: "The sustenance of a person is what he eats, no what he keeps in his safe." Imagine some cheese or jam in a jar.

If you lick the jar from outside, you get nothing. That cheese or jam is not your sustenance unless you eat it.

In Ramadhan we witness that a variety of food would be at the table. If we try to count it, our fingers would not be sufficient; we would out-count the toes, too. This abundance in Ramadhan is due to the fact that is indicated in this hadith: "The sustenance of the believer is increased in this month." *Sadaqa rasûlullah*—the Messenger of Allah stated the truth.

f. Reward for Providing Food for a Fasting Person

فَمَنْ أَفْطَرَ فِيهِ صَائِمًا ، كَانَ مَغْفِرَةً لِدُنُوبِهِ وَعَتَقَ رَقَبَتَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ ،
وَكَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ ، مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْقُصَ مِنْ أَجْرِهِ شَيْءٌ .

(*Men aftara fihî sàimen kâne maghfiraten li-zunûbihî*) "If a person provides food for a person who has fasted the day, he will have his own offenses forgiven." This is another aspect to remember. We shall generously invite people for dinner in Ramadhan.

(*Wa itqa raqabatihî mine'n-nâr*) "And he would free his neck from Hellfire. (*Wa kâne lehû mithli ejrihî*) "What ever the reward the fasting person earns, the same would be given to the person who provide him food in the evening (*min ghayri en yenqusa min ejrihî shay*) without any decrease in the rewards of the person who fasted." This is very important, too, because we would earn the same rewards the fasting person gets when we invite him for dinner.

In the continuation of the hadith, there is another good news:

قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، لَيْسَ كُلُّنَا يَجِدُ مَا يُفْطِرُ الصَّائِمَ .

(*Qàlû: Yâ rasûlallah! Leyse kullunâ yejidu mâ yufattirus-sàim.*)



"O prophet of Allah! Not all of us have the means to provide dinner for a fasting person." They had quite a bit hardship. They hardly had any food in their houses to feed a person. They were curious about what would happen to a person who could not provide much of food for a fasting person. The Prophet said:

يُعْطِي اللهُ هَذَا الثَّوَابَ لِمَنْ أَفْطَرَ صَائِمًا عَلَى تَمْرَةٍ، أَوْ شَرَبَ مَاءٍ،
أَوْ مَذَّقَ لَبَنٍ .

(*Yu'tillâhu hâdhe's-thawâbe men fettara sâimen alâ temratin, aw alâ sherbeti mâ'in, aw medhkati lebenin.*) "Almighty Allah gives this reward to any person who offers a date fruit, a sip of water, or some milk to a fasting person." Even the small offers to the fasting person are rewarded in large quantities.

Having heard of this hadith, we should provide things for people to break their fast when the sun goes down. It would be quite

beneficial if one carries a bag of dates to offer to other people. Sometimes, they would be on the road or at work when the time arrives for iftar. They could break their fast with the date you offer. You get your rewards.

Last week, we were traveling towards Izmir. We stopped at somebody's house. I told the host: "Bring something for us to break our fast and earn the rewards." They brought food and we had iftar. According to this hadith, they earned the same rewards that we earned by fasting without any decrease in our rewards.

g. Month of Mercy and Forgiveness

وهو شهر أوله رحمة، وأوسطه مغفرة، وآخره عتق من النار.

(*Wa huwa shahrūn awaluhû rahmetun*) "This is such a month that the first part is dominated by the mercy of Allah." We are surrounded by the mercy of Allah *al-hamdu lillah!* (*Wa awsatuhû maghfiraturun*) "The middle of this month is dominated by the forgiveness of the sins." We all have wrongdoing in the past, and we have so many shortcomings. As we keep fasting, Almighty Allah forgives us our sins by the middle of this month. (*Wa âkhiruhû itqun minen nâr*) "The last part of this month is freedom from the hellfire." Almighty Allah will say, "O My servant! You have fasted in Ramadhan, I have forgiven you and freed you from the fire." It is for those who fasted in Ramadhan properly.

May Almighty Allah place us among those who are freed from the Hellfire.

من خفف عن مملوكه فيه، غفر الله له، وأعتقه من النار.

(*Men khaffefe an memlûkihî fihî ghafara' llâhu lehû wa a'tekahû mine' n-nâr*) As you know in the past the prisoners of wars could be taken as slaves. The slaves had to work hard. The

prophet said: "If a person reduces the burden on his slave in this month--some slaves were Muslims, yet they still had to work-- Almighty Allah forgives that person (*wa a'tekahû minen nâr*) and frees him from the hellfire."

h. Do Plenty of Dhikr and Supplication in Ramadhan

وَاسْتَكْتَبُوا فِيهِ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ خِصَالٍ: خَصَلْتَانِ تَرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا رَبَّكُمْ، وَ
 خَصَلْتَانِ لَا غِنَى لَكُمْ عَنْهُمَا. فَأَمَّا الْخَصَلْتَانِ اللَّتَانِ تَرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا
 رَبَّكُمْ: فَشَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَتَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ. وَأَمَّا الْخَصَلْتَانِ اللَّتَانِ
 لَا غِنَى لَكُمْ عَنْهُمَا: فَتَسْأَلُونَ اللَّهَ الْجَنَّةَ، وَتَتَعَوَّذُونَ بِهِ مِنَ النَّارِ.

(*Festekthirû fîhî min erbai hisâl*) "Do these four deeds in plenty (*Hasleteyni turdûne bihimâ rabbekum*) two of these deeds will have you earn the consent of your Lord. (*Wa hasleteyni lâghinâe bikum anhumâ*) The other two deeds are something you cannot give up." What could be these four deeds? (*Feemmel hasletâni'letâni urdûne bihimâ rabbekum*) "What are the two deeds with which you are going to earn the consent of Allah? (*Feshahâdetu en lâ ilâhe illa'llah*) To bear witness that there is no deity but Allah." This is a very important word. (*Wa testaghfirûnehû*) "The second one is seeking forgiveness."

What we understand is that we need to keep saying "*Esh-hadu en lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah*." We could say "*Estaghfirullah al azîm wa etûbu ileyh*"

I had written in the magazines in the past: "Ramadhan is the month of Tasawwuf." As you see in this hadith, the Prophet is ordering the practices of Tasawwuf. You shall do the dhikr of "*Lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah*." With these dhikr, you will make Almighty Allah pleased with you. It is grace of Allah that he



Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN

is pleased with us when we say "*Lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah.*" What a great system of belief!

Dear brothers and Sisters, do these dhikr and become a good dervish.

(*Wa emmel-hasletâni'lletâni lâ ghinâe bikum anhumâ*) "The other two deeds that you could not do without are (*Fetes'elûna'llahe ' l-jenneh wa teùzûne bihî mine'n-nâr*) asking Paradise from Allah and seek refuge with Allah from hellfire." We shall keep praying: "Our Lord! Send us to Your Paradise! Our Lord! Free us from the hellfire!"

وَمَنْ أَشْبِعَ فِيهِ صَائِمًا ، سَقَاهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْ حَوْضِي شَرِيبَةً ،

لَا يَظْمَأُ بَعْدَهَا أَبَدًا .

(*Wa men ashbaa fihî sàimen*) "If a person provides food and water to somebody who fasted the day, (*saqàhu ' llàhu teâlâ min hawdî sherbeten*) Almighty Allah provides that person from the pool of Kawthar in a way that (*lâ yezmau ba'dehâ ebedâ*) one who drinks from that pool never feels thirsty again."

With this hadith, the Prophet had given us the good news that the person who provides some food to another person who has fasted the day will be served from the pool of Kawthar in Paradise. Thus we have completed the hadith. If you took notes, you have gathered quite a bit of information. Let us go over the hadith:

We must be careful and not miss the Night of Power. For this, we should practice i'tikâf in the last ten days of Ramadhan. If we have the money, we should sacrifice an animal on the day of Eid-al-Fitr. We must realize that this month is the month of patience and remember that the reward for patience is Paradise. If a person does good deeds in this month, he will receive the rewards in seventy folds. We must do charitable deeds in this month.

The sustenance is increased in this month, and we must be thankful for that and say "*Alhamdu lillah!*" We shall support the poor and needy by giving them money or goods. Everybody will have some kind of a feast in Ramadhan, and feel free of hardship.

Those who provide food for a person who is fasting will be forgiven their sins and are freed from the hellfire. They also receive the same rewards that the fasting person receives. That is why we need to open our doors and invite people for iftar. If we cannot afford it, we could offer simple things such as a cup of water, a date fruit, or some milk to a fasting person to break his fast in the evening. That will also bring the same rewards.

We shall do the dhikr "*Lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah*" in plenty and ask for Paradise from Almighty Allah. We shall also ask Almighty Allah to be saved from the hellfire often: "Or Lord! Forgive us our wrongdoing. Do not send us to hellfire. Keep us in Your Paradise!"

May Almighty Allah have you practice all the good things stated by the Prophet SAS in this hadith. May He have you live many Ramadhans as his beloved servants who practice the deeds that are favorable to Allah and benefit from the blessings of these months.

May Allah grant you a life in compliance with His consent. May He illuminate your hearts, fill your hearts with His love, and make you His beloved servants. May he grant you a good end as you depart from this life and accept you as illuminated servants whom He is pleased with. May He honor all of us with His beauty in His Paradise. May He make us neighbors to his beloved Prophet Muhammed Mustafa in the hereafter. May He grant us the drinks from the pool of Kawthar in Paradise.

As-salâmu aleykum wa rahmatu'llâhu wa barakâtuhû!..

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be with you.

February 2, 1995 / Ramadhan 2, 1415
Bizim Eller Radio, Denizli, Turkey

05. HAVE TAQWA

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah from Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah the Merciful the Beneficent.

Al-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâraken fîh... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jalâli wajhihî wa li-'azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa alâ âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebi'ahû bi-ihsânin ejmaîn...

Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. We praise Him with the best of the praises endlessly. Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammed, his family, his companions and his sincere followers.

a. Fear Allah!

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Almighty Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ، وَاتَّقُوا

اللَّهَ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (الحشر: ١٨)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenu'ttequ'llàh*) "O you who believe, fear Allah! (*Waltenzur nafsun mâ qaddemet li-ghadin*) And observe what you send to the hereafter ahead of time. (*Wattaqu'llah*) Fear Allah! (*Înna'llàhe habîrun bimâ ta'melûn*) Verily Allah is aware of all what you do" (Qur'an 59:18).

What does a person send to the hereafter? All the good and bad

deeds carried out in this life are sent to hereafter. Inviting people for *iftar*, paying money for charity, paying zakah, building a mosque, fasting, offering formal prayers, performing umrah, performing Hajj, participating in jihad, and doing other kinds of worship are sent to the hereafter. Each person sends these deeds to the hereafter. Likewise, committing offenses, drinking wine, gambling, oppression, injustice, shameful acts, and other deeds that are offensive to Almighty Allah are sent to the hereafter, too.

Almighty Allah states in the Qur'an: "Each person will receive the reward for an atom's weight of good deed and the punishment for an atom's weight of bad deed. Each person must watch out what he sends to the hereafter." In other words, Almighty Allah says: "O My servants! Pay attention to your deeds! Send good deeds to the hereafter! Send deeds that would make you happy in the hereafter and deeds that would earn the pleasure of Allah and blessings in the hereafter. Do good deeds!"

Almighty Allah says:

(*Wattaqu'llah, inna'llàhe habîrun bimâ ta'melûn*) "Fear Allah! Verily Allah is truly aware of all what you do." In other words, "Almighty Allah sees all what you do, so do not do bad things." Even if you do it secretly, Almighty Allah would know about it. You could not be absolutely alone because Almighty Allah will be with you:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ (الحديد: ٤)

(*Wa huwa me'akum eyne mâ kuntum*) "Wherever you are, Allah is with you" (Qur'an 57:4). Almighty Allah and His angels are with you all the time. The angels are on your shoulders.

كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ . يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ (الإنفطار: ١٢-١١)

(*Kirâmen kâtibîne ya'lemûne mâ tef'alûn*) "The angels register

all of your deeds.” Each person has a registry book where the angels record the good deeds and bad deeds. There are angels that stay with the person all the time. There are angels for each member and joint of the body; there are guardian angels to protect the person. There are angels to register the deeds. There are other angles that are responsible for earth, sky, rain, clouds, wind, and sun. That means a person is surrounded by angels. There is no place a person could be "alone." There would be so many witnesses even if no human being observes a person while he commits an offense. Almighty Allah sees all things.

Each of us should be aware of the fact that Almighty Allah sees us, and each of us should be very careful of what to send to the hereafter accordingly.

What does Almighty Allah say?

اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (الحشر: ١٨)

(*Ittequ'llah*) "Fear Allah! Be aware of Allah and avoid deeds that are unpleasant for Him."

In another verse, Almighty Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَموتنَّ إِلَّا وَأنتم مسلمون
(آل عمران: ١٠٢)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû*) "O you who believe! (*Ittequ'llàhe haqqa tuqàtihî*) Fear Allah the way how He should be feared. Have taqwa! (*Wa lâ temûtunne illâ wa entum muslimûn*) Do not die in any way except as Muslims!" (Qur'an 3:102)

Hadrat Ali RA said: "My Lord! You are a Lord as I am pleased with. I praise you. Make me a servant that You are pleased with." What kind of a person would Almighty Allah be pleased with? When a servant has *taqwa*, Almighty Allah is pleased with that person. You must know some people around who do not hurt

anybody, have a rosary in hand, keep saying prayers, who are gentle, sweet, and like angels. We refer to them as "people who have *tawqa*." What does *taqwa* mean?

Taqwa comes from the root *wiqàya* that means to protect something. *Taqwa* means for a person to protect himself from Almighty Allah, for Almighty Allah has absolute limitless power and He will reward or punish people in the hereafter according to their deeds in this life.

Almighty Allah is,

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ (الفاحة: ٤)

(*Mâlîki yawmi'd-dîn*) "The owner of the day of Recompense" (Qur'an 1:4) when the rewards or punishments will be given to people according to their deeds in this life.

Since Almighty Allah is the Sovereign on the Day or Recompense, He will reward the good servants and punish the bad servants. That is why we have to fear Allah and protect ourselves from the hellfire where the bad servants will end up. There would be unimaginable forms of torture in Hell. That is why we have to fear Allah and avoid Hell.

b. Purpose of Fasting

We fast in Ramadhan because Almighty Allah made fasting an obligation on us with the following verse: *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ

قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû*) "O you who believe!" —We have

been addressed— O Muslim servants who say "We believe in Allah, His messengers, His scriptures " in the creed. (*Kutibe aleykumu's-siyâm*) "Fasting has been prescribed on you as an obligation (*kemâ kutibe 'ale'lledhîne min qablikum*) as it was prescribed upon those before you (*leallekum tetteqùn*) that you may attain taqwa and become righteous." (Qur'an 2:183)

We understand from this verse that fasting is an obligation (*fard*). It is an obligation on every believer who is healthy. It is an obligation because the verse says (*kutibe*) "prescribed." The verse also states, "as it was prescribed upon those before you." We understand that fasting had been an obligation on the ummahs that lived before us.

Why did Allah prescribe fasting on people who lived before us and on us? We all are the children of Adam. Our nature has been the same. We have the same [spiritual] diseases, and the cure has been the same. That is what we infer from this verse.

The last part of the verse points to the purpose: (*leallekum tetteqùn*) "that you may attain taqwa and become righteous." That means when a person completes his fasting, he should attain taqwa. He should become a righteous servant of Allah, a good Muslim.

In the verses that I recited above Almighty Allah asks us to have taqwa:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ
(آل عمران: ١٠٢)

(*Yâ eyyuhelledhîne âmenut tequllàhe haqqa tuqàtihî wa lâ temûtunne illâ wa entum muslimûn.*) (Qur'an 3:102)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ، وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (الحشر: ١٨)

(Yâ eyyuhel'ledhîne âmenu'ttequ'llàhe weltenzur nefsun mâ qaddemet lighad, wettequ'llàh, inna'llàhe khabîrun bimâ ta'melûn.)
(Qur'an 59:18)

These verses instruct us to have taqwa and be righteous Muslims. We shall be righteous Muslims, avoid all offenses, have good manners, be trustworthy and truthful. Almighty Allah has pointed the path for us to be righteous in the verse 183 of Surah Baqara: fasting.

Dear brothers and Sisters! Almighty Allah prescribed fasting for us, as He prescribed it for ummahs before us, so that we may attain taqwa. This verse indicates that fasting is a method to attain taqwa. Fasting will help us attain taqwa and become righteous servants.

c. The Nafs Demands the Evil

Dear Brothers and Sisters! As you know each person has a body consisted of our hands, arms, head, eye, ear and other organs. We also have a spirit, a soul. When the soul is in the body, the body has a value. When the soul is gone, the body has no value despite the presence of the eyes, eyebrows, and other organs. A person becomes speechless when his soul leaves his body. The soul and body together make the body move. Without the soul, the body becomes a pile of meat.

We also know from the verses of the Qur'an that each person has a nafs. There is a being called nafs in each of us. The nafs in each of us has been created to tend the needs of the body. It is the manager of the body. When the body feels hungry, the nafs wants food and warns: "Go eat food. I have been completely drained. I cannot even stand up. I am losing my vision. Go eat something. Hurry up!" When the water in the body goes below a level, the nafs warns again: "My lips have been dried up! Go find some water so I can drink it!"

When the body works too much, the nafs says: "I feel tired! If you work with this pace of the work, soon you will collapse. Take a break! Rest a little. You need some sleep!" The nafs points out to the needs of the body.

The desires of the nafs are called *Shahawât-i Nafsâniyye*. *Shahawât* means desires and wants. The nafs produces desires: "I feel hungry, thirsty. I want food and water. I want some rest. I want some sleep. I want to get married." These are some of the desires.

Of course these desires are needed to maintain the body. Almighty Allah has not created anything in vain; there is a reason, wisdom, in the creation of everything. The nafs is needed to protect and maintain the body.

Man needs control. That is why the famous people have managers. The professional sportsmen, actors, and other famous personages have secretaries and managers. Some of the business is taken care of by the managers for the person. The manager, the director, the coach of the body is nafs. Nafs is needed because it informs about the needs of the body.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! When this nafs is left alone, then it would not limit itself. In other words, the desires of the nafs have no limits, and they go on and on! When they exceed the limits, these desires lead to sin. For instance, they could make a person steal, dishonor another person, or do other bad deeds. The nafs could make a person get lazy, stay in bed and sleep for long hours. Under the influence of his nafs, a person could wish that he takes it easy while everybody else works hard. Such a person becomes degenerate; his nature, corrupt.

For the reason above, this stage of nafs is called *an-nafs al-ammârah* (the evil self). (*An-nafsul ammâratu bis sû'î*) It is the evil self that orders a person to do the evil. When a person's nafs is not trained, it orders the person to do evil. This is stated in Surah Yusuf:



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إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي (يوسف: ٥٣)

(Inna'n-nafsa le-ammâratun bi's-sû'i illâ mâ rahime rabbi)
"Indeed the nafs is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy." (Qur'an 12:53)

The excessive desires of the nafs must be limited. Who is going to do the limiting and control? The father of a child puts the limits: "Do not go out to play soccer! Do not go to the movies! Sit here and finish your homework! Wake up and get up! You cannot go outside unless you finish your homework!" Somebody outside manages the child.

When the child becomes a strong grown-up, an independent person, who is going to direct him? Who is going to manage and train the nafs from outside? The nafs of the person needs training. If the nafs is trained, the person reaches salvation. It is stated in the Qur'an:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا . وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا (الشمس: ٩-١٠)

(*Qad aflaha men zekkâhâ*) "Prosperous is he who trains and purifies his nafs (*Wa qad khâbe men dessâhâ*) And failed is he who seduces it." (Qur'an 91:9-10) The *tazkiyetu'n-nafs*, the training of the self, leads to salvation. One who fails to train his nafs will be disappointed in the hereafter.

That is why training of nafs is one of the most important tasks for a believer and the most important subject of Tasawwuf. The nafs of the person must be trained. Whose nafs? Who is the person? A director, a minister, a president, a man, a woman, everybody. The nafs of everybody must be trained. A person becomes mature if his nafs is trained just as Mawlânâ Jalâleddîn-i Rûmî, Yunus Emre, Eshrefoghlu Rûmî, Ibrâhim Haqqi Erzurumî and other personages we see around, we have heard about or we have read about in history books.

Let me give you an example: Hadrat Qadi Shurayh was a judge. Two persons entered his court. One of them had the Muslim attire while the other one had the Christian attire. When he saw them together, he wished that the Muslim person was right. His heart took the side of the Muslim before they even stated the matter of disagreement. He had both of them sit across from him. Then he asked what the matter was and he listened to the claims and defenses. He came to the conclusion that the Muslim person was wrong and the Christian was right on the matter of disagreement. He issued the verdict that way, yet he felt the pain in his heart for the rest of his life for wishing that one of these two persons who

came him to seek justice was right. He felt sorry for himself for not looking at them as equals. The self of the person is trained, a person controls himself.

d. Fasting and Training Nafs

The nafs needs to be trained, and one way of training the nafs is fasting. That is why Almighty Allah has the Muslims practice every year not for a short time but for a month. It is a training on limiting the desires of the nafs and controlling it.

Now, what does our nafs want? It wants food, beverages, and intimacy with our spouses. What does Almighty Allah say? "You shall not eat food from dawn until sunset in Ramadhan!"

"Is it haram?"

"The food itself is not haram, but you shall not eat it from dawn to sunset O My servant! you shall not drink water, either!"

"Is water haram?"

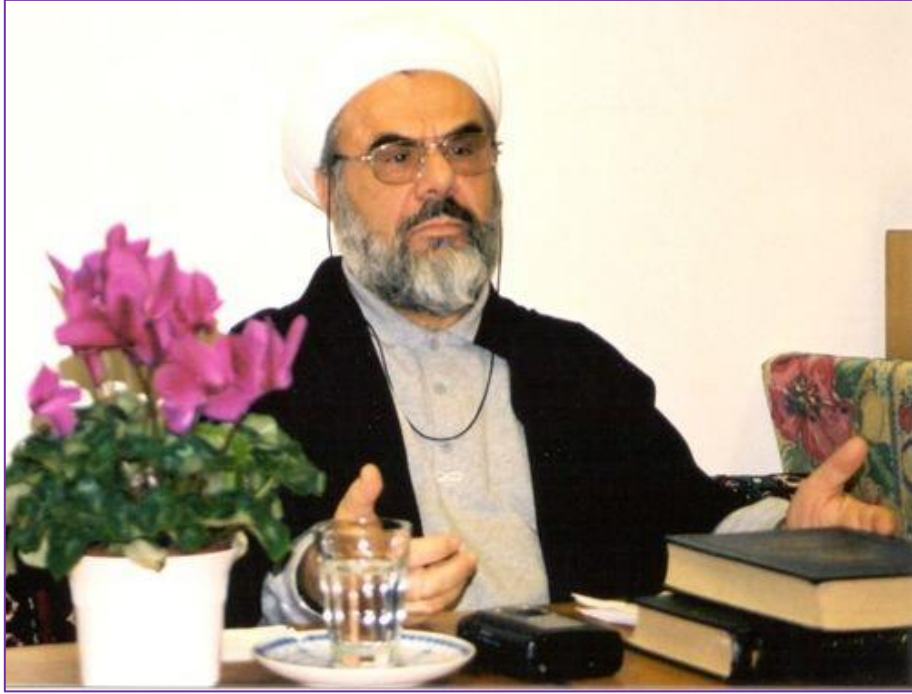
"The water is not intoxicating; it is not a prohibited matter. However, you shall not drink it from dawn to sunset in Ramadhan."

The water and food are essential for the body for the maintenance of life. Almighty Allah tells us to stop taking these two important matters from dawn till sunset.

What do we do? We want them. Imagine it is a summer day and you are fasting. Think about the heat of the summer, the heat of Antalya in summer. You would want water and cold beverages. You would want some when you see it.

Doctors immunize children to protect them from the diseases. Could we say, "why do you hurt children by inserting a needle into their arms? You know that they are going to get discomfort when you inject the immunization."

The doctors would respond: "I insert the needle because I am giving them some of the microbes of the diseases to them. Their body overcomes these microbes and gets immunity to these diseases. They will get some discomfort, but is it temporary."



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In the past, when these contagious diseases come to a locality, it would kill many people. Ottomans knew about smallpox and some ladies would do the immunization in the neighborhood. The epidemic of smallpox would pass like a breeze in Ottomans, yet it would kill one-half or one-third of the population in Europe. It was a terrible disease. When people are immunized, the diseases do not do any harm to them because the body learns how to defend itself against the diseases. The immunization produces antibodies against the microbes.

We, too, learn self-control by abstaining from the lawful and essential matters from dawn to sunset. We are training ourselves to gain control over our wills. We learn how to hold ourselves and be patient.

As you know, once a man in a white dress came to the Prophet SAS. He had a white, illuminated face; his dress was extremely

clean. Nobody had seen him before. He was not from Madina, yet there was no sign such as dust or sweat indicating that he had traveled. He sat by the Prophet and had his knee touch the Prophet's knee. He looked very close to the Prophet SAS. Everybody was amazed: "Who could be this stranger?"

e. What is Ihsân?

The man in the white dress asked some questions to the Prophet and the Prophet answered them. Every time the Prophet made a statement, he confirmed: "You have said the truth." The companions were puzzled: "How could a person talk to the Prophet in this manner? Who is teaching Islam—the Prophet or the stranger?"

One of the last questions was the following:

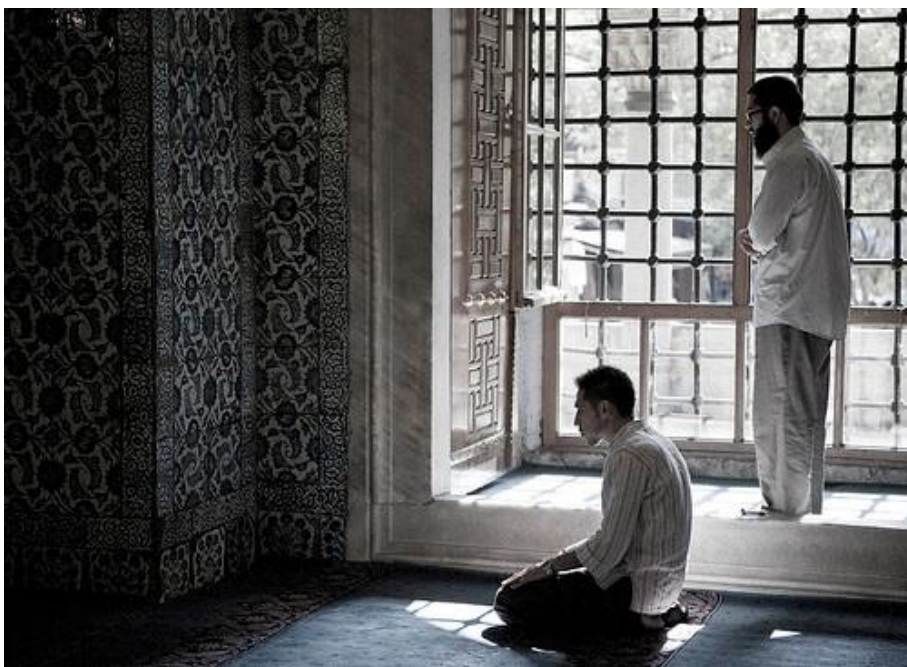
وَمَا الْإِحْسَانُ ؟

(*Wa ma'l-ihsânu*) "What is ihsân o Messenger of Allah?"

Ihsân means doing something well. What could be that something? It is the servitude. *Ihsan* means being a good servant to Allah. We had asked ourselves in the beginning of the discourse: "What kind of a servant does Allah want us to be?" He wants us to be good servants. The man in the white dress asked: "What is ihsân? How does a person become a good servant?" The Prophet SAS answered:¹¹

¹¹ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.27, no:50; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.39, no:9; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.101, no:4991; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.25, no:64; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.426, no:9497; İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.IV, s.5, no:2244; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.375, no:159; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.157, no:30309; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.528, no:117222; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.36, no:8; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.V, s.6, no:2610; Ebû Dâvud, *Sünen*, c.II, s.635, no:4695; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.97, no:4990; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.24, no:63; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.389, no:168; Beyhâkî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.X, s.203, no:20660; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.528, no:11721; Ebû Nuaym,



الإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ
 (خ. م. ن. ه. حم. خز. حب. ش. حل. عن أبي هريرة؛ م. د.
 ت. ن. ه. حب. ق. عن عمر)

(*Al'ih̄sānu en ta'budallāhe ke-enneke terāhu, fe-in lem tekun terāhu fe-innehû yerâke*) "Ihsan means worshipping Allah as though you see Him. You do not see Him, but He is everywhere and observant; He sees you." The man in the white dress said: "You

Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ, c.VIII, s.383; Beyhakî, *el-Erba'üne's-Suğrâ*, c.I, s.61, no:23; Hz. Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.44, no:5249; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.57, no:140; *Câmiu'l-Ehâdis*, c.X, s.494, no:10108.

have stated the truth." He asked another question and left.

After the man in the white dress left, the Prophet turned to the companions and asked: "Do you know who the person was?"

"We could not recognize him o Prophet of Allah."

"He was the angel Gabriel; he appeared as a human being. He asked these questions for me to answers so that you learn your religion. He came here for that."

This hadith is called hadith-i Jibrîl, and it was reported by Hadrat Omar.

According to this hadith, the servitude has to be good: We shall worship Allah as if we see him. In the presence of another person, when we feel that we are observed, we pay more attention to what we do; we would be more careful as we sit down, get up, talk or do anything. Almighty Allah sees us all the time; hence, we should do our servitude and worship accordingly.

"How are we going to do our worship?"

"We have to do our worship with taqwa. We have to pay attention to make sure that what we do is not offensive to Allah, false or leading to the hellfire. We have to avoid all that could prevent us from entering paradise. We have to be on our toes all the time. Every move we make has to be planned.

Hadrat Omar RA was a curious person. He used to ask people around him questions. Let me tell you one anecdote about him. I will return to our subject later.

Abdullah ibn-i Abbas was a young person, yet he was extremely knowledgeable. When Hadrat Omar became the Caliph, he asked Abdullah ibn-i Abbas to be among his council of advisors. The elderly of the Quraish and other companions questioned the wisdom of Hadrat Omar: "Why do we include this young man among us? We have children of his age. Why does the Caliph ask him to be present at our meetings?"

Hadrat Omar RA was one of the awliyaullah. All of the companions were awliyaullah, yet he was among the *asher-i mubash-sharah*, i.e., the ten people who were told that they will



Conquest of Makkah

enter paradise. He was among the top companions. He had Abdullah ibn-i Abbas RA called. May Almighty Allah bless this young companion as well as his father and grant them His consent. May Allah grant their intercession on us, too. Hadrat Omar RA had Abdullah ibn-i Abbas sit among the elderly companions and asked them:

"Tell me the message of Surah Nasr":

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ . وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ
 اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا . فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ ، إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا

(النصر: ١-٣)

(Idhâ jâ-a nasru'llâhi wal fethu wa raeyte'n-nâse yedkhulûne fî

dîni'llâhi efwâjâ... Fesebbih bi-hamdi rabbike wastaghfirhu innêhû kâne tawwâbâ

The elderly men responded: "O the leader of believers! As people got interested in Islam and became Muslims in large groups, Almighty Allah asked the Prophet (*Fe sebbih bihamdi rabbike*) to glorify and praise his Lord and (*wastaghfirhu*) and seek forgiveness from Him, (*innêhû kâne tawwâbâ*) verily He accepts the repentance of His servants. It is an order to the Prophet that he should praise Allah and Turn to Him when victory and the help from Allah arrived."

Hadrat Omar turned to Abdullah ibn-i Abbas RA: "What is your opinion? Do you agree with the statement?"

"No I do not agree with them."

"What do you think it is?"

"In this Surah Almighty Allah informs the Prophet that he would depart from this life soon."

The word *al-fat-hu* in this verse refers to the conquest of Makkah. Makkah was conquered. Earlier, Muslims had been expelled from Makkah by the unbelievers of Quraish. Muslims had immigrated to Madina due to the oppressions. Then there were battles of Badr, Uhud, the Ditch (Handak). Later Makkah was conquered. There were no centers in the Arabian Peninsula to insist in disbelief. People accepted Islam in large groups.

Abdullah ibn-i Abase said: "In this Surah Almighty Allah informs the Prophet that he would depart from this life soon."

Hadrat Omar RA commented: "I do not know any other interpretation but this. That is the deeper meaning of this Surah. 'O My Prophet! You are about to complete your mission. Praise your Lord for that and ask forgiveness from Allah. Your departure from this life is close.'"

Abdullah ibn-i Abbas was young but knowledgeable. His knowledge elevated his rank.

Hadrat Omar was the reporter of the Jibrîl Hadith. According to the hadith, each person shall do his worship as though he sees

Almighty Allah. That means, he shall do worship with taqwa, in a state of mind that is based on taqwa. If he does something wrong, he shall think that Allah sees him and will punish him in the hereafter. If he does something good, he shall expect its reward from Allah.

We can conclude that *ihsân*, i.e., doing the worship in the best way and having taqwa, which is recommended in many verses of the Qur'an, are essentially the same thing. Both of them mean for a person to be aware of what he does, to fear that Almighty Allah will punish him when he does something wrong, to avoid all that could lead to hellfire, and to avoid all that could prevent him from entering Paradise.

f. What is Taqwa?

Hadrat Omar RA was very knowledgeable person, and he would ask questions. He asked Ubey ibn-i Kâ'b RA: "Almighty Allah orders taqwa in the Qur'an. I want to hear from you. What is taqwa?"

Ubey ibn-i Kâ'b RA was one of the companions. He was a scholar; he knew the Qur'an well. He was one of them who collected the verses of the Qur'an. Hadrat Omar RA, too, was a knowledgeable person, yet they would exchange knowledge by asking questions. Hadrat Omar RA asked: "How do you understand taqwa?"

Ubey ibn-i Kâ'b RA asked a question in response:

"O Omar, have you walked in a field that had thorns?"

"Yes, I have."

"How did you walk?"

"I picked up the skirt of my dress."

"Why did you do that?"

"I lifted up the skirts of my dress because I did not want it to be torn. Then I paid attention to where I stepped to avoid the thorns. They could hurt the feet and make it bleed. They could tear the dress."

"That is taqwa."

What a great answer! Ubey ibn-i Kâ'b RA explained it with an example, in a way that would stick to the minds.

Taqwa is living a life as though walking in a field full of thorns. A Muslim must lead a life as though he is walking in that field. The thorns of this life are the offenses and sins. If you step on a thorn of sin, you will injure yourself spiritually. If you commit an offense, you will wound yourself spiritually. You have to avoid the offenses and sins. You have to be extremely careful in life.

"Do people commit sins because they don't know what is sin?"

"Not at all! They know it well what is haram. Everybody knows that drinking intoxicants, gambling, uttering lies, and involving in usury are sins. Very few people would be committing a sin without knowing. People commit sins knowing it is prohibited by Allah. They do it because they cannot control their nafs. They say afterwards, "I am sorry. I could not help it! I could not control myself. I followed the path of Satan; I followed the desires of my nafs."

During the month of Ramadhan, a Muslim practices controlling his nafs. He does the training by not drinking water, not eating food and not getting intimate with his spouse. Almighty Allah put up our strongest and stormiest desires to train us. By not doing them from dawn to sunset, a person learns avoidance and taqwa.

Do we understand the verse of the Qur'an better?

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

(البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Kutibe aleykumu's-siyâm*) "Fasting has been prescribed on you as an obligation (*kemâ kutibe 'ale'lledhîne min qablikum*) as it was prescribed upon those before you" because they had the same responsibility. They had nafs, too, and they would become better persons if they controlled their nafs. "(*Leallekum tetteqùn*) that you

may attain taqwa and become righteous." (Qur'an 2:183)

Dear Brothers and Sisters. Do not consider fasting as "staying hungry from dawn to sunset" only. Go beyond that and understand the purpose.

Few days ago we were in Egypt. An imam came to us and introduced himself. We greeted him, too. Then we had a request:

"Egyptians recite the Qur'an well. Could you recite some Qur'an for us?"

The imam responded: "I sure could, yet I would have a request. It is my custom, a weakness, to ask those who are present to listen to the Qur'an not by their ears but with their hearts."

There are so many people who hear things, but they act as though they never heard it. A child hears his father's words, yet he goes and does the same thing that he should not do. Why would he do that? He could not control himself. We often say, his father's words "entered through one ear and got out through the other ear." We know that there is no such thing, yet we imply that the person did not do what he was told to. Listening is not enough; one must understand and apply on himself. The person must instill what he hears into his heart. Looking is not enough; one must see it and place it in his heart. That is why the imam said: "I will recite the Qur'an, but you should listen to it not only by your ears but also by your hearts."

Dear brothers and Sisters! You must not carry out fasting in the form only. You should not be content with being thirsty or hungry whole day; try to understand its meaning and purpose, too.

What is purpose of fasting? (*Leallekum tetteqùn*) It is a task to make you god-conscious and strengthen your will power. It is a great training work. If I may say, it has been a modern training work for over centuries. It is a method for strengthening the will power that the man of twentieth century has been looking for.

Unfortunately we see some Muslims fasting the whole day and at the iftar they light a cigarette. What happened? What happened

to the training? He tried getting taqwa all day, and in the evening he broke his training. As the songs go:

*Karakolda doghru söyler
Mahkemedede shashirir
Akshamdan söz verip de
Sabaha dönüsh mü olur?*

*He tells the truth at the police station,
Yet he gets confused in the court case.
Would one promise in the evening
Then change his mind next morning?*

You ought to have taqwa and learn avoidance. If something is haram, you are not going to do it after iftar, either. You must not do it after Ramadhan, either.

I would like to end my discourse with something bitter and important. What is the sign of acceptance of our worship in Ramadhan? We offered Tarawih prayers, recited Qur'an and fasted. We offered night vigil prayers, spend money on charitable causes, fed the poor and invited people for iftar. Are they accepted? Our beloved Prophet said: "The sign of acceptance of the worship carried out in Ramadhan is the continuation of this excellent state of the person after Ramadhan."

After Ramadhan, if the person does not maintain his good state that he acquired in Ramadhan, if resumes bad activities after Ramadhan, it means that Allah has not accepted that person's worship in Ramadhan. That is why we should pay attention to this. The purpose of fasting is to learn self control and strengthen the will power against the offenses and haram. The purpose is to acquire taqwa. Do not forget this at all. Remember it after the iftar and after the month of Ramadhan. Live a life with taqwa.

Almighty Allah will place His *muttaqî* servants (those who have taqwa) in His Paradise.



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أَعَدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (آل عمران: ١٣٣)

(*U'iddet li'l-muttaqîn*) "Paradise is prepared as a reward for the servants who have taqwa." (Qur'an 3:133) If you learn taqwa and acquire it as it was stated in the verse (... *leallekum tetteqûn*) then Paradise will be yours. The prophet SAS said:

أَكْثَرُ مَا يَدْخُلُ النَّاسُ الْجَنَّةَ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَحَسَنَ الْخَلْقِ (حم. خ .
 في الأدب، ت. ه. ك. حب. هب. عن أبي هريرة)

RE. 80/3 (*Aktheru mâ yudkhilu'n-nâs al-jannah taqwa'llahi wa husnu'l-khuluqi*) "What takes people to Paradise is taqwa and good code of conduct." You are going to acquire taqwa in Ramadhan as

you fast and learn how to control your nafs. Most people who deserve Paradise deserve it because of their taqwa.

The second quality to take a person to Paradise is the *husnu'l-khuluq*, the good code of conduct and good manners. The good code of conduct originates from taqwa, too. If a person has a strong will power, if his nafs is trained, then he can have good manners. He becomes patient, merciful, generous, and helpful. He abandons envy, grudge, oppression, and stinginess. Taqwa is the source of the good characters.

For the training, one month is a pretty long time, not short at all. It also repeats every year. A person undergoes this training every year. It is an annual spiritual and bodily maintenance. We ought to learn about taqwa and understand it well. We ought to strengthen our will power and join in this Ramadhan among those who have taqwa. We should succeed in becoming muttaqî servants of Allah, for Allah loves those who have taqwa and grant them good ends. He treats them with blessings in His Paradise.

May Almighty Allah make your fasting real--not in form only. May He not place us among those who fast without being aware of the meanings of fasting.

May He grant us the good feelings that are meant for us in Ramadhan. May He strengthen our will power and remove the tarnish from our hearts. May He remove the curtains from our eyes so that we can see the truth as truth, the path leading to His consent, and His Beauty. May He grant us the love of His path. For the rest of our lives, may Allah make us His beloved servants, grant us taqwa, and keep us on His straight path.

With the secrets of the Surah Fatiha!

February 3, 1995 / Ramadhan 3, 1415
Sirri Kirimlioglu Mosque – ANTALYA

06. REWARDS FOR FASTING

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

I seek refuge with Allah from Satan

In the name of Allah the Merciful the Beneficent.

Al-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâraken fîh... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jalâli wajhîhî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa alâ âlihî wa sahbîhî wa men tebi'ahû bi-ihsânin ejmaîn...

Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. We praise Him with the best of the praises endlessly. Peace and blessings of Allah be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammed Mustafa. May Allah convey our greetings and respect to the Prophet. May He grant us his intercession on the Day of Judgment and keep us on his path.

a. Value of Ramadhan

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have reached such a blessed month. How nice to appreciate it! When the three months—Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramadhan—arrived, the Prophet would do more worship in these months.

The Prophet has been reported to say: "Rajab is the month of planting; Sha'ban, cultivating; Ramadhan, harvesting." That means the process of earning rewards starts with the beginning of Rajab and continues through Ramadhan.

As indicated in a hadith, the beginning of Ramadhan is mercy; the middle, forgiveness; and the end is (*itkun minan-nâr*) freedom from hell. As a person offers prayers and fasts, his rewards accumulate and he attains forgiveness. That leads to freedom from Hell. The danger of falling into hellfire is kept away from the

person. If a servant is kept away from Hell, he is placed in Paradise:

فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ (آل عمران: ١٨٥)

(*Femen zuhziha anin nâri wa udkhile'l-jennete feqad fâz*) "So he who is drawn away from the fire and admitted to Paradise has attained his desire." (Qur'an 3:185)

This is such a great month, the last of the three-months. It is the time for spiritual harvest. It is truly the queen of the eleven months as it is displayed in lights on minarets.

Ibn-i Abbas RA was a knowledgeable companion of the Prophet. He was one of the four Abdullahs. He was asked which month was the best. He said: "the best of the months is Ramadhan." We all know this without any doubt.

It was reported from Abû Mes'ud al-Ghifârî RA:¹²

أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، يَقُولُ: يَوْمَ أَهْلَ شَهْرِ
رَمَضَانَ: لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الْعِبَادُ مَا فِي شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ، لَتَمَنَّى الْعِبَادُ أَنْ
يَكُونَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ سَنَةً (طب. عن أبي مسعود الغفاري)

(*Ennehû semia rasûla'llah SAS yeqûlu: Yewme uhillê shehru ramadhàn*) The Prophet of Allah said: "When the crescent of the month of Ramadhan is sighted, (*lew ya'lemul ibâdi mâ fî shehri ramadhàn*) if the servants knew what is in Ramadhan — the blessings, mercy, rewards — (*letemennel ibâdi en yekûne shehru ramadhàn, seneten*) they would wish that Ramadhan lasted a whole year."

¹² Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.XXII, s.388, no:967; Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.33, no:4782; İbn-i Esir, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.1245; Ebû Nuaym, *Ma'rifetü's-Sahabe*, c.XXI, s.82, no:6393; Ebû Mes'ud el-Gifârî RA'dan.



The Tomb of Abdulkàdir-i Geylânî, BAGHDAD

We fast during the day and the Isha and Tarawih prayers add up to 33 rakat. Both have great rewards. Those who know the rewards would wish that the whole year were Ramadhan.

That means it would not be sufficient no matter how much we respect, love and appreciate this month. Alhamdulillah, we are in such a month.

I have been reading these ahadith from the book Ghunyatu't-Tàlibîn written by our great master Abdulqadir-i Geylânî RhA. I love this book. You love Abdulqadir-i Geylânî RhA, too. May Almighty Allah grant his intercession on the Day of Judgment. He was among the greatest of awliyallah, the leader of the Qadîrî tariqa. He was a great scholar, a descendent of the Prophet SAS. I love him very much and keep his book with me. It has a section on Ramadhan that contains information that is not found elsewhere

together. May Almighty Allah bless his soul and elevate his stage. May He make us neighbors to him in Paradise.

Naturally, as we read from His book, he earns rewards because a book is *sadaqa-i jâriyah* — a running charity. When a person writes a book and the book is benefited from, the author earns rewards for that as long as the book is used. If a teacher raises a student, he would earn rewards as long as the student is in the service of Islam.

Your imam, for instance, has been raised by a teacher. He led the prayer in congregation, alhamdulillah we offered the prayers together. The imam earned rewards as you earned your rewards; also his teacher earned rewards. Not only that, your parents earned rewards for raising you as Muslims. They continue earning rewards even after they die.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! There is good news: Our elderly who passed away are informed about our good deeds every Friday. They are told: "Your son or daughter did this and this." They feel happy to receive such good news. May Allah bless them all, illuminate their graves and elevate their stages. May their graves be like gardens of Paradise. May Allah increase their happiness.

Nûr means light. If the lights are turned off, we cannot see anything. There is light and we enjoy it. I could see the pages of this book and read it. Light is something very good. Each person needs light in the grave and on the bridge of Sirat. Our worship will be our light on the bridge of Sirat.

نورهم يسعى بين أيديهم وبأيمانهم (التحریم : ٨)

(*Nûrhum yes'â beyne eydîhim wa bi-eymânihim*) "Their light will proceed before them and on their right." (Qur'an 66:8) The worship of the believer will become light and illuminate his path.

Those who passed away feel happy in their graves when they are told that their children did something good. On the other hand, if

their children are doing something bad, they feel sorry.

As you are aware the evil has two kinds:

1. Doing bad things
2. Neglecting the good things.

If a person fails doing the obligations (*fard*), he would be doing something evil. Doing something prohibited (*haram*) is evil, too.

The best gift a person gives to his parents who passed away is being a good person because an equal amount of rewards for the good deeds carried out by this person is given to the parents. Nothing is reduced from the rewards of the person—no need to worry. Almighty Allah does not take away any rewards from him; He has endless mercy and blessings. He gives an equal amount of rewards to the parents. Alhamdulillah, this is a great blessing.

You can imagine: Bursa has the chestnut candy/sweet. When we pass through Bursa, we buy chestnut candy and take it to our destination. Afyon has the cream and other types of candy. Each locality has something different and famous. We buy these and take as gifts. You may wonder: "What kinds of gifts can we send to our relatives who passed away?" The best gift for them would be for you to become a good Muslim. Offer your prayers, recite the Qur'an, spend on charitable causes, and do other good deeds. When you are good persons, your elderly who passed away feel good. You dream about them, and they thank you for that. If you do not do good deeds, you would dream about them, too, but you see them sad. That could mean that they want you to do something good for them. They would be saying, "Son, do not forget me!"

b. The Sleep and Silence of Fasting Person

We have been reading some ahadith about Ramadhan. Abdullah ibn-i Abû Awfâ RA reported:¹³

¹³ Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.415, no:3937; Abdullah ibn-i Ebî Evfâ RA'dan. Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.397, no:3761; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.



Mehmet Çiçek Mosque, ANTALYA

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : نَوْمُ الصَّائِمِ عِبَادَةٌ ، وَصَمْتُهُ
تَسْبِيحٌ ، وَدَعَاؤُهُ مُسْتَجَابٌ ، وَعَمَلُهُ مُضَاعَفٌ (هَب. عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ
ابن أَبِي أَوْفَى)

(*Qàle rasûlu'llah SAS*) The Prophet SAS said. The source of knowledge is the Prophet. Almighty Allah revealed to the heart of the Prophet all the light and knowledge on the spiritual matters and other knowledge. He conveyed that knowledge to people for 23 years. He explained the Qur'an and the details that are not in the Qur'an. He also practiced and showed people Islam. He was a

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.718, no:23602 ve s.728, no:23631; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIV, s.25, no:13696.

living example of perfect Muslim and follower of the Qur'an. He was a great example for the companions and for us, too.

As you know, the painters and sculptors take a model and produce their work by looking at that model. Our role model, the one we are going to follow, is our beloved Prophet, Muhammad the chosen one. When we follow his footsteps, we will find salvation. He is the source of all knowledge. Almighty Allah revealed the Qur'an to him, and he informed us about it. The Qur'an came to us through the Prophet SAS.

With all of these, the Prophet SAS is the crown on our heads. We uphold his Sunnah. It is not possible to abstain from the Sunnah of the Prophet. We cannot say, "the Qur'an suffices for us" because the Sunnah is the interpretation of the Qur'an and a personified example of the Qur'an. I state these because some people who lack knowledge make incorrect statements that are misleading and confusing to people. We ought to get the facts.

The Prophet SAS said:

(Nawmus-sâ-imi ibâdetun) This is one of the rewards of fasting: "The sleep of the person who is fasting is a form of worship." Sometimes, the person who is fasting feels sleepy and takes a nap. The season could be summer or winter, hot or cold. Days could be long.

We were in Stockholm. It is a location close to the north pole. During the winter, the sun rises around 9 o'clock, and noon at 12 o'clock. Asr time is around 1 o'clock and sun goes down at 3 o'clock. It has a very long night. It is the opposite in summer time. Days are long while nights are very short. They have a hard time completing the Tarawih in Ramadhan. Some of our people who work there are workers in the ship-building industry. For instance, they do welding in a place where the temperature could rise to 60 to 70 degrees Celsius. They fast while they work, and the days could be long. They get tired and need a nap while they are fasting.

They do not sleep at all at night in Ramadhan. They pray the maghrib at the mosque, eat something there, pray Isha and

Tarawih. Stay there a little while and pray Fajr and go to work. They are brave people. As they get out the work, they deserve some sleep.

(*Nawmus-sâ-imi ibâdetun*) "The sleep of the person who is fasting is a form of worship. (*Wa samtuhû tasbîhun*) His silence is glorification Allah." It is like they keep saying subhanallah. they receive rewards for that. A person who is fasting could talk less than other times. Fasting makes a person more pleasant.

The sleep and the silence of a person who is fasting are forms of worship. (*Wa duâuhu mustajâbun*) "The prayers of a fasting person are answered." A person who fasts becomes a beloved servant of Allah. He abstains from eating food, drinking water and intimacy with his spouse for the sake of Allah. He abandoned the strong desires of his nafs for Allah. That is why Allah loves him. Allah loves him because he is doing all of that for the sake of Allah. Then his prayers are answered.

Knowing this, we ought to try to get the prayers of a person who is fasting. We ought to keep him happy and serve him. We ought to offer him good things and food for iftar. That is how we can get his prayers for us.

(*Wa ameluhû mudâafun*) "His deeds are rewarded in multifold." The fasting person is rewarded 70 times more in Ramadhan than other times for the same deeds. This is not a small difference—very significant increase indeed!

I would not know if you offer *nafilah* salat after Isha. I would not know if you make fresh wudu'u and offer salat before going to bed or if you get up for the night vigil (*tahajjud*) prayer. But I know that we offer 20 units of Tarawih prayer after Isha in Ramadhan. If we multiply it by 70, it would make 1400 units! We are given the rewards of 1400 units of prayer. If we spend for charity, it would count seventy times in Ramadhan. If we do dhikr, it would be rewarded seventy times more, too.



The Tomb of Prophet Muhammed SAS, MADINAH

That is why some Muslims who know this fact, who learned the secrets of the matter from their teachers, pay their Zakah in Ramadhan. As you know, there are some conditions for the Zakah. One of the conditions is that it has to pass one year after the possession of the goods for them to be subject to Zakah. Suppose you earned some money now. You are not required to pay Zakah on that money until a year passes while that money is in your possession. Some people make calculations and pay their Zakah ahead of time in Ramadhan.

If you go to Saudi Arabia in Ramadhan, you observe the Saudis practicing that. Some are very smart and knowledgeable about this hadith. They pay their Zakah in Ramadhan. He gets his money fold and gives to the poor from the window of his Mercedes in fifty or one-hundred Riyal bills. They know that it earns seventy times more rewards in Ramadhan.

That is the *amel-i mudàaf*. *Mudàaf* means 'in many folds.' We know from other ahadith that the good deeds are rewarded in seventy folds in Ramadhan.

c. Forgiveness for Offenses between two Ramadhans

Abû Hayseme reported:¹⁴

رَمَضَانَ إِلَى رَمَضَانَ ، وَالْحَجَّ إِلَى الْحَجِّ ، وَالْجُمُعَةَ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ ،
وَالصَّلَاةَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ ، كَفَّارَةً بِمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ مَا اجْتَنَبْتَ الْكَبَائِرَ .

(*Kânû yeqûlûne ramadhànu ilâ ramadhàn, wal hajju ile'l-haj, wa'l-jumuatu ila'l-jumuah, wa's-salâtu ila's-salâh, keffârâtun bimâ beynehunne mejtunibeti'l-kebâiru*) "A Ramadhan is expiation for the sins committed since the previous Ramadhan provided that the major offenses are not committed. So are a Hajj since the previous Hajj, a Friday since the previous Friday, and a prayer since the previous prayer." If one avoids the major offenses, fasting in Ramadhan, performing Hajj, offering the Friday prayer and offering daily prayers causes the sins to be wiped out. This is such a good and comforting news.

Al-hamdu lillah we are in the first week of Ramadhan. Last year we fasted in Ramadhan, and we are in Ramadhan again. If we fast in this Ramadhan properly, Almighty Allah erases all of the offenses that we committed since the last Ramadhan. When we offer the Friday prayer properly, a week of sins will be wiped out. There are, of course some manners of offering the Friday prayer such as taking a bath (*ghusl*) before coming to masjid. A prayer wipes out the sins committed after the previous prayer. If we want our sins to be forgiven, we must offer our prayers regularly, not miss the Friday prayers and appreciate the Ramadhan well.

¹⁴ Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Misned*, v.II, p.400, no:9186; by Ebû Hüreyre RA.

Hadrat Omar RA was one of the Ashara-i Mubash-sharah. He was one of the ten people who were informed by the Prophet that they would go to Paradise. Hadrat Omar was also the father-in-law of the Prophet: His daughter was married to the Prophet. What else? He is also a companion to the Prophet SAS in the grave. He is buried in the room where the Prophet SAS was buried. It is not a simple matter to be buried close to the Prophet. If Allah does not want it, He would keep the person away. Hadrat Omar rests in the same room as the Prophet SAS.

There is an anecdote about Hadrat Aisha RA, the mother of the believers, in the book *Dalâil-i Khayrat*. She had a dream that three full moons fell off the sky to her room and disappeared there. It was amazing: three large full moons disappearing in her little room. She went to her father, Hadrat Abubakr as-Siddîq RA, and told him about her dream. He used to enjoy interpreting the dreams. He told his daughter: "O my daughter! Three blessed persons will be buried in your room. These three persons are the most blessed persons on the face of the earth." Hadrat Aisha was the wife of the Prophet, and she had a room next to the masjid of the Prophet. The grave of the Prophet is in that place.

Time passed. When the Prophet SAS left this life for the hereafter, the companions consulted among themselves where the Prophet should be buried. One of the companions suggested: "The prophets are buried where they die. They are not taken away elsewhere. We must bury him in the room he died." That is how the Prophet's body was buried. After the funeral, Hadrat Abubakr as-Siddîq RA went to his daughter Hadrat Aisha RA and said: "O my daughter! Do you remember the dream you told me about? Three full moons had disappeared in your room. I had told you that three of the best people in the world would be buried in your room. The Prophet was one of the three moons. He was the best of all."

This blessed person, Hadrat Abu Bakr RA, must have known the second and the third persons to be buried there because he was the highest of the awliya. Allah knows, Hadrat Abubakr must have known that the second person to be buried there was himself and

the third person Hadrat Omar RA. They were great personages.

Hadrat Omar RA was a great person, too. He was a father-in-law to the Prophet SAS. He was buried in the same room with the Prophet. He had the honor of being close to the prophet in grave. Dear Brothers and Sisters! Why am I telling all of these things? There were factions among Muslims, and hatred and enmity grew towards some of the companions of the Prophet SAS. There are people who consider Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat Omar as their enemies. I would like tell them something logical: "If they were not good people, Almighty Allah would not allow them to be buried next to His beloved Prophet. They both are among the Ashara-i Mubashsharah as informed by the Prophet. Aren't these proofs enough? Stop talking against these blessed people."

Hadrat Omar RA used to say when Ramadhan arrived:

مرحباً بشهرٍ خيرٍ، خيرٍ كله صيامٍ نهاره وقيامٍ ليله .

(*Marhaban bi-shahri khayrin!*) "Welcome o month which is full of goodness."

The Arabic word *shahr* refers to a month 29 to 30 days of time length. *Shahri* Ramadhan means the month of Ramadhan. In Farisî, it is *mâh*. *Mâh-i* Ramadhan is the month of Ramadhan in Persian. *Shehr* does not mean a city or town with the walls and houses in it. The word *shehir* is used for that in Turkish, and it comes from Persian.

Hadrat Omar RA would welcome the month and say: (*Khayru kulluhû, sayâmu nehâruhû qiyâmu layluhû*) "All is goodness, fasting during the day and prayers at night." The night starts with the sunset, and the prayers at night refers to the Tarawih prayers.

d. The Night Vigil (Tahajjud) Prayer

Yet some of the true lovers of Allah would go home and pray more. That is light upon light, cream on top of cream! How nice it

is! May Allah accept their prayers.

Or a Muslim went home after the prayer and slept because he worked during the day and got tired. The Tarawih prayer could make him more tired. Since now it is winter time, all the prayers in the mosque ends by eight o'clock. If people go outside, they will find something to do and not go to sleep right away. Suppose one went to sleep. Then he got up for the suhur meal. He shall make wudu and offer two units of night vigil prayer because the night vigil prayer is recommended for the Prophet SAS.

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَكَ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا
(اسراء: ٧٩)

(*Wa mine'l-leyli fetehejjed bihî nâfileten lek, asâ en yeb'aseke rabbuke maqâmen mahmûdâ*) [As for the night, keep vigil a part of it, as a work of supererogation for thee; it may be that your Lord will raise thee up to a laudable station.] (Qur'an 17:79)

Our Lord has ordered the Prophet to offer voluntary prayers at night, and the Prophet never neglected it. In a hadith he said:¹⁵

رَكَعَتَانِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا.

(*Rek'atâni mine'l-leyli*) "Two units of prayer at night (*khayrun mine'd-dunyâ wa mâ fîhâ*) are better than this world and everything in it."

When we hear the word "world," we may have a difficulty imagining it. However, when we hear "everything in it," the

¹⁵ With a different wording: Deylemi, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, v.III, p.455, no:5404; by Abdullah ibn-i Omar RA.

Kenzu'l-Ummal, v.VII, p.785, no:21405; *Jamiü'l-Ehadith*, v.XIII, p.145, no:12782.

meaning sinks in our mind. There are so many things in the world: The shores, mansions, palaces, treasures... There are so many things in the world. Getting up to offer two units of prayer at night is better than the world and everything in it.

We have a hard time getting up for the night vigil prayer outside the Ramadhan because we go to sleep late. We have a hard time getting up for the Fajr prayer. We are not used to. It is difficult to get up for the Fajr prayer. This is the general state of Muslims. It is the beauty of Islam to have the ordinary people as well as the elite get up for suhur in Ramadhan for the sake of eating some food—pastry, pilaf, fruit, sweet stuff or juice. Everybody gets up in the middle of the sleep, happy and content, without any complaints. The children, the grown-ups, the brave, and the strong, everybody gets up for suhur meal in Ramadhan.

Other times people would not get up from the sleep even if you drag them from their feet. If the person is strong, he would get angry at you and ask you to go away. But in Ramadhan, he gets up. Once he gets up, he should make wudu' and offer two units of night vigil prayer and earn rewards that are better than this world and everything in it. He should not miss this great opportunity. I am reminding you about this as I talk.

What did Hadrat Omar RA said? "Welcome o Ramadhan that is full of goodness! All is goodness, fasting during the day and prayers at night."

Why is fasting during the day is good? Almighty Allah says in the hadith qudsî:¹⁶

¹⁶ Buhârî, *Sahih*, c.XXIII, s.11, no:6938; Müslim, *Sahih*, c.VI, s.19, no:1946; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.III, s.234, no:695; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.234, no:7194; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.II, s.45, no:1235; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VIII, s.232, no:8492; İbn-i Amr eş-Şeybânî, *el-Âhâd ve'l-Mesânî*, c.III, s.269, no:1649; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.235, no:7898; Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.IV, s.279, no:3285; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.164, no:2675; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.379, no:7723; Abd ibn-i Humejd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.288, no:921; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.VI, s.476, no:2507; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.III, s.5, no:8986; İbn-i Asâkir, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.269, no:541; İbnü'l-Ca'd,

الصَّوْمُ لِي، وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ (خ. م. عن أبي هريرة)

(*As-sawmu li wa ene ejzî bihi*) "Fasting is mine; I accept it for Myself. I will reward it Myself." Almighty Allah will reward it in an unaccountable way because the fasting is a hidden form of worship. It is not like formal prayer (*salat, namaz*). People can see you offering prayers as you stand, bow down and prostrate. You could not know if a person is fasting unless you ask the person. In Ramadhan, we assume that everybody fasts, but other times we cannot tell if a person is fasting.

You offer a person some food: "Come and eat with us!"

"No thank you. I will not eat."

"Come have some with us at our table."

"Thank you very much. I will pass."

Müsned, c.I, s.174, no:1120; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VI, s.273; İbn-i Hibbân, *Tabakâtü'l-Muhaddisîn*, c.III, s.66, no:254; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.XXIII, s.219; Ukaylî, *Duafâ*, c.III, s.99; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.345; Dâra Kutnî, *İlel*, c.X, s.162, no: 1955; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimâşk*, c.XI, s.371; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Müslim, *Sahih*, c.II, s.806, no:1151; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VII, s.397, no:2183; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.232, no:7174; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VIII, s.232, no:8492; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.II, s.286, no:1005; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.273, no:8117; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.90, no:2523; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.164, no:2677; Abd ibn-i Humeyd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.288, no:921; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.III, s.5, no:8986; Ebû Saïd el-Hudrî RA'dan.

Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VII, s.394, no:2181; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.90, no:2521; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.I, s.167, no:915; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.III, s.177, no:4478; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.IV, s.349; Hz. Ali RA'dan.

Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VII, s.395, no:2182; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.446, no:4256; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.X, s.98, no:10078; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.90, no:2522; Hatib-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.VII, s.213, no:3691; Dâra Kutnî, *İlel*, c.V, s.316, no:907; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.XXII, s.59, 141; Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.IV, s.309, no:3391; Vâsile ibn-i Eska' RA'dan.

İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.1254; Ebû Meysere RA'dan.

İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.I, s.404; Abdullah ibn-i Abbas RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.VIII, s.445, no:23576-23629 ve 24271-24290; *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.416, no:5071-5080; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.VIII, s.275, no:7293; 34004, 40317.

"Are you fasting today?"

You ask the person because you cannot tell if a person is fasting. The worship carried out in secrecy is preferred. Also, the fasting represents self-control. A person who is fasting overpowers his nafs, frees himself from his desires, and controls his will power. This is very desirable. That is why Almighty Allah says, "Fasting is for Myself, and I will reward it Myself."

Fasting has advantages despite the hunger and thirst we experience. You can ask doctors about its medical benefits. There is a sugar production plant in Burdur. There may be one in Antalya, too. During the summer months, the whole plant undergoes an overhaul. The machines in the plant are disassembled and cleaned. It is prepared for the next season. If it is not overhauled, the plant cannot produce sugar. The whole system would be clogged, congested and sticky.

The human body is like that, too. Al-hamdu lillâh, the stomach takes a rest. The pancreas and other digestive system organs take a break. The liver gets relaxed for a while. The fat that has accumulated on our bellies, back and other parts of our body melts away. Sometimes, a person could gain weight in Ramadhan. That is the fault of the ladies because they make delicious meals.

May Almighty Allah awaken all of us from the sleep of unawareness. May he place us among the knowledgeable and aware servants. May He make us His awliya. May He have us lead a life in compliance with His consent. May He grant His guidance with us. May He make us His special servants... May He grant us a pleasant end as we depart from this life. May He honor us with his Beauty in His Paradise.

With the secrets of Surah Fâtihah!

February 4, 1995 / Ramadhan 4, 1415
Mehmed Çiçek Mosque - ANTALYA

07. TURNING AWAY FROM SIN

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad Coşan

Eùdhu bi'llâhi mina'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

El-hamdü li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mübâreken fîh... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jalâli wejhihî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidînâ muhammedin wa alâ âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebi'ahû bi-ihsânin ejmaîn...

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Almighty Allah have all of you benefit from the blessings of this Blessed month of Ramadhan. May He accept our prayers, supplications, Tarawihis and fasts and make them means for earning His consent.

Our beloved Prophet informed in a Hadith Qudsî that Almighty Allah said the following:

يَقُولُ اللهُ تَعَالَى: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! هَلْ عَصَيْتُمُونِي، فذَكَرْتُمْ غَضَبِي فَانْتَهَيْتُمْ
عَنْ مَعْصِيَتِي؟ وَهَلْ آتَيْتُمْ فَرَائِضِي كَمَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ آتَيْتُمُ الْمَسَاكِينَ
مِنْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ، إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَسَاءِ إِلَيْكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ عَفَوْتُمْ، لِمَنْ
ظَلَمَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ وَصَلْتُمْ، لِمَنْ قَطَعَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ وَفَيْتُمْ لِمَنْ خَانَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ
أَدَبْتُمْ أَوْلَادَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ أَرْضَيْتُمْ جِيرَانَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ سَأَلْتُمُ الْعُلَمَاءَ، عَنْ أَمْرِ
دِينِكُمْ؟ فَانِي لَا أَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ، وَلَا مَحَاسِنِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ أَنْظُرُ إِلَى

قُلُوبِكُمْ وَنِيَّاتِكُمْ، فَارْضُونِي بِهَذِهِ الْخِصَالِ عَنْكُمْ .

(*Yekülü'llâhu teâlâ: Ye'bne âdem! Hel asaytumûnî fedhekertum ghadabî fenteheytum an ma'siyetî? Wa hel âteytum ferâidî kemâ emertukum? Wa hel âteytumul mesâkîne min emwâlikum? Wa hel ahsentum ilâ men esâe ileykum? Wa hel afewtum limen zalemekum? Wa hel Wasaltum li-men Qata'akum? Wa hel wefeytum limen hânekum? Wa hel eddebtum ewlâdekum? Wa hel erdaytum jîrânekum? Wa hel se-eltumu'l-'ulemâe an emri dînikum? Feinnî lâ enzuru ilâ suwerikum wa lâ mehâsinukum. Welâkin enzuru ilâ qulûbikum wa niyyâtikum. Feerdawnî bihâdhihi'l-hisâli ankum.*)

Almighty Allah taught many things to His beloved Prophet. The prophet said:¹⁷

أَدَّبَنِي رَبِّي فَأَحْسَنَ تَأْدِيبِي (ابن السَّمْعَانِي فِي أَدَبِ الْإِمْلَاءِ
عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ)

(*Eddebenî rabbî wa ahsene te'dîbî*) [My Lord have trained me and made my training well.] Almighty Allah trained the "The Orphan Pearl" [i.e., Prophet Muhammed whose parents died when he was a child and grew up as an orphan] and blessed him with the knowledge of the past and the future. It feels like a person cannot study all of the ahadith of the Prophet that fills the libraries in a life time. His ahadith are like a treasure; a treasure of education in deed. Almighty Allah taught and showed him many things and elevated him to stages that no ordinary person could be. Allah granted His Prophet the Miraj and accepted him in His presence. The Prophet was blessed with blessings that nobody ever

¹⁷ *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.XI, s.406, no:31895; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.70, no:164; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.II, s.88, no:959.

experienced, for he was the leader of the prophets and a chosen beloved servant of Allah. Almighty Allah informed him of many things. The hadith I read is an example of such information:

a. Withholding Self from Committing an Offense

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ!

(*Ye'bne âdem!*) "O son of Adam!" said Almighty Allah. The Prophet has informed us about it. The words of Allah as stated by the prophet [which are not part of the Qur'an] are called Hadith-Qudsî. So this is a Hadith Qudsî.

Almighty Allah addressed us as "O son of Adam!" Since we all are descendants of Hadrat Adam AS, we are the Children of Adam (*Benî Adem*). In Arabic ibn means son while benî is the plural form: sons. We all are the children of Adam. Almighty Allah addressed us as "O son of Adam!"

I go into such detail because the last sentence contains a very good news: "You do these things, and I will be pleased with you." In other words, if we do the things mentioned in this Hadith Qudsî, we will earn the consent of Almighty Allah. In fact, this is the reason for me to select this hadith for today's discourse.

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! هَلْ عَصَيْتُمُونِي، فَذَكَرْتُمْ غَضَبِي فَانْتَهَيْتُمْ

عَنْ مَعْصِيَتِي؟

(*Ye'bne âdem!*) "O son of Adam! (*Hel asaytumûnî fedhekertum ghadabî fenteheyttum an ma'siyeti?*) Have you ever remembered My wrath and punishment and withheld yourself from committing an offense, a sin, a form of disobedience?" Have you ever been in a situation that you were about to commit a sin and you remembered Allah's commands and anger, then you decided not to commit that

sin?

Here is an example: It is stated in the Surah Yusuf, *bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا ، لَوْلَا أَنَّ رَأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ (يوسف: ٢٤)

(*Wa leqad hemmet bihî wa hemme bihâ*) Mother Zulaikha closed the door on Prophet Yusuf who was exceptionally handsome.

Another issue just came up, and I must state it. In fact Prophet Muhammed was more handsome than Prophet Yusuf AS. Once a companion made the following statement about Prophet Muhammad SAS:

"The face of the Prophet would shine like a sword." His face was so illuminated. The person thought of a bright and shiny object to describe that brightness. At that time, there were not many bright objects. For instance, the mirrors would be made out of polished silver.

Another companion objected the description: "What do you mean like a sword? His face was shiny like the moon and the sun." May Almighty Allah grant us the opportunities to see the beauty of the Prophet.

Mother Zulaikha had invited the ladies in her room and gave them knives and fruits to peel. When the ladies saw Prophet Yusuf, they were mesmerized by the beauty of Prophet Yusuf and they cut their hands in confusion. He had a stunning beauty.

فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ وَقَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا

بَشَرًا ، إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ (يوسف: ٣١)

(*Qatta'nâ eydiyehunne*) They cut their hands in that state of shock. They said: (*Inne hâshâ lillâh, mâ hâdhâ besherâ*) "Verily,

perfect is Allah! This is not a human being! (*in hâdhâ illâ melekun karîm*) This is none but a noble angel." (Qur'an 12:31)

Mother Zulaikha was attracted to Prophet Yusuf AS. He was a handsome young man. She was a noble lady, too. She wanted to seduce him. She closed the door and said, "Come, you!" Prophet Yusuf held himself back:

لَوْلَا أَن رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ (يوسف: ٢٤)

(*Lew lâ en ra'â burhâne rabbihî*) "He would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof [i.e., signs] of his Lord." (Qur'an 12:24) It is told that Prophet Yusuf all of a sudden saw his father Prophet Ya'qub AS before him. Prophet Ya'qub was biting his fingertips. Prophet Yusuf realized the gravity of the matter and said:

رَبِّ السِّجْنِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِي إِلَيْهِ (يوسف: ٣٣)

(*Rabbi's-sijnu ehabbu ileyye mimmâ yed'ûnenî ileyh*) "My Lord! Prison is more to my liking than to which these women invite me to." He preferred the prison over the desires of the women which were sinful. (Qur'an 12:33) He was a perfect servant of Allah, a chosen servant, a noble servant, a prophet, and a son of a prophet.

In this Hadith Qudsî, Almighty Allah asks us, children of Adam: "Have you ever held yourselves back when you were about the commit an offense while all the conditions for that offense existed, yet you thought about the punishment of Allah in the hereafter?" If you give up committing a sin in this manner, Almighty Allah will be pleased with you.

As a matter of fact, Almighty Allah had Hadrat Yusuf released from the prison and be a vizier for the ruler of Egypt. Almighty Allah also had Hadrat Yusuf marry Zulaikha in a legitimate and wholesome way. It was in their destiny; they had one another not in an unlawful way, but in a legitimate and pleasant way.

b. The Sustenance is Predetermined

We keep moving from one topic to another as it is called for. Once I read an incident in a book and enjoyed very much. Let me tell you that, too: Hadrat Ali and his servant came to a masjid in Kûfa. They dismounted the horse and asked a man to hold the bridle of the horse until they offered their prayers. They performed the prayers.

Hadrat Ali got five dirhams out of his money purse to tip the man who watched the horse. He was going to give it to the man outside. As they got outside, the man and the horse were gone. They looked around and found the horse roaming. The bridle of the horse was missing. Apparently, the man stole the bridle. He could not steal the horse, but he stole the bridle. Hadrat Ali handed the five dirhams to his servant and sent him to buy a bridle.

The servant went to a merchant and spotted a bridle. He recognized the bridle and claimed it back. The owner said: "I paid five dirhams for it. If it belonged to you, just pay me five dirhams." The servant paid five dirhams and returned to the masjid.

People gathered around Hadrat Ali and his servant. There were curious. Hadrat Ali said:

"O people! This is an important event to heed. I had intended to pay this man five dirhams for his service. This money was going to be his with my consent. If he had been patient, he would have earned five dirhams lawfully. Yet he was not patient! He still received the same amount of money, but he received it unlawfully. He stole the bridle, sold it and got five dirhams. He was going to receive five dirhams from me lawfully. He chose to receive it unlawfully. Almighty Allah sent him five dirhams and showed two ways: lawful way and unlawful way. If he had been patient, he would have received it lawfully. His sustenance was five dirhams for today, yet he got it unlawfully."

If we look at the purse of Hadrat Ali, it did not matter: He was

going to give five dirhams to the man, yet the money had to go the merchant. The money in the purse decreased by five dirhams. If you consider the merchant, he paid five dirhams to the thief and received five dirhams. He did not earn or lose money.

The money was destined to go to the man who was entrusted the horse. He was meant to receive five dirhams on that day. However, he received it in an unlawful way. The way one earns money can be lawful or unlawful; the reward, too, could be Paradise or hellfire.

Hadrat Yusuf were patient, did not give in to haram. He stayed away from haram and preferred imprisonment over haram. In the end, Almighty Allah rewarded him with marriage with the same woman in a lawful and honorable way.

This has been an example of how a person should hold himself back from committing an offense. A person could have opportunities; he could have desires. The apple could be in his reach, yet he should say, "I should not touch that apple, it is not mine. It is unlawful." If he does that, another person could bring him a plate full of apples. If it is in his destiny to eat apple, he would get it anyway. Nevertheless, one has to hold himself back from the unlawful ways. If a person does that, Almighty Allah loves him.

c. Fulfilling the Obligations

In the hadith I read, things that Almighty Allah likes are stated in the question form. You should be aware of them--that is why I explain them. We have to control ourselves and avoid looking at haram. We have to control ourselves not to listen to haram. We have to control ourselves not to support the haram. We shall control ourselves not to go to places where haram is committed.

What is taqwa? Almighty Allah says in the Glorious Qur'an, *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm:*

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ

مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Yâ eyyuhelledhîne âmenû kutibe 'aleykumus siyâm, kemâ kutibe alelledhîne min qablikum le'allekum tetteqùn*) (Qur'an 2:183) "O believers! Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who lived before you so that you may attain taqwa." The taqwa would mean holding back from committing an offense or avoiding a sin.

Here Almighty Allah has asked about that: "Have you remembered Me and My anger and then turn away from committing sin?" We must learn how to control ourselves and how to stay away from offenses. We have to practice our training that we have acquired in Ramadhan. We must not touch haram, look at haram, say haram, eat haram or approach haram.

وَهَلْ أَتَيْتُمْ فَرَائِضِي كَمَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel 'alteytum ferâidî kemâ emertukum?*" Have you fulfilled the obligations that I have ordered for you in the way they should be carried out?" Have you offered the daily prayers, pay the Zakah?

"*Aqîmus-salâh*" says Almighty Allah: "Establish the prayer in a complete sense." He does not say simply, "*Sallus salâh*--offer your prayer!" instead He says, "Establish the prayer in a complete sense." One has to offer the prayer in the best way. Again, Almighty Allah does not say simply, "*wa lâ teznû*--do not commit adultery!" instead, He says "*wa lâ taqrabuz zinâ*--do not come close to adultery!" We have to stay away from adultery; we should not pass through its neighborhood. We should avoid all that would lead to adultery; we should not look or talk. To provide all of this abstinence, men and women should not mingle freely, There should be separate places for man and women. There should be covering of the body. All of these are orders of Allah and precautions to keep people away from haram.

Almighty Allah asks: "Have you fulfilled the obligations that I ordered for you? Did you pay your dues? Did you carry out what had to be carried out?" The hadith continues:

وَهَلْ أَتَيْتُمُ الْمَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel âteytumu&l-mesâkîne min emwâlikum?*) Have you allocated some of what you have for the poor and needy? Have you spend for charitable causes?

As you know, paying Zakah is not a virtue--it is an obligation. It is the right of the poor on the rich.

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَعْلُومٌ . لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

(المعارج: ٢٤-٢٥)

(*Welledîne fi emwâlihîm haqqun ma'lûm*) "There is a known amount of right in the wealth of the rich." To whom does this right belong? This portion is (*li's-sâili wa'l-mahrûm*) "for the beggars and the deprived and the destitute." (Qur'an 70:24-25) That portion of the wealth does not belong to the rich, and it is to be given to the poor. If you consider yourself generous, then give away more than the required amount. Generosity is not limited by 2.5 % that is required for Zakah.

Did Hadrat Abu Bakr-i Siddîq limit his generosity to 2.5 %? When the Prophet asked for, he gave everything he had. The Prophet asked: "O Abu Bakr! What did you leave for your household?"

Hadrat Abubakr responded: "Allah and his Messenger suffice for them." He was at the stage of siddîqiyat, and that stage had that kind of honor. He would give everything he had without a tinge of hesitation. He would not be afraid of death. The prophet was not afraid of poverty or deprivation, neither was Hadrat Abubakr because he was the top of his Ummah.



d. Generosity of the Prophet

Once a Bedouin came to the Prophet. I like this incident and I can visualize it. A flock of sheep was brought to the Prophet as spoils of a battle.

Sometimes we see some sheep and lambs on the side of the road as we drive on the highway. They look healthy and well fed. The lambs look so cuddly. The season has plenty of rain, and the grass has grown. They enjoy it very well.

The Bedouin was from a tribe that lived in the desert. He liked the sheep very much. "O Prophet of Allah! How nice these sheep are!" they must have been a special kind of sheep and well fed. He liked them very much.

The Prophet asked, "Did you like them?"

"Yes, O Prophet of Allah. They are beautiful."

"They are yours. Take them all!"

If it were us, we would give one sheep or a leg of the lamb. Or we would give the head and feet of the animal because it would be

difficult for our wives to prepare it at home. Who is going to skin the head or torch the feet? That would be our mentality.

The Prophet said, "Take them all!"

"You mean all of them, o Prophet of Allah?"

"Yes, all of them!"

The Bedouin took the whole flock to his tribe. People who saw him returning with a large flock of sheep could not believe what they saw: "*Allahu akbar!* What is this? You left your tribe in the morning with nothing, and now you return with a flock of sheep. What did you do--steal a flock of sheep?"

He responded: "Mohammed gave them to me. He gave me them in a way that he was not afraid of poverty. He is extremely generous."

We would be afraid of poverty. When we want to give away something, we worry about our children and household. The Prophet SAS gave away the whole flock without any tinge of fear of poverty. The whole tribe were amazed and mesmerized. They all came to the Prophet SAS and accepted Islam.

Now you tell me which is better: a flock of sheep or a group of believers? The Prophet gave a flock of sheep, yet he got a groups of believers. It was an excellent deal.

The Prophet would give away things without the fear of falling into the poverty. So would Hadrat Abubakr. He said, "Allah and His Messenger suffice for my family." He meant that Allah would suffice for all their needs so long as they follow the path of the Prophet. He trusted in Allah in the absolute sense.

Almighty Allah asked in the Hadith Qudsî:

"Did you give some of your wealth to the needy?"

We shall do that because they have rights on our wealth. When we give their share, our wealth becomes purified. When the wealth is cleared of other people's rights, then it will be pure.

The literal meaning of the Arabic word Zakah is "cleansing." When the portion of Zakah is given away, the remainder of the

wealth becomes pure. Paying Zakah is a sign that a person is not stingy. However, it is the lowest level of generosity. The top level of generosity is the giving without the fear of falling into poverty, at the level of siddiqiyyet. One could give away everything he has for the sake of Allah--including his own life. One Ottoman poet said:

*Jân-i jânân dilemiş, vermemek olmaz ey dil,
Ne nizâ eyleylim, ol ne senindir ne benim!..*

*The beloved has asked for the soul, o my heart we cannot
refuse*

Why should I argue for that, it is neither mine nor yours!

How could one refuse when the beloved asks for the soul? This soul is not mine, nor is yours. It belongs to the beloved.

Almighty Allah is asking if we give away something for the poor and the needy. If we do that, He will be pleased with us.

One of the characteristics of the Ramadhan is pointed out by the Prophet:¹⁸

شَهْرُ الْمَوَاسَاةِ،

(*Shahru'l-muwâsâti*) "It is the month of muwâsât." Muwâsât means giving somebody some money or goods as charity. In Ramadhan we shall recite Qur'an, offer Tarawih prayers, and fast during the day. In addition, we shall open the money purse and the gate of the storehouse, and give some to the poor. We shall give them money and goods to make them happy. Then Almighty Allah will be pleased because winning the hearts is rewarding just as

¹⁸ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; İbn-i Şâhin, *Fadâilü Şehri Ramadân*, c.I, s.18, no:16; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdîs*, c.XXIII, s.176, no:25782.

building the walls of Ka'bah. Likewise, breaking somebody's heart, offending somebody is as grave as destroying Ka'bah.

Once our beloved Prophet turned to Ka'bah from a distance and said: "O Ka'bah! You are so beautiful and blessed. You are so precious, yet by Allah, the heart of the believer is dearer to Allah than you are."

The heart of the believer is more precious than Ka'bah. Can you imagine how much reward you would earn by making a poor believer's heart happy?

I was told in Istanbul once, and I liked it very much: A rich man got out of the mosque after the Eid prayer on a day of Eid al Adha. He grabbed the arm of a poor man who was big and tall yet humble. He told the white-bearded poor man, "Come along!" Well, he was a respectable rich man--may Allah bless his soul. They all are gone yet remembered by their good deeds. This rich man took the poor man to the area where the animals were sold for sacrifice. He instructed: "You would understand which lamb or sheep is better and tastier. Could you please choose the best of the animals for me?"

The poor man knew that he was rich and money was not the issue. He was not going to be thrifty about buying the sacrifice. He picked the best of the sheep and brought to the rich man: "Sir, this is the best. You can purchase this one."

The rich man said: "All right! Move it to the side." He paid the vendor for the sheep and turned to the poor man: "Take this to your home. Enjoy it with your family."

The poor man thought that the rich man was going to buy it and keep it to himself. He thought the rich man was asking him a favor and help him choose the best one. If he had known that the rich man was going to give it to the poor man, he would have picked a small animal which would cost less. He would have said, "This is sufficient, Sir. No need for a better one." He picked the best animal for the rich to take home. Yet the rich man paid the money and

asked the poor man to take the lamb.

This is very good and unforgettable. It has nothing with me, yet I have heard about it and keep praying for that generous man. The generous rich person has left this life, yet people still pray for him on this day of Ramadhan. Man would die, yet his fame continues to live. People are remembered for the good things they do.

e. Good Treatment in Return to Mistreatment

وَهَلْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ إِلَى مَنْ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel ahsentum ilâ men esâe ileykum?*) Here is another question: "Have you well treated a person who had mistreated you before?"

In general, we do not treat a person well if the person mistreats us. If somebody punches us, we would punch him back. It has been like this in the society. We would say: "What can I do? He started it." We take our jacket off, hit him with our head, punch him, kick him, grab him, take him down, roll on the ground... Why? He started it!

As the Prophet SAS informed us, Almighty Allah is asking: "Have you well treated a person who had mistreated you before?"

I was told that once in Pakistan a blessed man, who was a white-bearded dervish, a mujahid, went to a farmer who was plowing the soil. The dervish called the farmer to the edge of the field and advised him on Islam. The farmer got angry: "Is that why you called me here and kept me away from my work?" He punched the dervish on the face. While wiping the blood on his face, the dervish apologized: "I am sorry, I was wrong; I should not have interrupted your work. I should not have kept you away from your work." The farmer realized that the dervish was a blessed man. He apologized and cried while he sought forgiveness from the dervish.

In the Hadith Qudsî, Allah asks: "Have you well treated a person

who had mistreated you before?" You think about your own life and visualize the time that somebody treated you wrong and deserved to be punished. You should not wait at a corner and say: "I will teach him a lesson when he passed from our neighborhood."

Have you done something good for such a person? If you have, Almighty Allah loves you. If you do like this, love and affection will be cultivated. That would heal the wounds. If one tries to take revenge, the enmity and grudge continues.

Imagine a man running away from Diyarbakir to Bursa or Istanbul to escape from the blood feud. He tries to leave no traces so that he is considered lost. His opponents could follow him like the police detectives and kill him as soon as they find him. It is for the revenge of a murder case that was committed by another person in the family. Now an innocent member of that family is murdered for revenge. In Islam there is the principle:

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ (فاطر: ١٨)

(*Wa lâ teziru wâziratun wizra ukhra*) "No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another." (Qur'an 35:18) Nobody can be held responsible for something that is committed by somebody else. If you would find the murderer, you punish him. In Islam, the parties involved cannot issue the jurisdiction or the punishment; the judge issues the verdict. One cannot inflict harm on the other; there is no "*muqabala biz-zarar*--reciprocation with harm" in Islam. This is an important rule in Majallah.

Almighty Allah says in this hadith: "If you well treat a person who has mistreated you, you will earn my consent. If you give away from your wealth and earnings, you will earn My consent. If you fulfill your obligations, you will earn my consent. If you turn away from committing an offense or a sin by remembering my anger, you will earn my consent."

I remembered another Hadith Qudsî: On the Day of

Resurrection, Almighty Allah will ask one of His servants:

"O My servant! I got sick, but you did not come to visit Me!"

"*Subhanallah!* My Lord! You are the Lord of the Universe. How could you get sick? I do not understand."

"One of my servants was sick. If you had visited him, you had earned rewards as though you have visited Me."

"O My servant! I was hungry, but you did not feed Me!"

"*Subhanallah!* I glorify Thee o Allah! My Lord! You are the Lord of the Universe. You would not get hungry! You are above all of these needs. I fail to understand what You mean."

"One of my servants was hungry, and you did not feed him. If you had fed him, you would have earned rewards as though you had fed Me."

We infer from this Hadith Qudsî that Almighty Allah is pleased when we do good things to His servants.

Continuing with the first hadith,

f. Forgiving the Oppressor

وَهَلْ عَفَوْتُمْ لِمَنْ ظَلَمَكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel afewtum li-men zalemekum?*) "Have you ever forgiven someone who had oppressed and wronged you?" Imagine a person who definitely have ill treated you and deprived you of your rights. Have you ever forgiven such a person? Forgiving earns great rewards for the person. It is praised in the following verse:

وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ (آل عمران: ١٣٤)

(*We'l-kâzimîne'l-ghayza we'l-'âfine 'ani'n-nâs*) "who restrain anger and who pardon people..." (Qur'an 3:134) These are the attributes of people who have taqwa. Remember, we are acquiring taqwa in Ramadhan; we are taking a one-month training course on taqwa, remember the verse,

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Le allekum tetteqùn*) "So that you may acquire taqwa--become righteous." (Qur'an 2:183) What are the characteristics of people who have taqwa?

الَّذِينَ يَنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَآظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ
عَنِ النَّاسِ (آل عمران: ١٣٤)

(*Elledhîne yunfiqûne fi's-serrâi wa'd-darrâ'*) "They spend in the cause of Allah during the time of ease and hardship..."(Qur'an 3:134) They are generous; they open the money purse, the safe, the sack, and the storehouse... (*Wa'l-kâzimine'l-ghayz*) "They restrain anger, keep control of themselves. (*We'l-'âfîne 'anin nâs*) They forgive people." What can we do? People do things that are upsetting. We should control our anger and forgive them. As Yunus Emre --may his abode be Paradise in the hereafter--said:

*Yaradilani hosh gör,
Yaradan'dan ötürü!*

Be tolerant towards the creatures because of their Creator.
He suggests overlooking minor and insignificant matters.

*Nazar eyle itürü,
Bazar eyle götürü
Yaradilani hosh gör
Yaradan'dan ötürü*

When you look, look carefully
Do not deal with bits and pieces, look at the whole
Be tolerant towards the creatures

Because of their Creator

He recommends looking at the matter at hand carefully. One should handle the matter as a whole, not in bits and pieces. People have shortcomings. They may fail to keep their promises and forget the favors done for them. We ought to be tolerant towards them because Almighty Allah created them.

Also, when you forgive somebody who has done something wrong to you, the wounds heal and the society gets better. Bad people regret their offenses, and the order is established. Otherwise, one cannot prevent the demoralization in the society.

وهَلْ وَصَلْتُمْ لِمَنْ قَطَعَكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel wasaltum li-men qata'akum?*) "Have you visited somebody who has distanced himself from you?" He ignores your friendship, never comes to your neighborhood, and never asks how you are. He has cut off all the ties between you. Do you go and visit him? This is very important.

Our late master Mehmed Zahid Kotku RhA was a blessed man whom people loved and observed his miracles. While I was traveling with him, in a town he suggested:

"Let's go and visit brother x."

The person he wanted to visit was a younger person who was a disciple of our shaikh, yet who would talk negative things about our master. He was known to gossip about him. I approached to our master and said: "Father! That person has been talking against you behind your back. He does not like you, he is against you!"

Despite my remarks, our master insisted about going and visiting this person. He did not turn his back to him. Later on this person stopped backbiting and became a good dervish of our master.

The hadith Qudsî continues:

وهَلْ وَفَيْتُمْ لِمَنْ خَانَكُمْ؟



Mehmed Zâhid KOTKU Rh.A

(*Wa hel wefeytum li-men khànekum?*) “Have you been truthful to somebody who had betrayed your trust?”

وَهَلْ أَدَبْتُمْ أَوْلَادَكُمْ؟ وَهَلْ أَرْضَيْتُمْ جِيرَانَكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel eddebtum ewlâdekum?*) “Have you trained your children to have good manners? (*Wa hel erdaytum jîrânekum?*) Are your neighbors happy with you?”

وَهَلْ سَأَلْتُمُ الْعُلَمَاءَ عَنْ أَمْرِ دِينِكُمْ؟

(*Wa hel seeltumu'l-'ulemâe an emri dînikum?*) "Have you consulted with scholars to make sure that you learn the truth in your religion and not deviate from the truth?"

The Hadith Qudsî continues:

g. Almighty Allah looks at your Hearts

فَإِنِّي لَا أَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ ، وَلَا مَحَاسِنِكُمْ وَلَكِنِ أَنْظُرُ إِلَى
قُلُوبِكُمْ وَنِيَّاتِكُمْ ،

(*Feinnî lâ enzuru ilâ suwerikum wa lâ mehâsinukum.*) "I do not look at your physical shape or beauty." Almighty Allah says that He does not look at a person's physical appearance, wealth, lineage. The worldly values and virtues are not of His concern. He says: "(*Welâkin enzuru ilâ qulûbikum wa niyyâtikum*) Yet I look at your hearts and intentions."

The Hadith Qudsî ends with the following words:

فَارْضُونِي بِهَذِهِ الْخِصَالِ عَنْكُمْ .

(*Feerdawnî bihâdhihi'l-hisâli ankum.*) "You should earn My consent by doing these good deeds."

Lets summarize it and conclude the discourse:

The Hadith Qudsî started as "O son of Adam! Have you turned away from committing a sin as you were about to do it yet you remembered my wrath?" We have to stay away from sins and offenses. This is one of the things we shall do.

Next, "Have you fulfilled the obligations as I ordered?" To fulfill the obligations, we ought to learn about them. In the past, scholars formulated the obligations as "Thirty-two Obligations" and "Fifty-four Obligations." They had children memorize them.

(*Hel âteytumu'l-mesâkine min emwalikum?*) "Have you give from what you have to the poor and needy?" We must be generous. The generous is closer to Paradise while the stingy is closer to Hell.

(*Wa hel ehsantum ilâ men esâe ileykum?*) "Have you well treated somebody who had mistreated you before?"

(*Wa hel afewtum li-men zalemekum?*) "Have you forgiven one

who had done injustice to you?"

(*Wa hel wasaltum li-men qataakum?*) "Have you visited those who had cut their ties with you?" Are you in touch with your relatives and friends?

(*Wa hel wefeytum li-men khànekum?*) "Have you been loyal and constant for one who had betrayed your trust before?"

(*Wa hel eddebtum ewlâdekum?*) "Have you trained your children to have good manners?"

(*Wa hel erdaytum jîrânekum?*) "Have you pleased your neighbors? Are they happy about you? Do they say good words about you?"

(*Wa hel seeltumu'l-ulemâe an emri dînikum?*) "Have you consulted with the scholars on religion to avoid doing anything wrong."

The hadith ends as, "I do not look at your physical appearance, your faces, or worldly virtues; I look at your hearts and intentions. Pay attention to these points and earn My consent."

May Almighty Allah guide us to his straight path in this Ramadhan, the month of spiritual training, worship, and mercy. The beginning of this month is mercy; the middle, forgiveness; the end, freedom from the fire. May He grant us the ability to see the truth as truth and follow it. May He grant us the means to benefit from the blessings of this month and become a righteous servant. May He grant us the means to abandon our ill characters and acquire good manners.

May He keep us on His straight path as his beloved righteous servants.

With the secrets of Surah Fatihah!

**February 7, 1995 – ISPARTA
Ramadhan 7, 1415**

08. DELAYING THE REPENTANCE

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbil àlemîn... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî ejma'in... Wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ilâ yewmi'd-dîn...

Praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the Universe. The Prayers and peace be on our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and his sincere followers till the day of Resurrection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Since you have gathered, here, I would like to read you a hadith. Then I will describe the daily duty for those who like to be initiated to the tariqa.

Let us read the hadith first as a good advice on this blessed day of Ramadhan. You may take notes and benefit from it later, too.

The Prophet SAS said:

يقول الله تعالى:

يا ابن آدم! إلى متى تطلب التوبة وتسوف الاوقات؟ وترغب

في الآخرة، وتترك العمل، تقول قول العابدين، وتعمل عمل

المنافقين. إن أعطيت لم تقنع، وإن أبليت لم تصبر. تأمر

النَّاسَ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا تَفْعَلْهُ، وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الشَّرِّ، وَلَا تَنْهَى عَنْهُ . وَ
 تَحِبُّ الصَّالِحِينَ، وَلَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ، وَتَبْغِضُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ، وَأَنْتَ مِنْهُمْ.
 تَقُولُ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُ، وَتَفْعَلُ مَا لَا تَقُولُ . تَسْتَوْفِي حَقَّكَ، وَلَا
 تَوْفِي حَقَّ غَيْرِكَ . مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ جَدِيدٍ، إِلَّا وَالْأَرْضُ تُخَاطِبُكَ
 فِيهِ فَتَقُولُ لَكَ : يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ ! تَمْشَى عَلَى ظَهْرِي، وَمَصِيرَكَ
 إِلَى بَطْنِي، وَتَضْحَكُ عَلَى ظَهْرِي وَغَدًا يَا كُلُّكَ الدُّودُ فِي بَطْنِي.
 وَيُنَادِيكَ الْقَبْرِ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ ! أَنَا بَيْتُ الْمَسْئَلَةِ، وَبَيْتُ الْوَحْشَةِ،
 وَبَيْتُ الْوَحْدَةِ، فَاعْمُرْنِي وَلَا تَخْرِبْنِي.

(*Yaqùlu'llahu ta'âlâ*) Almighty Allah said:

This is a Hadith Qudsî. The Prophet informed us with his own words what Almighty Allah revealed to the Prophet. We should listen to it attentively.

a. Hurry up to Repent!

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ !

(*Yabne âdem!*) "O son of Adam!" This does not exclude the "daughters." We all are the children of Adam, and male and female, all mankind is included in this address. It is the same as "O mankind!"

إِلَىٰ مَتَىٰ تَطْلُبُ التَّوْبَةَ وَتَسُوْفُ الْاَوْقَاتِ؟

(*Ilâ metâ tatlubut tawbete wa tusewiful awqât?*) "For how long are you going to think about repenting yet neglect it? For how long are you going to think about doing something for the hereafter, yet delay doing it?"

This is a question. The questions are asked to focus the attention and to get an answer. Almighty Allah knows that the believing servants want to repent; i.e., to turn to Allah, follow his path and become a good servant. Everybody wants this, yet they keep delaying it.

For instance, a believer will go for Hajj: "I should get older and then go." He will do his daily prayers or spend for a charitable cause, he says: "I will do this after such and such things, after my children get married, after I get older." If it is a good deed that comes to a person's mind, it should be carried out right away. One should hurry to do good deeds and not delay it. Yet, people keep delaying their repentance. They keep postponing it: "Let me get older, be forty, after I do this and that..." They keep postponing it. That is called *taswif*.

We had some friends in the university. They liked us, and we would sit and talk. I had helped them somehow. They were modern people. Both husband and wife were faculty members in the university. They liked Muslims and prayers. When we say, "Start offering your daily prayers regularly!" they would say: "Okay! I will start. I am aware of my fault. But, not now."

"If you are aware of your faults, then start the prayers now."

"I will."

This kind of postponing is called *taswif*. It is one of the tricks of Satan. Satan prevents a person from doing good deeds in many ways. It tries to have the person do bad things. If he cannot convince the person, then it tries to prevent him from doing the good works. If the person is determined to do the good thing, then Satan



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tries to delay it: "Okay. You can do it, but why hurry? You can do it later. You can do it in a few years." Depending on the nature of the good deed, it finds ways to have it delayed.

Delaying the good work is a trick of Satan, and we must be aware of it. Especially, the repentance is a very important phenomenon--turning to the Path of Allah. It is not merely getting the rosary and saying "*Astaghfiru'llàh... Astaghfiru'llàh... Astaghfiru'llàh...-- O Allah I seek forgiveness.*"

Our beloved master Hadrat Ali was in a Masjid in Kûfa. He saw somebody who was saying istighfar at a corner: "O Lord! Forgive me. *Astaghfiru'llàh al-azîm wa etûbu ilayh. Astaghfiru'llàh al-azîm wa etûbu ilayh.*" Hadrat Ali said, "Saying '*Astaghfiru'llàh al-azîm*' by tongue only is the repentance of the liars." Tawba means returning to Almighty Allah-- one cannot turn to Allah with words only. The "state" of the person must turn to Allah in totality. Once a person gets in to the straight path of Allah, that would be the true repentance.

Each person shall abandon the wrong practices and turn to the straight path. For instance, a woman shall observe hijab if she has not been. Each person shall start offering his daily prayers regularly if he has not been. He shall fast in Ramadhan if he neglected fasting. He shall abandon ill code of conduct if he has had any. If he is negligent in fulfilling the orders of Allah, he will attempt to do them. He shall return to the path of Allah. His friends or associates will say, "This person has changed; he has turned to Allah's path."

Some have a desire to turn to the Path of Allah, yet they keep postponing it. Almighty Allah is asking in this Hadith Qudsî: "For how long will you intend to repent yet postpone it?"

Once in Fatih, Istanbul I got in a bus and sat down. A woman got in the bus, too. She said "*Audhu billâhi min esh-shaytan ir-rajîm, bismillâhir rahmânir rahîm*" when she step on the bus. She was not observing hijab. She had the belief, yet she failed to observe hijab. She should have observed it. Sometimes, some women see my wife and say, "*MâshâAllah, mâshâAllah*, how nice she is observing hijab." They appreciate it yet not practice it. Observing hijab is an order of Allah, yet they fail to do it. They keep postponing it. Their explanation goes, "We are used to not wearing it; may Almighty Allah forgive our faults." Allah is the most forgiving, yet He will not forgive if you insist on the fault. He forgives when the person gives up the faults or offenses.

That is why in the beginning of the Hadith Qudsî Almighty Allah says: "Do your repentance if you intend to. Do not delay it. For how long are you going to delay it o son of Adam?" One should repent right away. That is why the prophet said in a hadith:

عَجِّلُوا بِالتَّوْبَةِ قَبْلَ الْمَوْتِ !

(*Ajjilû bi't-tawbati qabla'l-mawt*) "Hurry up in repentance before death." You never know when the death arrives. It comes

all of a sudden. There may be a traffic accident, a heart attack; there could be some unpredictable accident that takes the life away. Sometimes a young person dies, sometime an elderly person. Sometimes the patient survives and the caretaker dies. The grandchild dies and the grandfather survives. You never know how the will of Allah takes place. That is why before the death arrives, one must turn to Allah in repentance. The repentance should not be delayed.

In fact, we have passed the month of repentance. We should have offered our repentance in the beginning of the three months season. The month of Rajab and the special nights have passed already. The month of Sha'ban, too, has gone. Rajab is the month in which Almighty Allah forgives His servants.

The Prophet SAS said:¹⁹

رَجَبُ شَهْرِ اللَّهِ ، وَشَعْبَانَ شَهْرِي ، وَرَمَضَانَ شَهْرَ أُمَّتِي
(أبو الفتح في أماليه عن الحسن مرسلًا)

RE. 289/2 (*Rajabu shahru'llah*) "Rajab is the month of Allah." What does that mean? All months, all years, the whole world, the whole hereafter, and everything belong to Allah. It means, it is the month Almighty Allah forgives His servants and accepts their repentance. That is why we should have repented in that month. Nevertheless, a person must repent immediately. It should not be delayed even for a moment.

b. Human Interaction is Important

The Hadith Qudsî continues:

¹⁹ Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.275, no:3276; *İbn-i Asâkir*, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.114, no:210; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.374, no:3813; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XII, s.556, no:35164; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.341, no:1358; *Câmiu'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.109, no:12682.

وتَرغِبُ فِي الآخِرَةِ وتَتْرِكُ العَمَلَ ،

(*Wa tarhabu fi'l-akhirati wa tatruku'l-'amel*) "You desire the hereafter, you want to enter Paradise, yet you do not do the good deeds." You have a desire for the good things in the hereafter, yet you do not do the deeds that would take you to Paradise. You have not started the worship, giving for charity. How long are you going to delay that? This is a Hadith Qudsî; the Prophet SAS told us what Allah has asked: "O My servants! For how long will you desire Paradise yet delay turning to me in repentance? For how long will you desire the hereafter yet delay the good deeds that would lead to Paradise? How long will you maintain this unawareness? When are you going to pull yourselves together?"

تَقُولُ قَوْلَ العَابِدِينَ ، وتَعْمَلُ عَمَلَ المُنَافِقِينَ .

(*Teqûlu qawle'l-âbidîne wa ta'melu amele'l-munâfiqîn*) "O son of Adam! What are you doing? You utter the words of the sincere worshippers, yet you do the deeds of the hypocrites." People talk nicely as the elderly said:

النَّصِيحَةُ سَهْوٌ وَالْمَشْكَلُ قَبُولُهَا

(*En-nasihatu sehwin*) "Giving advice is easy, (*wa'l-mushkulu qabûlehâ*) and accepting it is difficult." Each person should accept the advice when he understands it. People at the time of the Prophet would listen to the prophet attentively and accept what he said. People of today listen to the advice, think about it "forty times," realize that it is true, yet they delay doing it or not do it at all.

When the verse that prohibited wine was revealed to the Prophet, people poured the wine to the streets to get rid of it. The

streets of Madina were flooded with wine. They complied with the verse that was revealed. Today, you see Muslim parents' children who are addicted to alcohol and they do not give up drinking. You tell them that alcohol is haram; they disregard your words. You see some parents giving advice: "Do not smoke cigarettes!" However, they keep the packages of cigarettes in their pockets. He tells the truth, yet he himself disregards it.

Uttering the words of the sincere worshippers, yet leading a life of the hypocrites... what are the main characteristics of the hypocrites? A hypocrite lies when he speaks, fails to fulfill his promises, and betrays the trust when something is entrusted with him. He is an unreliable person. He says something and does something different. A believer is not like that at all. He keeps his promises, and stands behind his words.

Once a person came to the father of one of our friends who had a business in Istanbul. He was a blessed person—may Almighty Allah bless his soul. His son spent what he inherited from him for the construction of a mosque. This person had request from this merchant:

"Hadji Baba! I desperately need some money. Could you lend me some?"

This blessed man responded:

"Son! The cash register/safe is right there. Go and get as much as you want."

He did not even go to the safe. After some time, this person who borrowed the money came back:

"Hadji Baba! Remember I had borrowed money from you; I brought it back."

This blessed man responded:

"Son! The cash register/safe is right there. Go and put it there."

After he retired, once he visited his son's store. He noticed the IOU's, invoices, and other documents on the desk. He asked what they were. The son explained him. The old man felt very sorry: "Oh no! Is this how you do business now? At our time, we could send

the whole store upon just one word, then the person would pay it back. Everybody would keep his promise. Is this how you do business now?" It sounded very strange for him. It was an indication that people do not fulfill their promises. People have left their iman and became hypocrites. When they talk, they say so many nice and soothing words, yet when it comes to the action, it is very disappointing.

I read a hadith on somewhere on the wall:

"If you see a person doing prayers and fasting, do not lower your guard towards him right away. Look at his actions and interactions. How does he deal with people?"

He could be offering his prayers and fasting, yet he may have a crooked way of dealing with people. He could be telling lies and fooling people.

I inquired before coming here: "How much does a prayer rug cost in Isparta [which is a province famous with its rugs]"

"Dear Khawaja, they started using bad material, then they lost the customers."

A customer could be fooled once only. They should have produced the rugs with high quality material. They work on a piece of rug for a month, and when it is produced with low quality material, the whole work goes down the drain. If it had been produced with the top quality material, it would have worth good amount of money. Once the customer is cheated, he will not come back. My friend told me that the rugs of Isparta are no longer popular. The work is no longer the work of a believer; it is full of deception.

The words of our Lord is reproachful: "You utter the words of the sincere worshippers, yet you do the deeds of the hypocrites." All of our deeds and works have to be sincere and proper. Everything we do should comply with the consent of Allah.

The Hadith Qudsî continues:

إِن أُعْطِيتَ لَمْ تَفْنَعْ ، وَإِن أُبْلِيتَ لَمْ تَصْبِرْ .

(*In u'tîte lem taqna'*) "When you are given something, you are not content; (*wa in ublîte lem tasbir*) when Allah tests you with a trouble, you lose your patience." A believer should be content with the sustenance he receives. He should say, "Al-hamdu lillah for everything I have."

While I was in Çanakkale, I was told that there was an elderly couple who were very blessed. They were poor. I decided to visit them. We went to their place. The couple had no house; they had a little box out of tin. Husband and wife were living in that small box. The wife was very content; she kept praising Allah for all the blessings she had. She kept saying, "Look at us! We have all we need. We praise Allah for that." I felt embarrassed. One could not stand up in that tin box. These poor people kept praising Allah. "Look we are nobody, but you came to visit us. We are not worth a visit, but you came here." They were content.

The contentment and the richness in heart make a person happy. Lack of contentment keeps a person disturbed even if he lives in abundance. We thank Allah that we are not hungry and that we have clothing and homes. We praise Allah that we have been blessed with so many things. We have seeing eyes and reasoning minds. There are no bombs exploding over our heads or destroying our minarets. It is not like Chechnia or Bosnia. Alhamdulillah we live in peace with good things.

Then a person should appreciate all of the blessings and be content. Sometimes, he is subjected to tests; even the prophets were subjected to the tests. Didn't they get sick? Didn't they get sad? They had so much saddening experience. They were falsely accused with things. People did unimaginable cruelty towards the prophets. A believer should see all of these as tests and try to pass the test with flying colors.

تَأْمُرُ النَّاسَ بِالْخَيْرِ وَلَا تَفْعَلُهُ ، وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الشَّرِّ وَلَا تَنْهَى عَنْهُ .

(*Te'muru'n-nâse bil khayri wa lâ tef'aluhû wa tenhâ ani'sher-ri wa lâ tunhâ anhu*) "You ordain people the good deeds, but you do not do them yourself. You also tell them not to do evil deeds, but you do them." This is not acceptable!

وَتُحِبُّ الصَّالِحِينَ وَلَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ ، وَتَبْغِضُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَأَنْتَ مِنْهُمْ .

(*Wa tuhibbu's-sâlihîn, wa leste minhum*) "You like the righteous people, but you are not one of them. (*Wa tubghidu'l-munâfiqîn, wa ente minhum*) You get angry at the hypocrites, yet you carry the characters of the hypocrites. This is not acceptable o son of Adam." This is what our Lord says in a general sense. Each person takes his share from these words.

In a hadith the Prophet said: "There are characters of hypocrites. If all of them are found on a person, he is a complete hypocrite. If he has one of the characters only, he will be a partial hypocrite." That is why we need to abandon the characters that belong tot he hypocrites.

Now we tell a child:

"Son! Be trustworthy! Do not utter a lie!"

Then the telephone rings and we tell the same child:

"If it is for me, tell that I am not home."

What happened here? Haven't we just told the child not to utter a lie? Weren't we not to utter a lie? Of course, the child notices the contradiction and tells: "Haven't you told me not to utter a lie?" He confronts the parents: "Mom, Dad! How is it possible? You told me not to lie first, then you are forcing to lie." They the parents tell the child: "You shut up!" Well, the child is right, and the grownups are wrong.

The person who ordains the good must do it himself first. When

he does it first, his words will be more effective. It will be effective spiritually, too.

Hadrat Abdulqadir-i Geylâni started a preach in the pulpit: "*Aûzu billâhi mines-shaytânir rajîm. Bismillâhir rahmânir rahîm.*" Before he started the main topic, he said some simple words: "My wife at home did this and that..." The congregation was so joyous that they started crying in the beginning of his talk. He had so much spirituality. He was a blessed person.

His son was observant of all of this. He wanted to preach people, too: "I want to tell them so many interesting things." Hadrat Abdulqadir-i Geylânî told his son: "This week you are going to preach." The son prepared his speech. People listened to his speech, but there were no excitements or cries. Hadrat Abdulqadir-i Geylânî lived what he preached; that is why his words moved people. When the preacher does not practice what he says, his words will be ineffective.

When a person gives advice about doing good things, he should do it himself first. Again, when a person tells people not to do something, he should stay away from that first. If a person loves the righteous servants--these are the beloved servants of Allah--he should try to be like them. If a person dislikes the hypocrites, he should try to get rid of any character that resembles those of the hypocrites

I want to mention one of the characteristics of the hypocrites as an example. The Prophet said: "Men should be keen about coming to the mosque for the Isha and Fajr prayers because the hypocrites do not come to mosque for these prayers." If a person fails to go the mosque for the Isha and Fajr, he should remember this hadith and say, "Oh no! I have a character of the hypocrites. I should not stay home but go to the mosque." Then he should go to the mosque. He should pay attention to attending the Fajr congregation in the mosque. Since we do not like the hypocrites and their characters, we should try our best not to be like them. Since we like the

righteous people, we should try to be like them.

c. Take the Righteous as Role Models

We should get to know the righteous people. There are benefits in reading, telling and listening to the anecdotes of these blessed people because we can see the examples of a good person. We can see how they live and aspire to be like them. We have benefited from them in a great deal.

An example for the righteous people is Hadrat Aisha-i Siddîqa, the mother of the believers. Many things were brought to the house during the day, but she gave them away. She instructed her maid: "Take this to such family, and this to other family." She gave them all for charity. They were fasting on that day. When they heard the call for Maghrib prayer, the maid said: "Oh Mother of the believers! Why didn't you save some for us, too? You gave away everything you received. You are fasting, and there is nothing to eat other than some stale bread and some dates."

Hadrat Aisha responded:

"If you had reminded me earlier, I would have done that, too."

Look! This is the state of the righteous people. Observe how they spend for the charitable causes.

Here is another example. Hadrat Ali RA and his family fasted the whole day. They sat down for supper. A poor person knocked at the door and begged:

"Please give me something to eat for the sake of Allah. I am hungry."

They gave their food to this person and stayed hungry. They chose to be patient. The next day they again intended to fast. When they completed their fast and prepared something to eat, an orphan knocked at the door:

"We are hungry. Could you give us some food?" They gave the orphan all they had and stayed hungry.

The next day they intended to fast again. In the evening when

they were about to break their fast, a captive person knocked at the door and begged:

"We are hungry. Please give us something."

They gave their food to them and stayed hungry again.

Upon this incident, a verse was revealed:

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا (الانسان: ٨)

(*Wa yut'imûnet taâme alâ hubbihî miskînen wa yetîmen wa esîrâ.*) "To earn the Love of Allah, they give their food to the needy, the orphan and the captive." (Qur'an 76:8)

They say:

إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا (الانسان: ٩)

(*Innemâ nut'imukum li-wajhi'llâh*) "We feed you for the consent of Allah. (*Lâ nurîdu minkum jezâen wa lâ shukûrâ*) We wish not from you reward or gratitude." (Qur'an 76:9) They do that for the sake of Allah without expecting any money or thanks from them.

Hearing about these incidents, a person aspires to be like them. That is why we ought to read about the lives of the righteous people. We ought to try to be like them.

We have published books such as Examples from the Lives of the Companions. These books should be read. Who were the female companions? How did they live? What are their characters? How was their servitude? What was their mentality? We ought to read all of these and realize how a good Muslim should be.

d. Do Not Talk About Things You will Not Do!

Going back to the Hadith Qudsî' Almighty Allah continued:

تَقُولُ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُ، وَتَفْعَلُ مَا لَا تَتَوَمَّرُ .

(*Teqùlu mâ lâ tef'alu wa tef'alu mâ lâ tu'meru*) "O son of Adam! You talk about the deeds that you cannot do and you do things that you are not ordered to."

Here two of the faults of the human beings are stated: (*Teqùlu mâ lâ tef'alu*) "You say things that you will not do!" Some people keep promising things without thinking much about it. It is not right for a person to tell things that he cannot fulfill. Each of us could only promise as much as he could fulfill. The words of the person should not go beyond his head.

(*Wa tef'alu mâ lâ tu'meru*) "You are doing something that you are not asked to do." We have to check and see if what we do is the order of Allah. We should ponder about our deeds and ask ourselves if we are carrying out the orders of Allah or the tradition of the Prophet. We must pay attention to what we do.

The hadith Qudsî continues:

تَسْتَوِفِي حَقَّكَ وَلَا تُوَفِّي حَقَّ غَيْرِكَ .

(*Testewfî haqqake wa lâ tuweffî haqqa ghayrike*) "If you have some right on somebody, you demand it all, and when somebody has a right on you, you avoid paying it back."

For instance, the inheritance of a person is already divided, and there is somebody who has a share in it. In Islam, when a woman dies, her nephews have a share in her wealth, yet they could demand nothing according to present laws in Turkey. Suppose that two sisters will inherit their mother's wealth. According to the instructions in the Qur'an, the nephews get shares. They share the inheritance according to the present laws, so they do not give anything to the nephews. When they are reminded, they question: "Who says there is such a rule?" Well, nobody says it--it is in the Qur'an. It is the order of Allah, and you have to comply with it.

"O son of Adam! When somebody owes you anything, you get it all to the last penny. But when you owe something to somebody,

you are not as meticulous about paying it."

Try the fine needle on yourself before attempting to poke somebody with a darning needle. Experience how it feels. Realize how sad you will get when somebody deprives you of your right. You defend yourself like an attorney. You must pay the due rights to the respective owners.

e. Beautify Your Grave with Good Deeds!

مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ جَدِيدٍ إِلَّا وَالْأَرْضُ تُخَاطِبُكَ فِيهِ فَتَقُولُ لَكَ: يَا ابْنَ
آدَمَ! تَمْشِي عَلَيَّ ظَهْرِي، وَمَصِيرَكَ إِلَيَّ بَطْنِي، وَتَضْحَكُ عَلَيَّ
ظَهْرِي وَغَدًا يَا كُلُّكَ الدُّودُ فِي بَطْنِي.

(*Mâ min yewmin jedîdin illâ wa'l-ardu tukhâtibuke fîhi feteqûlu leke.*) "There is no new day in which the earth does not call on you." In this Hadith, the Prophet is telling us that the earth calls on us and says these words:

(*Yebne âdem!*) "O son of Adam! (*Yemshî alâ zahrî wa masîruke ilâ batnî*) Now you are walking on me, yet there will be a time that you will be buried in me."

(*Wa tadhaku alâ zahrî wa ghaden ye'kuluke'd-dûdu fî batnî*) "You are enjoying life, having a good time on me, yet when you are buried, bugs will eat your flesh."

وَيُنَادِيكَ الْقَبْرُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! أَنَا بَيْتُ الْمَسْئَلَةِ، وَبَيْتُ
الْوَحْشَةِ، وَبَيْتُ الْوَحْدَةِ، فَاعْمُرْنِي وَلَا تَخْرِبْنِي.

(*Wa yunâdîke'l-qabru*) The grave will call on the person. (*Yebni âdem!*) "O son of Adam! (*Ene beytu'l-mes'eleti wa beytu'l-wahsheti*



wa beytu'l-wahdeti fea'mirni wa lâ tuharribni) I am the house of interrogation." There will be an interrogation in the grave: "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet? What is your scripture? What is your qibla?" That is pointed out here.

(Wa beytu'l-wahsheti wa beytu'l-wahdeti) "I am the house were you will be in solitary confinement. There will be no companion or helper for you." Each of us will be alone in the grave, yet our good deeds will be our company. His prayers, fasting, pilgrimage, Qur'an reading, his dhikr, and his charitable spending will be there to protect him.

It is stated in a Hadith that a person who is placed in the grave will ask upon seeing a lovable person with an illuminated face: "O blessed person! Who are you? While I was having a difficult time with the interrogation, you appeared. I like you. You have a bright face. Who are you?"

The person will respond: "I am the Surah Tabârika (*Mulk*) that you used to recite. Almighty Allah send me in this form to accompany you."

Because people like to have company, Almighty Allah shapes the Surah Tabârika in that form and sends it to the grave. Our other good deeds will appear in the grave in a pleasant form to accompany us till the day or resurrection.

In the end of the hadith there are two orders: (*Wa a'mirni*) "Try to beautify me, improve me! (*Wa lâ tuharribni*) Do not destroy me."

The beautification and improvement of the grave is done by the good deeds whereas its destruction takes place with offenses and sins. We must try doing good deeds and spend for the charitable causes. We shall think about our comfort in the grave.

I see *al-hamdu lillah* some sisters reciting Qur'an, offering prayers, and doing other good deeds. All of these are counted for the beautification of their graves.

This hadith is the address of Almighty Allah to us as human beings. We should derive the following lessons from this Hadith Qudsî: We shall turn to Allah in repentance and not delay it. Since we have a love for the good things in the hereafter, we should work to earn the Paradise. Our words and deeds should reflect the truth; our deeds should not resemble that of the hypocrites and disbelievers.

Despite the instruction in the Hadith Qudsî, our clothes, our life styles, and everything else resembles that of the disbelievers. How did they succeed having us look like them? How did this Muslim nation change? How were our forefathers? How are our people now?

When I go outside, in the market place or on the streets, I notice the poor state of women. I avoid looking at them and look at where my steps are as I walk. Yet, it is almost unavoidable. Women are much different from the daughters of Muslim grandfathers and grandmothers. They do not look like the hypocrites; they look like disbelievers! Here it is relatively cold; freezing temperatures and snow prevent many things. If you go to the south, e.g., Antalya, on a summer day, you will have a hard time walking on the streets [because of the women displaying their bodies.]

One of our friends is from Antalya —his family is a native there. He returned from the United States and had a nice house built in Antalya. They lived there for a while then realized that the future of their children and their faith are threatened. He moved away from the city because it has become unbearable place for a practicing Muslim family due to tourist infestation.

Aside from the tourists, our own people got worse than the tourists. Weren't we supposed to differ from the hypocrites? Many people go beyond the lifestyle of the hypocrites and dress like the disbelievers. They groom themselves like the disbelievers; they put make up like them. They adorn themselves and live like the disbelievers. They do not pray, make *wudu*, *ghusl*, or do any worship. They disobey and have no mercy or sense of what is right and what is wrong. Where is this leading?

We deserve more chastisement than these words: "You utter the words of the righteous servants and sincere worshippers, yet you do the deeds of the hypocrites." People do the deeds of the disbelievers, and they are far away from the faith. They would not know how to say *kalima-i shahadah*. They do not know enough to perform the daily prayers. Somebody sent me a piece of paper with a question: "My mother is going to start offering prayers regularly, yet she cannot pronounce the verses." Well, unfortunately the person has reached this age and still does not know how to pray. I suggested for her to learn the short surah such as Surah Kawther and Ikhlas. We are in a terrible state; may Almighty Allah help us.

f. Thankfulness for Blessings, Patience for Calamities

We shall be content with the blessings that Almighty Allah sends us. If He sends us a test, we shall be patient. The tests could be in the form of an illness, shortage of something, poverty, or other difficulties. We shall be patient for the tests.

There was a girl among our students. She got married and had a beautiful baby. The baby was truly beautiful. It was the "queen

of babies." She and her husband were very happy. They had some problems conceiving the child, so they were very happy to have the baby. In a week, Almighty Allah took the baby away from them. The infant died. What can we do? It was Almighty Allah Who gave the child and also Who took the child. We shall accept this fact patiently.

Unfortunately, the mother of the baby uttered unpleasant words towards Allah. I was truly scared to hear those words. She lost her mind. We cannot do anything about it because it was Allah who granted the child and also who took the child away. We shall learn how to be patient.

There was an imam in our village. He and his wife would have a baby, yet the baby would not live long. You know sometimes there would be blood mismatch and the infant dies. The imam would shed tears for the loss of the infant and feel extremely sorry. He lost many infants like that. One day a sage visited the village. On that day the imam lost another infant. When the sage saw the imam crying out-loud, he pulled the imam to the side and asked:

"Who is giving you these babies?"

"Almighty Allah."

"Who is taking them away from you?"

"Allah."

"Then, what is the matter with you? Be patient! You are an imam, you are a man! You should be a good example for people. Be patient, for Allah is testing you."

Then the imam promised him that he will be patient. He stopped the mourning. The next baby survived. Look at the test!

We ask for *afiyah* (well being) from Allah. May Allah grant *afiyah* for all of us in this life as well as in the hereafter. May all of your days be happy; and your business, as you hope. What if it is not like that? Then you be patient. It will not be summer all the time; sometimes it snows. There will not be affluence all the time, sometime we experience the shortage of something. We will not be healthy all the time, sometimes we get sick. We have to be patient

for all of these.

A good Muslim shall be patient, and raise no voice of objection towards almighty Allah. He shall be aware that it is from Allah and endure the hardship. He will earn rewards for being patient and endurance. A person earns rewards for two things:

1. On calamities, one remains patient and endure the hardship; thus, he earns rewards.

2. On the blessings, one remains thankful and earns rewards.

A believer earns rewards from being thankful and being patient. If he receives blessings yet fails to be thankful, he loses the rewards and commits an offense. If he is subjected to a test yet fails to be patient, he loses the rewards, suffers the hardship, and he may commit an offense.

A woman was mourning by screaming and pulling her own hair. The Prophet was passing by. He went to the woman and said: "Oh Lady! Be patient. Whatever happened to you is what Allah ordained in your destiny. You need to be patient."

The woman chose not to be patient and raised her voice: "Do you know what kind of a calamity fell on me?" She kept screaming at the Prophet. The prophet walked away without saying anything else.

Some of the companions witnessed this and asked the woman: "Did you know who that person was?"

The woman said, "No I did not!"

"He was the Prophet of Allah."

"O, really?"

She ran after the Prophet and apologized: "O Prophet of Allah! I could not recognize you. Forgive me please."

The Prophet responded:²⁰

²⁰ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.438, no:1240; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.II, s.637, no:926; Ebû Dâvud, *Sünen*, c.II, s.210, no:3124; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.III, s.314, no:988; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.22, no:1869; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.509, no:1596; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.130, no:12339; Tayâlisî, *Müsned*, c.I, s.272, no:2040; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VI, s.222, no:6244; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.VI, s.176,

الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى (خ. م. د. ت. ن. ه. حم. ط. طس.
ع. هب. ق. عد. عن أنس؛ ع. عن أبي هريرة)

(*Assabru inde sadmetu'l-ûlâ*) "The patience has to be at the beginning. If you are patient after the calamity has passed, it has no value." After some time passes, the person gets used to the calamity and accepts it regardless of being patient or not. Is there anything that fell off the sky and the earth rejected it? That is why if a person remains patient and calm at the beginning, he will earn rewards; if he loses his control, then he loses the rewards.

The lesson we learn from this hadith is that we ought to be patient. If we are tested, we ought to realize that it is a test and remain calm and patient.

It is good to advice the good to people, yet we ought to do the good things ourselves first. It is also a duty on us to prevent the evil and tell people not to do the evil, yet we have to avoid the evil ourselves first.

If we like the righteous people, we should try to become like them. If we get angry at the hypocrites and disbelievers, we should try not to be like them.

The Prophet said:²¹

خَالِفُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى!

no:3458; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.VII, s.119, no:9702; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.65, no:6919; Abd ibn-i Humeyd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.362, no:1203; İbnü'l-Ca'd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.208, no:1368; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.I, s.172, no:249; İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.1477; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.356, no:799; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.III, s.99; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.352, no:7373; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.415, no:3842; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.X, s.453, no:6067; Ukaylî, *Duafâ* c.III, s.463, no:1519; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.272, no:6510, 6511; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.246, no:647; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.VII, s.355, no:6462 ve c.XIV, s.52, no:13769.

²¹ İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.V, s.561, no:2186.

(Khalifu'l-yehûde wa'n-nasârâ) "Differ from the Jews and the Christians, do not be like them!" We should be different from them even when it comes to the worship and not do it at the time they do it. We should never do the things they do in disobedience, in entertainment and other things that are not pleasing to Allah.

Then a person should not utter the words that he himself cannot do. He should not promise things that he cannot fulfill. He should not take a responsibility that he cannot carry out. He should not do the things he is not ordered to. He should do everything for the sake of Allah. He should do everything that Allah ordered. He should have the intention every morning: "I shall do whatever Allah has asked me to." He should try to fulfill the what Allah ordered and what the Prophet ordered throughout his life.

As a person tries to get all his rights from others, he should pay the due rights to others. He should not get anything that belongs to the others.

Try to remember the other part of the hadith. Every day the earth calls us, but we are unaware: "You are walking on me today, yet tomorrow I will take you in." What does the earth mean? It means there is death and we should be prepared for death.

How does one prepare for death? Time to time we describe Tasawwuf in different ways. Here I will say something that has not been said before: "Being a dervish is the art of preparing for the death." A dervish is always ready to depart from this life. If his time expires and the Angel of Death comes to him, he would say: "All right! I am ready!" How is it so? He would have wudu and do dhikr all the time. He would not owe anything to anybody. He would carry out all of his obligations without missing or delaying any. He would be on the path of Allah. He would say, "If I am called, I will comply with the order." Being a dervish means being prepared to depart from this life.

Being a dervish requires imagination of one's own death; it is a duty for the dervish. While imagining it, we should try to hear the

call of the earth: "O son of Adam! Today you are walking on me, yet tomorrow, I will take you in. You enjoy life and have fun today, yet tomorrow the bugs will feed on your body."

The grave calls on the person: "O son of Adam! I am a house of interrogation. I am a place that you will be all alone and terrified. You will be in solitary confinement. There will be none to accompany you. So, you should try to beautify me and not destroy me." This is the Hadith Qudsî. We would not know the true nature of the grave. Once we learn these facts, we have to work for it.

Ibrâhim ibn-i Edhem was a ruler in the city of Balh who was the son of another ruler. His anecdotes are in books. He left his palace and throne to earn the consent of Allah. He left his fame behind. He was asked for some advice. He gave six beautiful advises. One of them is the following:

إِذَا اشْتَغَلَ النَّاسُ بِعِمَارَةِ الْقُصُورِ، فَاشْتَغَلِ أَنْتَ بِعِمَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ؛

(*Idheshteghale'n-nâsu bi-imâрати'l-qusûr, weshteghil ente bi-imâreti'l-qubûr.*) "While people are busy beautifying their mansions, you try to beautify your grave." People build nice houses, marble palaces, mansions with pools. They spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for that purpose. You see them often in the large cities. For instance if you go to the Lara beach and Kemer districts in Antalya, you cannot believe how much money is spent for the buildings. Everybody is trying to improve what belongs to this world.

(*Idheshteghalen nâsu bi-imâрати'l-qusûr*) While people are building palaces and mansions, (*weshteghil ente bi-imâreti'l-qubûr*) you try to illuminate your grave; try to fill it with rewards.

A poet said once:

القبر صندوق العمل .

(Al-qabru sanduqu'l-'amel) The grave is like a chest that girls prepare before getting married. They make various kinds of embroidery, napkins, covers for tables, and many other kinds of handicrafts to use them in their house when they get married. They keep them in the chest. The grave is a chest for every person. The person does the deeds and sends them to the grave to feel comfortable in there.

I had intended to read a hadith from the book, and this hadith was drawn. Its meaning is a bit bitter, yet it is the order of Allah with the words of the Prophet. I only read and explained it to you.

May Almighty Allah have us benefit from these advices and become His beloved servants.

With the secrets of Surah Fâtihah!

February 4, 1995 - ISPARTA
Ramadhan 4, 1415

09. MONTH OF OVERCOMING NAFS

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu billâhi minesh-shaytânir rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâreken fîh... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jelâli wajhihî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejma'în.

Praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the Universe. The Prayers and peace be on our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and his sincere followers till the Day of Resurrection.

a. Allah Invites His Servants to His Paradise

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have heard the call for the Isha prayer, offered the Isha prayer and the tarawih prayer. May Almighty Allah accept our prayers. With the sunset a new day starts, and it is already Friday. It is the best of the days in the week; its night is the most illuminated and fruitful night of the week. We are also in the most blessed month—Ramadhan. We have gathered here in a masjid, which is a house of Allah, a blessed place. We praise Allah for His grace and blessings.

If Almighty Allah has granted the opportunity to get into a mosque, the owner of the house has permitted to his house. This is a great blessing. May Almighty Allah forgive those who neglect the prayers and mosques. May He guide them to the right path and give them opportunities to attend the mosques. We wish guidance for all. Our brothers recited the Qur'an in the prayer very clearly as though crystal clear water is flowing from their mouth. In Surah

Yunus Almighty Allah said, *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

(يونس: ٢٥)

(*Wa'llâhu yed'ù ilâ dari's-selâm*) It is something amazing and to be happy about: "Verily Allah call you to the abode of peace, Paradise." Al-hamdu lillah! He is inviting us to His Paradise. May he place us among those who comply with that call.

(*Wa yehdî men yeshâu ilâ siratin mustaqîm.*) "And He guides whom He wills to the straight path." (Qur'an 10:25) He shows the straight path and has His selected servants step in that path. Hidâyah, the guidance, is from Allah, and it is the greatest blessing on us. It is the path of mercy leading to His Paradise. It is a great blessing from Allah to His servants. The best blessing is to be on the straight path because it takes to the eternal bliss.

He deprives some of His servants from this great blessing. He does not guide those who He does not like. That is why a person whom Allah does not like cannot become a Muslim. A person whom Allah does not like cannot do worship, spend on charitable causes, come to the mosque, or do His dhikr. He lets His beloved servants do all of these good deeds. We ought to search and find out whom Almighty Allah does not like.

Almighty Allah does not guide the disbelievers. He does not guide those who are ungrateful, who does not realize the blessings that Allah has given, who cannot see the real sustainer. He guides those who realize their wrongdoing, but not those who does not appreciate the blessings of Allah. We ought to know that all we have comes from Allah. The water we drink, the air we breathe, food, drinks, health, happiness, intelligence, thoughts, and everything else is a blessing from Almighty Allah. Almighty Allah deprives of the guidance those who do not know Him, who do not appreciate the blessings, and who fail to realize that all blessings



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are from Allah.

Almighty Allah does not guide the oppressors. He does not grant His guidance for those who do injustice to others or themselves or indulge in sins by disobeying the orders of Allah.

Almighty Allah does not guide the *fasiqs* (those who commit sins in public and insist on them). People with public debauch and vice are not guided. The prerequisite for a person to be favorable by Allah is that he should realize his wrongdoing, repent for them and turn to Allah. When this repentance does not take place, when the person insists in committing the offenses, the guidance is not granted. Almighty Allah accepts the repentance and favors the person when the person gives up the offenses.

We have to be fair and equitable. We ought to see the truth and realize our shortcomings and wrongdoing. The muedh-dhin brother recited beautifully:

*Aman ey shâh-ı rasul,
Yok elimden tutacak!*

Gunahlara batmishim...

*Oh the king of the prophets!
There is none to hold my hand
I am stranded in sins...*

Beautiful words that we ought to memorize. No matter how much a person is indulged in sins, there is the possibility of being forgiven when he realizes his faults and turns to Allah in repentance. When he regrets, Almighty Allah may forgive him. The crux of the matter is for one to realize his faults.

There are some words that are attributed to Mawlânâ Jalâleddîn-i Rûmî who is a blessed personage in our path. In fact, these words belonged to an Iranian poet:²²

بازآ بازآ، هر آنچه هستی بازآ!
گر کافر و گبر و بت پرستی بازآ!
این درگه ما درگه نومیدی نیست؛
صد بار اگر توبه شکستی بازآ!

*Bâz â bâz â, her anchi hestî bâz â!
Ger kâfir u gebr u putperestî bâz â!
In dergeh-i mâ dergeh-i nevmîdî nist;
Sad bâr eger tevbe shikestî bâz â!*

*Come back, come back whoever you are!
An infidel, a fire-worshipper or an idolater, come back!
This dargah is not the place of despair.*

²² Ebû Saîd-i Ebu'l-Khayr.



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In case you broke your vow hundreds of times, come back!

"Come even if you broke your repentance one hundred times, this is not the dargah of hopelessness." In other words, you feel sorry for your sins and say: "My Lord! I had promised not to disobey you, yet I broke my promise. I committed another sin. Would you forgive me?" Almighty Allah would forgive you. Almighty Allah forgives those who regret committing offenses and turn to him in repentance sincerely.

The first thing we must do, dear Brothers and Sisters, is to realize our shortcomings and wrongdoing and turning to Allah in repentance: "My Lord! I know I have sinned. I am guilty. Forgive me!"

It is said that the years pass like the flowing river or blowing wind. Arabs divide the lunar months into three parts: the beginning, the middle and the end. The first ten days are called *ashr-i ewwel*. The next ten days in the middle are called *ashr-i awsat*, and the last

ten days are called *ashr-i âkhir*. The first ten days of this blessed Ramadan has gone. The *ashr-i ewwel* of this Ramadhan has slipped away.

Time is impossible to replace. Once it passes, there is no way to bring it back or replace it. The most important advice for a believer is to appreciate his time and not to spend his life in vain. Not even a second in life should pass in unawareness. That is why our elderly in the tariqa suggested that we uphold the principle *hush der dem* and be aware every breath we take.

The first ten days of Ramadhan has already gone. It passed so fast that we could not realize it. I would like to read a hadith of the Prophet from the hadith collection *Ramuzul Ahadith* of Ahmad Ziyauddin Gumushkhanawi (Rahmatu'llahi aleyh, qaddasa'llahu sirrahu'l-aziz. It is the tenth hadith from the ninth page. It is related to Ramadhan.

b. Specialties of Ramadhan

Ubade ibn-i Sâmit RA reported it. It is in the collections of Tabaranî and Ibn al-Najjar. The Prophet said:²³

أَتَاكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ، شَهْرُ بَرَكَةٍ، فِيهِ خَيْرٌ يَغْشِيكُمْ اللَّهُ، فَيَنْزِلُ
الرَّحْمَةَ، وَيَحِطُّ فِيهِ الْخَطَايَا، وَيَسْتَجِيبُ فِيهِ الدُّعَاءَ، يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ
تَنَافُسَكُمْ، وَيَبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ، فَأَدْوُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا،
فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ، مَنْ حَرَمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ (طب). وابن النجار

²³ Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.271, no:2238; Ubâde ibn-i Sâmit RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.749, no:23691, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.344, no:4783; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.I, s.158, no:255; Münzirî, *et-Tergîb*, c.II, s.60, no:1490.

عن عبادة بن الصامت

RE. 9/10 (*Etâkum shehru ramadân*) The month of Ramadhan came to you (*shehru bereketin*), a month of abundance." There is abundance in everything. As we bear witness "*Eshhedu en lâ ilâhe illallah wa eshhedu enne muhammeden abduhû wa rasûluhû*—there is no deity but Allah and Muhammad is His servant and messenger," we bear witness that Ramadhan is the month of *barakah* (abundance). The tables will get the *barakah*; time gets *barakah*. There will be *barakah* in everything because almighty Allah through His angels prepares this month for the believing servants. Almighty Allah orders angel Jibrîl Alayhisselam to chain the warriors of the army of Satan. The activities of Satan is limited who would fool people, wrong them, confuse them, make them angry, and have them fight with one another. His activities toward believers are limited in Ramadhan.

When the percentages of certain gases increase in the atmosphere, we consider the air pollution increased. There would be an alarm such as "The elderly should not go outside; they should observe this and that." When the percentage of these gases is low or zero, then we call it clean air. We consider such places as the clean places with fresh air. People who have illnesses such as asthma would go to such places. Retired and old people try to move to such places. [Compared to the other months, Ramadhan has such a spiritual atmosphere; it is a desirable month.]

In this high-spirituality month, Almighty Allah has the sources of the evil tied up and the sources of good deeds increased. That is there are all kinds of blessings and *barakah* in this month. Satans are chained; the heaven is decorated, and the gates of the heavens are opened.

As you know, the gates of the heavens are not something we can see with our eyes. It is stated in the Surah Mulk:



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وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ (الملك: ٥)

(*Wa laqad zayyanna's-samâ ed-dunya bi-mesâbîha*) Almighty Allah has decorated the lowest heaven with stars. We cannot see the heavens beyond that; in fact, we cannot even see the end of the lowest heaven. There are stars whose light comes to us in five million years. It is possible that the light of some stars hasn't reached us. Another possibility is that the star is not there anymore because we still see the light that left the star five million years ago. We do not see what is there right now—the image we see belongs to a time that existed millions of years ago. There is a colossal curtain of time around the lowest heaven. There are curtains of time and space around us. That is why we cannot comprehend or see the gates of the heavens.

The gates of the heavens are important because almighty Allah granted his messenger the night journey and ascension (*Miraj*), that is something that has not been granted to any other human being. He was the *habibullah* the beloved of Almighty Allah, so he was blessed with a very special treatment. He was taken to Jerusalem and lifted up to heavens to the Divine presence. It is stated in the hadith that when the Prophet and Archangel Jibril arrived at the gate of the first heaven, the guarding angle stopped them:

"*Men ente*—who are you?"

The archangel Jibril was stopped and questioned. Jibril responded: "*Ene Jibrîl*—I am Jibrîl."

"*Wa men ma'ake?*—who is with you?"

"Muhammad—the chosen one, the messenger of Allah."

"*Hel uzine lahu* — is he given permission to pass here? He lives on earth; does he have permission to pass here?"

"*Ne'am*—yes!"

Then the angel opened the gate and let them pass. Imagine a gate that the chief of angels, Jibrîl, is stopped and asked, and the Prophet, too, is questioned whether he has the permission to pass.

There are such gates that we could never see or sense with our sensory organs.

During the month of Ramadhan, the gates of the heavens are opened: No interrogation, no stopping. Outside of Ramadhan, the angels are stopped:

"Hold it! Where are you going?"

"We are going to the Divine Presence."

"What are you taking with you?"

"One of the servants offered some prayers, did some good deeds and spent for the charitable causes. We are taking them with us."

"Go back and slam them to the head of that person. He did all of these for showoff. I have been ordered by Almighty Allah that I shall not let any deeds that belong to those who do them for showoff pass beyond this point."

Such deeds are not brought to the Divine Presence despite the fact that almighty Allah is all aware. He is aware, yet the deeds are not taken to Him. There is a deprivation, some sort of a punishment for the servant in that sense.

In Ramadhan, the gates of the heavens are opened; the Paradise is decorated, and the gates of the Hell are closed. Satans are chained. These are the spiritual changes that we infer from the ahadith of the Prophet. Without noticing these changes, we enter the beautiful atmosphere of Ramadhan and enjoy worshipping and doing good deeds. That is how people fill the mosques in Ramadhan.

Do you see this many people in congregation for the Isha Prayer in Kapi Mosque in this town out of Ramadhan? I am a guest here, so I would not know the details, but you would. How many rows would you see other times and in Ramadhan? You can compare. Are the brothers who fast in Ramadhan eager about worship outside of Ramadhan? As a matter of fact, no they are not. Would they perform prayers this long other times? No, they would not. It is obvious that people change in Ramadhan; they become practicing

Muslims in Ramadhan. Their disposition changes for better: They do not get angry or nervous; they become more generous and they tend to do good deeds for people. It is very obvious that Ramadhan has a very special atmosphere.

c. A Month of Blessing and Abundance

(*Shahru barakatin*) "A blessed month." As you know both Arabic and Farisi have the word *shahr*. In Arabic it means "month." *Shahru Ramadhan* is the month of Ramadhan; *Shahru Rajab* is the month of Rajab. The plural form of *shahr* is *shuhûr* or *ash-hur*. *Ash-huru hurum* means haram moths—sacred months. *Shuhûru thelâthe* means the three months: Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadhan.

In Persian, *shahr* means a locality, a town that is inhabited by people. *Shahr-i Istanbul*, *Shahr-i Burûsa*, and *Shahr-i Tahran* are examples.

(*Shahru barakatin*) Ramadhan is a blessed month, a month of barakah (*fîhi khayrun*) "there is goodness in it." There is so much goodness in this month that we all observe. In addition, there is the Night of Power in Ramadhan which is better than a thousand months. The Night of power is hidden in Ramadhan by Almighty Allah. Almighty Allah did not specify it definitely where it falls in. According to the Qur'an the Night of Power is better than one thousand months:

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (القدر: ٣)

(*Laylatu'l-qadri khayrun min elfi shahrin*) [The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.]

The companions asked the Prophet: "O prophet of Allah! Is this night of Power happens only once in the history of the world during your lifetime? Does it happen every year?"

The Prophet responded: "Every year."

Every year, in Ramadhan, there is a night that is better than

one thousand months." It is hidden in Ramadhan, yet the prophet gave a hint: "Look for the Night of Power during the last ten days of Ramadhan."

There is the Night of Power that is hidden in the last ten days of Ramadhan. If a person does worship on that night, he will earn the rewards as though he spent one thousand months in worship which adds up to 83.3 years. It is a very precious night. What shall we do then?

Our beloved prophet used to stay in the mosque (i'tikaf) for the last ten days of Ramadhan so that he would not miss the Night of Power.

I'tikaf is a strong Sunnah of the Prophet. If nobody does i'tikaf in a locality, the whole population in that locality will be held responsible for missing that Sunnah. On the day of Judgment, the whole population would be asked why they missed a strong Sunnah. That is why those of you who can do it should decide and inform the authorities about doing i'tikaf for the last ten days of Ramadhan.

The house of the Prophet was not far away from the mosque; it was attached to the mosque. When he opened his house door, he would step in the mosque. Despite that proximity, he would stay in the mosque for the last ten days of Ramadhan and spend his time—day and night—in worship.

The Prophet used to increase his worship when the three months—Rajab, Shaban and Ramadhan—started. He was already constantly in worship. Still he would increase his zeal in Rajab. He would increase it even more in Sha'ban. In Ramadhan, he would take it even further. In the last third of Ramadhan, he would stay in the mosque and not go to his house. The companions of the Prophet did the same thing.

Once something interesting, somehow funny, happened. The prophet entered the mosque and saw many tents in the mosque. These were the tents of the wives of the prophet. They are our mothers. As the Qur'an indicated,

وَأَزْوَاجَهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ (الأحزاب: ٦)

(*Wa ezwâjuhû ummehâtuhum*) The wives of the Prophet are your mothers." We call them mothers: Our Mother Hadrat Aisha, our Mother Hadrat Khadijah. They are all our mothers.

They put up tents in the mosque. The Prophet said: "Do they think that they are doing something good?" The Prophet did not practice i'tikaf that Ramadhan because there were women in the mosque doing i'tikaf, too. He did not ask them to leave either. They completed their i'tikaf. The Prophet did his i'tikaf after Ramadhan.

Women practice i'tikaf in their house. In a proper room in the house, a woman can practice i'tikaf. Men practice i'tikaf in the mosque. Women are more sensitive and need protection. They have to make wudu, lie down, and sleep. A mosque is not a proper place for women to do these things; her house would be better. Men stay in the mosque. The Prophet and his companions practiced i'tikaf in the mosque. You should practice it, too. You should taste the honor, the love, and the worship in the last ten days of Ramadan.

Once a sister among our ikhwan asked us: "Could I do i'tikaf at home?" May Allah be pleased with her—she completed the ten days then she told our brother khawaja: "I enjoyed it very much and benefited in a great deal from the worship." Naturally, during the i'tikaf, a person would turn to Allah and be with Him. In a Hadith Qudsî, Allah said:²⁴

أَنَا جَلِيسٌ مَنْ ذَكَرَنِي .

(*Ene jelîsu men dhekerenî*) "I am with those who remember me." That is why the i'tikaf is so excellent. A person could spend all of his time reading Qur'an, doing dhikr, and offering prayers. It is an opportunity to earn great rewards.

²⁴ Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.I s.451, no:680; Ka'bü'l-Ahbar'dan.



Ī'tikaf, Mosque Nabavi, MADĪNAH

We have reminded you about the i'tikaf right in time because the first ten days of Ramadhan is already gone; we are in the second ten days of Ramadhan. The i'tikaf is in the last ten days of Ramadhan. Those who have the time should experience it. You can look it up in the *ilmihal* (catechism) books and figure out about the details of it. Do it this year and realize how sweet it is.

A poet says in a hymn:

*Shekerlerde bulamadım,
Zikrullahin tadini!..*

*I could not find in sweets
The taste of dhikrullah!*

These are simple words, yet they are beautiful. You experience and taste it. Once a great Sufi said: "If the kings, the commanders and the warriors knew the spiritual pleasures and tastes of

dhikrullah, they would send armies on us to get those pleasures from us." They would attack them just as they attack people to conquer a city or a country.

One who has not tasted that pleasure would not know it, and it is difficult to describe it with words. Amy Almighty Allah grant you the pleasure, taste and excitement of the i'tikaf.

It is stated that;

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ، شَهْرُ بَرَكَاتٍ،

(*Shahru ramadhan, shahru barakatin*) Ramadhan is the month of barakah in all sense. The rewards are given in multitude. The worship is rewarded more in Ramadhan. In Ramadhan, a good deed is rewarded seventy times more than it is rewarded in other times.

d. Paying Zakah in Ramadhan

There are some smart and knowledgeable Muslims who take advantage of such more rewarding times. They could pay their Zakah at any time during the year, but they prefer paying it in Ramadhan to get the rewards in seventy folds.

The person has the intention of paying the Zakah anyway. He has calculated the amount and ready to pay it. That amount belongs to the needy. He has to separate that amount and give it to whom it belongs. Almighty Allah has ordered to pay one fortieth of it to the needy. The rate for different types of wealth and goods can be found in books. He has to pay that amount and return it to the rightful owner. He will earn rewards for doing so.

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ . لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

(المعارج: ٢٤-٢٥)



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(Wa'lledhîne fî emwâlihîm haqqun ma'lûm. Li's-sâili wa'l-mahrûm) "And those within whose wealth is a known right for the petitioner and the deprived" (Qur'an 70:24-25).

A Muslim knows that the needy have a right on his wealth. Look how beautiful Islam is. A Muslim believes that something that belongs to the poor is mixed with his wealth. He himself worked, sweated, accumulated the goods, yet Almighty Allah says: "The needy have a right in what you have accumulated."

The believer happily separates the part that belongs to the poor and gives it away. The Zakah for the farm crops is one tenth which is called *oshur*—*ashara* means ten; *oshur*, one-tenth. If the field is irrigated, the amount is different; it changes from one-tenth to one-twentieth. It is one-fortieth for money; i.e., 2.5 percent. It is different for camels: one in five. The list is long and can be found in books.

There is also a list indicating who may receive the Zakah payment: "The poor, those who are in debt, travelers who have no

means to rich their destination, ..." The Zakah is to be paid according to those lists, yet when it is paid in Ramadhan, its reward is multiplied by seventy. Any spending for a charitable cause in Ramadhan weighs seventy times that of spending outside of Ramadhan. Isn't this month full of barakah?" When one does 100 dhikr in Ramadhan, he will be rewarded 70 times more that he would outside the Ramadhan. There is abundance in worship, in sustenance and in rewards as well as in time.

There is a very blessed night hidden in Ramadhan. Almighty Allah kept it hidden, for the servants to search for it. Another reason is that if it were not hidden, a person might be relaxed thinking: "I prayed in the night of power, so I do not need to do anything else. I am through."

Once Hasan-i Basri (Hasan of Basra) got out of his house in a Night of Baraah. His face looked extremely pale; he looked sick and sad. Those who saw him inquired: "O brother, what happened? Are you sick? Do you have pain? Do you have headache? Have you vomited?"

He responded: "Tonight is the Night of Baraah. This is the night that the deeds are submitted to angels. I am aware of my offenses. I committed them when I was young, when I was grown up, during the day and during the night; I am sure about my sins. I have repented for them and asked for forgiveness, yet I have received no indication that they have been forgiven. I do not know if they are forgiven. I definitely committed sins, yet I am not sure if they have been forgiven."

It is possible that Almighty Allah may not accept a person's repentance for various reasons. One has to know about them. That is the true Islam. One has to learn under what conditions Almighty Allah guides a person to the right path and what conditions keep a person away from the guidance. That is the most important matter of this life. One has to know how he can earn the forgiveness of Allah and what prevents the forgiveness. If a person does not know these, he would be living in vain. We need to learn about these.

As Hasan-i Basrî said, we know about our sins—for sure we have committed them. We do not know if they have been forgiven. We have done some worship, too, yet we do not know if they are accepted. What if none of the daily prayers we have offered so far is accepted? Imagine that the prayers we have offered so many years were not accepted. What is going to become of us? Suppose a seventy-year old person were told in his dream that Almighty Allah did not accept any of his prayers. Can you imagine how he would feel?

Hasan-i Basrî said: "I know about my sins, but I am not sure if they have been erased. I have offered prayers, yet I do not know if they have been accepted. Is there anybody who is in a worst state than I am?" These thoughts made him extremely pale and worried. He was one of the most blessed people who met the companions of the Prophet. They were the intelligent servants of Allah; they have striven hard to save themselves from the hell fire and to deserve Paradise. They were not inattentive like us. Judge yourself on how you spend the first ten days of this Ramadhan.

e. Allah's Mercy Showers in Ramadhan

Now I am going to read this hadith the last sentence of which gives me goose bumps. For sure it is blessed month, and there is goodness in it:

يَغْشِيكُمْ اللَّهُ ، فَيَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةَ ، وَيَحِطُ فِيهِ الْخَطَايَا ، وَيَسْتَجِيبُ
فِيهِ الدَّعَاءَ ،

(*Yughash-shikumu'llah*) Almighty Allah encompasses you with goodness. There is goodness in it; Allah showers this goodness on you. Allah covers you with goodness. The earth and the Muslims are covered with goodness. Then (*fayanzilu'r-rahmeti*) the mercy of

Allah descends. The mercy of Allah comes down on homes, hearts, countries, towns, and mosques.

(*Wa yahuttu fîhi'l-khatâyâ*) Almighty Allah forgives the wrongdoings in this month. He forgives the sins at time of iftar in the evening. He forgives the sins at the time of suhur. He forgives everybody who turns to Him. Many people receive the forgiveness in this month. May Almighty Allah place among those who receive forgiveness in this month.

(*Wa yestejîbu fîhi'd-duâ*) "Almighty Allah answers the prayers in this month." I do not know what you ask from Almighty Allah. You raise your hands in prayer and ask for something. We ought to know what we should ask from Almighty Allah.

We often go for Hajj in a group. Some of the pilgrims come to me and ask in despair: "Khawaja, I heard that the prayer a person makes when he sees the Ka'abah for the first time is accepted. How shall I pray? What shall I say?"

Why didn't you think of it earlier? Why didn't you search for the best of the supplications? How come we are not interested in such things? We do not miss anything in newspapers, in sports and other things. We remember how Fenerbahçe soccer team beat Galatasaray 3 to nothing and who made the goals. We remember which team is eliminated from the league. I consider one sports page in a newspaper excessive, yet they kept increasing it to 4 to 5 pages. Is the sports on the top of this nation's agenda? Isn't there any urgent problem besides sports? Aren't there any crucial matters for Muslims? There are many matters concerning a believer: life and death, heaven and hell, to be forgiven or not, and many other matters. We keep ourselves busy with insignificant matters.

That is why Shaikh Sâdi said in remorse:

عمر گران بها در این صرف شد تا

چه خورم صیف و چه پوشم شتا

*Omru giran bahâ der in sarf shod tâ.
Che khorem sayf u che pûshem shitâ!*

Perhaps he himself is not like that, yet he says it for us to take heed:

*This precious life has been spent over
What to eat in summer, wear in winter.*

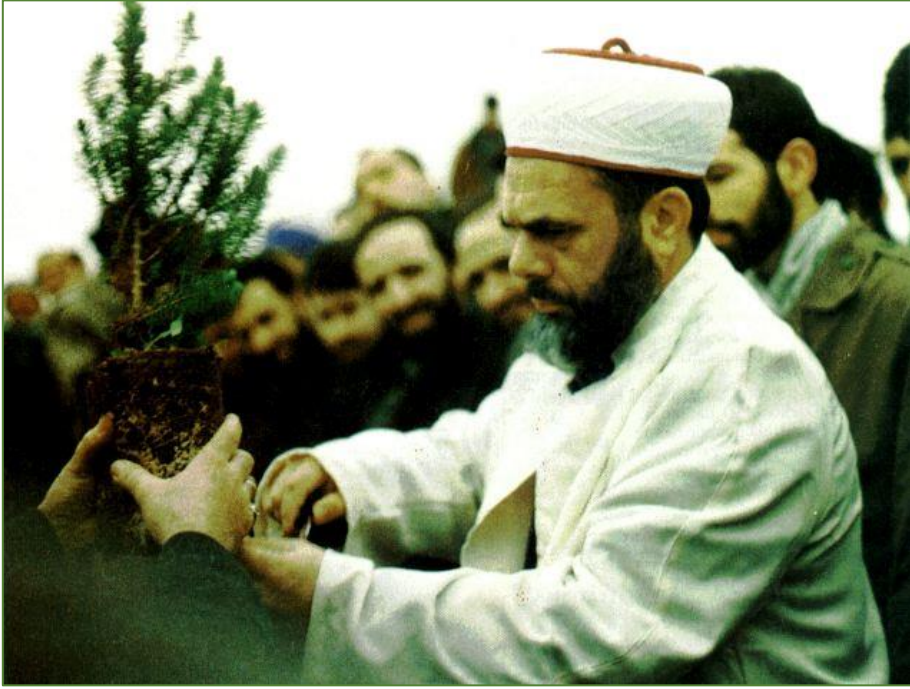
In summer the weather is warm, so people do not worry about clothing; instead, they worry about what to eat. Yet in winter, as the cold weather presses hard, people look for warm clothes. They also need coal and wood to warm up the house. That is why the mountains have been deforested. That is why we have barren mountains.

By the way, I feel embarrassed to look at the mountains that have no trees. My heart is torn into pieces when I look at the mountains: there are giant tree roots on these mountains.

We had an engineer from the town of Bor, Nigde. He was the general director of the Highway Department some time ago. You must know Hasan Dagi— you cannot miss this giant mountain if you travel towards Nigde. The mountain and the valley have hardly any trees. According to this brother from Bor, Hasan Dagi has roots of giant trees. The trees became firewood and were never replanted. Men chopped the trees and never planted new ones. They should have been replanted.

Let me tell you a story about planting trees. Once a ruler and his vizier disguised themselves as villagers and traveled in the country. They were followed from a distance by his men who were also disguised. On their way, they run into an old man who had a white beard and a hump. He was digging the ground to plant a tree. The ruler wanted to joke with the old man:

"Selamun alaikum Uncle!"



Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN

"Va alaikum selam Son."

"Why are you planting this tree? Do you think you will live long enough to see its fruit? Why do you bother?"

Well, he was the ruler of the country; he would feel free to make such statements. The old man responded:

"Son, those who lived before us planted the trees, and we eat the fruits. We should plant the trees so that those who come to this life after us could eat the fruits."

The ruler was pleased with the response. He told his vizier: "Give him a purse of money."

The vizier got a purse of money—whatever the amount in it consisting of dinars, dirhams or gold coins—with a red wax seal on it. The vizier handed the money to the ruler. The ruler gave it to the old man:

"Sir, here is a purse of money. I liked your response."

The old man received the money and looked at it. He became rich all of a sudden. He looked at the ruler and realized that he had to be an important person. He smiled and said:

"Look Son! You said that I could not have the fruit of this tree, yet I have harvested the fruit." He lifted the purse of money and showed to the ruler: "Here, this is the fruit of my tree."

The ruler enjoyed that response, too. He signaled his vizier to hand him another purse of money. The old man was very happy. He had a purse in each hand. He turned to the ruler:

"Son, you said I could not have the fruit of my tree, yet I got two harvests right now."

The ruler was pleased with this response, too. He turned to his vizier and said: "Give him the third purse. Yet we'd better leave; if not, this man will get all we have." They handed in a purse to the old man and left.

This is a pleasant story on the light side. The essence of the matter is that if we chop a tree, we should plant three trees. I tell my friends: "Go and purchase these mountains which have no trees on them. Almighty Allah gave you a car; get in and go to these mountains."

"Khawaja, there is no water!"

"Well, if there is no water, put plastic containers in the trunk of the car, and close them tightly. Go, plant the trees, water them and make these naked mountains green."

"Why?"

"It is because a tree is a *sadaqa-i jâriya*, i.e., continuous charity. A tree could earn a person rewards."

If a person rests in the shade of a tree, the person who planted that tree will get rewards. If a bird lands on a branch of the tree, the person who planted the tree will get rewards. Suppose it is a mulberry tree and a bird pecks on the fruit. If a child eats the fruit, the person who planted it will get rewards. If people benefit from the trimmed parts as firewood, it will earn rewards. We call this

sadaqa-i jâriya.

What does *sadaqa-i jâriya* mean? The word "*jâriya*" here does not mean a "slave woman" or the "women in harem." It means "current, continuous." *Sadaqa-i jâriya* means something that has the continuous rewards, a charity which continues earning rewards for the person. We ought to do these kinds of good works.

f. Beloved Servants of Allah

Let us come back to the hadith: Almighty Allah forgives sins and accepts prayers in this month. How did we bring this topic to the discussion? We waste our precious time with useless things such as football and alike, and we do not think about what is necessary for us. We ought to know how to make dua and learn what is useful in this life and in the hereafter. If we do not know it, we need to occupy our minds with these matters and seek knowledge. Once we learn these, we could harvest its fruits.

"Khawaja, what deeds take me to Paradise?"

I am not sure if there is anybody who has asked this question to our imam/khawaja brothers: "I want to go to Paradise; what should I do for that?" We should ask: "What do I do to save myself from hellfire? Whom does Allah love?"

It is stated in the Qur'an:

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (آل عمران: ١٤٨)

(*Wallàhu yuhibbul muhsinîn*) "Allah loves those servants who are *muhsin*."

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ (التوبة: ٤)

(*Innallàhe yuhibbu'l-muttaqîn*) "Allah loves the *muttaqî* servants." We also know that Almighty Allah loves those who are patient, who spends on charitable causes, who are clean. Make a

list of those and try to be a beloved servant of Allah. Isn't this the most important responsibility on each of us? Isn't it the most important duty to earn the love of Allah? People get old, the life is consumed up, yet people leave this life without learning this fact. In fact this is the essence of the life, the most important business in this month.

Which dua is more acceptable? What kind of dua should be made? How should we conduct the dua? We ought to worry about it, inquire and learn:²⁵

حُسْنُ السُّئَالِ نِصْفُ الْعِلْمِ (الأزدي في الضعفاء ،
وابن السني عن ابن عمر)

(*Husnu's-suâl nisfu'l-'ilm*) "Asking good questions is a sign of scholarship and a requirement for acquiring knowledge." Our minds should be concerned with good and important matters, and we should seek answers to the questions that come to our minds. Unfortunately most people have no concern.

Once I went to a mosque in Istanbul and offered our prayers there. It was a beautiful mosque, excellent architecture. I believe it is one of the works of Mimar Sinan. The name of the mosque was Zal Mahmud Pasha Mosque. After the Isha prayer, I asked the imam: "Khawaja, do you know what the word 'zal' in the name of this mosque means? Who is Zal Mahmud Pasha?"

The imam responded: "The person who had this mosque built

²⁵ Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VII, s.25, no:6744; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.V, s.254, no:6568; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.I, s.55, no:33; İbn-i Asâkir, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.453, no:936; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.141, no:2716; Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.I, s.395, no:727; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.LXI, s.360; Mizzî, *Tehzibü'l-Kemâl*, c.XXIX, s.220; İbn-i Hacer, *Lisânü'l-Mizân*, c.VI, s.11, no:35; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.X, s.238, no:29262; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.359, no:1142; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XII, s.122, no:11589.



Zal Mahmud Pasha Mosque, ISTANBUL

was extremely '*zâlim*' (oppressor). That is why he was nicknamed as Zal Mahmud Pasha."

I objected: "If he were a *zâlim*, an oppressor, he would not have a mosque built. He had to be a very religious and god-fearing person to have such a nice mosque built."

I decided to do a research on this matter. I looked up the encyclopedias and found the information. It was not like how the imam described at all. *Zal* means very old, aged. That means this Mahmud Pasha was a very old blessed person with a white beard. To differentiate him from another Mahmud Pasha, they called him Zal Mahmud Pasha, i.e., Old Mahmud Pasha. He had a very beautiful mosque built. May Allah make his abode in Paradise in the hereafter. May Allah be pleased with him. May Allah be pleased with those who had this mosque built, too. May He give us the opportunities to have mosques built and shower his mercy on us.

I sent a person to the imam of Zal Mahmud Pasha Mosque and asked him to tell the imam that Zal Mahmud Pasha was not an oppressor; he was an old and blessed person.

This was an example to how we are negligent about seeking the information. We ought to have some curiosity. That is a prerequisite for acquiring knowledge. Curious people will learn a lot. One who lacks curiosity will not learn anything significant.

That is why you ought to learn what supplication is good. Don't you ever wonder how the Prophet made dua and what he asked from Almighty Allah? Isn't it something we should be curious about? Are there any verses of dua or supplication in the Qur'an? What are they? Can we find them in a book all together? We ought to seek knowledge on these matters. We need to aspire to be like the Prophet and say what he said in his prayers. We need to author such books and make it available to the congregation and community.

In this blessed Friday evening, we are talking about our problems. Preaching in the Mosque and explaining various Islamic matters are rewarding, yet listening to the talk and just being in the mosque are rewarding, too. A person would earn rewards by being in the mosque as though he had been in the prayer all that time. It is possible that a person could make mistakes in the prayer; on the other hand, you did not make any mistakes by sitting and listening here, so you earned complete rewards. Studying and learning something of a chapter of an Islamic matter is better than this world and everything in it.

We need to learn Arabic. Without it, we would not understand the meaning of a verse. For instance, in a wedding ceremony, we would hear a verse about death being recited. In a marriage ceremony, we hear a verse about divorce. The person who recites the verse would not know its meaning; hence, he recites it at the inappropriate time or place.

The prayers and supplications made in this month are accepted. I will pose some questions, so you start wondering and searching. Since Allah accepts the prayers in this month, what kinds of prayers should we offer in this month? You can figure this out by

yourselves. A sincere supplication is preferred over some cliché.

You see a person raising hands in prayer yet inspecting the *mihrab*, the ceiling, the decorations and alike. It is called "*lâhiyen*"; when the heart is occupied with some other things, a person will be unaware of his words in his supplication. Almighty Allah does not like such supplication. He likes the sincere supplications that come from the bottom of the heart. That is how we should offer our prayers and supplications.

In addition to what we should ask from Almighty Allah, we should know when to ask. There are preferred times for the supplications. We need to inquire about them. The blacksmith pounds the iron to shape it at the proper temperature of the iron. Likewise, we should search for the proper time for supplication. That is important.

Then, "I person must pray for his parents" said the Prophet. For whom shall we pray? "When one prays for his friend, for his Muslim brother in his absence, the prayer is answered speedily." There is so much to learn about the prayers and supplications. We need to be curious about the topic, ask questions and find answers. We should do this in this Ramadhan.

يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ تَنَافُسَكُمْ، وَيَبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ،

(*Yenzuru'llâhi tenâfûsekim*) "In this month, Almighty Allah looks at your eagerness as if you were in a competition." You go to the mosques, recite the Qur'an or attend the recitation. You spend on the charities, invite people for *iftar*, and do other good deeds. Almighty Allah looks at your eagerness, and one look suffices for a person [in this life and in the hereafter]. On the contrary, if a person is subjected to the statement (*wa lâ yenzuru ileyhim*) "Allah does not look at him," he would be in deep trouble. That means Allah does not favor that person.

Almighty Allah looks at the eagerness of the believers in

worship, (*wa yubâhî bikum melâiketehû*) and tells His angels that He is proud of them: "Look at My servants! They are so eager to worship Me. They fast, recite Qur'an, and offer prayers—20 units, 33 units. They spend on charity. They open their houses to all — poor or rich — offering them meals. They give away money or goods to the needy; they take food and supplies to the poor families and make them happy."

فَادُّوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا ،

(*Feeddu'llâhe min enfusikum khayran*) "Then, you pay your servitude to Allah in this month. Hurry in doing the good deeds with zeal." This is the advice of the Prophet for us.

g. Who is a *Shaqî*?

Here is the most important sentence of the hadith:

فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ ، مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ .

(*Feinne'sh-shaqiyye*) "Verily the *shaqî* is the one (*men hurime fihî rahmetallâhi azze wa jelle*) who is deprived of the Mercy of Allah in this month." *Shaqî* means brigand, robber, rebel, outlaw, miserable, wretched, evil-doer, or sinner; *shaqî* is the one who is headed to hellfire if he does not repent. How sad it is! A person who is deprived of the Mercy of Allah in this month, who does not receive the blessings of Allah in this month, is truly unfortunate. These are the words of the Prophet.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Mere speech has no significance unless it is backed up by action. Man should take a lesson from the words and do what he must accordingly. Now, the first one third of this month of Ramadhan has gone. Examine yourselves to see if there is any change on



Kapi Mosque, KONYA

yourselves. Are there any signs that you have become a good Muslim? Check your manners, worship, thoughts, hearts, and minds to see if there is any improvement. One-third is gone, and the rest will go as fast as the wind. You remember the imams stating in their sermons: "As we said it was Rajab, Sha'ban, then Ramadhan has already gone. Today is the Eid day." The Eid will arrive soon and the blessed season will end.

That is why the Prophet said: "Do the good deeds that Almighty Allah is pleased with and pay your servitude to Allah as you are expected in the best way." Do not be unaware!

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

There is a wisdom in every worship and in every order of Allah. Every rule of Islam has a wisdom. Each one is proper and has a reason and a benefit for mankind. There are many benefits of fasting for the body, for the mind, for the stomach and for the spirit. It earns rewards. Ramadhan has great benefits for us.

You should know it well that Ramadhan is the month of

spiritual training from Allah for you to be good servants. You attend a month-long course to become better servants. It is similar to vocational training courses. Each person is given a certificate at the end of such a course perhaps along with a pay raise or a higher position. You should be aware that the month of Ramadhan is an improvement course for us to be good Muslims. There is this wisdom in it. That is why Almighty Allah chains the devils in this month and opens the doors of heavens. That is why Almighty Allah accepts the prayers and supplications in this month. You should ask for forgiveness and try to do the good deeds. This is the proper time and good opportunity, and the conditions are excellent. Try to complete this course with great success!

Here is something that is scary; it is a hadith. On a Friday, to deliver the sermon, the Prophet stepped on the pulpit and said: "Amen." He took another step and said, "Amen." He took yet another step and repeated: "Amen." Everybody was curious: "Why did the Prophet said 'Amen' three times?"

After the sermon, at a proper time, the companions asked the Prophet: "O Prophet of Allah! As you stepped on the pulpit you did something that you had never done before. At every step you said 'Amen.' What was it for?"

The Prophet responded: "The Angel Jibrîl came to me and said: 'Shame on the person who saw his parents and could not earn Paradise. Let him be humiliated.' I said 'Amen' to that." That means we have to respect our parents, treat them well, deserve their prayers, earn their consent, thus earn paradise. How easy and how important it is!

The Prophet continued: "Jibril added: 'Shame on the person who does not improve himself or become a good servant of Allah as the month of Ramadhan comes and leaves. Let him be humiliated.' I said 'Amen' to that." This statement concerns us because we are in the month of Ramadhan. There are two dangers at the end of Ramadhan:

1. Our worship may not be accepted in Ramadhan; then we would miss the entire month.

2. We may be subjected to the malediction of Jibrîl AS. We may be humiliated afterwards.

If a person does not improve himself in Ramadhan, he would be humiliated and punished. We ought to be familiar with how serious this matter is.

The third one: "Jibril also said: 'Shame on the person who does say salât and selâm to the Prophet (i.e., Allâhumme salli alâ seyyidinâ Muhammedin wa alâ âli seyyidinâ muhammed) when the name of the Prophet is mentioned. Let him be humiliated.' I said 'Amen' to that, too."

h. Love of the Prophet

What we learn from this hadith is that we have to love the Prophet. You should memorize the poem that was chanted by the muezzin after the twelfth rek'a and love the Prophet. We all should be in love with the Prophet. We all should learn how to love the Prophet.

Love is part of the education. One learns how to love. You should raise your children with the love of the Prophet. Each child should love the Prophet from the bottom of his heart. You must do the same, too. You must listen to his words and follow his Sunnah. Without the love for the Prophet, one cannot be a true Muslim.

"What kinds of feelings do you have in your heart towards the Prophet of Allah? "

"Nothing."

"I am sorry to say that you failed."

Here is what the Prophet said:²⁶

²⁶ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.14, *Îman* 2/7, no:15; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.67, *Îman* 1/16, no:44; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.114, no:5013; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.26, no:67; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III s.177, no:12837; Dârimî, *Sünen*, c.II, s.397, no:2741; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.405, no:179; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.VI, s.23, no:3258; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.II, s.129, no:1374; Abd ibn-i Humejd, *Müsned*,



Mosque Nabavî, MADÎNAH

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ ، لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ
 مِنْ وَالِدِهِ ، وَوَلَدِهِ ، وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (حم . خ . م . ن . هـ .
 و عبد بن حميد ، والدارمي ، حب. عن أنس ؛ حم . خ . ن .
 عن أبي هريرة)

c.I, s.355, no:1175; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.534, no:11745; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.I, s.23; Enes RA'dan.

Buhârî, *Sahih*, c.I, s.14, *Îman* 2/7, no:14; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.115, no:5015; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.534, no:11746; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.II, s.132, no:1383; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.I, s.29, no:70, 71; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.344, no:2955; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XVI, s.490, no:17360; c.XXII, s.395, no:25156.

(We'lledhî nafsî bi-yedihî) "By Allah who has my soul in His hand, *(lâ yu'minu ahadikum)* one of you could not be a true believer *(hattâ ekûnu ahabbe ileyhi min wâlidihî, wa waladihî, wa'n-nâsi ajma'in)* unless I am dearer to him than his father, his son, and everybody else."

Each of us must love the Prophet more than we love our fathers. We all must love the Prophet more than we love our children. We must love the Prophet more than we love the person who is dearest to us in our lives. We must love the Prophet more than we love our spouses or fiancées. Without that love, a person would not be a true believer.

Then we should try to acquire the love of the Prophet. That is the key for the true belief. If a person does not know the Prophet, does not understand his message, disregards the recommendations of the Prophet, does not follow the Sunnah of the Prophet, does not have the mercy for the Ummah of the Prophet, or does not have the desire to be useful to the Ummah of the Prophet, then he would be living in vain. He will not make progress. It is likely that he would deviate from the straight path and fall into the abyss. We all have to love the Prophet.

May Allah take us out of the numbness and give us desire and stamina to follow the path of the Prophet. We are so used to not doing so much good works and negligence. We have a tendency to maintain our condition which is less than the desirable. Where are we headed? We are drafted to the end of our lives in this world. We see everyday that somebody is sent to hereafter with the funeral prayer at the mosques. Someday it will be our turn. You never know when it will be your turn. We have to wake up and be prepared for the hereafter.

For that we have to shake ourselves first. We have to abandon our habits and stagnancy. Examine yourselves and see what you have, what you do, what you eat, what you wear, and what you talk. Question your lifestyle to see if it is pleasing to Allah.

Getting used to, habits and addictions are grave calamities on

us. They lead to stagnancy, laziness and negligence. They lead to unpreparedness for the hereafter and sorrow in the hereafter. We have to clear ourselves from the habits and addictions. We have to pull ourselves together and question ourselves: "At this age of my life, what should I do to be a good Muslim from now on? I had never thought of these things until I came to this mosque today. The khawaja is right. I must start thinking about these issues."

When a person starts thinking, he starts earning rewards because in Islam there is the principle:²⁷

لَا عِبَادَةَ كَالْتَفَكْرِ (أبو بكر بن كامل ، وابن النجار عن
الحارث عن علي)

(*Lâ ibâdete ke't-tefekkur*) "There is no worship as valuable as *tefekkur*, i.e., thinking, pondering." As a person ponders about issues, he would find the truth. Whatever he desires, Almighty Allah grants him eventually. He will attain his desires. One who searches finds his Lord. One who searches for trouble will find it, too. When somebody comes and bugs us we say, "Man, are you looking for trouble? Get out of my way!" One who looks for trouble finds it; one who looks for his Lord finds Him, too.

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ (يونس: ٢٥)

(*Wa'llàhu yed'û ilâ dâris selâm*) "Almighty Allah is inviting you

²⁷ Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.III, s.68, no:2688; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.IV, s.157, no:4647; Kudâî, *Müsnedü'ş-Şihâb*, c.II, s.38, no:836; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.II, s.36; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.V, s.179, no:7889; Mizzî, *Tezhibü'l-Kemâl*, c.VI, s.239; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XIII, s.256; Hz. Ali RA'dan.

İbn-i Ebi'd-Dünyâ, *Vera'*, c.I, s.122, no:216; Hz. Hasan RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XVI, s.163, no:44135; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.2039, no:3038; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XVI, s.446, no:17233, 17253.

to His paradise." Hafiz recited the verse; I am giving you its meaning. Almighty Allah is inviting all of you to His paradise. Go ahead! Search for what you need to enter His paradise and try doing it. Take advantage of Ramadhan and complete the course successfully. Try to be a successful Muslim before the Eid.

Our habits and addictions are our worst enemy; so is our nafs:²⁸

أَعْدَىٰ عَدُوِّكَ نَفْسُكَ الَّتِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْكَ .

(*A'dâ aduwuke nafsuke'lletî beyne jenbeyke*) "Your worst enemy is your nafs (yourself, your ego) [between your two sides]." Your ego is preventing you from becoming a good Muslim. Your nafs is holding you back. You must overcome that first. You cannot do your prayers before you overcome your nafs. You could not fast unless you overcome your nafs. If you do not overcome your nafs, you will not be able to do worship. If you do not overcome your nafs, you cannot stay away from sins. Your worst enemy is within yourself. Almighty Allah chains Satan in Ramadhan, yet you have your nafs. You must overcome your nafs.

Ramadhan is the month of learning taqwa and overcoming nafs. How does Allah have you overcome your nafs? He makes you fast—no food or drink. That is how you learn how to overcome your nafs. When a person fasts, his nafs gets weaker. While fasting, the nafs remains calm. When the person eats, his nafs gets stronger. Imagine a strong and big person like a wrestler sitting at the table and eating a whole lamb. Can you control this man afterwards? He has to do something afterwards.

You must have watched the shadow puppet show Karagoz. The

²⁸ Beyhakî, *Zühdü'l-Kebîr*, c.I, s.359, no:355; Abdullah ibn-i Abbas RA'dan.

Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.III, s.408, no:5248; Harâitî, *İ'tilâlü'l-Kulûb*, c.I, s.35, no:32; Ebû Mâlik el-Eş'arî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.IV, s.431, no:11263; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.143, no:412, 2144; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XVIII, s.270, no:19379.

main character Karagoz comes to the scene and screams: "*Yar bana bir eglence*—I need some entertainment!" Why does he do that? When a person's stomach is full, he asks for company, entertainment, music, fun and pleasure. When he is hungry, he would worry about his stomach, his life and his future.

Staying hungry, a person learns how to overcome his nafs. The desires of nafs are kept under control. You overcome your nafs and keep it under control whole day, yet in the evening, the nafs takes revenge. That is not acceptable—you cannot be a winner, a champion like that. As you fasted the whole day, your nafs was laying in an ambush and laughing at you: "I see that you are used to fasting. You know how to withstand hunger and thirst till the sunset. I will take revenge in the evening." And it does.

The person fasts during the day and goes to the theater or other entertainment places in the evening. The televisions and newspapers prepare special programs. They talk about the old Ramadhans: They do not say any word about khawajas or other scholars, but they bring out the cabaret singers, comedians, and other show-biz people. They call it the special Ramadhan program. In fact that is not a Ramadhan program at all; on the contrary, it is a Satan program! During the day the person overcomes his nafs, yet he surrenders to his nafs in the evening and goes to Beyoglu district [in Istanbul] or to the local center of entertainment.

In the past, some people would go to "Direklerarasi" in Istanbul [which was a district famous for entertainment such as theaters]. Man would tilt his fez and twist his mustache. They would go to the theaters and watch singing women. What happened? All the reward of fasting is gone!

The man fasted whole day and earned rewards, yet in the evening he earned sins to wipe out his rewards from the day. During the day, he overcame his nafs, yet in the evening, his nafs knocked him out. That is not acceptable. With the spiritual strength you accumulate during the day, you ought to overcome your nafs in the evening, too. You must continue overcoming your

nafs even after Ramadhan, too, and become a good Muslim.

You have had special spiritual training as in the military training. You are given a handful of bullets, and you have learned how to use a handgun. You learned how to shoot at 12. As you fire, you hit the bull's eye without any failure. You will be given a certificate indicating that you are qualified as a first-class commando. After Ramadhan, you fail to shoot the target board. What happened to you? Where did the training go? You are a commando who cannot lift an arm, move about, and ineffective in all. At every match, you get knocked out. What happened to the training? That means it did not stick.

If Ramadhan is not spent well, the training will not stick well. We have to take Ramadhan very seriously. We ought to overcome nafs during the night, too, as we do during the day. We should maintain our superiority over our nafs during the rest of the year, too. We must be good servants of Allah throughout our lives. We must learn taqwa, be a beloved servant of Him and return to his as one of His awliya. We must return to Him as one of His friends. We must return to Him as friends visiting one another just as the Shabi Arus of our master Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi. The night of death should be like the night of wedding or a feast. We must return to Him with pleasure observing the stages in Paradise. That is how we should prepare ourselves.

Ramadhan is the month to get ready for Paradise. Ramadhan is the month of correcting the nafs. Ramadhan is the month of becoming a good Muslim. One third of it is already gone, so you have only the two thirds. It will pass fast, too. You pull yourselves together before it is too late.

May Almighty Allah awaken you from the sleep of unawareness. May he place you among the righteous, knowledgeable and conscious servants. May He place you among those who are close associates and close friends to Him. May He grant you means to lead a life in compliance with His consent. May He keep His

guidance with you and make you special servants. May He grant you a pleasant departure from this life to the hereafter. May He honor you in His paradise with His beauty.

With the respects for the secrets of Surah Fatiha!

February 9, 1995 / Ramadhan 9, 1415

Kapi Camii - KONYA, TURKE

NOT: Here is the poem that was chanted after the 12th unit of Tarawih Prayer:

SHAHIDIM ARZ U SEMADIR

*Shahidim arz u semâdir bütûn ecrâmîyle,
Ashiqim sidq ile ben Hazret-i Shâh-i Rusûle,
Yaksa da âh-i derûnum beni bu hasret ile,
Tâkati yok dilimin halimi takrîre bile,
Ey bâd-i sabâ ughrarsa yolun semt-i Haremeyn'e,
Ta'zimimi arzeye Rasûlûs Sakaleyn'e!..*

*Bu günahkâr gidishin son demi bilmem ne olacak?
Gelecek bir gün ecel, kâse-i ömrün dolacak,
Yevme lâ yenfeûda her kishi râhin bulacak,
Aman ey Kân-i Kerem, yok elimden tutacak,
Ey bâd-i sabâ ughrarsa yolun semt-i Haremeyn'e,
Ta'zimimi arzeye Rasûlûs Sakaleyn'e!..*

*Hâkine yüz sürmek için ne yüzüm ne imkânım var...
Tahsis-i shefaat kebâir ehline, imanım var...
Ancak beni kurtaracak bir ulu sultanım var...
Aman ey Kân-ı Shefaat, pek büyük isyanım var...
Ey bâd-i sabâ uğrarsa yolun semt-i Haremeyn'e,
Ta'zimimi arzeye Rasûlûs Sakaleyn'e!..*

MY WITNESSES ARE THE EARTH AND HEAVENS

My witnesses are the earth and the sky with all their might
I am truly in love with the King of the Prophets
Even if the sighs of my heart burn me with the longing

My tongue has no strength to describe my state
O the breeze of the morning, if you pass by the Haramayn
Convey my reverence to the Prophet for the men and the djinn.

I wonder what would be the end of this journey in sin
A day will come to fill the cup of your life
Everybody will find a path on the day when there is no help
Help me O Mine of the Generosity; there is none to hold my hand
O the breeze of the morning, if you pass by the Haramayn
Convey my reverence to the Prophet for the men and the djinn.

I have no means to reach your grave, nor do I have face
I believe that the great personages will have permission to intercede
Yet I do have a great king to save me from the fire
Help me o Mine of Intercession, I am gravely disobedient.
O the breeze of the morning, if you pass by the Haramayn
Convey my reverence to the Prophet for the men and the djinn.

10. THE SUPPLICATION BY A PERSON WHO IS FASTING

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

*Eùdhu bi'llâhi minash-shaytânir rajîm.
Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.*

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kathîran tayyiben mubâreken fih... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jalâli wejhihî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa alâ âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejmâin...

Praise is to Almighty Allah, the Lord of the Universe. May the blessings of Allah be on the Prophet, his family, his companions and his sincere followers all.

a. The Night of Power

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our beloved Prophet, Muhammed the chosen, has stated:²⁹

أَتَاكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ، شَهْرُ بَرَكَةٍ، فِيهِ خَيْرٌ يَغْشِيكُمْ اللَّهُ، فَيَنْزِلُ
الرَّحْمَةَ، وَيَحْطُ فِيهِ الْخَطَايَا، وَيَسْتَجِيبُ فِيهِ الدَّعَاءَ، يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ
تَنَافُسَكُمْ، وَيَبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ، فَأَدُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا،
فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ، مَنْ حَرَمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ (طب). وابن النجار

²⁹ Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.271, no:2238; Ubâde ibn-i Sâmit RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.749, no:23691, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.344, no:4783; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.I, s.158, no:255; Münziri, *et-Tergîb*, c.II, s.60, no:1490.

عن عبادة بن الصامت

RE. 9/10 (*Etâkum shehru ramadhàn*) "The month of Ramadhan has arrived for you (*shehru barakatin*) the moth of abundance." There is barakah (*abundance*) in everything. There is barakah at food tables, in time, and in everything else. In this month of spirituality, Almighty Allah has the sources of evil tied up and the possibilities for the good deeds are freed and increased. There is a definite increase and blessedness in all.

(*Fîhi khayrun*) "There is goodness in it." There is countless goodness in this month that we all witness. There is also a night in this month which is better than a thousand months. On what day? Almighty Allah hid that night in this month of Ramadan. It is not clearly indicated which night would be. It is stated in the Qur'an:

ليلة القدر خير من ألف شهر (القدر: ٣)

(*Laylatu'l-qadri khayrun min elfi shehrin*) [The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.]

The companins asked the Prophet: "O Propphet of Allah! Is this night only one night in your lifetime or once in every year?"

The Prophet responded: "Every year."

Every year there is a night in Ramadhan which is better than a thousand months. When is it?

It is hidden in the month. Nevertheless, the Prophet gave a clue: "Look for it in the last ten days of Ramadhan!"

There is a night better than a thousand months which is hidden in the last ten days of Ramadhan. One who does a worship that is pleasing to Allah during that night will be rewarded as though he worshipped for one 1000 months which is 83.3 years continuously. It is such a valuable night. What shall we do then? (*Fîhi khayrun*) There is goodness in this month. We understand that there is a special night in this month. Here is goodness in every night of Ramadhan, yet there is also a night which is more precious than a thousand nights.

You should ask: "Dear Khawaja! What shall we do? Could you

inform us on this matter?"

"I am informing you: To catch this night, the Prophet used to do i'tikaf in the mosque for the last ten days of Ramadhan."

I'tikaf is a strong Sunnah of the Prophet. If nobody practices i'tikaf in a locality, all residents of the locality will be accountable for not practicing it. It is a well-known, strong Sunnah of the Prophet. People will be interrogated in the hereafter: "Why did you neglect that strong Sunnah of the Prophet?" That is why those who have time should decide which mosque they will stay and inform the administration of the mosque: "I am going to practice i'tikaf in this mosque; I am informing you." They should spend the last ten days of Ramadhan in a mosque.

Our beloved Prophet practiced i'tikaf; so did the companions of the Prophet. You should practice, too. You, too, should experience the honor, love and special worship during the last ten days of Ramadhan.

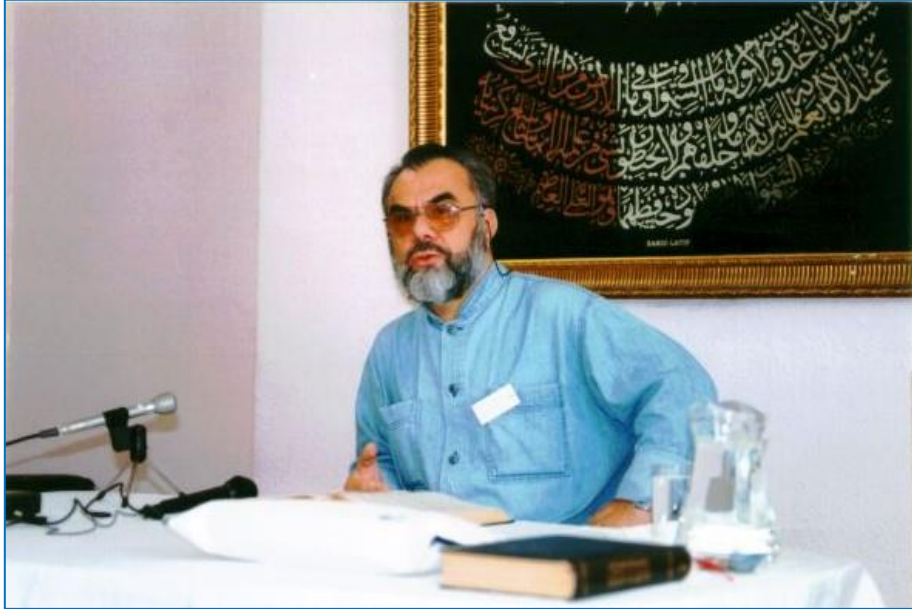
b. The Mercy of Allah Descents

يَغْشِيكُمْ اللَّهُ ، فَيَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةَ ، وَيَحِطُ فِيهِ الْخَطَايَا ، وَيَسْتَجِيبُ
فِيهِ الدُّعَاءَ ،

(*Yughash-shikumu'llah*) "Almighty Allah showers you with His mercy. The whole earth and all of the believers will be covered with the goodness. Then, (*feyenzilu'r-rahmetu*) the mercy of Allah descends from the heavens to the homes, hearts, countries, counties, and mosques.

(*Wa yahattu fihil-khatâyâ*) Almighty Allah forgives the offenses in this month. He forgives the sins every iftar time as well as every suhur time. He forgives every body who turns to him. Many people attain forgiveness. Many people are forgiven in this month. May Almighty Allah accept us among those who have been forgiven.

(*Wa yestejibu fihi'd-duâ*) "And Allah answers the prayers in this month." I do not know what you ask from Almighty Allah. You raise your hands in prayer and ask something from Almighty Allah.



Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN

We ought to know about the supplications; man has to know what to ask from Almighty Allah.

You must remember from the event of Mi'raj, even the Prophet was questioned if he had the permission [to pass certain gates of heavens]. As a blessing of Ramadan, the gates of the heavens are opened for the prayers and supplications of the servants. The prayers and other worship reach Almighty Allah without any hurdle.

يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ تَنَافُسَكُمْ، وَيَبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ،

(*Yenzuru'llàhi tenâfusekum*) "Almighty Allah looks at your efforts and zeal in doing good deeds as though you were competing with one another. (*Wa yubâhî bikum melâiketehû*) He shows you to His angels and commends you." Almighty Allah shows His servants to His angels and says, "O my angels, remember you had criticized my servants. Look at them. My servants are competing with one another in doing good works."

You are familiar with the adventure of the angels. When Hadrat Adam was to be created, the angels asked Almighty Allah: "Our Lord! Are you going to create species that will shed blood and create mischief on earth?" Almighty Allah had responded: "I know things that you do not know." They understood their faults and repented by circumambulating Bayt-al-Ma'mur as the pilgrims circumambulate the Kaabah. Almighty Allah points the worshipping believers and tells His angels that His servants are doing good work and worship.

فَادُّوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا ،

(*Fa-addullàhe min enfusikum khayrâ*) "Since Almighty Allah prepared such blessings for His servants, you try your best to benefit from it." Do good deeds and charitable works; compete with one another to do the good deeds. Fulfill your servitude to Allah! Carry out your responsibilities and have some zeal in doing so. Appreciate this month.

c. One who Fasts is Rewarded in Multitude

In a hadith reported by Abdullah ibn-i Ebî Ewfâ RA, the Prophet said:

نَوْمُ الصَّائِمِ عِبَادَةٌ ، وَصَمْتُهُ تَسْبِيحٌ ، وَدَعَاؤُهُ مُسْتَجَابٌ ، وَعَمَلُهُ

مُضَاعَفٌ (هب. عن عبد الله ابن أبي أوفى)

(*Nawmu's-sàimi ibâdatun*) "The sleep of the person who is fasting is worship." He would get up for the night vigil prayer, eats suhur meal, goes to the mosque, recites Qur'an, and his body gets tired. During the long summer days, the hunger and thirst overtakes him, and he goes to sleep. That sleep is considered as worship. The rewards and special treats are of this month.

(*Wa samtuhû tesbîhun*) "And his silence will be like glorifying Almighty Allah." When a person is fasting, he would be silent and sometimes without much of red color on his face. Yet his silence would earn him rewards.

As a matter of fact, the silence is a form of worship in Islam. Silence leads to contemplation and meditation (*tefekkur*). It also prevents a person from uttering evil words. That is why it is considered as a form of worship.

When we are asked about the worship, we often think about the daily prayers, fasting and paying zakah. The last one is the worship carried out with money or wealth: You give the needy what you have earned lawfully with your own hands. That is one of the beauties of Islam. One could do worship by spending money.

Hajj is worship, too; the Muslim visits the Honorable Ka'abah. Silence is worship too that many people fail to appreciate. A person either should say good things or keep silent. When the silence is accompanied by contemplation and pondering, then it becomes one of the greatest forms of worship. The Prophet said:³⁰

لَا عِبَادَةَ كَالْتَفَكُّرِ (أبو بكر بن كامل، وابن النجار عن
الحارث عن علي)

(*Lâ ibâdete ke'ttefekkur*) "There is no worship that is more valuable than contemplation."

There is another form of this hadith:³¹

³⁰ Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.III, s.68, no:2688; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.IV, s.157, no:4647; Kudâî, *Müsnedü'ş-Şihâb*, c.II, s.38, no:836; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.II, s.36; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.V, s.179, no:7889; Mizzî, *Tezhîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.VI, s.239; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XIII, s.256; Hz. Ali RA'dan.

İbn-i Ebî'd-Dünyâ, *Vera'*, c.I, s.122, no:216; Hz. Hasan RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XVI, s.163, no:44135; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.2039, no:3038; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XVI, s.446, no:17233, 17253.

³¹ *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.369, no:1004.

تَفَكَّرُ سَاعَةً ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ سَنَةٍ .

(*Tefekkuru sâatin khayrun min ibâdeti seneh*) "An hour of contemplation is better than a year of worship."

Here is yet another one:

تَفَكَّرُ سَاعَةً ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ سِتِّينَ سَنَةٍ .

(*Tefekkuru sâatin khayrun min ibâdeti sittîne seneh*) "An hour of contemplation is better than sixty years of worship."

In fact both could be true. Depending on the importance of a person's contemplation, depending on the impact of the contemplation on the person's life, one hour of contemplation could be equal to the worship of sixty years. A person realizes his faults and takes a lesson from an incident; he contemplates about his life, abandons his bad deeds and follows the straight path and return to Almighty Allah. Than, that contemplation is better than the worship of sixty years.

(*Wa duâühû mustejâbun*) "The supplication of the person who is fasting is accepted." The supplication is worship, too. This is one of the matters that many people are uninformed.

The Prophet said:³²

³² Ebû Dâvud, *Sünen*, c.II, s.76, no:1479; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.V, s.211, no:2969; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.II, s.1258, no:3828; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.IV, s.267, no:18378; Buhârî, *Edebül-Müfred*, c.I, s.249, no:714; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.I, s.667, no:1802; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.II, s.208, no:1041; Beyhakî, *Şuabül-İman*, c.II, s.37, no:1105; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.450, no:11464; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.21, no:29167; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.I, s.485, no:3243; Tayâlisî, *Müsned*, c.I, s.108, no:801; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.II, s.492; Kudâî, *Müsnedü'ş-Şihâb*, c.I, s.51, no:29; Abdullah ibn-i Mübarek, *Müsned*, c.I, s.74; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.XII, s.279, no:6719; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.XXXII, s.307, no:7081; Ubû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VIII, s.120; Nu'man ibn-i Beşîr RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.II, s.62, no:3113, 3151; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.403, no:1295; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.3, no:12416.

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ (حم. ش. خ. في الأدب، ت. حسن صحيح،
ن. ه. حب. ك. هب. عن النعمان بن بشير؛ ع. ض. عن البراء)

(*Ed-duâ'u huwa'l-ibâdatu*) "Duâ, i.e., supplication, is worship, servitude." When we complete our salat, we raise our hands and turn to Almighty Allah and ask things from Him. We ask; He will grant us what we want. The process of asking Him things is worship. A person could keep asking things from Allah the whole day; thus he would be in worship whole day.

Our beloved Prophet stated: ki:³³

مَنْ لَمْ يَدْعُ اللَّهَ، غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ (حم. ش. عن أبي هريرة)

(*Men lem yed'u'llâhe ghadhiba'llâhu aleyhi*) "The wrath of Allah is on those who do not turn to Him in supplication."

It is amazing good news! Almighty Allah does not say: "O My servant! That is enough. You have prayed enough. Do not ask too much!" On the contrary, Almighty Allah would be pleased with the person who asks things from Him all the time and count the persons requests as worship. Almighty Allah has wrath on those who do not turn to Him or do not ask anything from Him. The supplication, duâ, is a form of worship.

Sometimes we see in the mosque people who finish their salat saying "*As-salamu alaikum wa rahmatu'llah*" to his right and to his left and then get up and leave. O blessed person! The salat is worship; the supplication you make after the salat is worship, too. That will earn you rewards, too. Not only will it earn you rewards, but also Almighty Allah will grant him when he asks for.

Satan could instill a doubt in a person's mind: "I ask things from

³³ İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.XI, s.278, no:3817; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.2, s.443, no:9717; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.6, s.22, no:29169; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.II, s.394; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.VII, s.295; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.II, s.68, no:3160; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XXI, s.404, no:23844.

Allah, and nothing happens." There are people who say this. I heard a woman saying, "Allah does not accept my prayers."

Almighty Allah will accept the person prayer if the conditions are proper. We understand from the ahadith that He does not accept the prayers of people who are indulged in haram. Almighty Allah does not accept the prayers of a person who eats haram, talks haram, and wears haram. On the other hand, Almighty Allah accepts the prayers of a person who eats halal, talks halal and wears halal. The acceptance happens in three ways:

1. Almighty Allah grants what the person wants as the person wants it: "My lord, send us some rain for the fields I planted. If you do not send rain, I will suffer losses." You see that the next day it will rain in plenty.

2. Sometimes Almighty Allah grants something better than what the person asks for. It is similar to the situation that a patient asks a doctor for some aspirin. The doctor says: "You have an ulcer and gastritis in your stomach, and aspirin will aggravate it. You want the aspirin for your headache, but I will not give it to you. Instead, I will give you some other painkiller that is gentler to your stomach."

If Almighty Allah does not respond to the prayers right away, that means He will provide something better. One has to be patient.

The prophet warned us: "Do not say 'I asked something from Allah, but He did not give it to me.' Be patient and wait." Some patience is needed; Almighty Allah must have accepted it and it will happen."

While the Prophet was arguing with a pagan, the angel Gabriel approached the pagan, did something to him and returned. The Prophet asked: "O Gabriel, what did you do?" The archangel Gabriel responded: "I punctured his aorta."

The pagan did not understand anything, but Gabriel AS did what the person deserved. When the time arrived, he suffered what he deserved.

That is why we need not to hurry or panic. We ought to ask things from Allah, and wait for it with proper manners. You witness that Almighty Allah gives better than what you ask for. I am sure you have examples in your life, for I have witnessed many

examples with my life.

3. Sometimes, Almighty Allah rewards the person in the hereafter. Why is it so? It is likely that what is asked for is not proper for this life. For example, a person could pray Allah to extend the life of a person who is in death bed: "My Lord, give him health and longer life. Let him get up." The person dies. In such situations, Almighty Allah saves the rewards for the hereafter.

Sometimes people have conflicting requests. For instance, a farmer could ask for rain while his neighbor who makes a living by producing pottery asks for sunny weather. Each person would have different requests. Then some of these requests will not be answered because they will be a conflict. Two good servants could be asking things that create a conflict. Almighty Allah would give rewards for the request that is not actualized in this life.

d. Importance of Seeking Knowledge

[On this subject, I am going to tell you something that I often remember.] When I was in the military service, one of our friends would carry in his pocket a book of preaches by Abdulqadir-i Geylânî KS. He was a practicing Muslim. Whenever he had time, he would open the book and learn something. When a Muslim finds time, he should seek knowledge because studying [an Islamic subject] is better than this world and everything in it and has more rewards. Our beloved Prophet stated this fact. Our friend used to carry the book all the time. I wish all Muslims had this kind of habit: Whenever they find time, they would get the book and read it.

When I was a college professor, I used to advise the students: "Keep a pen and a notebook in your pocket. Whenever you hear something nice, you could write it down right away." It would be a reminder book. You could also carry a book to read, too.

Dear brothers and sisters!

We are an ummah that paid greatest importance to knowledge. Our forefathers were scholars of unmatched caliber in the history of world. They produced works that made them famous and



remembered. We are unaware of the importance of knowledge and relaxed. That friend of mine used to carry a book, I hope you all do the same.

[Before coming to what was in that book,] I will give you an opposite example: A friend of mine, who knows the Japanese well, told me that the Japanese read a lot. Among the Europeans, the German read the most. Yet, the Japanese read a lot more than the German. "They have bookcases in their bathrooms." That means they read while they use the toilet.

Well, we would not do that kind of thing—we respect the knowledge. Everything has to be carried out with proper manners. We do not do that, but we should be aware that they do read a lot. We should not waste time, advance in that aspect. I was amazed when I heard that they had bookshelves in their bathrooms.

My friend in the military service used to carry a book in his pocket. He was a practicing Muslim. Alhamdulillah, we have many practicing Muslim brothers who are college graduates. They lead a

conscious life. One of my students was in the service, too. He pulled the book from the friend's pocket: "Let's see what is in this book." I looked at it. It was a book by Abdulqadir-i Geylanî KS. I suggested:

"With bismillah, open a page and read what our master Abdulqadir-i Geylanî KS said."

We saw this hadith that was good news for us:

In the hereafter, when the record of each person is displayed and the rewards and offenses are compared in the Great Court, some Muslims will see some great rewards written in their record books. They will be curious about how they have earned these great rewards. They will ask Almighty Allah about it: "My Lord! I do not know how I earned these rewards. What deed did I do?" Almighty Allah will respond: "O My servant! In your life on earth, you made dua, and these rewards were recorded for your dua because at that time your request did not comply with my Devine Destiny. I answered your prayers in this manner."

The servants would remorse: "We wish Almighty Allah had left the rewards of all of our prayers to the hereafter."

That means the prayers are accepted. If a person did not eat haram, wear haram, be in a situation displeasing to Almighty Allah, his prayers will be answered because Almighty Allah promised:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ (المؤمن: ٦٠)

(*Wa qàla rabbukum ud'ûnî astajiblekum*) "Make dua, I will respond your prayers." The prayers will be accepted immediately as the person requested or in a better way. One could understand that it is accepted. Another option will be rewards in the hereafter.

Why did we provide this explanation? Allah accepts the prayers in Ramadhan. "The supplications by a person who is fasting are accepted," said the Prophet AS. We read about this good news, so we have provided the explanation.

Among the people whose duas are accepted are the people who

are ill. The sleep of the ill people is worship; their moaning, glorification; their prayers are accepted. They are given rewards for the deeds that they used to do but could not do it because of the illness. The offences in his record book are erased. That is the state of a person who is ill.

The state of a person who is fasting is similar. His sleep is worship, his silence is glorification, his prayers are answered, and his deeds are "*mudàaf*." Mudàaf means exaggerated, magnified, rewarded in multitude. All of the deeds carried out by a person who is fasting are rewarded 70 times more than usual except for his fasting. Our beloved Prophet stated that Almighty Allah said: "The fasting is carried out for me, so I will reward it." That means the reward for fasting is incalculable, uncountable. The other good deeds while fasting are rewarded in 70 folds as indicated in various ahadith.

e. Ramadhan is Expiation for Offences

Here is another good news about Ramadhan. Abû Hayseme RA reported that the Prophet said:³⁴

رَمَضَانَ إِلَى رَمَضَانَ ، وَالْحَجَّ إِلَى الْحَجِّ ، وَالْجُمُعَةَ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ ،
وَالصَّلَاةَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ كَفَّارَةً بِمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ مَا اجْتَنَبْتَ الْكِبَائِرَ .

(*Ramadànu ilâ ramadàn*) "A Ramadhan to the next Ramadan, (*wa'l-hajju ila'l-hajj*) a Pilgrimage to the next Pilgrimage, (*wa'l-jumuati ila'l-jumuah*) a Friday prayer to the next Friday prayer (*wa's-salatu ila's-salat*) a daily prayer to the next daily prayer (*kaffârâtun limâ baynahunne*) are expiations for the offences." They wipe out the sins.

This means if we have fasted in Ramadhan with the proper

³⁴ Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Misned*, c.II, s.400, no:9186; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

manner of fasting, our shortcomings and sins after the last Ramadhan will be wiped off. This is good news. Likewise, if we performed the Pilgrimage several times, if the Pilgrimage is accepted, if it is carried out with lawful money, the sins in-between will be erased from our record book. Performing Pilgrimage is expensive; not everybody could afford it. Yet, Ramadhan is available for everybody. That is why it is a great blessing and good news.

Another good opportunity is the Friday prayer. A Friday is expiation for the offences that are committed after the previous Friday. That is why one should not skip the Friday prayers. It wipes out the sins.

There are other possibilities and opportunities on Fridays: If a person takes a bath before coming to the Friday prayer, his sins of the last 10 days will be erased. Also, if a person recites Surah al-Kahf on Friday, his sins of the last 10 days will be erased.

As you see, Almighty Allah provides us with opportunities. We commit offences or fail to carry out the orders of Allah properly throughout the day and night. If we maintain our worship, attend the Friday prayer, perform Hajj, and fast the Ramadhan, our worship erases the offences and sins. When the sins are erased, we will not have a shameful face on the Day or Resurrection; we will not be punished in the hereafter for them.

If the sins are not wiped out, we will be in a terrible state:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ . وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

(الزلزال: ٧-٨)

(*Femen ya'mel mithqàla dherretin khayran yarah. Wa men ya'mel mithqàla sharran yarahû*) "Whoever does an atom's weight of good work will be rewarded; whoever does an atom's weight of bad work will be punished."



Mehmed Zâhid KOTKU, MAKKAH

It is stated in some ahadith that when a person performs Hajj, his sins will be wiped out in a way that if he has doubts such as "I wonder if Almighty Allah has forgiven me my sins," that would be his first offense. He shall not even doubt about it. *Al-hamdu lillah*, the sins are erased. The only condition is that he has to perform the Hajj with halal money. The whole thing boils down to an important point as indicated by the awliyaullah: One has to have halal sustenance. The haram should not go below our throat.

You must have heard of how Hadrat Abubakr as-Siddiq was careful about this issue. Once somebody brought a plate of something that looked good. Hadrat Abubakr tasted it and asked:

"Where is this from?"

When he understood that it was not from a lawful source, he put his finger to his throat and vomited what he had tasted. He said:

"If a body is fed on haram, hellfire will burn that body for sure."

That is why we have to stay away from haram.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The awliyaullah, the perfect guides in our path, have stated that a Muslim must pay utmost attention not eat anything that is haram. He should not cheat anybody. He must learn what is haram and what is halal. That is very important.

Hadrat Omar RA was a strong man. When he was the caliph, he would go to the market place for inspection. He would carry a whip and question the vendors on haram and halal issues. If they failed to provide the correct answer, he would beat them saying, "You do not know what is haram and what is halal. Why do you conduct business here?"

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Our purpose was to talk about Ramadhan; however, I had to tell you about the importance of halal sustenance. We have to be extremely careful about our earning and our sustenance to make sure that it is all halal. We have to provide halal sustenance for our family and children. We have to learn about lawful means of earning a living.

I wish that the colleges taught the students about what is lawful and what is haram in the first place. The colleges teach our students professions: the graduates become doctors, engineers, veterinarians, agriculture experts, lawyers, and alike. May Allah increase their number. I wished that they taught the students about the halal and haram aspects of their professions. That would lead the students to salvation. If a person eats haram, he would go to hellfire for sure. His worship is not accepted, nor are his prayers and pilgrimage. It is a terrible situation. I must remind you that we all have to pay attention to eating halal.

Two Ramadhans are expiation for the sins committed in between. Two Friday are expiation for the sins committed in between. Two formal prayers (*salah*) are expiation for the sins committed in between. Two Pilgrimages are expiation for the sins committed in between. The hadith listed these. There is one condition: (*Mujtunibetil kebâiru*) "as long as the major offenses are

avoided." What are the major offenses? They are homicide, stealing, adultery, and other ones. When the major sins are avoided, the sins that a Muslim is involved knowingly or unintentionally will be erased. This is true as long as one stays away from the major offenses.

As believers, we stay away from the major offenses. Alhamdulillah we do not commit theft or homicide. May Allah keep us away from such sins. The most dangerous major offence of our era is adultery. Unfortunately, the present living conditions make a person get involved in some form of adultery.

The Prophet stated:³⁵

العَيْنَانِ تَزْنِيَانِ، وَالْيَدَانِ تَزْنِيَانِ (حم. طب. عن ابن مسعود)

(*Al-aynâni tezniyân*) "The eyes commit adultery, too." What would be the adultery of the eyes? It is the unlawful look. (*Wa'l-yedân, tezniyân*) "The hands commit adultery, too. The hands should be guarded and kept away from sin. One has to be careful for the adultery of the eyes.

Let me elaborate on the adultery of the eyes. It happens with the magazines and newspapers. I read three or four newspapers to get a better understanding of the issues in the society and various opinions on these issues. Some newspapers print indecent pictures

³⁵ Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.412, no:3912; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.IX, s.134, no:8661; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.IX, s.246, no:5364; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musanef*, c.I, s.394, no:384; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.I, s.311, no:1956; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.VI, s.211, no:2282; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliya*, c.II, s.98; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.344, no:8520; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.X, s.267, no:4419; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İmân*, c.IV, s.365, no:5428; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VII, s.89, no:13289; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.I, s.72; İshak ibn-i Râhaveyh, *Müsned*, c.I, s.116, no:30; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.473, no:8913; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.VI, s.213, no:2284; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.V, s.327, no:13062; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.77, no:1799; *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.VI, s.390, no:10543; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIV, s.382, no:14541.

of people. That is why I cancelled the subscription to some of the papers. One newspaper had the pictures of two naked men together. There are pictures of naked women. Some newspapers made it a profession. They advertise the worst kind of obscenity. They print sexually attractive headlines to have people buy their papers and magazines. These lead to the adultery of the eyes and haram.

"All right, Khawaja, we shall not buy or look at that newspaper. We shall not stop at the newsstand."

"Fine! How about the television at home? The television inflicts a great deal of harm in Muslims."

I was in Konya yesterday. I was giving a talk. Somebody sent a piece of paper with a question on it:

"Khawaja! I heard that a person will not die as a believer if he has a television in his house. Is that true?"

I said: "No! Let us not take to the extreme! Nobody could mess with the works of Almighty Allah. The matter of belief is different. Nevertheless, the danger of television is not a minor issue."

Why is it so? I remember once we went to Ankara for a preach. After the preach, there was an interview on television: Yusuf Islam was to appear on the "32nd Day" of Mehmed Ali Birand.

I met Yusuf Islam. He came to visit me when I had an operation in a hospital in Istanbul. May Allah be pleased with him. I know about his past and his progress. He is a practicing sincere Muslim. He wears a long overcoat and a turban. He has a long beard. If you saw him, you would think that he is one of the Mollas from the Black Sea region. His style leaves that impression. He is a strong believer.

How did this Greek-British pop singer become a Muslim? He was about to be drowned in the ocean. He turned to Almighty Allah: "My Lord! If you save me, I will do good servitude towards you. I will be a good, practicing believer." Almighty Allah created the means, so something saved him from drowning. However, he had forgotten about the promise.



Yusuf İSLÂM

That is the typical behavior of man. When there is an earthquake, people become very religious. When the danger is over, they forget. During the times of hardship such as the scarcity of food, event of war—we all remember when the Turkish soldiers were sent to Cyprus— people change. The newspapers and radios got into a different mood. After the danger is over, people lose interest in religion. When the waves shake the ship,

دَعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ (يونس: ٢٢)

(Deawu'llàhe mukhlisîne lehu'd-dîn) "They sincerely pray to Allah"; when they arrive in the land, they forget all about the danger and promises. That is the nature of man.

Yusuf Islam had forgotten his promise. Yet in his dreams he was reminded:

"You had promised that you were going to be a good servant if

you had been saved. What happened?"

Almighty Allah warned him in the dreams. That led him to accept Islam.

I love our brother Yusuf Islam. Since I knew him, too, I decided to watch the interview on television. We turned on the television at the pre-announced time. May Allah punish those who prepared that television program. Yusuf Islam interview was for the Muslims to watch. That is why I wanted to see it. The beginning of the program included some bedroom scenes of an obscene movie. That was treachery and mockery. It was like belittling the beliefs of Muslims. I did not want to watch those scenes. I wanted to watch Yusuf Islam and learn few things about him. Why do you have to show me the obscene scenes? You commit the sins; why do you mess with me?

I did not want to see such scenery, nor did you announce it. We were ready to watch Yusuf Islam, and we did not know what to do when all of a sudden the bedroom scenes appeared. We closed our eyes, yet the damage was done. The television brings the bars, discos, nightclubs, the church, the priests, the singer, and everything else into our living room.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Please pay utmost attention on not committing the adultery of the eyes. Our Prophet warns us that the eyes will commit adultery, too. Looking at haram is a form of adultery, and adultery is a major offense. For this reason, many people are subject to this ailment and lose strength. We have to be more conscious and careful about avoiding the major offenses.

Yes, the Ramadhans will be expiation for sins, so are the Fridays, daily prayers and Pilgrimages as long as one avoids the major offenses. We have no choice but avoid the major offenses.

When a man sees a woman on street, the first look is forgiven. But when he stares at the woman for the second time, he starts accumulating sins. The first look was unintentional, yet the second look is from Satan. That is why one of the principles of our Naqshi tariqa is "*nazar ber qadem*—the dervish shall look at his feet as he

walks." That means, the dervish shall not investigate what is happening around him as he walks on the street. He shall have his proper manners and shyness of a young girl. When a person starts looking around on the street, he may see things that he should not look at. Once a poet said:

*Göz gördü gönül sevdi, a benim yüzü mâhim!
Kurbanin olam, var mi benim bunda günahim?*

*The eye saw and the heart loved my moon-faced beloved!
May I be sacrificed for you: Do I have any fault?*

Yes you do! Your eyes looked at it. It is a sin. You have to control your eyes and prevent from looking at haram. You have to take precautions and have manners. Have your wife cover up properly. You have to teach your daughter at an early age that she has to cover her hair and body to comply with the orders of Allah and earn rewards.

When the major sins are avoided, the offenses of a person are wiped out by Ramadhan. That is great.

f. Who is a Rebel?

After reading another hadith, I will end my talk with a warning:³⁶

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ وَقَامَهُ ، إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا ، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ
ذَنْبِهِ ، وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ (ت. ه. حم. عن أبي هريرة)

³⁶ Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.III, s.104, no:619; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.221, no:1316; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.503, no:10544; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.V, s.330, no:1953; Ebû Nuaym, *Ahbâr-ı Isfahan*, c.II, s.103, no:439; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.



(*Men sàme ramadàne*) “Whoever fasts in Ramadhan (*wa qàmahû*) and standup in prayer in it, i.e., offers the Tarawih prayers at night, (*îmaânen wa’htisâben*) by truly believing and expecting the rewards from Allah, (*ghufira lehû mâ taqaddeme min dhenbihî wa mâ teahhara*) his previous and latter sins will be forgiven.”

In another hadith the Prophet SAS stated about Ramadhan:³⁷

أَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ ، وَوَسْطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ ، وَآخِرُهُ عِتْقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ .

(خز. هب. عن سلمان)

(*Awwaluhû rahmetun, wa awsatuhû maghfiratun, wa*

³⁷ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü’l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü’l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA’dan.

Kenzü’l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276.

akhiruhû itqun mine'n-nâr) "The first part of Ramadan is for receiving the mercy of Allah. Its middle is for the forgiveness of the sins. Its end is freedom from the hellfire."

When the Muslim starts fasting, Almighty Allah showers His mercy on him. The mercy continues to the middle of the month. In the middle of the month, the Muslim is forgiven. In the latter part of the month, the believer is given the good news: "You are free from the hellfire."

Here is the most important point as stated by the Prophet:

فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ، مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ .

(*Wa inne'sh-shaqiyya men harume fihî rahmetu'llâhi azze wa jalla*) "Despite all of these blessings and good things that come with Ramadhan, if a person has not benefited anything, if he has not received the mercy of Allah, he will be a *shaqi* (rebel)."

Here *shaqi* does not mean a highway robber. In Islamic literature, people are in two categories. The first one is the *suedâ*, i.e., the happy ones both in this life and in the hereafter. The opposite of the *suedâ* is the *eshqiyâ*, i.e., those who are deprived of the mercy of Allah and headed towards hellfire. *Shaqî* is the one who will go to hellfire; *saîd* is the one who will go to paradise. "If a person did not benefit from the blessings of Ramadhan, is truly deprived."

What does this mean Dear Brothers and Sisters? We ought to pay attention to our worship and servitude to earn the rewards. We should not miss them or be like a student who has been kicked out of school. That is the important point.

g. Three People to Be Humiliated

Once, the Prophet was going to deliver a sermon in the masjid. As he climbed a step, he said "Amen!" He climbed the second step and said "Amen!" He repeated the same thing on the third step.



After he delivered the sermon, he was asked:

"O Prophet of Allah! You would not do move up the pulpit like this before. Why did you say "Amen!" three times?" The Prophet responded:

Jibrîl AS came to me and said three things:

1. "Woe to the person who reaches his parents—both of them or at least one—and he fails to earn Paradise. May he be humiliated." I said "Amen!"

2. "Woe to the person who reached Ramadhan and failed to be forgiven in the end of the month. May he be humiliated." I said "Amen!"

3. "Woe to the person who hears the name of the Prophet Muhammed and fails to say *salât* and *selam* on him. May he be humiliated." I said "Amen!"

What lesson shall we derive from this hadith?

1. We shall serve our parents and earn Paradise because when the parents make dua for the children such as "May Allah place you

in Paradise; may He give you a long life," one earns Paradise. There is a hadith: "The Paradise is under the feet of the mothers." Woe to the person who fails to earn his parents' consent.

We can earn Paradise if at least one of the parents is alive. It is a great opportunity. We must earn Paradise. Failing to earn Paradise is a great loss and deprivation. Additionally, the person is subject to the wrath of Jibrīl and the Prophet.

2. There is a good merciful atmosphere of Ramadhan that a believer could be forgiven. There are opportunities and possibilities. A person who lives through Ramadhan should be forgiven at the end. If a person fails that, he should be humiliated.

For these reasons, we must pay attention to Ramadhan. We must look at our progress and state at the end of Ramadhan. Is there an improvement? Have we corrected our conduct? Has our character changed for better? Today we finished the tenth day of fasting; has this spiritual medicine been effective for our ailments? Are we benefiting from this course? How is our grade report? Are we going to complete the course with success and pass? We have to examine ourselves to see all.

I noticed that when we were driving, we heard the call for the maghrib, and the iftar cannon was fired. A man on the street lit his cigarette. It is just the same as ever. You had been patient for the lawful things throughout the day; you were strong. You did not eat or drink anything during the day. You were not doing the regular things that you would do other times. Why do you have to start with something considered as *makruh*—according to some scholars it is haram? You were supposed to maintain your patience. That means you do not have a grasp of the meaning and spirit of Ramadhan.

You were supposed to acquire *taqwa* and self-control in Ramadhan. You were to abandon the bad habits and practices. You have not reached to that point yet. That is a bad sign. Nevertheless, Ramadhan is not over yet; it is not too late. There

are nineteen days to go. Let us try a bit harder on these days to earn the mercy of Allah. This is a very important point.

May Almighty Allah bless us with His Divine Guidance. May He grant us the ability to see the truth as truth and follow it. May He let us benefit from the blessings of Ramadhan and become His beloved servants. May He grant us means to get rid of bad manners and to acquire good manners.

There is another hadith that states that if a person, after Ramadhan, does not maintain the good things that he had acquired during ramadhan, if he returns to his usual state, it is an indication that his fasting and prayers during Ramdhan are not accepted. If the person maintains his good state, it is a sign that his fasting and prayers have been accepted. That means we ought to maintain our good state after Ramadhan, too.

....

May Almighty Allah awaken us from the sleep of unawareness. May He make us knowledgeable and aware servants. May He place us among those who are acquainted and friends to Him. May He enable us to lead a life in compliance with His consent. May He grant us His guidance and make us special favorable servants. May He grant us a pleasant way when we depart from this life. May He honor us with His beauty in His Paradise.

With the respects for the secrets of the Surah Fatihah!

February 10, 1995 — Mersin, Turkey
Ramadhan 10, 1415

11. PEOPLE WHO ARE HEADED TO HELLFIRE

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad Cosan

*Eùdhu bi'llâhi mina'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.
Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.*

El-hamdu li'llâhi haqqa hamdihî, wa's-salatu wa's-salamu alâ khayra khalqihî sayyidinâ muhammadin wa alâ âlihî wa sahibihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejmaîn...

Praise is to Almighty Allah who is truly to be praised. The blessings of Allah be on our master Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and his sincere followers all.

My Dear beloved Muslim Brothers and Sisters!

O blessed congregation of Muslims!

May Almighty Allah accept our fasts, prayers and supplications. May He grant you the desires of your hearts in this life and in the hereafter.

In this brief time period after the Isha prayer, I would like to explain few verses and a Hadith Qudsî.

a. Prepare for the Hereafter!

Dear Brothers and Sisters! In many verses of the Qur'an, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* orders *taqwa* on us. "Be *muttaqî* servants! Hold on to *taqwa*! Make *taqwa* your principle." You hear these verses often. In Surah Hashr, before the "*Huwallâhulledhî lâ ilâha illâ hû*" verse that we often read, Almighty Allah says, *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ، وَاتَّقُوا

اللَّهُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (الحشر: ١٨)

(*Yâ eyyuhelledhîne âmenuttaqullâha waltenzur nafsun mâ qaddemet lighad, wattaqullâh, innallâhe khabîrun bimâ ta'malûn.*)
(Qur'an 59:18)

This verse means, (*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû*) "O you who have believed, o Muslims! (*Ittaqu'llâh*) Fear Allah, have *taqwa!* (*Waltenzur nafsun mâ qaddemet li-ghad*) Let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow." Each of us must consider what we are preparing for tomorrow.

"Today" is our life in this world, our present life. "Tomorrow" is the life in the hereafter. Let each person look at what he is preparing for the hereafter. What is he preparing? What will he present?

The Prophet SAS has explained the matter with a simile for everybody to understand:³⁸

الدُّنْيَا مَزْرَعَةٌ الْآخِرَةُ .

(*Ad-dunyâ mezzrâ'atu'l-âkhirah*) "This life is the arable field for the hereafter." You are going to plant crops here to harvest them in the hereafter. You harvest whatever you plant. Nobody would plant wheat and harvest cotton instead. What ever you do in this life, you will get it in the hereafter. This is a simple fact that everybody, from the most illiterate to the top scholar, could understand easily. It is a fact just like two plus two equals four.

Our lord is ordering us "Let each person look at what he is preparing for the hereafter." Then we must look at what we do everyday. We turn back and look at what we have done. Every evening we must evaluate our deeds and look at our losses and

³⁸ *Kesfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.301, no:1320.

gains.

Some great personages had done that very seriously. They took a sheet of paper and a pen and listed their good deeds and bad deeds so that they would not repeat the bad deeds and maintain the good ones. They questioned themselves: "How did I miss that one?"

Hadrat Omar ibn-i Khattab RA recommended:³⁹

حَاسِبُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَاسَبُوا (ت. ش. عن عمر)

(*Hàsibû anfusakum qabla an tuhàsabû*) "Interrogate yourselves before you are interrogated in the hereafter. Do an analysis here!" A store owner would examine his records before the end of the year to see where he is headed. How much does he owe? How much is he going to receive? What is the overhead? Each person would pay attention to such things; otherwise, he would not know how much deficit or loss he will have to face at the end of the year. Every evening the account is checked.

That is why we ought to ask ourselves: "What I am preparing for the hereafter?" Before going to sleep, each person should remember the events of the day: "What did I do in the morning? When did I leave the house? Which places did I go? What things did I do?" He should get answers to these questions.

There was a man living in Madinah al Munawwarah. He was a good Muslim. Whenever he visited the grave of the Prophet, he would greet: "*As-salaâtu was-salâmu 'aleyke yâ Rasûlallah!*" He would hear a response of the Prophet, too. What a great state! Once he had visitors from his hometown. He inquired about his neighbors and relatives who are living in his hometown. With the

³⁹ Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.638, no:2459; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VII, s.96, no:34459; Abdullah ibn-i Mübârek, *Zühd*, c.I, s.103, no:306; İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.828; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XXXXIV, s.314; Hz. Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XVI, s.188, no:44203; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdîs*, c.XXVI, s.433, no:29408.

longing for his hometown, they had a conversation for a while. Then at the prayer time, this man went to the Masjid-i Nabawî (the masjid of the Prophet SAS) and greeted him. This time he did not hear a response from the Prophet SAS. He felt so sorry: "What I have done! I must have committed an offense!" He thought of what he had done that particular day. He traced back what he did since the morning.

"O Lord! What did I do? Why did the Prophet ignored me when I greeted him?"

He kept thinking and pondering. He thought of the conversations and finally he found his fault. He uttered the words:

"The yoghurt in our home town is the best. The yoghurt made here is not even comparable. It is not good at all."

How dare you utter such words indicating the displeasure of the conditions of the place that is identified with the Prophet? That costed him a fall in his spiritual rank. He repented in tears and corrected himself to gain the previous state he was in.

If a person looks back, he would see his good deeds (*khayr*) and mistakes and faults (*sherr*) he has committed.

Khayr is something that is pleasing to the heart. The sin is something that is heavy on the heart and unpleasant. This is a simple criterion, easily understood.

Coming back to the verse:

وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

(*Wa'ttequ'llàh*) "Be aware of Allah, have *taqwa*!" We have to look at what we are presenting for tomorrow. The first word is "*ittequllàh*"; it means to be aware of Allah, to fear Allah.

b. The Month to Learn and Acquire Taqwâ

In this month of Ramadhan, this blessed worship of fasting has

been ordained for us so that we may learn how to have *taqwa*. It is stated in the Qur'an, *bismi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Yâ ayyuhe'lldhine âmenû kutibe alaykumu's-siyâmu kemâ kutibe 'ale'lledhîne min qablikum le'allekum tetteqûn*) "O you who have believed! Fasting is prescribed on you as it was prescribed on those who lived before you so that you may learn how to be aware of Allah, have *taqwa*."

Let me read the whole of the verse I recited earlier.

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (الحشر: ١٨)

(*Yâ ayyuhe'lledhîne âmenu'ttaqullâha waltenzur nafsun mâ qaddemet li-ghad*) "O you who have believed. Be aware of Allah! And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow. (*Wa'ttaqu'llâh*) And be aware of Allah! (*Înna'llâhe khabîrun bimâ ta'malûn*.) Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do." He knows everything you do, hidden or obvious. He has the absolute knowledge of all.

Now we have to be aware of Allah--have *taqwa*. We must make *ittiqâ*. *Ittiqâ* means to be aware of, to avoid, to fear. What are we going to be aware of, avoid or fear? (*Ittequllâh*) "Be aware of Allah, fear Allah!" Yes, but, hasn't the Prophet SAS stated following:⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Müslim, *Sahih*, c.I, s.93, *Îman* 1/39, no:91; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.399, no:3789; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.XII, s.280, no:5466; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَمِيلٌ، يُحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ (م. حم. حب. ك. هب. عن

عبد الله بن مسعود)

(*Inna'llàhe jemîlun yuhibbu'l-jemâl*) "Allah is the most beautiful and loves beauties." One could love Allah; why would we fear? We have to avoid the wrath of Allah; we must fear the hellfire. We have to keep ourselves from falling into the hellfire. "O believers! Protect yourselves from going to hell."

How are we going to protect ourselves? We will avoid hellfire by not committing offenses. Hell is a terrifying place that is hard to describe. The Prophet SAS said, "If a drop of *zaqqum*--that is the drink that sinners will be given in hell--fell to the oceans, it would make the whole hydrosphere bitter. Woe to those who will be punished with such a drink!"

Can you imagine how potent it is? One small drop will poison all of the oceans on earth. What will happen to people who would drink that?

كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ . كَغَلِي الْحَمِيمِ (الدخان: ٤٥-٤٦)

(*Yaghlî fi'l-butùn. Keghalyi'l-hamîm*) The drinks will be boiling

c.IV, s.201, no:7365; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.V, s.160, no:6192; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.VI, s.367; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.I, s.39, no:85; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.I, s.78, no:70, Abdullah ibn-i Amr RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.VIII, s.203, no:7822, Ebû Ümâme RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VII, s.78, no:6906, Câbir RA'dan.

Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.II, s.320, no:1055; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.V, s.163, no:6201; Kudâi, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.II, s.143, no:1067; Ebû Saïd el-Hudrî RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.299, no:2322; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.330, no:2420; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.528, no:7748, 7763, 7769; c.VI, s.642, no:17188-17190;

Câmiu'l-Ehâdis, c.VIII, s.12, no:6775-6781; RE. 87/11.

and the torment will be immense.

The Prophet SAS said: "O believing brothers and sisters! O believers! O Muslims! Try not to fall into hell." Some people utter words here that I cannot say. Hell is an important abode because once a person falls in... It is hard to imagine how terrible it is. There will be some believers who will fall into Hell that they are listed in a Hadith Qudsi that we are going to look at.

There will be some believers who will fall into Hell. Who are they? The sinners; those who do what Allah prohibited. A believer, but disobedient. He had to obey, but he disobeyed. He had to avoid hellfire, but he did not! He was not supposed to enter hell as a believer, but he will be punished there.

"Try not to get in to Hell!" said the Prophet SAS because one who enters there will stay there for a while:

لَا بُثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا (النَّبَأُ: ٢٣)

(*Lâbisîne fihâ ahqâben*) "They will stay there as long as *huqubs*." *Huqub* is a time period in Arabic. How much does it equal in our understanding? One *huqub* is about 80 some years, i.e., a lifetime. *Ahqâben* means "lifetimes." What is the minimum number?

أقل الجمع ثلاثة

(*Eqallu'l-jem'i thelâtheh*) "The minimum of the many is three" say Arabs. Plural for "two" has a different form in Arabic.

The minimum is three lifetimes—in numbers $3 \times 83 = 259$ years. It is some 250 years! One who falls in hell will stay there at least 250 years even if he is a believer.

Is that it? No! The calculation is not over yet. We are going to use our math knowledge. In the Qur'an, Almighty Allah says--may He have mercy on us and forgive us.

وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ (الحج: ٤٧)

(*Wa inna yawman inde rabbike ke-elfi senetin mimmâ te'uddûn*)
"A day in the sight of Allah is a thousand years of your time, be aware!"

A calendar year is 365 days. Each of these days in the hereafter is 1000 years. One year will be like 365 000 years of our time. 250 x 365 000 years make a very long time. You go and calculate it then see how terrible it is. The best thing is not to enter Hell at all! Even a believer will spend millions of years in Hell before he gets out. Almighty Allah has wisdom; He would not state these in vain:

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ (آل عمران: ١٣١)

(*Wa'ttaqu'n-nâra'lleti u'iddet li'l-kâfirîn*) "Protect yourselves from the hellfire which is prepared for disbelievers." Almighty Allah has mercy on believing servants. That is why He is ordering us to be aware of the hellfire, avoid it and fear from it. In many verses of the Qur'an, Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* orders us to avoid the hellfire.

Almighty Allah not only orders us to stay away from the hellfire, but also He teaches us how to do it. Do you know how He teaches us? Are you aware how He does that? Many people are not aware of it as a poet put it:

*Ol mâhîler ki deryâ ichredur, deryâyî bilmezler.
The fish are in the ocean, yet they are unaware of it.*

The fish lives in the ocean, yet does not know what the ocean is. It is unaware that it lives in the ocean. Similarly, we are in a month-long taqwa training course in Ramadhan. Every year each Muslim undergoes the training course on taqwa.

If a person receives thirty days of training, he would be a "professor" of it. If an old person with a hump undergoes training one month every year, he would beat anybody in wrestling. As it continues year after year, people would hesitate to mess with him: "He has a trained body--like elastic. He may overpower us."

Every year we receive a month of the taqwa training. Fasting is for the taqwa training. With fasting we learn how to be aware and how to avoid.

"How does Almighty Allah teach us?"

Can you survive without water? It is not possible. We need water, so do the plants, flowers and trees, and crops. If Almighty Allah does not send water, life stops.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَعِينٍ (الملك: ٣٠)

(*Qul ara'eytum in asbaha mâukum ghawren femen ye'tikum bi-mâin maîn*) (Qur'an 67:30). If Almighty Allah withheld the rain, and the ground water were to become sunken into the earth, what would people do? Who would bring flowing water?

Then there is nourishment. We could not survive without food. We live for a while, but then we loose strength.

365 x 250 000 = Ninety-one million two hundred fifty thousand years... This is the minimum length of time a Muslim who has fallen into hell will spend three. Would you still get close to the offenses and disobey? Can you tolerate the intense fire for this long? You cannot even tolerate the heat of sun and seek a place in shade, put a hat or something else on your head. Ninety-one million two hundred fifty thousand years is not a short time period.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, we have to do our fasting as it should be done, in a complete way.

c. Two Things that Lead Man to Hellfire

Fasting does not mean a training of the stomach, a tolerance

towards poverty, hunger, and thirst. The control of the sexual desires is required, too. Fasting teaches to be patient in that aspect, too. It is an important feeling.

Water is a must; food is a must. Almighty Allah has given the other feeling in mankind, too. It is a very strong feeling. Many people are disgraced and humiliated because of that feeling. The sexual desires could make and a person humiliated and disgraceful and take to hellfire.

Our beloved Prophet SAS stated it in a polite manner: Mostly these two things lead people to hellfire: ⁴¹

أَكْثَرُ مَا يُدْخِلُ النَّاسَ النَّارَ الْأَجْوَفَانَ: الْفَمُ، وَالْفَرْجُ (حم. خ.
في الأدب، ت. ه. ك. حب. هب. عن أبي هريرة)

(*Ekseru mâ yudhilü'n-nâse'n-nâra al-acvafân*) Ekseriyetle insanları iki boşluk cehenneme sokar:

1. (*Al-famu*) The organ between two lips, i.e., the tongue. A person may utter improper words that make him a rebel or a disbeliever. His words take him to hellfire. The organ between two lips could lead a person to hellfire.

2. (*Wa'l-farcu*) The organ between two legs. A person could lead himself to disaster with that organ. Many publishers who have no shame or fear of Allah make a business out of it. There are films,

⁴¹ Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.363, no:2004; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.442, no:9694; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.II, s.224, no:476; Buhârî, *Edebül-Müfred*, c.I, s.108, no:289, 294; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.IV, s.360, no:7919; Tayâlisî, *Müsned*, c.I, s.324, no:2474; Beyhakî, *Şuabül-İman*, c.IV, s.235, no:4914; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.II, s.137, no:1050; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.IX, s.470, no:3787; İbn-i Ebi'd-Dünyâ, *el-Vera'*, c.I, s.93, no:135; Abdullah ibn-i Mübarek, *Zühd*, c.I, s.379, no:1073; Ramhürmüzî, *Emsâlü'l-Hadîs*, c.I, s.159, no:132; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.VIII, s.470; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.60, no:2340; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.VI, s.311; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XVI, s.141, no:44071; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.V, s.357, no:4283; RE. 80/3.

theatres, bars, nightclubs that thrive on this matter. Businesses are established on it. These businesses are established on the bridge over Hell or in Hell. They have glittering lights, attractive windows, and alluring views. They sell all kinds of liqueur. They all try to take people to hellfire.

Look at the audacity of the mankind! He has no fear of entertaining himself on top of Hell. How ignorant, how stupid, how unaware, how insensitive, how blind this man can be?

We must appreciate this month of training and benefit from the fasting. We must succeed in the training, get our certificate and be on the honors list. We have to learn taqwa in this course.

Taqwa is not mere avoiding food and water. It is not mere staying away from sexual desires, either. There is also the taqwa of the heart which is to avoid looking at haram. Our beloved Prophet SAS said:⁴²

العَيْنَانِ تَزْنِيَانِ (حم. طب. عن ابن مسعود)

(*El-aynâni tezniyân*) "Eyes commit adultery, too." Can a person commit adultery while fasting? If he does, what would happen to his fast and taqwa? If eyes commit adultery, if they look at haram, the rewards of our fast are lost. That is why you shall not look at haram.

Then there are the diseases of the tongue. You have to protect

⁴² Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.412, no:3912; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.IX, s.134, no:8661; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.IX, s.246, no:5364; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.I, s.394, no:384; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.I, s.311, no:1956; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.VI, s.211, no:2282; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliya*, c.II, s.98; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.344, no:8520; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.X, s.267, no:4419; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İmân*, c.IV, s.365, no:5428; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VII, s.89, no:13289; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.I, s.72; İshak ibn-i Râhaveyh, *Müsned*, c.I, s.116, no:30; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.473, no:8913; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.VI, s.213, no:2284; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.V, s.327, no:13062; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.77, no:1799; *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.VI, s.390, no:10543; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIV, s.382, no:14541.

it from sins, too. There are the diseases of the ears; one has to protect them from haram. The tongue has to be protected from haram; the hands should not reach haram. The feet shall not walk towards haram. When all of your body, physically and spiritually, learns taqwa, then your fast is accepted.

Imam Al Ghazzâlî talks about three levels of fasting:

1. The fast of the layman (*awâm*): It is the fast of masses; simple avoidance of food, water and sexual intercourse. That is all.

2. The fast of the elite (*hawâs*): in addition to avoiding food, water and sex, eyes are saved from looking at haram; ears and tongue are saved from haram, too. His hand does not reach haram, nor do his feet walk to haram. Total abstinence from haram is observed. That is the true fast.

If the eyes are not prevented from looking at haram; tongue, from lies and backbiting, then the fast of the elite is broken. He loses all the rewards. Our beloved Prophet SAS said:⁴³

رُبَّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ وَالْعَطَشُ (حم . خز. ع .
هب. ق. كر. عن أبي هريرة؛ طب. عد. عن ابن عمر)

(*Rubbe saîmin*) "There are many people who fast, (*leyse lehû bi*

⁴³ İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.539, no:1690; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.373, no:8843; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.VIII, s.257, no:3481; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.I, s.596, no:1571; İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahih*, c.III, s.242, no:1997; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.XI, s.429, no:6551; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.316, no:3642; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.270, no:8097; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.239, no:3249; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.II, s.309, no:1425; Abdullah ibn-i Mübârek, *Müsned*, c.I, s.78, no:77; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XXXVII, s.346; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.268, no:3248; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.III, s.250; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.XII, s.382, no:13413; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.II, s.309, no:1424; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.VI, s.401; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.853, no:7491; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.348, no:1365; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.101, no:12658, 12661; Münzirî, *et-Tergîb*, c.II, s.94, no:1646.

siyâmihi il-le'l-jûi wa'l-atash) yet they do not benefit from it. They remain hungry and thirsty till the evening." That is the fast of the masses which is not favored because they look at haram, listen to haram, uttered haram, or reached haram. That is why this kind of fast is not acceptable.

3, There is the fast of the elite of the elite (*hâssu'l-hawâs*). They keep themselves away from the *mâsiwallah* (anything other than Almighty Allah). They enjoy the beauty of Allah. Their fast is to disconnect themselves from the *mâsiwallah*.

Of course that is beyond our comprehension. We can understand the second kind of fasting: hunger, thirst and staying away from all kinds of sins. Then our fasting is accepted.

Suppose that in this month, we keep ourselves away from offenses during the day, yet commit them at night. That would not be acceptable. As the poet put it: "Could a person promise in the evening and change his mind in the morning?" Here is another one: "He tells the truth at the police station yet gets confused in the court house." One fasts the whole day--*mâshaAllah!* Then you look at him in the evening, when he breaks his fast, he heads to the places of offences. That is not acceptable. What was the purpose of fasting? What happened to your training?

Mehmed Akif RhA has a story in his *Safahat*:

A drunkard decided to give up drinking: "I promise, I repent. I am not going to drink wine again!" As he walked on the street of the bar, his heart started pounding. As he walked by the entrance of the bar, the excitement peaked. He consoled himself: "You promised! Don't get excited. Do not look at the entrance. Go on. Walk away!"

He paused at the entrance. Nevertheless, he continued walking on the street encouraging himself. He looked forward, but his mind was still at the bar. He moved away. He wanted to drink. He managed to reach the end of the street. He stopped there and said: "Congratulations! You did it! Let me reward you with a glass of drink!" He returned to the bar.

What happened? What happened to the repentance? What happened to the promise? Is this how one repents?

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Would it be acceptable to fast during the day and commit sins in the evening?

Our beloved Prophet SAS said: "Allah Almighty made an obligation on you to fast during the days in this blessed month, and He made praying at night a voluntary but very rewarding worship for you." You will fast during the day and get up at night to offer *tehejjud* (night vigil) prayers. You shall spend your nights in prayers. It is not proper to fast during the day and go for dancing at night. One should not go for drinking at night having fasted the whole day.

I see some of the elderly people who light a cigarette as soon as the call for *maghrib* is heard or the cannon is fired. O blessed man, dear brother, beloved brother, pupil of my eye! Haven't you been patient throughout the day? Why don't you continue being patient in the evening, too? Why do you break your covenant in the evening? Smoking is *makruh* [according to most tolerant opinions].

Our scholars have studied the matter and classified smoking as *kerahat-i tahrimiya* (close to haram). Okay, *makruh*; we accept the opinions of the scholars. Yet there are scholars who classify smoking as "haram." They prove their points: "Wasting resources is haram. Consuming something that is harmful to health is haram. Smoke is harmful to body. Therefore, smoking is haram."

When I was a college professor, I went to the Sahaflar Bazaar in Istanbul. I bought a precious manuscript. The manuscripts sold there are very valuable because they are antiques. They were written some 300 year ago. When the smoking was invented, the scholar who authored the book consulted the qadis (scholars who issue jurisdictions on the religious matters) of the four schools of thought (Hanafî, Shafîî, Mâlikî, Hanbelî) in Mekka-i Mukarramah about smoking.

Most people in Turkey are Hanafîs. In the eastern part, there

are some brothers and sisters who follow the Imam Shafi. The grave of Hadrat Imam Shafi is in Cairo. Hadrat Abu Hanifa is buried in Baghdad. "*Ana gibi yâr Baghdâd gibi diyar olmaz*--The is no friend like one's mother, and no locality like Baghdad." Abdulqâdir-i Geylânî QS is buried in Baghdad, too.

The scholars of the four schools of thought were asked about smoking, and the author collected the answers in that booklet. All of them stated that it was haram. The matter is controversial; there are scholars who classify it as haram, yet there is no person who says it is good and useful. The medical doctors say: "If you are a smoker, you are committing suicide slowly."

In the hospitals there are signs: "Please do not smoke here. Smoking is prohibited." Some establishments have the sign: "We thank you for not smoking here." Smoking is prohibited in motor vehicles, buses, and airplanes. It is harmful for health. It is also harmful for the nonsmoker. The smoke hurts nonsmokers, too.

Man fasts during the day and smokes in the evening; he even breaks his fast by smoking. O blessed person! Almighty Allah has given you an opportunity; you were patient during the day, You should be patient in the evening and tomorrow! Then you quit smoking all together. Save yourself from this bad habit, and get your good health back.

A friend of mine who was a professor of law told me about an incident. We had classes at the same school. He started out his profession as a public prosecutor. He had to present at the scene of the death or crime. The official procedure is started with his order. He said: "Once I was called for an incident that a national swimmer got drowned in water." The swimmer was 18-20 years old. The prosecutor was called. There was a German professor in the mortuary.

During the autopsy, somebody suggested: "The swimmer had a cramp and got drowned."

The German Professor objected: "No No! If he had a cramp, he would keep himself floating. He would not have been drowned."

They asked the professor: "How did he get drowned, then?"

"Look at his fingers!" said the professor. "He is a chain smoker." The smoke and the tar of the cigarette had stained his fingers.

"How did he get drowned then?"

In the post mortem, they opened up his chest and removed his lungs. My friend said: "They had latex gloves. They got the lungs out and lifted up. The lower parts of the lungs were black, turning dark-brown moving up. When the German professor squeezed the lungs, black tar came out like beads." He said: "His lungs were full of smoke. When he swam, his body needed the oxygen for the muscles. His lungs could not provide necessary oxygen. He swam and died of lack of oxygen."

In brief, smoking is harmful. Doctors are against it, the scholars of jurisprudence are against it. One has to give it up. If there are smokers among you, let them learn a lesson from this.

Dear Brothers and sisters! We shall learn how to stay away from sins, bad deeds and makruhs in this month of Ramadhan.

It is stated in a Hadith Qudsî: "When you commit an offense, do not look at if it is a minor or major offense; look at whom you have committed it against." If something is done against the order of Allah, then you cannot say it is a minor offense. We would not dare to commit an offense before Almighty Allah. In Ramadhan, we must learn staying away from major and minor offenses.

Today I intended to deliver a short talk, but it got longer as we do mathematical calculations and explain *taqwa*. Before I end my talk, let me read the rest of the Hadith Qudsî as I promised:

d. Those Who are Headed to Hellfire

This Hadith Qudsî lists people who are headed to Hell. Let me tell you the list, so you will be aware. If someone close to you or a relative has these shortcomings, inform him or her, too. You also correct yourselves if you have the traces of these shortcomings.

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! مَا هَذَا النَّيْرَانُ إِلَّا لِكُلِّ عَاقٍ الْوَالِدَيْنِ ، وَلِكُلِّ بَخِيلٍ ،
وَنَمَامٍ ، وَمَرَاءٍ ، وَمَنْعِ الزَّكَاةِ ، وَآكِلِ الرِّبَا ، وَشَارِبِ الْخَمْرِ ، وَظَالِمِ
الْيَتِيمِ ، وَالْأَجْبِرِ الْغَادِرِ ، وَالنَّايِحَةِ ، وَجَامِعِ الْحَرَامِ ، وَنَاسِي الْقُرْآنِ ،
وَلِكُلِّ فَاجِرٍ ، وَمُوذِّي الْجِيرَانِ ؛ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ ، وَأَمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا
صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يَبْدُلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا
(الفرقان: ٧٠) فَارْحَمُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ يَا عِبَادِي ، فَإِنَّ الْإِبْدَانَ ضَعِيفَةٌ ،
وَالسَّفَرَ بَعِيدٌ ، وَالْحَمْلَ ثَقِيلٌ ، وَالْمَنَادِيَ اسْرَافِيلُ ، وَالنَّارُ تَلْظِي ،
وَالْقَاضِيَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، وَيَحْذَرُكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ .

(Ye'bone âdem) "O son of Adam!" We all are the children of Hadrat Adam. We all are brothers and sisters in fact. Hadrat Adam is our great grand father.

(Mâ hâze'n-nîrânu) "This fire is for these: --Here the offences are listed; you pay attention and keep them in mind!--

1. (Illâ li-kulli àqqi'l-walideyn) "For those who disobey their parents."

If there is anybody among you who is not in peace with his parents, he should go to his parents, kiss their hands and make peace with them. If you have disobeyed your parents, go and make them happy because those who disobey the parents will end up in Hell.

There is a hadith of our beloved Prophet SAS: As the prophet was climbing up the pulpit to deliver a sermon, Jibrîl AS said: "Woe to the person who reached his parents yet failed to earn paradise.

Let him be humiliated." The prophet SAS said, "Amen!"

What do we understand from this hadith? Those who disobey the parents incur the wrath of Jibrîl AS and the Prophet SAS. When a person makes peace with his parents, Jibrîl AS, angels and the Prophet will be happy. That is why we should make our parents happy and get their prayers. We should kiss their hands and give gifts for them. We have find ways to keep them happy.

Did you know that the money spent on the parents is rewarded in seven hundred folds? Is is a valuable as the money spent in Jihad. That is why you ought to make them happy. Do not be rebels against your parents. If you have a situation like that, go and make peace with them.

When I was a faculty member at the university, a student knocked at my door. We tried to maintain some distance between us and the students [so that they maintain the respect for the professors], yet when it is necessary, we would talk with individual students. He said, "Professor, could I come inside?"

I responded: "Yes, please come in." The student had a beard. He said, "I want to talk to you."

"Go ahead."

"Sir, my father has kicked me out of the house. He said that I am no longer his son."

"O dear! Why?"

"He did because I keep a beard."

"What does he do for living?"

The father produced musical instruments. He did not like his son keeping a beard or becoming a religious person. He kicked him out of the house.

"Where and how do you live now?" I wanted to help him.

"I am well financially. I live in an apartment. I do not need any financial support. However, this is the situation."

I told him the following:

"The consent of the parents is very important. You should write them a letter." These were the words that Almighty Allah had me

utter. "Write with a peasant style. Say, 'My Dear beloved respectable mother and father! I kiss your hands and feet. My belief, Islam, orders me to be a good child to you. I want to do that. Please provide me that opportunity. You got angry at me and expelled me from your house. Allow me kiss your hand and feet and serve you. Let me be a good son to you. This is what I want. However, please do not ask me to disobey Almighty Allah. Do not ask me to deviate from the path of Allah. Do not ask me to disregard the orders of Allah. Then I would prefer the path of Allah while my heart cries because He is the Lord of the Universe, my Creator; you are nothing compared to Him. In that case, I follow the orders of Allah and disobey you. Please do not let me be in that difficult situation. I want to serve you.'" I am sure the student came to me with a sincere intention, and Almighty Allah had me say these words.

He said, "Yes Sir!" and left.

Several moths passed. The student appeared at my door. He was with a young lady who was in *hijab*--head to toe covered in loose overcoat. She had gloves, too. He asked, "Professor, could we come in?"

I took them in. I thought the student was getting married: the young lady next to him was his fiancée. He asked, "Sir do you know this girl?"

"No I do not. This is the first time I saw her. How would I know her?"

"This is my sister. Remember, you told me to write a letter to my parents. I wrote it the way you told me. The letter had an impact in the house like a bomb! My mother cried, so did my father and my sister."

Due to the sincerity in the letter, the father changed his mind and took the child home. They made peace *alhamdu lillâh*.

Some months later, the student appeared at my door again: "Sir, could I come in?"

"Come on in!"

"Sir, good news!"

"May it be real good. What happened?"

"My father, mother, my brothers and sisters, we all are going for Hajj."

Al-hamdu lillâh! How nice! If you have a conflict with your parents, try to eradicate it in this manner. It is possible that sometimes the parents are wrong.

"I am going to serve liqueur in the restaurant!" says the father.

"Why, Dad?"

"Son, there are not many customer. If there is liqueur, we will get more customers and get their money. The regular restaurant has not produced much money."

"Dad! If you are going to serve liqueur in the restaurant, let me move out of your house because I cannot accept sustenance from haram sources. I would not put haram food in my mouth. If you are going to sell wine, let me leave the house. If you do not want me to leave, then do not bring liqueur to the restaurant."

Sometimes the fathers are on the wrong path. Then the children correct them. Sometimes the children are rebellions and on the wrong path, the parents try to bring them to the straight path.

Yet the child becomes a rebel not listening to anybody and causing great distress on the parents. This is called *âkkul walideyn*: the disobedient child that hurts the parents. He is headed to Hell.

2. (*Wa li-kulli bakhîlin*) "And the stingy." The avaricious and miserly people will go to Hell.

You may say: "Not everybody could give things away. Money is warm and hard to get it out of the hands. Everybody wants some money in his pocket. What is the measure of stinginess? What is the limit?"

My response would be: "The limit of being free from the stinginess is paying zakah. One who pays his zakah is not stingy. One who does not pay zakah is stingy. One who pays zakah fulfils the obligation and cleared off the stinginess. The minimum is the

zakah."

You should pay your zakah in Ramadhan and do not neglect it! If you pay your zakah in Ramadhan, you get 70-fold rewards. Also keep one thing in mind: Paying zakah is also the minimum border of generosity, the lowest level of it.

"What is the upper limit?"

"The upper limit is giving everything for Allah."

"Who would do something like that? Is there an example?"

"Sure. Hadrat Abûbakr as-Siddiq RA gave everything for Allah."

Hadrat Omar ibn-i Khattab RA gave half of what he had. He thought that he would be giving more than Hadrat Abubakr RA did thus beat him in competition. When he arrived to the masjid, he learned that Hadrat Abubakr RA gave everything he had.

The Prophet SAS asked Hadrat Abubakr RA: "What did you leave for your family O Abubakr?"

His response was, "I left Allah and his Messenger."

Isn't Allah the Razzaq (The Sustainer), Ghanî (The Rich), Mughnî (The Enricher) and Mu'tî (The Giver of all things)? Allah provides the wealth, the sustenance. When the Prophet SAS is consent, would a person be deprived of anything? When a person is "siddiq," when the faith of a person is at that level, he would give all he has for Allah including his life. He would give it willingly.

3. (*Wa nemmâmin*) *Nemmam* is a backbiter. He takes somebody's words about somebody else and spreads it. That created mischief among people. The backbiter will go to hell.

4. (*Wa murâin*) *Murâi* is a person who does worship for people to see; thus he expects a worldly benefit from it. He has no sincerity. He is after fame and worldly benefits. The consent of Allah is not his concern; he wants to affect people with his worship. His worship is not acceptable; he will go to Hell.

5. (*Wa mâni'iz-zekâti*) One who prevents the payment of zakah, one who does not pay zakah, will go to Hell.

It is possible that a person interferes with the payment of zakah.

For instance, one of our brothers donated a large sum of money for the local branch of our foundation. The next day a friend of his father chastised him: "This generosity is too much; it is unacceptable."

Our brother responded: "Sir, you were a close friend of my father. You had a good understanding of one another. You know he is dead now." He meant: "Death could come at any time. One has to accumulate good deeds for the hereafter. My father is dead, and you were friends. You could die soon, too. You should spend on charitable causes, too."

"Do not threaten me with death! Do not scare me with death!" That is the response he got.

Almighty Allah has mysterious ways of handling His servants. Several days passed. The city administration decided to buy a lot in the middle of downtown that belonged to the man. The payment was much below the market value. That was somehow a punishment for him because he wanted to prevent a spending on good cause.

That was an example of people who try to prevent spending for good a cause.

6. (*Wa âkilu'r-ribâ*) One who is involved in interest. One who receives interest, one who pays interest, one who "eats" interest are headed to hellfire.

7. (*Wa shâribi'l-khamr*) One who drinks liqueur. He will end up in Hell.

8. (*Wa zâlimi'l-yetîm*) One who maltreats the orphan, takes advantage of him, and gets his property. He is headed to hell, too.

9. (*Wal ejîri'l-ghàdir*) One who employs people but does not pay them properly. He will go to Hell.

There are some people who do that. I know of many brothers who undertook projects as subcontractors in Saudi Arabia. They could not receive their money from the main company. The main company could not get their payments either. There are also people in Libya. Kaddafi did not pay for the projects; the employees could

not receive their salaries.

Those who have the employees work but do not pay them at all or properly will go to Hell. There are some rootless people who chase the workers away when it is time to pay them. The workers are intimidated, so they do not seek justice in the courts. Yet, in the hereafter, almighty Allah will question the employers who do injustice to his employees.

10. (*Wan-nâyihati*) Professional wailer who cry, scream and praise for a deceased person. There used to be some women who were invited to house of the deceased person. They would scream, pull her hair, tear her clothes, say good words about the person and cry.

11. (*Wa jâmi'i'l-haram*) Those who gather haram wealth and property. Such people are headed to hellfire.

12. (*Wa'n-nâsi'l-qur'ân*) One who forgets the Qur'an will go to hell, too. Forgetting the Qur'an could be in two ways:

a. He had memorized the Qur'an in the past, yet neglected repeating and reciting. He had forgotten what he had memorized. This happens often. To forget what one had memorized is a major sin. Forgetting would mean not paying enough attention to the Qur'an.

"Do you know the surah Ar-Rahman by heart?"

"I used to, but I cannot recite by heart now."

"You knew Tabaraka (Surah Mulk), recite that."

"I forgot."

It is a sin to forget the part of the Qur'an that was memorized before.

b. Another forgetting is the orders of the Qur'an. A Muslim has to carry out the orders of the Qur'an. He has to comply with them. He has to follow the orders of Allah and stay away from haram.

13. (*Wa li-kulli fâjir*) Those who commit sins [openly].

14. (*Wa mu'zi'l-jirân*) One who creates problems for his neighbor. In one of the towns we visited, somebody complained:

"Khawaja! I live in a neighborhood. My neighbors threaten me with guns."

"May Allah protect you from their evil. I pray that Almighty Allah correct them, take you away from them, or take them away from there."

Those who create problems for the neighbors are headed to hellfire.

Let me give you the list of people who are headed to hellfire: Those who are rebellious towards their parents, the stingy, the backbiter, those who do the worship for worldly benefits, those who do not pay zakah, those who indulge in interest, those who drink liqueur, those who do injustice to orphans, those who mistreat their employees, the professional wailers, those who accumulate haram wealth and property, those who forget the Qur'an, those who commit sins openly, and those who create problems for the neighbors. These are the people headed for the hellfire even if they are believers.

You may ask: "Khawaja, what are we going to do if we have part of what you have listed? What if we are just a bit stingy? What if we had some backbiting? What if we have showed off when we prayed? What if we failed to pay the zakah in full? It is not easy not to be a backbiter."

There is a way of escape:

e. Repentance and Doing Righteous Deeds

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَأَمَّنْ وَعَمَلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (الفرقان: ٧٠)

(*Illâ men tâbe*) "Except for those who have repented." Repentance (*tawba*) means "returning." If a person gave up such offenses and returned to Allah's path, he is exempted from going to hellfire.

Hadrat Ali RA said: "Mere utterance of the words

'*Astaghfiru'llah al-azîm wa atubu ileyh*' is the repentance of liars. If one continues committing the same offences, utterance of these words is the repentance of liars. The true repentance is abandoning the offences.

One has to repent, give up the offenses. Sometimes we say, "This person made a turn. She was an actress, singer, dancer, and she repented. Now she observes hijab, tries to practice Islam in full. He was a drunkard; he made a turn. He was a murderer, made a turn in the prison and became a good person.

First, one should repent. Then (*wa âmene wa amile amelen sâlihan*) one must have strong faith and do righteous deeds. He should do deeds that are pleasing to Allah. Those who repent and do good deeds to save their faith are exempted from the hellfire. What else will happen to them?

(*Feulâike yubeddilu'llàhu seyyiâtihim hasenât*) "Almighty Allah converts their offenses to good deeds." He forgives them, wipes out their sins and converts the sins into good deeds. He does that for the repentance of the servant. The sins of the person who has repented are erased.

(*Wa kâna'llàhu ghafuran rahîmâ*) "Allah Almighty is Ghafûr and Rahîm. Ghafûr means the most Forgiving. Rahîm means very much Merciful. Almighty Allah forgives and is the most Merciful towards his servants.

If a servant repents, strengthens his belief, becomes a good person, and does righteous deeds, Almighty Allah forgives him and converts the bad deeds to good deeds because Almighty Allah is the most Forgiving, the most Merciful.

f. Have Mercy on Yourselves!

فَارْحَمُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ يَا عِبَادِي! فَإِنَّ الْأَبْدَانَ ضَعِيفَةٌ، وَالسَّفَرُ بَعِيدٌ،
وَالْحَمْلُ ثَقِيلٌ، وَالْمَنَادِي إِسْرَافِيلُ، وَالنَّارُ تَلْظِي، وَالْقَاضِي رَبُّ

العالمين ، ويحذر كم الله نفسه .

(*Farhamû anfusekum yâ ibâdî!*) "Then, o My servants, have mercy on you. (*Feinne'l-abdâne daïfetun*) because your bodies are weak," they cannot withstand the hellfire. Have pity on yourself! (*Wa's-safara baïdun*) "The journey towards the hereafter is long, (*wa'l-hamlu sakîlun*) your burdens and responsibilities are heavy." Tour bodies are weak, the destination is far and your loads are heavy. (*Wa munâdiye isrâfil*) "One to call people is Isrâfil AS." He will blow the trumpet Sur, and people will rise from dead and gather for the judgment. The destination is far; the load, heavy; the bodies, weak. Have mercy on you and do not indulge in sins.

(*Wa'n-nâra telezzâ*) "The flames of the hellfire gush out." In a hadith the Prophet SAS said that the Hell will be brought to the place of resurrection. It is something colossal, yet angels will bring it. It will be restless and anxiously waiting for the sinners. The sinners will be thrown into Hell. Almighty Allah will ask, "O Hell! Are you full? Do you have any room left?"

Hell will answer: "Is there more, O my Lord? Send them to me."

(*Wa'l-qàdiy, rabbu'l-àlemîn*) ["The judge will be the Lord of the Universe."] Almighty Allah will establish his colossal court and interrogate people. A good work of an atom's weight will be rewarded, and a bad work of an atom's weight is punished.

(*Wa yuhazzirukumu'llâhu nafsahû*) "Almighty Allah is warning you from Himself ahead of time." This is the Hadith Qudsî. Our beloved Prophet SAS informed us, and I conveyed to you, too. You do not speak Arabic; you must not have heard this Hadith before. That is why I explained to you. It addresses both me and you.

g. Ramadhan is the Month of Forgiveness

May Almighty Allah make us believers who do deeds that are



pleasing to Allah. May He free us from the hellfire:⁴⁴

وَهُوَ شَهْرٌ أَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ، وَأَوْسَطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ، وَآخِرُهُ عِتْقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ
(خز. ق. عن سلمان)

What is the beginning of the Ramadhan? (*Wa huwa awaluhu rahmatun*) "The beginning of Ramadhan is the time Allah Almighty showers His mercy on His servants. (*Wa awsatuhû maghfiraturun*) Its middle part is the time for the servants to be forgiven. (*Wa*

⁴⁴ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; İbn-i Şâhin, *Fadâilü Şehri Ramadân*, c.I, s.18, no:16; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.311; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.XXVII, s.19, no:3146; Ukaylî, *Duafâ*, c.II, s.162, no:671; İbn-i Hacer, *Lisânü'l-Mizân*, c.VI, s.33, no:135; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.I, s.38, no:79; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XXIII, s.176, no:25782 ve c.XXXV, s.105, no:37946.

âkhiruhû 'itqun minan-nâr) Its latter part is the time to be free from hellfire." Muslims will be given a certificate: "O My servant! I have forgiven you your sins. You are not going to enter Hell. Here is your certificate of freedom from Hell."

To whom will these spiritual certificates be issued?

It will be issued for those who spend the Ramadhan as pleasing to Allah Almighty.

Dear Brother and Sisters!

It is not too late! The Ramadhan has not ended yet! There is still time and means! Fear Allah! Be aware of Him! Take *taqwa* as your principle in life and observe *taqwa* in everything you do! Fast during the day, but do not commit offenses at night! Walk steady on the path of Allah. Be knowledgeable, wise, sagacious and obedient servants! Do not miss the certificate of freedom from Hellfire! Do not miss the opportunity of Ramadhan; some may not make it to the next Ramadhan. You may not get the same opportunity.

May Almighty Allah awaken us from the sleep of unawareness. May He enable us to do deeds that are pleasing to Him. May He keep us on His path and busy us with His remembrance. May He receive us as His beloved servants.

[I end my talk] with the respect for His beloved Prophet Muhammed the Chosen, with the respect for the month of Ramadhan, and with the respect for the secrets of surah Fâtihah!

February 11, 1995 - Adana, TURKEY
Ramadhan 11, 1415

12. PREPARATION FOR THE HEREAFTER

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r-rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâreken fîh... Kemâ yenbaghî li-jelâli wajhihî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu was selâmu alâ seyyidînâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejma'ñ.

Praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the Universe. The Prayers and peace be on our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and his sincere followers till the day of Resurrection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am going to read you a hadith from a book titled Forty Qudsî Ahadith which was translated into Turkish by our late brother Fikri Yavuz — may Allah bless his soul. While coming here in the car, I opened a page which had the 26th Hadith of the book. I would like to read it if I may.

يَقُولُ اللهُ تَعَالَى: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! أَكْثَرُوا بِالزَّادِ فَإِنَّ الطَّرِيقَ بَعِيدٌ،

وَجَدَدُو الْمَرَكَبِ فَإِنَّ الْبَحْرَ عَمِيقٌ، وَأَخْلَصَ عَمَلِكَ فَإِنَّ النَّاقِدَ

بَصِيرٌ، وَابْعَدْ مِنَ النَّارِ بِيغْضِ الْفَجَّارِ، وَادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ بِحَبِّ

الْأَبْرَارِ؛ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (هود: ١١٥)

(*Yaqùllu'llahu ta'âlâ*) “Almighty Allah said that” says the Prophet SAS. As you know the ahadith that are worded by the Prophet yet refers to Almighty Allah are called Hadith Qudsî. In other words, Allah *subhanahû wa ta'âlâ* reveals to the Prophet SAS, and the Prophet conveys it to us.

Our late brother, the translator, did not do an analysis of the ahadith, i.e., he did not provide the reference information on the ahadith; nevertheless, it is a good work. I recommend our brothers and sisters who are going to author books indicate the references and proper citations in their works. For instance, Abdulfettah Abû Ghudde has written a book about scholars. He has provided footnotes and reference information. It is an excellent book that softens the hearts.

Another example is Sulemî's *Tabaqâtus Sôfiyye* book that we read weakly in Istanbul. The book was prepared for publication by an Egyptian professor, Nureddin ibn-i Shuraybe. The book is a classic, a great work by Abû Abdurrahmân Es-Sulemî KS. The footnotes provide so much information that one does not need to look up a dictionary. It includes information about the relaters of ahadith, names of the towns, and other valuable information that is related. When prepared like that, the rewards would be great. May Almighty Allah provide them peace in their graves and elevate their ranks in the hereafter. May he bless their souls.

a. Presentation of Deeds

The Prophet SAS said: “Almighty Allah said:”

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ!

(*Ye'bne âdem*) “O son of Adam!”

We all are children of Adam AS, so we all are brothers and sisters. Adam AS was created from clay; that is our essence, so we should keep that in mind and humble ourselves. May Almighty

Allah eliminate the bad characters from us in this month of Ramadhan. May he purify us and free us from the evils of pride, envy, hatred and other bad manners. May he increase the good characters in us.

We all are the children of Adam AS. Our blessed Prophet SAS met him during the Mi'raj. He would look at his right and smile, and then look at his left and cry. On the right he would see his believing righteous children who earned the Paradise and feel happy about them. On the left he would see his disobedient children who are headed to hellfire and cry for them. May Almighty Allah make us good children who make our great grand father smile.

Our beloved Prophet said in another hadith: ki:⁴⁵

تُعْرَضُ الْأَعْمَالُ يَوْمَ الْاِثْنَيْنِ وَالْخَمِيسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ؛ وَتُعْرَضُ عَلَى
 الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَعَلَى الْأَبَاءِ وَالْأُمَّهَاتِ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ؛ فَيَفْرَحُونَ بِحَسَنَاتِهِمْ
 وَتَزْدَادُ وُجُوهُهُمْ بَيَاضًا وَإِشْرَاقًا؛ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَلَا تُؤْذُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ
 (الحكيم عن عبد الغفور بن عبد العزيز عن أبيه عن جده)

RE. 253/1 (*Tu'radu'l-a'mâlu yawm'l-ithnayni wa'l-hamîsi ale'llâh*) "Our deeds are presented to Almighty Allan on Mondays and Thursdays. (*Wa tu'radu ale'l-anbiyâi wa ale'l-âbâi wa'l-ummahâti yawma'l-jumuati*) They are presented to the Prophet SAS, and our elderly on Fridays."

(*Fayafrahûna bi-hasenâtihim wa yazdâdu vujûhahum beyâdhan wa ishrâqan*) "The deeds of people are presented to their elderly who passed away. They feel happy about the good deeds of their offspring, and their light and happiness increase in their graves. When they are presented bad deeds, they feel sorry for their

⁴⁵ Hakîm-i Tirmizî, *Nevâdirü'l-Usûl*, c.II, s.260.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XVI, s.469, no:45493; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.307, no:991; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XI, s.292, no:10810.

offspring.” Then the Prophet SAS said:

(*Fattaqullah! Wa lâ tu'zû mawtâkum*) “Fear Allah and do not torture your forefathers.” They passed away; do not disturb them in their graves by your bad deeds.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! We understand that when we commit something bad, it hurts not only us but also our elderly who passed away. Committing offences are called “doing injustice to self.” A person would be doing injustice to himself when he commits a sin because he would suffer in the hereafter.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ . وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

(الزلزال: ٧-٨)

(*Femen ya'mal misqàle zarratin khayran yerah. Wa men ya'mal misqàle zarratin sharran yerah*) “Whoever does an atom’s weight of good deed will be rewarded; whoever does an atom’s weight of bad deed will be punished.” It will be a meticulous accounting.

That is why a person who commits sins is doing injustice and inflicting harm on himself. Not only that, that person would be causing pain for his parents and elderly, for they are informed in their graves.

If you love your elderly, if you want to be a good child towards them, if you want to keep them happy, then you must give up offenses. Give them up for Allah. Give them up to save your own soul. Give them up for your parents, grandparents because they will be informed about your deeds.

b. The Harm of the Sin on Other People

Committing sins affects other people, too. I read in a hadith that sins affect other people.

The Prophet SAS said:⁴⁶

الذَّنْبُ شَوْمٌ عَلَى غَيْرِ فَاعِلِهِ: إِنْ عَيَّرَهُ، أَبْتَلِي بِهِ؛ وَإِنْ اغْتَابَهُ، أَثِمَ؛
وَإِنْ رَضِيَ بِهِ، شَارَكَهُ (الديلمي عن أنس)

RE. 208/17 (*Az-zenbu shu'mun alâ gayri fâilihî*) “The sin is a bad luck and trouble for others.”

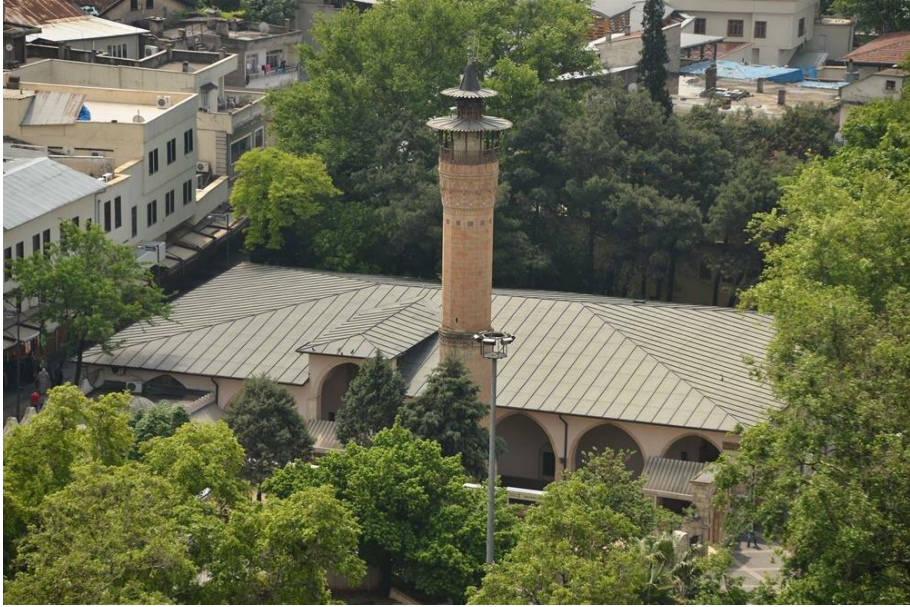
1. (*In ayyerahû ubtuliye bihî*) If a person looks down upon a person saying by heart “Woe to you! How could you do such a thing? Don't you have any shame?” then Almighty Allah does not like that criticism. If a person criticizes somebody like that, he will commit the same offence before he dies. Then he realizes: “O no! I had criticized a person doing that. Allah created means for me to do commit the same offence.” One has to be careful about criticizing people.

2. (*Wa in ightâbahû esime*) If a person talks about the sins and people who commit them, then he would be backbiting. That is a sin, too. “Ahmed committed this, Mehmed did that... Did he really? O no!” Talking like that is backbiting and exposing the shortcomings and faults. Such people would be committing sins, too.

3. (*Wa in radiye bihî shârekehû*) If one approves the sin, if he says, “So what? If I were him, I would do the same!” if he does not mind the sin, then he would be a partner in that sin despite the fact that he himself did not do it. That is bad, too.

For instance, we are going some place in the local bus. One says: “Did you hear that Mr. Religious had a wedding function for his son and served alcohol in it.” The other person responds: “It is okay. He has only one son. If I were him, I would do the same.”

⁴⁶ Deylemî, *Müsne'dü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.249, no:3169; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.III, s.145, no:5536.



Ulu Cami, MARAŞ

Now you are in deep trouble! When you say, “If it were me, I would do the same!” you would be becoming a partner in that offense while traveling in the local bus. We should not talk about the sinner, nor should we be consent with the sin.

Do you realize whom the sin affects? It harms the sinner, it harms the society, and it harms the parents. It harms the one who criticizes the sinner. It harms the one who backbites about it. It harms one who is consent with it. Would an intelligent Muslim commit such a thing? Didn't Almighty Allah provide us with intelligence and ability to ponder? Do we lack an ability to compare good and evil? It is amazing.

May Almighty Allah make us see the truth as truth and follow it. May He make us see the falsehood as falsehood and avoid it. How are we going to do it? Think about it.

We shall come to the Hadith Qudsî that we started with:

c. Preparation for the Journey to Hereafter

أَكْثِرُوا بِالزَّادِ فَإِنَّ الطَّرِيقَ بَعِيدٌ ،

(*Ekthirû bi'z-zâdi feinne't-tarîqa baîdun*) “Take plenty of supplies for your journey because the destination is very far.

وَجَدُّو الْمَرَكَبَ فَإِنَّ الْبَحْرَ عَمِيقٌ ،

(*Wa jeddidu'l-merâkibe*) Renew your vehicles to ride (*fe innel bahra amîqun*) because the ocean is very deep.” Small boats and rafts are not strong enough for this trip. Make new ships for the journey.

وَإِخْلَصْ عَمَلَكَ فَإِنَّ النَّاقِدَ بَصِيرٌ ،

(*Wa ahlis ameleke*) “Purify your deeds (*wa innen nâqida basîrun*) because your Creator sees everything very well; He can see your intention, too. Be sincere when you worship.”

وَابْعَدْ مِنَ النَّارِ بِيغْضِ الْفَجَّارِ ، وَادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ بِحُبِّ الْإِبْرَارِ ،

(*Wab'ud mine'n-nâr, bi-bughdi'l-fujjâr*) “Keep yourselves away by disliking dissolute people who commit sins openly. (*Wadkhulil jennete bihublil ebrâr*) Enter paradise by loving the pure and sincere servants of Allah.”

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (هود: ١١٥)

(*Feinna'llâhe lâ yudîu ejra'l-muhsinîn*) “Verily Allah *subhanahu wa ta'alâ* does not waste the deeds of His sincere servants; He rewards them.” (Qur'an 11:115)

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

This is the Hadith Qudsî. Almighty Allah says: “Take plenty of supplies because the destination is very far, and the journey is very long.” There are similes in the Qur’an for man to understand the subject, keep it in mind and visualize it.

What is meant by these words? The purpose of this statement is that this is a transitory world; this life is not permanent. Everybody will live a temporary life here. They will come and go. Everybody is a passenger, a traveler. They go from birth to death, from this life to hereafter. They are on a journey. The journey is very long and difficult. There are stops of this journey: the grave, purgatory, the resurrection and the Day of Judgment. On the day of Resurrection, people will wait for their turns for so long that it is equivalent to thousands of years in our time. The day of the colossal court, the day of repayment are stops. The time when the deeds are weighed, people are questioned, guilty ones are punished, the good servants are rewarded, it is a stage in this journey. Then there will be the final stop. The destination for the believers is Paradise; for the disbelievers, Hell.

This is a true journey, truly a journey. It is a fact that we are traveling towards our destination. We are on a journey towards hereafter. Since the journey is long, we have to take our food, water and supplies with us.

What could be the food and supplies for this journey? This question reminds us a verse:

Bi’smi’llâhi’r-rahmâni’r-rahîm:

وتزودوا فلن خير الزاد التقوى (البقرة: ١٩٧)

(*Fetezewwedû feinne khayrez zâdit taqvâ*) “O believers, o mankind! Prepare supplies for the journey.” (Qur’an 2:197) The verse continues: “The best of the supplies is taqwa.” What is taqwa? Where can we get it? Who sells it? How much does it weigh? How

do we get it? We ought to search for it. The Qur'an says we need *zâd* for the journey, and the best of the *zâd* is taqwa. Where do we get taqwa from?

d. Month of Acquiring Taqwa

Ramadhan is the month of preparing supplies for the journey. In the verse that instructed us to fast in Ramadhan, almighty Allah said. *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن
 قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû*) “O you who have believed! (*Kutibe aleykumu's-siyâm*) Fasting has been prescribed for you as an obligation (*kemâ kutibe aledgedhîne min qablikum*) as it was prescribed for those who lived before you.” (Qur'an 2:183) They had prayer and fasting duties, too.

This verse shows that fasting was prescribed for people who lived before the ummah of Prophet Muhammad SAS. That means, the nature of mankind has been the same for thousands of years, and the same prescription was given to cure the diseases of mankind. Fasting is our cure, and it was an obligation for previous nations, too. The verse continues: (*le'allekum tetteqûn*) “So you may acquire taqwa.”

That means Almighty Allah, in a clear way, has stated the season, the time and the method of acquiring taqwa that is needed in our great journey to the hereafter. It is for everybody to benefit; it is an obligation. There are great benefits for all of the obligations in this life as well as in the hereafter. Islam is the cure for all personal, spiritual, physical, social, political and economical problems. All problems have solutions in Islam. People, especially

those who deny it, learn the fact gradually. They admit it and declare faith.

An Iranian poet said:

ا ک ر پ ن د خ ر د م ن د ا ن ز ج ا ن و د ل ن ی ا م و ز ی

ج ه ا ن ا ن پ ن د ب ت ل خ ی ب ی ا م و ز د ت ر ا ر و ز ی

*Eger pendî hiredmendân zî-jân u dil neyâmûzî,
Jihan anter bâ tedhi biyâmûzed turâ rûzî.*

“If you do not listen to the advice of the wise persons, if you do not correct yourself by taking a lesson from the advice, this life and time bring you bitter experiences that make you learn it the hard way.”

Yes, 1400 some years ago the Blessing of Islam, the cure of Islam, the cure for all diseases came. Some are opposing to it, yet realize it in the hard way. Capitalism and communism have collapsed; the whole mankind is about to realize that Islam is the solution. The thinkers and researchers of the east and the west are entering Islam. Professors, philosophers, writers, politicians and great scholars are becoming Muslims. In time they will learn about the truth.

Almighty Allah knows the details, the past, the future, and the best of everything. He created the universe and the mankind. He has the absolute knowledge of problems and the cures for man’s diseases. He teaches us on these issues. Some understand it and appreciate it. They find the cures, get elevated and attain happiness in this life and in the hereafter.

One who fails to understand that fact eventually realizes it. We wish that this realization is not at the last moments of life. We wish that it is not like the faith of Pharaoh.

The Pharaoh struggled against Moses AS. He attacked and

chased the people of Moses AS. His army was after Hadrat Moses and his companions. They came by the sea. The companions of Hadrat Moses looked at the approaching army on one side and the ocean on the other side. They said:

قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ (الشعراء: ٦١)

(*Qàle as-hâbu mûsâ innâ lemudrakûn*) “We are going to be caught and killed.” (Qur’an 26:61) They had no place to escape. There was the ocean one side, and the army of the Pharaoh on the other side. The army outnumbered the companions of Prophet Moses AS and was well armed. Moses AS said:

قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ (الشعراء: ٦٢)

(*Qàle kellâ*) “No, not at all! (*Inne ma’iyerabbî seyhedîn*) Verily my Lord is with me; He is on our side and will guide us.” (Qur’an 26:62)

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ
كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ (الشعراء: ٦٣)

Almighty Allah ordered Moses AS: “O Moses! Hit the ocean with your staff.” As Moses AS hit the ocean, and twelve paths were opened (*ket tawdil azîm*) just like wide boulevards. (Qur’an 26:63) The companions of Moses AS passed the ocean in tribes and groups.

Pharaoh followed them. When the army of the Pharaoh was in the middle of the ocean, the water gushed in. That enemy of Allah, the imposter who claimed to be a deity, the murderer, the oppressor who killed the innocent men and separated women from their husbands, the Pharaoh was to be drowned. With his army and

supporters, the Pharaoh was about to be drowned.

Pharaoh used to claim: (*Ene rabbukumul a'la*) "I am your highest Lord!" The Egyptians had idols and deities. They worshipped crocodiles and eagles. They worshipped bulls, the sun and the moon. One should go and see Egypt to learn a lesson.

Since they worshipped in many idols, Pharaoh said, "I forbid you from worshipping anything but me. I am your highest god!" He claimed to be the highest god.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو

إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (يونس: ٩٠)

(*Hattâ idhâ edrekehul gharaku*) When he was about to be drowned, he said: (*Qàle lâ ilâhe illelledhî âmenet bihî benû isrâil, wa ene minel muslimîn*) "There is no deity except for the One that the Children of Israel believe. I believe in Allah; I am a Muslim." (Qur'an 10:90)

Yet another verse of the Qur'an indicates that it was too late:

الآنَ (يونس: ٩١)

(*Âl-âne*) "Have you just realized that? You are about to die, at the verge of drowning, you can see things clearer now; your entire life has passed. You had no hope. Have you just realized that?" (Qur'an 10:91)

That is why we wish that the awakening happens at an earlier time. Man should wake up from the sleep of unawareness and do righteous deeds, carry out works that are pleasing to Allah, depart from this life with a perfect belief, meet his Lord with a clear face and attain the mercy of Allah.

That is why each of us must have a clear purpose of taqwa. We have taqwa training in Ramadhan. We stated that all orders of

Islam are cures for the mankind. Then we said we should not be late, and we mentioned Pharaoh.

If we study the instructions of the Qur'an, the regulations of Islam, we realize that all of them are for the benefit and protection of man, his offspring, his property, his spirit, and his belief. They all are ordered by Almighty Allah to lead mankind to the happiness in this life and in the hereafter. People who realize that accept Islam.

Fasting in Ramadhan is such a worship that teaches taqwa; Ramadhan is a blessed month of acquiring taqwa. It is a month-long training course. We oppose our nafs from the morning to the evening. We practice the greatest jihad by opposing the desires of our nafs while fasting during the day. During the night, we perform Tarawih prayers, read Qur'an, offer night vigil prayers. We have *siyam* (fasting) during the day and *qiyam* (prayers) during the night. All of this is towards acquiring taqwa.

What is taqwa? Taqwa means protection and avoidance for a person. He has to protect himself from the torments in hellfire.

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ (آل عمران: ١٣١)

(*We'ttequn nâralletî u'iddet lil kâfirîn*) "Protect yourselves from the hellfire that is prepared for the disbelievers." (Qur'an 3:131)

That is taqwa. That is saving oneself from entering Hell. How can one protect himself from Hell? One could protect himself from Hell by not committing offenses. How could one avoid the offenses? One could avoid the offenses by a strong will power. One should be able to overpower his nafs. We practice overcoming the desires of nafs during this month.

What are the strongest desires of nafs? The first one is eating; we do not let our nafs eat when we fast. The second one is drinking beverages. We do not let our nafs drink anything while we fast. The third one is conjugal relationship, yet we stay away while we

are fasting. We learn how to control the desires of our nafs, how to oppose those desires, and how to be patient. That is why Ramadan is a month of serious training.

The best supply for the journey to hereafter is acquired when one fulfils the orders of Islam. It will be in the saddlebag, in the suitcases. We offer prayers and earn rewards. We fast and earn rewards. We do other righteous deeds and earn rewards. Almighty Allah rewards the good deeds in Ramadhan seventy times more than other times.

When a person spends on charitable causes in Ramadhan, he receives seventy times more rewards that he would at other times. If a person pays his zakah in Ramadhan, he would earn seventy times more rewards. If one offers voluntary prayers in Ramadhan, he would earn seventy times more rewards than other times. If one does dhikr, read Qur'an, invite people for iftar and dinner, he would receive seventy times more rewards. This is such a valuable month. I wish that the whole year is Ramadhan and that this promotion continues whole year.

وَجَدِّدُوا الْمَرَكَبَ فَإِنَّ الْبَحْرَ عَمِيقٌ،

(*Wa jeddidu'l-merâkibe feinne'l-bahra amîqun*) Renew your ships and make them stronger because the ocean is very deep and stormy. Weak ships may not survive against the waves. Renew your ships.” There are ups and downs in this life; many things could happen to a person. Some events shake the person like waves shaking the ship in the open sea. Man has to be strong against them. A person must be spiritually strong that is accomplished by worship.

وَإِخْلِصْ عَمَلَكَ فَإِنَّ النَّاقِدَ بَصِيرٌ،

(*Wa ahlis ameleke wa innen nâqida basîrun*) We have to do our

worship, yet it has a prerequisite. The prerequisite is sincerity. The worship has to be carried out with pure intentions for Allah. It has to be done with the thought:

إِلَهِي أَنْتَ مَقْصُودِي ، وَرِضَاكَ مَطْلُوبِي !

(*Ilâhi ente maqsûdî wa ridàke matlûbî*) “O Allah! You are my purpose, and I seek your consent.” There should not be any other thought or purpose such as worldly benefits or fame.

e. Islâm is the Truth

Some time ago, we lived in a neighborhood in Ankara where there was no mosque. A large housing complex was built with modern town houses, a shopping center, playgrounds, a movie theater, and other facilities; however, they did not allocate any lot for a place of worship as though people did not need to turn to Allah and pray.

If the Americans established that residential complex, they would have allocated a lot for a church. It could be a city regulation—I would not know it. I have seen a church in every island of lot in every neighborhood in America. I had similar observations in Australia. The Greeks were well organized while our Muslim brothers were disorganized without a mosque or with a small mosque. I asked how the Greeks were so well organized.

“Khawaja! The Greek government supported the Greeks. For every twelve Greek families, a priest was sent here.”

That was a serious support for a belief that was cancelled by Islam. They would worship the cross, believe in a modified religion. They deviated from the principle of Unity of Allah; they consider a servant of Allah as son of Allah. Thus they became disbelievers.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ (المائدة: ١٧)

(*Leqad keferel'ledhîne qâlû inna'llàhe huwe'l-mesîhu'bnû meryem*) [They became disbelievers when they said verily son of Mary is god.] (Qur'an 5:17)

We love Isâ (Jesus) AS, a prophet of Allah, more than they do. We name our children Isâ, Musâ, Meryem. They practice something wrong. They consider Jesus as son of Allah. Allah will ask in the hereafter:

يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّيَ إِلَهَيْنِ
مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ (المائدة: ١١٦)

(*Yâ îse'bne meryeme e-ente qulte lin-nâsi'ttekhûzîni wa ummiyye ilâheyni min dûnillâh*) “O Jesus son of Mary! Did you tell them ‘Consider me and my mother as gods’? Did you ask them ‘Worship me and my mother?’” (Qur'an 5:116)

This is a serious question. This blessed prophet, Jesus AS, will sweat as though he had just got out of a steam bath. Prophet Muhammed SAS saw him with a pinkish light complexion and beads of sweat. May peace be with him and other blessed prophets.

Jesus AS will reply:

قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ، إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ
فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ، تَعَلَّمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
عَلَامُ الْغُيُوبِ (المائدة: ١١٦)

(*Kàle*) He will say: (*Subhàneke mâ yekûnu lî en eqûle mâ leyse lî bi-haqqîn*) “Exalted are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right.” (*In kuntu qultuhû feqad alimtehû*) “O my Lord! I know why this question is asked. If I had made such statements, You would know it. There would not be a need for me to answer.

(*Inneke ente allâmu'l-ghuyûb*) Verily You know the unseen.”
(Qur'an 5:116)

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ

(المائدة: ١١٧)

(*Mâ qultu lehum illâ mâ emertenî bihi*) “I did not do that; I did not say that. I only told them what You have ordered me. (*Eni'budu'llâhe rabbî ve rabbekum*) ‘Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord!’” will say Jesus AS. (Qur'an 5:117)

That means the Christians are on the wrong path, on a path that Jesus AS does not want. They believe in something that is not stated by Jesus AS.

The government of a country decides to support a belief that has deviated from the straight path and sends one priest for every 12 families. The same government appoints a priest as the president of Cyprus. On the other hand, Muslims who belong to a religion that is pleasing to Allah do not get that support from Muslim governments.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ (آل عمران: ١٩)

(*Inne'd-dîne inda'llâhi'l-islâm*) “Verily the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam.” (Qur'an 3:19)

وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا (المائدة: ٣)

(*Wa radîtu lekumu'l-islâme dînâ*) [I am pleased with Islam as your religion] (Qur'an 5:3)

Let it be known by everybody on earth that the only valid religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. Allah is pleased with Islam. It is not Christianity, worshipping cross, worshipping idols,

worshipping sun, worshipping the cow, worshipping the material things, money or desires; Islam is the valid religion in the sight of Allah.

Allah will be pleased for His servants to accept Islam. Those who deny Islam will be in trouble in the hereafter. O mankind! Hear this fact. O Christians, Europeans, Americans, Japanese, Hindus, and Africans! Hear the fact! Abandon your false beliefs and come to the straight path of Islam before it is too late.

While our belief is the truth, we are not respected and our religious scholars respected as they should be. The Sütçü Imam of Marash is a proof for how much our religious scholars should be respected. Our religious scholars cannot take orders from politicians. On the contrary, the politicians should be in the service of religious scholars. Ordinary people should take orders from religious scholars because these scholars tell people about the orders of Allah. That is how it should be. Those who do the opposite will suffer the consequences. May Allah keep us from doing anything wrong. May He guide those who do the wrong.

f. Ikhlas (Sincerity) in Deeds

Yes, the ocean is wavy and stormy; man has to be strong here. He has to do his worship well and sincerely. If he lacks sincerity, his worship has no value.

The Prophet SAS said.⁴⁷

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَا يَقْبَلُ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ، إِلَّا مَا كَانَ لَهُ خَالِصًا
(ن. طب. عن أبي أمامة)

⁴⁷ Neseî, *Sünen*, c.X, s.204, no:3089; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.III, s.18, no:4348; Ebû Ümâme el-Bâhili RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.23, no:5261; RE. 91/13.

(Inna'llàhe lâ yaqbelu mine'l-ameli illâ mâ kâne lehû khalisà)
“Verily Allah does not accept the deeds unless they are carried out sincerely.”

“Well, I do things for the sake of Allah. I also think about other small benefits.” That is not acceptable either because Almighty Allah does not accept association. Allah says: “I am the best of the partners. If you associate anything with Me, I would give everything to him. I would not accept anything.” All of our deeds have to be only for Allah. The religion has to be only for Allah, the worship and the talk should be for Allah only. Everything, giving, receiving, charity, construction etc. should be for Allah alone.

In our neighborhood in Ankara, the housing complex had play grounds, swings, a movie theatre, and everything else, yet there was no place of worship. We decided to buy a house, demolish the building and construct a mosque on its lot. However, we had no money. We heard that there was a lady in one of the villages nearby who received large amount of money due to a highway construction on her property. We decided to go to her and ask her to contribute money for the mosque construction. As the executive committee of the mosque, we visited her in her house. May Allah bless her.

A dear friend, a scholar, was with us. He said: “Dear Hajji Aunt! We want to build a mosque in our neighborhood, but we do not have enough money. We are going to buy a house, demolish it and build a mosque on its grounds. Give us some money for the construction, and we can name the mosque after you.”

The lady stared at us and tilted her head to a side. Keeping her manners, she said: “Son, I do not want any fame or recognition. I will give you the money. Do not write or mention my name. Let Almighty Allah know it only, let Him accept my deed. That suffices for me.”

I felt ashamed. Look at the sincerity of this lady! Each person should do the worship only for Allah—nothing else.

وَإِخْلَاصٍ عَمَلِكُ فَإِنَّ النَّاقِدَ بَصِيرٌ،

(*Wa akhlis amalaka*) “Do your deeds sincerely; (*Fe-innen nâqida basîrun*) Allah sees everything we do and knows our intentions. If worship is carried out without sincerity (*ikhlas*), for sure there will be a punishment for it. The opposite of *ikhlas* is *riyâ* (show off). Allah does not accept the deeds carried out for showoff.

g. Love for Allah

وَابْعَدِ مِنَ النَّارِ بِيْغْضِ الْفَجَّارِ،

(*Web'ud mine'n-nâr, bi-bughdi'l-fujjâr*) “Distance yourself from hellfire by disliking those who commit sins openly.” We must dislike the sins and people who are indulged in sins openly. Each person will be treated with whom he loves. That is why we have to be careful about whom we love. Love and affection could be dangerous. If one likes the wrong person, if one ties his love to a wrong person, he could be doomed with the person he loves.

“Sir, I like an actor very much. I admire Brad Pitt’s eyes, Clark Gable’s hair and moustache, James Bond’s style, etc.”

“Sorry! That is not acceptable.”

“Whom shall I have affection for?”

“You have to love somebody who could benefit you. Love people who are destined to paradise. In the hereafter, each person will be with whom he loves. One who loves good people will be with good people. One who has affection for bad people will be among them in the hereafter even if he is with good people in this life.”

This is an important point in our belief that every Muslim must pay attention to it. Dear Brothers and Sisters! One of the most important things for a Muslim is to love for Allah and dislike for Allah. We must love the friends of Allah, good people who do righteous deeds. We should get angry at those who do the wrong deeds. We do that for Allah.

Our beloved Prophet said: “Arhs-i A’lâ will tremble when a person says (*Yâ seyyidî*) “Sir” to a person who commits major sins in public. When the telephone rings, we say, “*Efendim*—Yes sir.” We are used to talking like this. We must hold on a few seconds to say that. We shall understand first who is on the phone. Arsh-i A’lâ will shake because that person is doing something terrible and it may incur the wrath of Allah.

We must warn people who commit major sins in public that what they are doing is wrong. We should not smile at them or approve what they are doing. Smiling at such occurrences is an offense, too. One has to dislike it for the sake of Allah and voice his displeasure for the sake of Allah.

In Islam, there is the principle “*hubb-i fillâh*—love for Allah.” There is also another principle: “*bughz-i fillâh*—disliking for Allah.” No matter who commits the offence—be it a father, a mother, a child, a friend, or an associate—we must say that it is wrong.

You hear jokes about imams and other religious persons: “An imam did this; another did that...” First of all, an imam could not be a topic for jokes. You stop telling such jokes at once. What is your purpose? Are you an enemy of Islam? Are you trying to belittle Islam? Why do you put an imam in such a situation? “When an imam sits at a table, he eats so much ... A deceased does not provide tears; an imam does not provide meals.” That is a lie!

May Allah bless his soul; there was the imam of Haji Bayram Mosque in Ankara—Zekâî Khawaja. We prayed the fajr in the mosque. There were many people in the congregation in the blessed mosque of Haji Bayram Velî KS. The imam turned to the congregation and said: “O brothers! I invite all of you for breakfast. Let’s go to a restaurant.” Then he added: “You shall see if the deceased provides tears and if an imam produces meals.”

Who started such rumors and notions first? It is not fair! Many imams are so generous, they try to serve the congregation, and they

give up many worldly benefits and endure hardship for Islam. While you go and do your business and earn lots of money, he struggles with students trying to teach them some Qur'an. Why do you belittle him?

One meets a bearded person—like myself— on the way and looks at him as though he is superior to him. (Why do we keep a beard? We do that because we want to follow the Prophet SAS. Shaving the beard is considered as an offense, and we want to avoid that offense.) Suppose that the bearded person has special boots with galoshes. He calls him:

“Hafiz, come here! Have a seat! Tell me where you are appointed. Are you a *muedh-dhin* or an imam?”

“I am retired.”

“From where?”

“From the university.”

“Were you a servant in the office? Did you serve tea and coffee in the office?”

“Sir, I was a professor.”

“O Khawaja. I am sorry. I apologize!”

“You ask forgiveness from Allah. Why do you see that bearded man as an inferior to you? Why would you think that you were superior to a hafiz, an imam, or a *muedh-dhin*? Do you think it is easy to become a hafiz?” (Hafiz is a person who have memorized the entire Qur'an)

Dear Brothers and Sisters! We must love the believers and we must dislike those who commit major offenses in public. We shall not tolerate the offenses, and we shall express our displeasure. We have to tell: “You should not tell such jokes! You should not belittle the religious people. You can tell other jokes or tell how brave some imams were. For example, you can tell the story of Sütçü Imam.”

h. Read about the Lives of the Righteous!

وَادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ بِحُبِّ الْإِبْرَارِ،

(*Wa'dkhuli'l-Jennete bi-hubbi'l-ibrâr*) “Enter paradise by loving the righteous servants.” That is what Almighty Allah said and the Prophet SAS conveyed to us. We must like the good servants, the god fearing servants. We must love the awliyaullah and blessed servants.

Many such people did not care about money, position, or rank. They always thought of the consent of Allah. They did not acquire property or wealth. They were content with a shirt only.

One of the awliyaullah went for the Pilgrimage. He arrived in a small town. He went to the mosque and offered the prayers. Nobody said anything to him or welcomed him. He waited there for the next prayer time. Again, nobody stepped forward to talk to him. He was hungry—did not have any meal for a long time, so he did not need to go to a restroom.

I read in books that there was a walî servant of Allah who would make wudu once a week. He would not break his wudu within the limits of Haram-al-Sharif. He would walk 25 km distance to answer to the call of nature. They would not sleep for a week or eat food for so long. That is a different kind of love and affection for the holy places.

The man who kept waiting in the masjid of the small town, stayed in the masjid for three to four days. The congregation noticed the man: “The first one of us to come to the mosque sees him there, and the last one of us to leave the mosque sees him there. Who is he? What does he do?” They went to him and asked:

“O blessed person! Who are you? What do you eat and drink here?”

“I am a powerless brother of yours from such and such town.”

“Let’s go and have some food.”

Good morning! MâshâAllah! You have noticed him 4 days after his arrival.



The Prophet Mosque, MADĪNA

One such righteous person went to the masjid of the Prophet SAS. He was hungry and had no money. He was knowledgeable, but there was no money in his pocket. Nobody showed any interest to him. It was hot and he was hungry. He closed his eyes and said: “O Prophet of Allah! I came to visit you. I am hungry.” Then he fainted there out of hunger. There were not fifty kinds of meals on his iftar table.

Soon somebody showed up and tapped his shoulder. “Get up o blessed person!” He opened his eyes and looked at the person tapping his shoulder. The person was wearing a special kind of dress indicating that he belonged to the family of the Prophet SAS. He was a *sayyid*. He had brought a tray of food for him. “Please get up! Did you complain to our grandfather?” In fact, the Prophet appeared in the dream of that *sayyid* and said: “I have a guest in my masjid, He has been hungry for many days. Why didn’t you welcome him?” That is a spiritual communication! The Prophet

informed the *sayyid* about his guest.

Couldn't these scholars earn money? Weren't they smart? They could have been the richest persons in the world if they had used their intelligence for that purpose. But then what? What happened to Qàrun (Croesus)? What happened to the richest Pharaoh? What good did all of the gold that was buried with him do for him? How good is it if one fails to earn the love of Allah? That is why we ought to love the righteous servants of Allah.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Please read about lives of the righteous personages. That is why we read *Tabaqàtus Sôfiyye* in Istanbul every week. You should read *Tadhkiratul Awliya*, *Tabaqàtu's-Sôfiyye*, *Hilyatu'l-Awliya*, *Menâqib-i Asfiyâ*, *History of Prophets*, history of the companions of the Prophet SAS. We have provided a three volume book of *Examples from The Lives of the Companions*. Read about the lives of such great people and learn what true Islam is and how good a Muslim we are.

Fuzûlî said:

*Pehlevanlar, bad paghlar seyr idende her yana,
Tifl hem jevlân ider ammâ aghachdan ati var!*

The wrestlers, the strong men, put up their armors and take their swords, and mount horses. They ride the horse like winds. A child who sees them imitates them, yet his horse is a wooden stick.

We are like that child; we do not do things right when it comes to practicing Islam. We should read about the lives of the prophets and realize what true Islam is. We should understand how difficult life was for them. We should see how the most beloved servants of Allah lived.

We should understand what kinds of meals Prophet Muhammed SAS ate. We should find out how big his kitchen and the storage place were. We should find out how many refrigerators he had. We should inquire about how big his bed was, how many rooms his palace and mansion were, and if it was a duplex or triplex building. Read and find out.

Hatem-i Esam KS came to Madina al Munawwarah. He was a sage. He looked around and asked one of the merchants:

“*As-salamu alaikum!* Could you show me the palace of the Prophet SAS?”

The merchant did not know about this great personage. He responded: “What are you talking about? The Prophet did not have a place! If you had seen his room, you would cry.”

It was a small room—like 70 cm by 2 m. The rooms of the wives of the Prophet were about the size of a one-person bed.

“The Prophet did not have a palace. He slept on dirt floor, on a straw mat.”

Once Hadrat Omar ibn Khattab RA saw the marks on the hands of the Prophet SAS that the straw mat left. He cried expressing the fact that the Iranian and Roman rulers lived and affluent life in comfort while the Prophet of Allah, the most beloved person, lived a simple life. The Prophet comforted Hadrat Omar: “Do not feel sad O Omar! Those kings live a life like that in this world. Almighty Allah will grant us in the hereafter. (*Mâ lî wa lid-dunyâ*) I have no business with the worldly things.”

Hatem-i Esam asked:

“Then to whom do these palaces belong?”

“That belongs to person A the other one to person B ...”

“O no! The city of the Prophet was occupied by the Pharaohs!”

There were many buildings that looked like palaces. Where is the humbleness? Where is the generosity of not keeping anything overnight but distributing to the poor? Where is the contentment about tomorrow? What happened to the giving for the sake of Allah?

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Unless you learn the lives of the righteous servants of Allah, you will not learn about Islam correctly. Otherwise, you will be misinformed. Do not look at our times, but look at the righteous servants of Allah. Love them and learn lessons from their lives.

Love them because each person in the hereafter will be treated with whom he loves here.

The Prophet SAS said:⁴⁸

المرء مع من أحبَّ (خ. م. عن ابن مسعود)

(*Al-mer'u me'a men ehabbe*) Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* will place a person in Paradise with whom the person loves.

I will tell you some good news: Sawban RA was in service of the Prophet SAS. He looked at the Prophet SAS with love. He was admiring the face of the Prophet which was very bright. The Prophet SAS noticed it and asked: "O Sawban! Why do you keep looking at me?"

Sawban RA said:

اتمتع بالنظر اليك يا رسول الله!

(*Etemette'u bin nazari ileyke yâ rasûla'llah!*) "It is a blessing for me to look at your face O Prophet of Allah! I am enjoying your beauty. I feel happy to look at your face in this life, but I worry about the hereafter. You will the highest ranks in Paradise, but I do not know where I will end up. I do not know if I will enter Paradise. Even if I enter Paradise, I am afraid my rank will be so low that I would not see you."

There will be millions and billions of Muslims asking Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* to make them closer to the Prophet SAS in the hereafter. They want mansions in Paradise close to the mansion of the Prophet SAS. Sawban RA is worried that he will be far away from the Prophet SAS.

Our beloved Prophet comforted Sawban RA: "Do not worry or feel sorry. Each person will be with whom he loves in the hereafter."

⁴⁸ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.XIX, s.145, no:5702; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.XIII, s.95, no:4779; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Almighty Allah is able to do all things; He will not separate a person from whom he loves because there is no sadness in Paradise.

May Almighty Allah keep us with His Prophet in the hereafter. May He place us in His Paradise without questioning us. May He make us neighbors to the Prophet in Paradise.

If a person loves righteous people, he will be treated among them in the hereafter.

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (هود: ١١٥)

(*Feinna'llàhe lâ yudîu ejra'l-muhsinîn*) “Verily, Allah does not allow the rewards of those who do good to be lost” (Qur’an 11:115). He keeps the rewards of the *muhsin* servants.

i. What is Ihsan?

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Let me explain you the meaning of the word *muhsin*: *Muhsin* means one who does some job well. *Ihsan* means doing some job well. *Ihsan* in worship means doing the worship properly and perfectly:

وَمَا الْإِحْسَانُ ؟

(*Wa mel ihsanu*) “What is *ihsan* o Prophet of Allah?” asked Jibrîl AS. The Prophet SAS responded:⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.27, no:50; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.39, no:9; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.101, no:4991; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.25, no:64; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.426, no:9497; İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.IV, s.5, no:2244; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.375, no:159; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.157, no:30309; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.528, no:117222; Ebû Hüreyre RA’dan.

Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.36, no:8; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.V, s.6, no:2610; Ebû Dâvud, *Sünen*, c.II, s.635, no:4695; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.97, no:4990; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.24, no:63; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.389, no:168; Beyhâkî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.X, s.203, no:20660; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.528, no:11721; Ebû Nuaym,

الإِحْسَانُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ
 (خ. م. ن. ه. حم. خز. حب. ش. حل. عن أبي هريرة؛ م. د.
 ت. ن. ه. حب. ق. عن عمر)

(*El-ihsânu en ta'buda'llâhe ke-enneke terâhu, fein lem tekun terâhu feinnehû yerâke*) “Ihsan means doing the worship properly, as though you see Allah. Although you do not see Him, He sees you.”

As you start the prayer saying “*Allahu akbar*,” You are before Him. He is closer to you than your jugular vein.

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ (الحديد: ٤)

(*Wa huwa me'akum eyne mâ kuntum*) “And he is with you wherever you are” (Qur'an 57:4). He is omnipresent.

لَا تَدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ (الأنعام: ١٠٣)

(*Lâ tudrikuhul ebsâr wa huwa yudrikul ebsâr*) “Eyes do not see Him, but he perceives the eyes” (Qur'an 6:103). He knows what the eyes perceive. Allah knows everything.

That is the *ihsan* in worship. It is worshipping Allah with sincerity as if one sees Allah. It is the awareness that Allah sees us and observes us as we worship. One more point.

The Prophet SAS said:

Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ, c.VIII, s.383; Beyhakî, *el-Erbaûne's-Suğrâ*, c.I, s.61, no:23; Hz. Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.III, s.44, no:5249; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.57, no:140; *Câmiu'l-Ehâdis*, c.X, s.494, no:10108.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الْإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ (م. د. ت. ن. حم.
حب. عن شداد بن أوس)

(*Inna'llàhe ketebe'l-ihsâne alâ kulli shey*) “Verily, Allah prescribed *ihsan* on believers for everything they do. A believer is ordered to do everything with *ihsan*. The shoemaker shall make the boot in the best way. The baker shall bake the bread perfectly. The tailor shall make the dress perfectly. The weaver shall weave the fabric perfectly. The Calligrapher shall write in the best way. Everybody shall do his work perfectly. The butcher shall sharpen the knife perfectly before slaughtering the animal. The best of everything is an obligation on the believer; Allah does not let it go to waste the rewards for the deeds by *muhsin* servants. He will reward them, and the best of everything fits a believer.

May Almighty Allah grant us the means to do our worship, deeds, and all of our work and business in the best way possible. May He grant us the best of the rewards, the best of the abodes in the hereafter. May He make us neighbors to His best servants in Paradise.

Subhanake lâ ilme lenâ illâ mâ allemtenâ, inneke ente'l-alîmu'l-hakîm. Our Lord! You are glorified. There is no knowledge for us except for what You have taught us. Verily You are all knowledgeable, all wise. *Subhâne rabbinâ rabbi'l-izzeti ammâ yesifûn... Wa selâmun 'ale'l-murselîn... Wa'l-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne, al-fâtihah!*

**February 12, 1995 / Ramadhan 12, 1415
Ulu Cami - Kahraman Maras, TURKEY**

the repentances; it is a hadith. We are in the blessed month of Ramadhan, in a blessed mosque building. May Allah accept our prayer, our repentance, with His grace and generosity, for He is the One Who answers prayers. May He forgive us our sins. May He cleanse our book of deeds. May He grant us a life away from the offences. May we live as His beloved servants for the rest of our lives.

Repentance is a must and a good practice. Almighty Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance. However, the repentance does not mean the mere utterance of the words “O my Lord, forgive me!” It means turning to the straight path, changing the state to the truth. The essence of the repentance is not the words, but change in the state. It is a return to Allah's path. In fact, in Arabic, *tâbe-yetûbu* means “returning.” When the person makes that return, becomes a *tâib*, abandons the wrong deeds and turns to Allah, Allah turns to him more. Allah is Tawwâb; He turns to the servant excessively. Almighty Allah turns to the servant when the servant abandons the wrong path. That is the essence of the repentance, the *tewbe*.

That is why you shall not utter the words only, but make it a true repentance. Make it a real return, turn to the truth, have a desire to be on the path of Allah with all of your might.

Almighty Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance. However, not everything is erased with the repentance. The rights of other people if we have them unjustly will not be erased. If you have somebody's property or wealth without his consent, you could not say, “I sought forgiveness from Allah with Es'ad Khawaja in Marash Ulu Jamii.” It will not work! You have to return to people their due rights.

If there was an unfair division in the inheritance, for example, if somebody else's portion is in your possession, it must be returned. If there are spiritual rights, one would ask the person to waive his rights: “Forgive me! Tell me what I can do to have you forgive me!” Thus the peace will be established with all. You should not leave

these kinds of matters to the hereafter. This is the first important point.

The second duty is to pay back for the daily formal prayers and fasting of Ramadhan if there are any. They are not erased by repentance, either. These are debts, and they remain as such. Either one performs the prayers in their time, or you realize your fault and make them up later. The third alternative is the punishment in the hereafter. The punishment in the hereafter will be very difficult. That is why we must start paying back the debts of prayers and fasts.

Keep your *wudu* at all times. The Prophet SAS used to keep *wudu* at all times. When he broke the *wudu*, he would make *tayammum* with sand until he reached the water. Then he would make *wudu* with water. Our elderly awliyaullah and the perfect guides maintained that tradition. We recommend you the same practice. Pay attention to not being without *wudu*.

Then do your daily dhikr duties! As you know, the Qur'an orders something and the Prophet SAS showed us how the orders of Qur'an is practiced. For instance, the Qur'an orders: "Offer your salat! Pay your zakah!" Yet we learn how to pray from the sunnah of the Prophet SAS. The Prophet SAS explained the prayer with its *rukû*, *sujûd*, *subhaneke* and *at-tahiyyatu* supplications, selams and other details. We also learned from the Prophet SAS the amount of zakah for the camels, sheep, and other possessions.

Also, Almighty Allah orders in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا (الاحزاب: ٤١)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû'dhkuru'llâhe dhikran kathirâ*) "O You who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance—do the dhikr in plenty" (Qur'an 33:41). In the surah that the imam recited in the Tarawih prayer, Allah says:

وَأَذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (الانسان: ٢٥)

(*We'dhkurisme rabbike bukraten wa esilâ*) “Remember the name of your Lord morning and evening” (Qur'an 76:25). There is information about how these orders are to be carried out in the ahadith of the Prophet SAS. I will quote these ahadith. Thus you can carry out the order of the Qur'an and do your dhikr duty.

The dhikr duty can be done at any time of the day. There is not time that would be improper or disliked. In the morning, at noon, after sunrise, late afternoon, at sunset time... You can do dhikr at any time of the day.

The manners of doing the dhikr duty is as follows: You seek a quiet and clean place and sit towards qibla. You would be with wudu. The [preferred] way of sitting is called “*aqsi-tawarruk*.” [One sits as in the formal prayer and turns the feet to the left.] The companions of the Prophet SAS used to sit like that. You close your eyes. Start with *istighfar*: Say 25 times “*estaghfirullah*.” Then read one Sura Fatiha and three Surah Ikhlas. Present the reading to the spirits of the Prophet SAS and the masters of our tariqa in the silsilah. You will earn their love and affection. You will benefit from it.

a. Râbita of Mawt

While your eyes are closed, you will imagine three things: your death, your guide, and that you are in the presence of Allah. The imagination of the death is called “*rabita-i mawt*.” Imagining the spiritual guide is called “*rabita-i murshid*.” Imagining that you are in the presence of Allah is called “*rabita-i huzur*.”

The prophet ordered us to imagine about death. It has plenty of rewards, and benefits. It polishes the heart spiritually. It increases the spirituality and awakens the person from the unawareness, and



corrects the nafs. That is why you must imagine your own death well.

Imagine that you are in your death bed. You are living your last moments. The Angel of Death, Azra'il AS, has appeared to you. You get excited. He pushes your chest and start taking your soul from your body. There is panic, sweat, fear, and pain. The divine help arrives, and you utter the word of the *kalima*: “*Ash-hadu en lâ ilâhe illallah wa ash-hadu enne muhammeden abduhû wa rasûluhu*—I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammed is His servant and Prophet.” You submit your soul in that manner. Then people wash your body and wrap it in a shroud. Your body is brought to a mosque in a coffin. They perform the funeral prayer on you. You imagine all of this. Then the congregation picks the coffin and takes it to the cemetery. They placed you in the grave. The imam reminded you what to say when the angels meet you and interrogate you. Everybody leaves.

You are in your grave with the angel. The Angel asks: “Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your prophet? What is your scripture? Which way is your qibla?” Imagine that you gave

the correct answers for all of these questions, and your chamber in the grave became a lot larger. In the realm of the spirits, you spend your time with our late masters doing the dhikr of Allah. Imagine that the life in this world comes to an end the day or resurrection begins.

Imagine all of these terrifying states and events. Isrâfil AS has blown the trumpet Sûr and everybody gathers at a place. Imagine that people wait for thousands of years standing in a respectful position. Imagine that people run away from one another, and the colossal court is established. People are called for the account of their deeds, the deed books are opened, the good deeds and the bad deeds are weighed. The righteous servants will go to the Paradise happily while those who have bad deeds are sent to hellfire. Imagine all of these as described in the Qur'an.

Tell your nafs: "This is a serious matter. Each person comes to life only once. Come to your senses! As you live in this life, while you have the means, save yourself from the hellfire. Try hard to do the righteous deeds so you may earn Paradise. Be on the path to Paradise! Do not waste even a moment of your life! Do not waste your time. Come to your senses!" This imagination is called *râbita-i mawt*.

b. Râbita of Murshid

The second visualization is the *râbita-i murshîd*. You will imagine us with our masters in the tariqa. This powerless brother of yours would be sitting with them. You make a connection from your heart to our hearts and wait for the flow of divine *fayz* (spirituality and enlightenment) expectantly.

When a person makes *râbita* to a great personage from the awliyaullah, a connection is established, and the enlightenment fills the heart. Those who practice this know this fact. Thus a person becomes familiar with the secrets of the spiritual life and receives *fayz* even if his shaikh is far away physically. This *râbita* leads to *fenâ fish-shaikh* (annihilation within the shaikh, i.e.,

becoming united), *fenâ fir-rasul* (annihilation within the Prophet SAS), and other states.

This is a connection love, affection and respect. Try this the best way you can. This practice will develop your Tasawwuf experience and take you to better states.

c. Râbita of Huzur

The third imagination is the *râbita-i huzur*. Tilt your head towards your heart and be aware that Allah is closer to you than your jugular vein; He is omnipresent and observant. He sees you and hears you. He loves a person who turns to Him in supplication (dua). With this awareness, you will take a humble position, turn to Him, and pray: “My Lord! I have so many shortcomings. Forgive me my offenses and shortcomings. I want to be a good servant for You. Grant me Your guidance. I want to be among the servants whom You love and are pleased with. Allow me to be among the servants who do Your dhikr and be thankful to You often. This is what I want. O Allah! Help me!” You should turn to Allah in tears. Then with the awareness that you are in the presence of Allah, start your dhikr.

d. Daily Dhikr Duty

1. Say one hundred times “*Astaghfirullah.*” This is recommended by the Prophet SAS.

2. Say one hundred times “*Lâ ilâha illallah*”

3. Say one thousand times “*Allah.*” For every one hundredth, add the statement “*Ilâhî ente maqsûdî wa ridâke matlûbî.*” This is from a Qudsî Hadith meaning “O Allah! You are my purpose, and I seek Your consent.”

4. Say one hundred times the *salawat-i sharifa*. This is also based on a Hadith.

5. Read one hundred time surah Ikhlas (*Qul huwallahu ahad...*). This is, too, based on a hadith. You will be practicing the

recommendations of the Prophet SAS. Your dhikr complies with the ahadith of the Prpohet SAS.

After completing your dhikr duty, raise your hands and make dua. Ask good things from Allah for yourself, your parents, your loved-ones, your friends, for your worldly life, for your hereafter, for all Muslims, for the Chechens, Bosnians, and for all Muslims who were subjected to injustice in all parts of the world. Ask goodness for them, and wish well for them. Do not forget us in your prayers, either.

Now I am going to dictate dhikr for you traditionally as the Prophet dictated dhikr to his companions. You listen to me first:

“Lâ ilâha illallah... Lâ ilâha illallah... Lâ ilâha illallah...”

Now you say it all together, and let Allah be a witness to it.

“Lâ ilâha illallah... Lâ ilâha illallah... Lâ ilâha illallah...”

“Allah...”

“Allah...”

“Allah...”

“Allah...”

“Allah...”

“Allah...”

Continue with he same dhikr!

“Allah... Allah... Allah...”

Now close your mouth and eyes, and continue saying it by heart.

.....

May Allah bless it. Saying “Allah” by heart without the sound is the most virtuous dhikr of all because nobody would know about it. It would be free of show-off. Every tariqa has this dhikr. In every tariqa this is taught after a serious training. I am teaching this to you now. At every proper time of the day, you maintain this dhikr. No matter where you are—be it in the market or shopping mall, in the farm field, on the road, sitting, walking, even lying in bed—do not let your time pass in vain. Let your heart say “Allah.” Do not let anybody hear it. Do not let it be a show-off. However, keep this in mind:

Bir kez Allah dese ashk ile lisân,

Dökülür cümle günah misl-i hazân.

If a person says “Allah” with love and zeal, Like leaves in autumn all the sins will fall.

When a person says “Allah” with love, all of his sins will be wiped. Then he starts earning virtues. The dhikrullah has so much honor, virtue, rewards, and effects. That is why you should try to maintain this dhikr at all times. This leads to the state of being with Allah among people confirming the verse: *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ (النور: ٣٧)

(*Rijâlun lâ tulhîhim tijâratun wa lâ bey'un an dhikri'llâh*) “Men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah... “ (Qur'an 24:37)

Our path is the path of upholding the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet SAS. That is our principle; that is the essence of our path. We know that the path of bid'ah has no benefits. The deeds based on bid'ah have no rewards; they are not accepted. That is why you must not deviate from the path of the Sunnah of the Prophet SAS. Let *Riyâdhuz Sâlihîn* of Imam Nawawî be your textbook, and read it. It contains authentic ahadith. Read it and benefit from the ahadith of the Prophet SAS. Do not act on permissions, but uphold the virtues in the path of taqwa. Stay away from the offences as you work.

e. Supererogatory Prayers

Try to offer your obligatory prayers in the mosque. You can pray the voluntary ones at home. In addition to the obligatory prayers perform the following prayers:

1. After the fajr prayer, keep yourselves busy with dhikrullah. You may read the awrad, prayers, and the Qur'an. Study Islamic sciences. Then offer two or four units of ishraaq prayer. That has so

much reward. You will earn the rewards of a Hajj and an Umrah.

Our beloved Prophet SAS recommended this prayer as stated in the collection of Imam Tirmidhî.

2. I recommend the *duhâ* prayer. It is offered between the *fajr* and the *dhuhr* prayers. A hadith states that those who maintain the *duhâ* prayer are registered among the muhsinîn.

3. There is *awwâbîn* prayer after *maghrib* prayer. Catechism books describe it. It has sound grounds. You should pray that as two, four or six units. It was reported that the *awwâbîn* prayer causes the sins to be erased even if they are as much as the suds of the oceans. That is why we ought to offer this prayer.

4. Make fresh wudu before going to bed at night and offer four units of *tejdîd-i wudu* (refreshing the wudu) prayer. Then go to bed with wudu. If a person goes to bed with wudu, the angels record that he has worshipped the whole night. They gather around him in a large crowd and pray for him: “Our Lord! Forgive and bless this servant because he went to sleep purified.” This is also based on a hadith; therefore, you should make it a principle for yourself.

5. We are in Ramadhan and we are practicing getting up before dawn to eat suhur meal. Getting up for the suhur meal is a Sunnah of the Prophet SAS. He said:⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.II, s.678, no:1823; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.II, s.770, no:1095; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.III, s.88, no:708; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.141, no:2146; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.540, no:1692; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.99, no:11968; Dârimî, *Sünen*, c.II, s.11, no:1696; İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.213, no:1937; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.VIII, s.245, no:3466; Taberânî, *Mu'cemül-Evsat*, c.II, s.295, no:2028; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü's-Sağîr*, c.I, s.58, no:60; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.V, s.235, no:2848; Abdü'r-Rezzak, *Musannef*, c.IV, s.227, no:7598; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.II, s.274, no:8913; Beyhakî, *Şuabül-İman*, c.III, s.408, no:3908; Beyhakî, *Sünenül-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.236, no:7902; Neseî, *Sünenül-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.75, no:2456; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.III, s.35; İbnü'l-Ca'd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.215, no:1425; Kudâi, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.I, s.395, no:677; Deylemî, *Müsnedül-Firdevs*, c.II, s.55, no:2310; İbnü'l-Cârud, *el-Müntekâ*, c.I, s.104, no:383; İbn-i Hibbân, *Tabakâtül-Muhaddisîn*, c.III, s.127; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.I, s.354, no:283; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.305; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.III, s.230; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.177, no:2737; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.III, s.238; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

تَسَحَّرُوا ، فَإِنَّ فِي السَّحُورِ بَرَكَةً (ط. حم. خ. م. ت. ن. ه.
 حب. عن أنس؛ ن. حل. حم. خط. ض. عن أبي هريرة، و
 أبي سعيد، وجابر)

RE. 251/7 (*Tesahharû fe-inne fis sahûri barakah*) “Eat the suhur meal, for there is abundance in the suhur meal.” Even if it is a date fruit or a cup of water, one should get up for suhur and have the suhur meal. We learn how to get up at suhur time in Ramadhan; other times, even if we do not fast, we should get up and offer the *tahajjud* (night vigil) prayer because the *tahajjud* prayer

Neseî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.140, no:2144; İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahih*, c.III, s.213, no:1936; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.X, s.138, no:10235; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.IX, s.7, no:5073; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.V, s.217, no:1821; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.75, no:2454; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.III, s.305; Kudâî, *Müsnedü's-Sihâb*, c.I, s.395, no:675, 576; İbn-i Hibbân, *Tabakâtü'l-Muhaddisîn*, c.IV, s.69; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü'l-Kemâl*, c.XXIV, s.515; İbn-i Hacer, *Tehzîbü'l-Tehzîb*, c.IX, s.62; Cürcânî, *Târih-i Cürcân*, c.I, s.300, no:510; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.II, s.103; Dâra Kutnî, *İlel*, c.V, s.67, no:712; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.178, no:2745; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Neseî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.141, no:2147-2151; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.377, no:8895; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.V, s.175, no:4990; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü's-Sağîr*, c.I, s.162, no:253; Abdü'r-Rezzak, *Musannef*, c.IV, s.228, no:7601; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.II, s.275, no:8914; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.75, no:2457; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.III, s.322; İbn-i Hibbân, *Tabakâtü'l-Muhaddisîn*, c.III, s.20; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.V, s.233, no:2719; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.III, s.15; Dâra Kutnî, *İlel*, c.XI, s.103; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.178, no:2744; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.32, no:11299; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VIII, s.91, no:8064; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.II, s.275, no:8920; İbn-i Esir, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.1185; Ebû Saîd el-Hudrî RA'dan.

Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VII, s.90; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.III, s.111, no:1116; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.VI, s.98; İbn-i Hibbân, *Mecrûhîn*, c.III, s.60, no:1126; Câbir ibn-i Abdullah RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.849, no:23966; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.361, no:976; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XI, s.262, no:10736.

is a very rewarding prayer. The Prophet SAS said:⁵¹

رَكَعَتَانِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا .

(*Rak'atâni minel layl*) “Two units of the prayer from the night are (*khayrun mined dunyâ wa mâ fihâ*) better than this world and everything in it.” People will appreciate its value in the hereafter. They will realize what they missed and regret missing it: “Why didn't we offer more? Why didn't we offer every day?”

Get yourself used to the *tahajjud* prayer during Ramadhan. While you are taking the one-month taqwa training course, get used to the *tahajjud* prayer. After Ramadhan, set your clock to the time that you get up for suhur meal. Insha-Allah, we will get up at that time. Getting up at night before dawn is the custom of the righteous servants. Besides, the gates of the heaven are opened at night, and the prayers and supplications reach Almighty Allah without any obstacles. Almighty Allah accepts the prayers at night. One who has a desire of his heart should ask for it from Allah at night, before dawn, at the suhur time, at the *tahajjud* time.

f. Voluntary Fasting

In addition to the voluntary *salat*, insha-Allah, you will fast on Mondays and Thursdays after Ramadhan. Then fast the “*eyyâm-i biydh*,” that is the days when the moon looks full at night; i.e., the 13th, 14th and 15th days of the lunar months. These are Sunnah, and our beloved Prophet SAS persisted on these fasts. Also fast the *sitte-i Shawwal*—six days of fasting in Shawwal. In addition, fast on the *ashr-i Dhilhijjah*—the first ten days of the month Dhilhijjah when the pilgrims go for Hajj. Especially, fasting on the day of

⁵¹ Lafiz farkıyla: Deylemi, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.III, s.455, no:5404; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummal, c.VII, s.785, no:21405; *Camii'l-Ehadis*, c.XIII, s.145, no:12782.



Ulu Cami, KAHRAMAN MARAŞ

Arafa is very rewarding—it is an expiation to the sins for a year. Do not miss it.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Try to earn rewards by fasting in the months Rajab and Shaban, on the special nights, by voluntary salat and by attending the rewarding deeds. This life is the arable filed of the hereafter. One could not earn Paradise without working in that field. Man has to have the good intention and do righteous deeds to earn Paradise.

It is written on the cover of Ka'abah that Allah says:

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ (طه: ٨٢)

(*Wa innî ghaffârun li-men tâbe wa âmene wa amile amelen sâlihan thummehtedâ*) “Verily, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and beleives and does righteous deeds and then continues in guidance” (Qur'an 20:82). Dear Brothers and Sisters! As you see, there is the condition of doing righteous deeds. You try

to do the righteous deeds. I will also remind you of another verse:

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تَظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تَجْزُونَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

(يس: ٥٤)

(*Fel yewme lâ tuzlemu nefsun shey'en wa lâ tujzewne illâ mâ kuntum ta'melûn*) “When the accounting ends on the Day of Judgement, no soul will be wronged at all, and you will not be recompensated except for what you had done.” (Qur'an 36:54) Nobody will be mistreated on the day of Judgment. People will get what they deserve for the deeds they do in this life. If a person is rewarded with good rewards, he should be thankful to Allah! If a person is punished in the hereafter, then he should blame himself because it is stated (*illâ mâ kuntum ta'melûn*) “except for what you had done.”

Doing righteous deeds is very important. Despite this fact, all of our good deeds worth nothing in comparison to the blessings that Allah has granted us. No matter how much we worship for Allah, we could not pay back even one blessing of Allah. Yet without the righteous deeds, we would be a total loser. We have to obey the orders of Allah. It would not be befitting for a good Muslim to disobey the orders of Allah.

You should compete in doing the rewarding deeds. You will acquire taqwa in Ramadhan—for Allah says (*le'allekum tetteqûn*) “you may learn taqwa” as a result of fasting. You are going to have taqwa and avoid the sins.

There is something shameful and strange: A person fasts during the day, remains patient even towards the halal things, and does not drink water or eat food. However, when the sun goes down, he gets indulged in the offenses, prohibitions, and questionable entertainment. This is not befitting! Taqwa during the day, sinning at night—this is not acceptable. One should maintain the

taqwa of the daytime during the night, too. One should also maintain the taqwa of the Ramadan after Ramadhan as well. This is the proper way. You try to do this.

You should abstain from sin. Your eyes should not look at haram; your tongue should not utter haram. No haram food should go into your stomach; your hand should not reach haram; your feet should not walk to haram; none of your body organs should be indulged in a haram deed. You have to protect yourselves from haram. This is your duty.

To reiterate, first, you should do righteous deeds. Second, you should avoid sin. The third duty for you and for us is to acquire good manners. Good code of conduct can take a person to Paradise. If a person has good manners, Almighty Allah grants him plenty of rewards. A person of good manners will earn the rewards of fasting during the day and of offering prayers at night just by having good manners. Mostly people will enter paradise for their taqwa and good manners. When the person has ill manners, he will be bankrupt in the hereafter and suffer the consequences of having bad manners. That is why we should abandon ill characters and have good characters.

In fact, the tariqa is a way of training—training of the manners, training by a tekke. It leads a person to perfection. May Allah enable you to do all of these good things.

Now each one of you should read one Surah Fatiha and three Surah Ikhlas and present the rewards to our beloved Prophet SAS, our masters and perfect guides in the tariqa. Then I will make a dua.

.....
Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ، يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ، فَمَنْ
 نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ

فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (الفتح: ١٠)

(*Innelledhîne yubâyi'ûneke innemâ yubâyi'ûna'llah... Yedu'llâhi fewqa eydîhim... Femen nekethe wa innemâ yenkuthu alâ nefsihî... Wa men ewfâ bimâ àhede aleyhu'llàhe feseyu'tîhi ejran azîmâ.*) *Sadaqa'llàhu'l-azîm.*

“In deed, those who pledge allegiance to you O Muhammed, they are actually pledging allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands. So he who breaks his word only breaks it to the detriment of himself. And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allah—he will give him a great reward” (Qur'an 48:10)

Keep your pledge and be loyal to the path of Allah. Do not deviate from the straight path. May Allah Almighty make you victorious over your nafs and Satan. May He keep you on His path and on His remembrance. May He give you means to learn about the manners of the tariqa and become a good, perfect and beloved servant who is equipped with the manners of tekke.

May Allah illuminate your hearts and erase the tarnish from your hearts. May He lift the curtains from your hearts. May He grant you the divine knowledge and make you adept and wise servants. May He grant you His love and affection. Serve for Allah with love and zeal. May Allah receive you as His beloved servants whom He is content with. May He treat you with His beauty in His Paradise. May He place you to the highest ranks of Paradise.

Bi-hurmeti esrâr-ı sûreti'l-fâtihah!

**December 12, 1995 / Ramadhan 12, 1415
Ulu Camii — Kahraman Marash, TURKEY**

14. DHIKR THROUGHOUT A DAY

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni'r- rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi haqqa hamdihî wa's-salâtu wa's-salâmu alâ khayra khalqihî seyyidinâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahibihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejma'in.

a. Keeping Busy with Dhikrullah after Fajr Prayer

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Praise is due to Allah, The Truth. The Prayers and peace be on the best of the creation our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and all of his sincere followers.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Respected Congregation of Muslims!

Our beloved Prophet, Muhammed Mustafâ (*sallallâhu aleyhi wa âlihî wa selleme teslîmen kethîrâ*) loved staying in the masjid after the fajr prayer and keeping himself busy with dhikr. He used to do that and advised us to do so.

In a hadith among the collection of Imam Tirmidhî, which is one of the six authentic collections, Enes RA reported that the Prophet SAS said:⁵²

مَنْ صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ، ثُمَّ قَعَدَ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ

⁵² Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.II, s.481, no:586; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.II, s.9; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VII, s.808, no:21508; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XX, s.496, no:22727.

الشمس، ثم صلى ركعتين، كانت له كأجر حجة وعمره

تامة، تامة، تامة (ت. حسن عن انس)

RE. 426/14 (*Men sallel-fajra fi jamâatin thumma qaade yedhkuru'llàhe hattâ tatlua'sh-shams, thumme sallâ rak'ateyn, kânet lehû ke-ejri hajjetin wa umretin, tâmmetin tâmmetin tâmmeh*)
 “If a person offers his fajr prayer in the mosque with the congregation, sits and keeps himself busy with dhikrullah until the sun rises above the horizon and then offers two units of salat, that person will be given the rewards of a Hajj and an Umrah completely, completely, completely.” There are other reports on this matter.

Hadrat Omar RA reported an incident about the same matter. Once the Prophet SAS sent a detachment of troops on pagan tribes in Madinah al-Munawwara for jihad. In a short time, the troops returned to Madinah eal-Munawwarah with spoils and victory. Everybody was happy for the victory and for the spoils which included flocks of sheep. One of the companions commented:

“O *mâshâ-Allah!* How nice! What a great reward that is earned in such a short time.” Some reports state that it was Hadrat Abu Bakr RA to make this comment. Then the Prophet SAS said:

“Shall I inform you about better spoils and rewards than these ones?”

The companions replied: “Yes O Prophet of Allah!”

“If a person sits after the fajr prayer and keeps himself busy with dhikrullah, that is a better earning for him than the spoils of the war. It has greater spiritual rewards.”

Because of this good news, many great awliyaullah, the great scholars, upheld the practice of the Prophet. They worshipped and did dhikr after the fajr prayer until the time of ishraq and offered the voluntary ishraq prayer.



It is stated as (*thumma qa'ade yedhkuru'llah*) “then they sat by doing the dhikrullah.” In Arabic, dhikr means remembrance; it is the opposite of forgetting. There are various forms of dhikr. For instance, saying “Allah,” saying “*La ilaâha illa'llah*,” saying one of the beautiful names of Allah (*Esmâu'l-Husnâ*), saying “*Al-hamdu lillah, Subhâna'llah, Allah-u akbar*” and repeating these words with a rosary are all dhikr. This is the first meaning of the dhikr that comes to mind.

Another meaning of dhikr is the Qur'an. One of the names of the Qur'an is dhikr. *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm:*

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (الحجر: ٩)

(*Innâ nahnu nezzelne'dh-dhikra wa innâ lehû lehâfizûn*) “Verily We have revealed the dhikr and We are its protectors.” (Qur'an

15:9) In this verse, the “dhikr” is the Glorious Qur'an. The verse means, “We have revealed the Qur'an and we are going to protect it [till the Day of Judgement].

Yet another meaning of dhikr is salat. In fact, it is a great collection of dhikr. Its beginning, middle and end are all dhikr. We start with “Allah-u Akbar!” We continue with “*subhànekallahumme*” and praise Allah “*wa bi hamdike... alhamdu lillahi rabbil alemîn...*” It continues with the Qur'an. Then come *rukû* and *sujûd* (bowing and prostration) and *tahiyyat* that have the dhikr. Then come the salat and selâm. Finally, it ends with selâm. From the beginning to its end, the salat is dhikr.

b. Importance of Dhikrullah

For these words to be considered as dhikr and valid before Allah, the person who does the dhikr should be obedient to Allah. If a person is obedient to Allah, it means he remembers Allah and His orders. He remembers Allah and gives up the disobedience. If a person is disobedient, his utterance of the words above does not mean he is doing dhikr. If he remembered Allah, he would not disobey or commit offences.

Dhikr is something that has to be with obedience. The utterance of the dhikr words such as “Allah” “*Lâ ilâha illallah*” or one of the Beautiful Names of Allah, or other words is meant to remember Allah and help to keep that thought fresh in the mind. That is why our scholars stated:

الذِّكْرُ بِالتَّلَاوُحِ

(*Edh-dhikru bi't-tedhekkuri*) “Keeping Allah in the heart at all times is possible by saying the dhikr words by tongue. As the person does dhikr by his tongue, the remembrance is instilled in the heart. It is similar to the statement:

الْعِلْمُ بِالْتَعْلَمِ

(*El-ilmu bi't-teallumi*) “The knowledge is acquired by studying.” The remembrance of Allah is achieved by uttering the dhikr words by tongue. By practicing, a person reaches a state that is called *dhikr-i mudâm*; that is, he always remembers Almighty Allah. Nothing would prevent him from remembering Allah. *Bismillâhir rahmânir rahîm*:

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ (النور: ٣٧)

(*Rijâlun lâ tulhîhim tijâratun wa lâ bey'un an dhikri'llâh*) “Men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah...” (Qur'an 24:37) He will reach that state and keep Almighty Allah in his mind. His life will be similar to that the life of the Prophet SAS.

Our beloved Prophet SAS used to go to sleep with prayers and dhikr. He would keep his *miswaq* (toothbrush) with him. Whenever he woke up, he would use his *miswaq*, do dhikr, and make dua. When he got up, he used to do dhikr and make dua. While he was going to respond to the call of nature, he would do dhikr and seek refuge with Allah. He would do dhikr and praise Allah when he was returning. He would do dhikr and make dua when he made wudu. He would do dhikr and make dua while he walk to the mosque. He would do dhikr and make dua after he finished his salat. He would do dhikr and make dua when he put his clothes on; he would do the same when he took his clothes off. He would do dikr and make dua before he ate his meal. He would do dhikr and make dua when he finished his meal.

All of this indicates that the Prophet was with Almighty Allah at all times. At every moment, he was in a state of true remembrance (*dhikr-i haqîki*) and continuous remembrance (*dhikr-i mudâm*). It indicates that the Prophet did not have even a

moment of unawareness. In fact, this should be the purpose for us, too.

That is why one of the principles of the tariqa is *hûsh-der-dem*—being aware of every breath of life; *ash-shu'ûr fil enfâs*—being conscious in every breath. Naturally, one needs inhalation and exhalation to maintain his life.

As Suleyman Chelebi said:

*Her nefeste Allah adin de müdâm,
Allah adiyla olur her ish tamâm!..*

Say Allah at every breath continuously,
Every work is completed with the name of Allah.

The principle of our life, the purpose of our life should be remembering Allah at all times and not forgetting Him at all and awareness that we are His servants. We are advised to be like that. There is also the principle *khalwet der enjumen*—being with Allah while being among people; it is having the “hand” in *kâr* (work) and “heart with *yâr* (beloved, i.e., Almighty Allah). The Turkish version of the phrase is “*Eli ishte, gönlü bilishte*—his hand is at work, his heart is with the acquaintance, the friend (i.e., Allah).” Being in this state is desirable and the purpose. This is the meaning of dhikr and remembrance.

That is why a person should keep himself busy with dhikr when he sits after the fajr prayer. He could take the rosary in his hand and say the nice dhikr words or read Qur'an thus he would appreciate his time. Right after the fajr prayer, the formal prayer (salat) is not performed until the sun rises above the horizon. That time period is called *waqt-i kerahat* (abominable time). If a person misses the fajr prayer before sunrise, he cannot perform the prayer during that time. He has to wait until the sun rises above the horizon.

The abominable time will expire about 25-30 minutes after sunrise. It is described as “when the sun rises above the horizon about one length of a spear.” Now we do not carry spears; we would not know how big it would be. However, when we look at the horizon, we can see how high the sun is. If it is above the horizon and if we can look at the sun with no problem in the eyes, it would be *ishraq* time. If the sun is much above the horizon and if it is not possible to look at it, then the *ishraq* time is over, and the *duhâ* time has entered.

It is recommended to offer two units of salat when it is 25 or 30 minutes or a bit longer after the sunrise. There is a Qudsî Hadith that Almighty Allah says: “O son of Adam! You offer two units of prayer in the early day, and I will keep you in a good state till the end of the day.”

The two units of prayer mentioned in the hadith could be the *ishraq* prayer. The customary daytime (*nehâr-i orfî*) starts after the sunrise. That is what we understand from the daytime. However, the canonical daytime (*nehâr-i shar'î*) starts with the dawn. When the eastern horizon starts having the first light, the canonical daytime starts. The fasting starts at that time. The time for the fajr prayer enters that time. Because of this, some scholars stated that the two units of salat mentioned in the Qudsî Hadith refers to the two units of *sunnah* prayer before the *fard* prayer of fajr.

It does not really matter which one it is; there are other ahadith that recommend the *ishraq* prayer. It is stated in various ahadith that offering this prayer causes the sustenance of a person to increase. There are quotes as “For a person to stay in the masjid after the fajr prayer and keep himself busy with dhikr until the *ishraq* time would attract more sustenance for him than wandering on land to seek sustenance.”

It is possible because Allah sends us the sustenance. Everybody wants to be rich, but not everybody can be rich. Everybody wants to fill his stomach, but some cannot. Everybody wants abundance and plentitude, yet people in Africa are dying of hunger. It is Allah

who sends the rain, has the weed grow, sends the customer, and sends the sustenance. Allah creates the causes and means. When His servant acts in compliance with His orders and his consent, He guarantees the sustenance in abundance.

Instead of staying in the masjid after the fajr prayer, a person could go outside, start the business, buy something from the villagers, take it to the bazaar, and conduct business. It is a business, and he expects benefits from it. He may think, “I have a family; I must earn my sustenance!” It is possible; however, when he does dhikr in the masjid, Allah promises him more sustenance. Allah keeps His promise absolutely. He is the sustainer of the Universe! He would send a spider in the darkness of a basement its sustenance with wings. The sustenance of the spider goes to the basement and gets tangled in the web of the spider.

c. Pursuing Sustenance while Neglecting Obligations

It is related from our elderly in the tariqa that it is a sign of blindness for a person to neglect the servitude, that Allah asks of him, by claiming that he is after earning a sustenance. It is blindness because Almighty Allah already guarantees of the sustenance for all and the person fails to see that.

The is a wise saying of Hadrat Atâullah-i Iskenderânî in *el-Hikemu'l-Atâiyye*:

اجْتِهَادُكَ فِي مَا ضَمِنَ لَكَ ، وَتَقْصِيرُكَ عَمَّنْ طَلَبَ مِنْكَ ،
دَلِيلٌ عَلَى اتِّمَاسِ الْبَصِيرَةِ عَنْكَ .

(*Ijtihâduke fî mâ dumine leke*) “For you to run after the sustenance that is apportioned for you, (*wa taksîruke ammen tulibe minke*) and to neglect your obligations and servitude, (*delîlun alentimâsil basîreti anke*) is a sign that your vision is closed.” O man! O blessed creature of Allah! You follow the orders of Allah and observe what Allah will bless you with. You carry out the orders of



Allah first, and then do the other work. To do everything in compliance with how Allah wants is the business of smart people. When it is time for prayer, we should do the prayer. When it is time to sleep, we should sleep. When it is time to work, we should work. We have to be aware of the proper time for everything.

People do the opposite: They stay up and gamble when it is time to sleep. They sleep when it is time to work. They work when it is time to worship. They do the things at the wrong times. When the order is mixed up, it does not produce the desirable results. Meanwhile they would do the prohibited things, too.

Then what shall we do? We have to organize our day to the consent of Allah. When does our day start? In fact, our day starts with the *tahajjud* (night vigil) prayer. The Prophet said:⁵³

⁵³ Lafız farkıyla: Deylemi, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.III, s.455, no:5404; Abdullah ibn-i Ömer RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummal, c.VII, s.785, no:21405; *Camiü'l-Ehadis*, c.XIII, s.145, no:12782.

رَكَعَتَانِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا

(*Rak'atâni mine'l-leyl*) “Two units of prayer from the night, i.e., tehejjud prayer, (*khayrun mine'd-dunyâ wa mâ fihâ*) is better than this world and everything in it.”

Also there is a verse in the Qur'an: *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

(اسراء: ٧٩)

(*Wa mine'l-leyli wa tehejjed bihî nâfileten lek, asâ en yeb'aseke rabbuke maqâmen mahmûdâ*) “And from part of the night, pray with it as voluntary prayer for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station” (Qur'an 17:79)

Almighty Allah recommended the Prophet SAS to get up at night and offer tehejjud prayers. In fact, one of the early-revealed verses of the Qur'an is the beginning of Surah Muzammil recommended the Prophet SAS the night vigil prayer: “When the half, one third, two thirds of the night is passed, get up and worship your Lord.” (Qur'an 73:1-4)

Having listened to these verses and being good followers, the companions of the Prophet SAS would enliven their nights by doing worship at night. They would stay in prayer over long periods of night time. Later on the last verse of the Surah Muzammil (Qur'an 73:20) was revealed to make the night worship lighter stating that there may be illnesses, traveling and other causes so that one should recite what is easy. That means there is worshipping at night in the Qur'an.

As the persons who seek the consent of Allah and who utter the words:

إِلَهِي أَنْتَ مَقْصُودِي ، وَرِضَاكَ مَطْلُوبِي !

(*Ilâhî ente maqsûdî wa ridâke matlûbî*) “O Allah! You are my purpose, and I seek your consent!” we realize the encouragement. Since it is better than this world and everything in it and since Allah grants greater rewards, we must set our clocks to get up for the tahajjud prayer. In Ramadhan we are used to getting up for the suhur meal, which has the barakah and is a sunnah of the Prophet SAS. After Ramadhan we should maintain getting up at the suhur time inshâ-Allah and offer the tehejjud prayer. We should not miss the rewards.

The second thing we should do in the day is offering the Fajr prayer in the masjid. Our scholars, the elderly in the tariqa, stated: “It is better to sleep the whole night and offer the Fajr prayer in the mosque than staying up whole night in voluntary worship and praying the Fajr at home.” It is because the Fajr is an important prayer. The Isha prayer, too, is important. The hypocrites cannot withstand these prayers because they would like the comfort and sleep. It would be very difficult for them to come to the mosque at night and to wake up from their sleep. The hypocrites cannot attend the Isha and Fajr prayers in the mosque.

Based on this fact, the believers will not be in a state of hypocrisy. They would not like to resemble hypocrites. The believers would like to be similar to the believers and the Prophet SAS. That is why praying the Fajr in the mosque should be the primary concern of a believer. A Muslim should get up for the tehejjud prayer and attend the Fajr prayer in the mosque.

Then he can go to work and seek his sustenance. He should go to work early.

In the Islamic times, the believers would start the work early. The marketplace would open early. People would finish their business before the Asr time. Everybody would return home before

it would get dark. In the past it was like that. In many places, the work would be finished by noon. Now things are different. People go to bed real late and sleep in the morning. They would not get up for the Fajr prayer. They do not get up for tehejjud, nor do they for the Fajr prayer. You hardly find any stores open when you go to the market at 9 or 10 o'clock. The store-owners go to bed late, so they get up late. That is why the stores are closed. Things are not the same as what used to be in Islamic societies.

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَدْ قَالَ

(*Kânen nebiyyu sallàhu aleyhi wa sellem qad qàle*) “The Prophet SAS used to take a nap at the middle of the day, around noon time.” Here the word *qàle* is from the same root as *qaylûle*. This nap is very good for the health, and it relaxes and revitalizes the body. That is a great support for the night worship. A body that wakes up early needs some rest around the noon. Taking a nap energizes the body. The person will conduct his business in the afternoon and come home as the sun goes down.

It used to be our tradition. At the Maghrib prayer time, everybody would come home. Even after we became seventeen or eighteen, we would be scared to get home much after the sun went down. It would be like committing a crime because the family would gather at home at the Maghrib prayer time. It was possible that somebody might have fasted that day and we would eat dinner after the Maghrib prayer. We had to be home at that time.

d. Performing Salah in Congregation at Mosque

How would we plan our daytime? We must plan the day in a way that we offer our prayers with the congregation in the mosque. We had some brothers who open their stores and when it is prayer time, he would tell the customers gently: “I am going to go to the mosque for the prayer. Let's go together, or you could come back later.” He



would close the store and go to the mosque. The work of this world never finishes, but the time for the prayer would pass. When its time passes, it is not possible to catch the same virtue of that prayer.

What we must be after is the consent of Allah and the righteous and rewarding deeds. For this reason we should close our store and offer the noon prayer in the mosque. It has twenty-seven fold more rewards. Praying in the mosque has twenty-seven times more rewards than praying in a hurry on a rug or on a board by the counter in the store. If the Friday prayers are held in the mosque, the rewards would be fifty-folds. If a shepherd on the mountain or a farm worker in the field calls for *adhan* and prays in the field, he receives fifty-fold rewards too. Almighty Allah has invisible creatures and they would gather around. He would be declaring "Allah is the greatest! That is how the rewards become fifty-fold in the field or on the mountain.

In brief, a believer will work in the morning, take a brief rest before noon and offer the noon prayer in the mosque. He will continue his work in the afternoon and offer the late-afternoon (Asr) prayer in the mosque, too.

The Asr prayer is very important. Almighty Allah took an oath as “*wal asri*” in the Qur'an. One explanation of the word *asr* is the late afternoon prayer. At this prayer time, people are in the middle of their worldly businesses. It is the time business deals are about to end. The merchants in the market start to gather their goods at that time. Everybody would be in some hurry. It is the time people could find excuses to neglect the prayer. One would say: “I need to go to the rest room. I cannot make wudu right now.” He would not want to leave the business. That is why the Asr prayer is very important, and Almighty Allah took an oath as “*wal asri*.”

Of course there are other meanings of *asr*, but the late-afternoon prayer is very important. Once somebody came to the Prophet in desperation and told the prophet his problem. The Prophet SAS listened to him and said, “I thought you had missed the Asr prayer!” He meant to say that the problem was not that important. The Asr prayer is very important and we should offer it in the mosque.

We must come home early evening. Dear Brothers and Sisters! We have a bad custom in Turkey—we should know about our faults and correct them. In Turkey, it looks as though there are no congregational Maghrib prayers in the mosques in Ramadhan. O blessed people! Isn't Ramadhan a month of worship? How come you do not go to the mosque for the Maghrib prayer in Ramadhan? People fast and use it as an excuse not to go to the mosque. It looks as though the congregational Maghrib prayer is eliminated in Ramadhan. That is wrong! What we should do is take something to the mosque to break the fast, offer there the Maghrib prayer with the congregation and go home and eat the dinner nicely.

e. Makkah and Madinah in Ramadhan

Those who had performed Umrah in Ramadan know that Makkah al-Mukarramah and Madinah al-Munawwarah have a different atmosphere in Ramadhan. Inside the masjid, there will



be tables for breaking the fast. Many people spread tables there. Each wealthy person has a table. The table cloth is spread 5m, 10 m, 20 m, or 30 m. Then date fruits, zamzam water and other food that are allowed in are placed on the spread. As you enter the masjid, people come to you to take you to their table: “Please, Sir! Come to our table.” You receive many invitations until you walk to your own table. You will have a hard time walking there.

As the time arrives, adhan is called. Everybody breaks the fast with date fruits and zamzam water. Within five minutes, people break their fast and fold the spreads back. Then the Maghrib prayer is performed in congregation. The congregational prayer is not neglected at all. In Turkey, on the contrary, the congregational Maghrib prayer in the mosque is neglected in Ramadhan. That is not right. We should go to the mosque, offer the prayer there and go home and eat dinner.

Offering the Maghrib prayer first and eating food afterwards is comforting. Yesterday we stopped at a mosque at the time of iftar.

We offered the prayers in the mosques. There were only two people in the mosque—the imam and an elderly man. They did not open the main prayer hall; instead, they perform the prayer in a small room because hardly anybody shows up for the Maghrib prayer. There are houses nearby, but it became a wrong tradition. This is one of our wrong traditions.

Another wrong tradition is starting the congregational prayer right after the adhan. In the locality I lived, it was like that. My house was in the same block with the mosque. If I left the house the moment I heard the adhan, I could almost miss the congregation. They offer the sunnah in a hurry and start the fard. You may even miss several units of prayer by the time you get to the mosque. Why is this hurry? Why did you call me to the mosque? You said, “*Hayya ales-salâh*—come to the prayer!” from the minaret. I was at home, and you called me to the prayer. O muedhdhin! You asked me to come to the prayer. Here I am. Why didn't you wait for me?

Muslim brothers in Saudi Arabia pay attention to this. In Saudi Arabia, the Mufti's office decided that after the adhan, the muedhdhin has to wait for some time for the congregation to arrive in the mosque. There are signs in the mosques indicating when the congregational prayer starts: “The noon prayer is held 30 minutes after the adhan; the Asr, 20 minutes after the adhan, etc.”

Waiting for the congregation is nice. In Turkey, we could do something similar, too: “Each prayer is to be performed some minutes after the adhan to allow people to make wudu and walk to the mosque.” Suppose a person was sleeping when he heard the adhan. He has to get up, make wudu, and walk to the mosque. Let such people make wudu and walk to the mosque before starting the fard. This is a kind of hurry that we have.

Another hurry is offering the prayer fast. That is also an

innovation, a *bid'ah*. It is wrong because it is stated:⁵⁴

العَجَلَةُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ (ت. طب. عد. عن سهل بن سعد ؛
ع. هب. ق. عد. عن أنس)

(*El-ajeletu mine'sh-shaytàn*) “Hurrying is from the Satan.” A person must be dignified and calm during the prayer. Observing the proper manners in the prayer is a must. According to some scholars, it is a fard. Each part of the prayer must be done completely and properly. The salat may not be done in a hurry because it is an important form of worship. Each part of it must be done distinctly.

Once the Prophet SAS saw a man who performed the prayer in a hurry. He called the man and said: “Repeat your prayer because you did not pray.” The person thought he had missed something. He repeated the prayer in a hurry again. The Prophet called him again and said the same thing: “Repeat your prayer because you did not pray.”

The person repeated the prayer for the third time, but the Prophet called him again: “When you stand up for prayer, stand up completely. When you bow for *rukû*, let your body come to that position completely. Do each part completely and properly.”

⁵⁴ Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.VII, s.247, no:4256; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.IV, s.89, no:4367; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.X, s.104, no:20057; Hâris, *Müsned*, c.III, s.387, no:857; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *el-Fakîh ve'l-Mütefakkîh*, c.III, s.287, no:1159; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.78, no:2440; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.IV, s.151; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.310, no:2358; İshak ibn-i Râhaveyh, *Müsned*, c.I, s.428, no:494; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.367, no:2012; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.VI, s.122, no:5702; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.VI, s.374; Rûyânî, *Müsned*, c.III, s.241, no:1076; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.V, s.343; Sehl ibn-i Sa'd RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.III, s.98, no:5674, 5675; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.56, no:1713; *Câmü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XI, s.42, no:10212 ve s.390, no:11041; RE. 197/7.



Not performing the prayer like that is disobeying the sunnah of the Prophet SAS. We should not offer our prayer in a way that we are in a race.

We have other shortcomings. A Muslim hears the call for the prayer, but fails to come to the mosque. He offers the prayers at home. In fact, the person who lives close to a mosque must attend the mosque as soon as he hears the call.

Once Abdullah ibn-i Ummu Mektum told the Prophet SAS: “O Prohet of Allah! As you know I am a blind person. If somebody holds my arm, I could come to the mosque. It is hard to come to the mosque at night. May I offer my prayers at home instead of coming to the mosque?”

The Prophet SAS said: “Alright! You have an excuse.” Yet the Prophet called him back and asked: “Can you hear the adhan?”

“Yes, I can.”

“If you hear the adhan, you have to come to the mosque.”

If a person hears the adhan and does not go to the prayer, he would be rejecting the call of Allah. May Allah help us correct our mistakes and shortcomings.

We talked about sitting down after the Fajr prayer and occupying ourselves with dhikrullah. We said we should offer two units of prayer after the *kerahat* time. The imam recited the Qur'an beautifully, and I gave you these details. The *kerahat* time is over. My talk has been a form of dhikr; you have listened to it and it is a form of dhikr, too. Studying the Islamic matters is a form of dhikr and has great rewards. "It is better than this world and everything in it for a person to study a section of Islamic knowledge" as the Prophet gave the good news.

We have talked about how we should carry out our worship and how we should appreciate our day. We proceeded until the Maghrib time. Of course there is the Isha time afterwards. The Isha prayer should be performed in congregation at the mosque, too. You may be tired, but you can rest afterwards. There should not be any excuses. You shall offer your Isha prayer in the mosque.

What is after the Isha prayer? Our beloved Prophet SAS and his companions used to retire right after the Isha prayer. They would not even want to talk to one another much in the mosque just in case the conversation would go on and on. They wanted to go to sleep early so they could get up for the tehejjud easily.

In Arabic, prolonged conversations after the Isha prayer is called *musâmeratul leyl*. It is the conversation of the night. That is not right because it endangers the tehejjud prayer—even the Fajr prayer.

That is why a person must go to bed early and get up for the tehejjud energized. We shall go to bed early, yet there is an advice by our elderly that we should remember: Make fresh wudu, offer four units of prayer and go to bed with wudu. The angels record the whole night as worship for a person who goes to bed with wudu. The angels see his body as light and descend where he is. They

gather around him immensely and pray Allah for that person: “O our Lord! This servant of Yours has slept with wudu. Forgive him his sins and shortcomings.” Satan stays away from him, and his night will be a blessed one. If he is to die at that night, he would leave this life with faith.

Knowing these facts, we should not stay up late. Sometimes, we may want to see a specific program on the television, yet we should not lose the track of time. We should make the wudu, offer four units of prayer and go to bed, so we could get up for the tehejjud prayer.

We should appreciate our day in this manner and try to earn the consent of Allah.

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* grant us means to do everything in accordance with the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet SAS, and the essence of Islam. May he clear us from innovations, negligence, unawareness, laziness, deviation, and shortcomings. May He save us from all ill characters. May He equip us with good characters. May He grant us opportunities to do deeds that are pleasant to Him. May He make us his beloved servants. May He meet us as His servants whom He is pleased with. May He honor us with His beauty in the highest ranks of His Paradise.

Bi-hurmeti shehri ramâdhane'l-mubâarak, wa bi-hurmeti habîbihî muhammedini'l-mustafâ, wa bi-hurmeti esrâri sureti'l-fâtihah!

**February 13, 1995 / Ramadhan 13, 1415
Ulu Jami - Kahraman Maras - Turkey**

15. MONTH OF FORGIVENESS

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu billâhi minesh-shaytânir rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bismillâhir rahmânir rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîn... Wa's-salâtu wa's-salâmu alâ seyyidi'l-auwalîne wa'l-âkhîrin, muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî ejma'in, wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ilâ yewmi'd-dîn.

Praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the Universe. The Prayers and peace be on the master of all, our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and all of his sincere followers till the Day of Resurrection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Respected Congregation of Muslims! May Almighty Allah be pleased with you all. May He accept your prayers, fasts, supplications, and servitude. May He grant you your hearts' desire. You have fasted and offered your Tarawih prayers. I am sure you are physically tired. I would like to read some ahadith from our beloved Prophet SAS and explain them for you.

a. Holy Qur'an is a Cure

Almighty Allah said in a Hadith Qudsi:

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! أَكْثِرُوا بِالزَّادِ، فَإِنَّ الطَّرِيقَ بَعِيدٌ.

(*Ye'bne âdem*) "O son of Adam!" We all are children of Hadrat Adam AS. We all are brothers and sisters. The Prophet said "Adam

is from the clay.” Our essence is the soil; so we should humble ourselves.

(*Ekthirû bi'z-zâd, feinne't-tariqa ba'id*) *Zâd* is the food and water prepared for the road and paced in the traveler's bag. Travelers in the past had to take their food with them because there were no stores or restaurants along the road. The roads were not as good as today, nor was traveling comfortable. *Alhamdu lillah*, today we left Marash, passed many places and mountains, and reached Aksaray with the grace of Allah. It would have taken weeks in the past.

In our time, there are many facilities along the roads including the gas stations, restrooms, and masjids. There is no problem with food. One does not need to prepare a bag of food for the road. But it was not like that at all in the past. Imagine a person getting ready to travel in the desert. What will he eat? What will he drink? Both would pose serious problems. The water was carried in a bag of animal skin, and the bag was carried on the side of the camel or horse. For food, they would take something that would not be spoiled —some bread or roasted flour— during the travel but nutritious at the same time —like wheat and dates. They would put them in their bags and start the journey.

They would have a hard time on the road. In addition to the tiredness and the hardship of crossing long distances, they would have a shortage of food and water. Because of such difficulties, the Prophet said: “As you travel in the desert, if you stop somewhere and the host does not provide you with what is the right of the traveler, you may take it.”

Why is it so? The host must provide the traveler with food and water because it is a matter of life and death. When the traveler stops at a tent or a camp site, the host must provide some water and food. “If the host does not provide, you may take what is the right of the traveler. You are not going to choose death,” said the Prophet SAS. This indicates the seriousness of the matter.

I remembered a journey of the companions of the Prophet SAS. A group of companions was sent for an expedition by the Prophet



SAS. As they traveled in the desert with many difficulties, they arrived in an oasis. There were few tents, palm trees and sign of water. They were happy to reach there. The companions told the residents that they were traveling.

People of the oasis did not recognize the companions; nor did they offer them food or water. The companions were the helpers of the Prophet SAS; they lived by the Prophet. Each one was a great wali. Nevertheless, the people of the oasis did not show any hospitality towards the companions.

The companions decided to get some rest by the oasis despite their thirst and hunger. They lied down on the sand to sleep.

Soon they heard a scream. People in the oasis were running and screaming. A woman came to the companions and asked:

“A venomous snake bit the chief of the tribe. Is there anybody among you who knows how to cure the snake bite?”

If you do not treat the companions of the Prophet nicely, that is

what could happen. The snake knows whom to bite. The chief was bitten by a snake. His body was swollen. He was going to die. They know the kind of snake; it is a venomous one. Death is inevitable once that kind of a snake bites a person. The chief was in deep trouble—he was going to die of the venom. “Is there anybody who knows how to cure the snake bite?”

One of the companions said: “I know some.”

“Come to the chief at once!”

Then the companions were welcomed. They went to the chief. Did they give anything to the chief like a potion? Not at all. They only recited Qur'an. The swelling subsided, and the body started to recover. Every body in the tribe was happy. They offered food and water to the companions. They had a nice treatment for them. As the companions left the next day, they were given gifts including sheep and lambs.

As they approached Madinah al Munawwarah, the companion who recited the Qur'an was sad. He said, “I am not sure if I did a good thing.”

“Why do you say so?” They asked.

“I recited the Qur'an, and then they gave me these gifts. Did I use the Qur'an to obtain worldly benefits? I am going to ask the Prophet about it. Do not touch the gifts before I talk to the Prophet.”

They arrived in Madinah al Munawwarah. They went to the Prophet SAS and explained what happened. The Prophet said:

“There is no problem. Your intentions were pure. The way events unfolded was fine. You may use the gifts. If you give me some, I will benefit from them, too.”

The Prophet said this to clarify any doubts that the person might have had. Then he asked: “what did you do to the person? What did you read?”

“O Prophet of Allah! I recited Surah Fâtiha.”

What is the lesson to be learned from this hadith? In fact, there was a physical/biological problem with the chief of the tribe. The

body was swollen. The companion only recited the Qur'an—no other medicine is used. However, it is Allah Who sends the cure; He is able to do all things. Allah has the power to save the person from death. He has the power to order the person not to die yet get cured. He has the power to make things live. *Amennâ wa saddaqqâ* — we believe in it without a tinge of doubt that he is All Powerful. The sick person gets cured by reading Surah Fâtiha.

b. The Month of Forgiveness

We are in the month of Ramadhan. When we ask, “What is Ramadhan?” the answer that comes to mind is “the month of forgiveness.” It is a month in which Almighty Allah forgives many of His servants. He forgives at the time of iftar and at the time of suhur.

In this month, Allah answers the prayers. The Prophet SAS said: (*Duâuhû mustejâbun*) “The prayer of the fasting person is answered.” The Prophet also advised that when the sunset time is near, before we break our fast, we should pray: “My Lord! Forgive me, my mother, my father, and all believers!”

Ramadhan is a month in which many servants of Allah are forgiven and many who deserved the hellfire are freed from the hellfire. It is *Mâh-i Ghufrân*, *Shahr-i Ghufrân*, the month of forgiveness. It is the month in which Almighty Allah forgives His servants.

About the month of Ramadhan, the Prophet SAS also said:⁵⁵

أَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ ، وَوَسْطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ ، وَآخِرُهُ عِتْقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ .

(خز. هب. عن سلمان)

⁵⁵ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276.

(*Awwaluhû rahmetun*) “Its beginning is the Mercy of Allah, (*wa awsatuhû maghfiratun*) its middle is the forgiveness time, (*wa âkhiruhû itkun minen nâr*) its latter part is the time servants of Allah are freed from the hellfire.” It is the month of forgiveness.

What else? Ramadhan is also the *Mâh-i Qur'an*—the month of Qur'an because the Prophet used to recite the entire Qur'an to Jibrîl AS in Ramadhan. Since that time, in Ramadhan, hâfiz persons read the Qur'an in the mosque and the congregation follows it on the Qur'an as the Prophet and Jibrîl AS repeated the Qur'an together. That is why Ramadhan is a month of upholding the Qur'an, reading it and studying it.

The servants of Allah have shortcomings and sins. Drinking wine, telling lies, false accusation, and backbiting are all sins. Looking at haram and eating haram are sins, too. If a person forgets what he knew from the Qur'an is also one of the major sins. That is why all day each of us should hold onto the Qur'an and refresh our memory. In Ramadhan we should try this.

“I used to know Surah Rahman by heart.”

“Recite it now.”

“I cannot do it.”

“I used to know Surah Yasin by heart.”

“Can you recite it now?”

“I cannot do it.”

“When my parents were alive, they sent me to the Qur'an course. I had finished the *Amma juz*—the last thirtieth part of the Qur'an.”

“Can you read it now?”

“I cannot.”

That is a major offense. That is why we need to repeat the Qur'an. In the anecdote I told you about, we saw that the Qur'an has a cure for a physical/biological problem. It is a physical cure in the life of the companions of the Prophet SAS. Just like the person took some antidote against the venom of the snake. The companion recited Surah Fatiha and the venom was eliminated. The person



returned to life.

That means the Qur'an has special powers. Reading the Qur'an has spiritual rewards and physical curing effects. It is a cure at our time, too. Since it answers the questions from the unbelievers, it is a cure for the weakness of the belief and a cure for the physical problems of man.

c. Prepare fort he Hereafter!

I told you about this incident to point out the difficulties and hardship one faces while traveling in the desert. There will be hunger and thirst, some one has to be prepared before starting the journey. One has to take food and water. For all possibilities, one has to be prepared.

Almighty Allah says in the Hadith Qudsî: “Prepare for the journey, take plenty of supplies with you because the destination is very far.”

The life of the person in this world looks like a journey. Man comes to this world, and the life flows from childhood to middle age and then to the elderly. Then comes the death, and the person

departs from this life to the hereafter. He waits in the realm of spirits (*alem-i barzakh*). Then the Day of Resurrection will come and people will gather for the Judgment. Those who pass the Sirat Bridge will enter Paradise.

That means the journey of the man starts in the realm of spirits and continues with the birth. With death, the person goes to the hereafter. After the Judgment and accounting, one enters the final stage of the journey, the permanent station: Hell for the disbelievers and Paradise for the believers.

Yet there are believers who had offences and committed sins, the rebellious ones, will enter the hellfire get punished for sometime and then they will go to Paradise for their belief. Whoever believes in “Lâ ilâha illallah—there is no deity but Allah” will enter Paradise eventually.

The Prophet SAS said:⁵⁶

مَنْ قَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ (حب. عن جابر؛ حب. ط.
حل. عن أبي ذر؛ ك. عن أبي طلحة؛ طب. ع. حل. عن معاذ)

⁵⁶ Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.IV, s.279, no:7638; Ebû Talha el-Ensârî RA’dan.

Tayâlisî, *Müsned*, c.I, s.60, no:444; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü’l-Evliyâ*, c.VII, s.172; Ebû Zerri’l-Gifârî RA’dan.

Taberânî, *Mu’cemü’l-Kebîr*, c.XXII, s.313, no:790; Taberânî, *Dua*, c.I, s.434, no:1477; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimâşk*, c.LXVI, s.290; Ebû Şeybe el-Ensârî RA’dan.

Taberânî, *Mu’cemü’l-Kebîr*, c.VII, s.48, no:6348; Taberânî, *Mu’cemü’l-Evsat*, c.II, s.328, no:2124; Seleme ibn-i Nuaym el-Eşcaî RA’dan.

Taberânî, *Mu’cemü’l-Evsat*, c.III, s.205, no:2932; Taberânî, *Müsnedü’ş-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.214, no:2113; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi’d-Duafâ*, c.VI, s.447, no:1929; Ukaylî, *Duafâ*, c.IV, s.68, no:1622; Ebü’d-Derdâ RA’dan.

Ebû Ya’lâ, *Müsned*, c.VII, s.34, no:3941; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü’l-Evliyâ*, c.VII, s.174; Muaz ibn-i Cebel RA’dan.

Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü’l-Evliyâ*, c.X, s.,397; Ebû Hüreyre RA’dan.

Mizzî, *el-Fevâid*, c.I, s.191, no:445; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimâşk*, c. XLVI, s.436; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA’dan.

(*Men qàle lâ ilâha illallah, dakhalel jannah*) “Whoever says ‘*Lâ ilâha illallah*’ will enter Paradise.” He will enter Paradise, but some will enter without any interrogation. The blessed servants of Allah, the happy and fortunate ones, and the beloved servants of Allah will enter Paradise without any interrogation or accounting.

In a hadith the Prophet SAS said:

“Seventy thousand among my Ummah will enter Paradise without any interrogation.”

Ukkasha ibn-i Mihsân as-Saqafi RA, a person that the Prophet appointed him as the commander of the army, a beloved and blessed companion of the Prophet, got up and asked the Prophet:

“O Prophet of Allah! Please pray that I am one of the fortunate ones to enter Paradise without any accounting.”

The Prophet SAS smiled and said: “You are one of them!”

Then the Prophet SAS added: “When Almighty Allah stated that seventy thousand believers will enter Paradise without interrogation, I requested Him increase the number: ‘My Lord! Increase this number. Let more believers enter Paradise without interrogation.’ Almighty Allah granted seventy thousand more for each person of the first seventy thousand.”

That would make $70,000 \times 70,000 = 4,900,000,000$; four billion nine hundred million people will enter Paradise without an accounting of their deeds. There is a mysterious part of the hadith: “There will be several handfuls of the Merciful added to this number.” We would not know how much there is in one handful of Almighty Allah. Sometime, in the bazaar, the vendors weigh the goods to the right amount and then add a handful of the goods saying, “This is for the scale.” [They would do that just in case the scale is not weighing the exact amount; they would make sure that the customer gets no less than the stated amount of the merchandise.]

Upon the request of the Prophet, Almighty Allah granted seventy thousand more for each person of the seventy thousand: it makes four billion nine hundred million people. Additionally,

several handfuls of people by the hands of Almighty Allah are added to that number. We would not know how much there is in one handful of Allah. These are the ones to enter Paradise without an accounting, without interrogation. On the day of Judgment, they will rest in the shade of the Ash-i A'lâ, the Throne of Allah. Their book of deeds will not be opened. They will not be told: “You have committed sins. Explain all of this!” They will enter Paradise directly.

d. Prophet Muhammad SAS will Enter the Paradise First

Who will enter Paradise first? Of course our beloved Prophet, Muhammed-i Mustafâ SAS, will enter Paradise first. He said:⁵⁷

آتِي بَابَ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، فَأَسْتَفْتِحُ ، فَيَقُولُ الْخَازِنُ : مَنْ أَنْتَ ؟
فَأَقُولُ : مُحَمَّدٌ . فَيَقُولُ : بِكَ أَمْرٌ لَا أَفْتَحُ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلَكَ (م . حم .
وعبد بن حميد عن أنس)

RE. 3/1 (*Âtî bâbe'l-jenneh*) “I will reach the gate of Paradise.”
The gate will be closed. The gatekeeper, Ridwân, will ask:
(*Men ente?*) “Who are you?”

The Prophet will say: (*Ene muhammedin*) “I am Muhammed the chosen, the beloved servant of Allah, His messenger.”

The gatekeeper Ridwan will say:

(*Bike umirtu en lâ efteha li-ehadin qableke*) “Come in O Prophet

⁵⁷ Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.188, no:197; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.136, no:12420; Abd ibn-i Humeyd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.379, no:1271; Abdullah ibn-i Mübârek, *Zühd*, c.I, s.119, no:400; İbn-i Ebî Àsım, *Evâil*, c.I, s.62, no:10; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.VII, s.447; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.I, s.138, no:418; İbn-i Asâkir, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.462, no:955; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.XI, s.532, no:31890; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.I, s.I, no:2; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.I, s.9, no:1.

of Allah! I was ordered not to open this gate for anybody before you. That is why I am questioning you. Welcome O Prophet of Allah!”

Our beloved Prophet SAS will enter the Paradise first. Before entering Paradise, the believers will gather by the Liwâul Hamd banner of the Prophet. All of the Prophets, Hadrat Adam AS, Moses AS, Jesus AS, and all other prophets will gather under the banner of Liwâul Hamd.

That is why we ask Almighty Allah: “Our Lord! Gather us under the Liwâul Hamd banner of the Prophet SAS, among the prophets, true and loyal believers, the martyrs, and the righteous servants. Treat us as you treat them.”

All prophets will gather under the banner of Liwâul Hamd and enter Paradise directly. They are called *duhûl-i awwalîn* — the first enterers. The prophets will be in that group, but the very person that the gates are opened will be our beloved Prophet, the leader of the Prophets Muhammed-i Mustafâ SAS. Adam AS and other prophets will enter under the banner of our beloved Prophet SAS.

Those who will enter Paradise without interrogation will follow them. They will be the blessed servants of Allah, the martyrs, beloved servants of Allah, awliyaullah, and the *muqarrabîn*—those who are very close to Allah. It is stated in the Surah Wâqi'a:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ . أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ . فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ .
ثَلَاثَةٌ مِنَ الْأُولَى . وَقَلِيلٌ مِنَ الْآخِرِينَ (الواقعة: ١٠-١٤)

(*Wa's-sâbiqûnas sâbiqûn. Ulâika'l-muqarrabûn. Fî jennâtin naîm. Sulletun mine'l-awwalîn. Wa qalîlun minel âkharîn.*) These are the selected, elite believers of the highest level, pure servants.

Then there are people who will enter Paradise after they are interrogated and an account of their deeds is reviewed. I would like to tell you an anecdote about the accounting:

Hadrat Omar RA made a deal with one of his friends in this life. They loved one another for Allah. His friend told Hadrat Omar RA:

“O Omar! If you depart from this world before I do, appear in my dream and tell me what you have seen in the hereafter. If I die before you do, I shall try to appear in your dream and tell you what I see there.”

Hadrat Omar RA passed away before his friend whom he had the agreement. As you know, Hadrat Omar was stabbed on the back, and left this life as a martyr. He was buried. That night, his friend waited anxiously to see Hadrat Omar RA in his dream. The next day, too, he waited, yet he saw nothing. There was no dream for two weeks. He was hoping to get some information.

On the fifteenth day, the friend dreamed about Hadrat Omar RA. Hadrat Omar appeared as though he just got out of a steam bath; he was sweaty. His cheeks were red; he had beads of sweat on his face.

“O Omar! Didn't we make a deal? You were supposed to appear in my dream!”

Hadrat Omar responded in the dream: “Hush! I just got out of the interrogation.”

I tend to believe these stories. I do not think somebody would make it up. I myself believe that it happened. Dear Brothers and Sister! I derive the following lesson from this story:

Hadrat Omar RA was the second Caliph after our beloved Prophet SAS. The first one was Hadrat Abubakr; the second one was Hadrat Omar RA. Both were the father-in-law of the Prophet SAS. Hadrat Omar al-Farûq RA was the father of our mother Hafsâ RA. He was a close friend to the Prophet SAS.

Hadrat Omar was also among the *Ashara-i Mubash-sharah*—the ten people about whom the Prophet said they will enter Paradise: “Abubakr will enter Paradise, Omar, Othman, Ali, ... will enter Paradise.” These names are written with nice calligraphy and kept on the walls of the mosques.

e. The Degree of the Companions of the Prohet

We know how high the spiritual degree of the companions of the Prophet was. None of the awliyaullah could reach their level. According to the Ahl-i Sunnah creed, the highest level of the awliyaullah is below the level of the companions because the Prophet SAS sated: ki:⁵⁸

خير القرونِ قرني، ثم الذين يلونهم، ثم الذين يلونهم (خ. م. ت. حم.
حب. ق. حل. خط. كر. عن ابن مسعود؛ ت. حم. حب. ك. طب.

⁵⁸ İbn-i Hacer, *Tahlisu'l-Hayr*, c.IV, s.204, no:2130; İmran ibn-i Husayn RA'dan.

Lafız farkıyla: Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.II, s.938, no:2509; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.IV, s.1962, no:2533; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.V, s.695, no:3859; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.I, s.378, no:3594; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.XVI, s.205, no:7222; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.V, s.180, no:1777; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.X, s.122, no:20174; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VII, s.126; İbn-i Abdi'l-Ber, *el-İstiâb*, c.I, s.4; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.XII, s.52; Dâra Kutnî, *İlel*, c.V, s.187; İbn-i Asâkir, *Târih-i Dimaşk*, c.II, s.52; Abdullah ibn-i Mes'ud RA'dan.

Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.500, no:2221; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.IV, s.426, no:19833; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.XVI, s.212, no:7229; Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.III, s.535, no:5988; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.XVIII, s.212, no:526; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.404, no:32410; Umran ibn-i Husayn RA'dan.

Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.IV, s.549, no:2303; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü's-Sağîr*, c.I, s.220, no:352; Hz. Ömer RA'dan.

Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.IV, s.267, no:18374; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.XV, s.121, no:6727; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.II, s.27, no:1122; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.404, no:32413; Tahâvî, *Şerhü'l-Maânî*, c.IV, s.152, no:5673; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.IV, s.125; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.II, s.940, no:1036; Nu'man ibn-i Beşîr RA'dan.

Hâkim, *Müstedrek*, c.III, s.211, no:4871; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.II, s.285, no:2187; İbn-i Ebî Şeybe, *Musannef*, c.VI, s.404, no:32408; Abd ibn-i Humeyd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.148, no:383; Şeybânî, *el-Âhad ve'l-Mesânî*, c.II, s.47, no:726; İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.180; Ca'de ibn-i Hübeyre RA'dan.

Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.V, s.335, no:5475; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan. *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.245, no:1265; RE. 280/5

ش . عن عمران بن حصين؛ ت. عن عمر؛ حم . حب . طب . ش.
 طح . حل . عن نعمان بن بشير؛ ك. طب. ش. وعبد بن حميد عن
 جعدة بن هبيرة؛ طس. عن أبي هريرة)

(*Khayrul qurûni qarnî*) “The best of the times, the eras, is my era. People living during my time are the best. (*Thummelledhîne yelûnehum, thummelledhîne yelûnehum*) then the following generation, and then the following generation.” In other words, the best ones are the companions of the Prophet—people who saw the Prophet. The second best ones are the *tâbi’în*: people who saw the companions of the Prophet. The third best people are the *te-be-i tâbi’în*: people who saw the *tâbi’în*. These three generations of the early Muslims have the highest spiritual levels. Seeing the Prophet and attending his discourses are great honors.

Hadrat Omar was among the *Ashara-i Mubash-sharah*; he was one of the companions, he was also a father-in-law to the Prophet. Another point is that there are only two companions who were buried next to the Prophet SAS: Hadrat Abubakr and Hadrat Omar. Their graves are behind the grave of the Prophet SAS. They are under the green dome (Qubba-i Hadrâ) in Madinah Al-Munawwarah.

Once our Mother Aisha RA had a dream which is described in the *Dalâilul Khayrat* book. In the dream, three full moons descended from the sky to the chamber of our Mother Aisha RA. They disappeared on the ground of the chamber. She told about that dream to her father Hadrat Abubakr RA ask him to interpret.

Hadrat Abubakr said: “O my Daughter! Three important personages will be buried in your chamber. They are the best three persons on the face of earth.”

Years later, when the Prophet SAS passed away, Hadrat Abûbakr told his daughter, our Mother Aisha RA: “O my Daughter Asiha! Do you remember your dream that you had told me about?”

This is one of the full moons.” He said that because the Prophet SAS passed away in the chamber of Hadrat Aisha RA, and he was buried in that room. The Prophets would be buried where they passed away.

After the Prophet SAS, Hadrat Abu Bakr was buried in that room. The third person buried in that room was Hadrat Omar RA. The dream had been actualized. The best three people on the face of the earth were buried in the chamber of Hadrat Aisha.

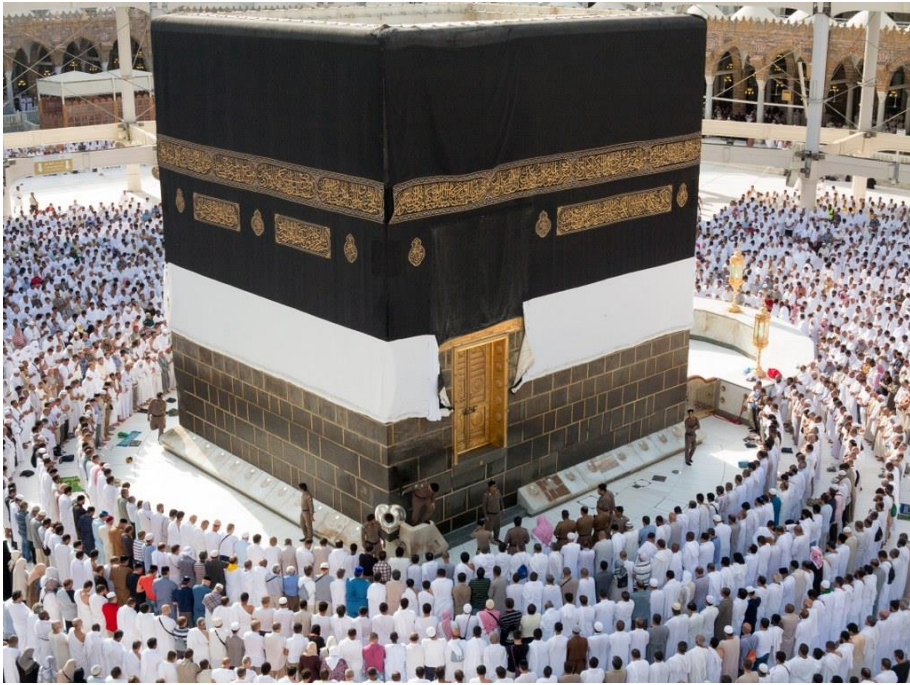
Imagine that a person who was among the *Ashara-i Mubashsharah*, one of the best people on the face of the earth, and a father-in-law to the Prophet, appeared in the dream fifteen days after he passed away and said that he had just come out of the interrogation. Now imagine what is going to happen to us when we are interrogated as sinners, rebels and guilty servants. May Allah help us! May He forgive us. May He have *maghfirah* on us *Maghfirah* means erasing and covering the sins.

Keeping that in mind in this Ramadhan, Dear Brothers and Sisters, we should try with all our might to be among the servants whom Allah has forgiven. If Allah interrogates us, we will be in deep trouble. If He forgives us, we will be happy. If He asks for an account of our deeds, we would be in a terrible state.

Let us ask forgiveness from Allah for us the sinners. Let us seek forgiveness and mercy from Allah *subhanahu wa ta'âlâ*. Let us try to earn that forgiveness and mercy.

Before starting his salat, our master Hâtem-i Esam KS would imagine the Ka'ba before him, for we turn to Ka'bah when we do our prayers. He would also imagine the Sirat Bridge under his feet. If he slips, he would fall into the hellfire. He would imagine that Azrâil AS is behind him waiting to take his soul. That prayer would be his last prayer. “After I complete this prayer, the angel of death will take my life away.” He would think about the hereafter and with pure intentions he would start the prayer, “*Allahu akbar!*”

May Allah give all of us long lives. May He give us health and happiness to live many Ramadhans. We should think that this is



our last Ramadhan and appreciate it as such. Let us assume that we will not reach the next Ramadhan. Let us do this seriously because it can be true.

Rabia-i Adewiyye would say to herself in the mornings: “This is your last day. Appreciate it and spend it in prayers.” At every night, she would say: “This is your last night. Spend your night as a person spending his or her last night in prayers.”

Those blessed people tried with all their might for Allah, spent their day and night in prayers and in tears turning to Almighty Allah and asking forgiveness and mercy from Him. They reached high spiritual stages. We must learn a lesson from them. We could not reach their spiritual levels; we cannot be a speck of dust on their feet. Yet we have to try hard to be righteous servants of Allah.

Almighty Allah asked us to take plenty of supplies for the journey which is very long. This journey is nothing but our lives. Then it is the hereafter, the Colossal Court, and the final

destination is Paradise for the believers and Hell for the rebels.

We were talking about the degrees of people who will enter paradise. Those who have more good deeds than bad deeds will enter Paradise. They will have degrees and ranks. Some will pass the Sirat Bridge (*kelberkul lâmi'*) like lightening, with the wink of the eye. Some will run on the Sirat Bridge, some will crawl. When they arrive in Paradise after the bridge, they will be happy.

فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ (آل عمران: ١٨٥)

(*Femen zuhziha ani'n-nâri wa udkhile'l-jennete feqad fâz*) "... So he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise has attained his desire..." (Qur'an 3:185) It will be great happiness. There are countless blessings in Paradise.

f. Torture in the Grave

There will be people who will suffer despite their belief. Some will suffer in the grave, and some will suffer in Hell. In a hadith an example of the suffering in the grave is stated: A believer was placed in the grave. The angels who were in charge of the torments in the grave slammed him with a hammer on his head that his head splashed all over. He asked: "Why do you torture me? I am a believer." The angels responded: "Yes you were a Muslim, but once some oppressors were doing injustice to a person, and you did not help the oppressed person. You walked away. This is for that."

It is clear that if one does not help the oppressed, he will suffer in the grave even if he is a believer. Knowing this, we must try to help the oppressed in Chechnia, Bosnia, and in other parts of the world. That is the lesson to be learned.

Once, the Prophet SAS was passing by two graves of Muslims. He said, "These persons are suffering in their graves." The prophet would see what is inside the graves, too. Some awliyaullah, too, are given the abilities of *kashf-ul qulûb* and *kashf-ul qubûr* at an early



stage in their spiritual progress. That means, they could know what is in the hearts and what is in the graves. The Prophet SAS said that people in their graves were tortured. The companions asked:

“Why are they tortured?”

“One used to backbite and carry words among people which would instill hatred and enmity towards one another. The second person did not pay attention when he urinated. [He would splash it on his clothes.]” The prophet asked the companions to bring a fresh branch of a tree. He broke the branch into two and erected the pieces on the graves. He added: “They will not have any torment until these fresh branches get dehydrated.”

We understand that even the believers could be tormented in the grave if they have ill characters and deeds.

Some people will fall into the fire for committing various sins. Some will enter Hell because they will have more bad deeds than the good deeds. That will be apparent in after the judgment in the

Colossal Court.

g. Try not to fall into Hellfire!

Once, the Prophet SAS asked:

“Who is called bankrupt?”

The companions responded:

“A person who lost all of his goods and business is called bankrupt.”

Hearing this, the Prophet SAS said:

“The bankrupt is a person who comes to the Colossal Court with rewards as large as mountains. He would have rewards for prayers, fasting, charity, and other good causes. While he was interrogated in the court, people whom he owed due rights will come there and demand their rights. His rewards will be given to those people to compensate for their due rights. In the end he runs out of rewards. But people continue demanding compensation: 'Our Lord! We have due rights on them, too.' They are instructed to leave their sins for compensation. Then the sins start to accumulate. When his case in the court is over, he is thrown to the hellfire with sins as large as mountains.”

The lesson we learn from this hadith is that we have to pay attention to other people's rights. We should not leave any due rights to the hereafter. To keep our rewards in the hereafter, we should pay the due rights to people in this life. We should not do any wrong to anybody.

If a believer is admitted to Hell for the offences he had in this life, he has to suffer the torments there. Pagans will mock at them: “Look, your belief did not help you. You declared that there was no deity but Allah, yet you are in Hell.” We may wonder how long a believer will stay in Hell. There is a hadith:

“O believers!! O Muslims! Protect yourselves from Hell. Try not to fall into the hellfire. Pay attention to your deeds. If you are admitted to Hell, you will stay there *ahqàben*.”

Ahqàben is the word in Surah Amma (Naba):

لَا يَشِينُ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا (النبا: ٢٣)

(*Lâbisîne fihâ ahqâbâ*) They will not find anything to drink. They will be burnt in fire. They will be tormented by fire. “They will stay there *ahqàben*.”

Here *ahqàben* is the plural of *huqub* which means eighty some years such as 83 years. Arabs call 83 years as one *huqub*. Since it is in the form that is three or more, *ahqàben* means at least three *huqubs* which make approximately 250 years. If a believer falls in Hell, he will stay there for 250 years. Yet, there is a verse, *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ (الحج: ٤٧)

(*Wa inne yewmen inde rabbike ke-elfi senetin mimmâ teuddûn*) “In the sight of Allah, one day is as long as one-thousand years in your time.” A day in the hereafter will be like one-thousand years of this life. Then a year in the hereafter will be equal to our 365 thousand years. Two hundred fifty years adds up to ninety-one billion two hundred fifty million years of this life. That would be the minimum time to be spent in Hell.

The minimum time in Hell will be billions of years. For this reason, Dear Brothers and Sisters, we must try not to fall into the hellfire. That is the lesson we derive from the hadith.

h. Acquire Taqwâ!

In many verses of the Qur'an Allah *subhanahu wa ta'alâ* instructs us:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (البقرة: ٢٧٨)

(*Yâ eyyuhelledhîne âmenuttequllah*) “O you who have believed, fear Allah!”

فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ (البقرة: ٢٤)

(*Wettequ'n-nâre'lletî wa qùduhe'n-nâsu wa'l-hijârah*) “Avoid Hell whose fuel is made of people and stones.” In many verses we are instructed to be aware of Allah and to avoid the hellfire. Also, the verse that indicates that fasting in Ramadhan is an obligation states: *Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: ١٨٣)

(*Yâ eyyuhe'lledhîne âmenû kutibe aleykumu's-siyâmu kemâ kutibe ale'lledhîne min qablikum le'allekum tetteqûn*) “O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may learn taqwa” (Qur'an 2:183).

In many verses of the Qur'an Almighty Allah recommends taqwa and orders: “Fear Allah! Be aware of Allah! The fasting in Ramadan is decreed on us so we may learn taqwa. Allah has granted us the month of Ramadhan. He orders everything with His wisdom. He provides means for us to carry out His orders.

I had read many years ago I read about a Canadian Diplomat, a scholar in South-East Asia. It was Thomas Irving. He became a Muslim and wrote a book about Islam. What he says about how he became a Muslim is very interesting. Since we learn Islam from our parents and we practice it in the family, we do not know how a non-Muslim sees it.

Thomas Irving says: “I was born in a Christian country, and I



am familiar with Christianity. When I was a diplomat in South-East Asia, I studied the religions of the region, too.” There are Indians, Chinese, Thais, and Vietnamese in that region. They practice Buddhism, Brahmanism, Shintoism and other religions. “I compared their practices with Christianity and Islam.”

What are the rituals and worships in Islam? Praying five times a day, fasting in Ramadhan, paying zakah, going for the Pilgrimage, doing dhikr (remembering Allah), spending for the charitable causes, and others. “To me, all of the orders of Islam are excellent, logical, beneficial, and full of wisdom. I realized that the worship of the other religions was baseless and useless. That is why I accepted Islam.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters! Think about Ramadhan—the month of training. As we do the worship of fasting, we strengthen our will power. The water is pure, but we do not drink it when we fast. Food is pure, but we avoid it while we fast. Imagine how many cups of water or tea we would drink every day if we were not fasting. The cakes, fruits, and other enjoyable food and beverages are avoided

because fasting is an order from Allah. We learn how to control ourselves, how to be patient, and how to have taqwa.

What does this mean?

“O My servants! Look! Water and food are the major needs of your body. You succeed staying away from water and food while fasting. You do not need the sinful deeds, so stay away from them at all times.”

Why does a person need the sinful deeds? There are so many halal things. While there are plenty of halal things, why would we indulge in haram?

In our college, there was Professor Abdulkhaliq Bey. He had served as a minister of Education in the cabinet. While he was in a diplomatic mission in Germany, the German host wanted to serve wine to him. He told them: “Do not serve wine.”

“Why Sir?”

He was a philosopher. He told us that he replied:

“Almighty Allah has so many halal and pure things to drink. There is no need to put the pure and halal things a side and reach for the haram things.”

Do people drink wine because of necessity?” Of course not!

I will tell you a joke. In the old times, alcoholic beverages were banned in the cities. A group of people decides to drink liqueur and set up a table at the outskirts of a town. A caravan was passing. The person in charge of the camels saw the table. He thought that the rich had a table with delicious food of all kinds. He was hungry and wanted to eat with them. The group invited the camel driver.

The driver sat with them and started eating the food. Then somebody offered him a glass of hard liqueur. He had no idea what it was, and he had a big sip. Oh no! From his mouth to his stomach, his inside was on fire! He had flames coming out of his eyes. He coughed and sneezed. He had tears in his eyes. Then he turned to people, felt sorry for them and asked: “Does the government make you drink this?”

Why do they have to drink it? Does the government force it on them? Why do they drink this harmful substance that destroys the stomach and the liver? Is it the law? Do they keep soldiers with you to make sure that you drink it? It has no useful things, and so much harm. It is not even pleasant!

Cigarette smoking is the same. There must be some among you who smoke. The cigarette has no useful effect. The wind takes the smoke; the strangers take the money, and the harmful effects stay with you. It causes cancer and other illnesses. While there are so many pure and halal things, one should enjoy the halal and stay away from the haram.

While we fast in Ramadhan, we do not eat the food that Almighty Allah had made it halal and that it is needed. We need water and food to survive; we do not eat or drink anything while we fast. As we avoid the lawful things, we should not even think of the unlawful things at all. We should learn how to control ourselves. We practice that over a month. it is a training of taqwa.

One of the wisdoms of fasting is the control of the will power. Almighty Allah has ordered believers to avoid Hell; to avoid Hell, one has to control his desires. To control the desires, one has to have the training of the will power.

What lacks in our educational system is that it teaches the knowledge, the information, but it fails to teach the manners and code of conduct. In fact the training of the manners is more important than the training for information. A person may lack the information, but if he has good manners, he could be more beneficial to the society.

In the early Islamic history, when Hadrat Omar ibn-i Khattab was the caliph, he was on a journey to Makkah al Mukarramah. He had a friend accompanying him—not an army of soldiers. He was like an ordinary passenger. They got tired and found a shade to get some rest. They met a shepherd there. Hadrat Omar RA called the

shepherd:

“Sell one of the lambs to us!” They were going to slaughter, cook and eat it. They were going to pay for it.

The Shepherd did not know who the passengers were. He said: “The flock is not mine. I am only a shepherd, not the owner. I cannot sell any.”

“You sell it and tell the owner that a wolf ate the lamb.” The Shepherd responded: “Suppose we fooled the owner. Could we fool Allah, too?”

What does it indicate? During the time of Hadrat Omar, Islam was still new. Yet even the shepherd on the mountain had excellent code of conduct and manners. The good believer would not resort to cheating or misleading.

Once, Hadrat Omar RA was patrolling the streets of Madina at night, he overheard the voice of a woman who was talking to her daughter:

“O my Daughter. Add some water to the milk.” Hadrat Omar was on the street, but he could hear the voice. The buildings at that time were not very strong. Some bushes were weaved and mud is plastered on them. The walls were made like that, so they were not soundproof.

The daughter of the woman rejected: “Didn't you hear the announcer that instructed us not to add water in the milk? We were supposed to sell the milk as it was milked.”

The woman said, “Get real, o my daughter. How would Hadrat Omar know about it? You do as I say.”

The girl persists: “Hadrat Omar would not know it, but Almighty Allah would know it Mom.”

Did you see what this little girl and the shepherd in the wilderness said? This is the result of the training of the manners and characters. Islam is instilled in the hearts; people became Muslims. They had acquired the fear of Allah, taqwa. You force them to commit the offences, yet they refuse to do it. They do not add water to the milk, nor do they sell the lamb.

How is it now? There is so much information; people are very knowledgeable, yet there are no manners. The President complains that the government cannot stop bribery. Both the giver and the taker are happy with it.

This reveals an important shortcoming on our part, on the part of the national education system: We train students to be good engineers, doctors, other professionals by teaching them the knowledge, yet we fail to teach them the manners and the code of conduct. That is why the bribery could not be prevented. That is the origin of the domination of the mafia and the abuse of the system. We read many disgraceful incidents on the newspapers every day.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! We must pay attention to the training of the manners, training of the taqwa and spiritual training. They are must.

i. Training of Nafs

As you know that each human being has a body. There is nafs in each body. In essence, the nafs produces some feelings and desires. The desires of the nafs are called *hawâ-i nafs* or *shahawât-i nafsâniyya*. *Shahawât* is the plural of *shahwah* that means appetite, strong desire. When a person follows the desires of his nafs, he gets indulged in haram. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي (يوسف: ٥٣)

(*Inne'n-nafsa le-emmâratun bi's-sû-i illâ mâ rahime rabbî*)
 “Indeed, the nafs is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy...” (Qur'an 12:53). The nafs orders the evil, the lust, and illicit desires. Many people follow the orders of their nufus and commit offences.

When a person is indulged in sins, he can found himself in Hell

to be tormented for millions of years even if he is a believer.

Then what shall we do? We should not follow the *shahawât-i nafsaniyya*. We should oppose to the desires of nafs and resist them. We must appoint our intelligence as a director within ourselves, which has the training of the Qur'an and Islam. If the human body is a country, the intelligence should be in charge of the government. This intelligence must be based on logic, Qur'an and Islam.

If the *nafs al-ammarah* (the evil nafs) overpowers the intelligence and takes control,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا . وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا (الشمس: ٩-١٠)

(*Qad aflehâ men zekkâhâ. Wa qad khâba men dessâhâ*) “One purifies his nafs will attain salvation, and one who fails to train his nafs will be a loser” (Qur'an 91:9-10) The nafs must be trained. The training of the nafs and teaching it about taqwa take place in Ramadhan.

Three of the five major obligations of Islam are carried out in this month. The first one is declaring the *kalima*—there is no deity but Allah. The Prophet SAS stated:

j. Four Things in Ramadhan

“Do four things in Ramadhan in plenty:

1. Say the *kalima-i shahâdah*: '*Ashadu en lâ ilâha illâllah* — I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah.'
2. Say '*Astaghfirullah* — My Lord! Forgive me my sins.'
3. Ask Paradise from Allah
4. Seek refuge with Allah against Hell.”

The Prophet SAS recommends us in Ramadhan the dhikr “*ashadu en lâ ilâha illâllah*” and “*astaghfirullah*.” We should do this dhikr in plenty knowing its meaning. The first dhikr means:

“My Lord! You exist. You are One and Only. You have no partners or equals. I worship You alone. I know that there is no deity other than You.” The second dhikr means: “My Lord! I have sinned. I seek your forgiveness. Forgive me my sins.”

Then we need to ask for Paradise: “My Lord! I want Your Paradise. Place me in Your Paradise where You will gather Your beloved servants and Your blessings. Free me from Your Hell.”

All of this is possible by giving the nafs taqwa and staying away from the offenses and sins.

There is *kalima-i shahâdah* in Ramadhan; that is one of the five pillars of Islam. Then there is *salat* (prayer) in Ramadhan. We do offer many more units of prayer in Ramadhan—*alhamdu lillah!* There is the Tarawih prayer in the mosques. We attend the mosques for that. There is also fasting in Ramadhan.

There is also another saying of the Prophet SAS: “The good deeds carried out in Ramadhan have 70 times more rewards than when they are done other times. That is why the knowledgeable Muslims pay their zakah in Ramadhan.

Ramadhan is such a month that there is *kalima-i shahâdah*, prayers, fasting, and zakah. It is a blessed season of training that has all kinds of worship. We strengthen our will power in this month; we appoint our intelligence as the ruler of our body country. We appoint the intelligence that has belief in Allah and upholds the Qur'an. That leads us to salvation.

قَدَ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا (الشمس: ٩)

(*Qad aflaha men zekkâhâ*) Then man finds the salvation. However, if we make the nafs as the ruler and dominant, if we follow the desires of the evil nafs, then we will be lost. Then a person will neglect the prayers, smokes and eats in public in Ramadhan, and do other evil deeds. You see that a grown up person, son of a good Muslim, do bad things. If his parents saw him

smoking, neglecting the prayers, displaying no shame, then they will feel extremely sad.

In the past, no-Muslims would tell their children: “This is the month of fasting for Muslims. Do not eat anything outside. Respect them and do not eat anything when they are present.”

When the *nafs al-ammarah* rules, the person does not fast, go to mosque, pay zakah, or distinguish between halal and haram. He wastes the precious month of Ramadhan. He does not benefit from it at all.

In a hadith the Prophet said: “The true *shaqî* (rebel, disobedient, unfortunate person deserving hellfire) is the person who does not benefit from the blessings of Ramadhan.”

Shaqî is the person who deserves the hellfire. It is the opposite of *saîd* (fortunate, happy, righteous person). The *shaqî* is deprived of the blessings of Ramadhan.

As you know, there is a dua for the night of Bara'ah. Almighty Allah decides what will happen in future at that night. That is why we make the dua: “O Allah! My Lord! At this special blessed Night of Bara'ah, if You have written my name to the list of the *shaqîs*, please erase my name from that list and write it to the list of *saîds*. If you have written my name to the list of *saîds*, please keep my name on that list and help me live like one of them.” We want to be fortunate servants, happy servants. We want to enter Paradise and attain eternal bliss in the hereafter.

Yet the Prophet SAS calls the person who did not benefit from the blessings of Ramadhan a *shaqî*.

Al-hamdu lillah, Almighty Allah granted you the opportunity to come to the mosque and accepted you to His House. The mosques are the houses of Allah, and you are His guests. This is a great happiness that not everybody gets. Appreciate this blessing. Talk to your neighbors, friends, and acquaintances—be it from the military service, from the street, from the childhood, from the school, from the shopping center— tell them about the blessings of

Ramadhan and help them benefit from it. Help them not to be deprived of this great blessing.

k. Three Supplications of Archangel Gabriel AS

I would like to conclude with a hadith. The Prophet SAS was stepping up the pulpit to deliver his sermon. After the first step he said “Amen!” He took his second step, paused and said “Amen!” He took his third step and repeated: “Amen!” After the sermon the companions asked:

“O Prophet of Allah! You would not say 'Amen!' when you stepped up the pulpit. Why did you say it with each of your steps this time?”

The Prophet SAS said: “Jebrâil AS came to me when I was stepping up and rebuked three persons, and I said 'Amen!' for that.”

One of these rebukes was related to Ramadhan:

“Woe to the person who fails to attain the mercy of Allah in the Ramadhan as the month comes and goes. May his nose be rubbed to the ground (may he be humiliated).” The archangel Gabriel AS said, “*Raghima enfuhû*—may his nose be rubbed to the ground.” The Prophet said “Amen!” to that.

The second rebuke was the following:

“Woe to the person who fails to earn Paradise as he lived with his mother or father or both. May his nose be rubbed to the ground.”

The Prophet SAS said “Amen!” to that, too.

What we understand from this is that if a person treats his parents well, attend their needs and get their prayers and blessings; he will enter Paradise for sure. If he fails to do so, then he incurs the wrath of Gabriel AS and of the Prophet SAS. We must pay attention to this.

For the third rebuke of Gabriel AS was the following:

“Woe to the person who fails to say *salawat* for me after hearing my name at a gathering. May his nose be rubbed to the ground.”

The Prophet SAS said “Amen!” to this one, too. This hadith points three important duties:

1. When we hear the name of our beloved Prophet SAS, when we hear the name Muhammed, we will say “*Alayhis-salâm* (AS)—peace be on him” or “*Sallallàhu alayhi wa sallam* (SAS)—may peace and blessing be on him.” Our forefathers made us used to saying this. May Allah bless them. Now when we hear the name Muhammed, we say it right away. We also add ‘*alayhis-salâm*’ to the manes of the Prophets: Jesus AS, Moses AS, Muhammed Mustafâ AS. We use it as if it is a part of the mane. That is a good training that we received from our elderly.

What happens when we do not say these words? When I was a college student, there were professors who would refuse to say “*alayhis-salâm*” or “*sallallàhu alayhi wa sallam*.” There were also professors in the College of Theology at Ankara University who would say “Muhammed” only. “Muhammed did this: Muhammed did that...” Is Muhammed a friend of yours from the military service? He is the most beloved servant of Allah—*Habibullâh*. His Prophet!

Could you call the president of a country with his first name? Could you say “Suleyman did this; Suleyman did that ...” for the President Suleyman Demirel [of Turkish Republic]? They say, “His Excellency, Mr. President” or “His Excellency Mr Prime Minister.” That is a sign of respect. You have no right to be disrespectful towards the Prophet of Allah. Even the non-Muslims would call him “*Yâ Ebelqâsim!*—O father of Qâsim!” That was how the noble people were addressed. The first names were not used for grownups.

Suppose your father's given name is Ahmed. Could you call him “Ahmed, come here?” He will slap you on the face, and people will denounce your arrogance. One would call his father, “My beloved Father,” “My Dear Father,” or “Dad.”

When the name of the Prophet SAS is mentioned, we say *salat* and *salâm* with love and zeal as Suleyman Chelebi said in his Mawlid:

Ashk ile shevk ile eytun essalât

You all say as-*salât* with love and zeal.

We must do it because one of the essentials of our belief is loving the Prophet SAS. The Prophet SAS said:⁵⁹

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ ، لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ
مِنَ وَالِدِهِ ، وَوَلَدِهِ ، وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (حم . خ . م . ن . هـ .
و عبد بن حميد ، والدارمي ، حب . عن أنس ؛ حم . خ . ن .
عن أبي هريرة)

(*Wa'lladhî nafsî bi-yedihî*) “By Allah whom my life depends on, (*lâ yu'minu ahadikum*) any of you will not be a true believer (*hattâ ekûne ahabbe ileyhi min wâlidihî, wa waladihî, wa'n-nâsi ajma'in*) unless I am dearer to him than his father, his children, and everybody else.” That is if we do not love the Prophet more than anybody else, we will not be a true believer.

The requirement to be a true believer is to love the Prophet SAS. The companions used to say, “Let my parents and my soul be sacrificed for you O Prophet of Allah!” That is why when we hear

⁵⁹ Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.14, *Îman* 2/7, no:15; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.67, *Îman* 1/16, no:44; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.114, no:5013; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.26, no:67; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III s.177, no:12837; Dârimî, *Sünen*, c.II, s.397, no:2741; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.405, no:179; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.VI, s.23, no:3258; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.II, s.129, no:1374; Abd ibn-i Humejd, *Müsned*, c.I, s.355, no:1175; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.534, no:11745; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.I, s.23; Enes RA'dan.

Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.14, *Îman* 2/7, no:14; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.VIII, s.115, no:5015; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.VI, s.534, no:11746; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.II, s.132, no:1383; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.I, s.29, no:70, 71; *Keşfü'l-Hafâ*, c.II, s.344, no:2955; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XVI, s.490, no:17360; c.XXII, s.395, no:25156.



The Grave of Our Beloved Prophet SAS, MADĪNAH

the name “Muhammed,” we must get excited and show our respect and love to the beloved Prophet, the crown of our heads and the light of our eyes by saying Muhammed-i Mustafâ *salla'llahu alayhi wa sallam*.

I went to Iran in 1981 among a group of 15 people to represent Turkish Republic in the celebrations of the new government system in Iran. They hosted us at the largest hotels and treated us as diplomats. At that time, Imam Khomeini was the spiritual leader of Iran. Believe me, every time we heard the name “Imam Khomeini,” everybody in the conference room would stand up and say “*Allàhumme salli alâ muhammedin we âli muhammed.*” Even after one sentence of the talk, when the name “Imam Khomeini” is heard, again everybody would stand up and say “*Allàhumme salli alâ muhammedin we âli muhammed.*” That was a sign of respect and love.

What are we to do? When we hear the name of the Prophet SAS, we would say *salat* and *salâm* with love and zeal. Jebrâil AS

condemns the person who fails to say *salat* and *selâm* when the mane of the Prophet SAS is heard. “Let his nose be rubbed to the ground—let him be humiliated.”

2. We shall be good children for our parents and get their prayers and blessings. We shall kiss their hands, give them gifts, and take them where they want to be taken. We shall ask them if they want or need anything. We should visit them in the morning and in the evening.

My mother used to tell me—may Allah bless her soul— “Son, when you get married, you ask us how we are doing—do not leave it to your wife.” She used to tell me a joke: A man was leaving the village for the bazaar in the next town. He requested his wife: “Go ask my mother if she wants anything from the town.”

The wife went to her mother-in-law and asked: “Mom, your son will go to the bazaar in town. Do you need any beads and bangles?”

The mother-in-law got angry. She shouted: “I do not want it!” What would an elderly person do with beads and bangles?

The wife came back saying, “You heard her. She said she did not want anything. She got angry at you and screamed.” The wife created mischief. We should not be like that.

Our blessed mother used to teach us: “You come to us and ask us how we are doing.” May Allah bless her soul with light and bless all those who passed away.

You shall not ask other people to go take care of your parents. You should visit them in the morning, call him “Dearest Dad!” and kiss his hand. You visit him in the evening and kiss his hand. You should not send the doorman to attend your father’s needs. You should get what your parents need yourself. They will say: “May Allah be pleased with my son or daughter. 'May what he grabs be gold.' May he be respected in this life and in the hereafter. May Allah honor him with His Beauty in His Paradise.” That is good.

Paradise is underneath the feet of mothers. If a person reaches his parents and receives their prayers and well wishes, Allah

accepts their prayers and places the person in Paradise. If one misses this opportunity, his nose will be rubbed to the ground. If a person misses entering Paradise, let him be humiliated. Woe to that person.

If your parents are alive, respect them and earn Paradise by serving them.

3. The third duty is related to the month of Ramadhan. We shall pay attention to not to be a person who misses the benefits of Ramadhan. Take the month of Ramadhan very seriously. Work hard, and beg Allah! Offer prayers in plenty, make dua, read Qur'an, and give for charity in plenty. Do whatever needs to be done in order to be among the servants who receive the mercy and forgiveness of Allah and are freed from the hellfire in Ramadhan.

1. An Anecdote from Hajj

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

One of my students went for the pilgrimage as a group leader. He visited me after the journey and said: "My Dear Khawaja! I was appointed as a group leader for the pilgrims of seven busses. We traveled on the land."

I asked how the journey was. He said: "Unfortunately, our people are ignorant. They go there, yet they do not appreciate the place. They waste their time in the shopping malls and stores. In the evening, they show one another what they bought. They discuss the prices and stores. They ask how many minarets and gates the Masjid al-Haram has. They spend their precious time with such matters."

One goes to the Pilgrimage once in lifetime. How could he waste his time in shopping malls? For every step he takes towards the Masjid al-Haram, he receives seven hundred Makkan rewards. His worship is rewarded one-hundred thousand times more! Despite this fact, how could a person waste his time in shopping malls? One should try to spend as much time as possible in the Masjid Al-



Haram and read Qur'an, offer prayers, and do other good deeds.
“They often spend their time in unawareness.”

Yet there was one pilgrim who was truly in love with the Prophet SAS.” I was moved very much by him.

“When we arrived in Madina, he got off the bus and kissed the ground in tears. He rubbed his face to the ground saying that the prophet walked on these grounds.

“He performed his Hajj well. He paid attention to his worship. He hurt nobody. He spent on charity. Then we returned to Madinah al Munawwarah.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters! This person had a dream in Madinah. In his dream, the Prophet SAS said: “Son, your Hajj has been accepted. Got get a piece of paper and pen, so I will write it down for you and sign it.” In the dream he went to the next room and searched for paper and pen. He got them and returned to the room to see that his shaikh was sitting where the Prophet SAS sat before. That means his shaikh was a true successor of the Prophet.

Isn't it great to receive such treatments and confirmations after

performing the Pilgrimage? We should pray in this blessed month of Ramadhan that Allah Almighty shows us the Prophet SAS in our dreams. May Allah grant us such treatment of the Prophet SAS.

Sübhâneke lâ ilme lenâ, illâ mâ allemtenâ, inneke ente'l-alîmül hakîm... Sübhâne rabbike rabbi'l-izzeti ammâ yesifûn... We selâmün ale'l-mürselîn... Ve'l-hamdü li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîn... El-fâtihah!

**February 13, 1995 - Aksaray, TURKEY
Ramadhan 13, 1415**



16. PATIENCE, THANKFULNESS AND HUMBLENESS

As-salâmu alaikum wa rahmatu'llah!..

Dear Beloved AKRA radio audience!

May your dawn and *suhur* meal time be good and blessed. May Allah Almighty place all of you among those who benefited from the goodness, enlightenment, and blessings of Ramadhan at the highest level.

Praise be to Allah that we are Muslims, and there is no greater blessing than Islam, for Islam helps people attain the consent of Allah and infinite bounties and pleasures of Paradise in the hereafter, that no eye has seen, no ear has heard of, nor can any mind imagine. Islam also organizes people's lives in this life, establishes invaluable principles that would make them happy. That is why we praise Allah for the blessing of Islam and endless other blessings that he has showered on us.

I also wholeheartedly thank brothers who have managed to commence the radio broadcast in Ankara in this blessed month of Ramadhan. My well-wishes and thanks go for them.

a. Importance of Patience

My Beloved audience, in a Hadith Qudsi, Almighty Allah said:

يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ، اصْبِرْ وَتَوَاضَعْ أَرْفَعُكَ، وَاشْكُرْنِي أَزِدْكَ، وَاسْتَغْفِرْنِي
أَغْفِرَ لَكَ، وَصَلِّ رَحِمَكَ أَزِدْ عَمْرَكَ.

(Ya'bna âdam, isbir wa tawâda' arfa'ka, wa'shkurnî azidka, wa'staghfirnî aghfir laka, wa sil rahimaka azid 'umrak.)

During this blessed time of the day, I would like to explain the meaning of these words.

(*Ya'bnâ âdam*) "Oh son of Adam!" says Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'âlâ*, addressing all of us: (*Isbir*) "Be patient, (*wa tawâda*) and be humble; (*arfa'ka*) then I will exalt you."

My respected brothers and sisters! As you are aware, some characters, manners, codes of conduct, thought patterns, and inner feelings get developed and improved by education and training. Almighty Allah has prescribed some orders for our well-being and for us to be happy in this life and in the hereafter. The benefits resulting from the fulfilments of these orders are for us and for our well-being and happiness.

For this reason, all orders of Islam are like medicine and unmatched source of cure. We fulfill the orders of Almighty Allah as worship, for His consent, without any other thought. We worship Him in sole servitude. We want to obey his orders and be happy as a consequence of it. Yet, all the good things that results from our servitude are still for us and bring us the happiness of this life and of the hereafter.

One of the endless beauties of Islam is that no order of Islam is meant to be a mere order. For the practice of a particular order, for people to uphold and practice the order, even for the layman to practice it with ease, Islam prepares people with other actions.

Let me explain this with an example. Almighty Allah encourages us: "Do good things towards mankind, your brethren, and other human beings." A believer may feel lost about how he will do it. Every person may think of something and do various things. Islam establishes a measure, a way to carry out the orders. For example: "If you earn money, give at least one-fortieth of it as *zakâh*!"

Zakâh is the minimum amount of the charitable deeds. The upper limit is left the benevolence of the giver. This is also expressed among people in Turkish for generosity: "You do not withhold agha's hand!" He will give as much as he desires. You would not dare to tell him: "Don't do it, leave it to me!" He is the landlord, the boss, and he will give with his generosity as much as he pleases. There is no upper limit to do the good deeds, giving for charity, and generosity. Each person can reach higher levels as much as he can, yet the lowest level is to pay the due *zakâh*.

While Islam orders “Do good to everybody, help people with what you possess,” it also described how it can be done in a way that everybody can practice:

“If it is money, gold or silver, give one-fortieth of it as Zakâh.”

“If you have this many sheep, you give this much. If you have this many camels, you give this much.” Specific, tangible, comprehensible orders and recommendations are stated.

This is an important management principle. If you are a manager, and give an order to people under your management, you need to think of how these people are going to carry out your order and direct people accordingly. Islam does that.

Each person must be good and earn the good code of conduct. Earning the good characteristics of conduct does not take place with words only. Saying “honey” does not sweeten the mouth of a person. It requires some action!

The blessed month we are in, the month of Ramadhan, has some great wisdom that we can notice when we study deeply. We can see a beautiful detail, more wisdom every time we look at it attentively. Consequently, we fall in love with Islam one more time. The love gets stronger and stronger.

Yes, Almighty Allah says: “O son of Adam!” We all are addressed: “Be patient and humble yourself. Then I will exalt you!”

How are we going to be patient? This is an order, an order of conduct. Being patient is very important and required for success in life, too. A student will study patiently and succeed in the end. A worker will work and sweat patiently, and get the results of his perseverance, the product. A Turkish proverb goes, “With patience, unripe sour grapes turn into sweet dessert.” Naturally, the grape will ripen through summer, get squeezed and boiled, and turn into molasses. Then various desserts will be made from the molasses. It will take time and patience. Man has to be patient while performing some servitude and worship.

If a person were confused about how he would be patient, if he thought about it and were amazed, then what would he do? He would be similar to a student taking an exam. If the instructor asks

the student, “Explain me a section you know well,” it would be quite difficult for the student. He would respond, “Please, Sir, you select the section.” As a matter of fact, the student would be confused with all possibilities to choose from.

We may ask, “Yes, we will be patient, but with what and how?” The answer is already given. Almighty Allah states in His book: “In the month of Ramadhan, during the daytime, avoid the most desirable and needed things for the body, be patient! Do not eat or drink anything, withhold other desires.” He teaches us how to be patient by action.

In other words, we have a month of patience training. Being patient is an important feeling and virtue. Our beloved prophet (peace be on him) said:⁶⁰

الإِيمَانُ نِصْفَانِ: فَنِصْفٌ فِي الصَّبْرِ، وَنِصْفٌ فِي الشُّكْرِ
(هب. والديلمي عن أنس)

RE. 193/8 (*Al-îmânu nisfâni*) “The imân is made two halves: (*nisfun fi’s-sabr*) one half is in patience; (*wa nisfun fi’sh-shukr*) the other half is in thankfulness.”

We are having this month-long training to acquire this beautiful virtue of patience, to be a calm, dignified, earnest, profound, strong-willed, determined person; to earn this good character that is one of the requirements of success, we undergo this training process. A month of training... It is repeated every year. As the Muslim gets older, he becomes more mature and virtuous, for he practices Islam.

b. Benefits of Humbleness

⁶⁰ Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-Îman*, c.VII, s.123, no:9715; Kudâi, *Müsnedü's-Şihâb*, c.I, s.127, no:159; Harâitî, *Fadîletü's-Şükr*, c.I, s.39, no:18; Cürcânî, *Târih-i Cürcân*, c.I, s.410, no:712; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.I, s.111, no:378; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.I, s.26, no:61; *Câmîü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XI, s.64, no:10261; RE. 193/8.

Almighty Allah recommended humbleness, too. When a person humbles himself, Allah will exalt him:

اصْبِرْ وَتَوَاضَعْ أَرْفَعَكَ،

(*Isbir wa tawâda' arfa'ka*) “If you are patient and if you humble yourself, then I will raise you!” Almighty Allah has promised.

As a matter of fact, we could assume a person loses something as a result of his humbleness. Yet it does not happen that way. On the contrary, other people feel relaxed due to his humbleness and develop a feeling of love and affection towards him. He does not lose anything as a result of his humbleness, but he earns the love and respect of people around him. The community gets organized; people become more affectionate. His humbleness elevates him.

This is the material, worldly aspect of the matter. Spiritually, a humble person would be cleaned of the arrogance and pride; he would not consider himself above others. This virtue will manifest itself in all of his behavior. This is pleasing to Almighty Allah, so He would reward him spiritually.

In this blessed month, we ought to equip ourselves with these good characters, being patient and being humble. May Allah elevate us material-wise, spiritually, bodily, and health-wise, and grant us great rewards.

c. Thankfulness

Almighty Allah says in the same Hadith-Qudsî:

وَأَشْكُرْنِي أَزِدْكَ،

(*Wa'shkurnî azidka*) “Thank me, I will increase.”

Yes, this is a heavenly law. Almighty Allah provides us

everything. Our life is from Him; our health is from Him; our children, property, possessions, wealth are from Him. He is bestowing everything upon us.

Then, if we are thankful to Him, if we acknowledge that everything is from Him, be thankful to Him, and feel gratitude towards Him, Almighty Allah multiplies the blessings and favors upon us as He is the *Musabbib-ul Asbâb* the Producer of all secondary causes. He creates the causes and means, and sends abundant blessings and sustenance from various directions. This abundance and increase are the promise of Almighty Allah. Man can witness this when he is thankful to Allah *Subhanahu wa Taàlà*.

d. Seeking Forgiveness

وَاسْتَغْفِرْنِي أَغْفِرْ لَكَ،

(*Wa'staghfirni aghfir laka*) "Seek forgiveness from Me, oh son of Adam, so I will forgive you your offences," says Almighty Allah.

Dear brothers and sisters!

Our beloved master, Prophet SAS, on the last day of a month Sha'ban, he stepped on the pulpit, and gave a sermon about the month of Ramadhan. At the end of his sermon, he recommended:⁶¹

وَاسْتَكْثَرُوا فِيهِ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ خِصَالٍ: خَصَلْتَانِ تَرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا رَبَّكُمْ، وَ
خَصَلْتَانِ لَا غِنَى لَكُمْ عَنْهُمَا. فَأَمَّا الْخَصَلْتَانِ اللَّتَانِ تَرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا
رَبَّكُمْ: فَشَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَتَسْتَغْفِرُونَ. وَأَمَّا الْخَصَلْتَانِ اللَّتَانِ

⁶¹ İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahih*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; İbn-i Şâhin, *Fadâilü Şehri Ramadân*, c.I, s.18, no:16; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XXIII, s.176, no:25782.

لَا غِنَى لَكُمْ عَنْهُمَا : فَتَسْأَلُونَ اللَّهَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَتَتَعَوَّذُونَ بِهِ مِنَ النَّارِ

(هـب. عن سلمان)

(*Festekthirû fîhî min erbai hisâl*) "Do these four deeds in plenty (*Hasleteyni turdûne bihimâ rabbekum*) two of these deeds will have you earn the consent of your Lord. (*Wa hasleteyni lâghinâe bikum anhumâ*) The other two deeds are something you cannot give up."

What could be these four deeds? (*Feemmel hasletâni'letâni urdûne bihimâ rabbekum*) "What are the two deeds with which you are going to earn the consent of Allah? (*Feshahâdetu en lâ ilâhe illa'llah*) To bear witness that there is no deity but Allah." This is a very important word. (*Wa testaghfirûnehû*) "The second one is seeking forgiveness."

What we understand is that we need to keep saying "*Esh-hadu en lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah.*" We could say "*Estaghfirullah al azîm wa etûbu ileyh*"

I had written in the magazines in the past: "Ramadhan is the month of Tasawwuf." As you see in this hadith, the Prophet is ordering the practices of Tasawwuf. You shall do the dhikr of "*Lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah.*" With these dhikr, you will make Almighty Allah pleased with you. It is grace of Allah that he is pleased with us when we say "*Lâ ilâhe illallah*" and "*Estaghfirullah.*" What a great system of belief!

(*Wa emmel-hasletâni'letâni lâ ghinâe bikum anhumâ*) "The other two deeds that you could not do without are (*Fetes'elûna'llahe ' l-jenneh wa teûzûne bihî mine'n-nâr*) asking Paradise from Allah and seek refuge with Allah from hellfire."

"Do the following four deeds in this month: recite *kalima* of *shahadah* (*Ash-hadu an lâ ilâha illa'llàh*) in plenty." These words or *kalima* of *tawheed* (*Lâ ilâha illa'llàh*) declare the unity of Allah. We are asked to recite *kalima* of *shahadah* or *kalima* of *tawheed* in plenty. Ask Paradise from Allah and seek refuge with Allah from hellfire."

Lâ ilâha illa'llâh... There is no deity but Allah... *Ash-hadu an lâ ilâha illa'llâh...* I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah. These are the statements that declare the existence and unity of Allah. We turn to Allah and say, “Oh my Lord! There is no deity but You. I worship only You!” This is a very noble, very elevated, unmatched, unique, the most beautiful faith. The Prophet SAS recommended reciting these words in plenty during Ramadhan.

The Prophet SAS also recommended seeking forgiveness:

“In addition to reciting the *kalima* of *shahadah*, seek forgiveness of Allah many times.” He asked to increase these recitations in Ramadhan.

In the Hadith Qudsî, Almighty Allah says: “Seek forgiveness from Me, ask me to forgive you your sins, then I will forgive you!”

Allah is the Most Generous; He bestows whatever His servants want.

Dear brothers and sisters!

Almighty Allah is the Most Generous; He grants whatever His servants ask for. That means, eventually, our strong desires, wishes and supplications will be answered by Almighty Allah. That is His divine law. For this reason, we ought to be careful as we ask for His forgiveness; we must insist, and continuously repent for our offences.

For this reason, in the Sufi path, there is a duty: “Every day, repeat the words of *istighfar*, ask forgiveness from Almighty Allah, at least 100 times!”

As the seeker repeats these words, he acquires the habit of asking Allah’s forgiveness often. Thus, the doors for the path leading to the Mercy of Allah are opened for him.

e. *Sila-i Rahim*—Keeping Ties with Relatives

Then, Almighty Allah says:

وَصِلْ رَحِمَكَ أَزِدْ عُمْرَكَ .

(*Wa sil rahimaka azid umrak*) “And keep ties you’re your



Prof. Dr. M. Es'ad COŞAN and H. Necati COŞAN

relatives, maintain your relationship with your relatives, I will increase your lifespan.”

The word *rahim* means relatives. A person has some ties through his birth and his parents. He has aunts, uncles, and other relatives. These people are close to us. Almighty Allah is ordering us to keep our ties with them and maintain the relationship. In this Hadith Qudsî, the Lord of the Universe, Almighty Allah is promising that He will make us live longer as a spiritual reward for our maintenance of good ties with our relatives.

I would like to complete my discourse with these words. We should do what this Hadith Qudsî is stating. These are the recommendations and orders of our Lord; they are what He is asking from us. We have also learned about the rewards of these deeds.

We ought to be patient; we practice patience by fasting, we hold ourselves back upon some improper treatments, we humble ourselves. The reward is being exalted; Almighty Allah will elevate our level in this life and in the hereafter, material wise and

spiritually.

We ought to be thankful for everything Almighty Allah has bestowed upon us. Consequently, Almighty Allah will increase His bounty and blessings for us. That is its reward, the reward for the thankfulness.

We shall ask Almighty Allah our forgiveness: “Oh Almighty Allah, forgive us our sins!” Then He will forgive us.

As you know, Ramadhan is especially the month of forgiveness:⁶²

أَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ ، وَأَوْسَطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ ، وَآخِرُهُ عِتْقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ
(خز. هب. عن سلمان)

(*Awwaluhû rahmatun, wa awsatuhû maghfiratun, wa âkhiruhû itkun mina'n-nâr*) “The first part of Ramadhan is mercy; its middle, forgiveness, and its final part is freedom from hellfire,” said the Prophet SAS.

We will repent and ask for forgiveness in this month, so that Almighty Allah will reward us with forgiveness.

We shall keep an eye on our relatives and tend their needs. We shall visit them, earn their hearts, and do our duty required by the kinship. We will support them with their financial, material and spiritual problems and help them.

As you know, Ramadhan is the month in which zakâh payments are made because Almighty Allah rewards all good deeds carried out in this month seventy folds in comparison to those carried out in other months. As we pay our zakâh, we customarily start with our relatives. We shall give our zakâh and alms to our relatives. Almighty Allah will make our life longer.

⁶² İbn-i Huzeyme, *Sahîh*, c.III, s.191, no:1887; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.305, no:3608; Heysemî, *Müsnedü'l-Hâris*, c.I, s.412, no:321; Selmân-ı Fârisî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.757, no:23714 ve s.961, no:24276.

May Allah *Subhanahu wa Taàlâ* grant us the opportunities to be His obedient servants. May He shower us will rewards and heavenly blessings. May your life here and in the hereafter be flourished. May Allah grant all of us happiness in this life and in the hereafter, my dear brothers and sisters, the listeners of AKRA radio.

As-salâmu alaikum wa rahmatu'llâhi wa barakâtuhû!..

**15. 02. 1995 – Ankara
(AKRA Sahur Discourse)**

17. CONDUCT AFTER RAMADAN

Prof. Dr. Mahmud Es'ad COSAN

Aùzu bi'llâhi mine'sh-shaytâni/r-rajîm.

I seek refuge with Allah against Satan

Bi'smi'llâhi'r-rahmâni'r-rahîm.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîne hamden kethîran tayyiben mubâreken fih... Kemâ yenbaghî lijelâli wajhihî wa li-azîmi sultânih... Wa's-salâtu wa's-selâmu alâ seyyidînâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin ejma'în.

Praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the Universe. The Prayers and peace be on our beloved Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and his sincere followers till the day of Resurrection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

May the Peace, Mercy, Abundance, Grace, blessings, and treats of Allah be with you. On this day of Eid al-Fitr, I pray that Allah *subhanahû wa ta'âlâ* places you among His forgiven servants. May he make us happy servants who receive the mercy of Allah.

a. Failing to Benefit from Ramadhan

As he was praising the month of Ramadhan, the Prophet SAS said:⁶³

فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ، مَنْ حَرَّمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

⁶³ Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.271, no:2238; Ubâde ibn-i Sâmit RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.749, no:23691, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.344, no:4783; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.I, s.158, no:255; Münzirî, *et-Tergîb*, c.II, s.60, no:1490.

(طب. عن عبادة بن الصامت)

(*Fein-nesh-shaqiyya men harume fihî rahmetu'llâhi azze wa jelle*) This is such a blessed month that is full of abundance and goodness. Almighty Allah sends His mercy on all, forgives the offences, and accepts prayers in this month. He asks His angels to look at His servants who do worship as if they are in a competition to earn rewards: "Look at My servants how they are trying to worship Me!" While the gates of mercy is opened, the gates of heavens are opened, the angels are praying for the servants, Satans are chained, and while there are many possibilities to do good deeds, if a person does not benefit anything from these good deeds that person is a true rebel (*shaqî*). "The true rebel is the person who is deprived of the good deeds and mercy of Allah in this month."

May Allah *subhanahu wa ta'alâ* save us from being among those who are deprived of the mercy of Allah. May Allah grants us a portion of His mercy in this month.

b. Rewards for Fasting

A month in which there is a night which is better than a thousand months has gone. We have fasted in this month. The Prophet of Allah praised fasting:⁶⁴

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ أَصْبَحَ صَائِمًا إِلَّا فَتِحَتْ لَهُ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ ، وَسَبَّحَتْ
أَعْضَاؤُهُ ، وَاسْتَغْفَرَتْ لَهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَى أَنْ تَوَارَى بِالْحِجَابِ .

⁶⁴ Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.VII, s.368, no:7749; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü's-Sağîr*, c.II, s.92, no:840; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.299, no:3591; İbn-i Hacer, *Lisânü'l-Mizân*, c.II, s.101, no:410; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.II, s.123, no:330; İbnü'l-Cevzî, *el-İlelü'l-Mütenâhiyye*, c.II, s.546, no:897; Hz. Aişe RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.720, no:23630.

فَإِنَّ صَلَّى رَكْعَةً أَوْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ أَضَاءَتْ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتِ نَوْرًا وَقُلْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُ
 مِنَ الْحُورِ الْعِينِ: اللَّهُمَّ اقْبِضْهُ إِلَيْنَا ، فَقَدْ اشْتَقْنَا إِلَى رُؤْيَيْهِ . وَإِنْ
 هَلَّلَ أَوْ سَبَّحَ أَوْ كَبَّرَ ، تَلَقَّاهُ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ يَكْتُبُونَ ثَوَابَهَا إِلَيَّ
 أَنْ تَوَارَى بِالْحِجَابِ (عد. قط. في الأفراد ، هب. عن عائشة)

(*Mâ min abdin asbaha sàimen*) "There is no servant of Allah who is fasting in the morning..." The fasting here could refer to the obligatory fasting in Ramadhan as well as to the voluntary fasting in other times--Allah knows the best. (*illâ futihat lehû ebwâbus semâ'*) "... for whom then gates of the heavens are not opened." That means, Almighty Allah opens the gates of heavens for a person who is fasting.

(*Wa sebbehât a'dâuhû*) "All of the body organs of the person who is fasting praise and glorify Allah Almighty. (*Wastaghfera lehû ehlus semâid dunyâ ilâ en tewârâ bil hijâb*) Everything in the heavens and on earth asks forgiveness for that person until the sun goes down."

(*Fe-in sallâ rak'aten aw rak'ateyni*) "When a fasting person offers one or two units of formal prayer, (*edâet lehus semâwâti nûrâ*) the heavens will pread light for him. (*Wa qulne ezwâjuhû minel hûril 'iyn*) His wives from the paradise say: (*Allâhumme aqbidhu ileynâ*) 'O Allah, let him be ours, bring him to us; (*feqad ishteknâ ilâ ru'yetihî*) we desire to be seen by him."

(*Wa in hellele aw sebbehâ aw kebberâ telqâhu seb'ûne elfe melekin yektubûne thewâbehâ ilâ en tewârâ bil hijâb*) "If the fasting person says '*Lâ ilâhe illallah,*' '*Subhânallah,*' or '*Allahu akbar,*' seventy thousand angels come to him, greet him and register the rewards till the sun goes down." We have lived such blessed month of Ramadhan. This hadith had been reported by Hadrat Aisha RA.

c. Three People to be Humiliated

According to Abû Hurayra, the Prophet said:⁶⁵

رَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ ذُكِرَتْ عِنْدَهُ ، فَلَمْ يَصِلْ عَلَيَّ ؛ وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ
دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ رَمَضَانَ ، ثُمَّ انْسَلَخَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْفَرَ لَهُ ؛ وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ
أَدْرَكَ عِنْدَهُ أَبْوَاهَ الْكَبِيرِ ، فَلَمْ يَدْخُلْهُ الْجَنَّةَ (ت . حَسَن
غَرِيب ، حَب . ك . عَنِ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ)

RE. 291/5 (*Raghime enfu rajulun dhekertu indehû felem yusallî aleyye*) "May the person be humiliated who fails to say salawat when my name is mentioned!"

Allàhumme salli alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî wa men tebiahû bi-ihsânin salâten wa selâmen dâimeyni mutelâzimeyni ilâ yewmi'd-dîn...

We must say salawat and prayers for our beloved Prophet SAS every time we hear his name. The first reason is the fact that our faith requires the love of the prophet. Without the love and loyalty for the Prophet SAS, without following his Sunnah, it is not possible for a person to advance spiritually. In a similar way, in Tasawwuf, a dervish must have love for his shaikh.

The hadith continues:

رَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ رَمَضَانَ ، ثُمَّ انْسَلَخَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْفَرَ لَهُ ؛

⁶⁵ Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.XI, s.455, no:3468; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.II, s.254, no:7444; Bezzâr, *Müsned*, c.II, s.437, no:8465; Ebû Hüreyre RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.I, s.489, no:2148; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XIII, s.136, no:12755.



(*Wa raghime enfu rajulun dakhale aleyhi ramadàn, thummen salâkha qable en yughfera lehû*) "May the person be humiliated who fails to benefit from Ramadhan and who fails to receive forgiveness in that month!" Such a person would be in a terrible state.

وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ أَدْرَكَ عِنْدَهُ أَبَوَاهُ الْكَبِيرَ، فَلَمْ يَدْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ .

(*Wa raghime enfu rajulun edrake 'indehû ebewâhu'l-kibera felem yudkhillâhu'l-jennete*) "May the person be humiliated who had his parents get old while they are with him and he fails to earn Paradise by serving them."

This hadith indicates how valuable a time Ramadhan is. It also indicates the importance of saying salawat when the name of the Prophet SAS is mentioned and serving the parents.

We had seen some ahadith that stated that a Hajj is expiation for the offences since the previous Hajj. The same thing is true for Ramadhan: It is expiation for the offences since the previous

Ramadhan. That means the offences committed in the previous year are forgiven in Ramadhan. Likewise, a Friday (prayer) is expiation for the offences committed after the previous Friday Prayer.

The Mercy of Allah is so encompassing; if it were not, then it would be impossible for anyone to enter Paradise despite all of the offences and shortcomings. Allah creates causes to forgive His servants to place them in His Paradise to reward them with His beauty.

d. Departure after Ramadhan's Fasting

In another hadith, the Prophet SAS said:⁶⁶

مَنْ حَجَّ وَاعْتَمَرَ فَمَاتَ مِنْ سُنَّتِهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَمَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ
 مَاتَ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَمَنْ غَزَا فَمَاتَ مِنْ سُنَّتِهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ (الديلمي
 عن أبي سعيد)

RE. 417/1 (*Men hajje wa'temara femâte min senetihî dakhale'l-jenneh*) "Whoever performs Hajj or umrah and dies in the same year, he will enter Paradise." It is because the Hajj and Umrah are expiations for offences and cleansing from spiritual dirt.

(*Wa men sàme ramadâne thumme mâte dakhalel jenneh*) "Whoever fasts in Ramadan and dies afterwards, he enters Paradise."

(*Wa men ghazâ femâte min senetihî dakhalel jenneh*) "Whoever participates in a battle for jihad and dies in the same year, he enters Paradise."

This hadith, too, indicates importance and value of Ramadhan. Although Ramadhan for this year is over, I will say few other

⁶⁶ *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.V, s.15, no:11846.

ahadith that point the importance of Ramadhan. You may remember later on:⁶⁷

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ، فَعَرَفَ حُدُودَهُ ، وَيَتَحَفَّظُ مِمَّا يَنْبَغِي أَنْ
يَتَحَفَّظُ مِنْهُ ، كَفَرَ مَا قَبْلَهُ (حم. ع. حب. حل. هب. ق.
ض. عن أبي سعيد)

RE. 426/2 (*Men sàme ramadàne fe'arafa hudûhehû wa haffazahû mimmâ yenbaghî en yutehaffaza minhu kufire mâ qablehû*) "Whoever fasts in Ramadhan and observe the limits of Ramadhan and fasting, his previous sins will be forgiven."

That means a person should observe the limits of fasting. What are the conditions of fasting?

e. Five Things to Cancel the Reward of Fasting

The Prophet SAS said:⁶⁸

خَمْسٌ يَفْطُرْنَ الصَّائِمَ : الْكُذِبُ ، وَالْغِيْبَةُ ، وَالنَّمِيْمَةُ ، وَالنَّظْرُ

⁶⁷ Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.55, no:11541; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahih*, c.VIII, s.219, no:3433; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.II, s.322, no:1058; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.310, no:3623; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.304, no:8288; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilyetü'l-Evliyâ*, c.VIII, s.180; Hatîb-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.VIII, s.392, no:4496; Ebû Saïd el-Hudrî RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.761, no:23727; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XX, s.459, no:22613.

⁶⁸ İbn-i Hacer, *Lisânü'l-Mizân*, c.II, s.86, no:347; Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.II, s.197, no:2979; İbn-i Ebî Hâtim, *İlel*, c.I, s.258, no:766; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.752, no:23813 ve s.795, no:23820; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XII, s.318, no:11993; RE. 279/7.

بِالشَّهْوَةِ، وَالْيَمِينِ الْكَاذِبَةِ (الدَّيْلَمِيِّ عَنْ أَنَسِ)

RE. 279/7 (*Khamsun yuftirne's-sàim*) "Five things eliminate the rewards of fasting as though a person ate something:

1. (*El-kezibu*) Telling lies
2. (*Wa'l-ghiybatu*) Talking about a person who is not present. Saying bad things about a person even if they were true.
3. (*Wa'n-nemîmetu*) Backbiting and spreading bad news among people.
4. (*Wa'n-nazaru bi-shahwatun*) Looking at a person with lustful eyes
5. (*Wa'l-yemînu'l-kâzibeh*) Swearing that what he says is true despite the fact it is not." People are used to uttering words "*Wallàhi... Billâhi... Tallàhi...*" That is not right! It destroys the rewards of fasting.

f. Rewards of I'tikâf in Ramadhan

The person who is fasting is supposed to control his nafs, correct his manners, and be careful about his words. If all of these are observed, then the fasting will wipe out his previous sins and earn the person the mercy and forgiveness of Allah.

There is also the Night of Power in Ramadhan that various ahadith state that it is one of the nights of the last ten days of Ramadhan. The exact day is hidden, yet the Prophet SAS suggested we search for the last ten days of Ramadhan. To be a good example, he stayed in the masjid day and night for the last ten days of Ramadhan. He ate his food there, slept there and he worshipped there. He stated in a hadith that when a person waits in the masjid for the prayer, he will earn rewards as though he is in prayer.

We are sitting and waiting here for the Eid-al-Fitr prayer. While we wait, we are in the presence of Almighty Allah as though we are offering our prayer with bowing and prostration. We earn rewards because we are waiting for the Eid prayer. Each person

receives that reward.

A person who is in *i'tikâf*, receives the rewards as long as he stays in the masjid regardless of the fact that he offers prayers, recite Qur'an, do dhikr, or sleep in the masjid.

For this reason the Prophet SAS said:⁶⁹

اعْتِكَافُ عَشْرِ فِي رَمَضَانَ ، كَحَجَّتَيْنِ وَعَمْرَتَيْنِ (طَب. عَنْ عَلِي
بْنِ حُسَيْنٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ)

RE. 74/1 (*I'tikâfu ashrin fi ramadâni kehajjeteyni wa umreteyni*) It is such a great reward. May Almighty Allah give the opportunity next Ramadan for those who have missed *i'tikâf* this year. May He reward those who practiced *i'tikâf* with great rewards. I could not pass this great news that I have seen while I was searching the ahadith. The prophet said: "There is the reward of two Hajjs and two umrahs for those who practiced *i'tikâf* for the last ten days of Ramadhan." It is the double reward of Hajj and Umrah.

How nice to be on the path to Allah and to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet SAS.

g. Reward of Fasting Six Days in Shawwal

You know that Ramadhan has ended. It is Eid-al-Fitr today. Soon we are going to perform the Eid prayer. The month we are in is Shawwal. It is the Arabic lunar month that follows Ramadhan. In the hadith, the Prophet said:⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.III, s.128, no:2888; Hz. Hüseyin RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.VIII, s.864, no:24008; *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.404, no:5025.

⁷⁰ Müslim, *Sahih*, c.II, s.822, no:1164; Tirmizî, *Sünen*, c.III, s.132, no:759; İbn-i Mâce, *Sünen*, c.I, s.547, no:1716; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.V, s.417, no:23580; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Kebîr*, c.IV, s.134, no:3902; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.V, s.49, no:4640; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III, s.347, no:3730; Beyhakî,

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ، وَأَتْبَعَهُ سِتًّا مِنْ شَوَّالٍ، كَانَ كَصَوْمِ الدَّهْرِ
(ط. حم. م. د. ن. ت. ه. حب. عن أبي أيوب؛ بر. هب.)

(عن ثوبان)

RE. 425/11 (*Men sàme ramadàne wa etbe'ahû sitten min shawwâle kâne kesawmi'd-dehr*) "If a person fasts throughout Ramadhan and adds 6 days of fasting from the month of Shawwal, it will be like fasting the entire year without any break. The six days from Shawwal can be back to back or otherwise. It is not allowed to fast on the day of the Eid because it is a day of festivities and celebration. One could fast on other days of Shawwal.

Here is an explanation: Ramadhan is 30 days, Almighty Allah rewards it 10 times; that would make 300 days. Additional six days will make 360 days. That means a person could earn rewards for 360 days, i.e., one year. We shall fast six days in Shawwal inshaAllah.

There is a hadith in the collection of Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel about fasting in Shawwal. It is also included in the collections of Muslim, Abû Dawûd, Nasa'î, Tirmidhî, Ibn-i Majah, and Ibn-i Hibbân. It was related by Abû Ayyûb-- most likely Hadrat Abû Ayyûb al-

Sünenü'l-Kübrâ, c.IV, s.292, no:8214; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.II, s.163; Abdü'r-Rezzak, *Musannef*, c.IV, s.315, no:7918; Hamîdî, *Müsned*, c.I, s.188, no:380; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.V, s.321, no:1944; İbn-i Asâkir, *Mu'cem*, c.I, s.98, no:178; Begavî, *Şerhü's-Sünneh*, c.III, s.272; Ebû Avâne, *Müsned*, c.II, s.168, no:2696; İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe*, c.I, s.1142; Hatib-i Bağdâdî, *Târih-i Bağdad*, c.III, s.57, no:1002; Mizzî, *Tehzibü'l-Kemâl*, c.XXI, s.284, no:4207; Ebû Eyyûb el-Ensârî RA'dan.

Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.308, no:14341; Beyhakî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.IV, s.292, no:8215; Tahâvî, *Müşkilü'l-Âsâr*, c.V, s.326, no:1949; Hâris, *Müsned*, c.II, s.25, no:331; İbn-i Adiy, *Kâmil fi'd-Duafâ*, c.V, s.113; Câbir ibn-i Abdullah RA'dan.

İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.VIII, s.398, no:3645; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.III; s.349, no:3735; Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.I, s.278, no:485; Sevban RA'dan.

Kenzü'l-Ummâl, c.VIII, s.745, no:23680 ve 23681; *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid*, c.III, s.425, no:5103; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdis*, c.XX, s.460, no:22614.

Ansârî who is buried in Istanbul--Allah knows best.

We should fast six days of Shawwal! It is an authentic hadith included in reliable hadith collections. There is a verse in the Qur'an:

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ. وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ

(الانشراح: ٧-٨)

(*Fe-idhâ feraghte fensab, wa ilâ rabbike ferghab*) [So when you have finished your duties, then stand up for worship. And to your Lord direct your longing (Qur'an 94:7-8). After a relaxation, a Muslim is supposed to make a new effort to do work. He will not get lazy, but attack again. The love and affection for Allah will not keep him idle.

Ramadhan is over, so we make an attempt to fast the six days of Shawwal. We look forward to the next Ramadhan eagerly. We hope that Almighty Allah rewards us for our love and affections towards Ramadan and fasting as though we have fasted the whole year. Since a person who waits for the prayer in the Mosque is rewarded just as he were in prayer, we expect that Almighty Allah graciously rewards the person who loves Ramadahan.

h. Maintain your Good State after Ramadhan, too!

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

We have left behind a blessed and valuable month. Now we are in a state of confusion: Shall we feel sorry for the fact that Ramadhan is over or shall we feel happy that it is Eid? Well, Almighty Allah has declared this day as Eid-al-Fitr, so we should be happy about it. Ramadhan is gone; we pray Allah that we see many Ramadhans in health and happiness. Our major task from now on is to maintain the good characters and attributes that we acquired in Ramadhan.

How were we in Ramadhan? First of all, we could get up for

suhur meal. We could wake up from deep sleep. We should get used to waking up. We should get up at the *suhur* time, offer two units of prayers, then we could go to bed. Time of *suhur* --which is *seher* in Arabic-- is a precious time in which the prayers are accepted. Almighty Allah turns to the heavens of the earth and asks: "O My servants! If any of you wants something from Me, I will grant it. If anybody prays, I will answer his prayer. If anybody asks for forgiveness, I will forgive him." It is such a precious time.

You have got used to getting up at that precious time during the Ramadhan. I would like to see you maintain it. We would like to see your lights on at that precious time every day. We will think, "Our brothers and sisters have got up to offer the night vigil prayer, supplications and repentance." We shall maintain this habit.

The second thing is that we have fasted the Ramadhan. The Prophet SAS had some recommendations for fasting that I had stated a short while ago: no backbiting, no looking at haram, no telling lies. Sometimes a person seeks trouble by hitting his shoulder to your shoulder or screaming at you. Sometimes the person comes to your car and screams at the car. Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* has many different servants in the town: some are with good manners; some, without. If the person is looking for trouble, we are going to say: "I am fasting! I am fasting!" We are supposed to avoid the fight and arguing.

One could say: "How dare you come to me and say those things? I can handle you easily. I am as strong as you are. I could beat you up!" However, the Prophet SAS did not approve it. He recommended that we stay calm and tolerant remembering our fasting. This is a difficult thing to do. "Since I am in a state of worship to Almighty Allah, I am not going to be level with you. I will be patient. I am not going to fight with you." That is what we shall do and maintain that attitude after Ramadhan, too.

We quitted smoking in Ramadhan; we should not start smoking again after Ramadhan. We practiced patience in Ramadhan saying "*Fe subhânallah... Lâ ilâhe illallah.. Lâ hawle wa lâ quwwate illâ*

billâh..." We should maintain that state after the Ramadhan.

"Ramadhan is gone; the worship has ended" should not be our motto. We may not say: "We offered so much worship in Ramadhan, and it is over now. We can head to the summer house, the beach, and the entertainment places. There were so many haram things that we could not do in Ramadhan; now we can do." If a person has this kind of thoughts, let him know that Allah did not accept his fasting in Ramadhan. There is a hadith about this. The sign of the acceptance of the worship throughout Ramadhan is the continuity of the good things after Ramadhan. Pay attention to this, and maintain your good state after Ramadhan. That is the most important task for us.

There may be a vacation time ahead. Many of us will go to our home town, visit relatives and spend some time there. With the momentum and knowledge we acquired in Ramadhan, we should teach our children about Islam and appreciate the vacation time.

When I am with the children and grandchildren, I realize that they need Islamic training and education. We seem to be just sitting with them. We should gather them around, read some ahadith with them, explain them what it means, and ask them what they understood. Often they find excuses: "I have work to do in the kitchen!"

لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّانِعٌ مَّانِعٌ وَلِلْعِلْمِ مَوَانِعٌ

(*Likulli shey'in mâni'un wa li'l-ilmi mewâni'un*) "Everything has an obstacle, but when you try to learn something, the obstacles come just like a hail storm."

"O my beloved wife. Have a seat. Let's do some prayers, dhikr. Let's study some matters on Islam."



"I have to do ironing, and there is work in the kitchen."

We shall say: "Leave them for later. This is the study hour."

We shall make a schedule and have principles on these issues. When we raise our children well, we keep earning rewards even after we leave this life.

We all are going to die and leave this world. Some who were with us last year are not here. We may not reach next Ramadhan. May Allah have us leave this life with iman. Our children will keep our book of deeds open and earn us rewards. They will pray for us, give for charities on our behalf, read Qur'an for us. They will offer their daily prayers, recite Qur'an, do dhikr, perform Hajj, and do other good deeds. If we raise them well, Almighty Allah will write rewards for our book of deeds.

I urge you to take advantage of the momentum that you have acquired in Ramadhan and practice Islam with your family members. We shall try to teach them Islam, too, in the vacation

time.

As I read these ahadith, something comes to my mind. I am sure you feel the same way: "O no! We could not appreciate Ramadhan as we should have. We could not worship our Lord as we should. We wish we tried better. I realize the greatness of fasting now. I wish I could do the i'tikâf in the masjid for ten days. I would be patient for ten days and get the rewards of two Hajjs and two Umrahs." I am sure you feel as I do. Well, Ramadhan is gone, so are the opportunities.

We are going to compare our lives to Ramadhan, too. The life will pass like that. We may wonder: "What is going to happen to me at the end of my life?"

Everybody will feel sorry for his life. At the last breath, the righteous servants will regret for not doing more and spending their time for useless things. They will wish they had spent every moment of their time in the way of Allah. That is how we will feel.

We shall appreciate our time and not waste it at all. Not even a moment of our time should be spent in vain. Either we should do dhikr by heart saying "*Allah... Lâ ilâhe illâllah... Lâ hawle wa lâ quwwete illâ billâh... Subhânallah... Elhamdu lillâh... Allahu akbar...*" It is pointed by many ahadith in that direction. Or we can seek knowledge or teach; we may pursue a good deed. We can visit an ill person or go help somebody. We could respect an elderly, be nice to a younger one and try to train him in a good way.

We should not waste our time, for there will be a longing for each passing moment. You have experienced that longing as Ramadhan departed. At the end of your life, you will have that longing. We should try our best to spend our life in compliance with the consent of Allah.

That is why our elderly stated: "A servant should be in a continuous state of dhikr (*dhikr-i mudâm*) so that each moment is considered as worship. For instance, the great walî Ibrahim Haqqi

Erzurumî stated in his *Ma'rifetnâmah* that the servant must be awoken from the sleep of unawareness and kept on *dhikr-i mudâm*. The person should think about Allah and remember Allah all the time. When the heart is used to doing that, each moment of the person is considered as worship.

Yet another principle, recommended by our elderly in the Naqshî Tariqa, is "*Khush der dem*" to be awake at all times. A Muslim has to keep his guard and be aware just like a soldier on guard duty. A soldier on guard duty will not sleep because the enemy may attack when he falls asleep.

One of our friends is an officer in the military. He noticed that a soldier on guard duty fell asleep. He went and picked the gun of the soldier without saying a word. When the soldier woke up, he realized that his gun was missing. He was desperate for so long. That was his punishment so that he does not do the same thing. The soldier should not fall asleep on guard duty.

May Allah almighty awaken all of us from the sleep of unawareness. May He make us as alert as soldiers on guard duty who are vigilant, careful, and holding on to their guns.

i. Five Enemies of a Believer

We need to be in that state because there are all kinds of enemies around us. The Prophet SAS said: ki:⁷¹

المؤمن بين خمس شدايد: مؤمن يحسده، و منافق
 يبغضه، و كافر يقاتله، و نفس تنازعه، و شيطان يضلّه

⁷¹ Deylemî, *Müsnedü'l-Firdevs*, c.IV, s.176, no:6548; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan. *Kenzü'l-Ummâl*, c.I, s.284, no:809; *Câmiü'l-Ehâdîs*, c.XXII, s.96, no:24411.

(ابن لال عن أبان عن أنس)

RE. 231/11 (*El-mu'minu beyne khamse shedâ-id*) "There are five calamities around a Muslim:

1. (*Mu'minun yahsudahû*) There are Muslims like him who are jealous of him and have a grudge for him. They could harm the believer. May Allah protect us from such envious persons.

It would not be possible to please an envious person. He will not be content with what is given to him. He would want you to lose what you have. That is why it is impossible to please the envious person.

2. (*Wa munâfiqun yubghizuhû*) The second enemy is the hypocrites. They will smile at you, but they device plots against you. They will try to stab you from your back. They would know that you are strong. They cannot harm you when you look at them. They will seek an opportunity to harm you. He is an enemy, too.

3. (*Wa kâfirun yuqâtiluhû*) The third enemy is the disbeliever who fights with a believer. There are many disbelievers that have declared war against the Muslims. We see that in all parts of the world. May Allah help Muslims. We shall ask good things for our Muslim brothers and sisters because we have fasted and Almighty Allah says, "Ask things from Me, and I will grant it. Pray to Me, and I will answer your prayers."

May Almighty Allah grant the comfort and celebration we have to all Muslims in the world. May He give them peace. May He give us means to liberate the lands that are occupied by enemies of Islam. May he grant victory to the mujahid brothers at the war fronts. May He free the Muslims from the oppressors in all parts of the world. May He grant freedom for the captive Muslims. May He grant honor and happiness for all Muslims in this life and in the hereafter.



4. (*Wa nafsun yunâzi'uhû*) We all have a nafs. It can be trained and corrected.

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي (يوسف: ٥٣)

(*Innen nafsa le-emmaratun bis-sû-i illâ mâ rahime rabbî*) If it is not trained, it will order the evil (Qur'an 12:53):

"Drink that wine, do this offense, give up the good things, take it easy, be lazy, neglect the prayers, do not pay zakah because your money will diminish..." The nafs orders evil things, so it is an enemy, too.

5. (*Wa shaytânun yudilluhû*) There is also an invisible enemy outside. He is outside, but he can be in us like the blood circulating in the veins. That is Satan. It gives people misgivings and doubts.

He recommends evil and leads the Muslim to hellfire.

Among all of these enemies, the Muslim seeks refuge with Allah.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

(النحل: ٩٩)

(*Innehû leyse lehû sultànun 'alelledhîne âmenû wa alâ rabbihim yetewekkelûn*) "Satan does not harm a believing servant who has put his trust in his Lord" (Qur'an 16:99).

With the fasting and other worship, Almighty Allah provides the training for the believer. You must realize that we learned many things in Ramadan including the controlling of the nafs. The nafs is trained like that; for the other enemies, we seek refuge with Allah saying, "*Hasbunallâhi wa ni'mel wakîl.*" No matter how many enemies there are, when a person is a good servant to Allah, when he puts his trust in Allah, Almighty Allah blesses him with blessings of this life and the hereafter.

May Allah make us true believers who believe and trust in Him sincerely and strongly. May He fill us our hearts with perfect belief. May He eliminate all doubts from our hearts. May He fill our hearts with the love of our beloved Prophet SAS and Respect and Love for Allah. May he keep us on His straight path. May He place us among the happy servants who truly put their trust in Him.

Almighty Allah says:

ان الله يحب المتوكلين (آل عمران: ١٥٩)

(*Inna'llàhe yuhibbu'l-mutewekkilîn*) "Verily Allah loves those who put their trust in Him" (Qur'an 3:159)

j. Three Things to Enjoy the Taste of Imân

There is also a famous hadith that I would like to remind you

about. This was one of the ahadith that I had selected for you. Since it is almost time for the Eid prayer, I may not find time to read the other ahadith.

The Prophet SAS said: buyuruyor ki:⁷²

ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ: أَنْ يَكُونَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولَهُ
أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا، وَأَنْ يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَأَنْ
يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ فِي الْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْقَذَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ
يُلْقَى فِي النَّارِ (خ. م. ن. حم. عن أنس)

(*Thelâthun men kunne fîhi wejede halâwetel î mân*) "There are three things that if a person has them, he will enjoy the taste of imân. He will be a perfect believer. Nobody could deviate him from his path. He will continue advancing on the path to Allah:

1. (*En yekûna'llahu wa rasûluhû ehabbu ileyhi mimmâ siwâhumâ*) "Allah and His Prophet SAS are dearer to him than anything else." That is, we must love Allah and His Prophet SAS first; the rest is not significant. This is possible by removing the other loves from the heart. Love for property, wealth, children, position and rank should be eliminated from the heart. He would hold on to the love of Allah and His Prophet SAS.

2. (*Wa en yuhibbe'l-mer'e lâ yuhibbuhû illâ li'llâh*) "He will love

⁷² Buhârî, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.35, no:20; Müslim, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.151, no:60; Neseî, *Sünen*, c.XV, s.170, no:4902; Ahmed ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned*, c.III, s.248, no:13617; İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh*, c.I, s.474, no:238; Taberânî, *Mu'cemü'l-Evsat*, c.II, s.34, no:1149; Beyhakî, *Şuabü'l-İman*, c.II, s.235, no:1623; Neseî, *Sünenü'l-Kübrâ*, c.V, s.527, no:11719; Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned*, c.V, s.440, no:3142; Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn*, c.III, s.308, no:2349; Abdullah ibn-i Mübârek, *Müsned*, c.I, s.31, no:30; Enes ibn-i Mâlik RA'dan.

his Muslim brethren just for the sake of Allah." That love will not be based on the physical appearance, property or wealth. It should be for Allah only.

We ought to learn this love. In fact, these Eid days are the time that joy overflows. We have to purge the bad feelings if we have them for fellow Muslims. For the sake of the Eid, we should clear our hearts from the simple matters, haughtiness, envy, pride, anger, hatred and other ill feelings. We should love one another for Allah. Unless we establish this love, a person could not attain perfection. We have to love one another for Allah.

We come to the Mosque, offer our prayers shoulder to shoulder, yet our hearts are not as warm as they should have been. If we open our hearts to one another with sincerity, things would be different. May Allah grant us that love.

3. (*Wa en yekrahe en yeûde fi'l-kufri baghde idh enqadhehu'llàhu kemâ yekrahu en yulqà fi'n-nâr*) "After being saved by Allah, a person should fear falling back into the disbelief and hellfire.

How does this hadith apply to us? We were in a different state before Ramadhan. We corrected ourselves in Ramadhan, achieved a pleasant state. Having acquired that state, we should be afraid of falling back to our previous state as we would fear from falling in fire. "O no! That is wrong way! It is a path leading to the fire. It is the path of ignorance and confusion. It is a path of deviation. It is a path away from the worship. Following that path is like falling in fire." That is how we are to avoid it. We have to stay away as though it were plague. We have to try to maintain our good state.

It is time for the Eid prayer. We should not delay it because children at home are waiting for their fathers. In their pleasant dresses, they want to meet their fathers and kiss their hands. They want the Eid to begin. We should not delay their joy. Talking about the ahadith is sweet, yet the Eid celebration is sweet, too. Let us offer our Eid prayer. May Allah accept your worship.

El-fâtihâh!

.....



(Eid prayer is performed. Everybody congratulated the Eid by shaking hands. The following supplication is said while standing)

El-hamdu li'llâhi rabbi'l-âlemîn... Wa salla'llâhu alâ seyyidinâ muhammedin wa âlihî wa sahbihî ejmaîn... Wa men tebi'ahû bi'ihsânin ilâ yewmi'd-dîn...

Allâhumme innâ nes'eluke mine'l-khayri kullihî, àjilihî wa âjilihî, mâ alimnâ minhâ wa mâ lem na'lem... Wa neûzubike mine'sh-sherri kullihî, àjilihî wa âjilihî, mâ alimnâ minhâ wa mâ lem na'lem...

Allâhumme'rhamnâ... Allâhumme'rham ummete muhammedin rahmeten àmmeh...

Allâhumme innâ nes'eluke fewâtiha'l-khayri wa hawâtimeh... Wa jewâmi'ahû wa ewwelehû wa âkhirehû wa zâhirahû wa bâtineh... Wad derejâti'l-ûlâ mine'l-jenneh...

May Almighty Allah grant all of us His mercy, forgiveness, and contentment. May He grant us the rewards of the Night of Power as we experienced the moth of Ramadhan. May he grant us many

Ramadhans in health and happiness. May He keep His assistance and guidance with us in dhikr, thankfulness, and good deeds for Him.

May He grant us a happy Eid. As He let us live for this Eid, may he give us many Eids in health and happiness.

May he bless the entire nation of Prophet Muhammed SAS. May He make us victorious over the disbelievers. May He give us all of the good things in this life and in the hereafter for the sake of the Ramadhan, the Night of Power and the Day of Eid. May He protect us continuously from the all kinds of evils and harm -- be they familiar or unfamiliar to us.

May he make it easier for each of us to depart from this life with perfect imân as one of His beloved servants whom He is pleased with.

Bihurmeti esmâihi'l-husnâ, wa habîbihi'l-mujtebâ muhammedeni'l-mustafâ...

(Halil Necati Cosan added)

"Taqabbel minnâ bi-hurmeti seyyidi'l-murselîn wa bi-hurmeti esrâri sûrati'l-fâtihah! "

June 20, 1985 / Shawwal 1, 1405
Iskenderpasha Mosque-- Istanbul, Turkey