

فَضَائِلُ
مَعْرَافَاتٍ

FAZAIL
و
SADAQAAT



FAZAIL –E—SADAQAAT

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The second of two of the most read books in the Islamic world, detailing the innumerable benefits of performing one of the greatest acts of worship in Islam, spending in the path of Allah. Heart softening stories of those who sacrificed their wealth for the sake of the Almighty, and the overwhelming bounties of Allah upon such people. Handy compact edition, translated by Prof. Abdul Karim and Malik Haq Nawaz.



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VIRTUES AND REWARDS OF SPENDING FOR THE CAUSE OF ALLAH

The Holy Quran and the Ahadith of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, the greatest of mankind, contain so many exhortations to give away Sadaqah that, after going through them, one cannot but conclude that money is not to be held back at all and that it is meant only for spending for the cause of Allah. The commandments and instructions on this subject are so numerous that it is difficult to collect even a tenth of them. In my usual way, I am quoting below, by way of example, a few Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an and some Ahadith with their translation.

Section (a)

AYAAT

1. (The Glorious Qur'an) In it there is guidance for those who fear Allah and believe in things not visible; they establish Salaat and spend from what We have bestowed on them; and they believe in what has been sent down to you and sent down before you; and they are certain of the Akhirah. They depend on the guidance from their Lord; they are the successful. (al-baqarah: 2-5)

Note: These Ayaat contain several subjects, all of which need close consideration:

(a) The Qur'an is a guidance to those who fear Allah Ta'ala Shanohu. Obviously, the one who does not fear his Lord, nor considers the Lord as his Master, and the one who does not know his Creator, cannot see the path indicated by the Glorious Qur'an. He alone can see the path who has the capability of seeing. Similarly, a person whose heart is devoid of the fear of Allah has no regard for His commandments.

(b) "To establish Salaat" is to perform it with full concentration, following the prescribed manner and fulfilling the necessary conditions. These have been fully dealt with in my booklet on the 'Virtues of Salaat,' wherein I have quoted a saying of Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho to the effect that: 'The establishment of Salaat' depends on correct performance of Ruku and Sajda, whole-hearted concentration and humility towards Allah. According to Qatadah Rahmathullah alaihe, perfection in Salaat can be achieved by observing it at its proper time, by proper 'Wudhu' (ablution), and by 'Ruku' and 'Sajda' in the proper way.

(c) The highest achievement of man is to attain 'Falaah'. The term Falaah implies success and happiness, both in spiritual and worldly affairs.

Imaam Raghیب Rahmathullah alaihe has written that 'Falaah' in the worldly sense means attainment of excellence in certain aspects of worldly life, in respect of lasting satisfaction, contentment and honour. 'Falaah' in the life of Akhirah consists in four things:

1. Eternal life
2. Riches that have no shadow of poverty.
3. Honour with no trace of disgrace.
4. Knowledge with no taint of ignorance.

In the case of absolute 'Falaah', success is implied in its highest degree, both in spiritual and material life.

2. It is not right righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or West; but the righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels, and the Scripture and the Ambiya and gives his wealth for the love of Him to kinsfolk and to orphans and the destitute and the wayfarer and to those who ask (in need) and to set slaves free; and observes Salaat properly; and pays Zakaat. (These are worthwhile attainments). (al-baqarah: 177)

(The Ayat mentions a few more qualities of the righteous and in conclusion, asserts, "Such are they who are truly sincere. Such are the people who fear Allah")

Note: Qatadah Rahmathullah alaihe says that the Jews used to turn their faces to the West while offering their prayers and the Christians faced the East; so this Ayat was sent down concerning their practise. Several other Ulama have expressed the same opinion (Durre Manthur). Imaam Jassaas Rahmathullah alaihe has said that this Ayaat was sent down to refute the objection of the Jews and the Christians against the change of 'Qiblah' i.e. from Bait-ul-Muqaddas to Ka'bah. Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala has, in this Ayat stressed the fact that virtue lies in obedience to Allah Ta'ala, without which the turning to the East or West is meaningless (Ahlamul-Quran).

Spending for the cause of Allah means that, in all cases, money must be spent only to seek the pleasure and love of Allah, and not for getting name and fame for one-self, in which case the spending will not count as an act of virtue. It will rather become a sin instead of being a virtue.

Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam has said that Haq Ta'ala Shanohu does not look at your faces and your wealth (how much you spent). He rather, looks at your deeds and your hearts (the motives behind your deeds). (Mishkaat). Another Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam as saying, "The thing I fear most for you (the Ummah) is the minor 'Shirk'. On being asked what the minor 'Shirk' was, he replied, "To do something for the sake of show". Repeated warnings have been given in the Ahadith against spending for the sake of displaying one's generosity.

The translation given indicated that spending of money should be motivated by love for Allah. Some Ulama have interpreted the Ayat as follows:

Spending of money should be accompanied by a feeling of love for spending i.e. one should be delighted to give away things as Sadaqah, should have no second thoughts, nor regret having spent money, nor fear from want, nor blame oneself for spending it lavishly (Ahkamul Qur'an). Many other Ulama have given a different interpretation.

They say that the Ayaat refers to spending for the cause of Allah while one still needs and loves money. A Hadith says that someone asked Rasulallah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam, "What is meant by spending money while one loves it; for everybody loves money?" Rasulallah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam replied, "It means that you should spend money while you are conscious of your own needs, fear from want and neediness and feel afraid lest you should need it at a time during the long years of your life lying ahead".

Another Hadith says that the best Sadaqah is to spend at the time when you are in good health, hoping to live long. Do not go on postponing Sadaqah till you find yourself on the death-bed, with little or no hope of survival, at which juncture, you may begin to give away your wealth saying, 'So much to so-and-so and so much for such and such cause, though it now belongs to your heirs. (Durre Manthur). When the hope for life vanishes, feeling for personal needs is no longer there and, with the apprehension of all the property going to your heirs, you begin to distribute it among Masjids and Madrasahs!

So long as the feeling of one's own neediness was uppermost, the will to give as Sadaqah was absent. Therefore the 'Shariah' has ordered that such last-moment directions for giving things in Sadaqah or to non-heirs should be limited to a maximum of one third of the total property. Thus if the total property has been given away at the time of death, only one third of it can be validly disposed off according to such a 'will' of the deceased. The above Ayat specifically emphasizes spending on the orphans and the destitute while Zakaat has been mentioned separately, at the end of the Ayat.

This shows that spending on the things specified therein has to be done from the property left with a person after payment of Zakaat. This point will be explained later under Hadith No. 1

3. Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, and make not your hands contribute to your destruction; and do good. Lo! Allah loves those who are beneficent. (al-baqarah: 195)

Note: According to Huzaifah Radhiiallaho anho, the command "Do not contribute to your own destruction," means giving up Sadaqah for fear of becoming poor.

Ibne Abbas Radhiiallaho anho has said, "To get killed in the path of Allah, is not ruining oneself: in fact, ruination lies in withholding the expenditure on sadaqah". Dhahhaak Bin Jubair Rahmathullah alaihe has said that the Ansaar

used to spend in the path of Allah and also give things in Sadaqah. Once, in a year of famine, they changed their minds and stopped this noble practise.

On that occasion this Ayat was revealed. Aslam Rahmathullah alaihe has said that he was once of those who participated in the battle of Constantinople. A large force of the enemy advanced to oppose them. A man from their side rushed alone into the enemy lines. Upon this, some of the Muslims started shouting that the man had blindly invited his ruination and they recited this particular Ayat in support of their contention.

Abu Ayyub Ansaari Radhiallahohunho, who was also in the field, got up and said that the action of that man was not self-ruination at all; he said that the Ayat of the Qur'an being quoted by some people referred to the Ansaar.

He explained that Ansaar quietly took a decision among themselves that the time had come for them to engage themselves in improving their lands and farms, etc; in the belief that, by the grace of Allah Ta'ala, Islam by then had become predominant and many people besides the Ansaar had joined the ranks of its supporters and helpers and, so the Ansaar could turn to their fields, plantations, etc, which were in ruin due to neglect and lack of care. At that juncture, the Ayat in question was revealed in order to admonish them that it would be self-ruination if the Ansaar gave up Jehaad for the sake of improving their properties. (Durre Manthur).

4. (People) ask you what they should spend (as Sadaqah). "Tell (them) what they can spare". (i.e.) what is in excess of their requirements). (al-baqarah: 219)

Note: Wealth is meant to be spent; whatever is left over, after meeting personal requirements, should be spent as Sadaqah. Ibne Abbas Radhiallahohunho has said that, after meeting the requirements of one's family the balance becomes 'Afv' which means that it is to be spent as Sadaqah. Abu Umamah Radhiallahohunho has reported

Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying, "O men, give what you can spare for charity, this is good for you; if you hold it back, it will be bad for you. You are not to blame for keeping back just enough for your own requirements; begin by spending on those who are dependant on you. The upper hand (which gives) is better than the lower hand (which is stretched out for accepting alms)".

Ataa Rahmathullah alaihe is quoted as having said that 'Afv' means wealth in excess of actual needs. (Durre Manthur). Abu Sae'ed Khudri Radhiallahohunho has said that once Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying that when a person has an extra conveyance he should give it to someone who has none, and whoever has provision in excess should give the excess to those who do not have any. Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying this so emphatically that we thought no one would have any right over his own property in excess of his actual needs. (Abu Dawood).

In fact the highest virtue lies only in giving away everything that is over and above one's legitimate requirements; nothing is to be hoarded. Certain Ulama have said that 'Afv' means "What is convenient"; one should spend as Sadaqah what can be spared with convenience and ease, so that no hardship or distress is caused to oneself afterwards. Also that no dependant should be deprived of his or her legitimate rights (which is a responsibility of the spender), due to which the latter may get into trouble on the Day of Judgement.

It is narrated that Ibne Abbas Radhiallahohunho said, "Some people used to give so much Sadaqah that nothing would be left with themselves, even for eating, and they would be compelled to look for Sadaqah from others. It was for this reason that the above Ayat was revealed".

Abu Sae'ed Khudri Radhiallahohunho has said that Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying, seeing the very poor condition of a person just arrived in the Masjid, asked the people to give him clothes as Sadaqah.

Plenty of these were contributed, Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying gave two garments out of these to the poor man. Later, once again Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying persuaded people to donate as Sadaqah. That poor man also gave one garment out of the two, whereupon Rasulullah Sallallahohunho was saying showed his displeasure and returned the piece to him. (Durre Manthur).

The Glorious Qur'an does invite us to give in charity, in spite of our own requirements, but this is for such people who can do it cheerfully, because the importance of 'Akhira' prevails over worldly requirements in their minds. This particular point is dealt with in detail under Ayat given at serial No. 28.

5. Who is it that will lend to Allah a goodly loan, so that He may give it increase manifold? (Do not fear poverty) Allah straitens and enlarges (your provision), and to Him you will return. (al-baqarah: 245)

Note: The act of spending for the cause of Allah has been interpreted as advancing loan to Allah Ta'ala, which means that, just as the return of a loan is obligatory, the recompense and reward for spending in charity is a certainty.

That is why Sadaqah has been termed as loan. Umar Radhiallaho anho has stated that giving a loan to Allah Ta'ala means spending in charity. Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho has said that, when the above Ayat was revealed, Abu Dahda Ansaari Radhiallaho anho came to Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam and submitted, "O Rasulallah, does Allah Jalla Shanohu desire a loan from us?" Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam replied, "Certainly so" He then said, "Please give me your hand" (for making a promise).

Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam stretched out his hand towards him and Abu Dahdah Radhiallaho anho, taking it in his own hand as a gesture of a vow, said that he was giving his garden to Allah Ta'ala as a loan. That garden had six hundred date-palms and his wife and children were living in it.

Abu Dahdah Radhiallaho anho went to the garden, called his wife Umme Dahdah Radiyallaho anha and told her that they had to leave the garden as it had been given away to their 'Lord' (Allah Ta'ala). Another Hadith by Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho says that Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam distributed that garden among some orphans.

Still another Hadith says that when the sacred Ayat was revealed, saying: "Whoever earned a single virtue would receive ten times the reward for it", Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam made a dua, "O Allah! Compensate my 'Ummah' even more than that". As a result this Ayat was revealed. Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam again implored Allah for a further increase.

Thereupon the Ayat which has been explained at serial No. 7 below, was revealed. Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam again made supplication saying, "O Allah, increase the reward of my Ummah" Thereupon the Ayat was revealed "That whoever is steadfast will receive a full return, which will be boundless." (az-Zumar: 19)

Another Hadith says that an angel calls out, "Whoever offers a loan today will receive a full compensation tomorrow" Another Hadith says that Allah Jallah Shanohu proclaims, "O man, entrust your treasures to me for safe custody; none of these will catch fire, nor sink, nor be stolen, you will receive these back from Me at the time when your need for them will be the greatest". (Durre manthur).

6. O you who believe! Spend, out of what We have provided for you before the Day comes when there would be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession (without Allah's permission). (al-baqarah: 254)

Note: It means that there shall be no selling or buying on that Day to enable you to buy virtues from others, nor would there be any friend to intercede or entreat on your behalf. In short, all means of help from any source shall cease. If anything is to be done for that Day, now is the time to do it and to sow the seed; that Day shall be the day of harvest. Whatever is sown shall be reaped, whether it be grain or flower, thorn or firewood! It is a matter for all to ponder and to examine what each one is sowing?

7. The likeness of those who spend their wealth in Allah's way (for good deeds) is as the likeness of a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whom He wills. Allah is All-Embracing, and All-Knowing (He knows the motive for which wealth is spent). (al-baqarah: 261)

Note: Ahadith say that there are six categories of deeds and four categories of men. The six types of deeds include two that are obligatory and two bring equal compensation, the fifth one brings ten times reward and the sixth may

bring seven hundred times reward in return. The obligatory two are that, if a person dies without committing any 'Shirk' he shall go to 'Jannah' and if he is guilty of 'Shirk' he shall land himself in 'Jahannam'.

Those at equal compensation are; if a person intends to do a good deed but is unable to accomplish it, he shall receive a single virtue as a reward for making the good intention. Similarly, if a person commits a sin, his punishment shall correspond to a single sin. When a person actually accomplishes a single good deed, his reward shall be tenfold, whereas, if he spends for the cause of Allah, his return shall be seven hundred times the value of the wealth spent.

The four categories of men referred to are as follows:

1. The one who receives ample provisions in this life as well as in the 'Aakhirah'.
2. The one prosperous in this life but poor and miserable in the 'Aakhirah'.
3. The one who suffers hardships in this life but shall flourish in the 'Aakhirah'.
4. The one who is miserable in this life as well as in the 'Aakhirah' (Kanzul Ummal).

His misery is due to poverty, and his bad deeds lead him to suffering in the 'Aakhirah', so that both his lives are ruined. Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that whoever gives in charity the equivalent to a date that is part of lawful possession and not unlawful, Allah nourishes that date as you nourish colt, to such an extent that your provision grows up to the dimensions of a mountain. Haq Ta'ala Shanohu accepts only pure and flawless things. Allah Ta'ala increases the reward of this simple virtue to a size larger than that of mount Uhad, which is the highest mountain near Madina.

This indicates that the reward for a single virtue would grow far beyond the seven hundred times limit mentioned above. Another hadith says that when the Ayat regarding the seven hundred times reward was revealed, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam made a dua for a further increase of the reward, upon which the Ayat given at No. 5 was revealed. (Bayan-al-Quran). This means that this particular Ayat was sent down earlier than the one given at No. 5. The subject of another Hadith is contrary to the discussion given under Ayat No. 5.

8. Those who spend their wealth for the cause of Allah and afterwards make no reproach or injury (in any way) to follow that which they have spent, their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve. (On the Day of Judgement). (al-Baqarah: 262)

Note: this great Ayat follows the previous one, and the whole section (Ruku) deals with the same subject. It encourages us to spend for the cause of Allah and warns against boasting of the favour done or teasing the beneficiary with taunts and insults, which means treating him with contempt, or to look down upon him.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that certain people shall not enter 'Jannah'. These include one who boasts of his generosity after spending for the cause of Allah, the other who is disobedient to his parents and the third who is a habitual drunkard, etc. (Durre Manthur). Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has written in the 'Ihya' about the etiquettes of Sadaqah that it must not be destroyed by 'Mann' (reproach) and 'Azaa' (injury).

Some Ulama have explained 'Mann' as boasting about it to the person to whom the Sadaqah has been given and 'Azaa' as talking about it to others. Other Ulama have said that 'Mann' is to demand free labour in return for Sadaqah and 'Azaa' is taunting the beneficiary for begging. Some others have said that 'Mann' is to show a feeling of superiority over the receiver of alms, and 'Azaa' is to rebuke the poor for begging. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that 'Mann' is as follows:

Having spent the money on the poor man, one would be conscious of it as a favour shown to him. This very thought becomes the source of all the evils mentioned above. In reality it is the poor who does favour to the rich, as their acceptance of Sadaqah absolves the rich of their obligation to Allah Ta'ala and also because the poor become a

source of purification of the rich man's wealth, besides saving him from the fire of 'Jahannam' to which he was destined, if the Zakaat had remained unpaid. (Ihya).

The famous Mohaddith Imaam Sha'abi Rahmatullah alaihe has said that unless a rich person considers himself more in need of reward from Allah for his Sadaqah than he thinks the poor person to be in need of his Sadaqah, he has wasted his alms, which would be thrown back on him. (Ihya-ul-Uloom). The Day of Judgement shall be a day of great severity, sorrow and terror, as would be explained at the end of this book. To be safe from these calamities on that day would be a great privilege.

9. If ye publish your almsgiving, it is well, but if ye hide it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you, and will atone for some of your ill-deeds. Allah is informed of what you do. (al-Baqarah: 271)

Those who spend their wealth by night and day, by stealth and openly, verily their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon neither shall they grieve. (al-Baqarah: 274)

Note: In both the above Ayaat, the giving of Sadaqah either publicly or privately has been praised while, in many Ayaat of the Qur'an and also in several Ahadith, an act committed for show or hypocritically has been termed as a vice or 'Shirk'; in fact it nullifies the reward and turns the act into a sin.

However, it should first be understood that 'show' has another sense as well. It may not necessarily mean that every good deed done in public would amount to 'show'. Actually 'show' means that an act is done to display one's own greatness or for the sake of publicity or honour or for being called generous.

A deed done purely for seeking the good-will and pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, even publicly, for some good cause would thus not be 'show' at all. Still the best form of every act of charity, presumably, is that done in secret, so as to eliminate all doubts of show and publicity.

Also it will prevent the poor from feeling humiliated. Even though an open deed may not be for show, the inevitable fame may lead to self-conceit and pride for being generous. It may also result in harassment, as a large number of people may start seeking his favour.

His fame for being wealthy may bring him to harm. He may have to pay taxes, his riches may tempt the thieves and breed ill-will in the heart of the jealous. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that one keeps away from publicity and hypocrisy when alms are given in secret.

It has also been related that. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said: "The best charity is that given by a person who is himself pressed for money and who gives Sadaqah to a needy person quietly out of his own earnings; and whoever talks about his charity is a seeker of publicity; and the one who gives alms in public is a hypocrite. In olden days, the truly pious tried their utmost to remain unknown to the poor who received help from them.

Some of them chose blind persons as recipients of their charity. Some would slip money into the pocket of a sleeping person, some would give through others, so as to remain anonymous and save the poor from humiliation. However, Sadaqah given for self-publicity means destroying a good deed, and getting a sin. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has written, "Where publicity is the aim, the deed becomes useless", the reason being that obligatory Zakaat has been ordered to reduce the love of wealth.

Usually the love for status is stronger than the love for wealth. Both will be the cause of ruination in the 'Akhirah'. Miserliness will appear in the grave as a huge scorpion, while love of status and hypocrisy will assail the dead man in the form of a python" (Ihya-ul-Uloom). According to a Hadith, it is enough for one's condemnation if people point him out for worldly or religiously fame.

Ibrahim Bin Adham Rahmatullah alaihe has said that when a person takes pleasure in self-publicity, his dealings with Allah are not sincere. Ayoob Sakhtiani Rahmatullah alaihe has said that a person true to Allah would prefer to keep the whereabouts of his residence unknown to people. (Ihya-ul-Uloom).

Once Umar Radhiallaho anho came to the Masjid-Nabavi and found Ma'az Radhiallaho anho sitting and crying by the grave of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. He enquired why he was crying. Ma'az Radhiallaho anho replied that he had heard Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying that the smallest hypocrisy amounts to 'Shirk' and Allah loves those pious people who live in unknown corners so that no one looks for them when they have left a place and if they are in a crowd no one recognises them; their hearts are the torches of guidance and they keep away from all dark and dirty spots. (Ihya-ul-Uloom).

Although many Ayat of the Qur'an and many Ahadith are there to condemn show and hypocrisy, nevertheless, sometimes an open deed becomes a religious necessity. As for example, Sadaqah from a small number of persons may not be enough to meet an important religious requirement; in which case, the difficulty could be solved through encouraging others by raising funds through open charity. For this very purpose, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that a man reciting the Qur'an aloud is like one giving Sadaqah in public, while reading it in low tone is like giving Sadaqah quietly. (Mishkaat). Hence, the best mode of reading the Qur'an depends on expediency, sometimes it may be better to read aloud and at another time in a low tone.

Many Ulama have been quoted as saying that the first of the two Ayaat mentioned above refers to obligatory charity (Zakaat) as well as the optional one (Nafl) Sadaqah. The best way to give Zakaat is to give it publicly, as is the requirement about all obligatory performances. This is for the purpose of encouraging others to fulfil the Divinely ordained obligations and also for the sake of absolving oneself from the possible blame of neglecting the payment of Zakaat. For the same reason Salaat is to be performed publicly in congregation (Jama'at).

Hafiz Ibne Hajar Rahmatullah alaihe has said that Allama Tabari Rahmatullah alaihe and others have quoted a unanimous opinion of the Ulama that the obligatory Sadaqah (Zakaat) is better given openly and the 'Nafl' Sadaqah is better when given secretly. Zain Ibnul Munir Rahmatullah alaihe has said that it all depends on circumstances: if the ruler is known to be unjust, and property is kept concealed, giving Zakaat is better kept secret.

In the same way, if a person is being followed, any type of charity given by him openly will be beneficial. (Fathul Bari). Ibn Abbas Radhiallaho anho, in his explanation of the above mentioned Ayaat, has said that Allah Ta'ala makes the reward for Nafl Sadaqah given secretly to excel seventy times the reward for open Sadaqah.

The reward for 'Fardh' (obligatory) Sadaqah given openly however excels twenty five times the reward for Sadaqah given secretly. Similarly, the same rule applies to all other deeds of worship, obligatory or optional. (Durre Manthur). It implies that amongst all deeds, the performance of Obligatory one's is best if done in public rather than in secret, because doing them secretly may bring the person concerned under false accusations, of neglecting the relevant Ibadat (worship) and secondly, if such an accusation comes from persons connected with him, the value and importance of that Ibadat may leave their hearts.

Open performance is preferred even in Nafl Ibadat, if others are thereby likely to follow the example. Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho has reported Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that a virtuous deed done secretly is better than the one done openly, except when the latter is meant as a persuasion for others. Abu Umamah Radhiallaho anho has said that when Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as to which type of Sadaqah was best, the reply was, "Giving something quietly to the poor". To make effort to help another, in spite of one's own helplessness, is, however, better.

The superiority of giving 'Nafl' Sadaqah secretly is the basic rule; if a religious exigency be in mind, giving it publicly becomes better, but in the event the man should not be heedless in allowing the baser self (Nafs) and Shaitan to convince him that there is an exigency in giving openly, and thus ruin his Sadaqah. He should rather determine carefully if there is really an exigency in giving openly. Above all, he should avoid mentioning the Sadaqah given by him, because that too, would be tantamount to giving openly.

One Hadith says that a person performs a good deed secretly and it is recorded as such; later when he talks about it to someone, it is changed from secret deed to an open one, and if he keeps mentioning it to people, the same is recorded as an act of hypocrisy. (Ihya-ul-Uloom).

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that seven persons shall enjoy the shade of Allah Jalla Shanohu when there will be no other shade on the Day of Judgement:

(i) A just ruler

(ii) A young person who is nurtured in 'Ibadat' of Allah Ta'ala;

(iii) A person whose heart is attached to the Masjid;

(iv) Two persons who love each other for the pleasure of Allah; without any worldly motive, and they meet and separate in that spirit;

(v) A man who due to fear of Allah, refuses to go near a respectable beautiful woman, sexually inclined towards him, as also a woman who in a similar situation refuses to meet a man;

(vi) A person who gives Sadaqah so secretly that his left hand does not know what the right hand gives away;

(vii) A person who cries when remembering Allah in solitude.

This particular Hadith mentions only seven persons; according to an other Hadith some other people, besides these, will enjoy the shade of the 'Arsh' (Allah Ta'ala's throne) on that severe Day. The Ulama have counted them as eighty two categories, which have been recounted by the writer of 'It-haaf'.

Many Ahadith relate Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, 'Concealed Sadaqah causes the wrath of Allah to wane'. Saalim Ibne Abil Ja'ad Rahmatullah alaihe has said that a woman was travelling alone with her infant son when a wolf snatched it away from her hands. The woman was running after the wolf when a beggar approached her and asked for something.

She had only a single loaf of bread, which she gave away to the beggar. Thereafter, the wolf returned and left the baby with his mother. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that three persons are loved by Allah and He is displeased with three. Those whom He loves are: the first is a person in a crowd of people who, when a man approaches and begs for something from them (among whom none is related to the beggar), moves away from the crowd and gives the beggar something of which only Allah Ta'ala is aware; the second is a person who is travelling with a group at night and when sleep overtakes them and they call a halt, leave their conveyances and go to sleep, he stands up instead of sleeping and offers his Salaat with full humility; the third is the person who, when engaged in a battle against the Kaafirs, holds his ground bravely till he is killed (meets Shahadat) or is victorious, while his companions turn their back due to heavy pressure of the enemy.

The three with whom Allah Ta'ala is displeased are; first, a person who indulges in adultery even in his old age; second who is a beggar, and still arrogant; and third, a rich man who is cruel. This very Hadith is recorded at Serial No. 15. One of the Hadith quoted by Jabir Radhiallah anho says that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave a sermon saying, "O people repent of your misdeeds before death overtakes you; be quick in seizing the opportunity of doing a good deed lest you should lose the chance by getting busy in something else; try to attain nearness to Allah Ta'ala by means of 'Zikr' and by Sadaqah given openly as well as secretly; because due to this, you will receive your livelihood, Allah's help and remedy for discomfiture".

Another Hadith says that, on the Day of Judgement, every one will be under the shade of one's Sadaqah, i.e. when the sun will be very close overhead, on the day of 'Qiamah' every person will be provided shade overhead according to the amount of his Sadaqah till the reckoning is finished.

The larger the Sadaqah, the larger will be the shade. Another Hadith says that Sadaqah cools the heat of the grave and every person will get a shade from his Sadaqah, on the Day of Judgement. Many Ahadith have mentioned the point that Sadaqah drives away many afflictions. Due to their own misdeeds, the Muslims today are afflicted with perils all over the world. Obviously, the remedy lies in giving more Sadaqah.

In the prevailing conditions when one is likely to lose one's property, all of a sudden, the best way to protect it is to give maximum Sadaqah. That part will be certainly saved and its blessing will drive away the coming misfortunes. But alas! In spite of seeing these conditions with our own eyes, we do not seem to give charity to the extent that the

time demands. Another Hadith says, "Sadaqah closes seventy doors towards evil", while still another one says that Sadaqah removes Allah Ta'ala's anger and saves the giver from a bad death. According to another Hadith, "Sadaqah increases the span of a man's life and cures him of conceit and arrogance".

Yet another Hadith relates that Allah Ta'ala, in return for giving a morsel of bread or a handful of dates, or anything else that may satisfy a poor man's need, shall grant entry into Jannah to three persons: (a) The owner of the house who ordered the Sadaqah (b) The house-wife who cooked the bread, etc. (c) The servant who took it to the needy person. After saying this much, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam remarked, "All praises are for Allah who has not forgotten even our servants while giving His rewards".

Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked the Sahabah, "Who is the strongest of men?" They replied, "The one who gets the better of his opponent in a contest". He said, "The strongest man is he who can control himself when he is angry" He then asked, "Who is a barren person?" They replied, "The one who is incapable of bearing offspring." Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "No, it is the one who has not sent a child ahead of him to the Hereafter". He then asked, "Who is a destitute person?" They replied, "The one who has no property".

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The destitute person, and the utterly destitute, is he who possessed property but did not send anything ahead of him" (for the Day when his needs would be the greatest but he would be empty-handed).

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho narrates that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Aishah! Bargain your amnesty from Allah Ta'ala, even though it may be with a piece of a date; for I shall not be able to help you against any demand from Allah Ta'ala; O Aishah, let not a beggar go away from you empty-handed; give him something; even if it be a goat's hoof". (Durre Manthur)

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe says that, in the early days of Islam, people used to consider it a bad day if no charity had been given during it, and they gave alms every day, even though it was a date or a piece of bread. For, they kept the Hadith of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam in view, which says, "Everybody will be under the shade of his Sadaqah, on the Day of Resurrection". (Ihya)

10. Allah has blighted usury and made alms-giving fruitful. (al Baqarah: 276)

Note: We have already quoted many traditions about the fruitfulness of Sadaqah; these Ahadith say that the reward for Sadaqah goes on increasing till it becomes as big as a mountain.

Those rewards will accrue in the Akhirah, but even in this life the Sadaqah causes one's income to grow. If a man gives away charities, sincerely and plentifully, his income goes on increasing. Let anyone try it, but sincerity is the condition; there must be no inkling of self-display or pride in spending. As regards usury, it is bound to be a bad bargain in the Akhirah, while here, too, usury brings ruination.

Abdullah bin Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "Even though usury may look productive, it leads to want and poverty in the end". Similarly Ma'mar Rahmatullah alaihe says that usury tends to decrease one's wealth in forty years.

Hazrat Dhahaak Radhiallaho anho says that although usury increases in this world, it shall certainly lead to ruin in the Hereafter. Abu Barzah Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "A man just gives a piece in charity and Allah Ta'ala grants it increase till it grows large in size like Mount Uhad".

11. (O Muslims!) You will not attain unto piety until you spend of that which you love. (Ale-Imran-92)

Note: Anas Radhiallaho anho has said that among the Ansaars Abu Talhah Radhiallaho anho possessed the largest number of date palms. He had a garden called Beerhaa which he liked most. It was situated just in front of Masjid Nabavi and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam used to visit it often and drink from the sweet water it contained. When the above mentioned Ayat was revealed, Abu Talhah Radhiallaho anho came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and said, "Allah Jalla Shanohu has said:

"You will never attain piety unless you spend of that which you love". Among all my possessions I love the Beerhaa garden most; so I give it in Sadaqah for Allah's sake, hoping to receive rewards and blessings from Allah; O Rasulallah, "You can spend it as you desire". Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Well done! It is a very profitable property. I deem it appropriate that you should distribute it amongst your relatives".

Abu Talhah Radhiallaho anho agreed and gave the garden away to his cousins and other relatives. Another Hadith says that Abu Talhah submitted, "O Rasulallah, my garden which is most valuable has been given away in charity and, if I could I would not let anyone know my Sadaqah, but secrecy is not possible in giving away a garden". Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho says that, when he learnt about this Ayat, he considered all his possessions which Allah Ta'ala had given him, to decide which one was the dearest to him. He saw that his slave-girl Marjanah was the dearest to him.

So he set her free. He further said that if he wanted to benefit the second time from her, he could have taken her as his wife after her freedom, which was permissible and there would have been no reduction in the reward for the Sadaqah. But, in that case it would have looked like getting back what had been given away as Sadaqah, so he gave her in marriage to his slave, Nafay. In another Hadith it is said that Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho while praying happened to recite the above Ayat and, while he was in the Salaat, set free one of his slave-girls by a gesture.

The noble Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum had a perfect understanding of the importance of the sacred commands of Haq Ta'ala Shanohu and His revered Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and took an exemplary initiative in obedience to the orders given. They, in this regard, deserve to be followed. Indeed, they were the type who really deserved to be the companions (Sahabah) of Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and his befitting servants and followers.

Umar Radhiallaho anho wrote to Abu Moosa Ash'ari Radhiallaho anho to purchase for him a slave-girl from among those who came from Jaloola. The latter purchased one of the best and sent her to Umar Radhiallaho anho, who beckoned her and recited the above Ayat and set her free. Muhammad Ibne Munkadir Radhiallaho anho has said that when this glorious Ayat was revealed, Zaid Ibne Harithah Radhiallaho anho had a horse which was the dearest thing to him. He took the horse to Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, and submitted that it was for charity.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam accepted the horse and gave it away to Zaid's own son Usamah Radhiallaho anho. Zaid Radhiallaho anho was somewhat uneasy over the decision, thinking that the horse thus came back to the family, but Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam explained and said, "Your Sadaqah has been accepted by Allah Jalla Shanohu, which means that it has been well paid. Having received the horse for charity, it then depends on me to give it to your son or any one else, a relative or a stranger: You did not give it to your son, which might have reflected as self-interest but you gave it to me to do what I liked."

A certain person from the tribe of Bani Sulaim narrated that Abu Zarr Ghifari Radhiallaho anho resided in the village of Rabza, where he had his camels and an old man to look after them. A tribesman (of Bani Sulaim) lived in the neighbourhood.

He came to Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho and requested permission to live with him and offered himself for the help of the old man, so as to derive moral benefit by being close to Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho and receive the blessings of Allah Ta'ala through his company. Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho replied that only a person who would comply with his orders could live as his companion.

If the tribesman was fully prepared for that condition, he had no objection to his stay. The man asked, "What are those matters in which you demand obedience." Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho said, "Whenever I order you to bring something to be given away, you must choose the best of the available things." The man agreed to do so and remained with Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho for a period of time.

Once Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho learnt that some people living across the water course were badly off. He wanted to help them, so he ordered the tribesman to bring a camel from his herd. The man went and looked for the best one, and found a he-camel strong and well trained, which he thought of taking to Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho but it occurred to him that this was a fit animal for breeding, so he left it out and chose the next best, which was a she-camel, and took it to Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho.

By chance, Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho saw the he-camel which the man had selected first. So, Abu Zarr told the man that he had committed a breach of trust. The man understood the position and replaced the she-camel with the he-camel. Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho then asked the people around if two of them would volunteer to do a good deed for him. Two men came forward, Abu Zarr asked them if they would slaughter the camel and divide its meat into as many pieces as the number of houses along side the water course and deliver a piece to each house.

He also told them to count his own house amongst those and deliver a piece there of exactly the same size as that for others. The two men agreed to do the needful and accomplished the whole task.

Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho then called the tribesman and asked him if he had forgotten the promise, which he had made before and told him that in that event, he had an excuse, or otherwise he had intentionally overlooked that undertaking.

The man replied that he had not forgotten it and explained that when he looked round the herd and found the he-camel to be the best in the whole lot; he thought that this animal met Abu Zarr's needs and requirements. Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho enquired, "Did you really leave it for the sake of my needs?" The man replied in the affirmative, whereupon Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho said, "Shall I tell you the time of my real need? It shall be the time when I will be placed in the grave and that would be the time of my utter helplessness and need! There are three partners in your property.

One is fate, which does not wait for anything but would take away your property, good or bad (I may think of a certain thing to be good and useful for a particular occasion and keep it for that, but without knowing whether it would be available at that particular time). In that case why should I not deposit and reserve it now for the Akhirah, in the treasure of Allah Ta'ala.

The other partner is your heir, who is always waiting for the occasion when you would land in your grave and he would receive all your property. The third partner is you yourself, (i.e. you can use it for yourself); therefore try and make sure that you are not the least recipient of all. Let it not happen that fate snatches it away and renders it useless or the heir rushes to own it; the best of all would be to hurry up and deposit it in the treasury of Allah Ta'ala Shanohu. Besides this, Allah Ta'ala has said: "You will not attain unto piety until you spend of that which you love" Therefore that camel which was very dear to me, why should I not reserve it for myself and send it ahead of me for safe custody?"

Another Hadith relates that Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho used to buy sugar and distribute it among the poor. His servant once submitted that it would be better if bread were given to the poor instead of sugar, as they would benefit more from it. He agreed with the suggestion but said that Haq Ta'ala Shanohu has said: "You will not attain unto piety until you spend of that which you love" Since, he himself loved sugar most, he gave the same to the poor (Durre Manthur). The Sahabah, even if they considered some action desirable, always preferred to act literally, according to the command of Allah Ta'ala Shanohu and His revered Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam.

There are many examples of this, in the Ahadith, indicating the height of love in doing something exactly according to the words of their loved one, even when there is an alternative apparently more appropriate.

12. And vie one with another for forgiveness from your Lord, and for Jannah as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous. Those who spend (of that which Allah hath given them) whether in prosperity or adversity, those who restrain their anger and are forgiving towards mankind: Allah loves those who do good. (Aale-Imran: 133-134)

Note: The Ulama have stated that certain Sahabah envied Banu Israel for an occurrence among them that, whenever a person committed a sin, he found it written on his door along with its atonement, also indicating the way it was to be carried out e.g. by cutting off the nose or the ear, etc.

The Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum envied them for the fact that the forgiveness of the sin (after the atonement), was certain, as they viewed the gravity of any sin so seriously that punishment for it here was considered not only light but enviable, compared to the punishment in the Akhirah. The incidents quoted in the books of Hadith regarding the

Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum clearly show that, when any one of them (out of human weakness) committed a sin, he would be overwhelmed by fear of its punishment.

Not only men, even the women felt the same way. Once a woman committed adultery and presented herself before Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, confessed her sin and asked for its atonement, which was death by stoning; and that punishment was ultimately carried out. Why so? Because, the fear of future retribution for the sin committed was far greater than the fear of death.

It is said about Abu Talha Radhiallaho anho that once a thought of his garden disturbed his devotion in Salaat, so he gave away the garden in Sadaqah for the sake of Allah, and felt happy thereafter. His sense of values could not tolerate that the thought of a material thing should interrupt him during his prayers. Anything disturbing his mind during Salaat was not worth keeping.

Another Ansaari Radhiallaho anho had a similar experience. His date-palms were in full bloom. He thought of them in his Salaat: how finely the dates had ripened! Realising his mistake, he appeared before Uthman Radhiallaho anho who was then the Khalifah and related the story of his date-palm garden and offered the garden to be given away in Sadaqah. It was accepted by the Khalifah and sold for fifty thousand Dirhams. The money was spent on religious needs. Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho once, by mistake ate a doubtful morsel of food, which he wanted to vomit out; so he went on drinking water and vomiting till the morsel came out. He did this for fear of allowing a bit of doubtful food to become a part of his flesh.

Numerous incidents of the Sahabah have been narrated in the author's booklet, "The Stories of Sahabah". With such people, it was not surprising to be envious of Banu Israel who were informed of their sins and the atonement in order to have their sins cleared in this life. Alas! Today we, on our part, are so weak in this respect that it does not even cross our minds how serious are the consequences. Allah Ta'ala, by His grace and benevolence, for His increasing favours and rewards especially meant for the Ummah of His beloved Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam revealed the above Ayat saying, "Hasten towards such good deeds whereby the forgiveness of Allah shall be readily forthcoming!" Sa'eed Ibne Jubair Radhiallaho anho in his explanation of this Ayat says that one must hasten, with ones good deeds, towards the forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala and for Jannah, the expanse of which is equal to the seven heavens joined together like a single sheet of cloth stitched out of several pieces and the seven earths also similarly joined with them.

Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has also been quoted to say that the seven heavens and seven earths joined together as one, make up the width of Jannah. Kuraib Rahmatullah alaihe, a slave of Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that he was sent by his master to a scholar of Taurah to ask him about the expanse of Jannah, as given in their Scripture. He took out the Scriptures of Moosa Alaihissalam, studied them, and said that the width of Jannah was as much as the seven heavens and seven earths all joined together as one.

Its length was only known to Allah! Anas Radhiallaho anho says that at the battle of Badr, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said,

"O people! Advance towards the Jannah which is as wide as all the heavens and earths put together".

Umair Ibne Hamam Radhiallaho anho said in astonishment, "O Rasulallah! Is the Jannah so large!" Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Yes, indeed." Um'air Radhiallaho anho applauded it and said, "O Rasulallah! I swear by Allah, I shall be one of those who will go to Jannah."

"Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam remarked, "Yes! Yes! You are one of those who will go to Jannah". After that, Umair Radhiallaho anho took out some dates from his saddle bag and started eating them (for gaining some strength to fight). But he soon started up, saying, "To eat these dates to the finish would mean too long a wait!" He threw the dates away and rushed into the battle-field and fought till he was killed (martyred). (Durre Manthur).

The above Ayat commends the Momineen (believers) for their virtue of controlling their wrath and forgiving fellow human beings. These are superb qualities indeed! The Ulama have written that, if and when your brother (Muslim) commits a blunder, you should think of seventy excuses for his making that mistake, and convince yourself of the weight of those excuses.

If you are still not convinced, do not blame him but yourself, for being hard-hearted and unjust, and say to yourself, "Your brother had seventy reasons for the mistake that he had made but you did not accept any one of them". And if your brother himself presents any excuse, accept it.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that one of the qualities of a Momin is that if he gets angry, he soon gets rid of his anger. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam did not say that one should not get angry but that the anger must disappear soon. Imaam Shafa'i Rahmatullah alaihe has said that a person who does not show anger when provoked is like an ass, while one is like Shaitan if his anger is not pacified when he is approached.

That is why Allah Ta'ala Shanohu has said, "Those who control their wrath", and not those who do not get angry. (Ihya). Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that when a person is capable of satisfying his anger but, instead, subdues it, Allah Ta'ala grants him peace of mind and 'Imaan'. (Durre Manthur). Patience in the state of helplessness is common, virtue lies in showing patience when in authority. One Hadith says that nothing which is swallowed is more valuable to Allah Ta'ala than the anger swallowed by a man; and Allah Ta'ala Shanohu fills such a person with Imaan. Another Hadith says that when a person suppresses his anger although he is in power, he will be called forward on the Day of Judgement and, in the presence of all, told to select a Hourai for himself.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that a truly brave person is not one who throws someone on his back but he who overpowers his own wrath. A slave-girl of Ali Rahmathullah alaihe Ibne Imaam Hussain Radhiyallahu anho, when helping him to perform wudhu, dropped the water-pot injuring his face. When Ali looked at her angrily, she said, Allah Ta'ala has stated:

"And those who control their anger"

Ali Rahmathullah alaihe thereupon suppressed his anger, on which she recited,

"And are forgiving towards mankind."

He said to her, "May Allah Ta'ala forgive you." She then recited:

"Allah loves the Charitable."

Thereupon he said, "You are a free woman." Once a slave of Ali Rahmathullah alaihe, while carrying a bowl full of hot meat for a guest, accidentally dropped the bowl on the head of Ali's son and the child died. Ali Rahmathullah alaihe told the slave that he was a free man and could go away, while he himself got busy with the burial of his infant son. (Raudh).

13. They only are the (true) believers whose hearts are full of fear when Allah is mentioned and when Ayaat are recited unto them they increase their faith, and who trust in their Lord. Who establish regular Salaat and spend of that we have bestowed on them. Such are the true believers; for them are positions of honour with their Lord, and pardon and a beautiful provision. (al-Anfaal: 2-4)

Note: Abu Darda Radhiyallahu anho has said that an awe-stricken heart is like the dry leafage of date-palm catching fire! Then he addresses his pupil Shahr Ibne Haushah, and asked him if he understood shivering of the body. The pupil replied that he did. Abu Darda Radhiyallahu anho then said that such was the time to make Du'aa which would be accepted.

Thabit Banani Rahmatullah alaihe has related that a pious man once said that he could tell which Du'aa of his was accepted and which one was rejected. People enquired as to how that was. He explained that when his body shivered, his heart was filled with awe and his eyes shed tears, that was the moment when Dua'a was accepted. Suddi Rahmatullah alaihe has said, 'In the above Ayat the meaning of 'when Allah is mentioned' is to tell a person, 'Fear Allah' at the time when he is bent upon inflicting cruelty on someone or is about to indulge in a sin; his heart should then be filled with fear of Allah!' Harith ibne Malik Ansaari Radhiyallahu anho, a Sahabi, was in the company of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who asked him, "How are you?" He replied, "O Rasulallah, I have become a true Momin".

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Be careful of what you say; there is a basis for everything; what is the proof of your Imaan?" (i.e. what has made you say that you have become a true Mo'min). He submitted, "I have detached myself from worldly life by keeping awake at night and fasting during the day; the scene of Jannah with happy people meeting each other remains always before my eyes, as well as the cries and uproar of the dwellers in Jahannam". Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Indeed, Harith! You have turned away from worldly life, hold fast to this state", and repeated this three times. (Durre Manthur)

It is obvious that a person who keeps in view the scenes of Jannah and Jahannam, all the time, could never get entangled in the worldly life.

14. All that you give for the cause of Allah shall be repaid fully to you; and you shall not be wronged. (al-Anfal: 60)

Note: The Ayaat and Ahadith, regarding increasing rewards for virtues, may not be taken to contradict this Ayat. It simply says that there will be no diminution of the good deeds done. The rate of reward shall depend on what the occasion demands or on the intention of the person spending and on the general conditions at the time of doing the act. The increase shall be to any extent in the Akhirah, whereas, often a full return is given in this life, as corroborated by other Ayat and Ahadith. This particular point would be amplified under the Ayaat quoted at serial No. 20 and under the Ahadith given at serial No. 8

15. Tell my servants, those who are (true) believers to be steadfast in Salaat and to spend out of that which we provided for them in private and in public, before that day arrives when all trading shall cease and friendship be no more. (Ibrahim: 31)

Note: The propriety of giving Sadaqah in private or in public should be judged in accordance with the conditions at the time of giving it. Both ways are necessary, depending on the circumstances prevailing at that time.

It may also mean that obligatory charity is better given publicly, and optional charity is preferably given privately, as has been explained under the Ayat given at Serial No. 9. Establishing Salaat has been discussed in the very first Ayat. Jabir Radhiyallahu anho says that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam delivered a sermon in which he said, "O people! Repent and take a vow to sin no more, before the hour of death, and do good deeds (lest you may not have a chance to do so due to your many occupations); and strengthen the connection between your Lord and yourself by His remembrance in abundance and by giving much in charity, both quietly and openly, because of that you will receive your livelihood, the Divine help and the dispelling of your adversity."

16. And give good news to the humble, whose hearts are filled with awe at the mention of Allah; who endure their misfortune with fortitude, establish Salaat and spend in charity of that which We have given them. (al-Hajj:34-35)

Note: 'Mukhbiteen' has been translated as 'those who are humble'. The Ulama have expressed several views about the meaning of this word. The literal meaning is those who prefer lowliness. Some Ulama have translated it to mean, 'those who submit and bow their heads before the Commands of Allah'. Some have said it means the people who always show humility and keep their heads down for that reason.

Mujahid Rahmathullah alaihe has translated it to mean those who have contentment. Amr Ibne Aas Radhiyallahu anho has said that 'Mukhbiteen' are those who do not oppress anyone nor do they retaliate when others oppress them. Dhahhak Rahmathullah alaihe says that 'Mukhbiteen' are simply the humble ones. Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood has been reported to have said that whenever he saw Rab'ee Ibne Khaitham Radhiyallahu anho he thought of 'Mukhbiteen'.

17. And those who give that which they give with hearts full of fear because they are about to return unto their Lord. They race for the good things, and they shall win them in the race. (al-Momenun: 60-61)

Note: Despite their spending in the path of Allah, they are always afraid of the fate of their charity: whether it will be accepted or not. It is due to the infinite Greatness and Sublimity of Allah Ta'ala Shanohu that the more one advances spiritually, the more he is overwhelmed by His awe and fear.

Particularly the person who is generally awed by the Greatness of Allah Ta'ala, is always afraid for his sincerity of intention in spending, as 'Nafs' and 'Shaitan' often deceive a person about his deed being a virtue, although actually it is not a virtue. As has been said in the last Ruku of Surah Kahf:

Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their works? Those whose effort goes astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work. (al-Kahf: 103 – 104)

Hasan Basri Rahmathullah alaihe says that a Momin remains apprehensive even after doing virtuous deeds, whereas a hypocrite becomes fearless after committing sins.

A number of instances have been mentioned in 'Fazail-e-Hajj' of the people whose hearts are so awed by the Grandeur and Greatness of Allah Ta'ala Shanohu that they are afraid to say labaik (here am I offering myself for Thy service!) lest they be rejected by Him.

Aishah Radhiallahoha anha says that she asked Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam, "Does this Ayat (No. 17 above) concern those who indulge in stealing, adultery, drinking wine and other sins, and at the same time they fear due to the fact that they have to return to Allah?" (that is to say, they are afraid of facing Allah Ta'ala Shanohu for their sins). Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam replied, "No! it concerns those who observe fasting, give in charity and are regular in their Salaat, yet they are afraid all the time of rejection of these virtues." In another Hadith Aishah Radhiallahoha anha asked Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam whether the aforesaid Hadith (S. No. 17) referred to those who committed sins and mistakes and feared Allah. Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam answered in the negative and explained that it referred, instead, to persons who offer Salaat, observe Fast, and give Sadaqah and still their hearts are full of fear.

Ibne Abbas Radhiallahoha anho has been quoted to say that it refers to the people who do righteous deeds but are apprehensive. Saeed Ibne Jubair Rahmathullah alaihe says that it refers to those who give charity but fear the severity of accountability in front of Allah Ta'ala. Hasan Basri Rahmathullah alaihe says that they are the people who act righteously, yet fear that their virtues may not bring them salvation. The face of Zainul Abedin Rahmathullah alaihe Ibne Hussain Radhiallahoha anho used to turn pale when he stood up to perform Salaat and his body shivered. When someone asked him the reason, he said in reply, "Do you know before whom I am standing?" Several instances of this type have been mentioned in the "Virtues of Salaat" and a special Chapter has been devoted in "Stories of Sahabah" concerning those who feared Allah Ta'ala Shanohu.

18. And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you, swear not to give to near of kin and to the needy, and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Do you not yearn that Allah may forgive you? Allah is forgiving, merciful.
(An-Noor: 22)

Note: In the battle of Bani Mustaliq in the sixth year of Hijrah, Aisha Radhiallahoha anha accompanied Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam. She had a separate camel to ride. A litter was fitted on it for her; she stayed in the litter most of the time.

Before moving, a few men would lift the litter and tie it on the back of the camel. She was very light in weight, so much so that the men lifting the litter would not feel the weight of a very light young lady. As usual, the caravan stopped at a certain place for the night. Just before the time of departure early next morning, the litter carriers came and tied it on the back of the camel, while Aishah Radhiallahoha anha had gone out to ease herself. When she returned, she found that the necklace which she wore was missing.

She went back to the spot, where she had been, to look for it. Meanwhile the caravan left the camping site, assuming that Aishah Radhiallahoha anha was occupying the litter. She was left alone in the wilderness. She felt that Rasulallah Sallallahoha alaihe wasallam would notice her absence on the way and someone would be sent back to the site to look for her. She sat down on that very spot where her camel-litter had been put. Feeling tired she went to sleep, with composure of mind which was a Divine gift to the blessed people of that period; whereas a woman of today, left alone in the wilderness in darkness, would be so frightened that instead of going to sleep she would be crying and wailing, till morning.

Safwan Ibne Mu'attal Radhiallaho anho, a venerable Sahabi who always travelled well behind the caravan for picking up anything left or dropped behind, came to the spot where Aishah Radhiallaho anha was sleeping, and noticed a person lying on the ground. When he came closer, he recognised Aishah Radhiallaho anha whom he had seen before the Ayat about 'Pardah' (veil) was revealed. He loudly recited:

Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihe raajioon

Thereupon she woke up and covered her face. He made his camel sit down and she mounted it. He then led the camel by its nose-string and overtook the caravan. Abdullah Ibne Ubayye, the leader of the hypocrites and a deadly enemy of the Muslims, seized this chance of slander mongering and making a scandal.

He gave wide publicity to this incident. Some of the simple-minded Muslims also joined in this rumour. Imagine the Majesty and Might of Allah Ta'ala, this kept circulating for a month and no Ayat was revealed to prove the innocence of Aishah Radhiallaho anha. Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam and all the Muslims were distressed due to that incident. Obviously, it was a severe shock.

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam consulted a number of men and women and made enquiries about it, but no satisfactory solution was forth coming until, after one month, a whole 'Ruku' of Surah an-Noor was revealed indicating the innocence of Aishah Radhiallaho anha and containing severe reprimand of Allah Ta'ala for those who circulated the slander without any basis. One of such persons was Mistah Radhiallaho anho, a Sahabi, who was related to and was looked after by Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho.

Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho was much grieved over the participation of that Sahabi in spreading the false allegation and, in that grief, he swore that he would no longer help Mistah Radhiallaho anho; therefore, the above Ayaat were revealed. It appears that beside Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho some other Sahabah also had withdrawn their helping hand from certain persons who had indulged in the gossip. Aishah Radhiallaho anha says that Mistah had actively participated in this, in spite of being a relative of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho. Mistah was dependent on the financial support of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho and, when the innocence of Aishah Radhiallaho anha was established, Abu Bakr swore not to help Mistah.

Thereupon the above Ayat was revealed, after which, Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho renewed the help. Another Hadith says that, after the above Ayat was revealed, Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho doubled the allowance of Mistah Radhiallaho anho. Still another Hadith says that there were two orphans whom Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho used to support, one of whom was Mistah; Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho had stopped maintenance for both of them, by taking the oath. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that there were several Sahabah who took part in the false allegation against Aishah Radhiallaho anha and for that a large number of Sahabah including Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho had sworn not to give help or spend on the participants of that ugly episode.

Thereupon the Ayat referred to above was revealed, saying that those who are men of means should not forswear helping their near relations and should spend as they were doing before. (Durre Manthur). How great was the forbearance shown by Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho whose daughter's chastity was the subject of false allegations and yet he kept helping the slanderer and gave twice as much as he did before!

19. Who forsake their beds to cry unto their Lord in fear and hope and spend of what We have bestowed on them. No soul knoweth what is kept hid for them of joy, as a reward for what they used to do. (as-Sajda: 16-17).

Note: Scholars of 'Tafseer' have expressed two different opinions about "Keep away from their beds at night." One takes it as the period between 'Maghrib' and 'Isha' Salaat; most Traditions confirm this version. Anas Radhiallaho anho has said that this Ayat was revealed concerning the Ansaar, because they did not go to their homes after Maghrib Salaat and stayed on till after they had performed Isha Salaat with Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam.

Yet another Hadith quoted by Anas Radhiallaho anho states that a number of Muhajireen were in the habit of performing Nafl after Maghrib till Isha and this Ayat was revealed concerning them. Bilal Radhiallaho anho says, "We used to remain seated after Maghrib Salaat and a group of Sahabah kept themselves busy in Salaat, till Isha, and it was regarding them that this Ayat was revealed." Abdullah Ibne Eisa Radhiallaho anho has also confirmed

the statement regarding the Ansaar that they performed Nafil Salaat between 'Maghrib' and 'Isha'. Another opinion relates it to Tahajjud Salaat.

Ma'az Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that this Ayat refers to standing up at night. Another Hadith, quoted by Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe, says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam talked about standing in Salaat at night and tears rolled down from his eyes.

At that time, he recited this particular Ayat. Abdullah Ibne Masood Radhiallaho anho has said that, according to the Taurah, for those who remain away from their beds at night (for standing in Salaat), Haq Ta'ala Shanohu has prepared bounties which no eye has ever seen, nor any ear has heard, nor any thought thereof crossed any mind; and no angel, nor any Nabi or Rasul knows about them; and the same has been referred to in this Ayat of the Holy Qur'an.

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that Allah Ta'ala has prepared such bounties for the pious as no eye has ever seen, no ear ever heard of, nor have those things crossed anybody's mind. Hundreds of instances have been quoted, in the "Raudhatur-Riyaheen" and similar books, of such people who used to spend their nights in Salaat, crying and weeping in remembrance of their Lord. Imaam Abu Hanifah Rahmatullah alaihe, for forty years, performed his morning Salaat with the same 'Wudu' for the previous 'Isha' Salaat. His is a well-known example, which cannot be denied.

It is also commonly known that he used to complete two readings of the Qur'an in a day during the month of Ramadan, one at night and one during the day. Uthman Radhiallaho anho is well-known for keeping vigil, reciting the whole Qur'an in a single Rak'at. Umar Radhiallaho anho after returning from Isha often spent the rest of the night in 'Nafil' Salaat.

It was a usual practice of Tamim Dari Radhiallaho anho, a well known Sahabi, to recite the whole Qur'an in one Rak'at; sometimes he repeated a single Ayat the whole night. Shaddad Ibne Auf Radhiallaho anho used to lie in bed but, after turning from side to side a few times, would get up saying, "O Allah! My sleep has fled away due to the fear of Jahannam." He used to spend the whole night praying. Umair Radhiallaho anho used to offer a thousand Raka'at of 'Nafil' Salaat everyday and recited 'Tasbeeh' a hundred thousand times daily. Uwais Qarni Rahmatullah alaihe is a famous Tabi'ee, of whom Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has spoken highly and even asked his people to request him for Du'aa. He would say one night, "This night is for Ruku" and spend the whole night standing in Rukhu. On another night, he would say, "This night is for Sajda," and spend it lying prostrate in Sajda. (Iqamat-ul-Hujjah)

In short, so numerous are the instances of such pious persons spending the whole night, all their lives pining in the remembrance of their beloved Lord, that it is practically impossible to encompass them all. A poet said:

"We shed tears by night, remembering our beloved; while asleep, we dream of Him alone!"

At the end, the author (Shaikul Hadith Muhammad Zakariyya Rahmatullah alaihe) says, 'Would that Allah Ta'ala grants this humble author a little of their zeal for devotions!'

20. Say: "Lo! My Lord enlarges the provision for him whom He wills of His bondsmen and narrows it. And whatsoever you spend (for the cause of Allah), He will replace it. And He is the best of Providers." (as- Sabaa: 39)

Note: Both prosperity and poverty are from Allah Ta'ala. To restrict spending will not bring prosperity, nor excessive spending cause poverty. On the contrary, whatever is spent for the cause of Allah shall definitely be compensated in Akhirah and in this life also. One Hadith says, "The angel Jibra'il Alaihissalam has quoted Allah Jalla Shanohu as saying. "My bondsmen, I have bestowed My bounties upon you, out of sheer Benevolence, and I have asked you for loan. So, whosoever gives Me loan, of his own accord, I shall requite him readily in this world and also preserve it for him in the Hereafter; as for him who does not give Me of his own accord, I shall take back forcibly what I have granted him. But if he observes patience (after the loss) hoping to be rewarded for that, I shall make it incumbent upon Myself to shower blessings upon him, shall record his name among the properly guided and grant him vision of Myself (on the Day of Resurrection)" (Kanz)

What a great favour of Allah Ta'ala! He has fixed a reward even for him who does not spend of his own accord but remains patient when some of his possessions are forcibly taken away from him, though such a one does not deserve any credit as he is not willing to give anything away in Sadaqah. But there is no limit to the bounties of Allah Ta'ala conferred on men.

Hassan Radhiallaho anho says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, explaining this Ayat, said, "Whatever you spend on your family and dependents, avoiding extravagance and miserliness, will be recorded as spending in the cause of Allah." Jabir Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Anything spent on one's family, as permitted by Shariah, avoiding expenditure on buildings or on sinful acts, has a return from Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala." Another Hadith, from the same source, says that every act of kindness counts as Sadaqah; anything spent on oneself and one's family will also count as Sadaqah; and all that is spent in accordance with Shariah and to protect one's honour shall count as Sadaqah.

Allah undertakes to give good return for all that, except what is spent on forbidden things or on construction.

A full version of the same has also been given in Durre Manthur by Allama Suyooti Rahmatullah alaihe. Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Two angels pray every morning: one implores Allah to grant a befitting return to those who spend and the other prays that the property of the one who hoards should be destroyed." This subject has been treated under the Hadith given at Serial No. 2 below.

Experience also shows that the door of Divine favours is permanently open for those who are generous in spending, while calamities like illness, litigation, theft, etc., cause in a few days, heavy losses in the wealth which the hoarders have amassed in years! Moreover if, due to some good deed of a person, his hoarded wealth is saved from a calamitous loss in his lifetime, his unworthy heirs will squander it in a few months after his death. Hazrat Asmaa Radhiallaho anha narrates that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said to her, "Spend generously! And do not count your hoarded money, lest Allah Ta'ala should also grant you calculated amounts; and do not hoard money, lest Allah should also hoard to deprive you; but give away as much as you can."

Once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam visited Bilal Radhiallaho anho and saw that he had a pile of dates lying beside him. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "What is this?" He replied, "It is something I have stored for my future needs." At this, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Are you not afraid to see, on account of it, the smoke in the fire of Jahannam? Spend liberally, O Bilal, and do not fear loss in your provision from the Lord of the Throne (Arsh)."

This Hadith warns against storing up things for one's future needs, and says that such people shall see the fire of Jahannam. As a matter of fact, the warning was befitting for Bilal Radhiallaho anho who enjoyed a respected position and Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam did not approve of his worrying for tomorrow's needs, as it implied a lack of complete trust in Allah Ta'ala Who provides for the needs of tomorrow as He provides for today. Everybody has a specific position and Allah demands excellence in behaviour varying from man to man.

A well-known maxim says: "What is good enough in a common man, as virtue, might seem a shortcoming in those who have attained a high position in nearness to Allah Ta'ala." Many instances can be quoted to illustrate this point. Clearly, wealth is not a thing worth keeping and least for hoarding.

It has been created only for spending, least on oneself and most on others, and therein lies its true benefit! Nevertheless, the most important thing to realise is the motive for an action, with which it is performed. The famous Hadith, in this connection, is:

"The value of any action depends on the intention." (Bukhari)

Spending even on oneself or one's kinsmen or strangers is bound to bring Divine blessings and benefits, if it is done with the intention to please Allah Ta'ala. But with wrong intention, like publicity or fame, etc., the good deed would be ruined and a misdeed, instead, be established, there being no question of any type of Barakah (Divine blessings) accruing from it.

21. Surely those who recite the book of Allah and establish Salaat, and spend of that which We have bestowed on them, secretly and openly, may look forward to an imperishable gain; that He will reward them and increase them of His bounties. Surely, He is Forgiving, and a Generous Patron. (al-Faatir: 29-30)

Note: Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says that 'imperishable gain' implies Jannah, which will never be destroyed nor become valueless and 'increase of His bounties' refers to what is contained in another Ayat of the Holy Qur'an. (Durree Manthur)

The Ayat quoted by Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe occurs in Surah 'Qaaf'; it reads:

There (in Jannah) they shall have all they desire and there is 'more' with Us." (Which We shall grant them). (Qaaf: 35)

The Ahadith explaining (Mazeedhun) "More" mention marvellous things which demand a detailed discussion. Of these the best is that 'More' signifies as assurance by Allah, to be given to the inhabitants of Jannah, that Allah is pleased with them, and His granting them the bliss of having a vision of Himself, which will be repeatedly granted to the most fortunate ones.

What a great reward in return for a few simple acts involving little labour, namely, spending generously in the path of Allah, establishing Salaat and being constant in recitation of the Qur'an, which is an enjoyable experience even in this life! A few examples of the blessings of constant recitation from the Glorious Qur'an have been mentioned in the 'Faza'il-e-Qur'an', which should be carefully studied.

22. And those who answer the call of their Lord, and establish Salaat, and whose affairs are a matter of counsel among themselves, and who spend of what We have bestowed upon them. (such people shall enjoy bounties of Allah which shall be far superior and more lasting than worldly things) (ash-Shuraa: 38).

Note: The Ayat of Ruku 4 of 'as-Shuraa' (of which the above mentioned Ayat forms a part) recounts various attributes of the perfectly pious people; and contains the promise that Allah Ta'ala has reserved for them rewards (in Akhirah) which are far superior to the bounties of this life. The Ulama have said that the Ayat:

"For those who believe and put their trust in Allah"

and the subsequent Ayaat contain an account of the special attributes of the 'Kulafa-e-Rashideen' Radhiiallaho anhum and a prophecy about the conditions that were to prevail in the respective times (in broad terms) of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali Radhiiallaho anhum, and even in the time of Hasan and Husain Radhiiallaho anhum, with an implicit reference to the order of their succession. The Ayaat also forewarn against certain trying circumstances that the Khulafa had to face in the respective periods of their Caliphate.

Moreover, there is the promise of abundant reward in the Akhirah for the Khulafa-e-Rashideen. The generality of expression extends that promise to all those who strive to cultivate these qualities in themselves. Would that we Muslims had love for Deen and a zeal to search out, in the Qur'an and Ahadith those high morals and virtues, and adopted them! But alas! Our morals continue to deteriorate. In fact, they have fallen so low that non-Muslims have developed an aversion for Islam.

Unfortunately, the non-Muslims do not realise that Muslims in general have given up Islamic morals; so, whatever conduct they see in Muslims today, they consider it to be a Islamic morality! So, we beseech Allah for help!

23. And in their wealth the beggar and the outcast had due share. (az-Zariyaat: 19)

Note: This is in continuation of the attributes and virtues of those who are blessed with perfect faith. The special thing about such people is that they give charity so frequently and regularly as if it was their bounden duty. Ibne Abbas Radhiiallaho anho says that the Ayat, 'in their wealth' indicates a specific portion, other than Zakaat, out of which they spend on relatives, entertain their guests and help the destitute.

Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says that this implies spending in addition to Zakaat. Ibrahim Rahmatullah alaihe says that it means, "They always believe that others have a right in their property in addition to Zakaat" Ibne Abbas Radhiiallaho anho has said that the 'Mahroom' (deprived ones) are those wretched people who have desire or need for things of this life but remain without them and yet they do not beg. Another Hadith says that they are those who get no share from the Bait-ul-maal (public treasury).

Aishah Radhiiallaho anha has said that the 'deprived one' is he, who is in poverty due to insufficient income. Abu Qalaba has said that there was a man in Yamamah, whose total belongings were swept away in a flood.

One of the Sahabah Radhiiallaho anho said about him that this man was a deprived person (Mahroom) and that he must be helped. Abu Hurairah Radhiiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam as saying, "The poor are not those who beg for a morsel from door to door; rather the really poor person is he who has insufficient means to meet his legitimate needs but people are not aware of his condition warranting help; he is the one who is truly deprived (Mahroom)."

When Fatimah Binte Qais Radhiiallaho anha asked Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam about the meaning of this Ayat, Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam said that there were obligations in respect of property beside Zakaat. (This particular Hadith will be repeated at Serial No. 16 under Ahadith). Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam recited the Ayat:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces ..."

A part of the above has been quoted at No. 2 above, in which payment of Zakaat has been mentioned separately from charity to the poor. Therein is an encouragement to spend abundantly for the cause of Allah, apart from what is given in Zakaat. But it is our misfortune that, nowadays, we feel distressed even while giving Zakaat. There are many Muslims who do not care to give Zakaat, but would even pawn their homes to celebrate absurd festivals and marriages, which amounts to waste of wealth here and retribution in the Hereafter.

24. Believe in Allah and His Rasul, and spend (for the cause of Allah) of that whereof He has made you trustees; and such of you as believe and spend (for the cause of Allah) theirs will be a great reward. (al-Hadeed: 7)

Note: The word, "Trustee" is meant to convey that the wealth you possess belonged to someone else and it is with you only for a few days till your eyes are permanently closed, when it will pass on to others; therefore, it is a useless exercise to collect it bit by bit.

Your wealth is disloyal, it does not stay permanently with anyone nor ever will. Lucky is he who can devise a way to keep it permanently with himself and that is to deposit it in the treasury of Allah Jalla Shanohu where there will be no fear of loss or its being taken away, whereas in this life fear and anxiety of a total loss always exist.

The Divine Power has repeatedly demonstrated that magnificent palaces, great estates and huge properties are, in an instant, taken away from their owners and given to others! The sole owners of buildings and houses yesterday, see with their own eyes others in possession of them today! Yet no one seems to take heed!

25. What has happened to you that you do not spend in the path of Allah; when all the heavens and the earth are Heritage of Allah? Those who spent (for the cause of Allah) before the conquest (of Makkah) and fought, are not comparable to those who did not, they are more exalted than those who spent and fought afterwards. And Allah has promised good reward for all. And Allah is aware of what you do. (al-Hadeed: 10)

Note: the Heritage of Allah Ta'ala means that, when all mankind meet their end, each and everything (including the total wealth of the earth and heavens) will be under the authority of the Divine Entity, the Creator, Who Alone will be there. Since we all have to leave all our possessions behind, why not spend them happily with our hands and receive a befitting return in the Akhirah? Thereafter the Ayat mentions a caution about the special status of those who fought and spent for the cause of Allah before the conquest of Makkah.

They are far superior to those who spend and fought after that great event, the reason being that the need then was the greatest and, therefore, spending in those conditions had much greater value than on other occasions; hence a much greater reward for it.

This point is further explained at No. 13 of the Ahadith. People must therefore look for such occasions, when the needs of other people are pressing, seize the opportunity of spending on them and consider it a great blessing. Allah Ta'ala Shanohu, on that basis, has differentiated between the various Sahabah, giving a superior reward to those who spent before the conquest of Makkah, it being a period of grave crisis. Accordingly, one must bear in mind that to help others at the time of their urgent need will be an act of higher value.

26. Who is he that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan that Allah Ta'ala will increase and for him there is an excellent reward. (al-Hadeed:11)

Note: A similar point has been made in the Ayat given at No. 5 above. The repetition is meant simply to lay emphasis on the subject matter. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly exhorts us that now is the time to spend in the path of Allah, and to do it as much as we can. There will be nothing but remorse after death.

27. Indeed the men who give Sadaqah and the women who give Sadaqah (all of them) are lending a goodly loan to Allah; the return for them will be increased; and for them shall be an exquisite reward. (al-Hadeed: 18)

Note: The Ayat means that those who spent as Sadaqah, in fact, lend a loan to Allah Ta'ala and, like any loan, this will also be returnable to the givers, but much increased at the time when their need will be greatest and most compelling; they will rather be without resources except for the befitting return of that loan from Allah Ta'ala. In this life, people save up bit by bit for future needs like wedding of their children or any other needs. Particularly for future weddings, they are constantly worried, keep buying dresses and ornaments and other things appropriate for those occasions, so as to avoid any difficulty at that time.

The Day of Akhirah will be the day of our greatest need and most urgent necessity, but with no chance of buying, borrowing or even begging from any source. For such a difficult and momentous occasion, one must save as much as is possible. This would hardly be a strain here, but would bring a return of the size of mountains.

28. (Therein is the share of those people too). "Those who entered the city (Madinah) and the faith (Imaan) before them and they love those who flee to them for refuge and they do not mind what the Muhajireen receive; and prefer them before themselves though poverty may afflict them; whoever is saved from his own avarice, such are the successful ones." (al-Hashr: 9)

Note: The preceding Ayaat mention the categories of the people who were entitled to receive assistance from the 'Baitul Maal'. This Ayat mentions the Ansaar Radhiallaho anhum, bringing out their particular virtues, one of these being that they accepted Imaan and achieved spiritual perfection while staying at home. Normally, it is a difficult thing to achieve these qualities while living at home, as worldly affairs and other matters become obstacles in the way. The other special virtue that the Ansar possessed, was intense love for the Muhajireen.

Those who have knowledge of the early history of Islam are astonished at the instances manifesting the degree of love the Ansaar had for the Muhajireen. Several such instances have been recounted in the "Stories of Sahabah."

An incident is related here, as an example. When Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam migrated to Madinah, he established a fraternity between the Muhajireen and Ansaar. Everyone among the Muhajireen entered into a sacred bond of brotherhood with one from the Ansaar; the necessity arose because the Muhajireen were strangers in Madinah and, as such, they were bound to face hardships in the new place.

The Ansaar, being locals, made life easy for the Muhajireen through their personal help and care. This was an excellent arrangement, made by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, whereby a man from the Ansaar found it easy to take care of a Muhajir brother.

Each one was able to look after one particular person. Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf Radhiallaho anho, a Muhajir, has related, his own story, this: "When the Muhajireen arrived in Madinah, I was conjoined with Sa'd Ibne Rabi'a

Radhiallaho anho, an Ansaari, as a brother. Sa'd told me that he was the richest person in Madinah, and that I could take half of his property and also marry one of his wives whom he would divorce for me, so that marriage could take place after the expiry of 'Iddat' (waiting period)" (Bukhari)

Yazeed Ibne Asam Radhiallaho anho says that once the Ansaar requested Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that the agricultural land of each one of them should be divided in two parts and one half given to a Muhajir brother. But Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam did not agree to the proposal and was pleased to arrange that the Muhajireen should work on the farms of the Ansaar for a share of the produce, so that both would benefit from each other, the Ansaar benefiting from the Muhajireen's labour and the latter from the former's land.

Today, it is impossible to imagine that such kinship could be created merely on the basis of religion. The irony of fate is that, today, the Muslims (who were once well known for their self-sacrifice and sympathy for others) have become engrossed in fulfilling their selfish and personal needs.

They do not mind giving trouble to others, as long as they themselves are in comfort. Muslim History is full of instances of Muslims bearing hardships and misfortunes for the sake of others. It is said that a pious person had a very bad-tempered wife, who gave him much annoyance all the time. A friend advised him to divorce her, but he replied, "She would then marry another Muslim and would cause similar trouble to him." (Ihya). That is a well said statement! Could this be said about Muslims today? Could anyone of us bear to suffer in order to save others from suffering?

The third quality of the Ansaar was that they were too broadminded to feel jealous of the Muhajireen when the latter received something from the war booty. According to Hasan Basri Rahmathullah alaihe the Ayat means that the Ansaar did not mind when the Muhajireen were given a general preference over them. (Durre Manthur)

The fourth quality mentioned in the Ayat is that the Ansaar willingly let others have material goods in spite of their own poverty and hunger. Many instances of this have been mentioned in the histories of their lives. A few of those have been recounted in the Author's booklet entitled "Stories of Sahabah" in the section on "Sympathy and self-sacrifice". One of those is the famous event which occasioned the revelation of the above Ayat.

A man came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and complained of hunger and poverty; Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam sent someone to his own household for bringing some food for the visitor, but nothing was available there. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then asked the people present there, if anyone of them would take the guest home and entertain him.

One of the Ansaar, whose name is said to be Abu Talha Radhiallaho anho, took the guest home and said to his wife, "This is the guest of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam; look after him well, and do not keep back anything in the house but serve it to him." The wife replied there was not much food in the house except some for the children. Abu Talha Radhiallaho anho told her to put the children to bed, lay the food before the grown ups (all three, husband, wife, and the guest) and when they sit to eat, put the candle out, pretending to adjust it; so that the guest might eat his fill, they themselves not touching the food while their guest would think they were sharing it.

The wife did accordingly. The guest ate while they spent the night hungry. In the morning, when Abu Talha Radhiallaho anho came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, he said that Allah Ta'ala was greatly pleased with Abu Talha and his wife for their entertainment of their guest the previous night. It was on this occasion that the above Ayat was revealed.

In the series of Ahadith given below, the Hadith quoted at serial No. 13 gives further explanation of this Ayat. After recounting the virtues of the Ansaar, the Ayat states that the persons who protect themselves from greed or avarice (Shuhh) are the successful ones. 'Shuhh' means innate greed and miserliness, which may not be manifest in practice. That is why the Ulama have explained it in various ways.

The Qur'anic word Shuhh in proper terms means greed or avarice. It includes greed for money as well as the desire to take others' property. A person came to Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho and complained that he was ruined.

On being asked, "How?" the man replied, "Allah Jalla Shanohu has ordained that only those will attain success who are free from Shuhh, and I am suffering from Shuhh because I do not like to lose anything that I possess." Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallahoh anho said that he was not suffering from Shuhh but from miserliness, although that was also not a good thing; Shuhh means taking away another's property unjustly. Ibne Umar Radhiallahoh anho has also been quoted to say the same thing as Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallahoh anho, adding that Shuhh is much worse than miserliness, as a miser only holds back his own property, while a man suffering from Shuhh does this and also wishes that others' wealth should become his property.

Ta'oos Rahmatullah alaihe says, "Miserliness consists in not spending out of one's property; whereas Shuhh causes a man to dislike others spending out of their property. Ibne Umar Radhiallahoh anho is reported to have said that Shuhh is even more hateful than miserliness because a miser withholds his own money and a man possessed of Shuhh (innate greed) does not spend his own property and also wishes that others' property should come into his possession.

In one of the Ahadith Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam has said that a person possessing the following three qualities would be free from Shuhh: (a) giving Zakaat, (b) looking after one's guest and (c) helping others in their difficulties.

In another Hadith Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam has said that nothing harms Islam more than Shuhh (greed). Another Hadith states that the dust that gathers on one's body while one is in the path of Allah and the smoke of Jahannam can never remain together on any person; nor can Imaan and greed (Shuhh) remain together in anybody's heart.

In another Hadith, Jabir Radhiallahoh anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam as saying, "Beware of oppression (cruelty), for oppression will produce layers upon layers of darkness on the Day of Judgment, and protect yourself against Shuhh, for Shuhh destroyed the people before you; it made them shed one another's blood and induced them to commit adultery among their close relations whom it is unlawful to marry." Abu Hurairah Radhiallahoh anho says that he heard Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam saying, "Preserve yourselves from innate greed and miserliness, for these evils caused the people before you to sever bonds of relationship with their kinsmen, induced them to commit adultery with women among their close relations forbidden for marriage, and led them to blood-shed." Obviously, committing adultery with a stranger woman costs something while incest with one's daughter costs nothing. Similarly, plundering others' property leads to blood-shed.

Anas Radhiallahoh anho says that once a person died in the times of Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam and people said that he would go to Jannah but Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam said, "Do you know everything about his life? It is just possible that he may have something that did not concern him or might have been miserly in a matter which brought him no benefit." In another Hadith, this incident has been related differently. A man died a martyr in the battle of Uhad. A woman came to his body and said, "Congratulations on your Shahadah (martyrdom) O son!" Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam said to her, "You are unaware whether he had uttered something irrelevant or ever acted as a miser about a thing which was of little use to him." Indeed, to be stingy about a trifle is the worst form of greediness.

29. O you who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from remembrance of Allah. Those who do so, they are the losers. And spend of that wherewith We have provided you, before death comes unto one of you and he says: 'My Lord! If Thou wouldst relieve me for a little while, then I would give Sadaqah and be among the righteous.' But Allah relieves no soul when its term comes and Allah is aware of what you do. (Al-Munafiqoon: 9-10-11)

Note: Engagements concerning property or money matters together with involvement in the family affairs, usually become a hindrance in fulfilling the commandments of Allah, the Almighty. This happens in spite of the certainty of death whose timing remains unknown; when that moment arrives nothing shall avail a person except grief and disappointment.

The household, the family, riches and property, all shall have to be left behind and one shall leave the world helpless. Ibne Abbas Radhiallahoh anho quoted Rasulallah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam as saying, "When death comes to a person who had sufficient wealth to perform Hajj and to give Zakaat and yet did not accomplish these,

he would pine for a return to this world." Someone said to Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho that only a Kafir wishes to rejoin worldly life, not a Muslim, Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho recited this particular Ayat and said that Allah has addressed this Ayat to the Muslims.

In another Hadith, Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho has been quoted to say that the Ayat refers to a Mo'min; when death comes to a Mo'min who has had sufficient wealth to enable him to give Zakaat as well as to perform Hajj, and yet has failed to do so in his lifetime, besides neglecting many other obligations towards Allah, he will wish to return to life, so that he may fulfil all those obligations. Nevertheless, Allah Jalla Jalalohu has decreed that when the moment of death comes, it cannot be delayed. (Durre Manthur)

The Holy Qur'an reminds men, time and again, that the moment of death has been fixed for every individual and that there can be no postponement. Man keeps thinking of giving such and such thing as Sadaqah, of dedicating such and such things for a sacred cause, and of donating so much to so and so through his will; but he remains absorbed in such thoughts till Fate suddenly takes his life.

And he dies suddenly while sitting, walking or sleeping. Therefore, one should not delay the performance of virtuous deeds by prolonged thinking or planning, but one should spend for the cause of Allah as soon as possible and deposit it with Him.

30. O ye who believe! Fear Allah. And let every soul look to that which it has sent for the morrow. Fear Allah! Lo! Allah is informed of what you do. And be not you like those who forgot Allah, therefore He caused them to forget their souls. Such are the evil-doers. Not equal are the inhabitants of the Fire (Jahannam) and the dwellers of Jannah; the dwellers of Jannah shall be the victorious. (al-Hashar: 18-20)

Note: 'Allah caused them to forget their souls' means they lost their intelligence and were unable to distinguish between right and wrong and indulged in things ruinous for themselves. Jarir Radhiyallahu anho says that once at mid-day he was in attendance upon Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam when a Jama'at of the Mudhar tribe arrived. They were all bare-headed and bare-footed and in a state of starvation.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam turned pale with grief to see them in this condition and went into his dwelling (obviously to get something for the visitors). He returned to the Masjid after a while and ordered Bilal Radhiyallahu anho to say Azaan.

After performing the Zuhur Salaat he mounted the pulpit, praised Allah Ta'ala and recited some Ayaat of the Holy Quran including the one above. He then exhorted the people to give Sadaqah before it becomes impossible to do so and repeated this by saying, "You must give before you become powerless to give, and give immediately whatever you can: a Dinaar, a Dirham, a piece of cloth, a little wheat barley, dates or even a piece of a date." Hearing this, a man from the Ansaar got up, went home and brought a heavy bag full of things which he could hardly carry, and presented it to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, whose serene face brightened with joy and he said that whosoever sets a good example shall get a reward for that as well as the reward equivalent to the reward of those who follow his good example, without any reduction in the latter's reward. Similarly, if a person sets a bad example, it will count as a sin against him and the sins of those who follow that example shall also go into his account, without any reduction in the latter's burden.

Thereupon, all the people went away and returned with something to give, a Dinaar or a Dirham or some grain. The result was that there were two heaps of clothes and grain, etc., gathered in front of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. These were all distributed among the tribe of Mudhar. (Nisai-Durre Manthur)

One of the Ahadith states, "O people send something in advance. The time is soon coming when Allah Ta'ala will talk to you without an intermediary and without a veil and say, 'Did not My Rasul come to you with My commandments? Did I not grant you wealth? Was it not more than your own needs? What did you send in advance for your requirements here?' The man will look around and see nothing except Jahannam in front of him." The Hadith further states, "Whoever wishes to save himself from this situation must give Sadaqah, even if it be a portion of a date." (Kanz). It will be a terrible situation and a frightening stock-taking.

The blazing Fire of Jahannam will be in front of the men trembling with the fear of being thrown into it at any moment, and deeply sorrowing for not having given away everything in worldly life and for withholding money for imaginary needs, and for wasting it on useless things. When the eyes close, all needs vanish except the severe one", an escape from Jahannam which will keep haunting a person.

Abu Bakr Siddiq Radhiallaho anho addressing the people said, "Bear in mind that the tenure of your life, out of which you spend mornings and evenings, is not known to you. You do not know when your end will come. You should, if you can, most carefully utilise it before the end comes. This you can only do if Allah wills. There were people who spent their time in useless occupations; Allah Jalla Shanohu has forbidden you to be like them and has said:

And be not like those who forgot Allah, therefore He caused them to forget themselves. (Al-Hasher: 19)

Where are those of your brethren whom you knew? They have departed after finishing their term; their deeds have come to an end and they are face to face with reckoning of their deeds. They will lead a joyful life if their deeds were good or be in suffering if they were bad. Where are those despots of the past who raised walled cities for their protection? They are lying now under stones and mounds.

This is the Sacred Word of Allah whose marvels shall never end, nor will its light grow dim. Get light from the Word of Allah today, to serve you during the dark days to come, and give heed to its warnings. Allah Ta'ala has praised certain people and said:

They hastened to do good deeds and called Us with Mixed feelings of longing and fear and showing humility towards Us. (al-Ambyia:90)

Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho went on saying, "That word has no merit which is not intended to please Allah; and that wealth is without benefit which is not spent for the cause of Allah; and that man is not good whose patience does not overcome his anger, and he is not a proper person who is concerned more about people's reproach than the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala Shanohu." (Durre Manthur)

31. Your wealth and your children are only a temptation, whereas, Allah! With Him is an immense reward. So keep your duty to Allah as best as you can, and listen, and obey and spend; that is better for your souls. And whoso is saved from his own greed, such are successful. (at-Taghabun: 15-16)

Note: Shuhh i.e. innate greed is the worst form of miserliness and we have already dealt with it under the Ayat given at No. 28 above. Wealth and children are a great trial for men: to distinguish those whose excessive love for them makes them neglect the commandments and remembrance of Allah, from those who persevere in loyalty to Him, despite these two temptations.

Of course, the example to be followed is that of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who had nine wives, several children and grand-children. In addition Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and most of the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum had very large families. Many books on history give details of their children and grandchildren. It is difficult to calculate the exact number of the sons, grandsons and great grandsons of Anas Radhiallaho anho, who himself remarked once, "Not to speak of the descendants of my sons and daughters, I have myself buried one hundred and twenty five persons out of my direct descendants." (Isabah).

One can imagine how many might have survived after his death and how large was the number of his sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, and other descendants! And yet Anas Radhiallaho anho is counted among the Sahabah who have transmitted a large number of Ahadith, and who took part in Jehaad frequently! Such a large family and its obligations could not deter him from participation in Jehaad, nor distract him from the pursuit of knowledge of Ahadith.

When Zubair Radhiallaho anho was martyred, his survivors included four wives, nine sons and nine daughters, and a few of his grandsons were even older than some of his sons. (Bukhari). Apart from these, he had other children who had died in his life. In spite of such a large family, he never joined any service or occupation, but spent his entire life in Jehaad and striving for the cause of 'Deen'. Similarly, there were many other Sahabah like them, who

never allowed families, however large, or abundant wealth to deter them from the performance of their religious obligations and functions. A number of them had large business concerns but never did these hinder them from observing their religious duties. Allah Ta'ala Himself has praised him in the Holy Qur'an by saying:

(They are such) people whom buying and selling do not prevent from the remembrance of Allah, performance of Salaat and giving Zakaat. They are fearful of the Day when all hearts and eyes will be overturned, but in their case they will receive excellent returns for their noble deeds and Allah Ta'ala, by His special favour, will grant them extra rewards. (an-Noor: 37-38)

Several incidents have been related in the explanatory discussions of this Ayat. It is said that the Sahabah were businessmen, but business never prevented them from the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. When the Azaan was called, they would immediately leave their shops for the performance of Salaat. (Durre-Manthur).

32. If you lend unto Allah a goodly loan, He will double it for you and will forgive you, for Allah is Responsive, Clement, Knower of the invisible and visible, the Mighty, the Wise. (at-Taghabun: 17-18)

Note: The same subject has been treated in the Ayaat given at Serial No's 25, 26 and 27. It is Allah Jalla Shanohu's special bounty and kind regard for the well-being of His bondsmen that He has repeatedly recounted the things which are important for them.

We often recite these Ayaat merely for the sake of earning blessings of recitation with it. It is a favour of the Gracious Allah that He grants good returns for the mere recitation of the Qur'an. But it has to be borne in mind that the Qur'an has not been revealed simply for recitation, but its sacred commandments are to be put into practise and properly followed in life. It should be realised that when the Sovereign and Lord of the whole Universe, Who is our Benefactor, our Guardian and Helper, our Cherisher and, above all, our Creator, repeatedly orders us to do something and we, in response, merely say, "Yes, O Lord we have read your directions and orders", and remain content with that, would not that be height on injustice?

33. And establish Salaat, and pay Zakaat, and (so) lend unto Allah a goodly loan. Whatsoever good you send before you for your souls, you will surely find it with Allah, better and greater in the recompense, and seek forgiveness of Allah. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (al-Muzammil: 20)

(A goodly loan or 'Qardh-e-Hasanah' is a loan without interest or any thought of gain or loss.)

Note: "Better and greater in the recompense" means that a donor will be given better and greater recompense in the Hereafter for the money spent as Sadaqah, far better in quality and quantity than the thing he would have got, in return for the money, if he had spent it in the world, for instance, two kilograms of wheat for a rupee. The fact is that the recompense in the Hereafter would be far superior to the possible worldly returns both in quality and quantity. We have already quoted a Hadith under the Ayat given at Serial No. 7 to the effect that "Even a date is given away as Sadaqah out of the lawfully earned property, with sincerity of intention, Allah Ta'ala grants increase in the recompense for it, till it becomes as large as the Mount Uhad."

Would that we appreciated the generosity of our Bounteous Lord Who grants such enormous rewards for such small amounts of Sadaqah, and deposited with Him as much money as possible! For, then He would have returned it to us with bountiful increase, at the time of our dire need.

In this Ayat, Allah Ta'ala has also promised that whatsoever virtue we send before us, He will accord us an equal recompense for it. In our booklet, "Barakaat-e-Zikr" we have quoted many Ahadith about the increase in rewards for good deeds, including the following Hadith:

In the estimation of Allah the reward for saying:

(SubhanAllah) Allah be glorified, or (Alhamdulillah) All praises to Allah or (lailaaha illAllah) There is none to be worshipped but Allah, or (Allahu Akbar) Allah is Great, is even larger than Mount Uhad, provided these are recited with the purest motive of pleasing Allah.

As a matter of fact, sincerity of intention is the first condition for the acceptance of any virtuous deed. A good deed performed insincerely, with a worldly motive, shall be of no value in the Akhirah. For cultivating this quality, one has to associate with spiritual guides (Mashaikh), serve them devotedly and earn their favour. For it is only through associating with such people that one can learn how to perform good deeds solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

34. Lo! The righteous shall drink of a cup whereof the mixture is of water of Kafur. A spring wherefrom the slaves of Allah drink, making it gush forth abundantly (in whatever direction they would desire). They fulfil the vow and fear a day whereof the evil is wide-spreading. And they feed the needy, the orphan and the captive, for love of Allah. And say: "We feed you for the sake of Allah only, we wish for no reward or thanks from you.

Because we only fear a day of wrath and fate from your Lord". Therefore, Allah hath warded off from them the evil of that day and made them find brightness and joy; and hath awarded them, for all that they endured, a Garden and silk-attire; reclining therein upon couches, they will find there neither (heat of) sun nor bitter cold. The shade thereof will be close upon them and the clustered fruits bow down (at their command). Goblets of silver are brought round for them and beakers of glass: (Bright as) glass but (made) of silver.

They themselves will determine the measure thereof (according to their wishes). They will have a drink in a cup whereof the mixture is of Zanjabeel (ginger); the water of a spring therein named Salsabeel. There serve them young men of everlasting youth, whom when you see you would take them for scattered pearls. When you look, you will see their bliss and immense territory. Their raiment will be fine green silk and gold embroidery, bracelets of silver will they wear. Their Lord will satisfy their thirst with a pure drink (and it will be said unto them): Lo! This is a reward for you. Your endeavour (upon earth) has found acceptance. (ad-Dahr:5-22)

Note: The sacred Ayaat describe three varieties of drink, the specific quality of each drink and the way in which it will be taken. The first Ayat says that the righteous will drink it themselves, the second says that they will be offered a drink by their servants, while in the third, it is said that the Lord of all creation, the Grand Sovereign Himself, would present the drink to them. Probably, this may refer to three classes of the righteous; the common people, the superior ones and the highest class.

In these Ayaat the greatness, honour and virtues of the righteous have been mentioned, which they shall attain especially through the performance of good deeds, particularly feeding the poor for the pleasure of Allah. If we had perfect Imaan and believed firmly in these promises, every one of us would like to follow the example of Siddiq-e-Akbar Radhiallaho anho, who gave away everything in his house to win Allah's pleasure, leaving behind only the blessings associated with the names of Allah and His Rasul. These Ayaat refer to a few matters which need special attention:

1. There is mention of fountains which the dwellers of Jannah would shift to any place they like. Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe explains that those fountains will flow to any point and in any direction of their choice. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says that they will have drinks which have a mixture of 'Kafoor' and are sealed with fragrant musk, and the water of the fountains will run in any direction they desire.

Ibne Shauzab Rahmatullah alaihe says that those people will have gold wands with which they will make a sign indicating the direction in which the fountain should flow and that will come about.

2. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe has been quoted as saying, "They fulfilled the 'vow' means they acted upon every order of Allah Ta'ala; that is why they have been called Abrar (the righteous). Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says that the vow means an undertaking to perform a good deed for the sake of Allah (like fasting, I'tikaaf or worship). Ikrimah Radhiallaho anho says, "It means offerings for thanks-giving." Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has been quoted to say that a man came to Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam and submitted that he had vowed to kill himself for the sake of Allah. Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam was busy in something else and could not properly attend to him.

The man took his silence as an approval for fulfilling his vow and got up and went away to kill himself. Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam came to know what the man was about to do and said, "Thanks be to Allah who has created such people in my Ummah who are so resolute in fulfilling their vows", and he ordered the man not to kill

himself but to slaughter one hundred camels instead, for taking one's own life was forbidden by religion and the ransom (blood-money) for a life taken was a hundred camels.

3. The feeding of prisoners in the Ayat concerns the idolaters who had become prisoners in various battles. There were no Muslim prisoners at that time. When the feeding of non-Muslim prisoners carries so much reward from Allah, the reward for the Muslim captives would be far greater.

Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam brought the captives of Badr (who were infidels) to Madina, seven notable Sahabah, namely Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, Zubair, Abdur Rahman, Sa'd, and Abu Ubaidah Radhiallaho anhum were particularly generous in spending money on their food, etc. At this, the Ansaar remarked, "We fought those prisoners in the cause of Allah and you are looking after them so lavishly." Thereafter, the nineteen Ayaat beginning (innal abraara) were revealed in praise of those Sahabah who looked after the prisoners. Hasan Rahmatullah alaihe says that, at the time of revelation of these Ayaat, there were only idolaters as prisoners.

Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says, "When Allah Jalla Shanohu ordered us to show kindness towards prisoners who were idolaters, the obligations in respect of Muslim prisoners must be far greater." Ibne Jurraj Rahmatullah alaihe says that there were no Muslim prisoners at the time when these Ayaat were revealed. Only the idolaters were prisoners, and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave orders for looking after their welfare. Abu Razeen Rahmatullah alaihe says that once he was with Shaqeeq Ibne Salmah Rahmatullah alaihe when a few of the prisoners passed that way, and Shaqeeq told him to give something as Sadaqah to the prisoners and recited the above Ayaat.

4. 'We wish for no reward nor thanks', means that the Sahabah did not like to have any type of return at all for their good deeds in this life, even in the form of Du'aa or thanks. They wanted total return for them in Akhirah. Aishah and Umme Salmah Radhiallaho anhum are reported to have given instructions, to the person who took their Sadaqah to the poor, to quietly listen to what the recipient said after receiving it.

When the person reported back any words of Du'aa, etc., to the venerable ladies, they used to make the same kind of Du'aa, etc., in favour of the poor, saying that it was in return for what the poor had said, so that their Sadaqah remained purely and solely for the Akhirah. Umar Radhiallaho anho and his son Abdullah Radhiallaho anho are reported to have done the same. Zainul Abedin Rahmatullah alaihe has remarked that if the giver of Sadaqah waits for the person in need to come to him, that would not count as real generosity.

The truly generous one is he who fulfils his obligations to Allah by going himself to the doors of the needy persons, and does not expect any expression of thanks for that, in view of the full faith he has in the rewards from Allah.

5. 'The bunches of the fruits of Jannah obeying the commands' means that they will reach them when and where the dwellers in Jannah wish them to reach. Baraa Ibne Aazib Radhiallaho anho says, "The inhabitants of Jannah will be able to eat the fruit as they wish, while sitting, standing or lying". Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says, "If they wished to have fruit while standing, the bunch would bend and come in front of them, just within their reach; it would bend lower if they desired to eat it while sitting; and it would bend still lower if they liked to eat it while lying." Another Hadith reports him (Mujahid) as saying, "The ground of Jannah is made of silver, its dust is musk, the roots of its trees are made of gold, their branches and leaves are made of pearls and jasper, with the fruit dangling in between them.

If the dwellers in Jannah would like to eat the fruit while standing they would experience no difficulty in reaching it; if they desired to have it while sitting or reclining on their beds, it would bend down accordingly."

6. 'Bright as glass but made of silver' means that the silver will be transparent like glass. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that, in this life, if silver is beaten to the thinness of a fly's wing, one cannot see water through it, but in Jannah the silver goblets will be transparent. It has been said that, in this life, there are to be found samples of everything in Jannah, except the goblets of silver of the type mentioned herein.

Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says that if all the experts in the world work together to make a transparent goblet of this type, they will fail to do so. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that an incident relating to Ali and Fatimah

Radhiallaho anhuma (which will be mentioned in the story No. 43 at the end of this book) occasioned the revelation of these Ayaat. It is not an unusual thing to find an Ayat being revealed in consequence of more than one occurrence taking place severally; in that case, it applies to all such incidents.

35. He is successful who purifies himself, And remembers the name of his Lord, and observes Salaat; but you prefer the life of the world. Although the Akhirah is far better and everlasting. (al-A'laa: 14-17)

Note: The Ulama have given several interpretations of 'purifies himself'; many of them say that it means 'gives Sadaqah at the end of Ramadhan, called 'Sadaqatul Fitr'; While some of them give it a general sense. Saeed Ibne Jubair Rahmatullah alaihe says that it means purifies himself of (the taint of) his lawfully earned wealth (through payment of Zakaat).

Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says, "Successful is he who has pleased his Creator by (spending) his wealth." Abul Ahwas Rahmatullah alaihe said, "Allah Ta'ala Subhanohu has mercy on a person who gives Sadaqah and then performs Salaat". He then recited the above mentioned Ayat. In another version, he is reported to have said, "Let him, who can afford, give something as Sadaqah before offering Salaat".

Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho says, "When a person intends to observe Salaat, it will be better for him to give something as Sadaqah before doing so." He then recited this Ayat. Arfaja Radhiallaho anho says that he once asked Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho to recite to him the Surah: Sabih bismi Rabikal A'laa

Glorify the name of thy Lord, the most High: (al-A'laa)

He began to recite it and when he came to the Ayat:

"But you prefer the life of this world"

he stopped short in the midst of recitation and addressing the people said, "We have preferred this life to the Akhirah." People sat listening quietly. He then again said, "We have preferred this life because we have seen the beauty and adornment of the world, its women, its food and its drinks, while things of the Akhirah have been veiled from us. We are engrossed in what is before us, forgetful of what we have been promised in the Akhirah!"

Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe has said that all mankind are engaged in the present-day worldly activities, except those who enjoy Allah's protection, even though the Akhirah is far more valuable and everlasting. Anas Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam as saying that the Kalimah (lailaaha illAllah) saves people from the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala as long as they do not give preference to their worldly requirements as against the demands of religion, but when they begin to do so, the kalimah (lailaaha illAllah) is returned to them with the Divine remarks, "You are telling a lie".

In another Hadith, Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam has said that whoever bears testimony to lailaaha illAllahu wahdhahu lashareeka lahu will enter Jannah, unless he has mixed it with something averse to it and polluted his faith with falsification. Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam repeated his words three times and the gathering remained silent. Probably Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam wanted someone to ask about it, but the people were quiet due to respect and awe. Finally a man got up from a distance and said, "O Rasulallah, may my parents be sacrificed for your sake, what is the meaning of, 'mixing it with something else?'" He replied, "The love of this world and preferring it to everything else, amassing wealth for its own sake and acting towards people unjustly and cruelly".

Another Hadith of Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam says, "Whoever loves this world harms his Akhirah and when anyone loves the Akhirah he does harm to this world, therefore, prefer the love of the thing (Akhirah) that will remain for ever, over the thing (this world) that will come to an end." In another Hadith Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam has said, "This world is the home of one who has no home in the Akhirah and it is the property of him who has no share in Akhirah, and only that person collects or hoards for this life who lacks wisdom".

A Hadith says that, amongst His entire creation, Allah Ta'ala does not dislike anything more than this world; He has never looked at this world with kindness ever since He created it".

In another Hadith Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that the love of this life is the root-cause of all sins. At the end of this book in Chapter six, a number of Ayaat and Ahadith regarding this life and Akhirah have been given in a summarised form. In addition to all the Ayaat which have been mentioned upto now in this volume, there are many other Ayaat in the Holy Qur'an, exhorting us to spend for the cause of Allah Jalla Shanohu.

This subject has been treated again and again in a variety of ways by Allah Jalla Shanohu in the Holy Qur'an, with different ways of persuasion to spend all. This shows its unquestionable importance, particularly, when all out of which one spends is a grant from Allah Ta'ala. For example, a rich man gives his servant some money for his personal needs but also says that he would like him to set aside a little money for such and such thing, and promises him a bountiful reward in case he complies with his directions. In such an event, it is obvious that the servant would gladly spend money on that particular thing, knowing that he would receive much more than what he has spent on it.

AHADITH ON THE VIRTUES OF SPENDING FOR THE CAUSE OF ALLAH

After quoting so many Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an on the subject of spending for the cause of Allah Ta'ala, there should be no need of quoting any Ahadith bearing on this subject. But since the Ahadith clarify and explain the sacred Word of Allah Ta'ala, there should be no need of quoting any Ahadith bearing on this subject. But since the Ahadith clarify and explain the sacred Word of Allah Subhanahu Ta'ala, it would be worthwhile narrating a few Ahadith before concluding this Chapter.

HADITH: 1

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "If I possessed gold to the extent of mount Uhud, I would not like to keep any of it with me for more than three days, except what I put aside for paying a debt".

Note: Mount Uhud is well known as the biggest mountain near Madinah. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that, if he had as much gold as the mountain of Uhud, he would like to give it away within three days and would not keep any portion of it with himself.

This is simply meant to convey that it will take at least three days to distribute that huge amount of gold. Of course, if there was debt to be paid and the creditor was not present, some portion of gold could be retained till the debt could be paid. This shows that payment of a debt is more important than Sadaqah. It was the noble habit of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam not to hoard anything. Anas Radhiallaho anho who was the special attendant of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says that he never kept anything for the next day.

Once somebody presented three birds to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, one of which he gave to his own attendant. The attendant brought back that bird the following day to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who said to him "Have I not told you not to keep anything for the next day? Allah Jalla Shanohu Himself will provide food for the next day." Samurah Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that he checked the store cabinet frequently to make sure that nothing was left in it, lest he should die with something left behind.

Abu Zarr Ghifari Radhiallaho anho, a famous and extremely pious Sahabi had particular aversion to wealth, about which several incidents have been reported, one of which has been related under the Ayat given at Serial No. 11 above. He says, "I was once accompanying Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam when he looked at Mount Uhud and said, "If this mountain were to turn into gold and be given to me, I would not like to keep a single Dinaar of it with me for more than three days except that which I put aside to pay a debt". He added, "Many of those who have much property shall gain scanty rewards, except for those who say, "Take this and this, before them, behind them, on their right and on their left". (The narrator made a gesture indicating that they spend profusely with both their hands, distributing money to people around them). (Bukhari)

In Mishkaat, another incident has been related about Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho. Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho was once sitting with Uthman Radhiallaho anho during the period of the latter's Caliphate when he told Ka'b Radhiallaho anho that Abdur Rahman Radhiallaho anho had died leaving behind some property and asked him what he thought

about it. Ka'b replied that there was no harm in leaving such property if he had given what was due on it to Allah Ta'ala.

Hearing this, Abu Zarr raised the stick he was carrying, struck Ka'b and said that he had heard Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying, "If I possessed gold equal in quantity to this mountain, which I could spend and which were accepted from me, I would not like to leave behind even six 'Auqias' (a small weight) of it". Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho then turned to Uthman Radhiyallahu anho and adjured him three times to tell him if he had not heard Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying these words. Uthman said that he had.

Imaam Bukhari Rahmathullah alaihe has related still another story about Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho, on the authority of Ahnaf Ibne Qais Rahmathullah alaihe, who says, "I was once sitting with a group of the Quraish in Madinah Munawwarah when a man came there.

He had stiff, dry and dishevelled hair, was dressed in coarse cloth and looked an ordinary man. He stopped by their side, greeted them saying, 'Assalam-o-Alaikum' and then addressing the people, said "Give those who hoard up treasures, tidings of a rock heated in the fire of Jahannam, which will be placed on their breasts; its heat will cause their flesh to melt and to boil over their shoulders. The rock will then be put on their shoulders causing it to flow from their breasts". Saying this, he went into the Masjid and sat down beside a pillar.

I did not know who this Divine was; so, I followed him, sat near him and said, "The people gathered there did not pay heed to what you said; they rather seemed to dislike your saying so". The divine replied, "They are fools who lack proper understanding, my most loved friend once told me". When I asked him who was his most loved friend, he replied, "Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was my most loved friend who once said to me, 'Abu Zarr, do you see Mount Uhud over there? I said that I did" (thinking that he wanted to send me on an errand and was telling me how much time remained before sunset.) He then said, "If I had gold to the extent of that mountain I would love to spend all of it except for three Dinaars".

Other versions of the Hadith explain why he would like to keep three Dinaars. After this Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho said, "These people have no sense; they go on hoarding wealth. By Allah, I neither expect them to give me any money, nor need to ask them anything about my religion! Then, why should I feel afraid or hesitate to tell them exactly what I believe to be true?" (Fatah)

We shall relate another incident about Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho under the Ayat given at Serial No. 5 in Chapter two below, Insha Allah.

HADITH: 2

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Two angels come down (from the heavens) every morning; one prays, 'O Allah, grant a return to him who spends', while the other prays, 'O Allah, destroy the wealth of him who withholds it'".

Note: This Hadith is corroborated by the Ayat given at Serial No. 20 above, which says, "And whatever you spend (for good), He replaces it".

We have also quoted many more Traditions bearing on this subject, in that context. Abu Darda Radhiyallahu anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "At sunrise, two angels, one on each side of the sun, make a proclamation, which is heard by everybody except Jinns and mankind, calling, 'O people, turn to your Lord! The little which suffices for you is better than the abundance which make you neglectful towards Allah!' Similarly, (the Hadith continues) At the time of sunset, two angels pray loudly from both sides of the sun, saying, 'O Allah, grant an early return to him who spends (for a good cause) and ruin the wealth of him who hoards it'. (Ahmad)

A Hadith says, "When the sun rises, two angels, one on each side of the sun, pray to Allah, calling, 'O Allah, grant an early return to him who spends; O Allah, ruin the property of him who withholds it!" Another Hadith says that there are two angels in the heavens above, who have no other function but to keep on praying; one says, 'O Allah, grant a return to him who spends (for a good cause), the other says, 'O Allah, destroy the property of him who holds it back." (Kanz)

It appears that the mornings and evenings are not the special hours appointed for the angels to make such invocations; they go on making these supplications all the time. The versions quoted earlier mean that they are particularly engaged in such supplications in the mornings and evenings (though they never cease to do so).

Known examples and experiences of life confirm the truth of these Ahadith; very often, those who amass wealth fall a prey to calamities that ruin their property; some get involved in litigation, others enter upon a life of wasteful expenses, still others have the thieves chasing them.

Hafiz Ibne Hajar Rahmathullah alaihe says, "When the property is hoarded, it brings ruin in its wake: very often the property is ruined; sometimes the owner himself passes away, leaving behind everything, or he is ruined through leading a vicious life. On the contrary, those who spend (for a good cause) are blessed with increase in their property". According to a Hadith, "Whoever gives much as Sadaqah, Allah Himself looks after his property after his death". (Ihya).

That is to say, the heirs of such persons do not waste away the property they have left behind and do not indulge in useless pursuits; unlike the sons of the rich feudal lords who squander away the wealth inherited from their parents. Imaam Nawawi Rahmathullah alaihe writes: Only that expenditure is commendable which is incurred for good causes, i.e. spending to provide for one's family, for entertaining one's guests or for other devotional deeds."

Qurtabi Rahmathullah alaihe says, "Devotional deeds include both obligatory (Fardh) and supererogatory (Nafil) devotions. However, he who does not give away (Nafil) Sadaqaat is not affected by the curses of the angels, unless he is overpowered by an innate miserliness which causes him to pay 'Fardh Sadaqaat' with a heavy heart".

HADITH: 3

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has said, "O son of Adam, it is better for you to give away what you can spare, and to withhold it is worse for you; but you will not be blamed if you keep back what may barely suffice you, and spend first on those who are dependent on you."

Note: This subject has also been corroborated by the Ayat at No. 4 above, where Haq Ta'ala Shanohu Himself has said, "Whatever is over and above your needs, spend it." That Hadith was also mentioned in that place. Here it is repeated for the sake of emphasis and clarification.

The truth is that anything in excess of the proper needs is not to be held back at all. The best use for it is to have it deposited in Allah's Treasury, which never suffers a loss, nor is subject to any mishap. It will be readily available at the time of extreme adversity and pressing needs, unknown in this life. And there will be no source of income at that time, except the wealth spent as Sadaqah available as deposits in the storehouse of Allah.

Another fact mentioned in this Hadith is that there will be no blame for keeping things that are needed urgently. These cover the bare necessities without which life becomes difficult, such as needs of one's family or some dependent people or even the animals which are owned by a person and whose care is his responsibility. Any harm to those due to lack of provisions, will be a sin and a cause of Divine punishment. In the Hadith of Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam it is said that it will be enough to get one condemned, if one whose livelihood is one's responsibility, perishes or dies. (Mishkaat).

Abdullah Ibne Saamit Rahmathullah alaihe says that he was with Abu Zarr Radhiallahohi anho when he received his share from Baitul Maal and purchased his requirements from the bazaar, after which he was left with seven Dinaars (gold coins) and he instructed his slave girl to get them changed into small coins (for distribution). The narrator advised Abu Zarr Radhiallahohi anho to keep the gold coins for a future need, such as entertainment of guests, etc.

Abu Zarr Radhiallahohi anho said that his friend Sallallaho alaihe wasallam had settled the issue once for all saying that if gold and silver are hoarded they would become sparks of the Fire for their owner, unless he spends them for the cause of Allah. As a matter of fact, so many are the exhortations given by Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam to spend for the cause of Allah whatever exceeds one's needs that some Sahabah thought that no one had any right to keep with them anything exceeding his rightful needs.

Abu Saeed Khudri Radhiallaho anho narrates that once he was among those who were accompanying Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam on a journey. One of the companions kept moving up and down the caravan with his she-camel. At this, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said that if someone had a spare animal for riding he should give it away to the one who had none, and whoever had extra provision should give these to them who were in need. The Sahabah surmised from this that no one had any right to his provisions beyond his actual needs. (Abu Dawood). As regards the Sahabi with the she-camel, if he was proudly showing off his animal, the injunction of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was addressed to him and it meant that no one should make a show of his extra provisions; he should rather give them to others.

But, if he was moving up and down with the animal to show its miserable condition, it means that he was indirectly asking others to give him a mount. In that case, the injunction of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was addressed to other people, exhorting them to help him.

HADITH: 4

Uqbah Radhiallaho anho has narrated that he offered his 'Asr' Salaat with Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. At the end of Salaat Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam hastily got up and, stepping over the shoulders of the people, went to the houses of one of his wives. People, not knowing what the necessity was, were perplexed over his haste. On his return he perceived the people's anxiety and explained that he had suddenly remembered leaving behind a piece of gold in the house and he was afraid (lest his death should take place while he owned a piece of gold; which would become objectionable for him on the Day of Reckoning). So, he had hurried home to tell them to distribute it immediately.

Note: The same incident has been narrated in another Hadith which concludes: I had left some gold in the house, and did not like to keep it with me during the night. A still more amazing anecdote has been related in another Hadith: Aishah Radhiallaho anha relates that during the illness of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam she had, with her, six or seven Dinaars belonging to him, which he told her to give away immediately. But she was busy attending to him in his illness and could not distribute the money immediately.

When he Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked her whether she had distributed the Dinaars, she replied that she had done nothing about them because she had been busy looking after him in his illness. He called for the Dinaars and, placing them in his hand, said, "How awkward would it be, if Allah's Rasul were to meet Allah, while having these in his possession!" (i.e. he would feel ashamed to meet his Lord while having Dinaars in his possession. (Mishkaat)

In another Hadith she has been reported as saying, "Some gold coins were given to him by someone at night; as a result he could not sleep until she was able to spend them late in the night." (Ihya). Sahal Radhiallaho anho says that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam had seven gold coins, which he had kept with Aishah Radhiallaho anha. He told her to send them to Ali Radhiallaho anho but he soon fainted, as a result of which Aishah Radhiallaho anha remained occupied.

A little later, when he recovered from the swoon, he asked the same question and again fainted. This happened several times. Ultimately the coins were sent by Aishah Radhiallaho anha to Ali Radhiallaho anho which he distributed. This incident happened during the day.

The following night, preceding Monday, was the last night of the life of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and that night Aishah Radhiallaho anha had no oil in her lamp. She sent the lamp to a woman in the neighbourhood for filling it with some oil, requesting that it was needed for Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who was seriously ill and was about to depart from the world to meet Allah Ta'ala. (Targheeb)

Umme Salmah Radhiallaho anha has also narrated a similar incident. She says that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came home looking upset; she thought he was not well and enquired as to what had happened. The reply was that seven Dinaars had been received the previous night and that they were still lying unspent in the corner of his bed (Ihya).

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam used to receive presents continuously but he spent them immediately, whether it was day or night and whether he was well or unwell. He did not rest content till everything had been spent. So much so that, in the state of serious illness when there was no oil in the lamp and seven gold coins were lying in the house, neither Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam nor Aishah Radhiyallahu anha thought of buying some oil with that money!

Here the author (Muhammad Zakariyya Rahmathullah alaihe) mentions the case of his own father Rahmathullah alaihe who, he says, never liked to keep any money in his possession at night. He was always in debt and owed seven or eight thousand rupees at the time of his death.

So, if he had money at night, he would send it to his creditors and the small change was given to the children, and he would say that he never liked this filth to be with him at night, as death could come unexpectedly. Even more remarkable, I have heard Shah Abdur Rahim Raipuri Rahmathullah alaihe that he used to receive many gifts and these, when accumulated, were suitably distributed.

If after that, more things were received, he felt unhappy and would say, "Oh! More have come!" Finally he distributed even his clothes and told his close associate Maulana Abdul Qadir Rahmathullah alaihe to lend him clothes to wear. The Auliya of Allah (the saints) behave amazingly: They have a strong desire to depart from this world empty-handed, just as they were born, and not leave behind any worldly collection as their property.

HADITH: 5

Someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as to what Sadaqah was most rewardable? Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "When at the time of giving Sadaqah you are in good health, you have greed for wealth, you fear to become poor and have a keen desire to become rich. That is the opportunity; do not postpone it till the last moment of your life and then say, 'So much to so and so, and so much to that (Masjid) and that much to such and such (Madrassah), although now the property belongs to so and so (heirs). (Mishkaat)

Note: The fact is that the heir now has a rightful share in the property; the last will is applicable to at most one third of the property, therefore the dying person can only give as Sadaqah one third of his property. Another Hadith says, that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Man keeps saying 'my property, my property'; in fact his property is confined to three things only; that which he has eaten, which he has worn and which he has given as Sadaqah and deposited in Allah's Treasury; whatever is left over, he is leaving for other people." Another Hadith says, "It is better for a man to give one Dirham as Sadaqah early in his life time than to give a hundred Dirhams at the time of his death".

The reason is that anything given away on the death-bed amounts to giving from someone else's property, because the dying man has to leave everything behind. Another Hadith quotes the saying of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that anyone who gives Sadaqah, at the time of death, is like a man who, after satisfying his appetite, gives the remaining food as a present to someone. (Mishkaat). Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has repeatedly declared that the proper time for giving Sadaqah is when one is healthy and fit; that is the time to control one's personal desires. This does not mean that Sadaqah at the time of death has no value.

It does carry a reward and becomes an investment for the Akhirah, but it does not carry the same return as that for giving Sadaqah in spite of one's needs and requirements. Allah Jalla Shanohu has said:

It is prescribed for you that when one of you approaches death and leaves property, he should make a will, in a known manner, in favour of his parents and other relatives. All those who fear Allah will do this as their bounden duty. (al-baqarah: 180)

This Divine order was given in the early days of Islam. Later, when the detailed orders regarding inheritance were revealed, the earlier order, for making will for those relatives whose rights had been fixed in 'Shariah', was cancelled; nevertheless the order for making a will upto one third of the property applied to all relatives who did not come under the Inheritance order.

Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that, under the new order, the making of a will in favour of those who have been given a right of inheritance, has been cancelled while those who do not come under this order still enjoy the benefit of a will. Qatadah Rahmathullah alaihe says that, for those who are not entitled to become inheritors, the above Ayat regarding a will remains valid whether they be the relatives or strangers.

Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala says, "O son of Adam: You were a miser in life and extravagant at the time of death; do not heap two evils together: one, the miserliness when living and second the extravagance when about to die. Think of your relatives who are deprived of your heritage, include them in your will". (Kanz). There is a hint towards this in the Ayat No. 2, among the Ayat above, that it is better to give Sadaqah at the time when the love of wealth is uppermost in one's mind compared to the time when the mind is indifferent. One Hadith says that Allah Jalla Shanohu is displeased with the person who remains miserly in his lifetime and becomes generous at the time of his death.

Therefore, it is not desirable that people should postpone giving Sadaqah and endowments to a later time near their death. In the first instance, no one ever knows when that last moment is to come, how and where. Several instances have come to notice where people were highly desirous of leaving much for charity and endowments, but illness did not give them a respite to do so.

Some were victims of paralysis, some of a coma and some were adversely influenced by the heirs nursing them. Even if they got a chance of fulfilling their desire, which was rare, the reward for it would not be as much as it might have been, if they had given Sadaqah in defiance of their own mundane desires. However, if a person has not been able to give away Sadaqah in his life owing to negligence, he should take the opportunity of spending for the cause of Allah at the time of death. For, after death, few are remembered by their heirs, who mourn them for a few days and then forget about them forever.

These are common occurrence now a days. Therefore, whatever one wishes – take to the Akhirah, one had better carry it with oneself without delay.

HADITH: 6

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "A man (from Bani Israel) decided to give Sadaqah quietly at night. He took it and placed it in a person's hand. In the morning, people started talking and saying, 'Last night, Sadaqah was given to a thief!' The man said, 'O Allah, to Thee be praise! I gave it to a thief! I could do nothing if it had been given to a worse person'. He decided to give Sadaqah again on the following night and put it in the hands of a woman; he might have thought that a woman would not be a thief. In the morning the people were talking and saying, 'Sadaqah was given to a prostitute last night'. The man said, 'O Allah, to Thee be praise! I gave it to a prostitute! My property deserved worse than that'.

He decided to give Sadaqah a third time on the following night and placed it in the hands of an unknown person. In the morning, the people were talking and saying, 'Last night, Sadaqah was given to a rich man'. The man said, 'O Allah, to Thee be praise! I gave it to a thief, a prostitute and a rich man'! He then had a dream in which he was told that his Sadaqah had been accepted. It was given providentially to a thief so that it might result in his refraining from stealing; to a prostitute so that she might repent of her immorality and to the rich man to teach a lesson, so that he may spend out of that which Allah Ta'ala had given him, following the example of the pious who gave Sadaqah, unnoticed".

Note: In another Hadith this story has been narrated differently. It may be a separate one as there are, in fact, a number of similar stories, leaving no cause for confusion. If the other one relates to the same case, it clarifies and confirms the original story.

Ta'os Rahmathullah alaihe says that a man took a vow to give Sadaqah to the first person he saw in the locality. It so happened that he saw a woman, to whom he gave the Sadaqah. People said that she was an unchaste woman; then he gave Sadaqah to a man whom he saw next. The people said that the recipient was the worst type of man. He then gave more Sadaqah to the next one he saw; people said a rich man had received Sadaqah.

The giver of Sadaqah was most distressed over these happenings. At night he dreamt that all three acts of Sadaqah had been accepted by Allah Ta'ala. He was told, "The woman was a prostitute, but she had adopted the profession due to poverty, your Sadaqah has made her give up the evil business. The thief also stole to overcome his poverty; he gave up stealing after receiving your Sadaqah.

The third person was a rich man but never gave anything as Sadaqah. Your Sadaqah served as a lesson that, though he was richer than you, you gave Sadaqah to him; it made him realise that he should give more as Sadaqah than you; he now gives Sadaqah regularly".

It is clear from this Hadith that if Sadaqah is given with sincerity, but happens to be misplaced, that also serves a Divine purpose and should not be regretted. Man's responsibility is to keep his intentions pure, as the real requirement is good intention and action.

This Hadith also brings out the piety of a man giving Sadaqah, for, though the results seemed to be wrong despite his repeated efforts, he did not stop giving Sadaqah. Due to his pure intention and sincerity, all three were ultimately blessed with acceptance, which was revealed to him in his dream. Hafiz Ibne Hajar Rahmathullah alaihe says that the point to note in this Hadith is that, if the Sadaqah given happens to be misplaced, its repetition is Mustahab (desirable), which should be done without reluctance. It is stressed by several divines that service to others must not be given up, even if it may not appear acceptable.

Allama Aini Rahmathullah alaihe has said that the above example shows that Allah Ta'ala is sure to reward pure intentions, as giving Sadaqah quietly at night clearly shows that it was done for the pleasure of Allah and, therefore, was accepted by Him and not rejected for being apparently misplaced.

HADITH: 7

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has said, "Be quick in giving Sadaqah, as a calamity cannot over take Sadaqah".

Note: This means that an approaching calamity is pushed back due to Sadaqah. An unverified Hadith has it that Sadaqah shuts seventy doors of evil. One Hadith quotes Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam as saying, "Purify your property by Zakaat properly paid, treat your sick by Sadaqah and meet the advancing calamities with Du'aa". (Targhib). Under several Ahadith in Kanzul Ummal, it has been mentioned that the best treatment for the sick lies in giving Sadaqah.

Experience also shows that frequently given Sadaqah results in recovery from sickness. Another Hadith advises treatment of the sick through Sadaqah, for, Sadaqah foils vilifies, repels disease, increases virtues and prolongs life. (Kanz). Another Hadith says, "Treat your anxieties and sorrows with Sadaqah; thereby, Allah Jalla Shanohu will mend your damages and help you against your enemies". (Kanz).

Another confirmed Hadith has it that when a person gives cloth to a Muslim to wear, he (giver) remains under the protection of Allah, as long as a rag of that cloth remains on the body of the wearer. Ibne Abi Aljad Rahmathullah alaihe says, "Sadaqah shuts seventy doors of evil". (Ihya)

Still another Hadith says, "Give Sadaqah early in the morning because calamity can never overtake Sadaqah". (Targhib). Anas Radhiallahohunho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam as saying that Sadaqah subdues Allah's wrath and protects one from tragic death. Ulama have written that Sadaqah guards against evil prompting from Shaitan at the time of death and protects one from uttering words of ingratitude under the influence of serious illness, and also prevents a tragic end.

In short, it helps to bring a peaceful end. Another Hadith says that Sadaqah cools down the heat of the grave and a man will be under the protective shade of his Sadaqah on the Day of Judgment. (Kanz). If the Sadaqah is in large quantity, the shade will also be large.

When Mu'az Radhiyallahu anho requested Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to tell him about some virtue, which would save him from Jahannam and get him into Jannah, he said, "You have asked for a very big thing, but it is actually an easy one, provided Allah Ta'ala makes it easy.

It is to worship Allah Jalla Shanohu sincerely, not to attribute co-partners to Him, to establish Salaat and to pay Zakaat, to observe fasting during Ramadhan and to perform Hajj of Baithullah". After that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Shall I guide you to the gateways of eternal bliss? They are: Fasting is a shield against Shaitan's onslaughts, Sadaqah destroys sins just as water extinguishes fire, the Salaat at midnight has a similar effect on sins". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then recited (Who forsake their beds) which has been mentioned at No. 19 of the Ayat above. He then said, "Shall I guide you to the head, the pillar and the height of Islam? The head is Islam (without which nothing has any value); its pillar is Salaat (just as no building can stand without pillars, Islam cannot exist without Salaat); its height is Jehaad (Islam reaches the height of perfection through Jehaad);" he then said, "Shall I not tell you about the root of all things, which is the foundation of all that?" Here Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam took hold of his tongue and said, "Restrain this". I asked, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) shall we really be punished for what we talk about?" He replied, somewhat angrily, "I am surprised at you, Mu'az! Is it not the tongue alone which will cause people to be dragged and thrown into Jahannam head-long!" (Mishkaat)

The deduction is that all that we utter with our tongues, moving like a pair of scissors, goes into our book of deeds and will be weighed on the Day of Judgement.

All the absurd and prohibited things we talk about will be instrumental in taking us to Jahannam. Another Hadith says that many a person says a word which wins Allah's pleasure for him, without himself knowing its importance: Allah Jalla Shanohu raises his rank in Jannah.

On the other hand, a person says something which he considers trifling, but it causes Allah's displeasure and for it, he will be thrown into Jahannam. Another narration says that he would be thrown as far away into Jahannam as the east is from the West. Another Hadith quotes Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that if a person undertakes not to misuse two things: first the thing between his two jaws (tongue), second the thing between his two legs (private parts), he (Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) will guarantee his entry into Jannah. Another Hadith says that the majority of people will go to Jahannam due to misuse of these two things.

A Hadith says that a person utters something in fun to make people laugh, which in fact becomes a misfortune for him, and he is thrown into Jahannam far away, upto the distance between the heaven and the earth.

Sufiyan Saqafi Radhiyallahu anho made a request to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asking, "What is it that you fear most in your mind for your Ummah?" He took hold of his own tongue and replied, "This one." Beside these, there are several narrations on record under different headings, with regard to this serious neglect. The truth is that one must exercise great care in the use of one's tongue, making sure that, if it cannot be used for a useful purpose, it must not involve one in calamity. Sufiyan Thauri Rahmathullah alaihe, who was one of the famous Imaams in the knowledge of Hadith and Muslim Law, said that he was guilty of a sin due to which he remained deprived of offering Tahajjud Salaat for five months.

When someone asked him as to what it was, the reply was that once he saw a person crying and he thought in his mind that the man was a hypocrite. (Ihya). Imagine! What an evil influence of a sinful thought. Yet we say very harsh things about others without any rhyme or reason. And if we have something against someone, we cross all limits in slandering him, even turning his virtues into vices, and publicise and magnify his weakness if any.

HADITH: 8

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Sadaqah does not cause a decrease in wealth and to forgive an offender enhances the honour of the forgiver. Whoever humbles himself for the pleasure of Allah Jalla Shanohu, he is exalted by Haq Ta'ala Shanohu."

Note: This Hadith contains three subjects, on the face of it, giving Sadaqah causes reduction in wealth, but in fact this is not so; its returns and recompense are sure in the Akhirah, as has been made abundantly clear by all the Ayaat and quotations mentioned so far.

There is also compensation in this life, which has been indicated in Ayat No. 14 above and further clarified in Ayat No. 20. Moreover under the same Ayat, several sayings of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam have been quoted confirming all that. Under Ahadith at No. 2, it has been stated that two angels daily offer Du'aa, "O Allah, compensate those who spend, and bring ruin to those who withhold".

Abu Kabshah Radhiyallahu anho says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam mentioned three things on oath and a special one, he said, was to be noted and preserved. The first one was that wealth would never become less by giving Sadaqah, the second was that an oppressed person, by remaining patient, would be honoured on that account; the third was that when a person begs something from someone, Allah Ta'ala opens for him the gate of poverty.

He then said that he was going to tell him something which must be especially remembered, namely that there are four types of people in the world: firstly those whom Allah grants knowledge as well as wealth. Due to their knowledge they fear Allah when spending their wealth and do not spend it against Allah's dictates: they fulfil the needs of their kins folk and spend rightly on good causes and deeds.

They are the ones held in high esteem. Secondly, the one who is granted knowledge but no wealth, he has the intention and longing to spend like the first type, if he had the wealth. This one receives the same reward for his intention alone. The third type is he, who is devoid of knowledge but possess wealth, which he spends recklessly and lavishly on amusements and lustful pursuits. He does not fear Allah, in spending, nor cares for his kith and kin and is extravagant with his money.

He will be in the vilest condition in the Akhirah. The fourth one is the person whom Allah Ta'ala has not granted any wealth nor any knowledge, but he thinks of doing the same things as the third one, if he had the wealth to spend. Due to his intentions, his punishment will be the same as for the person mentioned at No. 3. (Mishkaat)

Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho has quoted Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to have said that Sadaqah does not decrease one's wealth; when a person extends his hand to give Sadaqah, it passes into the sacred hand of Allah Ta'ala before that of the beggar, which means Divine acceptance of his Sadaqah.

And whoever begs without the actual need for it, Allah Ta'ala opens for him the gate to poverty. (Targhib). Qais Ibne Selaa Ansaari Radhiyallahu anho says that, when his brothers complained to Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that he was extravagant and spent money unnecessarily, Qais Ansaari said that he took his own share from the garden and spent it as Sadaqah or used it for providing food to his visitors. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam patted his chest and said, "Go on spending", repeating the words three times, Allah Ta'ala will spend on you". Qais Ansaari Radhiyallahu anho further said that after some time, when he went on Jehaad, he had his own riding beast and possessed more money than all his relatives. That is, in spite of his liberal spending, he had far more money than those who were too careful to spend liberally.

Jabir Radhiyallahu anho has said that once Muhammad (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) addressed the people and said, "My people! Seek Allah's forgiveness before death overtakes you; you make haste in doing virtuous deeds lest you get busy in other things; establish relationship with Allah Ta'ala by excessive remembrance and by secret and open Sadaqah in abundance.

That would bring you ample provision and would bring you Allah Ta'ala's help and a compensation for your losses". (Targhib). Another Hadith commands us to seek Allah's help for increase in our means of livelihood through Sadaqah. Yet another Hadith says, "Sadaqah causes the means of livelihood to descend on you" (Kanz). Another Hadith says that Sadaqah causes an increase in wealth. Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf Radhiyallahu anho says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "I swear by Allah, Who has control on my life, to three things: one, Sadaqah does not reduce your wealth, so give much; second, when a person becomes victim of an outrage and he forgives the oppressor, Allah Ta'ala will exalt his honour on the Day of Judgement; third, when a person takes to begging, Allah Ta'ala will open for him the gate to poverty".

Abu Salmah Radhiallaho anho has also reported Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Sadaqah does not reduce wealth, so do give Sadaqah". 'Sadaqah does not reduce wealth' obviously means that the return for it promptly comes from Allah Ta'ala. Habib Ajami Rahmathullah alaihe was a famous saint; his wife kneaded flour for bread and went to the neighbour's house for bringing a little fire; meanwhile a beggar came and Habib Rahmathullah alaihe gave away the available flour to him.

When she returned with fire and found the flour missing, she asked her husband about it, who replied that it had been sent to be baked into bread. She did not believe him and, on further questioning, he at last told her that he had given it away as Sadaqah. She said, "Allah be glorified! You should have known that there was no more flour in the house for the family to eat; what are we going to do without it?" While she was talking, a man came in with a large bowl full of meat and plenty of bread.

She exclaimed! "How quickly the bread has been baked and the meat is an addition!" Such incidents occur very often but, due to our lack of correct relationship with Allah Ta'ala, we do not notice or realise how a certain thing came to us as a blessing for something that we had spent. We usually take such things as chance happenings, whereas they are a return for what we have spent.

HADITH: 9

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that once a person in a jungle heard a voice from a cloud above, saying, "Go and supply water to such and such person's garden". Thereupon the cloud moved in one direction and rained on a piece of stony land. A channel collected the whole of that water which began to flow in a particular direction. He followed it and came to a place where a man stood with a shovel in hand, diverting the water to his garden.

The person asked the man his name; and when he told him, it was the very name he had heard from the cloud. The person then asked him why he had asked his name? The person replied that he had heard a voice coming from the cloud saying, "Go and supply water to such and such person's garden" and it was the same name which he had told him. The person then asked the man, "What he did, for, the cloud to supply water to his garden." The owner replied that now he has to tell the true facts. Whatever produce he got from the garden, he divided it into three equal parts; one part i.e. one third of the produce, he gave away promptly as Sadaqah, the second part he kept for himself and the family; the remaining one third he spent on the garden itself.

Note: What blessings result from Sadaqah in Allah's name! The one third of income spent for that purpose makes the unseen Divine resources water the garden. This is a clear illustration of the subject matter of the previous Hadith, that wealth does not decrease through Sadaqah. One third of the income from the garden given as Sadaqah raises the produce of the whole garden. Another excellent lesson to be learnt from the above Hadith is that a person should fix a certain portion of his regular income to be given as Sadaqah. This would be really useful.

As experience shows, once a portion for Sadaqah is permanently settled, one comes across frequent occasions to spend for good causes; whereas, without such a system, one fails to appreciate a worthwhile occasion for giving Sadaqah. When any occasion arises, the mischief of Nafs and Shaitan often misleads one into thinking that the particular occasion is not worth consideration for giving Sadaqah. Furthermore, if really a pressing demand does arise, one may have no funds to give, or the personal needs at the time might claim priority, leaving little or nothing for Sadaqah.

The proper course would definitely be to put aside, at the beginning of a month, a portion of the salary for Sadaqah, or in the case of business some fixed amount from the daily earnings be put away in a special box meant for Sadaqah. In that way, there will be no likelihood of any hindrance in spending, for the cause of Allah Ta'ala, from the ready money specifically meant for Sadaqah.

This is undoubtedly a solution worth trying. Abu Vaail Radhiallaho anho has related that he was sent to Quraiza by Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho with instructions to follow the example of the famous man of the Bani Israel, i.e. to spend as Sadaqah one third of the revenue, keep one third there, and bring the remaining one third to

him, viz. Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood. It shows that the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum also followed this 'one third' system.

HADITH: 10

Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was pleased to say that an unchaste woman was granted Divine pardon for a simple act: she saw a dog standing beside a well with its tongue hanging out due to severe thirst, as if about to die; so she took off her shoe, tied it to her shawl and lowered it into the well to draw water, which she gave to the dog to drink. Someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam whether they would receive reward for being kind to the animals. The reply was that there was reward for being kind to any living thing. (Muslim or non-Muslim, man or animal).

Note: This is the story of a lewd woman of Bani Israel, of which various versions exist. (Kanz). A similar incident has also been narrated by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about a man who was travelling through a jungle. He felt very thirsty and climbed down a well for a drink. When he climbed back to the surface, he saw a thirsty dog rubbing its mouth in the mud, feeling uneasy for want of water.

The man realised that the dog was suffering from thirst, in the way he himself did, before he had taken the drink of water. Finding nothing with which to draw water, he took off his shoe and climbed down the well, filled his shoe with water and climbed up, using both his hands and holding the shoe in his mouth. He gave the water to the dog to drink. Allah Ta'ala graciously pardoned all his sins.

The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum asked if there was a reward for being good to the animals. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied in the affirmative, saying that it applied to all the living beings. (Bukhari). The story No. 47 at the end of this book is about a tyrant who gave shelter to a dog suffering from scabies. Allah Ta'ala looked upon this act with kind approval. Since both these Ahadith indicate high rewards for being kind even to a lowly animal, the extent of rewards for showing kindness to a human being, the noblest of creation, is beyond comprehension.

Certain Ulama have expressed the view that creatures like snakes and scorpions, the killing of which is a good deed, are excluded from the living beings referred to above. Some other scholars maintain that even such animals, if thirsty, should not be deprived of a drink. Muslims are ordered that, if and when any living being is to be killed, a proper decorum has to be maintained and mutilation after killing is forbidden. (Fatah).

From the above two Ahadith and many others a delicate point becomes evident: if and when Allah Ta'ala is pleased with the sincerity of a single act of a person, this can get him a pardon for a life of sins. The kindness and favour of Allah Ta'ala are boundless compared with the small action done by a man. The crux of the matter is to win the acceptance and pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

It is not to be taken for granted that the pardoning of all sins of an offender would be possible simply on giving someone water for drinking, or doing some other type of good turn. Indeed, if it is of a standard to get the Divine approval, there may be no hindrance, but one must continue doing good deeds with all the sincerity and with the hope that Allah Ta'ala may find these acceptable. Once that happens, one may find success assured. The important thing is sincerity of purpose: that is to do everything for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, without any desire for worldly benefits, such as prosperous living, popularity among people or acquiring position or status, etc.

If any of these things become part of the purpose, the whole effort would be wasted. The smallest good deed, if done for Allah's pleasure, assumes a weight far more than that of a mountain. Luqman Alaihissalam advised his son to give something as Sadaqah, when he happened to commit a sin, because it washes away the sin and removes the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala. (Ihya).

HADITH: 11

Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that there are balconies in Jannah (which appear to be built of glass): everything in them can be seen from outside and the outer scene is clearly visible from inside. The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum asked as to who will occupy them. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Those who speak nicely to people, who feed others while themselves they continuously fast and offer Tahajjud Salaat at night when others are asleep."

Note: Abdullah Ibne Salaam Radhiallaho anho says that he had not embraced Islam, when he heard the news that Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam had migrated to Madinah.

He went at once to him and, on seeing his auspicious face, he said to himself that such a blessed countenance could not be that of a liar. When he reached there, the first thing that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said was, "O people, exchange greetings of Salaam with each other, feed the needy, be kind to the blood-relations and pray during the night when all others are asleep; you will safely and peacefully enter Jannah". (Mishkaat). At No. 34 of the Ayaat quoted earlier, the same subject has been mentioned: that they feed the poor, the orphans and the convicts and say, "We feed you for the sake of Allah, without asking for any return or thanks from you". One Hadith has it that when a person gives his brother food and drink to his satisfaction, Allah Ta'ala creates seven moats between him and Jahannam, each one of which is as wide as the distance to be covered in seven hundred years. (Kanz). Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala treats all His creation as a family and whoever provides most benefits to His family is the most loved by Him. (Kanz). Another Hadith says that every good deed counts as Sadaqah, such as meeting a person smilingly or sharing a pail of water with the neighbour. (Kanz). To have a smiling face during conversation, instead of being peevish, is definitely a good deed.

A smiling look towards a brother is by no means a trifle, says a Hadith, while no favour, however small, is to be considered insignificant, and every small good deed amounts to Sadaqah. Similarly, to help some one who has lost his way or to tell someone to do a good act or to restrain him from a bad one, amounts to giving Sadaqah, and the same is the case with removing a thorn or a harmful object from a pathway or to share a pail of water with someone. (Kanz).

A Hadith says that those condemned to go to Jahannam will be drawn up in a line. A dweller of Jannah will pass by, when one of them will ask him to intercede for him with Allah Ta'ala. The Jannati will ask him, "Who are you?" and he will say, "Do you not recognise me? I am the one whom you had once asked for a drink of water, which I had given you". Another Hadith has: Those condemned to go to Jahannam will be drawn up in a line.

When one of the dwellers of Jannah passes by them, one of them will say, "So and so, do you not recognise me? I am the one who gave you a drink of water and gave you water for ablution at such and such time". (Mishkaat) Still another Hadith has: On the Day of Resurrection, the Jannatis and the Jahannamis will be drawn up in separate lines. A man from among the Jahannamis will see a person standing in the row of the Jannatis and he will remind him of the good turn he had done to him (the Jannati) in his worldly life. At this the Jannati will hold him by the hand, take him into the presence of Allah Ta'ala, and say, 'O Allah, I owe this man a good turn!' Allah Ta'ala will say, "Let him go to Jannah on account of Allah's infinite mercy towards him!"

Another Hadith says: "Have a frequent contact with the poor and pour favours on them, as they are very rich people." Someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as to the nature of their wealth. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that on the Day of Judgement they would be told to lead every such person to Jannah who had ever given them food or a drink of water or a piece of cloth.

Another Hadith says that, on that Day, Allah Ta'ala will apologise to the poor in the same way as a person does to another person in this life, by saying, "I swear by My Honour and Greatness that I did not keep away the worldly wealth from you because you were disgraced in My eyes, I did so for the sake of bestowing on you the great honours of this day; you go and look into the rows of Jahannamis for those who fed you or clothed you for My sake, they are all yours.

When the poor approach such persons they will all be drowned in their own sweat and the poor people will pull them out and lead them to Jannah. (Rodh-ar-Rayahim)

There will be a declaration on the Day of Judgement, "Where are the poor ones of the Ummah of Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam; let them go round the rows of Jahannamis and look for those who had given them a morsel of food for Allah's sake or a draught of water to drink or a piece of new or old clothing; take them by the hand into Jannah". On that call, the poor of the Ummah will rise and look round for such people and get them their entry into Jannah, saying that they did them such and such a good turn. All young and old of the Ummah's poor will thus get many people an entry into Jannah. (Kanz)

One of the Ahadith says that whoever feeds a hungry animal, Allah Ta'ala will give him the best of food to eat in Jannah. Another Hadith has it that prosperity enters as swiftly into a house that feeds people as a dagger penetrates the hump of a camel. (Kanz) Abdullah Ibne Mubarik Rahmathullah alaihe used to give the best dates to others to eat and used to say that whoever eats the most dates will be rewarded with one Dirham for each date. (Ihya). A Hadith says that on the Day of Judgment an announcer will call, "Where are those who were kind to the poor and the destitute; today they may enter Jannah without any fear or sorrow", while another announcer will say, "Come forward those who had visited the poor and the meek during their illness, for you there are pulpits of Noor to sit on and to converse with Allah Ta'ala when the rest will be suffering from the severity of reckoning (Kanz). Another Hadith says, 'There is many a houri (in Jannah) whose dower is but a handful of dates or a like amount of something else given as Sadaqah". One Hadith says that no Sadaqah is superior to feeding the hungry.

Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala likes best the act of pleasing a Muslim, or relieving him of a sorrow or a debt or feeding him when hungry; all these are pleasing deeds to be accomplished as far as possible. Still another Hadith says that any action meant to please a Muslim, is bound to receive the grant of Divine pardon. i.e. actions such as satisfying some one's hunger, or relieving him of a hardship. (Kanz). Yet another Hadith says, "Whoever meets a worldly need of a Muslim, Allah Ta'ala will meet seventy two of his needs of which the pardoning of all his sins will be the lightest". (Kanz). This point is elaborated further in Hadith No. 13.

HADITH: 12

Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha has said that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam told her to spend freely and not to count otherwise (if she counted) Allah Ta'ala would give her counted favours; and not to save money, for (if she did so) Allah Ta'ala will also keep away from her (will give her less), therefore, she should give as much as possible.

Note: Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha was the sister of Aishah Radhiyallahu anha. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has, in this Hadith, encouraged us in various ways to spend increasingly. First, there is a clear order for spending liberally. It is obvious that the approved spending is the one according to Shariah, on things pleasing to Allah Ta'ala. Spending against Shariah cannot get anything but misfortune. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has then forbidden counting, which is meant to emphasise the same subject matter.

The Ulama have attached two meanings to counting: One, to count for the sake of hoarding, in which case Allah Ta'ala's blessings will be withheld: as you sow so shall you reap; the second meaning is: not to count when giving to the poor, in which case the return and reward from Allah Ta'ala will also be countless. Lastly, the same subject has been further emphasised by forbidding to withhold, stating that if you save instead of spending your wealth in the path of Allah Ta'ala, you will cause Allah's withholding of His bounties, favours and kindness. The point is stressed further by the commandment to spend as much and as well as you can.

This means, in fact, not to hesitate in spending what you can genuinely afford; and this is within your power. This very subject is covered extensively in a number of Ahadith which say, "Save yourself from the flames of Jahannam by giving Sadaqah, be it a piece of date which is sufficient to give protection from Jahannam".

One of the Ahadith in Bukhari says, "Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha enquired from Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam whether she could give as Sadaqah from what her husband Zubair Radhiyallahu anho had left with her, as she possessed nothing of her own. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied in the affirmative, advising her not to put aside things in the pot, lest Allah Ta'ala should keep away His bounties from her".

In this Hadith, if the act of giving something to Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha by Zubair Radhiyallahu anho amounted to making her the owner of that, she clearly had the right to spend all of it in any way she liked. However, if those things were meant for meeting the household needs, then the advice of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was based on his personal knowledge of Zubair's temperament that he would not be displeased by Asmaa's Sadaqah. The other reason for pressing her to give as Sadaqah could be that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam had already strongly advised Zubair Radhiyallahu anho to give in Sadaqah. The Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum were willing to sacrifice each and everything because of the general advice in such matters by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, while in the cause of a specific advice to an individual by him, the enthusiasm to comply was indeed marvellous. Thousands of such examples could be quoted in evidence; a few of these have been mentioned in the 'Stories of Sahabah'.

Allama Suyooti has quoted in Durre Manthur the story of Zubair Radhiyallahu anho as told by himself, saying that he was specially persuaded by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to spend in the path of Allah Ta'ala. Once he visited Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and sat in front of him. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam got hold of the tail of his turban, as a warning to note carefully, and told him 'O Zubair! I am the Messenger of Allah especially to you people and generally for all.

Do you know what Allah Ta'ala has said?" Zubair Radhiyallahu anho replied, "Allah and His Rasul know best!" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "When Allah Ta'ala sat on his Grand Throne (Arsh), He looked at His bondsmen (mankind) with kindness and said, 'O My slaves, I am your Creator and Sustainer, your livelihood is in My hands; do not put yourself in hardship for that which is My responsibility; approach Me for your living and needs'. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then repeated what Allah Ta'ala had further said, 'O My slaves, you spend on people and I will spend on you; be magnanimous to people and I will be so to you; do not be stingy in spending on others, I shall not straiten your livelihood for you; do not shut your wealth off from the people, so that I do not shut Mine from you; do not hoard a treasure, so that I do not hoard from you.

The door of livelihood is open above all the seven heavens and joined to the Grand Arsh and remains open throughout the day and night; from there Allah Ta'ala sends down daily sustenance for every individual human being, according to that person's own intentions, his spending, his Sadaqah and his expenses; whoever spends more receives more, the one who gives less receives less, while he who holds back, Allah Ta'ala holds things back from him' He further said, 'O Zubair! Eat and spend on yourself and feed others too; do not tie up things to put aside, or else Allah Ta'ala's bounties would be held up and kept away from you; avoid counting lest counting should be made against you; shun being strict in your dealings with others, lest the same is done to you; do not put people to hardship, lest that should happen to you'.

'O Zubair! Allah Ta'ala is pleased with the act of spending and displeased with the close-fisted; generosity comes from having full faith in Allah Ta'ala, while stinginess infests the doubting minds; one who has full faith in Allah Ta'ala, will never go to Jahannam and he who has doubts, will never enter Jannah; Zubair, Allah Ta'ala is pleased with generosity, even with a piece of date.

And Allah Ta'ala is pleased with bravery, be it in facing a snake or a scorpion; O Zubair! Allah Ta'ala loves to see patience at the time of an earthquake or any other calamity, and He is pleased with the faith which overpowers every part of the body and obstructs and satisfaction of passionate desires; He loves the perfect wisdom which overpowers moments of doubts in Deen and is pleased with piety at the time of facing forbidden and dirty things; 'O Zubair, show respects to all brothers, enhance the greatness of the pious and honour good people; have good relations with neighbours and do not be a fellow traveller of immoral people; whosoever remains steadfast in all these matters will enter Jannah without any reckoning or any fear of punishment.

This is the admonishment of Allah Ta'ala to me and mine to you'.

At No. 20 of the Ayaat, this very incident has been briefly treated with adequate remarks. After reading the detailed advice of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam given above, the reaction of Zubair Radhiyallahu anho can be clearly understood, and it was quite justifiable that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam told Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha to spend without hesitation from his property. Moreover Zubair Radhiyallahu anho was a cousin of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and, when relationship with one's own kith and kin is firm, exhortation of this type further strengthens the relationship.

One comes across instance of this type even in the present day loose conditions; there could be no question about the generosity of Zubair Radhiyallahu anho. The author of Isaabah has stated that Zubair Radhiyallahu anho had one thousand slaves on whom he used to levy tax, but not a penny of it was used on his household; all of it was sent in giving Sadaqah.

It was the result of this great generosity of his that, at the time of his death, he owed debts of twenty-two thousand Dirhams, the detailed story of which is given in the relevant Hadith in Bukhari. The nature of this debt was that most of it was due to people's money deposited as Amanat with him. As he was a very conscientious person, people trusted him and entrusted their valuables or money to him for safe custody. He used to tell them that, as he had no place to keep their things as deposits in trust, he would have them as a loan and would return them on demand.

Thus he used to have loans; which he went on spending on other people's needs.

This was the case not only with Zubair Radhiyallahu anho but with most of the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum; wealth for them was not a thing to keep. Once Umar Radhiyallahu anho filled a bag with four hundred gold coins and told his slave to deliver the bag to Abu Ubaidah Radhiyallahu anho for personal use, and to remain busy thereabout to see what he would do with the money.

The slave took the money and delivered it to Abu Ubaidah who paid compliments and prayed for Umar, and then called his slave-woman and told her to go and give seven Dinaars to so and so, five to such and such person, and so much to so and so, and thus every single coin was given away. The slave reported the whole proceedings to Umar Radhiyallahu anho, who then sent the same amount to Mu'az Radhiyallahu anho with the same instructions as for Abu Ubaidah. Mu'az also called his slave woman and distributed the money in various houses.

Meanwhile his wife came and said, "We are also poor and needy, please give us something too", at which, he threw the bag at her with only two coins remaining. The slave returned and narrated the whole story to Umar Radhiyallahu anho who was very pleased to hear it and said, "They are all of the same stock".

HADITH: 13

Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Whoever gives clothes to a naked Muslim, Allah Ta'ala will give him a green dress to wear in Jannah; and he who gives something to eat to a hungry Muslim, Allah Ta'ala will feed him with the fruits of Jannah; and the one who gives a drink of water to a thirsty Muslim, Allah Ta'ala will give him a drink of sealed wine in Jannah".

Note: The 'sealed wine' refers to that holy drink which, as indicated in the Holy Qur'an, would be reserved for the pious people in Jannah.

As Allah Ta'ala has said:

"The righteous will be in delightful comfort, sitting in their (curtained) seats, (looking at the wonders of Jannah). O listener, you will notice the freshness and gaiety in their faces, due to the comforts (of Jannah). They will have the sealed wine for a drink, the seal will be of musk. The greedy ought to have the greed for this bliss (this is what one should strive for)." (at-Tatfeef: 22-26)

Mujahid Rahmathullah alaihe says that Raheeq is one of the types of wine in Jannah, which is made from musk with a mixture of the Tasneem which, according to Qatadah Rahmathullah alaihe, is the most superior drink of Jannah. The favourites will drink it pure, while those below them will have a mixture of it. According to Hasan Basri Rahmathullah alaihe, Raheeq is the wine which has a mixture of Tasneem.

The above Hadith mentions the virtues relating to giving a meal or a drink to a hungry person and a dress to the naked. It may be that the giver himself be in need of food or drink or clothes, yet he gives to others. With this aspect, the Hadith is in line with the interpretation of the Ayat No. 28 under Ayaat above, meaning:

"They prefer others to themselves, although they have the same need".

Another view would relate it to the state of the recipients need; if they are in urgent need of something and that need is fulfilled by someone, the latter will receive correspondingly more reward and blessing of Allah Ta'ala than that of Sadaqah to the poor under normal conditions.

For example, there is a reward for giving clothes to a poor person, but for giving cloth to a naked person or one in tatters, the reward will be considerably more. To give food to a poor person will be definitely rewarded, but to feed a starving person will receive exceedingly greater reward and blessings. Similarly, to give water for drinking to anybody is rewarded, but to give water to someone who is extremely thirsty will receive so much reward and blessings that his life-long sins would be expunged, as has been mentioned under Hadith No. 10 above, wherein a prostitute got forgiveness for the sins of all her life for giving water to a thirsty dog.

Under the series of Ayaat above, at No. 23 a saying of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has been recorded that one who goes from door to door, begging for a morsel or two of bread, is not really a poor person; it is the one who neither has sufficient provision to meet his needs nor anyone knows about his circumstances to come to his help; he is the only truly poor.

Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho has narrated the saying of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to the effect that whoever undertakes to meet the needs of a brother, Allah Ta'ala will look after his needs; and whosoever saves a Muslim from calamity, Allah Ta'ala will protect him from one of his calamities on the Day of Judgements; and when someone provides a dress to a Muslim to cover his body and prevents a disclosure of his shortcomings, Allah Ta'ala will provide for him the same type of cover on the Day of Qiyamah. (Mishkaat)

Several such matters have been mentioned by the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum. Another Hadith has it that when someone keeps quiet about some defect in a person, be it concerning his body or behaviour, the reward for that will be the same as for digging out of the grave a man who has been buried alive. (Mishkaat).

Allah Ta'ala has said, (which has been mentioned under Ayat No. 25):

"Those who spent their money and fought in the path of Allah before the conquest of Makkah, cannot be equalled by others". (al-Hadeed: 10)

The reason for this as stated by the Ulama is that the need for spending before the conquest of Makkah was very great; that is why it is rated very high.

According to the author of Jamal, when Islam and the Muslims had not yet attained high honour and prestige and the Muslims were in a greater need of help, both physical and financial, they were the first and the foremost among the Muhajireen and Ansaar, about whom Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that Sadaqah in gold, of size of mount Uhud, given by others, will not equal a Mudd (about a kilogram) or even half Mudd given by those in the ranks of early Muhajireen and Ansaar.

Apart from this, there are many narrations wherein Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has warned and exhorted his companions to give preference to those who are in urgent need. To accept an invitation to Valima (marriage – feast) is desirable. However, one of the Ahadith narrates Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that the Valima meal is the worst type of meal, as only the rich usually are invited to it and the poor are overlooked. (Mishkaat). Thus the feast is of a worst kind when only important persons are invited to it, and not the poor ones, but if that is not so, attending it is desirable according to Sunnah.

One Hadith says that a person will be rewarded for giving water to a Muslim, when the water is available generally, as if he had freed a slave; whereas giving a drink of water to someone where water is scarce, will count equal to saving a dying person. (Kanz). One Hadith says that the highest Sadaqah is to give food to a hungry (man or animal).

Another Hadith says that the virtue which Allah Ta'ala appreciates most is to feed a starving destitute or to pay his debts or to remove his affliction. Ubaid Ibne Umair Radhiallaho anho has said that on the Day of Judgement the

people will rise in a state of extreme hunger and thirst and in total nakedness; however, an individual who fed someone for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, will be granted food to his fill; similarly, the one who gave water to someone for the pleasure of Allah, will have his thirst quenched fully, and the one who gave someone clothes will receive a dress from Allah Ta'ala. (Ihya).

HADITH: 14

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that he who strives to help a needy unmarried woman or a poor person is like the one who strives in Jehaad and, probably he added, he is like the one who prays all night without the slightest slackness and is like a person who fasts every day for his whole life.

Note: A woman without a husband usually means a widow or the one who cannot find a husband. This describes the reward for the effort made in helping these cases irrespective of any results. Another Hadith says that a person is rewarded like those who fight in the path of Allah if he undertakes to fulfil the need of a Muslim brother or tries to give him some benefit.

Another Hadith says that any one helping an afflicted brother will be granted by Allah Ta'ala the power to stand firm on the Day when mountains will move from their places (i.e. on Doomsday). (Kanz). A fine point emerges from this Hadith that, in the present day disturbed times, people get easily upset except those who keep helping and assisting others. Another Hadith says that if a person meets the need of a Muslim brother in this life, Allah Ta'ala will meet seventy of his needs, the least of which will be the forgiveness of all his sins; and if one takes up a cause for another person with those in power for solving his problem, Allah Ta'ala will help him to cross the 'Siraat' (the Bridge over Jahannam) on the Day of Judgement when many will slip while crossing. (Kanz)

This Hadith is of great value for those who have an access to those in power; they may take up legitimate problems of the subordinates and other sufferers with the concerned authorities and give it due importance. It is to be remembered that crossing of the 'Siraat', is the most difficult and the hardest of things on the Day of Judgement and, by this ordinary effort here, it will be made easy for them, to their great advantage. However, the effort is to be made for the sake of Allah Ta'ala and not for self publicity or popular esteem; the effort made for the sake of Allah will automatically bring good name and respect, far greater than desired by oneself but, if there be a personal motive behind the act, it will eliminate the purity of intention behind the effort, which has to be made for the sake of Allah Ta'ala to gain the promised reward.

HADITH: 15

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that Allah Ta'ala loves three persons and detests three. Those whom Allah loves are (1) a person who, when a beggar came and begged from some people, none of them being related to him, and was refused by them, got up quietly and gave him something secretly so that only Allah Ta'ala and the beggar knew of it; (2) a person who was one of a party that travelled all night till sleep overtook them, but when all of them went to sleep (for a short while), he got up and engaged in devotions, begging Allah's favour with importunity and reciting from the Holy Qur'an; and (3) a person who was in a detachment that fought in Jehaad and was defeated but he went straight ahead till he was martyred or granted victory.

The three whom Allah Ta'ala detests are an old man who indulges in adultery, a beggar who is proud and a rich man who is oppressive.

Note: There are several different Traditions about the above subject concerning the six types of persons mentioned in this Hadith. At Ayat No. 9 under the Ayat series above, this very Hadith has been mentioned. Some of the Traditions mention only one type of person and some, more than one. One Hadith says that there are three occasions when the prayer (Du'aa) of a person is not rejected, but certainly accepted.

First, when a person offers his Salaat in a jungle alone, and no one can see him, his Du'aa is certain to be accepted; second when a person who is engaged in Jehaad along with a party, which runs away from the enemy, but he remains steadfast alone; the third is a person who stands in devotion before Allah Ta'ala in the latter part of night. Allah Ta'ala will not listen to three persons on the Day of Judgement, nor will He purify them of their sins, nor look at them graciously and, for them, there will be grievous punishment.

First the persistent adulterer in old age; second the lying ruler; and third an arrogant beggar. In this context, 'will not purify them' may mean, either 'not purify them of their sins', or 'will not commend their actions'. Another Hadith has it to the following effect: There are three to whom Allah Ta'ala will not accord a look of Grace on the Day of Resurrection and they will have a severe, painful punishment: an elderly man indulging in fornication, a proud beggar and a merchant who swears on all occasions, unnecessarily and repeatedly, both while buying and selling. Undoubtedly it amounts to sheer impudence towards the Divine Majesty of Allah Ta'ala to swear unnecessarily.

Still another Hadith says: There are three at whom Allah Ta'ala will not look gracefully on the Day of Resurrection and they will have painful punishment; an old man indulging in fornication, a man who makes capital out of oaths, true or false, and a proud beggar who is vain of himself. (Jami-us-Saghir)

It occurs in a Hadith that Allah Ta'ala loves three persons and detests three: those he loves are (1) a person who joins a detachment making Jehaad, faces and fights the enemy most bravely till he is granted victory or dies a martyr, (2) a person journeying with a party of travellers who go to sleep at night, but he stands in devotional prayers till his fellow-travellers have taken rest for a while and then wakes them up, and (3) a person who is patient towards a neighbour who keeps molesting him till the two are separated by death or one of them journeying to a distant place. And the three whom Allah detests are: a merchant who swears frequently, a proud beggar and a person who, after giving Sadaqah, keeps reminding people of his generosity towards them.

HADITH: 16

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "There is something due on property apart from Zakaat", and then recited the following Ayaat (in support of what he said):

"It is not piety that you should turn your faces to the east and west....." to the end of the Ayat

Note: We have quoted the Ayat referred to in the Hadith at Serial No. 2 above in the series of the Ayat. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam inferred from this Ayat that, besides Zakaat, there are other obligations concerning one's property. The Ayat explicitly encourages spending on one's kinsmen, orphans, destitute persons, wayfarers, beggars and for setting free slaves and convicts (held in ransom for money owed by them) and paying of Zakaat has been mentioned separately. Muslim Ibne Yasaar Rahmathullah alaihe says, "Just as Salaat is of two types, the Fardh and the Nafil, Zakaat is also of two types, the Fard and Nafil, and both have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

When asked to explain, he began to recite this Ayat in support of his view and, after reciting the first part of the Ayat which recounts the various occasions for spending (i.e. upto: 'for setting free slaves and convicts'), he said, "All these are the occasions for giving Nafil Zakaat (Sadaqah)". He then recited the last part of the Ayat mentioning Zakaat in particular and said, 'This is Fardh Zakaat.' Allama Teebi Rahmathullah alaihe says, "There is something due on property apart from Zakaat", mentioned in this Hadith, indicates not to refuse a beggar nor one asking for a loan, nor any one asking to be lent things of common use, i.e. utensils like cooking pot, bowl, etc., or any one asking for some water, salt, a live coal for kindling fire, etc.

Allama Qari Rahmathullah alaihe has said that the Ayat which Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam recited in this particular Hadith applies, besides Zakaat, to the matters mentioned therein, like rights of near relations, showing favour to orphans, meeting the demands of the poor, travellers and beggars, and getting freedom for those who are slaves or prisoners.

The author of 'Mazahire Haq' has written that Zakaat is obligatory and has to be paid, while Sadaqah is a voluntary act and is highly praiseworthy; therefore, it must also be encouraged in the directions indicated in the aforementioned translations of the sayings of Allama Teebi and Allama Qari, confirming that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam read the Ayat as an authority for his views that Allah Ta'ala has praised the Momineen (believers) first for giving Sadaqah to their kith and kin and the orphans and later He praised them for establishing Salaat and paying Zakaat. It is clear from this that giving of Sadaqah in the above manner is distinct from payment of Zakaat and the former is a Nafil act.

The statement of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "Besides Zakaat, there is something due on property," has been established by the Ayat in question; the Nafil Sadaqah has been mentioned first, and then the obligatory one.

Allama Jassas Razi Rahmathullah alaihe has written that certain Ulama have interpreted this Ayat to mean that there are obligatory occasions for giving Sadaqah, such as spending on one's blood relations, when any of them is in distress, or to spend on some afflicted person in danger of death, to the extent of saving his life.

After that the Allama, quoting the same saying of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, has said that it also implies spending on the poor kinsmen whose maintenance has been made incumbent on a person by a lawful ruler, spending on those in distress and spending on others by way of Nafil Sadaqah, as the term 'Something due on property apart from Zakaat' used by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is applicable both to obligatory and Nafil Zakaat. The 'Fatawa Alamgiriya' says that it is obligatory to feed a needy person when he is not in a position to earn or to go out to beg. In this particular matter, there are three points to note: first, the needy one has to be fed by all those who become aware of his condition until he becomes fit to go out and fulfil all his needs; if the person or persons are not themselves able to fulfil this duty, he or they should inform others of the needy person's condition; if this is not done nor is the person fed and he dies, all who were aware of the state of affairs would be guilty of the sin. Secondly, if the needy one is able to move but not to earn, he should be helped through obligatory Sadaqah.

If he is capable of earning his livelihood then it is not permissible for him to beg for alms. Thirdly, if a needy one is able to go out but not able to earn, it is obligatory on him to go to people and ask for Sadaqah, otherwise he will be a sinner.

HADITH: 17

Buhaisah Radhiyallahu anha has related that when her father asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam "What is the thing not to be refused (if asked for by someone)?" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Water." Her father then asked the same question again, to which Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, 'Salt'. When her father repeated the question once again, the Prophet Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Whatever good you can do (to someone) is better for you."

Note: If the water is meant to be taken from the well and salt from a mine, then, according to Shariah, no one has the right to stop anyone who is in need, even when both the water and the salt are owned by someone. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam admonished never to refuse such simple things to a needy person, as these do not cost the owner much but the receiver's urgent need is met. As these ordinary things are commonly available in homes, their urgent need and scarcity is not felt. A small quantity of salt given to someone for his curry will make his food tasty, without much loss to you.

Similar is the case in respect of giving water to someone. Aishah Radhiyallahu anha narrates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "It is improper to refuse three things to anyone: salt, water and a bit of live fire." She then said that the need for giving water was understood, but the case of salt and fire was not clear? Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "O Humairah! When someone gives a bit of fire to a person in need, it is as if all the things cooked on the fire were given as Sadaqah to the needy; and for the one who gives a bit of salt, all things that become tasty by its use will count as Sadaqah. So the gain to the giver is enormous". In the main Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has mentioned two things as examples and then he has stated a principle, "to do good as much as you can to someone is good for you".

The fact is that when someone does any type of favour to another person, it is indeed a favour to oneself: Allah Ta'ala's commandments mentioned at No. 20 of the Ayaat series above, says, that whatever you spend in the path of Allah, you will receive a return from Him. At Hadith No. 2 above, it has been mentioned that two angels permanently pray to Allah Ta'ala for a good return for those who spend for Allah's sake and ruin for him who holds back his wealth. Under such circumstances, when one does a material favour to another person, he actually saves his wealth from an evil fate and at the same time establishes a right for a handsome return from the treasury of Allah Ta'ala.

A serious consideration of the matter will reveal the truth that we are not doing any favour to another person, but it may well be that he has saved your home from plunder, which shows that he has done you a favour and not you to him.

HADITH: 18

Sa'ad Radhiallaho anho enquired from Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that, as his mother was dead, what type of Sadaqah would be best? (for inviting Divine blessings for her soul). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that water was the best of all. On that, Sa'ad had a well dug, so that his mother should receive the blessings.

Note: Supplying water was considered to be the best Sadaqah, as there was scarcity of it in Madinah. All hot countries suffer from shortage of water, but there was an acute shortage in Madinah in those days. Besides this, the benefits of water are common, as also its use. One of the Ahadith says that whoever arranges a water-supply system, wherefrom men, jinns and birds drink, will keep on receiving blessings and reward until the Day of Judgement, even after his death. Abdullah Ibne Mubarak Rahmatullah alaihe was visited by a person who complained about a wound on his knee, saying that, despite continuous treatment by many physicians for the last seven years, it had not healed at all. Abdullah Ibne Mubarak Rahmatullah alaihe advised him to have a well dug at a place where drinking water was scarce and said, 'I have full trust in Allah Ta'ala that, as soon as the water appears in the well, the wound will heal up.' The person acted accordingly and his wound was completely cured.

The famous Mohaddith Abu Abdullah Hakim Rahmatullah alaihe had some wounds on his face, which remained incurable, inspite of various treatments for a year. He requested his teacher, Abu Uthman Sabuni, Rahmatullah alaihe to make Du'aa for the cure of this wound. As it happened to be Friday, the teacher made a long Du'aa to which the whole congregation said Aamin. On the next Friday, a woman came to the congregation and presented a written note which stated that, after she returned home last Friday, she kept on praying for Hakim carefully and she saw Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam in her dream, telling her to advise Hakim to have the arrangements of water supply extended for the Muslims.

After hearing this, Hakim arranged drinking water at the door of his for the wayfarers and got the water regularly replenished along with ice. Hardly a week had passed when all the wounds were healed and his face looked much more handsome than before.

A Hadith says that Sa'ad Radhiallaho anho told Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that his mother, who had died, had performed a Hajj at his expense, used to give Sadaqah from his money and also helped her relatives and other people from his wealth. He then asked whether she would receive any returns for all these actions if he continued to perform them on her behalf.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Yes, she will." Another Hadith has: A woman told Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that her mother had died suddenly and had not been able to give Sadaqah as she would have done in case of a normal death. She then asked whether her mother would get any benefit if she (the daughter) gave Sadaqah on her behalf. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Yes, do so." In fact, for all the relatives, particularly those who leave property for us after their death, like parents, husband or wife, brothers and sisters, or those who might have done us favours, like teachers and holy personages, one should regularly give Sadaqah and do other good deeds and pray for the transference of the rewards to their account.

It will be highly improper to go on benefiting from the wealth they have left behind, or from favours done by them, and yet to forget them when they are in need of receiving gifts and benefactions from the living ones. When a person dies, his own actions come to an end; unless he leaves behind a perpetually rewarding virtue or any deed of that kind, as will be explained later; he remains dependant on transference of blessings and prayers from the living ones. One Hadith says that a dead man in his grave feels like a drowning person who keenly desires help, from all directions, that his father, brother or a friend may send him as an aid in the form of a prayer. And if something is received, it becomes the dearest thing for him in that world.

Bashar Ibne Mansoor Rahmatullah alaihe says that once, during an epidemic of plague, a person busied himself very often in offering funeral prayers for the dead and in the evening he would stand at the gate of the graveyard and read this Du'aa:

"May Allah Ta'ala change your dreadful life into a pleasurable one, have mercy on your loneliness, overlook your faults and bless all your good deeds with acceptance".

He would then return home. One Day it so happened that he returned home without offering the Du'aa. At night he saw in his dream that a large crowd of people approached him. When he asked them who they were and why they were there, they replied that they were the dwellers of the graveyard, and they used to receive gifts from him every evening. He asked them, 'What kind of gifts?' They said that the Du'aa that he used to make every evening would be turned into gifts that reached every one of them.

Thereafter the man never forgot to make that Du'aa. Bashaar Ibne Ghalib Rahmatullah alaihe Najrani says that he used to make Dua'a most frequently for Rabi'ah Basriah Rahmathullah alaiha. Once he saw her in a dream and heard her saying, "Bashaar, your gifts reach us in the trays of 'Nur' covered with silken covers. When he asked her what it meant, she said, "When a Muslim makes a Du'aa and it is approved, it is placed in a tray of Nur and covered with a silken cover and presented to the dead person concerned, who is told that it is a gift for him from so and so.

Later in the next Hadith, several examples of this type have been given. Imaam Nawawi Rahmatullah alaihe writes in his interpretation of Muslim's collection of Ahadith that there is no difference of opinion among Muslims regarding the dead receiving the rewards of Sadaqah given on their behalf. This is the correct belief.

A few have written that the dead cannot receive any reward for the Sadaqah given on their behalf, but this is definitely wrong and a clear mistake. It goes against the Qur'an, the Ahadith of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and the general consensus of opinion among Muslim people; therefore, that contention is not fit for serious consideration. (Bazl)

Shaikh Taqiyyuddin Rahmathullah alaihe says that if a person thinks that a reward is receivable only for ones own deeds, he is acting against the consensus of opinion of the whole Muslim Ummah. For, the whole Ummah is unanimously of the opinion that a person receives benefits from the prayers of other people, which means a gain from the deed of another person.

As for instance, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam will intercede on the Day of Judgement and so will other Ambiya Alaihimussalam and men of piety, all of which would imply benefits from the actions of others. Likewise, the angels pray and seek pardon for the Momineen (as given in first Ruku' of Surah Mo'min). This, too, is a gain from the act of others. Allah Ta'ala, by His own Mercy and Kindness, will forgive the sins of people; this will amount to benefiting without any effort from oneself. Children of Mo'mineen will enter Jannah along with their parents (according to what is said in the first, Ruku' of Surah at-Toor), which also means benefiting from others' good deeds. A Hajj by a substitute for a deceased person counts as obligatory Hajj for the latter, which means a gain from the act of another person.

And there can be more examples of this type. A venerable gentleman related that his brother had died and he saw him in his dream; he asked his brother as to what had happened to him in the grave. The deceased brother replied that, as soon as he was buried, a flame of fire came close to him; at the same time a prayer from some person reached him and stood between him and the flame. If the prayer had not been made, he would have been caught in the flame.

Ali Ibne Moosa Haddad Rahmathullah alaihe says that once he was present in a burial prayer along with Imaam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal Rahmatullah alaihe. Muhammad Ibne Qudaama Jauhari Rahmatullah alaihe was also there. After the burial, a blind man sat down near the grave and started reciting the Qur'an. Imaam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal told him that reciting the Qur'an beside a grave is an unapproved innovation.

On the way home, Muhammad Ibne Qudama asked Imaam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal Rahmatullah alaihe what he thought of Mubashir Ibne Ismail Halabi Rahmatullah alaihe. The Imaam replied that he was a noble person and that he (Imaam) had learnt Ahadith from him. Ibne Qudaama said that he had heard from Mubashir that Abdul Rahman Ibne Alaa bin Lajlaaj Rahmathullah alaihe quoted his father as saying at the time of his death, "After my burial, the first and the last part of Surah Baqarah be recited at the head of my grave, and he confirmed this by saying that he (the father) had heard Abdullah Ibne Umar Radhiiallaho anho entrusting the same duty to a person at the time of his death. After hearing this, the Imaam Rahmatullah alaihe told Ibne Qudaama to return to the graveyard and to tell the blind man to continue reading the Qur'an at the grave. Muhammad Ibne Ahmad Marvazi Rahmatullah alaihe quoted Imaam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal as saying, "Whenever you go to the graveyard you should recite Surah Fateha, Ikhlas, al-Falaq and an-Nas and supplicate, Allah to transmit the reward of those to the dead in the graveyard.

They will certainly receive it." The author of Mughni, which is a recognised book of Fiqhe Hanbali, has quoted this very story and given a number of other examples in respect of this subject. In 'Bazlul-Majhood', a quotation from 'Bahar' indicates that if a person offers a Nafl Salaat or observes a Fast or gives something as Sadaqah, the rewards of these are transferable to any person, dead or alive, and the latter will undoubtedly receive it. In Abu Dawood (collection of Ahadith), a saying of Abu Hurairah Radhiiallaho anho has been quoted that he would welcome a person who undertook to offer two or four Raka'at of Salaat at Masjid Ashar (near Basrah) and supplicate Allah Ta'ala to transmit the reward to him, i.e. Abu Hurairah. (Abu Dawood).

Due attention should be given by all relatives to transmit, in this way, spiritual benefits to the dead relations. Apart from their right in that regard, one has to meet them after one's own death. It will be a matter of great shame if their rights and obligations were forgotten while using their property for one's own needs.

HADITH: 19

Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam has said that the returns for a person's own virtues come to an end when he dies; but there are three such things, the returns for which keep accruing even after death: a Sadaqah with recurring benefits, knowledge from which people continue to benefit, and virtuous children who offer Du'aa for their deceased parents.

Note: How infinitely Kind, Liberal and Bountiful Allah Ta'ala is for man! Even after his death, when his own deeds come to an end and he is powerless to do any good act for himself and remains in a sound sleep in the grave, Allah Ta'ala has created means through which the deceased's account of virtues keeps on increasing.

Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam has mentioned three of those means in this Hadith. The first one is virtue with recurring benefits, that is to give Sadaqah something, the benefits of which is lasting, such as building a Masjid where people offer Salaat. As long as it remains in use for that purpose, its returns will keep accruing. Some other similar cases are: to build a caravan-serial for free stay of travellers, to dedicate a building for the public good or for religious purposes, to benefit Muslims.

The recurring returns for such dedications will benefit the deceased donor. Yet another example of this is to have a well dug for public use; the benefit of this will keep accruing as long as people keep drinking its water or use it for ablutions, etc., all for the gain of the person who paid for the well, whether he is alive or dead. Another Hadith says, "The things for which a Mo'min continues to receive reward after death are: knowledge that he taught and spread, the good children he left behind, or a copy of the Qur'an which he left as legacy, or a Masjid which he built, or a caravan-serai that he made for the travellers, a canal that he dug, or a Sadaqah which he gave when he was alive and healthy" (Mishkaat). One can continue to receive benefits after death through creating, by the way of Sadaqah, any thing of lasting value and meant for public good.

Yet another thing which is of continuous benefit is the knowledge taught to others and also the diffusion of knowledge, which includes donating money to a Madrassah or compiling a religious book or distributing such a book among religious students. To donate volumes of Qur'an and religious books to Masjids and Madrassahs for public reading also come under diffusion of knowledge.

Another Hadith mentions seven things which perpetuate their rewards even after death. These are teaching of knowledge, building of a canal, establishing a well, planting a tree, building a Masjid, leaving the Qur'an in heritage and leaving behind children who invoke upon the deceased parents forgiveness from Allah Ta'ala.

It is not necessary that all the material things mentioned here are meant to be done by an individual, but any share in them would bring proportionate benefit for the deceased. The other thing mentioned in the above Hadith is knowledge, which is meant for people's benefit.

For example, to leave a book in a Madrassah, from which people will benefit as long as it lasts and which will remain a source of blessing for the deceased. Similar is the case of paying for someone to become a 'Hafiz' or an Alim; as long as their knowledge or 'Hifz' keeps spreading, whether the 'Hafiz' or 'Alim' is living or dead, the contributor will keep receiving the blessings.

For example, the Hafiz taught the Qur'an to ten or twenty boys and he died, after which his pupils kept teaching and reading the Qur'an, as long as this system continues, the teacher (Hafiz) will perpetually receive its blessings, and so will the person who made the 'Hifz' of the Hafiz possible. Still, in the larger sense, this grand system of teaching and learning will continue till Qiamah, and thus the original contributor will be the recipient of everlasting blessings, whether someone invokes them or not.

The same applies to the making of an Alim, with its blessed results again. Here it is not necessary that the total expenses of making an Alim or Hafiz are to be borne for receiving benefits after death. Blessings till Qiamah shall accrue for any portion or share in it.

Fortunate are the people who endeavour physically or financially to spread the right knowledge for the security and continuity of 'Deen'. As life is no more than a dream, the termination of which can come about unexpectedly, whatever store of this sacred commodity one leaves behind will prove to be lastingly useful.

The kith and kin, the relations and the friends will mourn him only for a few days and then become busy in their occupations, forgetting the deceased, whereas these contributions to 'Deen' are the things of lasting benefit which one must deposit during one's lifetime in the perpetual treasury, assuring safety of the capital and accruing of profit till Qiamah.

The third item mentioned in the above Hadith is virtuous children who will pray for the welfare of their deceased parents. In the first instance, the effort to make children virtuous in itself is a deed of perpetual benefit and, as long as they do good deeds, the parents will keep receiving the blessings automatically. Their prayers for the benefit of the parents will be additional permanent treasure for the latter.

In a book called 'Raudh' is a story of a pious lady known as Bahitah, who was too regular in her prayers. At the time of her death she raised her head towards heaven and exclaimed, "O, the One, who is my only Treasure and Provider for life and death; I pray, do not disgrace me at the moment of death and save me from the horrors of the grave!" After her death, her son made it a practice to visit her grave every Friday and read the Qur'an there, offering the blessings for his mother, as well as for all those buried in the graveyard.

One day, he saw his mother in a dream and asked her, how she was. The mother replied, "The severity of death is extremely harsh. By the grace of Allah Ta'ala, I am most comfortable in the grave with a bed of sweet basil and silken cushions. And the treatment given to me will last till Qiamah." The son asked her if he could be of any service to her. She said, "Do not give up coming to me on Fridays and reading the Qur'an. On your arrival all the dwellers of the graveyard come to me and tell me that you have arrived. Your visit to the graveyard is a source of great pleasure for me." The boy said that he visited the place regularly on Fridays.

One day he saw in a dream that a very big gathering of men and women came to him and he asked them who they were? They said, they were the dwellers of such and such graveyard and they had come to thank him for his Friday visits to them and his prayers for their forgiveness by Allah Ta'ala that pleased them most. They requested him to keep up that practice, which he continued most carefully.

Another learned dignitary relates that a person saw in his dream that all the graves in a graveyard opened up suddenly and the dead came out of them and started picking up something from the ground, except one person who kept sitting and was quiet. The dreamer approached him and asked what the others were picking, to which he replied that they were picking up the blessings of Sadaqah, Du'a and Darood, which the living people had offered for the dwellers of this graveyard. The dreamer asked him why he was not picking up anything.

The dead person replied that he was happy without picking up anything, as he had a young son who had the business of selling sweetmeats in such and such bazaar and who daily read the whole Qur'an and sent him his blessings. The man went to the bazaar in the morning and saw a young man selling sweets while his lips were moving. The man asked him what he was reading. The young man replied that he daily recited the whole of the Qur'an and offered its blessings as a present to his deceased father.

The person who had the dream, again saw the same vision after some time, and noticed that the person with whom he had talked was also picking up something along with others, whereupon the man woke up surprised! In the morning he went to the same bazaar and came to know that the young man was dead. (Raudh).

Saleh Muree Rahmatullah alaihe has related that once on a Friday night, well before dawn, he left his home to offer morning prayers at the Jamia Masjid, and came across a graveyard where he sat down beside a grave (as it was too early for Salaat), and dozed off. He saw in his dream that all the graves had opened up and the dead came out. They were all happily and cheerfully talking to each other and among them was a young man with soiled clothes looking gloomy, who sat away from the others.

After a short while, a large number of angels descended from the sky carrying trays covered with glittering napkins. They handed a tray to each person who returned to his grave with the tray. When all had gone, the lonely person also got up to enter his grave but without a tray. The dreaming gentleman approached him and asked him why he was so gloomy and what those trays were. He replied that the trays contained the presents which the living people had sent to their dead. As for him, he had no one living except his mother to send him anything, but she had remarried and was too busy with her husband and never thought of him. On enquiry, the dead son gave him the address of his mother. Next morning, Saleh went to the young man's mother and told her about his dream.

The woman said, indeed, the young man was her son and most dear to her, and she had carried him in her lap. The woman then gave Saleh one thousand Dirhams and requested him to give that money as Sadaqah for her son who indeed was the coolness of her eyes, and she promised never to forget to pray for him and give Sadaqah for his sake. Saleh Rahmathullah alaihe further said that he once again had the same dream with the same gathering of people in the graveyard. This time the young man was wearing very good clothes and looked very happy. He came running to him and said, "May Allah Ta'ala bless you immensely. Your present has reached me." (Raudh).

There are thousands of instances of the above type mentioned in various books. Some of these have also been mentioned under the preceding Ahadith. So, any one who wishes that his children be of use to him after his death, should endeavour to do whatever he can, to make them virtuous and righteous. It is the best one could wish for his children, as also for himself, as Allah Ta'ala has said in Surah Tahrim:

"O believers! Save yourself and your families from the fire of Jahannam". (at-Tahrim: 6)

Zaid Rahmathullah alaihe Ibne Aslam has said that when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam recited this Ayat, the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum asked how they could save their children and families from the fire of Jahannam. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Keep on exhorting them to do the deeds which Allah Ta'ala likes and to keep away from those which Allah Ta'ala dislikes." Ali Radhiyallahu anho explained the Ayat by saying to teach and exhort oneself and one's own family about all things which are good.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has further said, "May Allah Ta'ala have mercy on the father who helps his children to remain courteous and good towards their father (and not to treat him in the way amounting to disobedience)". (Ihya). This includes making them of good character and disposition; otherwise, their being discourteous will only be natural.

One Hadith says that the Aqeeqa ceremony of a baby be performed on the seventh day after birth and the baby be given a name; after six years of age the child must be taught good manners; after nine years of age the child must have a separate bed and should not share a bed with any other person; after thirteen years of age a child must perform Salaat regularly and may be punished if found neglecting Salaat, and when of sixteen years he or she should be married. After that, the father should get hold of his or her hand and say, "I have taught you good manners and given you education and have got you married, I now seek Allah Ta'ala's protection in this life from any mischief by you and any punishment in the Hereafter due to you." The meaning of 'any punishment due to you', as mentioned in a number of Ahadith under different versions is that, when a person acts in a wrong manner, that will count as a sin of his own doing and if the others copy him in that action, he will be accountable for their sins, too; not that there will be any reduction for the sins committed by them because of following another person; it will be a definite sin on their part too, and the person whose example was followed will suffer additionally for their sins as well. Hence, when the children follow the bad examples set by their elders and act in a wrong manner, such sins will count against the elders too.

Therefore, the elders must particularly abstain from doing anything wrong in front of them (young persons).

In this particular Hadith it has been said that punishment for neglecting Salaat be given after thirteen years of age, whereas in a number of other Ahadith, the instruction for Salaat are to be given after seven years of age and beating for neglecting Salaat is to be done after ten years of age. This latter version is considered to supersede the previous one. Anyhow, a father is allowed to beat his child if he neglects to offer Salaat and of the former does not discharge this responsibility he will be guilty of committing a sin. Contrary to that, if the child is habitually regular in performance of Salaat, proper observance of fasting and other injunctions of Islaam, the blessings of these virtues will accrue to the parents as well.

Furthermore, when he grows up to be a pious person and makes Du'aa for his parents, that will be an additional source of blessings for them. Ibne Maalik Rahmatullah alaihe has said that in the above mentioned Hadith, the condition is of the children being virtuous, as the Du'aa from the non-righteous children will not reach the parents. The mention of Du'aa in the Hadith is meant to encourage the children to pray for their parents. Moreover, it is generally maintained that the father of pious children automatically receives the blessings on account of all the virtuous deeds performed by them, whether they make a Du'aa for him or not. It is like planting a fruit tree for common benefit; the planter will keep on receiving blessings as people eat fruit from the tree, whether they offer a prayer for him or not.

Allama Munavi Rahmatullah alaihe has said that offering Du'aa by the children for their father has been specially emphasised to impress its urgency and importance for the children to keep up this virtue. Otherwise, Du'aa is fruitful in all cases, whether by one's own children or by others.

The main Hadith however mentions only three things for indicating their basic importance. There are several other actions in the same category, which are mentioned in different Ahadith about perpetual rewards and blessings. For example, in one Hadith, it is said that when a person is the first, to do something good, he will receive a reward for that action as well as for the actions of those who copy that good deed, without any reduction in the rewards of the individuals who followed the first person.

Similarly, if someone starts an evil practice, he will suffer for the sin that he has committed and also for the sins of those who followed his bad example, without any reduction in the punishment of those who followed him. In another Hadith, it is said that the blessings for doing good deeds come to an end at one's death but, in the case of a person who is assigned the duty of defending his country's frontiers, the blessings for him keep accruing till Qiamah. Building of a canal and planting a tree for the common good of the people come under the same category. Allama Suyooti Rahmathullah alaihe has counted those as eleven, while Ibne Emaad Rahmatullah alaihe has said those are thirteen in number. However, they are all related to the categories of the three principal actions mentioned in the main Hadith above. (Aun)

HADITH: 20

Aishah Radhiyallahu anha has said that once someone slaughtered a goat (and distributed some of it); when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam enquired, "What remains of the goat?" The reply was, "Only a shoulder." Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "All remains except the shoulder."

Note: the idea in this is that whatever is given away for Allah's sake remains as an everlasting reward; the rest perishes unless it is spent for a worthwhile cause. Mazahir Rahmatullah alaihe has said that it points towards the Ayat of Holy Qur'an:

"Whatever you have in this world will perish one day (either by its own decay or your death). That which reaches Allah remains forever." (an Nahl: 96)

In one of the Ahadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that one says, "My property! My property! Whereas the fact is that his property is only that which he himself has used up by eating, wearing or giving in the path of Allah Ta'ala as a deposit for the Hereafter; the rest is all to be counted lost and left for other people, when he departs from here: Another Hadith says that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum, "Is there any one among you who loves the property of his heirs more than his own property?" the reply was that there was no such person; every one loved his own property. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said that man's own property is only that which he sends ahead of him as his treasure, and whatever is left behind is the property of the heirs. (Mishkaat)

A Sahabi Radhiyallahu anho has said that he was once in the company of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who recited Surah Takaathur and said, "Man claims to have his property. O man! You own nothing except that which you use in eating, the clothes that you wear out and the Sadaqah that you send ahead to be preserved in Allah Ta'ala's treasury." Several Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum have narrated to the same effect. People deposit money in Banks most carefully, with no surety of it's remaining with them.

Even if a calamity does not fall on it in their lifetime, none of it will be any use to them after death; but the wealth deposited in the treasury of Allah Ta'ala will always be available for use without any fear of calamity, decay or decrease; in fact it will never finish.

Sahl Ibne Abdullah Tusturi Rahmatullah alaihe used to spend liberally in the path of Allah Ta'ala. His mother and brothers complained to Abdullah Ibne Mubarak Rahmathullah alaihe that Sahl wanted to spend everything and they feared he would become a pauper. Abdullah Ibne Mubarak Rahmatullah alaihe enquired from Sahl Rahmatullah alaihe about the matter.

The latter asked Abdullah Ibne Mubarak, "If a person wanted to migrate from Madinah to the city of Rustaqq in Persia, where he had already purchased land, would he leave anything behind in Madinah?" The reply was that nothing would be left behind. Sahl Rahmathullah alaihe then said that was his real purpose. While the people thought he was going to migrate to another place, he had actually meant transfer to the next world. In these days, people have personal experience (of it) that when people who wish to move permanently from one country to another (e.g. India to Pakistan or vice versa) by their own choice, they try to transfer all their belongings and property, buildings, etc., by exchanging with those at the new locations, before actual migration.

Until this arrangement is completed they do not move, despite all inconvenience at the old place. On the other hand, the people who are forced to move out of their homeland, leaving everything behind, undergo endless grief and sufferings. This is exactly the state of affairs of every single person leaving this world. As long as he is living, he has the power to transfer his property and belongings, etc., to the next world (Akhirah), but when death causes a forced change of place, everything has to be left behind, as if it had been confiscated by the state. There is still time for those who understand the truth to transfer their property to the next world.

HADITH: 21

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that whosoever believes in Allah Ta'ala and the Day of Judgement must treat his guest well, refrain from causing difficulties for his neighbour, and whatever he utters must be good, or else he should hold his tongue; the other version of this Hadith adds: 'He should be kind to his kinsfolk.'

Note: In this Hadith Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has warned us about several matters and each of these is preceded by the phrase, "Whosoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgement", (Arabic text contains full version, while the above translation is abbreviated).

Repeating this phrase with each clause aims at showing the extreme importance of each matter. It is like someone telling one of his children, "If you are my son, you will do such and such". The purpose of these warnings is that these matters are part of the complete faith and whoever is not careful about them cannot be considered as perfect in his faith. The belief in Allah and Akhirah have been stated together, due to the fact that there is no reward in Akhirah for any good deed without faith in Allah Ta'ala. To have faith in Allah Ta'ala includes faith in the Akhirah. Its special mention in the Hadith above is probably for inspiring a passion for the rewards to be had on the Day of Judgement for accomplishing the deeds emphasised by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. On that day, it will become obvious to all how much rewards are given by Allah Ta'ala, for the smallest things and actions done in this life.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has emphasised four matters in the above Hadith:

One, to honour one's guest; this point is fully explained under the next Hadith.

Two, not to cause any difficulty for a neighbour. This is the least of the obligations towards a neighbour. In fact, considerable emphasis has been laid on this matter in the Traditions. Many Traditions narrated by the Shaikain (Bukhari and Muslim) tell us, "Treat your neighbour well", and in some of them it is said, "Be kind to the neighbour", meaning: 'Help him whenever he is in need and save him from any adversity'. In one Hadith, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Do the people know their obligations to the neighbour? They are: help him whenever he asks for it, give him a loan when he wants it, help him if he is needy, visit him in his sickness; in the event of death, accompany the funeral; congratulate him on his happy occasions; condole with him in adversity, do not build your house higher than his without his permission, lest the ventilation of his house is obstructed; if you buy some fruit, send some of it to him as a present and, if you cannot do so, take the fruit into your house covered up, so that he cannot see it and make sure that your children do not take the fruit out of the house and make his children grieved, and do not let your smoke cause him annoyance, unless you are cooking something that you propose to share with him."

You now appreciate and understand the rights of a neighbour. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then swore by Allah and said, "No one will ever understand these rights of the neighbour unless Allah has mercy on him." This Hadith has been narrated by Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe in the Arba'een and by Hafiz Ibne Hajar Rahmatullah alaihe in Fath-ul-Bari. Another Hadith says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, repeating his words three times, "By Allah, he is not a Mo'min, By Allah, he is not a Mo'min, By Allah, he is not a Mo'min!" Someone asked as to who it was. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The person who causes suffering to his neighbour." Another Hadith says that such a person will never enter Jannah.

Aishah Radhiallaho anha and Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho both have narrated the saying of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "Jibra'il Alaihissalam has been repeatedly stressing upon me the rights of the neighbours, so much so that I thought he would be made to share the inheritance. Allah Ta'ala has ordered in the Holy Qur'an:

"You understand worship of Allah and do not attribute any partner with Him, be kind and good to your parents, also to other kinsmen, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbours, your associates and the wayfarers." (an-Nisaa: 36)

The near neighbour is the one next to your house, and the distant one that living at a distance. Someone asked Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe about the extent of neighbourhood. He said, "Forty houses in front, forty behind, forty to the right and forty to the left." Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho is reported to have said that a beginning should be made from the nearest and not from the one living farther away. Aishah Radhiallaho anha asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "I have two neighbours, with whom should I begin?" Rasulallah Sallallahu

alaihe wasallam said, "The one whose door is closer to yours." Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho has related this differently by saying that the nearness of a neighbour depends on his relationship: he is near, if he is related, while the one not related is the far one. Nauf Shaami Rahmatullah alaihe has related that the near neighbour is the one who is a Muslim and the far one is the non-Muslim. (Durre Manthur)

The version given in Musnad Bazzar and others, relates Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that there are three types of neighbours:

First, the one having three rights, those of neighbourhood, kinship and Islam; second having rights of neighbourhood and Islam; third, he who has only one right and that will be a non-Muslim. Neighbourhood has thus been classified into three grades. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has also narrated this particular Hadith and has said that Islam has given preference even to a non-Muslim over a Muslim due to neighbourhood.

Another Hadith says that the first case to be settled between two persons on the Day of Judgement, will be the one about rights of neighbourhood.

A person came to Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiyallahu anho and complained bitterly about his neighbour. Ibne Mas'ood said to him, "Go and do your business; if he has disobeyed Allah Ta'ala in regard to you, you must avoid disobeying Allah in his respect." An authentic Hadith says that a woman's way of living was described before Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, that she was regular in her Tahajjud Salaat and fasted frequently but molested her neighbour.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "She will enter Jahannam, though she might be taken out of it after undergoing her punishment." Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that not to trouble him is not the only right of a neighbour; to bear patiently any trouble from him is also one of his rights.

Ibnul Muqaffa Rahmatullah alaihe used to sit frequently in the shadow of his neighbour's wall. He came to know that the neighbour was in a heavy debt and was to sell his house to pay the debt. He said that he always enjoyed the shadow of the neighbour's wall and did not pay anything for that; so, he presented to the neighbour the price of his house and told him that, since he had received the price, he should not sell it.

The slave of Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho slaughtered a goat; Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho told him that, after skinning the goat, he should first give a share of the meat to his Jewish neighbour and he repeated these same words. Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho said that he heard Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying that Jibra'il Alaihissalam repeated himself several times in stressing the neighbour's right; that is why he too was repeating it again and again.

Aishah Radhiyallahu anha has said that good conduct comprises ten qualities. Sometimes these are seen in a son and not in the father. The slaves may have them, while the masters may not. These are a gift from Allah Ta'ala to whomsoever He may grant:

1. Speaking the Truth.
2. To be honest with people.
3. To grant favour to a deserving needy person.
4. To return a good turn.
5. To be kind to the kinsmen.
6. To take care of a trust.
7. To fulfil the rights of a neighbour.

8. To be dutiful to a comrade.
9. To discharge obligations towards a guest.
10. At the root of all these is modesty. (Ihya)

The third subject in the main Hadith is that anyone having faith in Allah Ta'ala and the Akhirah should speak good things or else remain quiet. Hafiz Ibne Hajar Rahmatullah alaihe says that these are the most comprehensive words of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, as whatever is spoken will either be good or bad. The good includes all the things which need to be spoken of, obligatory or desirable; whatever is left is evil. In other words, anything which may appear to be neither good nor bad, according to Hafiz, will be treated as harmful, because when it does not look to be good it becomes absurd, which means evil.

Umme Habibah Radhiyallahu anha has reported Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that anything uttered by a person becomes his own burden. Nothing is beneficial, except ordering good or prohibiting evil or remembering and praising Allah Ta'ala. After hearing this Hadith, a person remarked that it was very severe. Sufian Thauri Rahmatullah alaihe said, "What to say of the severity of this Hadith, Allah Ta'ala Himself has said in the Qur'an:

"People's whispering and tale bearing is often devoid of good, except of those who encourage others to be charitable, virtuous or to have improved mutual relationship; and whosoever does this for the pleasure of Allah, We shall grant him immense rewards shortly. (An-Nisaa: 114)

Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho has said that when he requested Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to give him some advice, he said, "I bid you to ever remain fearful of Allah Ta'ala, as by that, every action of yours will become likeable. He requested him for some more advice.

He said, "Be regular in reciting the Qur'an and the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala, as this will cause your remembrance in heavens and provide you light in this world." He asked for more advice; the reply was, "Observe silence most often, which will keep away Shaitan from you and help you in performing religious duties." He asked for still more; the reply was, "Abstain from laughing too much, as it deadens the soul and reduces lustre of the face." He still requested for more; the reply was, "Speak the truth always, however bitter it may be." He asked for more; the reply was, "Do not fear anyone in your dealings involving Allah's commandments." On yet another request for more, the reply was, "The anxiety about you own faults should prevent you from looking at other people's fault."

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said, "The tongue is one of the greatest boons of Allah Ta'ala. It is one of His most wonderful and exquisite creations. It is small in size but, by the exercise of tongue, one can perform great deeds like profession of faith, or fall into heinous sins, such as apostasy – the two extremes of human behaviour." After that, he recounts many sins that are committed by the tongue, e.g. idle talk, absurd conversation, quarrels and altercations, talking while making faces, talking with false eloquence and ostentatious style, obscene talk, abusive language, cursing, over indulgence in poetry, making fun of others, disclosing people's secrets, making false allegations through hidden reference, backbiting, slander, duplicity in talk, out-of-place praises for someone and asking improper questions, etc, etc. So many of these mischiefs are related to so small a thing that the problem becomes really dangerous.

That is why Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has repeatedly exhorted us to remain silent and has said that whoever observes silence will find deliverance. One Sahabi Radhiyallahu anho requested Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to tell him of certain essentials in Islam for which he may not need to ask anyone else. The reply was, "To believe in Allah Ta'ala and to be steadfast therein." He further asked as to what thing should he guard against. The reply was, "Improper use of tongue." Another Sahabi Radhiyallahu anho asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam the way to attain salvation. The reply was, "Restrain your tongue, remain at home (do not wander about) and keep lamenting over your sins."

In one of the Ahadith, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Whoever can give me guarantee against misuse of two things, I shall guarantee his entry into Jannah: one, the tongue and the other, the private parts." One of the Ahadith says that someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "What is the most important virtue

which will help people to enter Jannah?" the reply was, "The fear of Allah Ta'ala and good habits." The next question was about the deeds that will cause entry into Jahannam.

The reply was, "Misdeeds relating to the mouth and the private parts." Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho was once performing the sa'yee (formal walk between Safa and Marwah) while he kept saying to his own tongue, "You will gain if you talk of good things and avoid evil talk; this will keep you safe from being put to shame." Someone asked him whether these were his own words or he had heard them from Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. He said that he had heard Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying that most of man's sins arise from his tongue. Abdullah Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Allah Ta'ala will hide the misdeeds of the one who keeps his mouth shut and He will save from His punishment one who controls his anger, and whoever seeks Allah's pardon, it is granted to him."

Mu'az Radhiallaho anho requested Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to give some good advice; the reply was, 'Worship Allah Ta'ala as if you could see Him, consider yourself among the dead and, if you like, I may tell you something which could give you a hold on these things,' and then Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam made a gesture towards his own tongue.

It has been narrated from Sulaiman Alaihissalam, that if speech is silver, silence is gold. Luqman Hakim (Alaihissalam), who is famous for his wisdom, was a Negro slave of plain looks. Due to his wisdom and vast knowledge, he gained world-renown in his time. Someone asked him if he was not the slave of such and such person. He replied in the affirmative. The next question was, "Are you not the same person who used to graze goats at the foot of such and such mountain?" he replied, "Yes". The person asked him how he had attained his present position. He replied, "By four things: Fear of Allah; speaking the truth; trustworthiness and preferring silence to useless talk." Several other narratives indicate it as his main habit. (Durre Manthur)

Baraa Radhiallaho anho has said that a Bedouin (villager) approached Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to ask him about the deeds which would take him to Jannah. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Give food to the hungry, a drink of water to the thirsty; tell people to do good and forbid them from evil deeds; if you are unable to do that, restrain your tongue from uttering anything but good." Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has advised us to guard our tongues from saying anything but good, as that would enable us to overcome Shaitan.

The above are some of the Traditions narrated briefly; besides these, there are many other sayings and Traditions which Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has mentioned. All those have been supported by Allama Zubaidi Rahmatullah alaihe and Hafiz Iraqi Rahmatullah alaihe.

It appears from the above that the control of tongue is most important and yet we are totally unmindful, and talk whatever we like, disregarding the fact that Allah Ta'ala has appointed two watching angels for day and night who remain with us on our right and left shoulders, writing every good and bad action committed by us. In spite of that, the mercy and favours of Allah Ta'ala and blessings of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam are with us. For lack of attention, we are prone to speak uselessly at times; for this, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has prescribed an atonement that, before dispersing from a gathering, we should recite three times the prayer:

"Subhanallahe wa bi hamdhehe Subhanakallahuma wabehamdheka ash hadhu alaailaaha illah antha asthagfiruka wa athoobo ilaik"

One Hadith says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam used to recite this prayer at the end of all meetings. When somebody submitted that he Sallallahu alaihe wasallam had never done so before, the reply was that it serves as an atonement for what may have been spoken in a gathering; and if the gathering is for righteousness, those words will become a seal to the whole affair, like a seal that is put at the end of a document. Those words are:

"Subhanakallahuma wabehamdheka laailaaha illah antha asthagfiruka wa athoobo ilaik" (Abu Dawood)

The fourth subject of the original Hadith mentioned above is about rights of the kith and kin, which will be discussed in the forthcoming Chapters.

HADITH: 22

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that whoever has faith in Allah Ta'ala and the 'Aakhirah' needs to honour his guest; a guest is entitled to special treatment for a day and night, while hospitality may be extended for three days and nights; it is not proper for the guest to stay too long, as it may cause hardship to the host. (Mishkaat)

Note: This Hadith lays down two points of etiquette, one each for the host and the guest. The courtesy to be shown by the host is that, if he believes in Allah Ta'ala and the Akhirah as has been mentioned in the previous Hadith, he must honour his guest, which is to treat him broadmindedly and talk to him politely. One Hadith says that a person should accompany his guest upto the door.

Uqbah Radhiyallahu anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that whoever does not show hospitality is devoid of virtue. Samurah Radhiyallahu anho says Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam used to entertain a guest with a feast. Someone saw Ali Radhiyallahu anho weeping and asked him the cause. The reply was that seven days had passed without his having entertained a guest and he feared lest Allah Ta'ala might intend to dishonour him.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam ordered that a guest be treated well and given special treatment for a day and night. The latter point has been explained differently by Ulama. Imaam Maalik Rahmatullah alaihe says that he may be shown special favour such as presents or special food for one day and night, and normal food (of the family) thereafter. Another interpretation is that the special day is in addition to three days ordered by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, which would give the guest a right to stay for four days.

Another version is that the special day is included in the three days. There is yet another interpretation: that a day's special treatment means provision of food for the journey if the guest cannot stay for three days. Another interpretation is that special treatment means food for the journey on the fourth day, after he has spent three days as a guest. Still another interpretation, is that special treatment is for a person who breaks his journey, for a day, unlike a person who comes for a regular visit and has a right to stay for three days. The purpose of all these interpretations is to bring out fully the way to honour a guest by giving him especially good meals for one day and food for the journey, particularly on routes where food may not be available.

The other point of etiquette mentioned in the above Hadith concerns the guest; that he should not prolong his stay so much that it causes hardship and inconvenience to the host. Another Hadith puts it that the stay should not be lengthened to the extent that the host may become sinful, that is, he may start backbiting about the guest or behave in a manner which may cause harassment to the guest, or he may begin to mistrust the guest in some way. Such behaviour would make the host sinful, but this state of affairs would arise when there is no pressure for longer stay from the host, or when the guest does not realise that his stay is a burden to the host.

Someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about the things that would be the cause of the host's sin. The reply was to stay so long that the host is left with nothing to feed the guest. Hafiz Rahmatullah alaihe says that Salman Radhiyallahu anho had that type of experience with his guest, which has been quoted by Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe, as narrated by Abu Waail Radhiyallahu anho who with a friend of his went to visit Salman Radhiyallahu anho; the latter placed before them barley bread and some half pounded salt. His friend remarked if there was Satter (a type of mint), served with this bread, it would taste delicious. Salman Radhiyallahu anho went and pawned his metallic water pot to purchase satter for the guest. After finishing the meal, that guest said:

"All praise are for Allah Ta'ala who has enabled us to be satisfied with the food served."

On that Salman Radhiyallahu anho said, "Had you been satisfied with what was served, my water pot would not have been pawned." The lesson is to avoid putting a demand on the host which would place him in difficulties. Also, it is highly undesirable to mention one's requirements when staying at someone else's home; whatever is presented as a meal should be eaten thankfully in good humour.

Demands from guests very often put the host in difficulties. However, if there are indications that the host will be pleased to receive the guest's demands, particularly when the latter enjoys an affectionate regard and the host would love to make a sacrifice, one may order anything he desires. Imaam Shafe'i Rahmatullah alaihe was once a

guest of Zafrani Rahmatullah alaihe in Baghdad. For the sake of the Imaam, the latter used to write the daily menu and send it through his slave-girl. One day, Imaam Shafe'i Rahmatullah alaihe took the menu from the slave-girl and added an item of his own taste.

When Zafrani saw that item being served, he asked the slave-girl why she had prepared a thing which he had not mentioned in the menu. She brought the written menu to him and showed the addition made by the Imaam. On seeing the addition written by the Imaam himself, he was beside himself with joy and set free the slave-girl in that happy mood. In the case of such a host and the same kind of a guest, a demand becomes a source of pleasure for both.

HADITH: 23

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has said, 'Do not have intimate companionship with anyone except a Muslim; and let only those who fear Allah partake of your meals.' (Mishkaat)

Note: In this Hadith Rasulallah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has indicated two guidelines. One, there should be no intimate companionship and close association with non-Muslims. The second part of the Hadith is a guideline for a good Muslim, in that he should avoid relationship even with the impious Muslims. It is also indicated in another Hadith that no one should enter your house except the pious.

The Hadith could also mean that a Muslim should associate with non-Muslims only per necessity. There is an insistence in the Hadith on keeping oneself in pious company. A person is known by the company he keeps: association has its influence according to the character of those who are associates; that is why Rasulallah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has warned against the entry of impious people in the house. Intimacy with such people is bound to have an adverse effect. Rasulallah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam has said that the company of pious people is like meeting a musk-merchant; when one sits with him, he may give a small piece as present and one can also buy some musk from him; otherwise, at least one will enjoy the fragrance of musk while sitting with him. Bad company has been likened to sitting near a blacksmith's furnace, where a spar may rise and burn the clothes; if that does not happen, at least one will suffer from its smell and smoke.

Another Hadith says that a person adopts the religion of his friend, therefore, take care as to who is your friend. This means that the company of a friend gradually influences one, so that a day comes when one adopts his religion; therefore; look carefully into the religious disposition of a person before adopting his company. Sitting frequently with the irreligious people is bound to lead one into irreligiousness. It is a matter of common experience that one's intimate association with drunkards and chess-players, even for a few days, leads to indulgence in those habits.

In another Hadith, Rasulallah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam told Abu Razeen Radhiallaho anho, "I will tell you something that will give you the power to earn good of both the worlds; it is to adopt the company of those who constantly remember Allah Ta'ala and, when alone, keep your tongue moving as far as possible in His remembrance. (Zikr), your friendship and enmity should be for the sake of Allah Ta'ala and not to follow your personal liking." Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that a companion should have five attributes in him.

First, he should be intelligent, as intelligence is the real wealth, while a stupid person's company may cause annoyance or a break among blood relations. Sufian Thauri Rahmatullah alaihe considers it a folly even to look at a stupid person. Secondly, he should have good manners as, very often, bad manners affect a man's intelligence. For example, an intelligent person understands a matter very well but, very often, his anger, passions or niggardliness do not let him act rightly. Thirdly, he must not be corrupt; as such a person lacks fear of Allah Ta'ala and cannot be trusted as a friend; one never knows when or where he may lead one into trouble. Fourthly, he must not be an innovator in religion, as one is likely to be influenced by his innovations, which should be feared as contagious evils.

In fact any connection with him must be severed and friendliness discouraged. Fifthly, he must not be greedy about increasing his earnings; intimacy with such a person is deadly poison. It is natural to follow and intimate such persons whose secret influence is inevitable.

Imaam Baqir Rahmatullah alaihe had said that his father Zainul Abideen Rahmatullah alaihe strongly advised him to keep away from five persons and never talk to them or even walk with them on the same path. One, an immoral person; for he will sell you for a single morsel or even for less than a morsel. When Baqir Rahmatullah alaihe asked what less than a morsel meant, the reply was, "He may sell you in the hope of receiving a morsel and eventually, he may not get even that morsel." Two, a stingy person, as he would break all connections with you when you need him most.

Three, a liar, as he is misleading like sand; he shows a near thing to be far and the far to be near. Four, a blockhead, as he will wish to give you profit but it will result in a loss. Five, one who has severed relationship with his kith and kin, as the Qur'an has cursed him in three different places.

It is not that one is influenced by men only. Actually, a person is imperceptibly affected by anything with which he is closely attached. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said that a Shepard has humility, while a horseman suffers from boastfulness and arrogance; this is because these attributes are to be found in these animals. The owners of camels and oxen are known to be severe and hard-hearted.

Several sayings forbid riding on a leopard-skin (saddle); the Ulama have said that the ferocity of the animal is likely to give similar habits to the user of the skin. The second advice mentioned by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam in the above Hadith indicates that your meal may not be shared by any one but a pious person. This subject has been covered in various Traditions. One Hadith says, "Feed the pious and make Mo'mineen the object of your kindness." Here, feeding refers to a meal by invitation and not food given to a needy persons. One Hadith says that only that person should be invited to partake of your food whom you love for Allah's sake. As regards feeding a needy person, Allah Ta'ala has praised feeding of even a captive and in those days only non-Muslims used to be in captivity, it has been mentioned earlier in the series of Ayaat of the Qur'an, and in the series of Ahadith, that a lewd woman was granted Divine pardon simply for giving a drink to a thirsty dog. Several narrations have covered this particular subject in different ways.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has given a clear-cut rule that there is a reward for good treatment given to any living being, which includes the pious, the non-Muslims, human beings and animals alike. Hence, in the case of a need and exigency regarding food, the one who needs it will not matter but how urgent and severe the need is, will count; the severe the need the bigger the reward from Allah Ta'ala. If the food is being provided through an invitation or because of some relationship, or for the intention of meeting some religious good, the reward will be in proportion to the nature and degree of the welfare and good in view. If, however, there is no special religious interest, the extent of reward for feeding someone will depend on the degree of the piety of the invitee.

The author of Mazaahir and Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe have written that giving meals to the pious results in encouraging piety, while feeding an immoral person implies supporting immorality. It is obvious that if a pious person gains physical strength through good food, he will engage himself more in acts of piety while similar food given to an immoral person will make him go further in sin and frivolities, because of the additional strength. A certain divine often gave meals to the needy among religious devotees.

When someone told him that it would be better if he fed the common poor, he said, "The people to whom I give food have their full attention and devotion towards Allah Ta'ala and, when they become hungry, their attention is naturally disturbed. If I help even one of them to maintain his attention to Almighty Allah, it is far better than helping a thousand hungry people whose total attention is towards this world." Junaid Baghdadi Rahmatullah alaihe was very pleased when he heard of this. A tailor asked Abdullah Ibne Mubarik Rahmatullah alaihe that, if he stitched the dressed of cruel rulers, was that an act of helping the cruel? The reply was, that he was not just a helper of the cruel but he himself was a cruel person; the helpers were those who sold needle and thread to him.

In one Hadith, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that when a person does some favour or good turn to a generous man, the latter becomes his slave and if someone does a favour to a mean person, he invites the enmity of the latter. Another Hadith says, "Give your food to the pious people and grant your favours to Mo'mineen." Apart from the above benefits, there is the inherent honour and respect for the pious and Mo'mineen, which is very desirable. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has forbidden accepting an invitation from impious and immoral people. Beside other reasons for this, there is the element of giving them undesirable importance through accepting their invitation.

HADITH: 24

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho asked Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam, "What is the best Sadaqah?" The reply was, "The hard effort by an indigent person; a begging must be made on those who are dependent on you."

Note: It means that the best Sadaqah is that of a needy and poor person who makes full effort to get something and then gives it as Sadaqah. Bashar Rahmatullah alaihe has said, "There are three difficult deeds, which demand a lot of courage. One, generosity in poverty. Two, piety and fear of Allah in privacy. Three, to speak the truth before a person whom one fears or expects a favour from him. That is, one may have certain interests attached to a person and the fear that, if the truth is spoken to him, it will go against those interests and may result in some harm.

There is also a hint in this respect in the Holy Qur'an (as has been mentioned in the Ayat at series No. 28) about the people who give preference to others over their own urgent needs. Ali Radhiallaho anho has said that three persons came to Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam: one of them said that he had one hundred (gold) Dinars with him and gave ten Dinars as Sadaqah; the other said that he had ten Dinars and gave one as Sadaqah; the third said that he had only one Dinar and gave one tenth of it as Sadaqah.

Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam said that all the three will get equal reward, as every one of them had given one tenth of his possessions as Sadaqah. Another Hadith quotes a similar instance and the same kind of answer by Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam, except that he recited the Ayat which is the last Ayat in the first Ruku of Surah Talaq. The Ayat means:

'One should give according to one's capacity'. (at-Talaq: 7)

Those who have less income should give something as Sadaqah from what Allah Ta'ala has bestowed upon them (i.e. the rich and the poor should give according to their means). Allah Ta'ala does not put anyone in hardship beyond what one can bear. The poor should not be afraid of becoming destitute if they give something as Sadaqah; Allah Ta'ala can cause easy means of living to succeed hard conditions readily enough.

Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam has gone further than this in another Hadith by saying that one Dirham begets rewards more than a hundred thousand Dirhams when a person having only two Dirhams in his possession gives one as Sadaqah and this Dirham will fetch a greater reward than a hundred thousand Dirhams given as Sadaqah by a person having plenty of wealth.

Allama Suyyoti Rahmatullah alaihe has quoted Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho in his publication, Jami-as-Saghir, as an authentic narration of Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam that a person owning only two Dirhams but giving one as Sadaqah is an example of great sacrifice by an indigent person, as he gives in Sadaqah half of his possessions, which may amount to a few cents only. However, there is an example of still greater sacrifice in another narration by Imaam Bukhari Rahmatullah alaihe.

According to him, Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho has said, "Whenever Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam told us to give something as Sadaqah, some of us would go to the market to do physical labour, received a 'Mud' of grain and gave that away as Sadaqah". In some other narrations, it has been said that the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum, who did not possess even a Dirham, used to go to the market and request people to engage them for some physical labour.

They carried heavy loads on their backs in return for a Mud of grain, which they gave away as Sadaqah. The narrator has mentioned that Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho himself was one such Sahabi. Imaam Bukhari Rahmatullah alaihe has written a chapter entitled, "About the man who carried loads on his back to earn and gave the earnings away as Sadaqah." Could one find someone today who would go to the Railway station to carry loads on his back as a coolie and give away as Sadaqah the few annas (small coins) that he got for it! The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum were worried about their food in the Akhirah as much as we are worried today for our food here in this life.

We today would do physical labour because we have nothing to eat now, while they did physical labour thinking that they had nothing to deposit for the Akhirah! In the early days of Islam, the hypocrites used to laugh at the people who bore hardships to earn something for the sake of giving as Sadaqah. Allah Ta'ala has shown His displeasure with such hypocrites in the Qur'an:

"These hypocrites are among those who laugh at the Muslims who gave as Sadaqah, particularly at those who have no other means but to work (as porters) and give away (their earnings) as alms; they are reproached by these hypocrites. Allah (Himself) reproached them and has promised a suitable return for their making fun, that on the Day of Judgement they will be laughed at by multitudes) besides the painful punishment (which awaits them and it shall never be averted or deceased)." (at-Taubah: 79)

The commentators have given several Traditions concerning this Ayat. It is said that the Sahabah used to work as porters at night, to spend the earnings as Sadaqah and even whatever they had at home was used for the purpose of Sadaqah. They utilised a bare minimum for their own needs under compulsion. Once, when a person approached Ali Radhiallaho anho for a favour, he told Hasan or Hussain Radhiallaho anho to ask his mother Fatima Radhiallaho anha to give one Dirham out of the six which he had given her to keep.

The son returned with the reply that he (Ali) had given those for purchasing flour. Ali Radhiallaho anho said that no one is sincere in his Imaan unless his faith in what Allah Ta'ala has promised is stronger than his belief in his worldly possessions, and told his son to ask his mother to give all the six Dirhams. Fatima Radhiallaho anha, who had hesitated earlier only for the sake of reminding her husband of his original intention before giving away the money as Sadaqah, at once handed the money to her son for giving as Sadaqah, all of which Ali gave to the person. Ali Radhiallaho anho had not moved away from the place when a man arrived there with a camel for sale.

When Ali Radhiallaho anho asked the man the price of the camel, he said it was worth 140 Dirhams. Ali brought the camel, promising to pay the price a little later. A short while later, another man came and asked Ali about the owner of the camel. When Ali Radhiallaho anho said that he himself was the owner, the man asked if he wanted to sell the camel. Ali Radhiallaho anho, agreeing, indicated the price as 200 Dirhams. The man took the camel and paid Ali 200 Dirhams out of which he paid the original owner 140 Dirhams and sent the remaining 60 Dirhams to his wife, Fatima Radhiallaho anha, who asked him wherefrom the money came.

Ali Radhiallaho anho replied that Allah Ta'ala, through Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, has promised to give ten times the reward for every single virtuous deed that is performed in this world. This is yet another example of the Sahabah's spending out of their hard-earned money. One had only six Dirhams, which were meant to buy flour for the family's food, but, when his strong faith in Allah made him spend the whole of that money for Allah's sake, it was repaid ten-fold as the promised return in this world.

There are many similar instances in the lives of the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum who, as a result of their strong faith in Allah Ta'ala, gave away every bit of their possessions. The story of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho giving Sadaqah at the time of Tabook is well known. When Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked for contributions, he brought everything that he had at home.

When Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked him what he had left behind, his reply was, "Allah and His Rasul", meaning their pleasure, although, at the time of embracing Islam, Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho had considerable wealth amounting to forty thousand gold coins. Muhammad Ibne Abaad Mohallabi Rahmatullah alaihe has said that his father once visited the king (Caliph) Maoon Rashid who presented to him one hundred thousand Dirham, all of which he gave away as Sadaqah. The king came to know of this and showed his displeasure. His father told the king, "To withhold what one has is a mistrust in the One Who is the Lord we worship." That means, to hang on to what one has and not to spend it, for fear that when it is spent nothing may be available again, is mistrust in the Lord who had given earlier.

There are many examples of our earlier Divines who used to give as Sadaqah whatever they possessed. In contrast to these instances, there are several Ahadith which indicate a different approach. One of the well-known sayings of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is:

"The best Sadaqah is that which does not leave its giver in want."

This subject matter forms the content of several narrations. One instance is given in Abu Dawood, narrating on the authority of Jabir Radhiyallahu anho, who said that, once, while he was in company with Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, a man came and presented a piece of gold, the size of an egg, saying that he had found it in a mine and that he had nothing else in his possession.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam turned his face away from him. He came round to face Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and reported the same thing, but Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam again turned his face away from him. This happened several times. Finally, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam picked up the piece of gold and threw it away with such a force that if the man had been hit, he would have been injured. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, "Some people give away their entire belongings and later start begging; the best Sadaqah is the one which does not leave its giver in a state of want."

Abu Saeed Khudri Radhiyallahu anho has said that once a person came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam's Masjid, wearing clothes in poor condition. On seeing him Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked people to give him clothes for Sadaqah. Several pieces of clothes were collected, out of which Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave two pieces to the poor visitor. On a later occasion a similar requirement of clothes was announced by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, on which the same poor man gave one of the two pieces as Sadaqah. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam showed his displeasure and returned the piece to him.

In another Hadith, the same situation has been mentioned where Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam remarked, "The man had come to the Masjid in a very bad condition and I had thought people would do something for him on their own. Since nothing happened, I asked those present to give something as Sadaqah; some clothes were brought and I gave two pieces to the needy person; he gave one piece as Sadaqah when another needy person came, but I returned his piece to him." In another Hadith, the saying of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has been repeated that some people give all their belongings as Sadaqah and then sit back expecting other people's generosity; the best Sadaqah is when the feeling of want does not arise afterwards.

Another Hadith says that no Sadaqah is valid without freedom from want. This may appear opposite to what has been said in the earlier Ahadith, but in fact it is not so, as Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has not said here anything against those but has only indicated that it is improper to give away all the belongings as Sadaqah and then expect others to give you something. However, this does not matter for those who rely far more on what Allah Ta'ala has in store than on their own belongings; like the instance of Ali Radhiyallahu anho mentioned above or that of Abu Bakr Radhiyallahu anho, which explains the case better.

By all means one may go on trying to attain the level of those great personages, so as to have a similar degree of reliance on Allah Ta'ala, without any attachment to the world, as they did. The sincere effort to acquire anything is invariably rewarded by Allah Ta'ala, as is the saying "man jadha wa jadha" meaning, whoever tries receives reward. Someone asked a divine how much Zakaat was to be paid from a certain amount. The reply was, "For a common Muslim, five Dirhams out of two hundred Dirhams".

We may mention here the remarks of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam under Sr. No 1, in the series of Ahadith that, "If the entire mountain of Uhad becomes gold, he would not like to keep a Dirham out of it, except what was required to pay a debt". For this reason Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once rushed to his residence after Asr Salaat and ordered the giving away as Sadaqah of the piece of gold which, by chance, had been left over, and as mentioned in Ahadith at No. 4, he felt upset during his illness because of a small amount of money that was lying in his home.

Imaam Bukhari Rahmatullah alaihe has mentioned in his famous book, 'Sahih Bukhari', that Sadaqah is improper without freedom from want and that Sadaqah given in a state of want will not be acceptable. If one is in debt, the debt must be cleared first or, when one is needy or his family is indigent, these must be taken care of first. However, if someone is well known for patience and fortitude and is able to ignore his own needs, like Abu Bakr Radhiyallahu anho and the Ansaar Radhiyallahu anhum who gave preference to Muhajireen over their own needs, such cases could be treated as exceptions. Allama Tabri Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the majority of Ulama allow a person to give all his property as Sadaqah, provided he is not in debt, nor feels any hardship in doing this, and either has no dependents or they are also agreeable, in which case Sadaqah will be admissible.

If however any of these conditions is not satisfied, the Sadaqah is better avoided. (Fateh). Shah Waliullah Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the Hadith, saying that Sadaqah is valid only with freedom from want, indicates a feeling of freedom from want in the heart of the person who gives Sadaqah. This is in line with another saying of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that freedom from want does not come from the excess in property but it is a condition of the heart. (Mishkaat)

The instance of the man who wished to give a piece of gold as Sadaqah, but repeatedly said that it was all that he possessed, is an example indicating that he had some reluctance in his heart to part with the piece of gold. The writer of the Mazahir has said that it is obligatory that Sadaqah must accompany freedom from want; even when there is only a feeling of freedom from want in the heart, it would amount to complete reliance on Allah Ta'ala.

Such was the case of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho, who had given all his belongings for the sake of Allah and when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked him as to what he had left for family he replied, "Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam appreciated this reply. If this level of freedom from want is not present, then possession of some property remains essential.

It may be deduced from all this that, in the presence of perfect trust in Allah Ta'ala, one may spend in Sadaqah as much as one likes. In the absence of this trust, the family's needs are to be given preference. However, one should remain mindful of this weakness and keep admonishing oneself for lack of trust in Allah Ta'ala, as against too much reliance on the worldly means. Insha-Allah, by repeated self-admonishment, the desired results will be obtainable.

HADITH: 25

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that when the wife gives something as Sadaqah out of the family's provisions, without being wasteful, she will receive a reward for that and the husband also receives a reward because he was the earner; while the person (man or woman) who made arrangements for the food also earns a reward; all three will be rewarded, without reduction in any one's share.

Note: Two subjects have come up in this Hadith. One is about spending by the wife and the other about the one who makes various arrangements for food, etc. There are many Traditions about both these subjects. One of the Traditions by the Shaikhain quotes Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that, when a wife spends something without her husband's permission, she earns half the reward. (Mishkaat). Sa'd Radhiallaho anho has said that once, when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was initiating into Islam a group of women, one tall woman stood up and said, "O Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, we the women are a burden to our fathers as well as on our children and husbands, what right do we have on their property?" The reply was, "Fresh things (the perishables) which you may eat as well as give to others." Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala will reward three persons over a morsel of bread and a handful of dates: one, the husband who is the owner of the house, two, the wife who cooked the food and three, the servant who carried the thing to the beggar at the door.

Asmaa Radhiallaho anha, the sister of Aishah Radhiallaho anha, told Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that she had nothing of her own except what her husband Zubair Radhiallaho anho gave her and asked if she could give out of that to someone. The reply was, "Spend well out of that and do not store any part of it, lest you are barred from receiving anything." This and several similar traditions have already been mentioned above. In another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that, when a woman spends out of her husband's property without his permission to do so, he will receive half the reward for the Sadaqah.

Correspondingly, it has already been mentioned that the wife will receive only fifty percent reward for such Sadaqaat. If carefully interpreted, there are two situations regarding the wife spending out of her husband's property. One, when the husband gifts something out of his own earnings to the wife and she spends from the gifted part, full reward for that will be her due and half the reward will also be for the husband, although he had given away ownership of that part to his wife; the fact that he had earned it initially, is given credit due to the kindness and generosity of Allah Ta'ala.

The other situation is that the husband does not give ownership of his earnings to his wife but gives her things for household expenditure, from which she gives something as Sadaqah; the full reward in this case will be for the husband and half for the wife, because the man is the owner while the wife suffers from the shortage in family expenses. Similarly, women have been encouraged, in the several traditions, to give as Sadaqah from the things meant for feeding the family. They should not refuse to do so on the excuse that the husband's permission is not there. In contrast to this line of advice, there are certain Traditions forbidding action in that manner.

Abu Umamah Radhiallaho anho has said that, on the occasion of 'Hajja-tul-Wida', Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, in his famous address, directed that no woman should spend from the property of her husband without his permission.

Someone asked if food was also not to be given away as Sadaqah without permission. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that food was the best of the property; even that is not to be given away without permission. This Tradition, in reality, does not contradict the previous Ahadith. All the earlier Traditions are based on common and general conditions, as well-known practices in homes that, whatever the husbands give for household routine expenditure, they do not object to anything being given as Sadaqah by the wives or for feeding a poor person from that money. On the other hand, a husband asking questions regarding that expenditure is considered to be mean and miserly.

However, in spite of this common practise, if a miserly husband does not permit this, it is improper for a woman to give anything as Sadaqah or as a gift from what she receives for household expenses. Nevertheless, she may spend on anything she likes from her own belongings. A person submitted to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that his wife spent from what he gave her without his permission. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that both he and his wife would receive reward for that. When the person said that he had forbidden her to do so, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that he will have a return for his miserliness and his wife will receive a reward for her kindness. This shows that the husband's act of stopping the wife from spending such a small thing amounts to miserliness and also that the wife should not spend when her husband stops her from doing so.

However, if the wife is anxious to give away Sadaqah, but is unable to give because of her husband's orders, she will be rewarded continuously for her noble intention.

Allama 'Aini Rahmatullah alaihe says that in such matters, the current practices vary in different towns and cities and the attitudes of husbands are also different; some approve of the wife's actions and others do not. Likewise, a difference occurs over the kind of things given away. Certain things are so ordinary that no importance is attached to their being given away, while some others are considered important by the husband. In some cases, retention of things may render them useless while in another case a certain thing remains useful for the future. According to Ibne Hajar Rahmatullah alaihe, the wife should not spend in a way that may lead to trouble.

Some Ulama have said that it was a well-known custom in Hijaz to encourage wives to spend as Sadaqah and they had a general permission to give from the eatables to the poor, the guests, the needy neighbouring women and the beggars. The purpose of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam in the above Ahadith is to persuade the Ummah to follow the good practice of the Arabs in spending on the needy people.

Consequently, it has become a general custom among the Muslim families in our country that husbands do not mind their wives giving as Sadaqah from the eatables to the poor, the needy relatives or the hungry. The other subject in the Hadith above is about the steward (Cashier) or the caretaker, etc. Usually the persons in those positions create hindrance when the owner wishes to give something as a present to someone. It often happens, in the case of the rich and ruling people, that their stewards and cashiers cause obstructions even against the written instructions from their masters on the plea of funds not being available.

That is why Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has stressed and encouraged, in a number of Ahadith that, if these employees willingly and cheerfully comply with their master's instructions and orders, they will receive from Allah Ta'ala, through His kindness, suitable honour and rewards for being the means for accomplishing the good deed. There are several Ahadith on this. One such Hadith says, "If a Muslim caretaker or a treasurer fully and whole-heartedly obeys his master's commands, he will be counted among the alms-givers". Another Hadith says, "If an article given as Sadaqah passes through seventy million hands, the last one will receive the same reward as the

first one". For example, a king gives orders for giving Sadaqah and, if a large number of persons are involved in the arrangements, each one of them will be entitled to receive a similar reward as the king who had given the orders, although the precise extent of reward may vary. It is not necessary that the master should receive the most. In some cases, the master may be the greatest receiver, e.g. a master may give a hundred rupees to a servant for giving to a person who is present or waiting at the gate; in this case the master's share of reward will be greater.

In another case, a master gives a pomegranate to a servant to be delivered to a sick man living at a distant place. The hardship in reaching there deserves more consideration than the piece of fruit: and here the servant will receive more reward than the master. Similarly, a treasurer has to make effort in collecting money and keeping it, while the master gets it effortlessly. Any amount of Sadaqah given through the treasurer will, therefore, bring more reward for the latter; as the saying is:

"The reward is in proportion to the effort and hardship."

This is a definite rule in the Shariah. But a treasurer, unless he has a general permission of his master to give, cannot give anything without the master's orders unlike the wife who can spend from the husband's property without his permission.

HADITH: 26

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Every good deed is Sadaqah and to encourage someone to a good deed brings the same reward for the encourager as a good deed done by himself. Allah Ta'ala loves the help given to people in adversity.

Note: This Hadith contains three subjects:

One, every good deed is Sadaqah. It means that for Sadaqah, spending of money is not the only way, nor is it confined to giving something. A Hadith says that there are three hundred and sixty joints in human body, and it is essential that a Sadaqah be given for each joint everyday. The Sahabah submitted that no one has the capacity to give that much Sadaqah everyday.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Removing of spittle from the Masjid counts as Sadaqah, removing a harmful thing from the road is an act of Sadaqah, if nothing else can be done, two Rakaat of Salaat in the fore-noon (Salaat-ud-Dhuhaa) will suffice you (since every joint is engaged in Salaat)". Another Hadith says: "Everyday the sun rises, an act of Sadaqah becomes due from every person for every joint in his body. If one makes a just settlement between two persons, it amounts to Sadaqah; if one helps a man in mounting, loading or unloading his beast, it is Sadaqah; reciting 'Kalimah Tayyebah' is Sadaqah; every step taken to go for Salaat is Sadaqah; to remove a troublesome thing from the road is an act of Sadaqah".

Another Hadith says, "Every one must give Sadaqah everyday for each joint in his body. Every Salaat is Sadaqah, fasting is Sadaqah, performing Hajj is Sadaqah, saying Subhanallah (Allah be glorified) is Sadaqah, saying Alhamdulillah (All praise be to Allah) is Sadaqah, saying Allah hu akbar (Allah is Great) is Sadaqah." Another Hadith says, "Greeting everybody you meet on the way with Assalaam-o-alaikum counts as Sadaqah, enjoining what is good or forbidding what is bad counts as Sadaqah". (Abu Dawood). There are several other Ahadith from which it becomes clear that every good deed and each act of kindness acts as Sadaqah, provided the intention is to please Allah Ta'ala.

The second point in the Hadith is that exhorting someone to do a good deed is like doing it oneself, which earns the same reward. The point is contained in a well-known Hadith. A good many Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum have quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that the one who guides others to righteousness is like him who does the righteous deed himself. This shows how infinitely Kind, Generous and Beneficent Allah Ta'ala is, the Giver of all rewards! He liberally rewards even those whose acts involve but little effort. It is our misfortune that we do not take advantage of His great Generosity.

A person may not be offering plenty of Nawafil himself, but if he exhorts others to do so, he will receive as much reward as the others receive who perform Nawafil on his exhortation. A man may not have enough to spend as Sadaqah, but he can persuade others to give Sadaqah and receive as much as those who spend for the cause of Allah. Similarly, one may not be able to fast or perform Hajj, or go for Jehaad, or observe his Salaat properly, but if he invites and encourages others to perform these good deeds, he is entitled to receive the same reward as is granted to those who actually perform those deeds, after listening to his exhortation.

However, if a man performs all these deeds for himself, he will receive a single reward, but if he persuades a hundred others, he will receive reward for one hundred such performances or even more, according to the number of persons he has persuaded. To crown it all, he will go on receiving, even after his death, the rewards for the actions of those who keep performing these deeds of righteousness. There is no limit to the Kindness and Favours of Allah Ta'ala! How fortunate are those who, in their lifetime, encourage and exhort millions of people to lead a religious life! After their death, they will continue to receive a good reward, for the good actions of all those people.

Maulana Ilyas Rahmatullah alaihe used to say, with delight, "Some people leave behind individuals, but I am leaving behind a whole country". He meant the region of Mewat where, by virtue of his personal efforts, hundreds of thousands of people became regular and punctual observers of Salaat, thousands of them took to observing Tahajjud Salaat, and thousands learnt the Holy Qu'ran by heart (became Hafiz of the Qur'an). So, he will continue to receive full reward for all the righteous deeds of all those people in Mewat.

The Tablighi Jama'at initiated by him, by the Grace of Allah, is now working in all the countries of the world. Through the untiring efforts of this Jama'at, a large number of people are engaged in religious devotions, such as Salaat, recitation from the Qur'an, etc. and the reward for the virtuous deeds of all these people will also go to every member of this Jama'at, including, of course, the Maulana himself, who used to say delightedly that he was leaving behind a whole country.

After all, this life is bound to end and only that will be of use in the life after death which one earns here for the Akhirah. Therefore, every moment of this life is precious and we must earn here as much as we can for the life after death. Neither the parents nor the children left behind will care for anyone. They will just shed tears and mourn for a few days then forget about the deceased. The best thing, therefore, is to earn perpetual rewards.

The third point mentioned in the above Hadith is that Allah Ta'ala loves the help given to people in adversity. A Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala will show no mercy to those who do not show mercy to other people. Another Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "he who helps the women in their distress, or the poor, is like one who is engaged in Jehaad".

The narrator says he thinks that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam also added, "Like one who offers Nafil Salaat the whole night without slackening, and he is like one who is always fasting without break." One Hadith says that whoever removes any suffering of a Mo'min in this life, Allah Ta'ala will save him from the distress of the Day of Judgement; and Allah Ta'ala will grant relief, both in this life and in Akhirah, to anyone who relieves someone's hardship. Whoever conceals the shortcomings of a Muslim in this life, Allah Ta'ala will save him from the exposure of his shortcomings both in this life and in the Akhirah.

One Hadith says, "When someone fulfils the need of a Muslim brother, his reward will be like that of a person who spent his whole life in the service (worship) of Allah Ta'ala". Another Hadith says, "If someone places the need of a Muslim brother before a person in power, he will be helped to cross the 'Siraat' (the bridge over Jahannam) when feet will slip on it".

According to a Hadith, there are a number of men whom Allah Ta'ala has created for the sole purpose of meeting people's needs and helping them in difficulties; those men shall have no worries on the Day of Judgement and will have nothing to fear. Another Hadith says that whoever helps his brother in distress, Allah Ta'ala will keep him steady and firm when even the mountains will not be able to stay firm in their place, i.e. on the Day of Qiamah (Doomsday). One Hadith says, "If someone helps a Muslim by saying a few words in his favour, or takes a few steps to help him in any manner, Allah Ta'ala bestows on him seventy blessings, one out of which will suffice him for his well-being in this life and in the Akhirah, while the remaining seventy two will be reserved for exalting his rank and status on the Day of Judgment". Beside these, there are several Ahadith on this subject quoted by the author of

Kanzul-Amaal. A Hadith maintains that the Muslims, by being kind to each other, by their close relationship with each other and being merciful to one another, are like a single human body, of which when one limb suffers, all its other parts become restless and share its suffering.

For example if one of the limbs is injured, all other limbs become uneasy; if one hand gets hurt, all other limbs are restless and the whole body becomes feverish. Likewise, all the Muslims must feel disturbed over the difficulties of any one Muslim.

A Hadith says, "Rahman (Allah Ta'ala) shows mercy to those who are merciful to others; be merciful to those on earth, you will have the mercy of those who are in Heaven, which includes Allah Ta'ala and the Angels." One Hadith says that the best Muslim home is the one in which an orphan lives and gets fair treatment, while the worst home is the one where an orphan lives and gets bad treatment.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Whoever in my Ummah helps someone in his need to make him happy, he makes me happy and my happiness makes Allah Ta'ala happy, and when Allah is happy He grants that person entry into Jannah." One Hadith says, "When someone helps an afflicted person, he becomes entitled to seventy three grades of forgiveness, one of which is enough for his salvation; the remaining seventy two will raise his rank and positions in Akhirah." A Hadith says that the whole of creation is Allah's family, and from amongst mankind He likes those most whose behaviour is good towards His family. 'The entire creation is Allah Ta'ala's family' is a well-known Hadith quoted by several Sahabah. The Ulama have explained that, just as a man is responsible for the provision of all needs of his family, so does Allah Ta'ala provide for the whole of His creation, which, for that reason, is here called the family of Allah Ta'ala. In this regard the Muslims do not have any special status.

Muslims and non-Muslims are all alike, even the animals come in the same category; every species in the creation is here included in the family of Allah Ta'ala. Whoever metes out good treatment to the whole creation will thus become the loved one of Allah Ta'ala.

HADITH: 27

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says, "He who observes Salaat hypocritically (for show) attributes a partner to Allah, he who fasts hypocritically attributes a partner to Allah, and he who gives Sadaqah hypocritically attributes a partner to Allah.

Note: It means that whoever offers worship and prayers to please someone, makes him a co-sharer with Allah Ta'ala, that is, the persons whom the worshipper wishes to impress are made partners with Allah Ta'ala for whom his prayers are meant. This is a very important subject on which this Chapter is being ended. The real object is that every prayer or worship should be purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala; it ought not be corrupted by hypocrisy, publicity, respectability, etc., otherwise it may turn out to be a case of good deeds gone for nought, while sins against you are established. Many Ahadith contain severe warnings and threats of grave punishment on this account.

According to a Hadith Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says, "I am most unconcerned among all partners: when someone joins anyone with Me in his worship, I leave the worshipper with him; that is, he may go to that partner for the return of his prayers, for I have no concern with him." Another such Hadith says, "On the Day of Judgement, a herald will proclaim, "Whoever ascribed a partner to Allah Ta'ala, in any of his deeds, should seek the reward from that partner of Allah Ta'ala, as Allah Ta'ala is most unconcerned with such partnership".

Abu Saeed Khudri Radhiallaho anho says, "Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came to us when we were discussing Dajjal and told us, 'Shall I tell you a thing of which one should be afraid more than Dajjal?' We submitted, 'Please do tell' He said, 'It is the latent Shirk (associating partners with Allah Ta'ala)' For example, while praying with sincerity, a person notices someone watching him and, thereupon, he prolongs his Salaat. Another Sahabi Radhiallaho anho has reported Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "I am most afraid for you of the minor Shirk." The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum enquired as to what the minor Shirk was. At this he replied

'Hypocrisy'. A Hadith says that on the day when Allah Ta'ala will distribute His rewards for good deeds of the good men, the hypocrites will be told to go to those for whom they had acted and see, if they have any rewards to offer them for their actions. Allah Ta'ala has said in the Qur'an:

"Whoever longs to meet his Lord (to become His beloved and favourite) must keep acting righteously and must not join anyone else with Allah Ta'ala in his prayers." (al-Kahf: 110)

Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho has said that someone submitted to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that, when he started some good deed for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, he felt in his mind that people should see him making that effort. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam kept quiet till the above Ayat was revealed.

Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe has said that someone said to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that he gave Sadaqah with the intention of pleasing Allah Ta'ala but he did have the feeling that people should call him a good person; thereupon the above Ayat was revealed. A Qudsi Hadith quotes Allah Ta'ala as saying, "If anyone does a righteous action for My pleasure but seeks to please someone else also, I reject the whole of it, I accept only that deed which is purely for Me." After that, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam recited the above Ayat. Another Hadith quotes Allah Ta'ala as saying, "I am the most Liberal in apportioning share with My partners, if someone makes another person My co-sharer in his worship for Me, I leave My share also with the co-sharer." A Hadith says that there is such a valley in Jahannam, that Jahannam itself seeks protection against it four hundred times a day, and that valley is for the hypocritical Qaaris. (Qur'an reciters.)

A Hadith says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked the Sahabah to implore the protection of Allah Ta'ala from going to 'Jubb-ul-Huzn'- (the well of grief in Jahannam). They asked him as to who will go into it. The reply was, "Those who act with insincerity (ostentatiously)". A Sahabi Radhiyallahu anho says that the above Verse was revealed last of all in the Holy Qur'an. In another place in the Holy Qur'an it is said:

"O those who believe, do not ruin your Sadaqah by reminding the poor of your favours to them or causing vexation. He is like a person who spends in charity, but as a show to the people; he neither believes in Allah nor in the Akhirah. This type of person resembles a smooth stone, which may get covered with soil (and some green growth), but all is washed away by a heavy rain.

(Similarly, the Sadaqah of those who display their generosity, who are harsh towards the poor and who are hypocrites, shall vanish and not a particle of it will be available to them on the Day of Judgement). All the virtues and the charities given will become useless. (and their earnings will be of no avail to them.)" (al-Baqarah: 264)

Hypocrisy has been reprov'd strongly in several places in the Holy Qur'an.

One Hadith says that on the Day of Judgement the people, whose reckoning will take place first of all, will include a martyr. He will be called and reminded of all the bounties which he received from Allah Ta'ala in this life and asked what acts of virtue he had performed in return for those bounties. He will submit to Allah Ta'ala that, to seek His pleasure, he did Jehaad till he was martyred and gave his life for His sake.

The Divine answer will be, "It is a lie; you went to Jehaad, to be called a hero by the people, which they have done." (So, your aim has been achieved). The Divine verdict and order for him will be to throw him into Jahannam, which orders will be carried out by dragging him face foremost and throwing him into Jahannam.

The next person to be reckoned with will be an Alim (religious scholar). He will be reminded of all the Divine favours and bounties bestowed on him and questioned what the virtues were that he had done to show gratitude for it. His reply will be, "I acquired knowledge and taught knowledge to people and read the Qur'an, seeking your (Allah Ta'ala's) pleasure." Allah Ta'ala's verdict and order will be, "All of it is a lie; you did all that to be called a great Alim and Qaari by the people (which has been done)".

He too will be thrown into Jahannam being dragged on his face. The third person, who will have to give his account, will be a generous person, on whom Allah Ta'ala had bestowed his favours and bounties extensively in this life and who will be reminded of everything given to him and questioned as to what he did with them. He will submit that he did not miss any opportunity of doing good and spending for Allah Ta'ala's pleasure.

The Divine reply will be, "It is a pure lie, you spent entirely to be called a very generous man by the people, which they did (and your aim has been achieved)." The order for him will also be, to be dragged on his face and thrown into Jahannam. In this Hadith, as well as in other Ahadith, the mention of one man implies all the people of his kind. It does not mean that only three persons will receive that punishment; rather, the three types of people will be treated in that manner; for the sake of illustration, only one individual of each has been mentioned above.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has given very severe and heavy warnings to the Ummah that every action and deed must be done solely for Allah Ta'ala, and extreme care must be taken in this matter, so that no mixture of hypocrisy, show and publicity is allowed to creep into our affairs.

But we must take care of the deceit of Shaitan who, as a strong enemy, uses many ways of hostility against his victims. Invariably, he makes a person doubt the sincerity of his actions and for that he makes him give up his very important virtuous deeds. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that Shaitan's first move is to stop a person from doing a virtuous act and to create such thoughts in his mind whereby he does not even think of doing a good deed.

But when a person is strong enough to oppose Shaitan in that effort, then Shaitan makes a fresh move against him, by suggesting to him that he lacked sincerity in his prayers which rendered all his hard labour useless; as such there was no use of insincere worship. By creating such doubts and suspense, Shaitan succeeds in stopping a man from doing any type of good. When this happens, his purpose is fulfilled.

Therefore, one must not stop doing good deeds, because of such doubts about sincerity, but go on acting and trying to achieve sincerity through prayers to Allah Ta'ala that He, by His Mercy and Kindness, may grant him protection against insincerity and save his good deeds from becoming valueless.

CONCERNING THE MAINTENANCE OF KINSHIP

In actual fact, this Chapter is a supplement to the previous Chapters. Nevertheless, since special emphasis has been laid on this matter by Allah Ta'ala in the Holy Qur'an and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has also done the same in the Ahadith pronouncing threats of severe punishment for breaking kinship, a specific Chapter has been devoted to this subject and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that the reward for Sadaqah given to the kith and kin is doubled.

When Ummul Momeneen Maimunah Radhiyallahu anha set free a slave-girl, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam told her that it would have been better if she had given her away to her own uncle. Hence, if there be no important religious obligation, it is better to give Sadaqah to a relative than to anyone else. However, in meeting a religious need for the cause of Allah Ta'ala, the reward is multiplied seven hundred times.

Numerous encouraging rewards are promised in the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith for the protection of kinship, while punishments are indicated for breaking relationships. If all of these were to be covered, the book would become too bulky; therefore, only three Ayaat about the encouragements and three about the punishments have been selected and thereafter a few Ahadith have been discussed.

Section (a)

AYAAT ON SPENDING FOR KITH AND KINS

1. Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorts you in order that you may take heed. (an-Nahl: 90)

Note: Allah Ta'ala has ordered (us) in many places in the Qur'an to be well wishers of our kith and kin and has encouraged us to be generous to them. A few Ayaat in that connection are indicated here, which may be studied separately from a translation of the Qur'an.

'And be good to parents and to kindred'. (al-Baqarah: 83)

'Say: That which ye spend for good (must go) to parents and near kindred'. (al-Baqarah: 215)

The following Ayaat of Surah (an-Nisa: 1-10)

'O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. Be careful of your duty towards Allah in Whom ye claim (your rights) of one another, and towards the wombs (that bore you). Lo! Allah hath been a Watcher over you'.

'Give unto orphans their wealth. Exchange not the good for the bad (in your management thereof) nor absorb their wealth into your own wealth. Lo! That would be a great sin'.

'And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many), then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess. Thus it is more likely that ye will not do injustice'.

'And give unto the women, (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions; but if they of their own accord remit unto you a part thereof, then ye are welcome to absorb it (in your wealth)'.

'Give not unto the foolish (what is in) your (keeping of their) wealth, which Allah hath given you to maintain; but feed and clothe them from it, and speak kindly unto them'.

'Prove orphans till they reach the marriageable age; then, if ye find them of sound judgement, deliver over unto them their fortune; and devour it not by squandering and in haste lest they should grow up. Whoso (of the guardians) is rich, let him abstain generously (from taking of the property of orphans); and whoso is poor let him take thereof in reason (for guardianship). And when ye deliver up their fortune unto orphans, have (the transaction) witnessed in their presence. Allah sufficeth as a Reckoner'.

'Unto the men (of a family) belongeth a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto the women a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, whether it be little or much, a legal share'.

'And when kinsfolk and orphans and the needy are present at the division (of the heritage), bestow on them there from and speak kindly unto them'.

'And let those fear (in their behaviour towards orphans) who if they left behind them weak offspring would be afraid for them. So let them mind their duty to Allah, and speak justly'.

'Lo! Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully, they do but swallow fire into their bellies, and they will be exposed to burning flame.' (an-Nisaa: 1-10)

Also other Ayaat in the Qur'an viz:

'(Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred'. (an-Nisaa: 36)

'And ye do good to parents'. (al-An'aam:151)

'And those who are akin are nearer one to another in the ordinance of Allah'. (al-Anfaal: 75)

'Have no fear of this day! May Allah forgive you'. (Yusuf: 92)

'Such as unite that which Allah hath commanded should be joined'. (ar-Ra'd: 21)

'Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents'. (Ibrahim: 41)

'And (that ye show) kindness to parents'. (Bani Israel: 23)

'And lower unto them the wing of submission'. (Bani Israel: 24)

'Give the kinsman his due'. (Bani Israel: 26)

'And he was devout, And dutiful toward his parents'. (Maryam: 13, 14)

'And (hath made me) dutiful toward her' (Maryam: 32)

'When he said unto his father: O my father! Why worshippeth thou that which heareth not, nor seeth, nor can in aught avail thee?' (Maryam: 42)

'He enjoined upon his people worship and almsgiving'. (Maryam: 55)

'And enjoin upon thy people worship'. (Ta-ha: 132)

'And who say: Our Lord! Vouchsafe us comfort of our wives and of our offspring'. (al-Furqan: 74)

'And be gracious unto me in the matter of my seed'. (al- Ahqaf: 15)

'My Lord! Forgive me and my parents'. (an-Nooh: 28)

Section (b)

AYAAT ON IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING KINSHIP

The above Ayaat are quoted as an example, as giving more details will increase the volume of this book. These are beside the three that are fully discussed hereunder. In addition to these, Allah Ta'ala has stressed this subject repeatedly in the Holy Qur'an, which confirms the great importance of this topic. Ka'b Ahbar Radhiallaho anho swears by Allah Ta'ala and then says that it is mentioned in the Tauraat (old testament) "Fear Allah and be good to kith and kin; I shall prolong your life, make it easy for you to get the things which bring comfort, and drive away all difficulties from you". Allah Ta'ala has, at many places in the Qur'an, ordered the maintenance of kinship. As for example it is said;

'Fear Allah Whom you beg to fulfil your needs; and be careful of kinship'. (an-Nisaa: 1)

In another place it is said:

'Fulfil the obligations towards the kith and kin'.

'Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness (to the people) and to show beneficence to kith and kin'. (an-Nahl: 90)

Yet in another place it is said, "Allah Ta'ala orders you uphold Tauheed and recite La Ilaha Illallah".

Allah Ta'ala has ordered fulfilment of three obligations, He further prohibits three things: indecency, acts against Shari'ah, cruelty to people. Allah then says: "He exhorts you in order that you may take heed".

Note: Allah Ta'ala has repeatedly exhorted mankind about kindness to kith and kin and the parents, as has been explained under the previous Ayaat. In this Ayat particular emphasis has been laid on being kind to the parents. This commandment about parents appears three times in the Qur'an. First, in Surah Ankaboot, then in Surah Luqman and thirdly, here in Surah Ahqaaf, where it appears with a greater emphasis. The writer of "Khazin" has narrated that the Ayat was revealed in honour of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho.

His Companionship with Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam commenced when they travelled to Syria. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was then twenty years old and Abu Bakr was only eighteen. During the journey they stopped near a Jujube tree. Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho went to meet a monk who lived nearby and Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam rested under the tree. The Monk enquired from Abu Bakr about the person sitting under the tree. Abu Bakr told him that he was Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib. The Monk said, "By Allah! He is a Nabi; no one has sat under that tree after Isaa Alaihissalam. He is the last of the Ambiya! When Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam reached the age of forty and was bestowed with 'Nubuwwat' (apostleship), Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho embraced Islam. After two years, when he (Abu Bakr) reached the age of forty, he prayed, "Allah! Enable me to offer proper thanks for the reward that has been bestowed upon me and my parents".

Ali Radhiallaho anho has said that no one among the Mohajireen (Immigrants) has had the privilege of Abu Bakr, both whose parents and children were all Muslims. The Ayat in Surah Ankaboot is more emphatic about the parents, i.e. be kind to them even if they are non-Muslims. When the disbelieving parents are to be treated kindly and graciously by the order of Allah Ta'ala, the orders about the Muslim parents are obviously of much greater importance.

Sa'd Ibne Abi Waqas Radhiallaho anho has said that, when he embraced Islam, his mother resolved not to eat or drink anything till Sa'd gave up the religion of Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. Food and drink used to be forced into her mouth. Thereupon the Ayat in Surah 'Ankaboot' was revealed. It shows the severity of admonition, that, even in such difficult circumstances, the parents are to be treated kindly. However, if they order a person to forsake the true faith (Unity of Allah), they are not to be obeyed. When someone asked Hasan Radhiallaho anho as to what was the limit of kindness to be shown to the parents, he replied, "To spend all that you possess on them and to obey every command that they make, except if it is to commit a sin". Such has been the teaching of Islam for the Muslims. They were to remain good to the polytheist parents: even if the latter tried hard to turn a Muslim son to polytheism, he must remain good to them but shun 'Shirk' (polytheism), and must not obey them in this regard.

No one is to be obeyed against an obligation to the Creator.

Despite the parent's persistent efforts to make the son polytheist, the duty of the son is to be good to them. One of the Ahadith regarding the Ayat in Surah Luqman says that this particular Ayat was revealed at the time of the incident of Sa'd Radhiallaho anho.

The Hadith quotes Sa'd as saying that he used to treat his mother extremely cordially and, when he became a Muslim, his mother exclaimed, "What have you done? You must leave Islam or else I shall give up eating and drinking till death comes to me, upon which the people will reproach you for being the cause of my death". Sa'd requested her not to take that step and said that he could not give up his religion. She did not eat or drink for two consecutive days. On that Sa'd told her that, even if she had one hundred lives and gave up all, one after the other, still he would not give up Islam. When she witnessed his determination, she started taking food and drink.

The famous theologian Abul Laith Rahmatullah alaihe says that, even if Allah Ta'ala did not emphasize the rights of parents, common sense indicated that their rights are important and obligatory. So much so, that Allah Ta'ala's commandment about this has been given in all the Divine Books, namely Taurah, Injeel, Zaboor and Qur'an, and all the Ambiya Alaihimussalaam received revelations about it with full emphasis.

The above three Ayaat were concerning the good treatment of the kith and kin. The next three Ayaat contain warning against their ill treatment.

Section (c)

AYAAT ON RETRIBUTION FOR SEVERING FAMILY BONDS

1. And He misleads thereby only miscreants. Those who break the covenant of Allah after ratifying it, and sever that which Allah ordered to be joined, and (who) make mischief in the earth. Those are they who are the losers. (al-Baqarah: 26-27)

Note: Just Allah Ta'ala has ordered kindness towards the kith and kin, especially the parents, at several places in the Qur'an, similarly He has also warned repeatedly against the severing of connection with the relatives, particularly with the parents. A reference is made to a few Ayaat in that context, as has been done earlier under Ayat 1, in the beginning of this chapter, for the sake of drawing attention to this and to bear them in mind. Allah Ta'ala says:

'Be careful of your duty toward Allah in Whom ye claim (your rights) of one another, and toward the wombs (that bare you)'. (an-Nisaa: 1)

'And that ye slay not your children because of penury'. (al-An'am: 151)

Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty'. (Bani Israel: 31)

'And whoso saith unto his parents: Fie upon you both! Do ye threaten me that I shall be brought forth (again) when generations before me have passed away? And they twain cry unto Allah for help (and say): Woe unto thee! Believe! Lo! The promise of Allah is true. But he saith: this is naught save fables of the men of old'. (al-Ahqaf: 17)

'Would ye then, if ye were given the command, work corruption in the land and sever your ties of kinship?' (Muhammad: 22)

Muhammad Baqir Rahmatullah alaihe was given a strong advice by his father, which has been quoted under Hadith No. 23 in the first Chapter and is based on sound experience. He narrates that his father, Zain-ul-Aabideen Rahmatullah alaihe advised him as follows: "Avoid the company of five types of people, do not talk to them, never walk with them, if you come across one of them by chance.

Those five are: first an immoral person who will sell you for a morsel of bread, or even for less". When asked how could anyone sell a person for less than a morsel, he replied, "He will do so in hope of receiving a morsel, which he may never get". The next one is a miser who will forsake you in your time of need. The third is a liar who is a cheat; he will deceive you by making you believe the far off thing to be near and the near one to be far off. The fourth is a stupid person, who is to be shunned for fear of causing you harm when he intends to do good to you, as it is said that a wise enemy is better than a foolish friend. The fifth is the one who breaks away from his kith and kin, as the curse of Allah descends upon him, as has been mentioned at three places in the Holy Qur'an.

2. And those who break the covenant of Allah after ratifying it; and sever that which Allah has commanded to be joined, and make mischief in the earth: theirs is the curse and theirs the ill abode. (ar-Ra'd: 25)

Note: Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe has advised being extra careful in guarding against breaking an agreement, for that incurs displeasure of Allah. There are more than twenty Ayaat containing Allah Ta'ala's admonishment and

threats of severe punishment for breach of a ratified agreement. The author believes that Allah Ta'ala has not admonished so many times on any other matter.

Therefore, a person must fulfil an agreement under all circumstances. Anas Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "He who is not trustworthy has no faith (Imaan) and he who does not fulfil his promises has no religion!" Abu Umamah and Ubadah Radhiallaho anho have also made the same comment. (Durre Manthur). Maimoon Bin Mehran Rahmatullah alaihe has said that there are three orders which make no distinction between a Muslim and a non-Muslim; First, an agreement must be fulfilled, be it with a Muslim or a non-Muslim, because, in fact it amounts to a vow with Allah Ta'ala. Secondly, a kinship must be upheld, whether it is with a Muslim or a non-Muslim. Thirdly, a property held in trust must be returned, whether the owner of the trust is a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

There are several Ayaat in the Qur'an regarding fulfilment of covenants, one of which is:

'Fulfil the trust, you will be called to account for it'. (Bani Israel: 34)

Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the order about maintenance of kinship concerns both the near and distant relatives. The other warning in the Ayat is about breaking relationship. Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe has said that one should not associate with a person who causes breach of relationship between kith and kin, as he found a curse on him at two places in the Holy Qur'an: one, in the above Ayat and the other in Surah Muhammad. The reference in Surah Muhammad has already been indicated in a preceding paragraph, where it has been said, in the context to breach of relationship, that they are the people who have been cursed by Allah Ta'ala and they have been made deaf, (cannot listen to Allah's commandments) and blind (that they cannot see the path of righteousness). While Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe has mentioned the curse in two places.

Zainul Abideen Rahmathullah alaihe has pointed out three places. Two are as above, in Surah Ra'd and Surah Muhammad, while in the third place, he is called 'a loser' and 'one gone astray' which is close to being called an accursed person, as mentioned earlier in the Ayat from Surah Baqarah.

Salman Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that, when words abound and practice is locked up in a treasury (that is, plenty of speeches and elaborate writings, but not followed by actions), such an approach creates agreement in words but hearts remain opposed and there is discord and breach of kinship. In that event, Allah Ta'ala deprives people of His mercy and blessings and makes them blind and deaf. Hasan Radhiallaho anho has also quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that, when people display their knowledge but have no deeds, and show love verbally while having malice in the hearts and no regard for the kith and kin, Allah Ta'ala drives them away from His kindness and mercy, wherefore, they are unable to see the path of righteousness or what is right and wrong.

One Hadith says that the fragrance of Jannah spreads upto a distance covered in five hundred years, but the one who remains disobedient to his parents and disregards kinship will never be able to experience the sweet smell of Jannah.

Abdullah Ibne Abi Aufa Radhiallaho anho has said that once, in the evening on the day of Arafah, we (the Sahabah) were sitting around Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. He announced, "Any one who has broken relationship with any of his kin, should leave the company and not sit with us!" Only one man sitting at a great distance got up and went away. After a while, he returned and joined the assembly. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked him how only he had left the company after his statement. The man said that, after hearing the order, he went straight to his aunty who had broken her relationship with him. On seeing him she asked how it was that he had come to her against his normal practice.

He repeated to her the order of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, on hearing which, she made a Du'a for forgiveness for him and he made a similar Du'a for her and thus were reconciled with each other. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was greatly pleased with him, allowed him to rejoin the company, then said that Allah Ta'ala does not grant His blessings on a community among whom there is some one who has broken away from his relations.

This Hadith has been quoted by Faqeeh Abul Laith Rahmatullah alaihe, who says that damaging kinship is so grave a sin that, even by sitting with a person guilty of such a sin, one is deprived of the blessing of Allah Ta'ala. It is essential, therefore, that anyone who is involved in such a situation, must seek forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala and build up his relationship with his kith and kin.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that there is no good deed the reward of which comes faster, than being good to one's kith and kin; and there is no sin greater than the breach of kinship and cruelty in respect of punishment in this life and in Akhirah. Several Traditions indicate that the punishment for breach of kinship is experienced even in this life, and in the life, as evident from the above Ayat. Faqih Abul Laith Rahmatullah alaihe has mentioned a rare story about a very pious and honest man from Khurasan who used to live in Makkah Mukarramah. People used to leave their property as a trust with him.

Once, a person left ten thousand Dinaars as a trust with him and went away on a journey. When that person returned, the trustee had died, so the person made enquiries from the family of the deceased but no one knew anything about it. As a large sum of money was involved, the owner asked a gathering of Ulama in Makkah as to what he should do. They told him that the Khurasani was a very pious person who must be in Jannah. The owner should visit the Zamzam well after midnight and call the name of the Trustee, asking him about his money. The owner repeated the process for three nights running, but received no reply. He went back to the Ulama and told them about his efforts. They were surprised and recited: Inna Lillahi wa inna ilaihi raajioon.

They were afraid, lest he should not be in Jannah. So, they advised him to visit a certain place where he would find a valley by the name of Barhoot and, in it, a well. He should make a loud call into the well. He did so and received a reply after the very first call, that his money was safe; not trusting his children, he had buried it in such and such place inside the house and the person should ask his son to show him that place, where he should dig his money out. The man did so and got back his wealth. He, however, in astonishment, asked the deceased how he was in such a place in spite of being a pious person. The deceased told him that he had some relatives in Khurasan, with whom he had broken his relationship and had died without mending it, which had become the cause of his punishment.

Ali Radhiyallahu anho has said, "The best of all valleys is the valley of Makkah Mukarramah, and that valley in India where Adam Alaihissallam was brought down from Jannah, where all the fragrances are, which people use. The worst of valleys are the Ahqaf and Hazarmout, known as Barhoot. The best of all the wells is the Zamzam and the worst of all is the Barhoot well where all the spirits of non-believers are kept". But the incident related above is an instance of Divine manifestation (i.e. Allah Ta'ala manifesting to a saintly being, a supernatural phenomenon that transcends the conceivable or rational). Obviously, such manifestations have no dogmatic value.

3. If one of them or both of them (parents attain old age with thee, say not "Fie" unto them (anything which may upset or put them to shame) nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word. And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy, and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both, as they did care for me when I was little. Your Lord is best aware of what is in your minds. If you are righteous, then lo! He was ever forgiving unto those who turn (unto him)". (Bani Israel: 23, 24, 25)

Note: Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe has said, in the explanation of this Ayat, that when the parents become aged you ought not to grumble over washing their urine and excreta, as they washed it when you were a baby. Ali Radhiyallahu anho has said that if there were any degree of disrespect below uttering "Uff", Allah Ta'ala would (probably) have forbidden it. When someone asked Hasan Radhiyallahu anho as to what was the lowest degree of disrespect, the reply was, "To deprive them of the benefit of your property and wealth, avoiding to see them and looking at them with sharp looks".

Another person asked Hasan Radhiyallahu anho as to what the 'Qaule Karim' (gracious word) meant: he replied, "To address them lovingly as 'Mummy and Papa' and to avoid calling them by their names" Zubair Ibne Muhammad Rahmatullah alaihe has been quoted to explain that whenever they call you, reply, "Present sir". Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe has said that they should be spoken to politely. Someone asked Sa'eed bin Musayyab Rahmatullah alaihe that the Qur'an repeats many times the order for good conduct, which is understandable, but

the meaning of 'Qaule Karim' is not clear. The reply was that it means the way a slave, guilty of a grave offence, speaks to his master who has a harsh temperament.

Aishah Radhiallaho anha has said that a person accompanied by an old man, came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. He asked who the old man was. The man said that he was his father. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam told the man, "Do not walk in front of him, do not sit down before he takes his seat, do not call him by his name and never talk to him impolitely". Urwah Rahmatullah alaihe was asked by someone what is meant when the Qur'an says, 'Lower unto them?' The reply was that, if and when they speak to you unpleasantly, do not look at them angrily, as the dislike first becomes apparent in the eyes.

Aishah Radhiallaho anha quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Whoever looks at his father angrily, he is being disobedient". Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho has said that once he asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as to what was the most acceptable deed in the eyes of Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Salaat offered on its right time". He then asked: What came next? The reply was, "Good behaviour towards parents". He again asked, "What came next?" The reply was "Jehaad". Another Hadith says that the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala lies in the pleasure of the father and Allah's displeasure is caused by the father's displeasure.

The writer of Mazahir has written that it is the children's obligation to be humble, to show love and so serve their parents that the latter remain pleased with them, always to obey them in rightful actions, never to be impolite or treat them arrogantly, even if they happen to be non-Muslims, not to raise their own voice above their parents or to call them by name, nor to precede them in any action and, if non-Muslims, to be polite in calling them to do good deeds and to prevent them from committing sins; even if they do not accept your advice, still continue to be good to them and keep praying for them, seeking forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala on their behalf. This last is evident from the Holy Qur'an in Surah Maryam, we are told that Ibrahim Alaihissalam gave good advice (Da'wah) to his father once and then said to him, "I shall offer Du'aa to Allah Ta'ala for you".

Some Ulama have stated that obedience to parents regarding forbidden things is not permissible, but in doubtful matters, it is obligatory to obey them, bearing in mind that 'Taqwa' and the need to be good to them are both essential. For example, if their food is of doubtful nature and your refusal to eat with them might injure their feelings, you should eat with them.

Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that two doors of Jannah will remain open for every Muslim whose parents are alive and he serves them well, while if he keeps them unhappy, Allah Ta'ala will not be pleased with him until they are pleased with him. Someone asked, "What if they are cruel to me?" Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho replied, "Even then you must remain good to them." Talha Radhiallaho anho has said that once a man came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and requested permission to go for Jehaad.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked if his mother was alive, he replied that she was. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then told him to persist in serving her well, as Jannah is under the mother's feet. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam repeated this a second time, even for the third time. Anas Radhiallaho anho has said that once a man came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and stated his great desire to go for Jehaad, but added that he had no means for doing so.

On being asked if any one of his parents was alive, he replied that his mother was alive. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, "Fear Allah Ta'ala in her regard"; meaning, be careful in fulfilling your obligations towards her, up to the level of Taqwa and when you attain that, you will be considered as the one who has performed Umrah and Hajj, and also participated in Jehaad. That is, you will receive whatever reward is earned from all these things.

Muhammad Ibne Almunkadir Rahmatullah alaihe has said, "My brother Umar used to spend the whole night in praying, while I used to spend the night in massaging my mother's feet and never felt envious of his nightlong prayers, nor desired to exchange his reward with mine". Aishah Radhiallaho anha has said that she asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam; "Of all the obligations of a woman towards other people, which one is the greatest?" He replied, "The one she owes her husband".

She then asked who came next and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Her mother". A Hadith says "Remain chaste in respect of other people's women-folk, then your own women will be chaste; if you remain good to your own parents, your own children will be good to you". (Durre Manthur)

Taaous Rahmatullah alaihe has said that a certain person had four sons. He fell ill. One of his sons told the other three that if they were prepared to nurse the father in his sickness, he would take the whole of his father's property; and, if they wanted the whole property, he was prepared to nurse him without any claim on the property. They agreed to the second course and left the nursing to him.

He looked after the father most admirably until the father died. As agreed, he did not take anything from the property. He saw in a dream, one night, a person telling him that one hundred Dinaars (gold pieces) were buried at such and such place, which he could take. He asked the person if that money was blessed. The reply was, "No, it is not so". He related the dream the next morning to his wife, who insisted that he should take the money but he did not agree. He dreamt again the following night and someone told him about ten Dinaars lying buried at a certain place. When he again asked if they were blessed, the reply was in the negative.

He related the dream to his wife next morning, who insisted that he should go and take them, but he refused to do so. He saw in a dream, the third night, someone telling him that a single Dinaar was lying at such and such place, he should go and take it. He again asked if it was a blessed one. The reply was, "Yes, it is". So, he went and took the Dinaar, purchased two fish with it and brought them home. When cut open for cooking, an invaluable pearl was found in the stomach of each fish. Both these pearls were sold to the king of the country in return for ninety mule-loads of gold.

Section (d)

AHADITH CONCERNING MAINTENANCE OF KINSHIP

Abu Hurairah Radhiyallahu anho narrates that a man asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "For whom should I be most concerned in maintaining good relations?" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Your mother". The man put the same question a second and a third time; and each time Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave the same reply. When he repeated the same question the fourth time, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Your father and then other relatives, in order of nearness to you in kinship".

Note: Some Ulama infer from this Hadith that a mother's share is three parts in regard to kind treatment, because Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, 'Your mother' three times and said, 'your father' only when the question was repeated for the fourth time.

The reason for this preferment, the Ulama say, lies in the fact that a mother has to go through hardships for her child: pregnancy, child-birth and breast-feeding. The theologians have added that, if a person does not have the means to take care of both his parents he should give first preference to his mother. However, the father enjoys preference in matters relating to respect and obedience from his children. (Mazahir-e-Haqq). Being a woman, a mother evidently needs more help and loving care of her children. The near relatives are then to be given preference (over others) in order of their kinship, the nearer relations will be given preference over the distant ones.

Another Hadith narrates "Begin with your mother in your good treatment, then comes your father, then your sister, then your brother and then other kinsmen in order of their nearness in relationship. Do not ignore your neighbours and the needy". (Kanz). Another Hadith quoted by Bahz Bin Hakeem from his grand father repeats the same obligation that a person has to his parents and other relations. Another Hadith indicates that Allah Ta'ala will make the hour of death easy for him who possesses the following three qualities and grant him entry into Jannah:-

1. Is kind to the weak;

2. Treats his parents with loving care;
3. Shows favour to his subordinates. (Mishkaat)

HADITH: 2

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said: "Anyone who wishes to have his means of livelihood enlarged and a prolonged life, should treat his relatives with kindness".

In this Hadith the word 'anyone who wishes to have his footprints last longer', implies prolonged life. For, he who lives longer will leave his footprints for a longer period; when a person dies, his footprints get effaced after a short time. Some people may take an exception to this Hadith saying, "Everybody's term of life is predetermined". At many places in the Holy Qur'an, it has been clearly stated that the term of life is fixed; not a moment can be added or lessened there from.

Some Ulama have interpreted the term 'prolongation of life' as grant of 'Barakah' (blessings) in life. Due to Divine blessings a person may accomplish tasks within hours, which others usually take days to perform, and may accomplish in days what is usually done in months. Others say that 'prolongation of life' term implies a laudable remembrance of his good deeds long after his death. Others say that it means 'increase in progeny and his descendants' flourishing after his death.'

It has to be admitted that, as a statement of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, all of whose sayings are doubtlessly true; these benefits in some form will accrue from maintaining kinship. Allah Ta'ala is all powerful: He may create and bring about anything He wills. Whatever He wills must happen and He creates such subtle means for bringing about events that the wisest of men are taken by surprise. Therefore, there should be no ambiguity about the 'prolongation of life' granted as a reward for strengthening family bonds.

Truly the decrees of destiny are unalterable, but Allah Ta'ala has introduced casual relationship in the affairs of the world; for everything that happens in this world, there is a cause either hidden or apparent. For example when a person is suffering from cholera, we send for the doctors in the hope of helpful treatment to make him survive, though we know that his death-hour is fixed and cannot be delayed or hastened.

There is no reason for not taking up seriously giving Sadaqah to deserving blood relations as an effective prescription for prolongation of life. This recipe was prescribed by the wisest of all men, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, whose diagnosis and treatment for human ailments could never be wrong, whereas the physicians of this world may err while diagnosing a disease or writing a prescription. The subject matter of the Hadith quoted above has appeared in other narrations with slight variations, hence it is fully authentic.

It has been narrated in another Hadith, on the authority of Ali Radhiyallahu anho, that for him who guarantees one thing (respect of kinship), Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has guaranteed four things, namely long life, respect among relatives, increase in means of livelihood and entry into Jannah. (Kanz). Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam told Abu Bakr Radhiyallahu anho that three results are assured: (1) If a victim of cruelty overlooks it, he will earn greater respect; (2) Whoever hankers after increase in his wealth, will find a decrease in it; (3) Whoever opens the door of Sadaqah and regard for kinship, will have abundant wealth. (Durre Manthur). The theologian Abul-Laith Rahmatullah alaihe has said that ten rewards are priceless in the obligations of kinship:-

1. It wins pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, who has ordered its fulfilment.
2. It promotes happiness among the kith and kin – and Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that the best of deeds is to make a Muslim happy.
3. The angels also feel happy about it.

4. The Muslims praise the one who keeps it up.
5. Shaitan is grieved by it.
6. It brings prolongation of life.
7. It enhances means of livelihood.
8. It brings happiness to the dead when they come to know about it.
9. It strengthens mutual help: when you do good to someone, he would help you whole-heartedly in time of need.
10. One will benefit from it after his death, as the beneficiaries will always remember him with good wishes and prayers.

Anas Radhiallaho anho says that three types of persons will enjoy a place in the shade of the Grand Throne of Allah Ta'ala:-

1. The benefactor of the kith and kin, who gets a prolonged life and enhanced livelihood and also an enlarged grave.
2. A widow who brings up young children of her deceased husband, without her remarriage, so that she has no difficulties in looking after them till they are grown up.
3. The person who invites the poor and orphans to participate in his feasts.

Hasan Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to have said that Allah Ta'ala loves two foot-steps, the one taken for the sake of obligatory Salaat and the other taken to meet an intimate friend or a relation. Some Ulama have said that five things, if observed regularly and constantly, earn such rewards from Allah Ta'ala as are even bigger than high mountains, and one's means of livelihood are also increased on account of them.

These are: Constancy in giving Sadaqah, be it large or small; spending regularly on one's relatives (to strengthen family bonds), whether one spends little or much; Jehaad (striving in the path of Allah); remaining always in a state of Wudhu (ablution); constancy in obedience to one's parents. (Tanbeeh-ul-Ghafilien). A Hadith says, "Strengthening ties of kinship is a virtue for which one is most readily rewarded and blessed by Allah; even many a sinner is granted abundance in wealth and in children, on account of kind behaviour towards relatives". (Ihya). It occurs in a Hadith that the following virtues cause one's misfortunes to change into good fortune, prolong one's term of life and avert an evil death: giving Sadaqah in the proper manner, adopting ways that are good and beneficial (for others), treating one's parents with kindness, and maintaining bonds of kinship.

There are several other Ahadith which assert that a man's livelihood is increased and his term of life is prolonged on account of his kindness towards his kinsmen. We have just quoted a few of them, by way of example. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has pointed out to us an easy way of achieving these two ambitions through strengthening ties of kinship. All those who desire a long life and extensive means of livelihood can try this prescription suggested by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, if they sincerely believe in the truth of his sayings, and spend as much as they can on strengthening kinship. For, it is bound to be recompensed with increase in means of livelihood and, furthermore, it guarantees a prolonged term of life.

HADITH: 3

Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "An excellent way of showing kindness to one's father in his absence is to treat his friends and acquaintances in a kindly way".

Note: Absence may be temporary or permanent from this world i.e. death. In the latter case, showing kindness to one's father's friends will be a higher virtue. For, if a person treats his father's friends kindly, in the absence of his father when alive, he may be doing so in order to win the favour for his own selfish designs, whereas, if he treats them kindly even after the death of his father, this will not be for any selfish design, but will be out of genuine regard and esteem for him. In another Hadith, Ibne Dinar Rahmatullah alaihe relates that Abdullah Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho was going on a journey to Makkah when he saw a Bedouin going on the way. Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho gave him his own riding-beast, took off his own turban and gave it to him as a gift. Ibne Dinar Rahmatullah alaihe said to him, "This man might have been pleased with something less". Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho said, "This man's father was a friend of my father and I have heard Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying, "Showing kindness to the friends of ones father gets the best return".

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho says that, on one of his visits to Madina, Ibne Umar came to see him and said, "Do you know why I have come to see you? I have heard Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam saying, "If anyone wishes to show kindness to his father who is dead, let him treat his father's friends in a kindly manner, and (you know that) my father (Umar) was a friend of yours". (Targheeb).

A Hadith reports Abu Usaid Maalik bin Rabi'ah Radhiallaho anho as saying, "While we were sitting in company with Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, a man of the Banu Salma Tribe came to him and said, "O Rasulullah, is there any way left for me to show kindness to my parents after their death?" He replied, "Yes, you can invoke Allah's blessings on them, make 'Istighfaar' for them (ask Allah's forgiveness for them), fulfil the promises (if any) made by them with people, treat their relatives and dependents with kindness and show respect to their friends". (Mishkaat). A version adds: At this the man said, "What an excellent idea!" and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Practice it, then". (Targheeb)

HADITH: 4

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says, "If the parents of a person die, or one of them dies, and he has not been dutiful to them, but he goes on asking forgiveness for them and making other supplications (Du'aa) for them, Allah Ta'ala will record him as a dutiful son".

Note: How bounteous are the blessings and favours of Allah Ta'ala to His men! Very often, circumstances arise which cause a certain unpleasantness between parents and children, but the parent and children relationship is deep-rooted to allow for permanent estrangement from each other. So, when a man's father or mother dies, filial love re-asserts itself, he feels deep remorse and is distressed to remember their loving care for himself. Allah Ta'ala has, in His infinite Mercy and Compassion for man, shown a way for redeeming such situations.

He has ordained that, if a person prays for Allah's blessing for his parents after their death, makes 'Istighfaar' for them and, after doing a good deed involving expenditure of money or otherwise, requests Allah to transfer its rewards to their credit (called 'Eesaal-e-Thawab'), these good deeds will compensate for his failure to fulfil the duties he owed them in their lifetime and he will be recorded as a dutiful son. It is one of the greatest favours of Allah Ta'ala to His men that He has opened a way for the undutiful sons and daughters to atone for their sins, even after the death of their parents when, normally, it is said to be too late.

What a shame would it be if we were too hard-hearted not to avail of this opportunity for atonement! For, there are very few whose behaviour to their parents is always correct and who give their parents their due rights. It is, therefore, advisable that each one of us should make a routine of performing some good deeds regularly and pray to Allah to transfer the blessings earned in this way to the credit of his deceased parents. It would be an excellent routine, in view of its splendid consequences.

A Hadith says that if anyone performs Hajj on behalf of his parents, it is treated as a 'Hajj-e-Badal' (i.e. it atones for their failure to perform Fardh Hajj during their life), the glad tidings whereof are conveyed to their souls in the Heavens above, and he is recorded as a dutiful son, even though he may have been undutiful heretofore. Another Hadith says that if a person performs Hajj on behalf of either of his parents, the father (or mother) receives reward

for one Hajj, while his own reward for it is equal to that of a person performing Hajj nine times. Allama Ainee Rahmatullah alaihe has quoted a Hadith in his explanatory notes on Bukhari, to the following effect:-

Whosoever recites the following Du'aa and then requests Allah Ta'ala to transfer the reward earned thereby to the credit of his parents, is like one having fulfilled his obligations to them:

Alhamdulillah Rabil aalameen. Rabisamaawaathie wa Rabil ardhie wa Rabil aalameen. Wa la hul kibariyaaa ouu fisamaawaathie wal ardhie wa huwal Azeezul Hakeem. Wa lillahil hamdhu Rabisamaawaathie wa Rabil ardhie Rabil aalameen. Wa la hul azmathu fisamaawaathie wal ardhie wa huwal Azeezul Hakeem. Huwal Maliku Rabusamaawaathie wa Rabul ardhie wa Rabul aalameen. Wa la huNooru fisamaawaathie wal ardhie wa huwal Azeezul Hakeem.

All praise be to Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds; the Lord of the heavens and the earth; to him alone belongs the true greatness in the heavens and in the earth and He alone has supremacy and is Wise. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Sustainer of the Worlds, to Him alone belongs Majesty in the heavens and in the earth, and He is Supreme and Wise; He alone is the Sovereign, Lord of the heavens and the earth and the Sustainer of the Worlds; to Him alone belongs the celestial light (Nur) of the heavens and the earth and He is the Majestic, the Wise.

Another Hadith relates: What does it cost a person if, having spent something as a Nafil Sadaqah, he prays to Allah Ta'ala to transfer the reward to his parents, provided they be Muslims? For, in that case, they will receive the blessings while his own reward will not decrease. (Kanz). According to this Hadith, a man does not need to perform any virtuous deed exclusively for his parents; he should just pray to Allah Ta'ala to transfer to his parents the rewards earned by him spending for a good cause.

Abdullah Ibne Salaam Radhiallaho anho says: I swear by the name of the Immaculate Being, Who sent Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam with the message of truth, it is implied in the Sacred Book of Allah, 'Do not sever kinship with him who has done a favour to strengthen kinship with your father, for that might cause your loss of faith'. It occurs in another Hadith that: "Whosoever goes to visit the graves of his parents, or the grave of either of them, on every Friday, his sins will be forgiven and he will be counted among the dutiful".

Allama Auzaa'ee Rahmatullah alaihe says, "I have heard it said that, if a person who has been undutiful towards his parents makes 'Istighfaar' for them after their death, pays off their debts and does not speak ill of them, he will be counted as dutiful; and that, if a person who has been dutiful towards his parents speaks ill of them after their death, does not pay off their debt they owed, nor makes 'Istighfaar' for them, he will be treated as undutiful. (Durre Manthur).

HADITH: 5

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "Shall I not advise you on an excellent Sadaqah? It is what you spend to provide for a daughter who has been sent back to you, and who has no one but you to earn her livelihood".

Note: 'Has been sent back to you' means sent back to you after being widowed or divorced by her husband. It may also mean that some other circumstances have necessitated her coming back to her parents. In these cases, all that is spent to meet her requirements is treated as an excellent Sadaqah, for it combines many acts of virtue: (1) Sadaqah, (2) helping a person in distress, (3) strengthening family bonds, (4) loving care for one's children, and (5) sympathy with the grieved, for earlier, when the children lived with their parents, they felt happy to look after their needs, but, when they come back to their parents, after having been married and having started to live happily in their own homes, both the children and the parents feel extremely grieved. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, 'For anyone helping a distressed person Allah Ta'ala records seventy-three grades of forgiveness, one of which shall suffice him for his well-being in all worldly affairs and seventy two will raise him spiritually on the Day of Judgment'.

We have already referred to a number of Traditions bearing upon this subject in Chapter one, under the Hadith quoted at Serial No. 26. Umme Salamah Radhiallaho anha once asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam 'Shall I gain reward for what I spend on the sons of Abu Salamah my previous husband, for they are my sons?' He replied, 'Spend on them, you will be rewarded for spending on them'. (Mishkaat). Besides, it is a praiseworthy act, according to Shariah, to treat one's children with kindness and loving care, even when they are not in need of help. Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam caressed his grandson, Hasan or Hussain Radhiallaho anhumma who were with him and Aqra Ibne Haabis, the chief of Banu Tameem, who was also with him at that time said, "I have ten children and I have never shown affection to any one of them". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam regarded him with sharp looks and said, "He who does not show mercy, will not be shown mercy". It occurs in another Hadith that a nomadic Arab asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "Do you kiss your children? We do not kiss them". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "How can I help it when Allah Ta'ala has made your heart devoid of tender feelings". If a person treats children kindly when they are in distress, he gets a specific reward in addition to that for showing kindness to his children normally.

HADITH: 6

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "A Sadaqah given to a poor man is merely Sadaqah, but when it is given to a relative, it serves two purposes: it is both a Sadaqah and an extra act of kindness for kinship".

Note: While giving Sadaqah, the poor relatives should be given preference over the poor ones among the common people, as it is more virtuous to spend on one's kinsmen. This is the subject of many a Tradition, and it has been treated in the Ahadith in various ways. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Of the (four) Dinaars, a Dinaar you contribute in the path of Allah, a Dinaar spent to set free a slave, a Dinaar given as Sadaqah to a poor man and a Dinaar spent to provide for your family – the one spent to support your family will bring the greatest reward, provided it is spent solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and they need help". It has been narrated in another Hadith that once, when Maimunah Radhiallaho anha set free a slave-girl, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "It would have given you greater reward if you had given her to your maternal uncle". Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam specifically exhorted women to give Sadaqah.

After listening to the exhortation, Zainab returned to her husband Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood, an eminent Sahabi and a great Faqeeh, and said to him, "Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has commanded us to give Sadaqah and you are financially weak; so go and ask him if my spending on you will count as Sadaqah". Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood Radhiallaho anho told her that she had better go and ask it herself. (Possibly he felt shy to ask the question himself or might have thought it would appear selfish of him to ask such a question). So she went to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and found a woman standing at his door, who had come for the same purpose, but they dare not ask him. Meanwhile Bilal Radhiallaho anho came out, so they said to him, "Go to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and tell him that there are two women at the door who have come to ask whether it would count as Sadaqah if they gave something to their husbands and to the orphans, who are in their charge, from among the children of their late husbands". Bilal Radhiallaho anho went in and conveyed the message to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who asked him who the women were, whereupon Bilal told him that there was a woman from the Ansar and Zainab, the wife of Abdullah bin Mas'ood. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, "Yes; and they will get two rewards: one for the kinship and the other for Sadaqah". (Mishkaat).

Ali Radhiallaho anho says, "I would love to help my brother with a Dirham rather than spend twenty Dirhams on another person. I would rather help him (a brother) with a hundred Dirhams than set free a slave". (Ihya). It occurs in another Hadith that (while spending money) the first preference should be given to one's own needs; if the money exceeds one's needs, it should be spent on one's family; if there is still something extra, it should be spent on other relatives; and if there is still some left, it should be distributed among other people. (Kanz).

There are many other Ahadith on this subject related in Kanz-ul-Ummal and some other collections of Ahadith; but the Ahadith mean that, when spending money, a person can prefer his family above others only if he knows for certain that his family is more in need of help. But if others are in greater need of help or he himself, in spite of his need, has patience with perfect trust in Allah Ta'ala, it is highly commendable to prefer others' needs to his own. We have already discussed this point in Chapter one under the Ayat: 28 beginning: "...and prefer them before themselves..." (al-Hashr: 9)

Ali Radhiallaho anho relates: "Shall I tell you an incident about myself and my wife, Fatimah Radhiallaho anha, the dearest and most loved daughter of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who lived with me in my house. She used to grind the corn herself so that calluses grew on the palms of her hands; she fetched water for the house in a goatskin bag, the strap of which had left a mark on her body; she swept the house herself, which soiled her clothes; she cooked the food so that her dress became black with smoke. In short, she did all the strenuous household jobs herself. Once some war-captives were brought to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and I asked her to go to him and ask him for a helper.

She went to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam but, as there were many people round him, she could not ask him for shyness. (A version has: She mentioned the matter to Aishah Radhiallaho anha and came back). Next day, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam visited us and said, "Fatimah, what did you want to tell me yesterday?" She felt shy and kept quiet. I told Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about her daily labours and her having to fetch water, etc., and said that I had sent her to ask for a servant. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Let me suggest something that is better than a servant: when you go to bed, say: Subhanallah (Glory be to Allah) thirty three times, Alhamdulillah (Praise be to Allah) thirty three times and Allahu Akbar (Allah is Great) thirty four times. That will be better for you than a servant". (Abu Dawood).

Another version of the Hadith adds: Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "I cannot give you a servant at this time when the 'Companions of the Suffah' are suffering from pangs of hunger. I shall sell the slaves and spend the price on their requirements". (Fath-ul-Bari)

HADITH: 7

Asmaa Radhiallaho anha, daughter of Abu Bakr, says that, when Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was negotiating a treaty with the Quraish, her mother, who was a non-believer, came (from Makkah) to visit her (in Madinah) and she asked, "O Rasulallah, my mother has come to me, expecting me to help her; shall I help her?" Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Yes, do help her".

Note: In the early days of Islam, Muslims were mercilessly persecuted by the non-believers and books on History are full of painful details of their miseries. Even when the Muslims migrated to Madinah Munawwarah, the non-believers did not allow them to live in peace.

They attacked them and harassed them in all possible ways. Once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came to Makkah with a small number of his Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum, with the sole intention of performing Umrah, but the non-believers prevented their entry into the Sacred City and compelled them to return to Madinah without performing the rites of Umrah. On this occasion, however, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam made a treaty with the Quraish to stop hostilities for a few years, on certain conditions.

This is a well-known event of Islamic history, to which Asmaa Radhiallaho anha has referred in the above-quoted Hadith. It was during those days of treaty that the divorced wife of Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho, who was the mother of Asmaa Radhiallaho anha but who had not embraced Islam, came to visit her in Madinah Munawwarah in the hope of gaining some financial help. As she was a non-believer, Asmaa Radhiallaho anha could not decide whether she should help her or not, and so asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about it, who advised her to help her mother. Commenting on this incident, Imaam Khattabi Rahmatullah alaihe writes: "We can infer from this incident that it is necessary to give material help to our kinsmen, irrespective of their being Muslims or non-Muslims". A Tradition says that the following Ayat was revealed concerning this incident:

"Allah does not forbid you to show kindness to and deal justly with those who did not make war against you on account of Deen (religion) and did not drive you out from your homes. Lo! Allah loves those who deal justly". (al-Mumtahinah: 8)

Commenting on the Ayat, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Rahmatullah alaihe writes, "It refers to the non-believers who have become 'Zimmis' (non-Muslim subjects living in a Muslim state) or those non-Muslims who have agreed to live at peace with the Muslims. It is commendable to treat these classes kindly. In this context, 'Show kindness and deal

justly' means that they be treated kindly, in view of their being subjects of a Muslim state or are reconcilable. Not to speak of a Zimmi, it is incumbent upon a Mo'min to deal justly with every man, Muslim or non-Muslim, and even with animals" (Bayab-ul-Qur'an).

The name of Asmaa's mother is said to be 'Qailah' or 'Qutailah', daughter of Abdul-Uzza, who had been divorced by Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho as she had not embraced Islam. Some traditions relate that when she came to visit her daughter Asmaa Radhiallaho anha, with some cheese and purified butter as gifts for her, Asmaa did not allow her to enter her house, but sent a messenger to her half-sister, Aishah Radhiallaho anha requesting her to ask Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam whether she (Asmaa) could allow her non-Muslim mother into her house. When asked, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave her the permission and the above-quoted Ayat was revealed concerning this incident. (Fatah and Durre Manthur).

The incident speaks of the firm faith of the ladies of those times, which is really enviable. Just imagine! Her mother comes to her house just to see her (for, she has not yet asked her for any help) but the lady does not allow her to come in till she has ascertained, by sending a messenger and asking Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, whether it is permissible to entertain one's non-Muslim relatives. Many Traditions have it that, in the early days of Islam, the Sahabah did not like to give Sadaqah to their non-Muslim relatives, till the following Ayat was revealed:

"Their acceptance of Islam is not thy duty (O Muhammad), but Allah grants whom He will. And whatsoever good thing you spend (as Sadaqah, etc) it is for yourselves, when you spend not except for seeking Allah's pleasure". (al-Baqarah: 272)

The Ayat implies that whatever a man spends as Sadaqah, etc., for the sake of Allah Ta'ala may be given to any needy person, Muslim or non-Muslim. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says: People did not like to treat their non-Muslim relatives with favour, so that they, too, might come into the fold of Islam. Some of them asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about it and, on this occasion, the Ayat "Their acceptance of Islam is not thy duty.." was revealed. The same subject has appeared in several other Ahadith. (Durre Manthur). Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe writes: "Once a fire-worshipper (Magian) came to Ibrahim Alaihissalam and requested to be entertained as a guest. Ibrahim Alaihissalam refused to entertain him saying, "If you embrace Islam, I shall be pleased to entertain you".

The Magian went away, but a revelation came to Ibrahim Alaihissalam from Allah Ta'ala saying, "Ibrahim, you could not feed a non-Muslim for a night until he accepted your creed, while I have been feeding him for the last seventy years, notwithstanding his being a non-believer. It would not have mattered much if you had given him a meal". Ibrahim Alaihissalam got up at once and went in search of the Magian and asked him to come back and share a meal with him. The Magian came back and, having taken the meal, asked Ibrahim Alaihissalam what had made him go out and search for him. At this, Ibrahim Alaihissalam told him about the revelation, on hearing which the fire worshipper embraced Islam and said, "As He has been treating me so kindly, I accept Islam.

Please give me necessary instructions". (Ihya) A Hadith relates three matters, which are a must for everybody: (1) treating one's parents with kindness, be they Muslims or non-Muslims; (2) fulfilling one's undertaking, whether it is for a Muslim or a non-Muslim; (3) returning a thing kept in trust, to its owner, be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim. (Jaame-us-Saghir). The three divines, Muhammad Ibne Hanafiyah, Ataa and Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihum, are agreed that the following Ayat from the Qur'an requires the Muslims to deal kindly with those of their relatives who are Jews, Christians or other non-Muslims:

"Except that you should deal kindly with your friends". (al-Ahzaab: 6)

HADITH: 8

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "All creatures are Allah's family (dependents) and those are dearest to Allah who treat His family men with kindness".

Note: The phrase "All creatures" includes Muslims, non-Muslims, all mankind, and animals. Islam teaches us to behave kindly towards all creatures, so as to earn love from Allah. We have already quoted a Hadith at serial No. 10 in Chapter one, which relates how an unchaste woman was granted forgiveness by Allah Ta'ala, by virtue of an act of kindness i.e. giving some water to a thirsty dog. Another Hadith, quoted at serial No. 8 in Chapter two above relates that a woman was punished for starving her pet cat to death.

Such are the rewards for showing kindness to animals; one can imagine how bountiful will be the reward for the good treatment and kindness shown to human beings, who are the best of creation. An oft-quoted Hadith says:

"Show mercy to those who are on the earth; He Who is in the Heavens will have mercy on you".

According to another Hadith, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "Allah Ta'ala will not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to other people". Still another Hadith has: "Mercy is taken away from the heart of an ill-fated person". (Mishkaat). Each and every incident from the life history of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam bears testimony to the fact that his blessed life was a mercy for the entire world. Therefore, it is important that every member of the Muslim Ummah should try to learn the details of his everyday life and follow his blessed example.

Allah Ta'ala says:

"And we have not sent you (for no other purpose than) to show mercy to all the people of the entire world". (al-Ambia: 107)

Commenting on this Ayat, Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says: Undoubtedly the sacred personality of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is a mercy both in this world and in the Akhirah for those who believe in him as a Rasul of Allah Ta'ala. What is more, his life is also a mercy for those who do not believe in him. For, though the benedictions of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, they have been saved from suffering drastic punishments in this life, which were inflicted on the Ummahs of the past for their sins, such as being swallowed up by the earth or being changed into animals, or being stoned to death from above.

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was asked, "Invoke Allah's curse upon the Quraish, for they have been very cruel in persecuting the Muslims and have caused them great harm", but he replied, "I have not been sent to curse people. I have been sent as a mercy to mankind!" And there are many other Traditions on the same subject. (Durre Manthur).

In the 'Stories of Sahabah' the harrowing tale of the sufferings of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam on his visit to Ta'if has been related, describing how the wretched people of Ta'if treated him mercilessly and pelted him with stones, so that his body was covered with blood. But when the angel of the mountain came and said to him that, if he wished, he (the angel) would cause the hills on both sides of Ta'if to collide so that all the humans within would be crushed to death, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "No, if they do not embrace Islam, I hope among their progeny there will be such who will do so and pray to Him".

In the Battle of Uhud, when the Quraish made a severe attack on Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and one of his blessed teeth was broken, he was asked to curse them, but all he said was, "O Allah, show my people the path of Hidayat (of Truth). They do not know me". Once Umar Radhiallaho anho said, "O Rasulallah, if you had invoked Allah Ta'ala against us (in our pre-Islamic days) as Nooh Alaihissalam did, all of us would have been ruined. But you tolerated all manner of torture at our hands, and still, always implored Allah, saying, 'O Allah forgive my people, for they do not know!'" Qazi Ayaaz Rahmatullah alaihe says, "If we carefully consider all these incidents, we find in them the great height of moral attainments of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, showing his great forbearance, nobility of disposition and magnanimity. The non-believers treated him in the cruellest possible way, but Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam always implored Allah Ta'ala to forgive them and grant them proper guidance (i.e. Hidayat) "

The story of Ghawath bin Harth is well known in the life history of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. Once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was on a journey and went to sleep all by himself; Ghawath came along unsheathing his sword and awakening him said, "Who can protect you from me?" Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Allah!" On hearing this, Ghawath began to tremble with fear and the sword fell from his hand!

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then took up the sword and said, "Who will protect you from me?" The man, seeking his forgiveness, said, "You are the best among those who grasp a sword", upon which Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam pardoned him and let him go. It is also well known that a Jewish woman poisoned Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and, when questioned, she admitted her crime but he did not take revenge from her.

Labeed Ibnal-A'sam, the Jew, cast a spell on Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who was told about it but did not even like the people to know about it. In short, there are numerous incidents in history which speak of the noble and merciful behaviour of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam towards his enemies.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam also said: "You cannot be a (perfect) Mo'min unless you behave mercifully to one another". The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum submitted, "O Rasulullah every one of us shows mercy to others", but Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "True mercy does not consist in showing mercy to one's own friends, kinsmen, fellow-Muslims; true mercy is that which is all embracing".

Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam went to a house where some people of the Quraish were sitting together, and said to them, "Power shall remain among the Quraish and they shall rule, as long as they show mercy to those who ask for mercy, act justly towards people while giving decisions, give due share to everybody while distributing things; and he who does not observe these will be cursed by Allah Ta'ala, cursed by the angels and cursed by all mankind".

Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam went to a house where some Ansaar were sitting in company with Muhajireen. When they saw him coming, everybody moved from his place to make room, each one wishing that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam should sit close to him, but he stood in the doorway, resting his hands on the bars of the door, and said, "You owe me a lot! The Quraish will rule as long as they observe three things particularly: (1) Showing mercy to him who asks for it; (2) Acting justly while giving a decision; (3) Holding fast to a treaty made with other people.

He who does not observe these things shall be cursed by Allah Ta'ala, cursed by the angels and cursed by all mankind". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Whosoever kills a sparrow without justification will have to account for it on the Day of Judgment". When asked by the Sahabah what does a man owe to a sparrow. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "It should be eaten after being killed properly and not thrown away uselessly".

There are numerous Ahadith to the effect that: "Feed those of your servants who are under your control from what you eat, clothe them as you wear; dispose of them when they do not suit you, but do not punish them, for you have no right to do so". (Targheeb)

According to another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "When your servant cooks some food, having suffered heat and smoke, you should ask him to partake of it. But if the food is small in quantity, you should give him a small part of it". (Mishkaat). Another Hadith has: "Treating those under one's authority well is blessed, while treating them badly invites misfortune". (Mishkaat). To conclude, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has insisted that the believers (Mo'mineen) show mercy to all creatures and has exhorted them, in various ways, to be generous to all.

HADITH: 9

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said: "He who gives equal treatment in response does not really strengthen family bonds; but he is the one who through kind behaviour strengthens his ties of kinship with those who sever relations with him".

Note: Obviously, if you believe that you should treat your relatives just as they have treated you, you have done little for strengthening family bonds. For, this principle applies even to strangers: you are morally bound to do good to a person who has done a good turn to you. But, if you do good to a kinsman who does not show much concern for

you, remains aloof from you or even severs relations with you, your kind behaviour towards him would spring from a regard for the sanctity of family bonds.

It is, therefore, desirable that you should never think of how a kinsman treats you but think of what you owe him and continue to fulfil your obligations to him, lest you should be called to account on the Day of Judgment for negligence in observing your duty to him. Never for a moment entertain a thought of what he owes you on account of your kinship with him; you should rather feel happy if you are not receiving what is due from him. For, on the Day of Judgment your reward for foregoing your rights will be far greater than the material benefits you would have gained if he had fulfilled them.

Once a Sahabai Radhiallaho anho said to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "O Rasulallah, I have some relatives; I try to strengthen bonds of kinship with them but they ignore me; I treat them with kindness but they treat me badly; I exercise forbearance in my behaviour towards them but they are rude to me". Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "If you are treating them as you say, you are throwing dust in their faces (they will be humiliated) and Allah Ta'ala will continue to support you against them as long as you remain steadfast in your behaviour". (Mishkaat). And, what harm can come to a person who is continuously supported by Allah Ta'ala in all his affairs! How can anybody who severs relations with him deprive him of any benefit? An Urdu poet says:

"I would not have Thee forsaking me, O Lord; O what a calamity (it would) be to be forsaken by you! Thou art mine, I won't mind being forsaken by the entire world".

There is no denying the fact that, if Allah Ta'ala supports a person, he does not need help from anyone else. For, all the world will work for his good and, even if all people were to unite against him, they would not be able to do him any harm. Another Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Allah My Lord has commanded me to observe nine things: (1) To fear Allah openly and in private (i.e. fear Him from my heart and in my outward behaviour; or fear Him in my lonely hours and while sitting in company with people); (2) to speak justly, both when I am pleased and when angry (when pleased, a person hides the faults and extols the virtues and when angry he frames false accusations; I must speak justly under all conditions); (3) to adopt moderation both in poverty and in prosperity (i.e. not to be miserly in poverty, nor extravagant in prosperity; or; it may mean 'not to grumble or complain when poor, nor take pride when rich); (4) to strengthen ties of kinship with him who has severed relations with me; (5) to show favour to him who has denied me his favours; (6) to forgive him who has wronged me; (7) that my silence should be devoted to meditation (on the signs of Allah Ta'ala or the circumstances of the Akhirah, etc.); (8) that my speech should be devoted to Glorifying Him or explaining His commandments to people; (9) that my looking at things should be for taking a lesson; (10) that I should enjoin what is good".

The Hadith mentions nine commands but seems to give ten. It may be that the tenth command is meant to sum up the details given in the first nine. Or, the commands given at serial no. 7 and 8 may be taken as one command, as in case of the first command (which enjoins fear of Allah, both in public and in private) two commands have been combined into one and, again in case of the second command (speaking justly both when pleased and when angry), two commands have been combined into one.

Hakim bin Hazaam Radhiallaho anho says that someone asked Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as to what kind of Sadaqah was the best, to which he replied, "Behaving kindly towards a relative who harbours enmity towards you". (Targhib). A Hadith narrates that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Anyone who wants to have high grades and lofty apartments awarded to him on the Day of Judgment should forgive a person who wrongs him and show kindness to him who denies him his favours and strengthen ties of kinship with him who has broken it off with him". (Durre Manthur). According to another Hadith, when this Ayat was revealed:

"Keep to forgiveness (O Muhammad) and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the rudely ignorant". (al-A'raf: 199)

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked Jibra'il Alaihissalam to explain it to him. Jibra'il Alaihissalam said, "I shall tell you about it after asking the One Who knows". So Jibra'il Alaihissalam went away and came back and told Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam that Allah Ta'ala was commanding him (in the Ayat) to forgive those who wrong him, to grant favours to those who deny him their favours and to strengthen ties of kinship with those who sever relationship with him".

Another version of the Hadith adds, "After this revelation Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam addressed the people thus: Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character for this life and for the Akhirah?" The Sahabah said, "Certainly!" And he continued, "They are, to forgive him who has wronged you, to give a favour to him who has denied you of his favours, to reunite ties of relationship with him who has broken it off with you".

Ali Radhiyallahu anho says that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character possessed by the noble people of the earlier and the later times?" I said, "Certainly" and he said, "They are: to favour him who has deprived you of his favours; to forgive him who has wronged you and to rejoin ties of kinship with him who has severed relations with you". Uqbah Radhiyallahu anho says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked, "Shall I guide you to the excellent qualities of character for this life and the Hereafter?" And then mentioned the aforesaid qualities. A number of Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum have related Ahadith to the same effect. Abu Hurairah Radhiyallahu anho reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Nobody can attain perfect sincerity in faith (Imaan) until he observes the following: Joins ties of kinship with those who have severed it with him, forgives those who wrong him, pardons those who abuse him and does good to those who ill treat him". (Durre Manthur).

HADITH: 10

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "There is no sin for which the doer more deserves punishment in this world, in addition to that reserved for him in the Akhirah, than the committing of oppression and severing kinship".

Note: The Hadith means that the two sins, oppression and severing family bonds, are more readily punished in this world (in addition to the punishment in the Akhirah) than any other sin. Another Hadith says: "Of all the sins, Allah Ta'ala forgives whichever He likes except the sin of severing kinship with one's parents, which is punished in this life before the death of the sinner". (Mishkaat). Still another Hadith says, "The punishment for every sin is delayed by Allah Ta'ala till the Day of resurrection, except for the sin of undutifulness to parents, the doer of which is readily punished in this world". (Jami-us-Sagheer). There are quite a few Ahadith to the effect that, on the Day of Judgement, Allah Ta'ala will grant 'Rehem' (a symbol of kinship) the power to speak; it will catch hold of the Throne (Arsh) of Allah Ta'ala and beseech Him repeatedly, thus, "O Allah, grant your reconciliation to him who reconciled with me, and ignore him who ignored me!" Also there are several Ahadith which report Allah Ta'ala as saying, "'Rehem' (symbol for family bonds) is a derivative of Ar-Rahman (The Compassionate one), one of My Attributive Names. I, who am Rahman, shall look after him who looks after kinship; and ignore him who ignores family kinship". It occurs in another Hadith that Allah's Mercy does not descend upon a people among whom there is a person who has severed ties with his kinsmen. Another Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Men's deeds are submitted to Allah Ta'ala every Thursday, but no good act is accepted from a person who severs family connections". (Durre Manthur)

Faqih Abul-Laith Rahmatullah alaihe says: "The sin of a person severing family bonds is the most abominable one; so much so that those who sit in company with him are also deprived of blessings from Allah Ta'ala. Therefore, everyone must repent of this sin, as soon as possible, and make efforts to reunite ties of relationship with his kinsmen.

For, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "There is no virtue more readily rewarded than the act of reuniting family bonds; and there is no sin of which the doer is more readily punished in this world, besides having punishment stored up for him in the Akhirah, than the one committing oppression and the one severing ties of kinship". (Tanbeh-ul-Ghafilien). One day after Fajr Salaat, Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiyallahu anho was sitting in company with a number of people when he said, "O people, take an oath, if anyone of you has severed ties of relationship with his kinsmen, he should go away and leave us alone. For, we are going to beseech a favour of Allah Ta'ala and the gates of the heavens are closed for him who has broken kinship". (Targheeb) He meant that the prayers of such a person do not reach the heavens, because the doors of the heavens are closed even before his Dua'a reaches there. And, if their prayers also went up along with his, all would be turned back from the heavens.

There are many other Traditions on this subject and numerous incidents occurring in this world testify to the fact that a person severing relations with his family, falls a prey to misfortune and feels miserable throughout his life.

In their ignorance, such people do not realize that, howsoever hard they struggle, they will not find an escape from their misery (which is a consequence of the breach in family bonds) unless they repent and compensate the wrong. And if, under the evil influence of this sin, a man begins to practice something irreligious, taking it to be a genuine act of religion, it will be far more harmful for him, as he might die without entertaining a thought of repentance (why should he repent of what he believes to be a virtue?) May Allah, in His infinite Bounty, grant us protection!

ON CONDEMNATION OF MISERLINESS

The Ayaat of the Qur'an and the Ahadith of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, given in Chapter 1, have made it abundantly clear that there are great and enormous virtuous gains and profits in spending in the path of Allah Ta'ala. Any deficiency in this will bring a corresponding heavy loss, which, by itself, is deplorable. However, Allah Ta'ala and Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam have condemned and given such warnings against miserliness and hoarding that are in a way, a great favour of Allah Ta'ala on the Ummah of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, as these have been given with a view to saving them from this deadly disease. Both the Holy Qur'an and the Ahadith have treated this subject in many different ways as persuasions to do virtuous deeds, warnings prohibiting the evil and harmful acts, etc. It is difficult to cover fully any of these aspects. However, as an example, a few Ayaat and Ahadith are given in this Chapter.

Section (a)

AYAAT:

1. Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, and be not cast by your own hands to ruin (al-Baqarah: 195)

Note: This Ayat has already been mentioned at No. 3 of the Ayaat in Chapter 1. This Ayat considers the failure to spend for the cause of Allah Ta'ala as self-ruination and destruction, and has been mentioned in detail by the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum. Who would want his own ruination and destruction, but how many are there who, after knowing this full well, try to save themselves from this calamity and keep away from hoarding? What can be the conclusion other than that our minds being befogged by negligence, we are bent upon causing our own ruin.

2. Shaitan promises you destitution and enjoins upon you lewdness. But Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself with bounty. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (al-Baqarah: 268)

Note: According to Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiyallahu anho, Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that man is influenced within his mind by Shaitan and also by an angel. Shaitan's purpose is to frighten him with evil results (like spending will bring poverty) and to falsify the truth, while the angel promises blessings and confirms the truth. Whoever perceives the angel's advice should think it to be from Allah Ta'ala and be thankful for it; and whoever thinks the opposite, should seek the protection of Allah against Shaitan, as it is he who creates such thoughts in man's mind; and then Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam recited the above Ayat in support of his contentions.

The Ayat actually denotes Allah's direction that Shaitan frightens by this fear of becoming poor and incites us to indulge in obscenities, which in fact is falsifying the truth. Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho says that the above Ayat contains two things from Allah Ta'ala and two from Shaitan. Shaitan avows poverty and orders evil; he asks us not to spend anything but to hoard it carefully for later needs. And Allah Ta'ala promises forgiveness of all sins and an abundant increase in provisions.

Imaam Ghazali Rahmathullah alaihe says that one should not get involved in fears for the future but should trust in Allah Ta'ala, Who has promised to provide livelihood; and consider such fears as an evil influence of Shaitan. As has been mentioned in the above Ayat, Shaitan fosters the thought in the human mind that, if you do not hoard

wealth, you would land in trouble and difficulties when you fall ill or become unfit to earn or when some other emergency arises. Through these thoughts, he keeps people involved in toil and hardship all their lives and later makes fun of them that the men, through imaginary future fears, are caught in real hardships at present in the form of constant anxiety to save for the fearful thought of an unknown future!

3. And let not those who hoard up wealth that Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. No, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be made a collar (in the form of a snake and put round their necks) on the Day of Resurrection. Allah's is the heritage of the heaven and the earth, and Allah is informed of what you do. (Aal-e-Imran: 180)

Note: According to Bukhari, Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that, if a man has been given wealth by Allah Ta'ala, but fails to pay Zakaat on it, that wealth will, on the Day of Judgement, be turned into a bald-headed snake (extremely poisonous) with two spots under its mouth (a sign of deadly poison) and will be put round his neck.

The snake will grab his jaws and say, "I am your hoarded wealth and the protected treasure." Then Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam recited the above Ayat. This Hadith will be repeated in Chapter 5 under Ahadith at No. 2. Hasan Basri Rahmathullah alaihe has said that the above Ayat was revealed about the Kaafirs and about those Muslims who are miserly and do not spend in the path of Allah Ta'ala. Ikrimah Radhiallaho anho has said that, when someone fails to fulfil the demands of Allah Ta'ala from his property, that property will become a bald-headed snake and chase the person who will be begging for protection from it.

Hajar Bin Bayan Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to say that when a close blood relation approaches a relative for help from his spare wealth and the latter refuses it, due to miserliness, that wealth will become a snake to be worn by the owner of the wealth round his neck. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam then recited the above Ayat.

Many Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum have also repeated this subject. Masrooq Rahmatullah alaihe says that the above Ayat refers to a person whom Allah Ta'ala has given wealth but who fails to fulfil his obligations to his relatives: that property will be turned into a snake, which he will be made to wear round his neck. He will ask the snake, "Why are you persecuting me?" The snake will reply, "I am your property." (Durre Manthur)

Imaam Razi Rahmatullah alaihe writes in his Tafseer 'Kabeer' that the preceding Ayaat exhort us to participate in Jehaad personally. This Ayat contains exhortation to spend money in the path of Allah and warns those who do not spend for the cause of Allah, that their wealth will become a bald snake, which would be hung round their necks. After a detailed discussion of the topic, the Imaam Rahmatullah alaihe says, "This Ayat does not apply to the cases of Supererogatory spending (NafI Sadaqaat). It applies to cases of failure in obligatory spending, which falls in several categories: first, spending on oneself and the dependents in the household; second, paying Zakaat and the third, spending money at the time when the Muslims are invaded by non-Muslims to destroy their life and property: the rich must give to the defenders as much as needed, which will in fact mean protection of their own life and property; fourth, to help a person in distress till he is out of danger. All these payments are obligatory.

4. Lo! Allah loves not such as are proud and boastful, who hoard their wealth and enjoin avarice to others, and hide that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty. For disbelievers We prepare a shameful doom. (An-Nisaa: 36-37)

Note: Teaching miserliness may be by verbal encouragement or by setting a personal example for others, this subject has been treated in many Ahadith to the effect that whoever adopts a wrong course suffers for his own sins as well as of those who follow his example; there will be no reduction in the punishment to the followers for their own sin. This subject has already been discussed earlier in detail. In the explanation of "Mukhtaalan-Fakhoora", Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe has been quoted to have said that anyone who keeps counting the things gifted to him by Allah Ta'ala, and does not offer thanks to Him, is a proud person.

Abu Saeed Khudri Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam as saying that, on the Day of Judgement when Allah Ta'ala will collect His entire creation in one place, the fire of Jahannam will advance furiously, flames over flames, towards the people and the angels appointed on it would like to halt it, but it will say, "I

swear by my Lord, let me get hold of my companions or else I will swallow all of these people." The angels will ask who are they? It will reply, "Every proud person and tyrant." After that, it will pick up with its tongue, one by one, every cruel and arrogant person and devour him, like an animal eating grass. It will withdraw after that, but return soon after, with the same fury and demand the conceited and the persons thankless to Allah Ta'ala, picking them up one by one and swallowing them. In the third turn, it will come and deal with all those who were arrogant and strutted proudly in life. Thereafter the reckoning of the remaining people will commence.

Jaabir bin Sulaim. (Hujaimi) Radhiyallahu anho says that once, he came to visit Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and met him in a street of Madinah. He asked him about the wearing of the 'Izaar' (lower garment), to which he replied, "It should be worn halfway down to the calf, but if you dislike that, you may wear it a little lower, and if you do not like it even that high, you can wear it still lower, till it comes down to a point just above your ankles.

If even that is not to your liking, there is no further scope, as Allah does not like those who are proud and boastful (and trailing of lower garment or wearing it lower than the ankles is a sign of pride)." He then asked about the acts of kindness and Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Do not consider any act of kindness too small or insignificant, nor delay it, be it a piece of string or a shoe-lace (that you give to someone), or a bucket of water (that you fill for someone) or to remove a harmful object from the road or to speak to someone with a smile or pay Salaam to a wayfarer, or to show affection to a person in distress; all are good acts of beneficence. If someone talks about a vice which you may have, you should suppress his vice that you may know of; the concealment of his vice will bring you reward and its disclosure will be a sin. When you intend to do something, and you will not regret its becoming known to people, go ahead and do it. And if there be something you wish to do but are afraid of people knowing it, do not do it (as it is the sign of its being a vice)".

Abdullah Bin Abbas Radhiyallahu anho says that Kardam Ibne Yazid and others used to come to the Ansaar and advise them not to spend too much, as they feared that all their possessions might get exhausted and they might become destitute. They advised them to keep back something for meeting any unforeseen eventuality. The above Ayat was revealed as condemnation of such persons. (Durre Manthur)

5. They who hoarded up gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings (O, Muhammad) of a painful doom. On that Day when it will (all) be heated in the fire of Jahannam, and their foreheads and flanks and their backs will be branded therewith (and it will be said unto them). Here is what you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard. (al-Taubah: 34-35)

Note: The Ulama have said that the mention of forehead, etc., means that all the parts of the body will be branded. Another Hadith confirms this interpretation, saying that face to foot, all will be branded. Some of the Ulama have said that there is mention of only three limbs in the Ayat because these are very sensitive to pain, while others have said that these three parts have been mentioned because, when a person meets an indigent person, he turns his face and shoulder away from him and walks off with the back towards the poor man; hence the painful suffering promised for those three particular parts.

There are other reasons too. The above Ayat mentions branding with the heated gold and silver, while the Ayat at No. 3 above mentions the property turning into a snake and chasing its owner. Both these punishments are appropriate in their respective fields, which will be clear in Hadith No. 2 of Chapter 5. In the above Ayat according to Abdullah Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho and several Sahabah, the hoarded wealth means that particular property from which Zakaat has not been paid, while that from which Zakaat has been paid is not considered hoarded wealth. Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho however, has said that this order was revealed before the order for paying Zakaat; thereafter, Allah Ta'ala made Zakaat, when property paid, the source of purification of the rest of the property.

Thauban Radhiyallahu anho has said that, at the time when the above Ayat was revealed, we were accompanying Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam on a journey. Some of the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum submitted, "O Rasulullah, when this is the fearful result of collecting gold and silver, what then is the best wealth to be hoarded as a treasure?". The reply was, "The tongue which remains busy in Zikr of Allah, the heart full of thanks to Allah Ta'ala and a pious wife who helps in preparing for the Akhirah". Umar Radhiyallahu anho has been quoted to say that, when the above Ayat was revealed, he went to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and submitted that the Ayat weighed heavily on the minds of the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said that Zakaat had been made obligatory for the very purpose of making the remaining property pure and fit for inheritance,

and the best thing to be treasured is the devoted wife who causes pleasure when seen, obeys orders instantly and takes full care of herself and the husband's property when the latter is away (on travels).

In reply to a question from Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho as to what was the best thing to be treasured, Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam said, "The tongue in remembrance of Allah, the heart filled with thanks to Allah Ta'ala and a pious wife who helps in virtuous deeds." Abu Zarr and Abu Umamah Radhiallaho anho have quoted Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam as saying that whoever has a Dinaar (gold coin), a Dirham (silver coin) or a piece of gold or silver and does not spend it in the path of Allah, this money (unless it is kept back for paying a debt) will be taken as a treasure and will cause him to be branded on the Day of Judgement. Similarly, any one who leaves behind, after his death any amount of hoarded silver or gold, will be branded with it on the Day of Judgment, even if, later he is sent to Jahannam or forgiven.

Ali Radhiallaho anho quotes Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam as saying that Allah Ta'ala has made obligatory on the properties, of the rich Muslims, as much as would suffice for the needs of the poor. The poor suffer from hunger and want of clothing because the rich do not give away what is due on their property. Beware! Allah Ta'ala will demand an explanation from the rich about it or punish them severely". (Durre Manthur).

There is a commentary on this Hadith given in 'Kanz-ul-Ummal'. And it has been narrated in another Hadith, on the authority of Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho, "If in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala, Zakaat were not sufficient for the poor, He would enjoin something more to be paid, apart from Zakaat". Therefore, the hunger of the poor is a consequence of the rich people's sin of withholding Zakaat, or not paying it in full. (Kanz). Bilal Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam as saying, "Meet Allah Ta'ala in a state of poverty and not in riches". When asked how is that to be, the reply was, "When you get something, do not hide it and do not refuse a needy person". On the query as to how that was possible, the reply was, "If that cannot be, then Jahannam is the end".

Abu Zarr Ghifari Radhiallaho anho is one of those whose belief was that money was not a thing to be kept. He thought that one Dirham was one branding and two Dirhams were two brandings. We have already narrated quite a few stories about him in the foregoing pages.

Once Habib Ibne Salmah Rahmatullah alaihe, the governor of Syria, sent three hundred Dinaars (gold coins) as a gift to Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho, with the request that he should spend the money on his own needs. But Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho declined to accept the money saying, "Can't you think of anyone other than me, who is more liable to be deceived into a mistrust of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. keeping so much money in one's possession is a sign of heedlessness towards Allah Ta'ala)." Truly, it is a deception to be unafraid of Allah's punishments. There are many Ayaat to that effect in the Holy Qur'an, for example:

"Let not the deceiver deceive you with regard to Allah Ta'ala". (al-Faatir: 5)

The Ayat has been re-quoted below at Sr. No. 38 in Chapter six, with many more Ayat about this world and the Akhirah. Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho then added, "I need but a little shelter to protect myself against the sun, three milk goats whose milk should suffice for our family, and a slave-woman good enough to take care of me and my family. And I feel afraid (of Allah Ta'ala) to keep anything that exceeds my bare necessities". Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho is also reported to have said, "On the Day of Resurrection, the one who possessed two Dirhams will be detained longer (for Reckoning) than the person who possessed one Dirham". (Durre Manthur)

Abdullah Ibne Saamit Radhiallaho anho says, "I was once sitting in company with Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho, when a man brought for him his daily allowance from the Baitul Maal (Public Treasury). He sent his slave-woman to the market who brought for him the things he needed for the day. After this, he was left with seven Dirhams. He told her to get small change for the money so that he might distribute it among the poor.

I asked him to keep it, for he might want it for entertaining his guests or for any other need that might arise. Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho said that Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam had told him once, "It is an established fact that whosoever hoards some gold or silver is like one keeping a spark of the fire of Jahannam in his possession, until he spends it for the cause of Allah". (Targheeb).

Shaddad Rahmatullah alaihe says that Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho would listen to Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam giving a strict commandment regarding a matter and then go to his lonely resort in the forest (where he was living). Sometimes, the commandments were made lenient afterwards (as a concession to the weaker natures) but he did not know of it, and, therefore, stuck to the same strict commandment. (Durre Manthur).

It is true that Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho held extremely stern views concerning money matters; undoubtedly perfect asceticism consists in adhering to his views, and our spiritual leaders lived up to the same high standards of renunciation. But it is not worthwhile imposing these high standards on everybody; nor does, as a rule, failure to comply with them, lead one to Jahannam. Fortunate are those who can be stern and austere in these matters, of their own sweet accord, with the special aid and favour from Allah Subhanahu Ta'ala. May Allah grant this humble author, who regards himself to be a mere worldling, something of the fine qualities possessed by the great ascetics of those times.

6. "And nothing prevents their contributions to be accepted from them, save that they have disbelieved in Allah and His Rasul and that they come not to worship save as idlers, and pay not (their contribution) save reluctantly. So, let not their riches nor their children please you (O Muhammad). Allah thereby intends but to punish them in the life of the world and that their souls shall pass away while they are disbelievers. (at-Tauba: 54-55)

Note: Beside faithlessness, carelessly offered Salaat and reluctance in giving Sadaqah have been mentioned as causes of non-acceptance of alms. The subject of Salaat has been dealt with in detail in the book "The Virtues of Salaat". Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has said about Salaat, that he who does not offer Salaat has no place in Islam. In fact, there is no Deen without Salaat, which is as important for the Deen as the head is for the body. Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has further said that the Salaat offered with utmost humility and supplication ascends to the heavens as a luminous object, with good wishes for the concerned person's welfare and prosperity, whereas the Salaat carelessly offered assumes a black ugly shape, curses the person concerned: "May Allah ruin you as you have ruined me", and is thrown like a dirty rag on his face. Another Hadith says that the very first deed taken up for reckoning on the Day of Judgment will be the Salaat. If it is reckoned as satisfactory, all the remaining deeds will become acceptable, and if Salaat is rejected, nothing else will be acceptable.

The next thing mentioned in the above Ayat is the reluctantly given Sadaqah, which will be rejected. In case of Zakaat, only the obligation will be taken as fulfilled. In various narrations about Zakaat, Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has said that Zakaat must be given cheerfully, which beside fulfilment of obligation, will bring numerous blessings and rewards. In another Hadith in Abu Dawood, Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has stated,

"Whosoever gives with the intention of receiving a good return will certainly receive it, while the one who does not give, shall be made to pay." Some versions add 'with penalties' after 'to pay'.

Ja'far Ibne Muhammad Rahmatullah alaihe has narrated that once he went to see Khalifah Abu Ja'far Mansoor and there he saw a descendent of Zubair Radhiallaho anho who had come to request the Khalifah for some help. The Khalifah ordered something to be given to him, but the person complained of this being too little, at which, the Khalifah lost his temper. On seeing this, Ja'far Rahmatullah alaihe said that he had been informed through his ancestors that Rasulullah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has said that anything given cheerfully brings blessings both to the giver and the receiver. On hearing this Hadith the Khalifah Mansoor said, "By Allah I was not happy while giving it to that person, but now I feel glad".

Thereafter, Ja'far Rahmatullah alaihe turned to the Zubairy and said that he had also received a Hadith through his ancestors that, if a person thought a small gift to be too little, Allah Ta'ala would deprive him of receiving any bigger one.

The Zubairy replied, "By Allah I had thought of the sum given to me to be too little but, after hearing the Hadith, this same sum has grown big in my eyes". Sufyan Ibne Oyeniyah Rahmatullah alaihe, who has related this story, says that he met that Zubairy later and asked him how much he had received from the Khalifah. He said that it was a small amount but, eventually with Allah's blessing, it earned a profit of fifty thousand.

Sufyan Rahmatullah alaihe has further said that Ja'far Rahmatullah alaihe was from the 'Ahl-al-Bait' (a descendant of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam) and anyone from among them was a source of general benefit like the rain. In the above instance, by quoting two different Ahadith, Ja'far Rahmatullah alaihe benefited both the parties, making them happy. One may envy the rulers of that time, for accepting willingly and cheerfully the words of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam. This was because of the spiritual environment that prevailed in those days.

The next thing in the above Ayat pertains to one's property, and descendants becoming a source of a chastisement in this life. The children become a source of trouble and grief for the parents due to illness, sufferings and death. Muslims also suffer from such happenings but, because any type of suffering in this life turns into a blessing and reward in the Akhirah for them, these no longer appear as a punishment but a cause of ultimate comfort and happiness in Akhirah. As for the faithless, who will have no reward in Akhirah for the troubles in this life, all their sufferings are nothing but a punishment in this life means all sorts of troubles and calamities which people have to undergo. For the unbelievers, it is a punishment, while the Muslims derive blessings there from.

7. And let not your hand be chained to your neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest you sit down rebuked, denuded. Lo! Allah enlarges the provision for whom He will, and straitens (it for whom He will). Lo! He was ever Knower, Seer of His slaves. (Bani Israel: 29-30)

Note: At this place in the Qur'an, detailed warnings have been given in respect of requisite standards in social obligations. In this particular Verse, there is warning against miserliness and extravagance and also an encouragement to be moderate and to adopt a middle course in giving Sadaqah. Certain narrations say that someone solicited Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to give him something, but when he replied that he had nothing to give, the man said, "Give me the shirt that you are wearing". Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was kind enough to give it to him. Thereupon this Verse was revealed.

"And if Allah were to enlarge the provision for His slaves.." (ash-Shuraa: 27)

Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that the above Verse pertains to domestic expenses, in which a middle course be adopted, avoiding miserliness and extravagance. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has also mentioned several times that whosoever adopts moderation will not become poor. The last part of the Ayat rejects the foolish naïve idea that all are entitled to equality in provisions of life.

It is in the hands of Allah to enlarge provisions or restrict them, on whosoever and as He wills. He is the best Judge of matters concerning His slaves and knows their expediencies. Hasan Radhiallaho anho has said that Allah Ta'ala is fully aware of the circumstances prevailing upon His slaves and knows what is advisable for each. He gives to whom he wills affluence and sends hardship on those for whom He wills poverty. It is given at another place in the Qur'an:

"And if Allah were to enlarge the provision for His slaves, they would surely rebel in the earth, but He sends down by measure as He wills. Lo! He is informed, a Seer of His bondsmen" (ash-Shuraa: 27)

This particular Verse indicates that an overall affluence for mankind will cause all-round arrogance and disturbances. As a matter of experience it may well be seen that, if Allah Ta'ala be so gracious as to make everyone rich, human administration would become impossible, as all and sundry will behave as independent masters and there will be no one willing to work for anyone else. Ibne Zaid Rahmatullah alaihe has said that, whenever in Arabia production became plentiful, people indulged in killing and imprisoning each other, but when a famine occurred all these evils would disappear.

Ali Radhiallaho anho and a number of other Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum have said that the Ayat was revealed when the Sahabah of the Suffah Radhiallaho anhum wished to obtain some worldly benefits. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe, in his interpretation of the Ayat has said, "The best sustenance is that which does not make one arrogant, nor does one get overwhelmed with it". We were told that the worst fear of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam about his Ummah was that they would become infatuated with worldly splendour! Someone asked Rasulullah

Sallalallaho alaihe wasallam whether the lawfully earned money could become a source of evil, whereupon this particular Ayat was revealed.

In a Hadith Qudsi, Rasulallah Sallalallaho alaihe wasallam has reported Allah Ta'ala as saying, "Whosoever behaves disrespectfully towards a friend of Mine (a Wali) is like one waging war against Me and I become as wrathful, while protecting My friends, as a furious lion (when attacking its prey)". Rasulallah Sallalallaho alaihe wasallam said, "No one can attain nearness to Allah Ta'ala more readily than by fulfilment of obligatory matters. Secondary (in importance in this regard) are the optional prayers (Nawafil) whereby a person can also come close to Allah Ta'ala (the more he offers these, the nearer he approaches Him till he earns love from Allah Ta'ala).

At that state, Allah Ta'ala assumes control of his eyes, ears and hands and becomes his constant Helper. Allah Ta'ala responds when he cries to Him; when he asks for something, He meets his demands". Allah further says, "I never hesitate when I will to do something, except when the soul of My mo'min slave is to be taken as, for some reason, he does not wish to die; and I do not want to go against his wishes; whereas death is a must. Some of my slaves are keen to offer special types of prayers but I do not let them do so, for it may lead to vanity; some of them are such, who can have sound faith only when in good health, if I destine sickness for them, they are adversely affected; there are others who can maintain their faith only in sickness, if I order health for them, they may go astray. I give orders befitting the affairs of My slaves, because I know all that is in their minds".

This Hadith is immensely important, as it concerns pre-ordained matters. It, however, does not mean that we are not required to help a poor or sick person. If that were so, all the Ayaat of the Qur'an and the Ahadith about Sadaqaat and alms would become irrelevant, so would the Ahadith regarding treatment of the sick.

Rather, destiny will continue to operate, against which it is impossible for doctors and health organizations to stop the occurrence of disease, or for a state to completely end poverty. By all means, people must continue to help others, to show sympathy, and give treatment to the sick, according to available means, as we are all entrusted with these missions. Every effort in this regard by anyone is worthy of reward, according to one's contributions, both from worldly and religious points of view. Despite all such efforts, if the sick do not get well and the poor are not relieved of poverty, they must not be dismayed, but should think that Allah Ta'ala has willed it so and that it is bound to be good for them. We have no power to act against destiny, but we must continue to make increased efforts to help, to sympathise, to give good treatment, and to succour the needy, the poor and the sick.

"And Allah aids His men to behave as He wills".

8. Whatever Allah Ta'ala grants you, seek also there from, for Akhirah, and do not forget your share in this life, (which has to be for the Akhirah), be kind (to people) as Allah has been Kind to you; refrain from making trouble in the earth (by disobeying Allah and violating human rights); certainly Allah dislikes the trouble-makers. (al-Qasas: 77)

Note: The Holy Qur'an gives this as a warning, from the believers to Qaroon (Korah). The complete story is given on non-payment of Zakaat by Qaroon in Chapter 5 under Ayat No. 3. Suddi Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the phrase of 'seeking for Akhirah' means gaining nearness to Allah Ta'ala by giving Sadaqah and by helping one's kith and kin. Ibne Abbas Radhiallah anho has said that, 'not to forget your share in this life' means, not to ignore working for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe has said that offering prayers to Allah Ta'ala is a part of this life, for which we shall get a reward in the Akhirah. Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe has said that it means keeping sufficient amount for one's need and spending the rest for the Akhirah. One Hadith says that one may keep a years requirement and should spend the rest. To forget about the share of one's Akhirah is an extreme cruelty to oneself.

Rasulallah Sallalallaho alaihe wasallam has said that on the Day of Judgement a person will be brought before Allah Ta'ala, like a little lamb (infirm and weak). He will stand before his Lord, Who will demand what he had done with the wealth and property that Allah had bestowed upon him.

The man will submit, "My Lord, I collected a lot of wealth and increased it very much from what I originally had, but I have left it behind. If you send me back in that world, I shall bring everything here." He will be asked to show what he had sent here to be treasured for this Day. His reply will be the same, that he had accumulated enormously but had left it behind; that he would bring everything back to that life. Ultimately, in the absence of any accumulation for the Akhirah, he will be sent to Jahannam. All these sayings and reminders by Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, are matters for serious consideration and are to be acted upon most carefully and not to be read cursorily or ignored. This life is meant to be a preparation for the Akhirah, of which we must take full advantage and earn as much as we can, otherwise life will pass away like a dream. May Allah Ta'ala give all of us the ability to accomplish what is required of us; Ameen.

9. Take heed, you are the people who are called to spend in the path of Allah, yet among you there are some who hoard. And as for him who hoards, he hoards only from his soul. And Allah is the Rich, and you are the poor. And if you turn away, He will exchange you for some other folk, and they will not be the likes of you. (Muhammad: 38)

Note: It is obvious that there is no personal interest of Allah Ta'ala in the Sadaqah that we give. All the virtues and benefits that He and His Rasul Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam have stated, to encourage us, are for our gain only. Many benefits of Sadaqaat, both from the religious and the worldly point of view, have been dealt with in Chapter one. When a Ruler, who is also the Creator and the Lord, requires someone to do something, without any personal interest, the total gain in this is that of the one who is being told and if he disregards that, to him must come maximum retribution.

One Hadith says that many people receive plenty of bounties from Allah Ta'ala, meant for benefiting other people. So long as they keep on giving to others, they retain them. If and when they go wrong, Allah Ta'ala deprives them of those bounties and grants them to others. These favours, which Allah Ta'ala grants are not confined to riches, but include honourable position, respectability and influence, all of which suffer the same fate. Certain Ahadith say that, when the above Ayat, saying, 'If you turn away from obedience of Allah Ta'ala, He will bring another people in your place', was revealed, some Sahabah asked Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam as to who will those people be, who will replace them in the event of their disobedience. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam put his hand on the shoulders of Salman Farsi Radhiyallahu anho and said, "He and his people". He then swore by Allah and said, "If Islam were placed on the distant stars, some people of Faris (Persia) would have attained to it". (The subject is contained in several Ahadith). It shows that Allah Ta'ala has blessed them with such keen zeal for Deen and knowledge that they would reach to the stars, if that could help them to attain it.

Mishkat has quoted this narration from Tirmizi. In another narration Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has been quoted to have put greater trust in non-Arab people, (Ajami) from Persia and Turkistan, than in his own people, or that he trusted Ajamies, or some of them, more than some of the Arabs.

This is obviously because some people among the Ajam acquired such a distinction that they stood very high, except for the status of Sahabi. The virtues and distinctions of Salman Farsi Radhiyallahu anho, to which he was indeed entitled, have been mentioned in Ahadith. He suffered great hardships for the true Deen, searching for it in country after country. He had a long life of 250 years according to authentic sources. (Some have put it at 350 years, and some have even exceeded that; so much so that they say that he lived in the time of Isaa Alaihissalam who lived 600 years before Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam).

Salman Radhiyallahu anho came to know about the coming of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam from the old Scriptures and he left his home in search of him. He made enquiries from monks and religious scholars of that time, who gave him the good news that the time of the coming of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was quite close and they explained to him various signs about his appearance. Salman Radhiyallahu anho was one of the princes of Persia. He travelled far and wide from one country to another, looking for those signs. Someone arrested him and sold him as his slave. He was sold several times in that way, as he himself told people. It is narrated in Bukhari that more than ten masters bought and sold him.

Finally a Jew from Madinah bought him at about the time when Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam migrated to that city. He met Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam and identified him by the signs that he had heard about him. He was satisfied and became a Muslim. He got himself freed from the Jew's slavery by paying ransom money.

Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam has said that Allah Ta'ala loved four persons and Salman is one of them. (This does not mean that Allah Ta'ala loves no one else). Ali Radhialloho anho has said that Allah Ta'ala gave seven elite to every Rasul Alaihissalam, meaning, a Jama'at of great souls who looked after the spiritual and worldly affairs of the Rasul and were his helpers. Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam said that he had been given fourteen such divines. When someone asked Ali Radhialloho anho as to who they were, he replied, "My self, my two sons Hasan and Husain, Ja'far, Hamza, Abu Bakr, Umar, Mus'ab bin Umair, Bilal, Salman, Ammaar, Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood, Abu Zarr Ghifari and Miqdad Radhialloho ahum". They had a special position among the Sahabah in various important religious matters.

It is mentioned in Bukhari that, when the Ayat of Surah Jum'ah meaning:

"Along with others of them who have not yet joined them"

(Referring to the learned divines of the non-Arab regions with particular reference to the East) was revealed, the Sahabah asked Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam as to who those people were. Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam remained silent, but the Sahabah repeated their question three times. Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam then put his hand on the shoulder of Salman Radhialloho anho and said that if Deen were placed on stars high, in the sky, some of his people would reach there to get it. Another Hadith says the same thing about the people of Faris (Persia). Allama Suyuti Rahmatullah alaihe, who is one of the confirmed leaders of the Shafi'ee creed, says that this Hadith fits appropriately as a prediction of the religious accomplishments of Imaam Abu Hanifah Rahmatullah alaihe.

10. Naught of disaster befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is in a Book (Lohe Mahfooz) before We bring it into being.....Lo! That is easy for Allah - That you grieve not for the sake of that which has escaped you, nor yet exult because of that which has been given to you. Allah loves not all prideful boasters, who hoard and who enjoin upon the people avarice; and whosoever turns away, still, Allah is the Absolute, the Owner of Praise. (al-Hadeed: 22-24)

Note: To grieve over a calamity is natural, but grief must not stop one from participating in religious or worldly activities. To know that certain things are bound to take place, despite any effort to stop them, minimises the sorrow over the loss or damage, as against something which may happen all of a sudden. For that reason, the warning contained in the Ayat refers to all events of life and death, happiness and sorrow or any type of calamity.

Allah Ta'ala says that all these things have been preordained by Him, therefore it is no use taking pride over good happenings or grieving over any loss. The Ayat mentions two words (Mukhtaal and Fakhoor), which together mean a prideful boaster. The pride is usually over personal accomplishment and the boasting is on something that is received from outside, like rank or wealth. Qaza'h Rahmatullah alaihe says that he saw Abdullah Ibne Umar Radhialloho anho dressed in coarse clothes, so he took for him a suit made of a material from Khurasan and requested him to put it on for his pleasure. Abdullah Ibne Umar replied that he was afraid of suffering from pride and boastfulness if he wore those clothes!

11. They it is who say: Spend not on behalf of those (who dwell) with Rasulallah that they may disperse (and go away from you); with Allah is the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not comprehend. (al-Munafiqoon: 7)

Note: Various Ahadith have covered this subject: that Abdullah bin Ubayyi the leader of Hypocrites, and his progeny, told people not to give any aid to those who were close to Rasulallah Sallalalloho alaihe wasallam so that they might become disheartened and desert him. Thereupon, the above Ayat was revealed. It is an absolute truth and a common experience that whenever an individual or some people, due to malice and bad intentions, stopped

aid to sincere religious workers, Allah Ta'ala by His Grace and kindness opened a new avenue; so every one of us should have faith that Allah Ta'ala has the sole control over the provisions for human life and no other power however strong can interfere.

On the other hand, all those who hinder or stop any help to religious requirements should be prepared to give an explanation for that to Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Judgement, when no false excuses will work, nor will a pleader be of any avail. Let it be known that evading help in such matters by concocted excuses will only result in one's ruining one's own fate in Akhirah; to obstruct religious requirements or to stop others from helping them, because of some personal hatred and for fulfilling wrong worldly-ends, will result in one's own disaster rather than bring any harm to others.

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that, when someone evades helping a Muslim brother at the time when he is being vilified and dishonoured, Allah Ta'ala remains unconcerned about the evader when he himself is badly in need of help by anyone. (Mishkaat).

The practice of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam in any situation is a guideline for the Ummah. It is obligatory on every one of us to try to find out in everything the way he acted and we must, sincerely and to the best of our ability, follow him. He, as a rule, did not hesitate to help even his enemies. There are several examples of that in the books of Ahadith and history.

Abdullah bin Ubayyi, who was the leader of the hypocrites, did not miss any opportunity to cause injury and trouble to Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam. It is said about him that, during the journey in which the above Ayat was revealed, he told his people (hypocrites) that they were a respectable class and that, after reaching Madinah, they would drive the despicable band out of the city (meaning the Muhajireen). In spite of this, when he fell ill a few days after his return from the journey, he told his son, who was a devout Muslim, to go to Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam and request him to come to see him, hoping that Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam would agree to the request of the son.

The son went and made the request, to which Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam readily agreed and accompanied the son to his home. When Abdullah saw Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam he started crying. Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam told him, "O enemy of Allah, are you afraid?" He said, "I have not called you to rebuke me, but I have called you to have mercy on me!" At this, the eyes of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam were filled with tears and he asked him what he wanted. He said, "I am about to die; when that happens, kindly be present when I am being washed after death, grant your own clothing for shrouding me, accompany my bier to the grave and kindly lead my funeral prayers." Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam agreed graciously to all his requests. Thereupon, the Ayat was revealed:-

And never (O Muhammad) pray for one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. Lo! they disbelieved in Allah and His messenger, and they died while they were evildoers. (9:84)

In this Ayat, Allah Ta'ala forbade Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to lead the funeral prayers of the hypocrites. The nobility of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam is shown by the treatment given to his deadly enemies who were all the time bent upon vilifying and defaming him.

Could we give that type of treatment to our enemies? Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was an embodiment of mercy for the entire mankind. On seeing the misery of his deadly foe, his eyes filled with tears and he fulfilled his wishes, which due to his lack of faith were of no use to him. For the future, Allah Ta'ala forbade Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to show such extreme kindness.

12. We have tried them (Makkans) as We tried the owners of the garden when they vowed they would pluck its fruit next morning; and made no exception (for the will of Allah). Then a visitation came upon it while they slept; and in the morning it was as if plucked. And they cried out to one another in the morning, saying, 'Run early to your field if you wish to pluck (the fruit)'. So they went off, saying to one another in low tones, 'No needy person shall enter it today against you'.

They went early, being sure (to reap the whole themselves). But when they saw it, they said, 'We are at the wrong place' (but when they realised they said), 'Nay, we are in misfortune'. The best among them said: Did I not tell you (not to be ill-thinkers; to give to the poor brings blessings). Why do you not glorify Allah? They said: 'Glorified be our Lord! (Assuredly) we have been wrong-doers'. Then some of them blamed each other. (Later they said) 'Alas for us! We were all outrageous. It may be that our Lord will give us better than this in place thereof. We beseech our Lord (for his forgiveness). Such was the punishment. And verily the punishment of the Akhirah is greater, if they did but know". (al-Qalam: 17-33)

Note: The story contained in these Ayaat is a severe admonition to the people who make a vow of not helping the poor and needy, of not a penny or a piece of bread to be given to them, thinking they do not deserve any help and it is useless to give alms to them. Such people lose their possessions all of a sudden in this manner. Some among them, being good hearted, do not like that attitude. But, out of regard others' feelings, they join with them. They shall not escape the calamity, which befalls all of them alike.

Abdullah Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that the above incident happened to a certain people of Habshah (Ethiopia). Their father had a very big garden, from which he used to give Sadaqah to the beggars. When he died, his children said that the old man was a fool, as he gave away almost everything to other people. So they made a vow and said that they would bring the whole harvest from the garden to their homes and not give anything to the beggars. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe said that the previous owner of the garden, the old man, as a rule, kept back as much as he needed for a year and spent what remained as Sadaqah.

His sons tried to stop him from doing that, but he did not listen to them. After his death the sons did what has been described in these Ayaat; they intended to keep everything for themselves and not to give anything to the poor. Sa'eed Ibne Jubair Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the garden was in Yemen, at a place called 'Zarwan', about six miles outside the famous city of San'aa. Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe has said that it was a vineyard. Ibne Juraij Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the calamity that fell on that garden was a fire, which came out of a valley in Jahannam and spread over the whole garden.

Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Guard yourselves against sins. A man commits such sins as would create evil effects, causing loss of a part of his knowledge (loss of memory), so that he is unable to remember what has been learnt; some sins lead to failure to observe Tahajjud Salaat (at night) and, owing to some other sins, one is deprived of the income he was destined to receive". Then Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam recited the Ayat:

"And a visitation came upon it from thy Lord...."

And said that these people were deprived of the harvest of their garden because of their sin". Allah Ta'ala says in another place in the Qur'an:

"The calamity that befalls you is due to your own actions; (it does not follow every bad action), most of which are overlooked and forgiven by Allah Ta'ala". (ash-Shuraa: 30)

Ali Radhiallaho anho says that he was told by Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, "O Ali, I explain to you this Ayat: "whatever you suffer from, be it an ailment, a worldly loss in this life, or a calamity, all are the results of your own doings". This subject has been fully dealt with in another publication of the author called al-I'tidaal, which may be consulted.

13. But as for him who is given his record in his left hand, he will say: Oh, would that I had not been given my book and knew what my reckoning was! Oh, would that it had been death! My wealth has not availed me, my power has gone from me. (It will be said): Take him and fetter him and then expose him to hell-fire, and then insert him in a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits. Lo! He used not to believe in Allah, the Tremendous and urged not the feeding of the destitute. Therefore, he has no friend here this day, nor any food save filth, which none but sinners eat. (al-Haaqah: 25-37)

Note: The word 'Ghisleen' (filth) in the second last Ayat given above, is commonly translated as 'Filthy fluid' collected from the washing of wounds, etc. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says that the pus and blood which oozes from the wounds is called Ghisleen. Abu Sa'eed Khudri Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam as saying that, if a pail full of Ghisleen is thrown on to this earth, its stench will make everything rotten and foul smelling. Nauf Shani Rahmatullah alaihe has said that the chain will be seventy yards long, each yard will be of seventy measures, each of which will be as long as the distance between Makkah and Kufah. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho and some other interpreters of the Holy Qur'an have said, "The chain whereof the length is seventy cubits will be entered into their bodies at their posterior and taken out from their noses; then it will be bound together and wrapped upon them tightly". The Ayat under reference describes the wrath of Allah befalling those who discourage others to feed the poor. Therefore one should always encourage one's friends, relatives and all acquaintances to help the poor and the needy, as urging others to spend is bound to reduce miserliness in oneself.

14. Woe unto every slandering traducer who has gathered wealth (of this world) and keeps counting it. He thinks that his wealth will render him immortal. Nay, but verily he will be flung into the Consuming one (Hellfire). Ah! What will convey to you what the Consuming one is! (It is) the Fire of Allah, kindled, which leaps up over the hearts (of men). Lo! It is closed in upon them, in outstretched columns. (al-Humazah: 1-9)

Note: There are various explanations by different Ulama of 'Humazah and Lumazah', the words in the first Ayat here. Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho and Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe have said, "Humazah means one who taunts, whereas 'Lumazah' means backbiter" Ibne Juraij Rahmatullah alaihe has said, "Humazah is a taunting indication by hand, face and eyes, whichever is used, while Lumazah is done by words of mouth."

Once Rasulallah Sallalallah alaihe wasallam described some events of his Ascension (Mi'raaj) and said that he saw a group of men whose bodies were being cut up with scissors. When he asked Jibrail Alaihissalaam as to who those people were, he replied, "They are those who used to adorn themselves for committing adultery". Then he saw a well from which a stinking smell came out and he heard shrieks coming out of the well. He asked Jibra'il Alaihissalaam about that, who replied that these were those women who used to beautify themselves (for adultery) and do other wrong things. He then saw some men and women hung up by their breasts and enquired about them. Jibra'il Alaihissalaam told him that they were those who used to do back biting and reproached and taunted others.

May Allah Ta'ala save us from these evils, as they involve terrible punishments. The above Surah censures the evils of miserliness and greed by saying that one amasses wealth due to miserliness and satisfies his greed by counting it over and over again, to make sure that it has not become less. He loves his wealth and enjoys counting it. This bad habit leads one to become arrogant and boastful, which creates in him the evils of back biting and taunting.

That is why the Surah opens with admonition against these vices and severely censures such evil habits. It is a pity that everyone these days is a victim of the mania that wealth will save him from disasters and calamities, as though death will not come to the rich. That is why a severe warning has been administered here. Events, in general, support the truth that, when a calamity befalls someone, all his wealth and property is of no avail; rather, the excess of wealth attracts adversities. Someone may think of poisoning a rich person or murdering him. Robbery, theft and other such mishaps always remain a worry for the wealthy. Above all, the relatives, even wife and children, eagerly await the time when the rich old man will die, so that the wealth falls into their hands.

15. Have you observed the person who belies religion? (particularly the Day of Judgement). He is the one who repels the orphan, and urges not the feeding of the needy. Ah! Woe unto the worshippers who are heedless of their prayers. They would be seen (at worship) yet refuse small kindnesses. (al-Maa'un: 1-7).

Note: Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho has said that repelling the orphan implies denying him his legitimate rights. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says that it means being unjust to him, which happens because of having no faith in Akhirah. Whoever believes in Akhirah and the process of retribution, will never be unkind and harsh to anyone nor will he accumulate wealth, but will prefer spending it liberally.

He believes that by investing ten rupees today in that business, he will surely get return of one thousand tomorrow, all lawfully earned; he will certainly not hesitate to take that step. Ibne Abbas Radhiallahohunho has said that worshippers, mentioned in this Surah, are the hypocrites: who prayed in the presence of people for show. Their abandoning prayers means delaying the prayers deliberately, thus missing often the proper time.

The Ulama have given several explanations of the word Maa'oon. Some have said that it means Zakaat, while others have interpreted it as things of common use. Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud has said that in the days of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam they applied this term to those things which people used to borrow from each other and returned them after use: such were the acts of mutual help by lending things like axe, cooking pot, bucket, scales, etc. Abu Hurairah Radhiallahohunho has also repeated the same items by quoting Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam. When someone asked Ikrimah Radhiallahohunho the meaning of Ma'oon, he said that essentially it stands for Zakaat and its lowest forms are lending things like a sieve, a pail, a needle, etc. (Durre Manthur).

This Surah contains several warnings. It includes special warning about the orphans: ill treating an orphan is among the causes for one's punishment and damnation in Akhirah. Many people take over as guardians of orphans simply for the sake of misappropriating their property, but when the orphans, or some others on their behalf, raise a demand, they rebuke them. For such people, there can be no doubt about future punishment and damnation. This is apparently the reason for the revelation of this Surah. There are many Ayaat in the Qur'an containing warnings on ill-treatment of orphans.

The author has given reference to twenty such Ayaat. The gist of those Ayaat is to impress on people the utmost importance of giving good treatment to the orphans, which include working for the improvement of their lot and being their sincere well-wisher. One is required to take care of their property, to be kind to them and to do everything possible for their well being and happiness. If an orphan girl is taken in marriage, her dower (Mahr) must not be reduced because there is no one to plead for her: this is one of the admonitions given in Ahadith. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that whosoever undertakes to look after an orphan, will be as close as to him in Jannah as the two fingers, which he demonstrated by putting together two fingers: his middle and the forefinger.

This means a close neighbourhood of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, a very great honour indeed! A Hadith says that when someone affectionately pats the head of an orphan to seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, he will receive as many blessings as the number of the hair which come under his hand. If a person does a good turn to an orphan boy or girl, he too will be a neighbour of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam in Jannah in the manner described above. (Durre Manthur)

Another Hadith says that, on the Day of Resurrection, some people will rise from their graves with fire blazing in their mouths. When someone asked Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam about them, he, in reply, recited an Ayat from Surah an-Nisa:

"The people who unlawfully grab the property of the orphans and swallow it! They fill their stomachs with fire". (an-Nisa: 10)

On the night of the Ascension (Mi'raaj), Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam saw some people with lips as large as those of a camel and the angels tearing up their lips and thrusting burning stones into their mouths, so that the fire went down their throats and came out of their backs. They were yelling and lamenting painfully. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam enquired about them from Jibra'il Alaihissalaam, who told him that they were people who had eaten up the property of orphans unlawfully and now they were being fed with fire.

One Hadith says that there are four types of people who will never enter Jannah, nor will they ever taste any delicacy there from. First those who are habitual wine-drinkers; secondly, the usurers, thirdly those who usurp the property of orphans; fourthly those who are disobedient to their parents. Shah Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe has mentioned in the Tafseer that there are two ways of being kind to orphans. The one, which is obligatory on the guardians, is to take care of their property by investing it in business or agriculture, so that it earns profit to suffice for their living expenses and other common needs like education and proper upbringing.

The second type is obligatory for the common people, which includes avoiding all types of harm to orphans, treating them kindly, seating them closer to oneself in gatherings, showing affection by patting their heads and taking the

small ones in the lap, like one's own children to show them paternal love. Allah Ta'ala has ordered all men to treat orphans like their own children so that the pre-ordained handicap suffered by them, through the loss of their father, may be compensated by the loving care of thousands of men in place of the paternal love. So an orphan has a relationship under the religious law, whereas normal relatives have a customary kinship.

The other subject contained in the Ayat concerns the warning for discouraging others to feed the poor, which is the worst form of miserliness; not only do such persons refrain from spending their own money on the poor, but they cannot tolerate others spending on them. The Holy Qur'an contains a number of Ayaat encouraging the feeding of the poor people. Surah Fajr says:

"You do not honour the orphan nor do you encourage others to feed the poor". (al-Fajar)

The other point mentioned in the above Surah is the stopping of Ma'oon, which has been discussed earlier in this commentary. Shah Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe has said in his writings that Surah Ma'oon has been so named to indicate the importance of the small acts of kindness, which, if not practised, become a cause of Divine displeasure and estrangement. Obviously, violation of laws concerning our major obligations to Allah Ta'ala and to the people must be feared most.

AYAAT ON WARNING AGAINST MISERLINESS AND HOARDING

Thus far, a few Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an have been mentioned and discussed on the subject of miserliness. Some more are given here; thereafter some Ahadith on the same subject are discussed, in order to bring out how extremely dangerous is the practice of miserliness and amassing of wealth:-

1. And be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and the needy. (al-Baqarah: 83)
2. And giveth his wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy. (al-Baqarah: 177)
3. Say: That which ye spend for good (must go) to parents and near kindred and orphans. (al-Baqarah: 215)
4. And they question thee concerning orphans. Say: to improve their lot is best. (al-Baqarah: 220)
5. Give unto orphans their wealth. (an-Nisaa: 2)
6. And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly with the orphans, (an-Nisaa: 3)
7. Prove orphans till they reach the marriageable age; then, if ye find them of sound judgment, deliver over unto them their fortune; and devour it not by squandering and in haste lest they should grow up. (an-Nisaa: 6)
8. And when kinsfolk and orphans and the needy are present at the division (of the heritage). (an-Nisaa: 8)
9. Lo! Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully, they do but swallow fire into their bellies, and they will be exposed to burning flame! (an-Nisaa: 10)
10. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbour who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbour who is not of kin, and the fellow traveller and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your right hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful. (an-Nisaa: 36)
11. And the Scripture which hath been recited unto you (giveth decree), concerning female orphans unto whom ye give not that which is ordained for them though ye desire to marry them, and (concerning) the weak among children, and that ye should deal justly with orphans. Whatever good ye do, Lo! Allah is ever Aware of it. (an-Nisaa: 127)

12. And that ye should deal justly with orphans. (an-Nisaa: 127)
13. And approach not the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better. (al-Anaam: 152)
14. And approach not the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better. (Bani-Israel: 34)
15. That which Allah giveth as spoil unto His Rasul from the people of the townships, it is for Allah and His Rasul and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, that it becomes not a commodity between the rich among you. And whatsoever the Rasul giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he fobiddeth, abstain (from it). And keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is stern in reprisal. (al-Hashr: 7)
16. And feed with food the needy wretch, the orphan and the prisoner, for love of Him. (ad-Dahr: 8)
17. Nay, but ye (for your part) honour not the orphan. (al-Fajr: 17)
18. And to feed in the day of hunger. And orphan near of kin. (al-Balad: 14, 15)
19. Did He not find thee an orphan. (ad-Duhaa: 6)
20. Therefore the orphan oppress not. (ad-Duhaa: 9)

AHADITH REGARDING THE EVILS OF MISERLINESS

HADITH: 1

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that two habits cannot be found in a Mo'min, one miserliness, two, bad temper.

Note: This Hadith means that miserliness and bad temper cannot be found in a Mo'min, as these are clearly against the dignity of a Mo'min, who will always be worried about his Imaan (Faith), lest he is deprived of it by doing something wrong, just as a virtue attracts another virtue, in the same way a vice begets another vice. Another Hadith says more definitely that Shuh (a high degree of miserliness) cannot co-exist with Imaan, just as water and fire cannot remain together; the one is bound to overpower the other. If water is more powerful, fire will be extinguished; otherwise the water will be evaporated by the fire. Similarly, the two habits mentioned in the above Hadith are opposed to Imaan and, if Imaan and these two co-exist in someone, then by and by one is bound to finish the other. A Hadith says that there is no Friend of Allah but is endowed by providence with generosity and affability.

Another Hadith says that generosity is a permanent habit of a Friend of Allah. And this is obvious, for if anyone has a love for and connection with Allah Ta'ala, he will automatically long to spend on His Creation, as it is an obligation in love to look after the dear ones of the Beloved. So, when Allah's Creation is referred to as "His dependants", His friend will certainly love to spend on them; and whosoever has strong ties with the Creator, will naturally do more for such dependants. If, on the other hand, the so-called friend of Allah does not wish to spend on "His dependants" or those who are close to Him, clearly the claim of friendship with Allah is false.

HADITH: 2

Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho has quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to say that a deceitful person will not enter Jannah, nor will the miser or the one who boasts of the favours done by him.

Note: The Ulama have said that no one having the above mentioned qualities will enter Jannah. If however, a Mo'min happens to have these bad qualities in him, in the first place he may be afforded an opportunity by Allah

Ta'ala, while in this world, to seek Divine forgiveness or else he will be put in Jahannam till he is purified of his sins and, then only, he will enter Jannah. To go to Jahannam, even for a short while, is not to be taken lightly, as the ordinary fire which is unbearable stands no comparison to the fire of Jahannam. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that the intensity of the heat in the fire here is a seventieth part of the fire of Jahannam. The Sahabah submitted that the fire here inflicts a very painful injury. Thereupon Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said that the other is sixty-nine times hotter.

Another Hadith says that the person suffering the lightest punishment will be made to wear a pair of shoes prepared from the fire of Jahannam, which will make his brain boil like a pot on the fire. Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala has prepared the Jannat-e-Aden (a special part of Jannah) with His Own Blessed Hands and adorned it. He then ordered the angels to make canals flow therein and suspend fruits in it. When Allah Ta'ala viewed its excellent embellishment, He proclaimed, "By My Honour, by My Glory and by My Grandeur on the high Throne, no miser shall enter here."

HADITH: 3

Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho has said: Once I visited Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, who was sitting in the shade of the Holy Ka'aba. When he saw me, he said, 'By the Lord (Allah) of the Ka'aba, those people are the losers. I submitted, 'which people?' He replied, "The rich, except those of them who spend on their right and on their left, in their front and behind their backs, but such of them are rare." (Mishkaat)

Note: Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho was one of the most ascetic Sahabah, as has been mentioned earlier in this book. On seeing him, what Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said was in reality for Abu Zarr's consolation that he, being a pious but poor person, may not feel dejected at any time about his poverty. The truth is that property and riches in excess are not things to be covered: these may be a source of damage and loss, as these may lead to heedlessness towards Allah Ta'ala. It is often seen that people seldom turn towards Allah Ta'ala and seek His help without becoming needy.

Those rich are exceptional who are gifted by Allah Ta'ala with a natural urge to extend their generous hand to the needy all around. For them, their wealth is a blessing. But, as Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said, this type is rare. More often than not, the abundance of wealth has in its wake sin, debauchery, vagrancy, extravagant living. To spend on wrong occasions or for fame and show are the easy direction of wasteful expenditure of wealth. For example, on marriages and other ceremonies, hundreds of thousands of rupees are spent lavishly, whereas lack of funds will be the plea for not spending on the needy and hungry to please Allah

A Hadith says that those who are rich (in this life) will have the least assets in the Hereafter, except the ones who earn honestly and spend freely in charity. Truly, wealth is a source of honour and grace for those who spend it freely in good cause, while for those who keep collecting and counting it, it is a fore-runner of calamities and ultimate ruin and a waste by itself. Wealth is lacking in grace, as it will not bring any worldly or religious benefit to its owner unless it is separated from him.

HADITH: 4

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "A generous person is close to Allah, close to Jannah and close to people, but far away from Jahannam; whereas a miser is far away from Allah far from Jannah and far from people but he is close to Jahannam. An ignorant but generous person is certainly dearer to Allah than a pious miser."

Note: It means that a person may be offering prayers in plenty and lengthy Nawafil, while (compared to him) another person does not offer many prayers and Nawafil, but excels in generosity and, so, is dearer to Allah Ta'ala. 'Faraidh' of course are obligatory for everyone, whether he is generous or not.

Imaam Ghazali has quoted that once, when the Prophet Yahya Bin Zakariyya Alaihissalaam asked Shaitan to say whom he loved most and for whom was his worst hatred, Shaitan replied that he most loved a miser Mo'min and extremely hated an immoral but generous person.

Yahya Alaihissalaam wanted to know how was that. He explained that he had no anxiety for a miser, as his stinginess would be enough to take him to Jahannam, whereas an immoral person's generosity is a permanent worry for him (the Shaitan) as Allah Ta'ala may overlook all his sins due to his generosity. This means that, if at any time Allah Ta'ala is pleased with the generosity of the impious person, Divine Compassion and Forgiveness may wash out all his sins and misbehaviours. In that event, Shaitan's life long effort to make him a sinner will be rendered ineffectual.

One Hadith says that a person is generous due to his good expectations from Allah Ta'ala, while a miser is lacking in this. Good expectations mean that One Who granted him a favour in the first place will continue to be kind in future as well.

Such a person is close to Allah Ta'ala, while a miser has no faith in the limitless treasures of Allah Ta'ala Who has created all the means of income and Who has the Power to suspend the fruitfulness of those means. A merchant may sit at his shop endlessly, without having anyone to buy his goods and the farmer may till the land, but get no produce: when all is the being granted by Him, it is foolish to have doubts as to wherefrom things will come. In spite of our tall claims in words, we seem to lack the faith that everything is being provided by Allah Ta'ala and we have little to say in the matter.

The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum firmly believed that Allah grants everything and He Who has given them today will continue to give them on another day as well. So they did not hesitate to spend everything for the cause of Allah.

HADITH: 5

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has been quoted to say that generosity is a tree in Jannah. A generous person will catch hold of a branch of that tree and enter Jannah. Stinginess is a tree in Jahannam: the miser will catch hold of its branch, which will lead him into Jahannam.

Note: The highest form of stinginess is called 'Shuh' in Arabic; it is the name of a tree in Jahannam and whoever gets hold of a branch of it, is bound to be led to Jahannam. A Hadith says that the name of a tree in Jannah is 'Sakha' which means generosity. This virtue is a fruit from that tree. Similarly, stinginess or parsimony is a fruit from the tree known as 'Shuh'.

A miser will not enter Jannah. Another Hadith says that the branches of the tree of Sakhawat bend down in this world and anyone who gets hold of a branch reaches Jannah. In the same way, the tree of Miserliness has its branches in this world and whoever catches its branches will be led to Jahannam. Obviously when a person takes the road to the railway station, he is bound to get there sometime. In the same way, holding the branches of either of the two trees mentioned in this Hadith will lead a person to where that tree exists.

HADITH: 6

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that among the worst type of habits that a man may have, is that kind of miserliness which drives a man to impatience and such cowardice and fright which may endanger his life.

Note: Allah Ta'ala has warned in the Holy Qur'an about these two weaknesses, as follows:

"Indeed man is created impatient; he becomes vexed when an evil befalls him, save the prayerful who are steadfast and constant at their prayers; And in whose wealth there is a right acknowledged for the beggar and those ashamed

to beg, and those who believe in the Day of Judgement; and those who are fearful of their Lord's Punishment; indeed the punishment of the Lord is that before which none can feel secure (everyone is frightened of it). And those who preserve their chastity, save with their wives and those whom their right hands possess, for there they shall be blameless; but whoso seeketh more than that, those are they who are transgressors; and those who keep their pledges and covenant; and those who stand by their testimony and those who are steadfast in their Fardh prayers; those will dwell in Gardens, honoured." (al-Ma'aarij: 19-35)

The same subject has been treated in Surah al-Mo'minoon.

Imran bin Hussain Radhiallahohunho has said that once Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho got hold of the loose end of his turban and said, "Imran, Allah Ta'ala loves spending of wealth and dislikes withholding it, so spend on people and feed them; do not harm anyone so that your own needs are not ignored; listen carefully! Allah Ta'ala approves deep thinking whenever one is beset with doubts.

In cases of doubt about the lawfulness of a thing, one should not act casually but exercise deep thinking; and He likes clear intellect to face passions (these should not be allowed to overpower one's senses). Allah loves generosity, even if it is shown by giving a few dates (keeping in view your capacity, do not feel shy of giving few or small amounts of things). Allah likes bravery, be it in killing a snake or a scorpion. Allah Ta'ala does not like one to be frightened in danger, but one should hide his fear if it arises and not mention it to others. In fact, efforts should be made to overcome it. There are a number of Du'aas reported from Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho for supplicating Allah Ta'ala to save one from cowardice.

HADITH: 7

Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho has said that a person ceases to be a Mo'min when he fills his own belly while a neighbour of his remains hungry.

Note: Indeed, it is disgraceful that one should have enough to eat a full meal, while a neighbour of his remains hungry. It is imperative that he should eat less and give something to help the neighbour. Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho has said that a person does not believe in me as his Rasul if he fills his own belly while knowing that his next-door neighbour has nothing to eat.

Another Hadith says that there will be many people on the Day of Judgment who will catch hold of their neighbour's clothes and make a submission to Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah, ask this man why he would shut his door on me and would not give me anything that was surplus to his own needs." Another Hadith quotes the saying of Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho, "O people, give Sadaqah; I will testify to it on the Day of Judgment. There may be some of you who have something left over from their own meals at night while one of their cousins may spend the night hungry; some of you might keep earning to increase their wealth while their poor neighbour is unable to earn anything for himself".

Another Hadith quotes Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho to say that it is enough to label a man a miser when he insists on having his full share, not allowing a particle to be left back, that is, when dividing something among relatives or neighbours, he is anxious to get his own exact share, not yielding anything to others at all. This is a sign of miserliness, as no great harm is done if a little extra from his share goes to someone else.

HADITH: 8

Ibne Umar and Abu Hurairah Radhiallahohunho both have quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho to have said that a woman was condemned to Hell because she kept a cat tied up until it died of hunger; she did not give it any food, nor set it free to find food for itself. (Mishkaat)

Note: People who keep pets bear great responsibility towards them, as these dumb creatures cannot express their needs. Therefore, providing feed and drink to these pets is an important obligation of the owners. To be miserly in discharging that obligation is to invite severe punishment upon oneself. Many people are fond of keeping animals but they are reluctant to spend adequately on their feed and fodder. Various Ahadith under different headings have quoted Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to indicate a warning from Allah Ta'ala about these animals. Once, when Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was out for a walk, he saw a camel, on the way, whose stomach had shrunk (due to hunger or weakness) and he said, "Allah Ta'ala has warned you about these dumb creatures; maintain them well for riding as well as for eating".

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam used to go out for a call of nature into a garden or behind a mound. Once he went to a garden for that purpose, where he saw a camel who started moaning when he saw him and tears began to flow from his eyes (a natural thing to happen when meeting a sympathiser). Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam went to the camel and rubbed his hand affectionately behind the ear, whereupon the camel became quiet. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam asked about the camel's owner; one of the Ansaar came forward to claim him. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam told him, "Are you not afraid of Allah Ta'ala who has made you his master?" The camel is complaining that you keep him hungry and make him work hard".

Once, when Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam saw a donkey whose face was branded, he said, "Don't the people know that I have cursed the person who brands an animals face or hits it?" This Hadith has been mentioned in Abu Dawood, and several other narrations contain the same warning that animals should not be cruelly treated. Obviously, when there is so much said about the care of animals, behaviour towards man, the superior being, is even more important and quite a serious matter to consider.

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that, when someone is responsible for feeding a man or an animal, any negligence towards them amounts to cruelty to oneself. Therefore, if we are stingy in feeding an animal which is being kept for some use, because no one is watching us, this would amount to a severe cruelty to oneself; Allah knows everything about it and His recorders are recording all things, however secret. This misfortune is due to miserliness. Animals are kept for serving a man, for riding them, tilling the land or carrying loads but, due to miserliness, he finds it hard to spend money on them.

HADITH: 9

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has been quoted to have said that on the Day of Judgement a man (weak and lean) like a lamb will be brought before Allah Ta'ala Who will question him, "What did you do with the wealth, the train of servants and many bounties that I bestowed upon you? Give me their account." The man will reply, "My Lord, I collected a lot of wealth and increased it considerably (by my own efforts), far more than what I had in the beginning. Please send me back to that life and all shall be brought here." He will be commanded to show what he had sent here (to be treasured for This Day). The man will repeat the same request of sending him back (so that he could spend all that in the path of Allah) and show it here. Since he will have nothing to show from what he could have spent previously as Sadaqah, he will be thrown into Jahannam.

Note: We work hard in this life in business and other professions to earn money in order to collect sufficient resources for future use and for any need that may arise. We are, however, paying little heed to the real need which is sure to arise in Akhirah and will mean a pressing requirement. To meet this situation, we are well aware that only that particular credit will be available which is deposited in the Divine Treasury while in this world. It will not only be a safe deposit but will increase continuously, by the grace of Allah Ta'ala.

We are well aware that life here, however long, is bound to end one day, while the life of Akhirah will never end. In our worldly life, if one is left without resources, he can live by working even as a labourer or, the worst of all, one may resort to begging. But, there will be no source of earning anything in the next life, while only that much will be useful which was sent in advance during the life here as a deposit. In one of the Ahadith, Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said that when he visited the Jannah he saw on both sides three lines written in golden letters. The first line was the kalimah Tayyabah:

The second was:

"What we had sent ahead we have received, that which we ate up in that life was a gain and that which we left behind was a total loss."

The third line contained:

"The sinful Ummah and the Forgiving Lord!"

Ayat No. 6 in Chapter one states that on the Day of Judgement there would be no business deals, no friendship and no recommendations. Ayat No. 30 in the same Chapter states that every person should make sure that he has sent something in advance for requirements on that Day. One Hadith says that when one dies, the angels ask him what he has sent ahead as a deposit in his account to be useful for that Day, while the people of the world ask as to what he has left behind.

In another Hadith Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam asked, "Who is it among you who loves the property of his heirs more than his own property?" The Sahabah replied that there was none among them who did not love his own property more than that of his heirs. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam then said that a person's own property is only that much which he sends in advance; whatever he leaves behind is no longer his property, but that of his heirs.

Another Hadith says that the man keeps saying, "My property, My Property". Only three things are his property: one which he has used as food, the second which he wore till it was worn out and the third which he sent in advance to be deposited in his account for the Akhirah. Anything else is not his property; it is left behind for other people. It is interesting that man keeps collecting, toiling and bearing hardships for the people to whom he does not like to give a penny in his lifetime, but irony of fate makes them the successors to all that he had collected. Artaah Ibne Sahitah Rahmatullah alaihe, at the time of his death, recited a few couplets which are translated as follows: "A man says I have collected a lot of wealth, but generally he earns and hoards for others, his heirs. He keeps an account of what and where he has spent his money. But later he leaves everything as a booty for such people who are not accountable to him for squandering what he left behind.

Therefore, eat and feed others while you are living, at the cost of the miserly heirs. After death, a man cannot hope to get any benefit from his wealth and none among his successors even think of him while enjoying his property.

Another Hadith relates the same story (as given in the above Hadith) under a different heading. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam once enquired from the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum if there was anyone among them who loved his own property more than that of his heirs. They replied that everyone of them loved his own property more. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said "Think well and then answer". They said, "We still think the same, that everyone of us loves his own property more than that of his heirs." Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said that it was not so, as there was none among them who does not love his heir's property more than his own.

The Sahabah enquired how that could be. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Your property is only that which you have sent ahead, what you leave behind belongs to the heirs". Here one may bear in mind that the purpose of all these narrations is not to deprive the heirs of their due share. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has warned about this requirement.

Sa'ad bin Abi Waqaas Radhiyallahu anho fell so seriously ill, at the time of conquest of Makkah that there was no hope of his survival. When Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam went to enquire about his health, he said that he had plenty of wealth but only one daughter as his heir and he wanted to give away, by will, all of his property. He thought that the daughter was to be looked after by her husband.

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam prohibited him from this. He then requested permission to will away two thirds of his property, which also was not allowed by Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam; one half was also not permitted. He then requested for willing one third of his property, which was permitted by Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, with the remarks "Even one third is too much to be willed; you must leave your heirs well to do

rather than in poverty, lest they should be forced to beg from others". Whatever is spent for the pleasure of Allah will gain reward from Him, be it putting a morsel of food in the mouth of one's own wife".

Hafiz Ibne Hajar has said that the story of Sa'ad Radhiallahohunho does not contradict the earlier Hadith questioning the person who loves his heir's property more than his own. The purpose in that Hadith was to encourage a person while in good health to give away Sadaqah in a deserving situation; while the story of Sa'ad Radhiallahohunho concerns the willing away of all or most of the property on his death bed, at the cost of his heir.

According to the author of this publication, the act of willing away something with the intention of harming the heirs, is considered to be reprehensible. Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho has said that certain men and women pass sixty years of their life in piety but, at the time of their death, they bring harm to someone through their will, which leads them to Jahannam. After quoting this Hadith, Abu Hurairah Radhiallahohunho recited the Ayat of Holy Qur'an:

Mim ba'dhee waseeyathie yu'saa bhehaa gaira mudhaar

That whatever has been in the preceding Ayat about division of property, is applicable after separating the willed property and; if there is a debt against the deceased person that will also be deducted first. One primary consideration is that, in the will, the person should have no intention of harming a heir. One Hadith says that whoso cuts out the inheritance of a heir, Allah Ta'ala will cut out his heritage in Jannah. Therefore, great care must be taken that, at the time of making a will or giving as Sadaqah, the intention must not be to deprive any of the heirs. On the contrary, the intention must clearly be to benefit oneself by leaving a deposit (with Allah) for the Akhirah. It is to be remembered that a person's intention and purpose have a direct bearing on all his prayers and worship, as in the famous saying of Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho:

"The intention and purpose behind every action determines the true value of that action"

For example when Salaat (the most important of all forms of worship) is performed solely to please Allah Ta'ala, it becomes a source of great blessings, rewards and closeness to the Mighty Creator, such as no other form of worship can obtain; but if the Salaat be performed hypocritically or for show, it will amount to minor 'shirk' and embitters one's life. Hence in the case of property, the pleasure of Allah and the ultimate gain for oneself should be the aim and object. The best way, therefore, is to spend as much as possible, when one is healthy and alive, without knowing who is to predecease whom (the person himself or his heirs), to give as much Sadaqah as one desires and has means for it, make a will or create a charitable endowment and also keep looking for better charitable occasions.

But it is wrong to remain a miser when living and to become highly generous when the end of life is in sight. As has been described in the Hadith No. 5 in Chapter 1: Rasulullah Sallalallahohunho has said that the best Sadaqah is that which is given when one is in good health and not lying on death bed, when already the property has in fact become owned by the heirs.

The author at this point lays down, as an advice for himself and his friends, "Our own wealth and property is only that which has been deposited in the Treasury of Allah Ta'ala; all other collections and multiplied resources will be of no avail to us. From among our parents, wives and children, none will think of us, with rare exceptions. The sum total of their love for you will be a few days of crying and shedding tears, and if those few tears were to cost something, even those might not be forthcoming! To collect and leave wealth as a well wisher of our children is a case of self deception; to leave only accumulated wealth for them is not for their good but, in all probability, harmful for them.

If really the purpose be, to do the children a good turn, so that they may not suffer hardship and privations afterwards, it is better and more important that they inherit a virtuous life as good Muslims rather than be merely rich. For, un-Islamic living is likely to become wasteful and extravagant. Through luxurious living for a short time, they would fall a prey to poverty. Even if this does not happen, their wealth will be of little use to you, whereas their Islamic life and practises will be most useful for them as well as for you. Your share in your own property is truly that much which has been sent ahead by you yourself."

Ali Radhiallaho anho has narrated that Allah Ta'ala put to death two rich persons and two poor men. Allah asked one of the rich one as to what he had sent (here) ahead of him and what he had left behind for his family. The man replied, 'O Allah, You created me as well as them and You took the responsibility of providing livelihood for all of us; You have stated in the Holy Qur'an:

"Is there a man who would give Allah Ta'ala a loan, a goodly loan"

I therefore sent all my property and wealth here ahead of me. I was absolutely certain that you would give my family their livelihood". Allah Ta'ala said, "Well, you may go; had you know what rewards and returns I have preserved for you here, you would have been most happy in that life and seldom sorry". Allah Ta'ala then asked the second rich man as to what he had sent ahead for himself and what he had left behind for his family. The rich man replied, "O Allah, I had children and I was afraid of their becoming poor and falling into trouble.

So, I left all my wealth for them!" Allah Ta'ala then asked him whether He had created him and his family and whether He had taken the responsibility of giving them their livelihood. The man replied, "Yes, You did. Yet I was afraid of their being very poor". Allah Ta'ala then informed him that they did become poor and could not be saved by his effort. He was then told to go away. If he had known what punishments He had in store for him here, he would never have laughed so much and have grieved a lot."

Then, one of the two poor men was called upon to explain what he had brought for himself and how much he had left behind for the family. He replied, "O Allah, You created me healthy and sound, You gave me the power of speech, you taught me your Sacred Names and also how to pray and supplicate you. If You had given me wealth, I would have been neglectfully absorbed in it. I am happy with what I have been." Allah Ta'ala would say, "You may go. I am also happy with you.

If you had known what I have for you here, you would have laughed more and cried less". The second poor man was then called and commanded to tell what he had brought with him and what he had left behind. He submitted, "O Allah! What did you give me for which I have to answer now?" Allah Ta'ala said, "Did I not give you health, the power to speak, the ears and the eyes?" And, I also stated in the Qur'an:

"You supplicate Me and I shall grant you what you ask for." (al-Mo'min: 60)

The poor man will reply, "My Lord, I agree with all that, but I forgot all of it" Allah Ta'ala will then say, "Go away. Today I have also ignored you. If you had known, in that life, what punishment is awaiting you, you would have cried much more and laughed much less."

HADITH: 10

Umar Radhiallaho anho has narrated that Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Whoso brings provisions (grains, etc.) from outside (for giving it to people cheap) receives (an increase in his) livelihood from Allah Ta'ala and the one who withholds such things is a cursed fellow".

Note: The theologian Abul Samarqandi Rahmatullah alaihe has explained that some persons buy provisions from other cities so as to sell them to their people at a cheaper rate. For such people Allah Ta'ala provides an increase in their livelihood, because they do so for people's benefits, who pray for their welfare. The person who withholds things, is one who buys things with the intention of hoarding and thus harming people by keeping back provisions to increase their price, despite people's urgent requirements.

He is an accursed fellow because of his greed, miserliness and profiteering. Another Hadith says that Allah Ta'ala afflicts with poverty and leprosy, the person who holds back food stuffs for forty days, prevents sale (despite the people's urgent need). It is clear from this that anyone who brings harm to the Muslims, and drives them into starvation, suffers a physical punishment like leprosy and also poverty.

On the contrary, in case of a man who brings things from outside and sells them cheaply to people, Allah Ta'ala directly helps him by increased livelihood and other benefits. A Hadith puts it: "How wicked is the man who withholds grain and feels happy when prices go down and is delighted when they are up!" Another Hadith says that if a person hoards grain for forty days despite it's being needed by the people and refuses to sell it, but later gives away the whole lot as Sadaqah, it will not atone for his sins of hoarding.

It is said in one of the Ahadith that a man, from the previous Ummahs, passing by a sandy mound during a period of famine, wished (in his heart), if that mound were a mound of grain he would have fed the Bani Israeel to their satisfaction. Allah Ta'ala sent a revelation to the Nabi of those times to give him the good tidings of a reward, which had been recorded for him, equal to the charitable distribution of grain among the people up to the size and quantity of that mound. There is no paucity of blessings and rewards with Allah Ta'ala.

He does not need to create storages or to multiply income; a simple sign by Him is enough to create provisions for the entire creation. Only actions and intentions of the people matter with Him. There is an abundance of blessings and rewards by the Great Creator for him Who shows love and kindness to His Creation.

Someone approached Abdullah Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho and requested him to advise him to do six things: first, to have full faith in Allah Ta'ala about the things for which He Himself has taken responsibility (such as the livelihood); secondly, to fulfil the obligatory functions, which He has assigned, at their right time; thirdly, to keep the tongue busy refreshingly at all times with the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala, fourthly, not to obey Shaitan who is jealous of the whole creation of Allah Ta'ala; fifthly not to remain occupied in building up the worldly requirements of life, which will adversely affect the prospects in the Akhirah; sixthly to be a well wisher of Muslims at all times.

The theologian Abul Laith Rahmatullah alaihe has said that eleven things are auspicious indications for man and eleven others are signs of misfortune for him. The auspicious ones are: (1) Not to covet things in this life, but only those that matter in the Hereafter. (2) Excessive prayers and recitation of the Qur'an. (3) Avoiding useless talk. (4) Vigilant care in performance of Salaat at the right time. (5) To keep away from things prohibited, however insignificant these may appear. (6) To remain in the company of the wise and pious. (7) To be humble and to abstain from arrogance. (8) To be kind and generous. (9) To show affection to Allah's creation. (10) To be useful to people. (11) To remember death frequently. The signs of misfortune are: (1) Greed for collecting wealth. (2) Indulgence in worldly pleasures and passionate enjoyment. (3) Shameless and excessive talk. (4) To be lazy in performance of Salaat. (5) To eat prohibited and doubtful things and to associate with immoral people. (6) To be bad tempered. (7) To be proud and arrogant. (8) To keep away from acts beneficial to people. (9) Not to have mercy on Muslims. (10) To be miserly. (11) To be forgetful of death. In the opinion of the learned author, the most fundamental thing is to remember death constantly. If this is kept up, the first eleven, by the grace of Allah Ta'ala, will automatically develop and will also provide a protection against the second list of eleven sources of misfortune. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, 'Keep much remembrance the cutter off of the pleasures, i.e. death'. (Mishkaat)

HADITH: 11

Anas Radhiallaho anho has said that one of the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum died and, from among the gathering, someone said that the deceased was a Jannati. On that, Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, "How do you say that? He might have indulged in idle talk or shown miserliness over a thing which was of little value to him".

Note: The above mentioned shortcomings may cause a hindrance to one's entry into Jannah. Generally, engaging oneself in useless matters and idle gossip is a common habit and a pastime in the present day society. The great affection and compassion of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam for the Ummah deserves our highest appreciation in that he has given a solution for every difficulty and, in the short period of twenty three years of his 'Risaalat', he has suggested answers to all the problems which may arise at any time throughout the life of man in this world. He has told us that the atonement for any type of sinful behaviour in gatherings is to invoke Allah in a Du'aa, before ending the sitting:

Subhanallahi wa bhe hamdhe hi subhana kalla humma wa bhe hamdhika ashadhu alaa ilaaha illa antha
asthagfrikuka wa athoobu ilaik

"Glorified be Allah! All Praise be to Him! Glorified art Thou, O my Allah, with Thy Praise; I bear witness that there is none to be worshipped except Thee; I beg forgiveness of Thee, and turn to Thee in repentance!"

The other thing in the above Hadith is the condemnation of miserliness which one may show in refusing to give something that may cause little loss to oneself. We may consider many actions as trifling, but, with Allah Ta'ala, they may rank high in earning reward or punishment. There is a Hadith in Bukhari that a person may say something in praise of Allah Ta'ala, which may seem to him a small thing but it rises him to higher ranks, while a word, which Allah Ta'ala may dislike, may throw him in Jahannam, deep as the East is distant from the West.

HADITH: 12

Ummul Mo'mineen Umme Salmah Radhiallahohunna was given a piece of roast meat as a gift by someone. As Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was very fond of meat, she told the housemaid to keep it away safely for Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam as he might like to eat it sometime. The maid put it in a shelf but, after a little while, a beggar came to the door and begged for something for the sake of Allah. He was given the answer, 'May Allah bless you', (meaning there was nothing available in the house).

The beggar went away and Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam came in after he was gone, and asked Umme Salmah if there was anything for him to eat. She ordered the housemaid to bring the piece of meat for Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam to eat. When she went in, she did not find the meat in the shelf, but saw a white stone in its place. (After hearing the whole story) Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Since you did not give the piece of meat to the beggar, it has been turned into a piece of stone."

Note: How very instructive! The generosity of the sacred wives of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam is not open to question; the piece of meat was retained for a legitimate need and that, too, for Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, but the result was astonishing! It was a special favour and bounty of Allah Ta'ala that He showed to the household of Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam the ultimate effect of denying a piece of meat. It was meant to indicate that anyone who eats something, after refusing it to a needy person, is like one eating a piece of stone and he shall not get any benefits out of it.

The truth is that we eat many delightful things, by the blessing of Allah Ta'ala, but none of them seems to benefit us, as desired, and we complain that the good things have lost their real effect. In fact, it is the ill effect of our own evil intentions that marks their true quality.

HADITH: 13

The well being of this Ummah, in early times, was a consequence of their firm faith (in Allah Ta'ala) and an indifference towards worldly attractions; its decadence and corruption will begin with miserliness and with entertaining inordinate hopes regarding the distant future.

Note: In reality, miserliness comes from entertaining high hopes and worldly ambitions. Man builds up long term plans and then begins to gather resources for accomplishing them. If he were to keep death in remembrance, and realise that he may not have many days to live, he will not plan for the distant future, nor will the need to gather resources arise in his mind.

HADITH: 14

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam once visited Bilal Radhiallaho anho and found a heap of dates lying in front of him; when he asked Bilal as to what it was for, Bilal replied that he had gathered it for future use. Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam said, "O Bilal, are you not afraid of the Day of Judgement when, due to this hoarding up, you may have to see the smoke of Jahannam. Bilal, spend it and do not have fear of any shortage from the Owner of the Arsh. (Great Divine Throne)".

Note: Every person has a status and a position. The Shariah makes allowances for the weak and feeble in faith, like us, to store something for future needs, but for the revered personality of Bilal Radhiallaho anho, whose faith and belief in Allah Ta'ala was of high degree, it was not, in keeping with his great Imaan, to have fears about any shortage for him in the Divine store. 'Seeing the smoke of Jahannam' does not necessarily mean entering Jahannam itself, but it does mean some reduction in status of Bilal Radhiallaho anho.

Even if that may not happen, there is likely to be a longer period of reckoning. In some Ahadith, Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has mentioned punishment in Jahannam due to hoarding up of a meagre sum of one or two Dinaars. (See Chapter 6, Hadith No. 2, which is to follow). The reckoning will be for every person, the more the wealth, the longer the period of reckoning.

Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said that he, while standing at the gateway to Jannah, saw that the majority of the people entering Jannah were the poor, whereas those who had plenty were being held back (for reckoning), while those who were condemned to Jahannam had been thrown into it. Visiting the gateway of Jahannam, he saw most of those who entered it were the women folk, the reason for which has been mentioned in another Hadith. Abu Sa'eed Radhiallaho anho has said that Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam, on the Day of Eid, visited the Eidgah and passing by a gathering of women, addressed them, saying that they should give plenty as Sadaqaat as he had seen mostly women in Jahannam.

When the women asked him the reason, he replied that they frequently indulged in cursing and were ungrateful towards their husbands. Even in the case of their own children, whom they hold very dear, they curse them for small errors by saying, "May death overtake you! May you get buried and so on". The ingratitude towards the husband is frequently witnessed, he may do much to pamper her, yet she is never satisfied; she becomes unhappy at the slightest regard and favour shown by him to his own kith and kin, including his parents.

A Hadith says that when, during Salaat-ul-Kusuf, Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam was shown both the Jannah and the Jahannam, he saw a great many women in Jahannam. When the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum asked the reason for that, he said that it was their ingratitude in respect of their husbands. In spite of lifetime of kindness and favours to them, if once there is some unpleasantness, the wife will cry out against the husband unhesitatingly, "I have never received any good turn from you!" Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has also said: "It is a common habit of women that in spite of receiving the best possible treatment, they will forget all of that over a single thing happening against their personal wish.

Thus, a displeased woman, forgetting all the good done and kindness and favour shown to her by the husband, will openly complain of having had no comfort and ease at home. This is the habitual expression used by women towards their husbands".

The above Ahadith clearly state the reasons for which the majority of women will land in Jahannam and, at the same time, show that the escape lies in giving Sadaqah excessively. When Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam addressed the women in the Eidgah, they started removing their jewellery and gave it to Bilal Radhiallaho anho who accompanied Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam and made collection for the poor.

Nowadays, women pay no heed to such serious Ahadith and, when they do, the burden of Sadaqah falls on the shoulders of the husband who has to give Zakaat or Sadaqah on their behalf. In case they do it directly, the husband is expected to compensate them. They never permit any decrease in their jewellery. Although they cannot help accepting its loss by chance or by theft or by pawning it for celebrating a marriage, etc., they never think of willingly depositing it in the Treasury of Allah Ta'ala for the Akhirah. They leave it behind after death, to be distributed among the heirs and usually sold away at a very cheap price. Most of them waste a lot of money on remodelling and re-fashioning their ornaments from time to time. The main subject in this Hadith is that excess of wealth does lead to unpleasant situations in the end. As Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "The

poor Mohajireen will have a lead of forty years, in entering Jannah, over the rich people of their time", even though the sacrifices and Sadaqaat made by the latter cannot be compared or assessed. Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam once made the Du'aa:

"O Allah, grant me life as a poor man, cause me to die as a poor man and resurrect me in the company of the poor ones".

When Aishah Radhiallaho anha asked Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam the reason for such a Du'aa, the reply was that the poor will enter Jannah forty years ahead of the rich of their time and he told Aishah Radhiallaho anha never to disappoint a poor person, saying, "Give him a piece of date and show him kindness and let him be your favourite; you will be close to Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Judgement". Some Ulama have raised a point that, according to this Hadith, the poor will precede even the Ambiya Alaihemussallam into Jannah, but the author of the present book clears this point by saying that the Hadith states that the matter concerns the poor and the rich of the same class or society; therefore the precedence will take place among each class separately, such as among Ambiya, among Sahabah, and so on for the other groups.

HADITH: 15

Ka'b Radhiallaho anho says that he heard Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam saying, "There is a trial and a temptation for every Ummah. The trial and temptation of my Ummah consists in wealth."

Note: The sacred words of Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam are not only a matter of faith but an absolute truth. It is a fact of daily observation that excessive wealth often becomes the cause of vagrancy, sensuality, usury, adultery, cinema-going, gambling, maltreatment and leads to looking down upon people, apathy towards the 'Deen' of Allah and obligatory Salaat, and finding no time for other religious observances, etc.

Poverty, on the other hand, does not bring about one third or one fourth or even one tenth of these evils. (There is a saying in Persian, meaning, lovemaking without money is empty words). Even if these vices do not occur, wealth creates lust for further increase. For example, if one gets three thousand rupees, his constant efforts will be how to increase it and this keeps him so busy that he will hardly care for any rest, for Salaat, Fasting in Ramadan and even Hajj and Zakaat. His ceaseless efforts will be aimed at increasing his business. His efforts in that line will ignore any other thought regarding participation in religious activities or for going out to work for Deen, Because of the fear of harming his business. In this connection, Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has said repeatedly that, when a person acquires two valleys full of gold, he will begin to look for a third one and that man's appetite cannot be satisfied by anything but the earth of the grave.

One Hadith says that, after possessing one valley full of wealth, the man begins a search for the second and, when he has two, he will look for a third one; nothing can end his appetite except the earth of the grave. Another Hadith says that a man may have a whole forest of date palms, but he will wish to have one more and, when he has that, he will desire to have a third one. Thus he will never be content till his death, when his stomach will be filled with the earth of the grave. Another Hadith says, "If a man is given a valley full of gold, he will seek another; if he gets two, he will crave for a third; nothing can satisfy a man's appetite but the earth of the grave." (Bukhari). It shows that man's greed for having more and more has no end, as long as he lives in this world. He goes on entangling himself in one thing and another for increasing his income, having no rest even to remember Allah Ta'ala. That is why Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam made the Du'aa:

"O Allah. Let the provisions of my family members be a bare sufficiency" (i.e. just as much as should suffice them for their bare needs, and nothing more, lest they should be entangled in the vicious circle of getting more and more)

Another Hadith says: "Good and merited is the life of a person who has been granted Islam and an adequate livelihood, with which he is contented". Still another Hadith says that every rich and poor person, on the Day of Judgement, will wish that his provisions in this life were limited to bare sufficiency. A Hadith in Bukhari says that Rasulallah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam told his companions that he was not afraid of poverty and hunger for them, but was afraid of their being given plenty, like the previous Ummahs. "Then, your hearts may fall a prey to greed for

more and more money, as was the case with the earlier Ummahs, and consequently you may become the victims of that which brought disaster to them.

Similarly, warnings have been given in many other Ahadith about the dangers of excessive wealth and its ultimate fate. Wealth by itself is not an unclean or undesirable thing; it is the perversity in our hearts which, when wealth comes, turns the heart to corruption and creates diseases in it. If someone steers clear of that harmful element, abstains from hoarding and uses wealth according to laid down laws and procedures, it will do him no harm but will prove to be beneficial. Generally, however, care is not taken of the methods and guidelines for its use, nor are the known mistakes rectified. So wealth begins to spread its poisonous effects rapidly.

It is like eating guavas when suffering from cholera, which inherently have no defect but with the presence of the disease in the body these prove very harmful, and may even lead to death. That is why doctors strictly prohibit the eating of guavas when cholera is prevalent, and huge quantities of that fruit are destroyed under their orders. It is surprising that we are afraid of touching a thing when an ordinary doctor tells us that it is harmful for us, while no heed is paid to the authority whose wisdom and understanding, enlightened by the Divine light of Nabuwat are unsurpassed by any of the doctors and physicians of the world.

Since Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam has repeatedly warned us about the harm and troubles caused by wealth, every one of us ought to be apprehensive of the afflictions that wealth may cause and should use it most carefully, in accordance with the rules of Shariah. For this, it is most important to fulfil the obligations we owe to Allah Ta'ala.

It has also been said by Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam that a wealthy person who has fear of Allah Ta'ala has nothing to fear from the (evils of) riches. Abdul Aziz Dehlavi Rahmatullah alaihe is quoted to have said that riches can be the best aid to fulfil the commandments of Allah Ta'ala and to win His favours. Rasulullah Sallalallahu alaihe wasallam when calling people to Allah Ta'ala never told them to give up all worldly things, rather he encouraged them to live with their families using the good things of this life. Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe further said, "When Uthman Radhiyallahu anho died, his treasurer produced one hundred and fifty thousand gold coins (Dinaars) and a million silver pieces (Dirhams); in addition, there was landed property worth two hundred thousand Dinaars in the Kaibar area. Abdullah Ibne Zubair Radhiyallahu anho left behind property worth fifty thousand Dinaars, one thousand horses and one thousand slaves. Amr Ibne Aas Radhiyallahu anho left three hundred thousand Dinaars, while the wealth left behind by Abdur Rahman bin Auf Radhiyallahu anho was countless. Yet, Allah Ta'ala has praised all of them in the Holy Qur'an,

"They supplicate and pray to Allah morning and evening only for His pleasure". (Surah Kahf: 28)

"They are the people whom their business dealings do not prevent from remembering Allah". (an-Noor: 37)

It is true that, in those days, frequent conquests brought the Sahabah large amounts of abundant wealth, which remained with them, despite their generous spending, their attachment with their property was negligible compared with their love and devotion to Allah Ta'ala. Some instances have been quoted in the books, 'Fazail-e-Namaz' (Virtues of Salaat) and 'The Stories of Sahabah', which ought to be read carefully for the sake of self-admonition. For example, Abdullah Ibne Zubair Radhiyallahu anho, who has been mentioned above, used to stand up right in his Salaat like a peg driven in the ground and his 'Sajda' used to be so lengthy that sparrows would perch on his back, and yet he possessed much wealth.

Once, when the enemy forces attacked his position, he was praying in the Masjid and a shell hit the wall of the Masjid; the debris fell very close to him but he did not take notice of it and continued to pray. Again, in the case of another Sahabi Radhiyallahu anho it is related that, when his thoughts wandered to his fully ripe date palms garden while praying in it, he felt so grieved that after finishing his prayers he went at once to Uthman Radhiyallahu anho, who was then the Khalifah, and presented the garden to him, which the latter sold for fifty thousand and spent the money for religious purposes.

Similarly, two bags full of Dirhams amounting to more than one hundred thousand pieces were presented to Aishah Radhiyallahu anha, which she distributed to the needy. She herself was fasting, but did not think of telling her slave girl to keep something or to purchase some food, out of that, for breaking the fast. At the time of Iftar, when the

maid sorrowfully remarked that if she had kept a Dirham, some meat could have been purchased and they could have eaten it with their meals, Aishah Radhiyallahu anha said that this could have been done, had the maid reminded her at that time; it was no use being sorry later.

These and several other similar instances have been mentioned in the 'Stories of Sahabah', while thousands of such instances have been mentioned in books of history. The Sahabah were the people who considered wealth as trivial as the household rubbish; then how could it cause them any type of harm?

Here, it can be argued that, to have wealth in abundance is not forbidden, as the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum possessed it in plenty during the days of Khulfa-e-Rashideen and the glorious early period of Islam. But, to take their case as a precedent for our times would be like a feeble and diseased person endangering his life by trying to do things that a young and strong person does. The story at No. 54 in the series of stories at the end of this book should be read carefully in this context. Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has said that wealth has an antidote as well as the poison of a snake. Its benefits are the antidotes, while its damages are like a poison.

Only he who has knowledge of its benefits and harmful effects has the power to draw upon its benefits and save himself from harm. Wealth has two types of benefits, worldly and religious. The worldly benefits are well known to all: that is why every one does his utmost to earn it. The religious benefits are three:

1. It helps directly or indirectly in the performance of worship. The direct benefit is in respect of Hajj and Jehaad, which cannot be accomplished without money. Indirectly, money is needed for purchasing food, etc., which if not available will keep a person away from religious activities. When money helps in performing worship, in that capacity, earning money itself becomes worship but only to the extent which is needed for worship; the excess over it will not be in that category.

2. The other benefit of wealth is in spending on other people, which is of four categories:

(a) To give Sadaqah to the poor and needy people. This has innumerable benefits, which have already been described.

(b) To spend on well-to-do persons, through gifts or invitations to meals, for creating good relations and friendship and to encourage others to be generous; many Ahadith mention benefits of inviting people to meals or giving them presents.

(c) To spend for the sake of preserving one's prestige and honour when there is danger from undesirable people. This also counts as Sadaqah. According to the author, a bribe given to escape harm, comes under the same category. Bribery for some material gain is Haraam (forbidden): both the giver and the receiver commit a grievous sin.

(d) To pay wages to the labourers employed for some work, which often one cannot do oneself. Sometimes, even if the work could be done by oneself, the employment of a labourer, to save precious time, for doing more useful things like studies or worship, etc., is perfectly all right.

3. The third Religious benefit concerns spending on general welfare activities. In this category would come the building of a Masjid, traveller's inns, bridges, religious schools and hospitals, etc. These will remain a source of recurring benefit, even after death.

The above is a summary of benefits obtainable from wealth from the religious standpoint. Shah Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe lists seven activities that count as worship when money is spent on them namely: (i) Zakaat and Usher, (ii) Sadaqah-e-Fitr (Fitr Alms), (iii) Voluntary Sadaqah, which includes hospitality and giving loans to needy persons, (iv) Building of Masjid, Inns and bridges, etc, as charitable endowments, (v) To perform Hajj or to help a Haji by providing food or conveyance, (vi) To spend in Jehaad, when one Dirham will count as seven hundred, (vii) To spend on members of one's family (wife and young children) and, if the means permit after that, to help the needy relatives.

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has also noted that the harmful aspects of wealth are two, the religious and the worldly. The Religious harms are of three types:

(a) Wealth leads towards sins excessively. Often one gets involved in lustful activities, ignoring the risk of becoming a pauper. If a person finds a particular sin beyond his reach, then he loses his inclination towards it, while for anything which is within one's reach his anxiety to get it becomes more intense. Wealth is a great source of power. That is why, the temptations from wealth are far stronger than otherwise.

(b) Wealth tends to increase the desire for more enjoyable things of life in legitimate directions, such as having better and better food and clothing, etc. The rich would never take simple barley bread or wear coarse clothes; luxurious living leads to increased demand for more things, which leads to increasingly heavy expenses, often beyond the income, which in turn leads to making money by illegitimate means.

Thus, a foundation is laid for fraud and hypocrisy. Too much wealth usually attracts a great many visitors and associates, and maintaining connections with them is bound to lead to vices like malice, envy and hostility. All these will create numerous conflicts, which even wealth will not be able to resolve. Deeper reflection on such matters will indicate countless damages of which wealth is the root-cause.

(c) No rich person can escape being obsessed with the desire of multiplying his wealth and property, so he remains neglectful of 'Zikr and Fikr' of Allah Ta'ala. And whatever makes one unmindful of Allah Ta'ala, will bring him nothing but a perpetual loss. That is why the Nabi Isaa Alaihissalaam has said that three evils are connected with wealth. First it is earned by improper means. Someone said, "If the means are lawful?" The reply was that the spending will be in wrong directions. Someone then asked, "If the spending is right?" The reply was that the anxiety to increase wealth and to take care of it is bound to keep the possessor from the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala, which is an incurable disease.

The remembrance of Allah Ta'ala is the essence of all prayers and worship, for which a free mind is a must, whereas a rich person, with plenty of property of varied types, remains occupied day and night with the troubles with tenants and peasants about recoveries and dues from them, about water distribution, etc.

Then there are the problems of partnership about shared land or business; there are the state officials and their agents to be looked after. The servants and the labouring class pose their own problems. The same is the fate of the business class who have plenty of worries about their partners, if the business is a joint one. And, the sole trader is beset with worries to increase his income. There are few engagements requiring attention when wealth is in the form of cash with the owner but, even then, the thought of its safety, the fear of theft and worry about the ways of spending it and the people who are jealous of him, are some of the worries that keep the owner's mind occupied with anxieties. All these are some of the harmful effects of wealth and property.

On the other hand, the person who just has enough to meet his essential needs is free from such anxieties. Therefore the antidote for the poison of wealth is to give away, for good purposes, whatever is in excess of one's legitimate personal use. If the excess is kept back, it becomes a poison and leads to vices.

May Allah Ta'ala save us all from this poison and enable us to spend our wealth on worthy causes. The apt example of wealth is that of a snake. To him, who is an expert in catching a snake and knows its ways, no harm can come from it; on the contrary, he can make an antidote from it, or get some other advantages from it. But, if an ignorant person handles a snake he will be inviting his own death.

As such, if we try to copy the example of the well-to-do Sahabah Radhiiallaho anhum and try to be rich like them, we shall only be asking for our ruin. For them, it was a different matter, because they treated wealth like ordinary firewood, as is clear from numerous examples set by them: wealth did not divert their attention from Allah Ta'ala for even a moment. In spite of this, they were always afraid of its ill effects; their histories give ample evidence.

And truly Allah Alone aids a person to do what is pleasing to Him.

EXHORTATION TO PAY ZAKAAT AND THE VIRTUES OF ZAKAAT

'Zakaat' is one of the most important fundamentals of Islam. It is well known that Allah Ta'ala has enjoined Salaat and payment of Zakaat in eighty-two different places in the Holy Qur'an. In addition, in many other places, Zakaat is mentioned exclusively.

An oft-quoted Hadith of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says: "Islam is based on five fundamentals: the declaration of belief in Kalimah Tayyebah (the testimony that there is none to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is His Rasul), the observance of Salaat, the payment of Zakaat, fasting during Ramadhan and the performance of Hajj" Another Hadith says, "Allah Ta'ala does not accept Salaat from a person who does not pay Zakaat, for he has put in the Holy Qur'an the command to pay Zakaat along with the command to observe Salaat; so do not differentiate between the two". (Kanz). The Ulama are agreed that it is an act of Kufr (heresy) to deny the obligatoriness of any one of these five fundamentals. For, these are, as it were, the five pillars supporting the entire structure of Islam and constitute the most important forms or worship.

Upon close consideration, these forms provide us two opportunities to approach the presence of Allah Ta'ala after making declaration of faith (Imaan). Firstly, a Mo'min is in the spiritual presence of Allah Ta'ala while he is performing Salaat. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "A person performing Salaat has a direct conversation with Allah Ta'ala; and, for the same reason Salaat is called 'Me'raj-ul-Momineen'. Throughout Salaat, a man is granted an audience by Allah Ta'ala and can present his needs to Him. And, as human needs are numerous and keep arising from time to time, a man has the opportunity to appear in the presence of Allah, again and again, to ask favours of Him. Many Ahadith mention the fact that whenever Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam faced any difficulty, he would at once take up Salaat.

Similarly, all the Rasuls of the past used to offer Salaat when they faced any difficulty. When a Mo'min is granted audience by Allah Ta'ala through his Salaat, he praises and glorifies Him and then implores Him for Help, as in Surah Fatihah. The Ahadith explaining Surah Fatihah state that, Allah Ta'ala responds by promising him that his Dua'a (supplication) will be accepted. For the same reason, when the Azaan is called out and the Muazzin says, "Come to Salaat", he also adds: "Come for Falah", which means 'Come for success in this world and in the Akhirah'.

Many Ahadith explain this point. Now as Allah Ta'ala grants, through Salaat, both worldly requirements and well being in Akhirah, a Mo'min pays Zakaat as a token of his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for granting him worldly gains, as a consequence of his Salaat. Thus the command: 'Observe Salaat and pay Zakaat'; may be taken to imply:

'Observe Salaat and out of the bounties We grant you, as a reward thereof, spend a paltry fraction (two and half percent) for the good of the poor who are attached to Us. In this way Zakaat becomes a mode of expressing gratefulness to Allah Ta'ala for the favours bestowed upon a person through the audience. It is quite natural and stands to reason, that a man should give something, out of the ample rewards bestowed upon him by the Sovereign, to those attached to His court. Therefore, at many places in the Holy Qur'an, the Mo'mins are commanded simultaneously to observe Salaat and to pay Zakaat, which may be interpreted as thus: Ask favours of Us through Salaat and, out of what We bestow upon you, spend some thing on those of you who are attached to Us and need assistance.

Allah Ta'ala has promised additional great rewards for this paltry amount that we spend as an expression of our gratitude to Him, for the favours already bestowed on us. Secondly, we go for Hajj to make our physical appearance in the House of Allah Ta'ala.

As Hajj involves a lot of toil and expenditure of money, its performance has been made obligatory (Fardh) once in a lifetime and only for those who can afford to undertake the journey. Before going into the presence of Allah, we purify ourselves of the filth of worldly passions through fasting during Ramadhan, which is also obligatory for a believer. To purify ourselves, we restrict our quantity of food and restrain our passions, for these are the two principal causes of spiritual laxity. It is for the above reason that the Hajj season closely follows the month of fasting. The learned scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence also follow the same sequence when they treat these subjects in their books.

The purifying effect of fasting, however, does not preclude other benefits of the month of Ramadhan, which are equally important. Most of the Ulama are of the view that the Ayat containing threats of punishment for not spending

money as Sadaqah, some of which have been quoted in Chapter Two above, were revealed concerning the non-payment of Zakaat. Obviously, it is not easy to mention all such Ayaat and Ahadith. We shall therefore, refer only to a few of them, by way of example.

A single Ayat or Hadith may suffice for a true Muslim to take heed; but it is no use quoting the whole lot of Ayaat and Ahadith for a person who is a Muslim just in name. It is enough for an obedient servant to know that his master has commanded him to act in such and such a way; but the disobedient ones will not heed a thousand warnings until they are afflicted with punishment.

AYAAT ON PAYING ZAKAAT

AYAT: 1

Establish Salaat, and pay Zakaat, and bow your heads with those who bow (in worship). (al-Baqarah: 43)

Note: Commenting on this verse, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi Rahmatullah alaihe writes:

In Islam, the devotional practices (A'amaal) fall under two broad divisions, the physical and the spiritual. The physical may be subdivided into two sections, those performed with the body alone and those involving expenditure of money. In this way, the A'amaal fall into three broad categories: The Ayat mentions all the three categories of A'maal referring to one act of each kind: Salaat is a physical act of devotion, Zakaat means giving away money to the poor, and Khushu is an inner spiritual quality.

The phrase: ma'araakioon meaning 'with those who are engaged in practising humility', suggests, very aptly, that inward humility is better attained through association with the humble minded. (Bayan-ul-Qur'an). According to the above explanation, the Arabic word 'Ruku' means devotional humility and there are many other subtle points about the Ayat, for example:-

- (i) Salaat is the most important devotional practise for a Muslim; that is why it has been mentioned foremost.
- (ii) Zakaat comes next to Salaat, in order of importance.
- (iii) Payment of Zakaat is an expression of gratitude for the favours of Allah Ta'ala, as detailed earlier.
- (iv) By inference, we can conclude that all physical acts of devotion have higher value than spending money as a religious practice.
- (v) The outward or formal aspect of a religious practice has higher value than the inward aspect associated with it, as 'humility' (which is an inner aspect of Salaat) has been mentioned after Salaat and Zakaat (which have physical form).
- (vi) Associating with those who practice humility in their worship of Allah Ta'ala is highly important for cultivating this quality in oneself. For the same reason, some divines stress the need to establish 'Khankahs', where this quality can be easily acquired in their company.
- (vii) The collective form of address in the Ayat; "Observe Salaat all of you" indicates that the instructions are meant for all the members of the Community as general practices, rather than for those of the chosen few. If we ponder further, we can infer more subtle points from the Ayat.

Another view is that the instruction ma'araakioon means perform Ruku which denotes the formal act of bowing in Salaat. Commenting on the Ayat, Shah Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe writes, in his Tafseer-e-Azizi, Briefly the Ayat means: Perform Salaat along with those who perform it; that is, perform it in a congregation. The command stresses the need to practice Salaat with Jam'at (in congregation). Congregational Salaat is a distinguishing feature of Islam, while other religions do not enjoin congregational prayers.

The Ayat refers to Ruku in particular, because the preceding Ayaat were revealed concerning the Jews, and Ruku or bowing is not part of their form of worship. Thus, the Ayat implies: 'Observe Salaat like the Muslims'. As has been explained in the book 'Virtues of Salaat', the Salaat is best performed with Jama'at so much so, the theologians regard a Fardh Salaat performed without Jama'at to be a defective performance.

AYAT: 2

And My mercy embraces all things; therefore, I shall ordain it for those (in particular) who fear Allah and pay Zakaat, and those who believe our revelations. (al-Araaf: 156)

Note: Hasan Radhiyallahu anho and Qatadah are reported to have said that, in this world, Allah's Mercy descends upon every body, good or bad, but in the Akhirah, Allah's blessings will be showered only upon the righteous people who fear Allah.

Once a desert nomad came to Masjid-an-nabawi and, after performing Salaat, prayed thus, 'O Allah, have mercy on me and on Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and let no one else share thy Mercy with us' Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam heard him praying and said, "You have restricted the extent of your Lord's Mercy, which is infinite. Allah Ta'ala divided His mercy into a hundred portions, of which He sent down one portion and distributed it in the world. By it, all created beings – jinn, men and animals – show kindness to one another (to their children, kinsmen and others) while Allah Ta'ala has kept back ninety-nine portions of His mercy".

Another version has: "Allah Ta'ala has hundred parts of mercy, of which He sent down one part to the world; by it, the created beings are kind to one another and the animals show mercy to their young ones. And, He has kept back ninety-nine parts for use on the Day of Judgment. There are quite a few more Ahadith corroborating this subject. (Durre Manthur)

Indeed, we should rejoice to know that Allah's Mercy is so vast in extent. The loving care of a mother who feels restless when she finds her child in the slightest trouble, a father's deep affection for his children upsets him when he finds them in trouble, the mutual love of blood relations, the conjugal love between man and wife, the various human sympathies and feelings of kindness for one another, which make it unbearable for one to see others in pain – all these are manifestations of Allah's Mercy asserting itself through the hearts of living beings. And, all those affections, loves and sympathies, put together, make but a hundredth portion of Allah's Infinite Mercy, of which He has kept back the remaining ninety-nine portions with Himself.

What a shame to disobey the commandments of the Lord who is so infinitely Merciful, so full of compassion for His men!

Imagine a mother who treats her son most affectionately and think how great would be her sorrow if the son disobeyed her! Then, how shocking would be the behaviour of a person who neglects the commands of Allah Ta'ala, in spite of the fact that His Compassion and Mercy to men is much vaster, to which a mother's affection for her children stands no comparison.

AYAT: 3

That which you give in usury, in order that it may increase on (other) people's property, has no increase with Allah; but that which you give as Sadaqah (Zakaat, etc), seeking Allah's Countenance, has increase manifold. (ar-Rum: 39)

Note: Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says, commenting on this Ayat: "Giving in order that it may increase" includes all manner of spending aimed at receiving more or better than what one has spent, whether the spender hopes to have increase in this world or expects to receive bountiful rewards in the Akhirah. For, in both cases, money is spent in

order that it may increase. That is why usury and Zakaat have been mentioned together. Another tradition reports Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe as saying that the Ayat refers to gifts. (Durre Manthur).

That is to say, if someone gives a gift to a person in the hope of receiving a bigger gift in return, he shall, as a rule, receive no increase in his money from Allah Ta'ala. Similarly, the gift-money given to a married couple on their marriage and the money spent on arranging a feast for a person, in the hope of receiving from him a gift, calculated to be costlier than the food to be served, shall bring no reward from Allah Ta'ala, who grants manifold increase to those alone who spend money solely to seek His pleasure.

Sa'eed Ibne Jubair Rahmatullah alaihe says; "If a gift is given with the intention of receiving a return only in this world, it shall bring no reward in the Akhirah. Obviously, when a person does not wish to be recompensed in the Akhirah, why should he receive a reward in that life?" Ka'b Qurazi Rahmatullah alaihe says, "He who gives a gift to a person with the intention of receiving a bigger gift in return, shall not receive any increase from Allah Ta'ala; but he who gives a gift to someone solely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, hoping for no return or favour from the beneficiary, shall receive ever increasing returns from Allah Ta'ala". (Durre Manthur).

It becomes evident from the above that those who give Zakaat, gifts, etc., to the people in order to win their gratitude, are, in fact, losing their own benefits owing to their insincere intention. The Ayat quoted at Serial No. 34 in chapter one is also very relevant here:

"(they says) we feed you, for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you". (ad-Dahr: 9)

And Allah Ta'ala has specifically asked Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam not to spend money with the intention of receiving an increase in return. In another place in the Holy Qur'an, Allah Ta'ala says, addressing Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam:

"And show not favour, seeking worldly gain". (al-Muddathir: 6)

As regards the rewards for spending in the cause of Allah Ta'ala and the increase promised for that, in this world and the Akhirah, we have already quoted a number of Ayaat and Ahadith to that effect, in Chapter one above. Therefore, those who spend for the cause of Allah Ta'ala should be very particular about the purity of their intentions and should not at all expect a feeling of obligation from those who receive their gifts, nor expect to get any material gain in return for their favours. Undoubtedly, it is binding upon the one receiving a gift to be grateful to the giver and express his thanks to him.

But if the giver has any intention of expecting or receiving such thanks, his spending shall cease to be regarded as an act of devotion performed for the sake of Allah; it will rather count as a deed performed for worldly gains. Especially, in case of Zakaat, a man should not, in the least, think of obliging the poor because, while paying Zakaat, he is performing his obligatory duty (Fardh) and doing no favour to anyone. Quite significantly, the Ayat promises manifold increase to those who pay Zakaat, thereby seeking Allah's pleasure.

AHADITH ON THE VIRTUES OF ZAKAAT

HADITH: 1

Ibne Abbas Radhialloho anho says: "When the Ayat meaning: and those who hoard gold and silver...was revealed, the Sahabah Radhialloho anhum felt greatly concerned; so Umar Radhialloho anho said that he would solve their difficulty. He, therefore, went and told Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam that the Sahabah were upset by the Ayat. Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam said, "Allah Ta'ala has made Zakaat obligatory in order to purify the property that remains with you after payment of Zakaat; and the procedure for inheritance exists in order that property should remain with those who inherit it after you.

Upon this, Umar Radhialloho anho said, "Allaho-Akbar (Allah is great)" with joy. Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam then added, "Shall I not inform you about the best thing a man can keep as a treasure?" It is a woman of

virtue who pleases her husband when he looks at her, obeys him when he asks her to do a thing and guards his things (also her virtue) when he goes away from her".

Note: The Ayat mentioned in the Hadith has been quoted at Serial No. 5 in Chapter Two above. It seems to mean that all manner of hoarding, however indispensable, shall be severely punished in the Hereafter; so the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum were seriously upset because, sometimes, hoarding of money become indispensable; they feared lest they should find it difficult to fulfil this commandment, whereas obedience to Allah Ta'ala and to His Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was a matter of life and death for them. So, Umar Radhiallaho anho approached Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to dispel their anxiety by explaining the Ayat.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam thereupon assured that Zakaat has been made obligatory in order to purify the property that remains with a person after paying what is due on it. This proves the admissibility of withholding money, because Zakaat falls due on the property that remains with a person for one complete year. If hoarding were disallowed in all circumstances, there would be no need to enjoin Zakaat.

The Hadith thus indicates the virtues of Zakaat. Apart from the reward one gets for performing it, Zakaat also purifies the remaining property. In the Holy Qur'an, there is a clear reference to the purifying effect of Zakaat in the following Ayat:

"Take Sadaqah of their wealth, wherewith you may purify them (of the effect of sins)" (at-Taubah: 103)

A Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Pay Zakaat out of your wealth; it is a means of purification for you". (Kanz). According to another Hadith, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Pay Zakaat; it is a great purifier and, through paying it, Allah Ta'ala will purify you (of sins)" Still another Hadith has: Protect your wealth from the uncleanness of sins, or from going waste, by paying Zakaat and treat your sick with giving away money as Sadaqah, and make supplications (Dua'a) to guard yourself against calamities. (Kanz) Another Hadith puts it as follows:

"Protect your property by means of Zakaat, treat your sick with spending in Sadaqah and seek help from Allah against calamities by beseeching Him through humility". (Kanz)

Then, in the main Hadith quoted above, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gives another proof of the admissibility of withholding money through the requirements of inheritance. If withholding money were not permissible, there would be nothing to inherit.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then warned the Sahabah that, though hoarding of money is admissible as the last resort, it is not a thing to be kept stored in coffers; it is better to spend it. The best thing for safe custody is a virtuous wife. Some versions of the Hadith say that the Sahabah asked as to what was the best thing to be treasured and Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied that it was a virtuous woman. Thauban Radhiallaho anho relates that they were on a journey with Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam when the Ayat was revealed:

"And those who hoard gold and silver...."

Some of the Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum said, O Rasulallah, we wish we knew what are the best things to be treasured and taken care of. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "A tongue that remains occupied with the remembrance (Zikr) of Allah Ta'ala, a heart filled with gratitude (to Allah Ta'ala) and a virtuous wife who aids her husband in the performance of religious practices. (Durre Manthur).

It has been related in another Hadith that when the Ayat (mentioned above) was revealed, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, repeating his words thrice, "Woe to gold and silver, How cursed are they!" The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum asked, "What is the best thing to be protected and prized as treasure?" Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "A tongue that remains occupied with the remembrance (Zikr) of Allah, a heart filled with fear of Allah and a virtuous wife who helps her husband in the observance of religious obligations and devotions". (Tafseer-e-Kabir)

How fine are the sayings of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and how aptly stated! In a few words, he has indicated the admissibility of withholding money, together with the commendability of keeping nothing back with oneself, and also defined a mode of living which ensures peace in this life and success in the Akhirah. This life-pattern consists in keeping one's tongue occupied with Zikr, having a heart filled with gratitude to Allah and living with a devout, virtuous, sensible and submissive wife who guards her own virtue as well as the possessions of her husband, thus making his life full of comforts and all manner of joys, without exposing him to trials and temptations which wealth brings.

HADITH: 2

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Zakaat is a (great and strong) bridge of Islam".

Note: Just as a strong bridge is a convenient means of going across to a place, so paying Zakaat is a short and easy way to attain to the reality of Islam or the easiest and surest means of attaining nearness to Allah Ta'ala. Abdul Aziz Ibne Umair Rahmatullah alaihe who was a grandson of Khalifah Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe has said, "Salaat will take you half way to the presence of Allah Ta'ala, fasting will take you to the entrance of His court and Sadaqah will enable you to gain audience with Him". (Ithaaf).

There is a subtle affinity between Zakaat and a bridge, which becomes evident from the following remark by the great Sufi Sheikh Shaiq Balkhi Rahmatullah alaihe-

"We have searched for five things and discovered them in five places; abundance of livelihood through forenoon Nafil (Salaat-udh-Dhuhaa) and illumination of the grave through Tahajjud Salaat; satisfactory answers to Munkar and Nakeer (the two angels who visit the grave for Reckoning) through recitation of the Holy Qur'an; easy crossing of the 'Siraat' (the bridge over Jahannam) through fasting and Sadaqah; and a place in the shade of the Arsh (throne) of Allah on the Day of Resurrection through meditation in solitude". (Fazaile-e-Salaat)

HADITH: 3

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "If a man pays the Zakaat due on his property, it causes its evil influence to vanish".

Note: Some traditions have it thus: "When you have paid the Zakaat due on your wealth, you have caused the evil influences attached to it to disappear". (Kanz). That is to say, wealth can cause many evils to happen but, if one pays Zakaat regularly, he remains safe from its evil influence. Obviously, one shall be saved from punishment, in the Akhirah, for possessing a property, if he has paid the Zakaat due on it.

In this world also, Zakaat ensures protection of his property. This fact forms the content of the Hadith that follows immediately. And, if Zakaat is not paid, the property gets destroyed, according to the Hadith quoted at Serial No. 6 in Chapter six below.

HADITH: 4

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Protect your possessions by payment of Zakaat, treat your patients by giving Sadaqah and face the waves of affliction with supplications and crying unto Allah in humility".

Note: The Arabic word 'Hassinoo' is derived from 'Tahseen' which means building fortifications all around. The Hadith means that, as a man living in a fort is safe against attacks from all sides, similarly, the property becomes safe after Zakaat has been paid on it, like a treasure kept in a fortress. A Hadith says, "Once Rasulallah Sallallahu

alaihi wasallam was sitting at al Hateem in the Holy Masjid of Ka'bah when a man mentioned some people who had suffered a great loss because the sea waves had washed away their property.

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam said, "Whenever any property is destroyed in a Jungle or on the sea, it is because of the non-payment of Zakaat; so protect your property by payment of Zakaat, treat your patients with Sadaqah and check the calamities by making Dua'a unto Allah, because Dua'a removes a calamity that has befallen and checks it, if it is about to descend.

When Allah Ta'ala wills the survival of a people or wills that they thrive, He grants them chastity and adorns them with the manly qualities of liberality and large-heartedness. And when He wills the annihilation of a community, they indulge in breach of trust". (Kanz)

HADITH: 5

Alqamah Radhiiallaho anho says that when our group of people visited Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam he said to them, "Verily you can make your Islam perfect by your payment of the Zakaat due on your property".

Note: Obviously, a complete adherence to Islam is not possible without payment of Zakaat, which is one of the five essential obligations enjoined by Islam; the other four being: belief in 'La-ilaha-illallah, Muhammad-ur-Rasulullah', Salaat, Fasting and Hajj.

And if a person omits any one of these five fundamentals, he cannot be a perfect Muslim. Abu Ayyub Radhiiallaho anho reported that a person came to Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam and said, "Tell me what I should do to enter Jannah". Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam replied, "Worship Allah and associate no partners with Him, observe Salaat, pay Zakaat regularly and strengthen bonds of kinship".

Another Hadith says, "An Arabian nomad came and said to Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam, "Tell me what I should do to enter Jannah". Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam said, "Worship Allah and associate no partners with Him, observe Fardh Salaat regularly, pay Zakaat and fast during Ramadhan". The man said, "By Him in whose hand my soul is, I shall not add anything to this, nor fall short of it". Then when he turned away, Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam said, "If anyone wishes to look at a man of Jannah, let him look at this man". (Targheeb)

HADITH: 6

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam said, "he who observes three things will taste the sweetness of Imaan (faith): One who worships Allah alone and believes (from his heart) that there is no one to be worshipped but Allah and one who pays the Zakaat on his property, willingly, every year. In Zakaat on the animals, one should not give an aged animal or one suffering from itch or any other ailment, or an inferior one, but should give animals of average quality. Allah Ta'ala does not demand from you the best of your animals, nor does He command you to give animals of the worst quality".

Note: Though the Hadith is about the Zakaat of animals, the rule applies to all things given as Zakaat. It is not necessary to give away things of the best quality, nor is it permissible to give things of the worst quality; the true spirit of Zakaat lies in giving away things of average quality (of ones possessions). However, if someone gives away things of good quality, of his own sweet will, in order to win the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and to earn His blessings, it would be a sign of his being a blessed soul, specially favoured by Allah Ta'ala. In this regard, one should keep in view the lives of the Sahabah Radhiiallaho anhum and consider their examples carefully.

At this point, we shall relate two incidents from the lives of the Sahabah by way of illustration. Muslim Ibne Shu'bah Rahmatullah alaihe says: "Nafey Ibne Alqamah had appointed my father as head man of his tribe, and ordered him once to collect Zakaat from the entire tribe. My father sent me to collect Zakaat from them, so I came to an old man,

called Si'r Radhiyallahu anho and told him that my father had sent me to collect Zakaat from him. Si'r Radhiyallahu anho said, "What kind of animal will you take, my nephew?" I replied, "I shall select the best animals and I shall also examine whether the udders of the goats are long enough". He said, "Let me first relate a Hadith to you (so that you may know the general rule and then you may do as you like).

I lived in this land during the time of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam when two persons came to me and they said, "We are messengers of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to you and he has sent us to collect Zakaat from you". I showed them all my goats and asked them what was due on me for them. They counted the goats and said, "One goat". I selected a goat which I knew was full of milk and fat and brought it to them. They saw it and said, "This is a pregnant goat and we have been prohibited by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to accept such goats". I asked, "What kind of goat will you take, then?" They said, "A kid that is six months old or a goat in its first year".

I then went and brought a kid that was six months old. They took it and went away. Evidently, Si'r Radhiyallahu anho wanted to give the best goat of the entire lot. But he related the Hadith to the collector of Zakaat, so that he might know the general rule about collecting Zakaat on animals".

Ubbaiyy bin Ka'b Radhiyallahu anho relates:

"I was once commissioned by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as a collector of Zakaat and I went to a person who gathered his camels before me and I found, on calculation, that a one year old she camel was due from him. I said, "Give a she camel in her second year as Zakaat", but he said, "What use will be a one year old she camel to you? It is not worthy of milking or riding". He then selected a very good, fat, healthy and well built she camel and said, "Here is another; so, take it". I said to him, "I cannot take it.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is on a journey and he is going to stay at a place quite near to you. If you like, go to him and present it to him directly. If he accepts it, I shall accept it from you". The man accompanied me to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and took with him the she camel which he had presented to me. We came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and the man submitted thus, "O Rasulullah, your messenger came to me to collect Zakaat. By Allah, I never had the privilege of being commanded to pay Zakaat by you or your messengers. I presented all my camels to the collector.

He examined them and said that a one year old she camel would be due on them. But a one year old she camel has neither milk nor is it worth riding. I, therefore, presented one of my best she camels to be accepted as Zakaat, but he refused to accept it, So, I have brought it with me to present it to you. Kindly do accept it, O Rasulullah!" At this, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Only that is what was due from you, but if you want to give a better she camel, to serve you partly as Naf'l Sadaqah and partly as Fardh Zakaat, Allah Ta'ala will reward you for that". The man said, "O Rasulullah, I have brought the she camel with me so that you may accept it". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then advised that it should be taken from him". (Abu Dawood)

How ambitious were the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum to give away their best property as Zakaat! They felt proud and deemed it an honour to welcome the messenger for collection of Zakaat sent by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. They never regarded Zakaat as a tax levied upon them, but believed that payment of Zakaat was a sacred duty, which they had to perform in their own interest. Today, we keep back the best of our possessions for our future needs, but they believed that the property given away for the cause of Allah was the one well-disposed of.

Under the Ayat given at serial No. 11 in Chapter one, we have already related an incident about Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho, who allowed a man from the Banu Sulaim tribe to live in companionship with him only on condition that, whenever he asked the man to give Sadaqah out of his possessions, the man should select the best and finest things for the purpose. And the Hadith quoted at serial No. 10 in section five below states that things of inferior quality should never be given as non-obligatory Sadaqah, much less as (Fardh) Zakaat.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "When you have paid Zakaat on your property, you have paid what was due from you (if you spend more, it will count as Nafil Sadaqah). But he who gives Sadaqah out of the property earned by unlawful means (usury, bribery, etc.), will get no reward for that and he will also suffer from the evil of his unlawful earnings".

Note: This Hadith contains two subjects: Firstly, only Zakaat is due on one's property as incumbent (Wajib) levy. Apart from Zakaat, there are degrees of virtues in Nafil Sadaqah and voluntary spending for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. A Hadith says: "He who has paid Zakaat has paid what was due from him on his property; and he who gives more than what is due, is more virtuous". (Kanz)

The Hadith narrated by Dhimam Ibne Tha'labah Radhiyallahu anho is quite famous, and has been mentioned in different channels in Bukhari, Muslim and many other authentic collections of Ahadith. It relates that Dhimam Radhiyallahu anho asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam about the fundamental obligatory requirements of Islam, which the latter explained to him in detail. Among these, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam mentioned Zakaat, whereupon Dhimam asked, "Is there anything else due from me, apart from Zakaat?" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "No, but you can spend more as Nafil Sadaqah if you like".

A man sold a house during the time of Khalifah Umar Radhiyallahu anho who advised him to dig a hole in his residence and bury the sale money to keep it safe. The man asked, "Will it not be treated as Kanz Treasure (Hoarded money) for which the possessor shall be punished on the Day of Judgment?" Umar Radhiyallahu anho said, "A property on which Zakaat has been paid shall not be treated as 'Kanz'." Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho said, "I wouldn't mind keeping in my possession an amount of gold weighing as much as Mount Uhad, if I kept on paying Zakaat due on it and observing other commands of Allah Ta'ala with regard to it". (Durre Manthur).

There are many more Ahadith to that effect in the compilations of Ahadith. Therefore, the four great Imaams of 'Fiqh' (Islamic jurisprudence) and the generality of Ulama are agreed that, apart from Zakaat, nothing is due on property as such. However, there are other obligations of a Muslim which involve spending of money; for example, the maintenance of one's minor children.

There are other similar cases in which spending of money becomes incumbent upon a Muslim. Another such case is helping a man who is facing death, if food or water is not given to him immediately. It is the collective responsibility (faradh-e-Kifayah) of a community to save him from such a death.

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has written in his book, Ihyaa-ul-Uloom: Some (Tabi'een) like Imaam Nakh'ee, Sha'bi, Ataa and Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihim are of the view that there is something more due on property, apart from Zakaat. Someone asked Imaam Sha'bi Rahmatullah alaihe, "Is there anything due on property, apart from Zakaat?" He replied, "Yes", and recited the following Ayat:

"And gives his wealth, for love of Him....(to the end)"

This has been quoted in full at serial No. 2 in Chapter one. These Legists hold that it is incumbent upon the Muslim that the rich among them should supply the needs of the poor when they come to know of their necessity. According to 'Fiqh' the soundest opinion is that, when a person is driven to a stage that, if his need is not fulfilled immediately, he may suffer death, it becomes a collective obligation (Faradh-e-Kifayah) of the whole community to supply his need, though the opinions differ as to whether he should be granted a loan or a donation. (Ihyaa).

It is an incumbent (Wajib) act, in itself, to supply the need of a person who has been driven to dire necessity and may be facing death through hunger or thirst. But nothing is due from a wealthy person on his wealth, apart from Zakaat. At this point, I would like to invite the attention of my readers to two points:-

1. 'Ifraat' (Extremism). Nowadays, we are accustomed to go to extremes; so immediately, we transgress the limits of propriety. For example, it is unlawful to take another man's property except with his own sweet will. Some legists do allow taking another man's property as a last resort when someone's life is in danger.

But even in such cases, within the Hanafi school of thought, there are two views: one permits eating of carrion in preference to another man's property; the other view accepts the reverse position that, in a helpless state, instead

of taking carrion he may take another man's property with out permission. All the books on 'Fiqh' deal with this controversy. Anyhow, when a person reaches that stage of necessity where eating of carrion becomes permissible for him, he may be allowed to take food belonging to another person without his permission. Says Allah Ta'a'a:

"And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity, nor seek by it to gain the hearing of judges that you may knowingly devour a portion of the property of others wrongfully". (al-Baqarah: 188)

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "You must not act wrongfully and a man's property must not be taken, except with his own good will".

Another well known Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "If a person wrongfully takes a span of land belonging to another, he will be made to wear round his neck (on the Day of Resurrection) a column of earth, in breadth a span but in length stretching out to the extent of seven earths. (Mishkaat)

The coming of Hawazin's deputation to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is a famous incident of History, which is very much in point here. After they had been defeated in the battle, a deputation of the Hawazin tribe came to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam in order to accept Islam and asked him to return to them their property and captives, which had been taken as booty. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said that both together could not be returned to them and told them to choose one of the two, the captives or the property.

The promise to return one of the two was made because it was in the best interest of Islam and the Muslims. When the Hawazin replied that they preferred their captives, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam called the Muslims who were entitled to a share in the booty and said, "I have promised to return their captives to the Hawazin; so, those of you who are willing to release their captives, without any compensation from us, should act accordingly. As for those who want a compensation, we shall recompense them for releasing the captives that have fallen to their share.

The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum, taking the hint, said with one voice that they would be pleased to follow the example of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and release all the captives. But Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "In a large gathering, it cannot be judged for certain which of you are willing from their hearts (to release the captives). So, let your headmen talk to each one of you in private and tell me about your willingness". (Bukhari)

This is the example set by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam with regard to the care to be taken before using the property belonging to others. This Hadith is corroborated by many Ahadith to the effect that it is unlawful to take a thing belonging to another, by force or compulsion.

The virtuous Ulama are extremely careful in such matters, so much so that they do not approve of the donations which are collected in public. For, they argue, a person may donate for a cause simply because he is shy of saying 'no' in public. Hence, it is very important that we do not go beyond limits of propriety and never take anything belonging to others through some forms of compulsion.

And we should not be swept off our feet, under the influence of some movements, etc, that are launched from time to time, to hold opinions or act contrary to the precedents set by the virtuous Ulama of the bygone generations. Undoubtedly, the desire to help the poor is praise worthy but the forms of propriety set by Islam are not to be violated. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "The worst of people is he who does harm to his own life in the Akhirah, for the worldly benefit of other people". (Mishkaat)

2. So, Ifraat (exuberance) should be avoided at all costs; but no less harmful is the habit of acting upon the Minimum which, in this regard, consists in feeling satisfied by restricting ourselves to what is due on property according to the strictest calculations. True, Zakaat alone is leviable upon a property, but one should not be content to pay the minimum alone. So far, we have quoted many Ahadith in this book which make it abundantly clear that it is the property spent in our life time, for the cause of Allah, which alone benefit us in the Akhirah as it is like money deposited with Allah Ta'ala.

After a man passes away, there are few to remember him, and, in course of time, even the parents, wife and children forget about him. They shed tears of sorrow, real or false, for a few days and thereafter engage themselves in their worldly pursuits. Then, for months together, and even for long years, nobody thinks of the dead relatives.

Besides, regarding the above mentioned Hadith, one point is worthy of special notice and is of general importance. Nowadays most people say absurd and meaningless things about religion. For example, people are often heard saying, "We are men of the world; it is more than enough that we fulfil our Fardh (obligatory) duties and it is for the great saints to observe optional (Nafl) devotions".

Now this sort of reasoning is a guile of Shaitan and a sheer absurdity. The fact is that voluntary and supererogatory (Nafl) devotions are meant to make up for the deficiencies in the observance of obligatory (Faradh) religious practices. For, who can claim to have fulfilled all his Faraidh rites perfectly and strictly according to the Commandment of Allah Ta'ala. And, since lapses do occur, the supererogatory (Nafl) devotions are meant to make up for the deficiencies. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "A person finishes performing his Salaat but a tenth part of his Salaat, or a ninth part, or an eighth part or a seventh part or a sixth part or a fifth part or a fourth part or a third part or half of it is recorded as acceptable (according to the quality of his Salaat). (Abu Dawood).

The Hadith indicates, by illustration, that everyone receives a reward according to the requirements fulfilled by him in his Salaat. We are fully aware how deficient in quality our Salaats are.....and we should deem it a special favour of Allah Ta'ala if He granted us a thousandth, or even a millionth part of the reward meant for a perfect Salaat. As a matter of fact, our Salaat is not worthy of acceptance by Allah Ta'ala because of our evil deeds and deficiency in sincerity! Indeed, as described in a Hadith, our Salaat is such as deserves to be rejected and thrown back on our faces, like a wrapped up rag of shabby cloth. When such is the quality of our Salaat, we never can tell what fraction of the reward has been recorded for us!

A Hadith says: "The first thing about which people will be called to account on the Day of Judgment is Salaat. Allah Ta'ala will say to the angels, "Look into the Salaat of My servant and see whether he has performed it perfectly or not". If perfect, it will be recorded as such; if defective, the defect will be recorded. Then Allah Ta'ala will say, "See if there are some optional (Nafl) Salaats observed by My servant". If there are Nafl Salaats to his credit, Allah Ta'ala will say, "Compensate the short-comings of Fardh Salaats by the Nawafil.

Then Zakaat will be taken up in a similar way (that is, the Fardh Sadaqah will be reckoned first and then the Nafl Sadaqah to make up for the deficiency in the payment of Fardh Sadaqah). Then all the other A'maal will be considered similarly". (Abu Dawood). It follows that a person who pays Fardh Zakaat should not vainly think that he has been paying what is due from him. For, nobody knows how deficient he has been in the fulfilment of Faradh (obligatory duties). And in order to make up the deficiency, one must have a generous amount of Nafl Sadaqaat at one's credit. It is common practice that when a man goes to a court, for the pursuance of a law suit, he carries with him a sufficient amount of money, in excess of the calculated expenses, allowing for unforeseen emergencies.

And the Court of Allah Ta'ala is Supreme, where nobody can hide facts, nor can force of arguments or intercession avail anyone. It is true that the infinite Mercy of Allah Ta'ala takes precedence over everything else and all Fardh (obligatory duties) are due rights that men owe to Allah Ta'ala, Who may forego His rights if He wills and nobody would question Him if He did so. But forgiveness is not a matter of right and no one should commit a crime in the hope of mercy of the Sovereign.

Therefore, a man should regularly perform the obligatory requirements, fulfilling all the necessary conditions and observing the proper etiquettes, but he should not rest content with having fulfilled what is due from him. He must rather have in store for himself a vast collection of 'Nafl' (supererogatory) devotions, lest he should have to compensate for the defective observance of 'Fardh' on the Day of Judgment. Allama Suyuti Rahmatullah alaihe writes in his book, 'Mirqaat-us-Su'ood': Seventy Nafl acts of virtue are equal in merit to one corresponding obligatory (Fardh) act of virtue. (For example, seventy Raka'at of Nafl Salaat are equal in merit to one Raka'at of Fardh Salaat). Therefore one should be very particular about the proper performance of the 'Faradh' religious practices; for, in case of a defective performance of the 'Fardh' one shall have to compensate for the deficiency by a whole lot of Nawafil. Further more, we should also have a considerable amount of Nawafil recorded in our Book of Deeds as a precautionary measure.

The other subject contained in the main Hadith is that, if anyone procures wealth by unlawful means and then gives Sadaqah out of it, he will get no reward for that. There are a number of Ahadith to the effect that Allah Ta'ala accepts only Sadaqah from lawfully earned property.

Another Hadith says, "Allah Ta'ala does not accept the Sadaqah given out of property acquired by 'Ghulool' (dishonesty regarding the spoils of war)" The Ulama have said that the Hadith purposely mentions Ghulool, as everybody has a share in the booty. The point of the Hadith is that a property acquired dishonestly out of war is not accepted as Sadaqah, even though the dishonest person also has a share in the booty.

Obviously, a property wrongfully taken from a person, in which the giver has no share, shall be more liable to rejection by Allah Ta'ala, if it is given as Sadaqah. According to a Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "Whoever unlawfully acquires property, and spends it, shall not be blessed; neither will it be accepted from him if he gives away as Sadaqah; and if he leaves some of it behind (i.e. when he dies), it will be his provision for Jahannam". Ibne Mas'ud Radhiyallahu anho says, "He who acquires lawful property, but does not pay Zakaat on it, makes his property impure; he who acquires unlawful property and spends some of it as Zakaat, cannot purify this property by doing so". (Durre Manthur)

ON THREATS OF PUNISHMENT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF ZAKAAT

There are a good many Ayaat on the above subject, most of which have already been discussed in Chapter Two, entitled 'Deprecation of Miserliness'; the Ulama have explained that all these Ayaat pertain to non-payment of Zakaat. Obviously, the threats of punishment for miserliness apply even more aptly to non-payment of Zakaat, which, all agree, is obligatory for a Muslim.

AYAAT OF PUNISHMENT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF ZAKAAT

AYAAT: 1

"They who hoarded up gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings (O, Muhammad) of a painful doom. On that Day when it will (all) be heated in the fire of Jahannam, and their foreheads and flanks and their backs will be branded therewith (and it will be said unto them). Here is what you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard". (at-Taubah: 34-35)

This Ayat has been quoted in full at Serial No. 5 in Chapter Two above. Majority of the Sahabah and Ulama are agreed that this Ayat was concerning the non-payment of Zakaat: The severe punishment mentioned in the Ayat is meant for those who do not pay Zakaat, as mentioned earlier.

In a number of Ahadith. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has confirmed that the punishment described in this Ayat, viz. branding foreheads and their flanks and their backs with gold, etc., heated in the fire of Jahannam, is meant for those who do not pay Zakaat. We invoke Allah's Mercy to protect us against such a severe punishment. We all know how unbearably painful is the slightest touch of burning hot metal. And the costlier a man's possessions are, the greater will be the number of brandings which he shall have to experience for hoarding (worthless) pieces of gold or silver.

AYAAT: 2

"And let not those who hoard up wealth that Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. No, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be made a collar (in the form of a snake and put round their necks) on the Day of Resurrection. Allah's is the heritage of the heaven and the earth, and Allah is informed of what you do". (Aal-e-Imran: 180)

This Ayat has been quoted in full at Serial No. 3 in Chapter two above, and also the following Hadith from Bukhari, corroborating the Ayat. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says, "If anyone is granted property by Allah Ta'ala

and he does not pay Zakaat on it, his property will become for him (on the Day of Resurrection) a snake which shall be coiled around his neck and will say to him, 'I am your property; I am your treasure'.

If a snake is seen in a house, nobody has the courage to enter it in the dark, for fear lest it should attack him. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has told us that if a man does not pay Zakaat on his wealth and puts it away as hidden treasures or in steel almirahs, it shall be turned into a snake and hung round his neck on the Day of Resurrection.

Whereas the snake seen in a house may or may not attack you (it may be just a possibility), still you are frightened and look around, fearing lest it should come out of this hole or that one. The punishment for non payment of Zakaat (in the form of a snake hung round the neck is certain, yet we do not feel afraid of it!

AYAAT: 3

Qaroon (korah), whose story is well known, was a cousin of Musaa Alaihissalam. The entire eighth section (Ruku) of Surah al-Qasas (quoted above) consists of his story. A translation of the Ayaat is given below:

"Now Qaroon (Korah) was one of Musa's folk but he oppressed them and We gave him so much treasure that the keys thereof would verily have been a burden for a troop of mighty men. When his own folk said to him, 'Exult not; Lo! Allah loves not the exultant'."

"But seek the abode of the Akhirah in that which Allah has given you and neglect not your portion of the world, and be you kind even as Allah has been kind to you; and seek not corruption in the earth; Lo! Allah loves not corruptors",

"He said, 'I have been given all this on account of the knowledge I possess. Knew he not that Allah had destroyed, already of the generation before him of men who were mightier than him in strength and greater in respect of following? The guilty are not questioned of their sins'."

"Then went he forth before his people in his pomp. Those who were desirous of the life of the world said; Ah, would that to us had been given the like of what has been given to Qaroon! Lo! He is Lord of rare good fortune".

"But those who had been given knowledge said "Woe to you! The reward of Allah for him who believes and does right is better, and only the steadfast will obtain it".

"So we caused him and his dwelling place to sink in the earth. Then, he had no host to help him against Allah, nor was he of those who can save themselves".

"And the morning, found those who had coveted his place, but yesterday, saying: Ah, well a day! Allah enlarges the provision for whom he will of His slaves and straitens it (for whom He will). If Allah had not been gracious to us, He would have caused it to swallow us (also). Ah, well a day! The disbelievers never prosper". (al-Qasas: 76-82)

Note: Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says: "Qaroon (Korah) was a kinsman of Musaa Alaihissalam, a son of his paternal uncle. He was well versed in worldly knowledge and he was extremely jealous of Musaa Alaihissalam and refused to pay Zakaat, although Musaa Alaihissalam told him that he had been commanded by Allah Ta'ala to receive Zakaat from him (Qaroon).

What is more, he said to the people, 'Musaa wants to rob you, of your property, in the name of Zakaat. He commanded you to observe Salaat and you obeyed him patiently; he gave you other commands and you obeyed him against your will. Now that he is demanding Zakaat, you will have to pay it, even though it be burdensome for you'.

The people said, "It is too much for us. Could you suggest some means to evade it" Qaroon said, "I have thought of a device. Let us induce some woman of ill-repute to make a false accusation against him in public and say that he has evil designs on her". So they went to a whore and induced her to slander Musaa Alaihissalam in public, with promise of a large reward. Qaroon then went to Musaa Alaihissalam and said to him, "I suggest that you read out the commandments of Allah Ta'ala to a big gathering of the Banu Israel".

Musaa Alaihissalam liked the idea, asked Banu Israel to collect together and, when all were assembled, he began to proclaim the commandments of Allah Ta'ala to them, saying, "Allah Ta'ala commands you to worship Him, to associate no partners with Him, to maintain ties of relationship with your kinsmen...etc., etc." In the course of his discourse, he also added, "Allah Ta'ala commands that if a married man commits adultery he should be stoned to death". At this, the people said, "What if you yourself commit adultery?" Musaa Alaihissalam said, "Even I should be stoned to death if I commit adultery, whereupon people said, "You have committed it".

Musaa Alaihissalam said in surprise, "Are you accusing me of adultery?" They said, "Yes" and called the whore, and asked her what she had to say about Musaa. Musaa Alaihissalam then asked her to speak on oath. She replied, "Since you have asked me to speak on oath, the truth of the matter is that they promised to give me such and such amount as a reward and induced me to accuse you in public. You are quite innocent of the crime". On hearing this, Musaa Alaihissalam fell prostrate (in Sajdah), crying unto Allah, in which state the revelation came from Allah, "O Musaa, do not weep. We give you power over the earth in order that you may punish these people as you like.

Command and it shall obey you!" Musaa Alaihissalam raised up his head and commanded the earth to swallow them up. When they were sunk into the earth up to their ankles, they began to implore Musaa Alaihissalam in humility to grant them pardon, but he commanded the earth to swallow them further, and they were swallowed up to their necks. They cried louder and importuned him to forgive their sins, but Musaa Alaihissalam again ordered the earth to swallow them and so each one of the slandered was swallowed up by the earth.

After this, the revelation came from Allah Ta'ala to Musaa Alaihissalam, "The people were beseeching you for pardon and crying unto you in humility. By My Honour, had they cried unto Me and begged My pardon, I would have accepted their prayer".

In another Hadith, Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho is reported to have said, "The phrase 'And do not neglect your portion of the world' occurring in the Ayat means, 'Perform (good) deeds, in the world, to serve you in the Akhirah'." Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe says it means, "Showing obedience to Allah Ta'ala in this world in one's portion of it, for which one shall get a reward in the Akhirah".

Hasan Radhiallaho anho says, "Do not neglect your portion of the world" means, 'keep with you as much of worldly wealth as may suffice you for your needs; and send the rest in advance to the Akhirah'. Another Tradition reports him as saying, "Keep with you what may suffice you for a year, and give the rest away as Sadaqah". (Durre Manthur). We have already quoted one of these Ayaat at serial No. 8 in Chapter Two, entitled 'On deprecation of miserliness'.

AHADITH THREATENING PUNISHMENT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF ZAKAAT

HADITH: 1

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said, "If anyone possessing gold or silver does not pay what is due, then, on the Day of Resurrection, his gold and silver will be converted into plates that will be heated in the Fire of Jahannam till they become like plates of fire itself, and then his side, his forehead and his back will be branded with them, again and again, during a Day which will be fifty thousand years long. Thereafter he will go to his destined, Jannah or Jahannam....."

Note: The above quotation forms part of a comprehensive Hadith which describes the various modes in which the owners of camels, cows, goats, etc., will be punished for non-payment of Zakaat. In Arabia people possessed cattle in large number, while in our country, most people do not generally possess sufficient number of cattle to make

Zakaat obligatory; of course, gold and silver and things made thereof are commonly possessed. I have, therefore, given only that part of the Hadith which relates to the owners of gold and silver.

One can judge from the Hadith as to how severe will be the torment of those who do not pay Zakaat on their property. On the Day of resurrection, they will be branded with the plates of gold and silver heated in the fire of Jahannam, which will be their punishment on that Day alone, which will be fifty thousand years long.

After going through so much torture, they may be sent to Jannah if the virtues performed by them are found to outweigh their sins; but if they are found to be short of virtues, and no pardon is granted to them, they will be condemned to Jahannam to suffer more punishment for these sins. And the details of the torment in Jahannam are too harrowing to be expressed in words!

According to this Hadith, the span of the Day of Resurrection will be fifty thousand years, and the fourth Ayat of Surah al-Ma'aarij also has, to the following effect: 'A Day whereof the span is fifty thousand years'. Some Ahadith say that the Day will be made easy for the pious believers (Mo'mineen) so that, for them, it will be as easy to endure as a Fardh Salaat. For others, its duration will be shortened to the period of time between Zuhr and Asr Salaat, according to their good deeds. (Durre manthur). 'Its duration will be shortened' means that, as they will be engrossed in amusements and recreations, they will not realize the length of that duration; those who frequently indulge in recreation know full well that hours of joy pass away unnoticed, like minutes and seconds.

A Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, (while branding), one heated dinar will not be placed above the other; instead, the body of the man suffering punishment will be so enlarged that all the hoarded coins will be placed on it, side by side, each heated coin touching his body, and then it will be said unto him, 'Now taste of what you used to hoard!'

Thauban Radhiyallahu anho is reported as saying: "All the gold, silver, etc., hoarded by the man (withholding Zakaat) will be beaten out into small pieces, each weighing one Qiraat (0.195 gram); then each piece will be heated in Jahannam till it begins to burn like fire; and then his entire body, from head to foot, will be branded with these burning pieces. After this punishment he will either be granted pardon or sent to Jahannam". (Durre Manthur). The torment of branding described in this Hadith has also been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, as in the relevant Ayat at serial No. 5 in Chapter Two.

Some Ahadith state that the property on which Zakaat has not been paid will be transformed into a snake and hung round the man's neck.

HADITH: 2

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has been reported as saying, "If Allah Ta'ala gives anyone property and he does not pay Zakaat on it, his property will be transformed for him into a large bald snake with two black spots over its eyes, which will be put round his neck on the Day of Resurrection, will hold both of his jaws and say to him, 'I am your property; I am your treasure'. He then recited: 'Let not those who hoard up what Allah has bestowed upon think.....' to the end of the Ayat.

Note: The Ayat mentioned in the Hadith has been quoted in full at serial No. 3 in Chapter two above. In the Hadith, the snake has been named as 'Shujaa' which, according to some Ulama, means a male snake; while others have said that the 'Shujaa' is a kind of snake which can stand erect on its tail, and attack a man. (Fathul-Bari). Another characteristic of the snake mentioned in the Hadith is that it will be bald; a snake becomes bald because of excessive venom.

The third characteristic of the snake is that it will have two black spots over its eyes, which is also a sign of an extremely venomous species (such snakes also live longer). Some Ulama have translated 'two black spots' as two blobs on the corners of its mouth because of excessive venom. Others interpret the word as 'two fangs sticking out of its mouth'. Still others have said that it means 'two bags full of poison dangling on both sides of the snake'. (Fathul-Bari)

This Hadith states that the defaulter will have his property transformed into a snake, which will be hung round his neck. The preceding Hadith relates that the gold, etc., will be heated in the fire and he will be branded with it. Both modes of punishment have also been described in two different Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an, quoted at serial No. 3 and 5 in Chapter two above.

The Ahadith should not be taken as contradictory to each other. For, they may be understood to mean that (i) the defaulters will be punished in different ways on different occasions; or; (ii) the modes of punishment shall vary, according to the various classes of people; or (iii) the defaulters shall undergo both punishments simultaneously.

Shah Waliullah Muhadith Dehlavi Rahmatullah alaihe writes in his book, Hujjatullahil Balighah: The modes of punishment shall vary from having a snake coiling round one's body to being branded with burning plates of gold, etc. For a man adoring wealth in general, his property shall be transformed into one monstrous snake, which will chase him and bite him. As for him who loves each and every item of his property, "counts the coins, arranges them and fondles them lovingly, converts everything into gold and silver and hoards it up", his coins, etc., will be beaten into plates burning with fire and he will be branded with them.

A Hadith says that whoever leaves behind a hoarded treasure will find it transformed, on the Day of Resurrection, into a bald snake, with two dark spots above its eyes, which will chase him. The man will say to it, "What monster are you?" and the snake will reply, "I am your treasure that you left behind". The snake will then bite and devour his body, beginning with his hand. (Targheeb). While undergoing punishment, on the Day of Resurrection, if the body of a person is reduced to pieces, it will resume its original shape before the same punishment is inflicted upon it once again and so on.

HADITH: 3

Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho has said, "We have been commanded to perform Salaat and to pay Zakaat. So, Salaat will not be accepted from a person who does not pay Zakaat on his property".

Note: In other words, he will not be granted any reward by Allah Ta'ala for his Salaat, although he will be deemed to have fulfilled what was obligatory upon him. Another Hadith says: He who does not pay Zakaat is not a (perfect) Muslim and his good deeds will not avail him". (Targheeb). That is to say, his good deeds will not avail him for warding off the punishment prescribed for non-payment of Zakaat; it will remain due from him, until paid. According to another Hadith; 'He who does not pay Zakaat has no religion'.

Still another Hadith has: 'Allah Ta'ala does not accept Salaat from a person who does not pay Zakaat; Allah Ta'ala has joined the command to observe Salaat with that of paying Zakaat (in scores of places) in the Holy Qur'an. So, do not separate them'. (Kanz). Separating the two means: observing Salaat and not paying Zakaat.

HADITH: 4

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Allah Ta'ala has enjoined upon the rich to pay (Zakaat) on their wealth, as much as should suffice for the poor ones among them. And nothing distresses the poor, when they are hungry or naked, more than the neglectfulness of the rich who do not pay what is due from them (i.e. do not pay it in full). Beware! Allah Ta'ala will call such people to a stern account and punish them with most severe punishment (for the neglect of their obligatory duty)".

Note: The Hadith means that Allah Ta'ala, Who is All Knowing, has made it compulsory (Fardh) for the rich Muslim to give away (as Zakaat) the precise fraction of their wealth which, if fully paid according to the prescribed standards, would suffice for the needs of the poor among the Muslims, so that no member of the Ummah would starve or suffer from want of clothes.

This fact is definite and self-evident. The point has been explained more clearly in a detailed Hadith related on the authority of Abu Zarr Ghifaari Radhiallaho anho, which has been included by Faqeeh Abul Laith Samaraqandi Rahmatullah alaihe in his book, 'Tanbeeh-ul-Ghafilin'. In this Hadith, the narrator, among other questions, asked

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam "O Rasulallah you have commanded us to pay Zakaat; what is Zakaat?" Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "O Abu Zarr, he who is not trustworthy has no Imaan; and the Salaat of a person who does not pay Zakaat, is not accepted; Allah Ta'ala has enjoined upon the rich that much Zakaat (on their property) as would suffice for the needs of their poor.

On the Day of Resurrection, Allah Ta'ala will call them to account for the Zakaat due on their property and punish them for any default". This Hadith clearly indicates that the above mentioned saying of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is specifically about Zakaat.

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe writes in 'Ihya-ul-Uloom' that Allah Ta'ala has threatened with dire punishment those who neglect to pay Zakaat. The Holy Qur'an says:

"They who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the path of Allah...." To the end of the Ayat (at-Taubah: 34-35)

Where 'spending in the path of Allah' means paying Zakaat on one's property. He then goes on to say that Zakaat is of six kinds:

1. Zakaat on the animals
2. Zakaat on gold, silver, etc.
3. Zakaat on wealth invested in business.
4. Zakaat on mines or hidden treasures, etc.
5. The Sadaqat-ul-Fitr (Wajib) paid at the end of Ramadhan.

All the four Imaams (legists) of Fiqh are agreed that Zakaat is due on all the six kinds of property listed above, except that the Hanafi school holds that, instead of Zakaat, one-fifth (khumus) of the wealth procured from a mine is incumbent (Wajib) upon its owner. Certainly, If every Muslim is particular above regular payment of Zakaat due on each kind of property every year, no poor man would ever die of hunger.

Some Ulama have inferred from the above Hadith related by Ali Radhiyallahu anho that something more than Zakaat is due on property, but the view is not tenable; this interpretation of the Hadith contradicts another Hadith related by Ali Radhiyallahu anho himself, which says, "Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said that Zakaat has abrogated the obligatory nature of all other Sadaqaat".

This Hadith has also been transmitted in a 'Merfoo' (traceable to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) form. Imaam Razi Jassass Rahmatullah alaihe has written in his book, 'Ahkaam-ul-Qur'an' that it is a saying of Ali Radhiyallahu anho, which has been confirmed through a more reliable chain of transmission.

The Compiler of 'Kanz-ul-Ummal' has quoted the same Hadith, from several collections of Ahadith, with the version: 'Zakaat has abrogated every other Sadaqah' (previously taken to be obligatory) mentioned in the Holy Qur'an; the obligatory bath taken after sexual intercourse (Ghusl-e-Janabat) has abrogated obligatory nature of all other baths; the fasting during Ramadhan has abrogated the obligatory nature of all other fasts, the slaughtering of sacrificial animals on Eid-ul-Adhhaa has abrogated all other obligatory slaughters of animals. Ali Radhiyallahu anho has said, "If a man were to possess all the wealth of the world, with the pure motive of winning Allah's pleasure by spending it for the cause of Allah, he could still claim to be an ascetic.

This saying has also been quoted in Chapter six, below. Some Ulama have said that, before the commandment of Zakaat, it was obligatory to give away (as Sadaqah) all that exceeded one's needs, but the command to pay Zakaat abrogated (automatically) the previous injunction. Allama Suyuti Rahmatullah alaihe has said that Suddi Rahmatullah alaihe held the same view, which he has expressed in his commentary on the half Ayat:

"Keep to forgiveness (O, Muhammad) and enjoin kindness...." (al-A'raaf: 199)

Therefore implying the above, even if something had been made obligatory to be paid on property, it has since been abrogated by Zakaat. Moreover, such a reading goes against another Hadith which reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Whoever has paid Zakaat, has fulfilled what was due on his property; and if anyone gives more than that, it will be an additional credit for him". (Kanz, related on the authority of Hasan Rahmatullah alaihe in 'Mursal' form).

We have already quoted above several Ahadith of the same import, and even clearer is the following Hadith, narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho and similar to the one related by Ali Radhiallaho anho: "If Allah Ta'ala considered the amount of Zakaat received from the rich insufficient for the needs of the poor, He would have made it obligatory for them to pay something more, apart from Zakaat.

So, if now the poor suffer from hunger, it is because of the wrong-doing of the rich". (Kanz). In other words, as the rich do not pay in full the Zakaat due from them, the poor have to starve for want of food. In his book, "Majma-uz-Zawaid", Haithani, the Muhaddith Rahmatullah alaihe, has transmitted this Hadith on the authority of Ali Radhiallaho anho, quoting it in the very beginning of the chapter entitles 'On the obligatoriness of Zakaat'. For the same reason, the author of 'Kanz-ul-Ummal' has included it in the 'Book on Zakaat'.

Hafiz Ibnu Abdil Barr Rahmatullah alaihe says, "The Ayat beginning:

(They who hoard up gold and silver.....)

and other similar Ayaat apply to those who do not pay Zakaat on their hoarded property. This is the consensus of the Ulama of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) and the same view was held by the Sahabah viz Umar, Ibne Umar, Jabir, Abdullah, Ibne Mas'ud, Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anhum.

The following Hadith, transmitted by Abu Dawood and others, also supports this view: Umm-e-Salmah Radhiallaho anha says that she was once wearing an ornament of gold and she asked Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, "Is this (ornament) to be treated as Kanz (hoarded treasure, the owner of which shall be severely punished on the Day of Judgment)?" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Any property on which Zakaat is payable is not 'Kanz', provided the Zakaat is paid on it". Furthermore, this is corroborated by the following Hadith, transmitted by Tirmizi Rahmatullah alaihe and Hakim Rahmatullah alaihe on the authority of Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho, "When you have paid the Zakaat, you have fulfilled what was due from you on your property".

Another Hadith, transmitted on the authority of Jabir Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "After you have paid Zakaat on your property, you have purified it of its inherent evil". Haakim Rahmatullah alaihe has transmitted the same Hadith saying that it is a "Marfoo" Hadith (traceable to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) according to the standards set by Imaam Muslim Rahmatullah alaihe.

Baihaqi Rahmatullah alaihe says that it is a 'Mauqoof' Hadith (not traceable to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), as the chain of its authorities reaches up to Jabir Radhiallaho anho, a Sahabi. Abu Zar'ah Rahmatullah alaihe also calls it a 'Mauqoof' Hadith, with the chains of its transmitters reaching up to Jabir Radhiallaho anho and says that it is a Sahih Hadith with the wording: "The property on which Zakaat has been paid is not 'Kanz' (hoarded treasure)". Ibne Umar and Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anhum have also reported the same words.

Ataa Rahmatullah alaihe and Mujahid Rahmatullah alaihe have said, "The property on which Zakaat has been paid is not a 'Kanz', even though it be buried in the ground; and the property on which Zakaat has not been paid is a 'Kanz', even though it be lying on the surface of the earth". Here, of course, the word 'Kanz' denotes a term of Shariah (Islamic Law) and it has not been used as a common word with usual dictionary meanings.

(That is to say, though Kanz literally means a hidden treasure, in Shariah (Islamic Law) it is a term applied to any property on which Zakaat has not been paid). Barring a few exceptions, I have not found any one holding a view at variance with the one mentioned above that the term Kanz applies to the property on which Zakaat has not been paid.

However, a few illustrious Sahabah like Ali and Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anhuma and some of the ascetics (Zaahid) among the followers (Tabi'een), like Dhahhaak Rahmatullah alaihe, have said that something more, apart from Zakaat, is due on one's property. Of these, Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho has gone so far as to say that provision exceeding one's sustenance is to be regarded as kanz.

Ali Radhiallaho anho has been reported as saying that the amount exceeding four thousand (Dirhams, etc.), is to be treated as kanz while Dhahhak Rahmatullah alaihe says that ten thousand Dirhams is to be considered as property in excess. Ibrahim Nakh'ee, Mujaahid, Sha'bi and Hasan Basari Rahmatullah alaihim are of the view that something more is payable as Sadaqah on wealth, apart from Zakaat.

Ibne Abdil Barr Rahmatullah alaihe says that, with the above exceptions, all other scholars of the earlier and later ages are agreed on the point that kanz is that property on which Zakaat has not been paid, and they opine that the Ayat and Ahadith quoted by the Ulama of the other school of thought (in support of the view) actually emphasize the desirability of spending more than the prescribed amount, rather than advocate its obligatoriness, or else these commandments were revealed prior to the command to pay Zakaat, which has abrogated all previous commandments, just as the command to fast on the 10th of Muharram was abrogated when fasting during Ramadhan was made obligatory.

Still, the fact remains that fasting on 10th Muharram (as a supererogatory act), or spending more than the prescribed amount (as Nafil Sadaqah) are acts of virtue. (Ittehaf)

This view is also supported by the fact that when the Muhajireen among the Sahabah emigrated to Madinah Munawwarah, they possessed nothing in the world; so Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam established the bond of brotherhood (Muakhaat) between the well-to-do Ansaar of Madinah Munawwarah and the poor emigrants (Muhajireen) from Makkah.

The Ansaar proposed that half the property belonging to each one of them should be given to his brother from among the Muhaajireen, but Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam did not accept the suggestion and, instead, told the Muhajireen to work on the fruit-plantations owned by the Ansaar, in return for a share in the produce.

Under such conditions, the bond of brotherhood was established between Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf and Sa'd bin ar-Rab'i Ansaari. Sa'd said to Abdur Rahman, "It is known to everybody that I am the richest person among the Ansaar; I request you to accept half of my property". But Abdur Rahman Radhiallaho anho declined to accept the offer and said, "Guide me to the market". So, Abdur Rahman Radhiallaho anho went to the market and started business.

If the poor had a right to take the extra wealth of the rich, without being driven to it by extreme want, why did Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam refuse to take the property of the Ansaar? Why did Abdur Rahman Radhiallaho anho refuse to have his (due) right?

The collections of Ahadith and biographies of Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam contain innumerable incidents about the Ashaab-us-Suffah, the poor emigrants (Muhaajireen) who lived on a platform in the Holy Masjid at Madinah, without any means of subsistence, sometimes going without food consecutively for many days.

They would sometimes fall to the ground from starvation. Even though there were many rich Sahabah among the Ansaar, Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam did not compel anyone to distribute his extra wealth among these people, though he often exhorted them to help the needy.

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho says that there were seventy people in the Suffah and not one of them had a full sheet of cloth (to cover his body). (Durre Manthur). Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho has related many incidents about his own hard life, which are contained in the collections of Ahadith. He says, "By Him Who Alone is to be worshipped, I used to lie with my stomach pressed against the ground, suffering from pangs of hunger. On some occasions, I tied a stone to my stomach (to appease the spasms of hunger).

Once, I intentionally sat the wayside for someone to invite me to his house. Soon Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho passed that way. I entered into conversation with him and asked him a question about an Ayat, expecting him to invite me to his house, as was his wont, but he answered my question briefly and went away.

After him, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came along and, when he saw me, a smile brightened his face and he said, "Come along with me". I accompanied him to his house, where a bowl of milk was presented to him and, upon his asking, "Who brought this milk?" he was told that such and such person had sent it as a present. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then told me to go and invite all my companions of the 'Suffah'. (They had no families, nor any means to support them selves, nor was anyone responsible for providing food for them or to look after their affairs.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam would pass on to them all that he received as Sadaqah and would share with them whatever was presented to him.) When Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam bade me invite all of them, I naturally felt disappointed, for there was only one cupful of milk and there would be too many of us to share the drink. I said to myself, the milk is barely sufficient for a single person.

If I were given to drink it all, I could gain some strength by it. Also, I was aware that, when they came, I would be told to serve it to the others and a server is always the last to drink and, more often than not, he gets the least of the entire lot. But I had to comply with what Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam had told me. So, I went out and fetched all of them. When they had come, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam handed me the bowl and bade me serve it to them. I began to serve the milk, taking the bowl to each one of them in turn, who drank to his fill and finally returned the same to me.

When everybody had taken his fill, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said to me, "Only you and I are left now", and on my replying "Quite so" he said, "Sit down then and drink"; So, I drank to my heart's desire. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Have some more" and I drank more; he again said, "Have some more" and I drank some more and said, "O Rasulallah, my stomach cannot hold any more of it". He then drank the remaining milk himself".

Another story related about himself, runs thus: "Once I had nothing to eat for three consecutive days and fell on the ground while walking on the way to Suffah. The boys in the street said, 'Abu Hurairah has gone crazy' but I replied, 'Not I, but you are mad'. Somehow I managed to reach the Suffah where I saw Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam serving Thareed (bread crumbled in gravy) to my friends out of two bowls sent to him by someone.

I stood there, raising my head time and again, hoping to be noticed by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who, I thought, would invite me to share the meal with them. I waited till everybody had taken his share and nothing was left in the bowls. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then ran his fingers all around inside the bowls, gathering the left-overs into a morsel, which he placed on his fingers and said to me, 'Take this with an invocation to Allah Ta'ala'. I ate it and my stomach was filled".

Fudhala bin Ubaid Radhiallaho anho says: "Sometimes Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam sat, after performing Fajr Salaat, and saw some of the 'Suffah' brothers falling to the ground on account of pangs of hunger. He would say, 'If you knew how exalted your ranks are, in the sight of Allah, you would love hunger and poverty more than you do now".

Under Ayat No. 30, in section one above, has been related the detailed story of some people of the Mudhar tribe who came to Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, hungry and scantily clothed, having little to cover their bodies and nothing to eat, suffering from starvation.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, finding nothing inside his houses for them, then assembled the people and delivered a sermon exhorting them vehemently to give Sadaqah, whereupon people brought donations. Two piles of food and clothing gathered up in front of him, all of which he distributed among the poor tribesmen; all this was done through persuasion. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam did not compel anyone to give away money, nor called anyone to account for possessing wealth in excess of his requirements.

Anas Radhiallaho anho relates that once an Ansaari came to Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam and begged from him. Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam asked him, 'Have you got nothing in your house?' He said, "I have a piece of matting I spread a part on the ground and use the other as a coverlet, and also a wooden bowl for drinking water".

Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam asked him to bring both things to him and then auctioned these for two dirhams, which he gave to the man, directing him to buy food for his family with one dirham and buy an axe with the other and bring it to him. When he brought the axe, Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam himself fixed a handle on it and said, "Go, gather firewood and sell it, and do not let me see you here for a fortnight".

The man did as directed and came again on the fifteenth day. He had earned ten dirhams, and bought food with him. Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam said, "This is better for you than begging, which would have caused a spot on your face on the Day of Resurrection", and then added,

"Begging is allowed only for three people: One who is in grinding poverty, one who owes a heavy amount of penalty or one who is responsible for blood money, which he finds it difficult to pay".

Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam permitted these three categories of men to ask other people for help, but did not allow the man who had asked for help to beg from people, although he was extremely poor, nor did he entrust anyone with the responsibility for his provision.

In short, there are thousands of incidents related in the collections of Ahadith which bear testimony to the fact that only Zakaat, and nothing more than that, is obligatory on property. And the following oft-quoted saying of Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam also corroborates the above statement:

"The one who exceeds the limits of propriety while giving away Sadaqah (or while collecting it) is like one who refuses to pay it".

Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam appointed Dhahaak Ibne Qais Radhiallaho anho to collect Zakaat, who brought the best camels of the entire lot owned by the people. On seeing them, Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam said, "You have taken the best property of the people". Dhahaak Radhiallaho anho said, "O Rasulallah, you will soon be going on a Jehaad expedition, so I selected those camels that are good for riding and carrying equipment for Jehaad". Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam said, "Go and return these animals to the owners and fetch others of the ordinary kind". (Majma-uz-Zawaaid)

These were the instructions of Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam to collectors of Zakaat at a time when he needed equipment for Jehaad and was exhorting the Sahabah to donate for the cause, so much so that, moved by his exhortation, Abu Bakr Radhiallaho anho donated his entire belongings. Umar Radhiallaho anho gave away half of his entire possessions and Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf Radhiallaho anho once said, 'O Rasulallah, I own four thousand (dirhams or dinaars); I have kept back two thousand for my household expenses and brought two thousand to be spent for the cause of Allah Ta'ala'.

And another Sahabi said, 'I worked as a labourer all night long and received two Saa's (a measure weighing about three kgs) of dates as wages; I have left half the amount at home, for my family and brought the remaining half to present it to you'. (Durre Manthur). Abu Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho says, "Whenever Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam advised us to give Sadaqah, and some of us possessed nothing, they used to go to the market, work as porters and get a 'Mudd' (a measure of grain) of dates and then give it away as Sadaqah". (Bukhari)

The subject has been treated at length in Chapter one, under Hadith No. 24. Notwithstanding all this concern about the equipment for Jehaad, Rasulallah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam did not accept, as Zakaat, the camels for good quality instead of those of the ordinary kind (not liking to act against the general rule in collection of Zakaat). It becomes evident that, so far as the obligation is concerned, nothing more is due on property, apart from Zakaat. As for spending generously for the cause of Allah Ta'ala, irrespective of its incumbency or otherwise, a Muslim is upon to spend and not to hoard up wealth.

The Quranic Ayaat and the Ahadith of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam quoted in Chapter one of the book clearly state, in the strongest terms, the fact that wealth is really meant for spending on things which earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, (i.e. to spend much on others and, as far as possible, to spend little on their own needs). Only such wealth will be of real benefit to a man which he has deposited in the Treasury of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. spent for His sake) and no harm can come to it, unlike the banks of this world which might be looted, destroyed, or go bankrupt.

The wealth deposited with Allah Ta'ala will benefit a man on the Day when he will be in dire need of help. Allah Ta'ala says, "O man, let your treasured wealth flow unto me; for then it will be safe against fire, nor will it be stolen, nor swept away by the water; and I shall return it to you at a time when you will be extremely needy". (Targheeb)

We have quoted an Ayat at serial No. 30 in Chapter one, in which Allah Ta'ala says:

"And let every soul look to that which it sendeth on before for the morrow. And be not you as those who forgot Allah; therefore, He caused them to forget their souls". (al-Hashr: 18-19)

And the following Ayyat have been quoted at serial No. 31 in the same context:

"Your wealth and your children are only a temptation and a trial. And spend; that is better for your souls". (at-Taghabun: 15-16)

A Hadith at serial No. 1 in the same Chapter says that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "If I possessed gold to the extent of Mount Uhad, I would not like to keep any of it with me (for more than three days), except what I put aside for paying a debt". And according to the Hadith (quoted at serial No. 3 in the same context), to give away whatever surplus you have is better for you and to withhold it is worse for you".

Also, we have given at serial No. 12 in the same Chapter the similar advice of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha, in which he exhorted her to spend without making calculations, and to give away whatever she could for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. Also in point here is the incident related at serial No. 20 above, on the authority of Aishah Radhiyallahu anha, that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked what was left of a goat that they had slaughtered. When she told him that only the shoulder joint remained, while the rest had been distributed, he said, "The whole of it remains except its shoulder joint".

A number of Ahadith on this subject have already been quoted above. Regardless of what is obligatory and what is commendable or praiseworthy, one should bear in mind that only such property shall avail a person as he has remitted to the Akhirah (with his own hands) in this life. If anyone wants to protect his hard-earned money and store it away for use at a time when he shall need it badly, let him spend it for the cause of Allah.

He will not only be sure to gain rewards in the Akhirah but also receive maximum benefits in this world, for, Sadaqah is effective protection against afflictions and, by its blessings, many a person is cured of diseases and saved from meeting an evil death. A well known Hadith reports Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Envy is justified only regarding two persons one whom Allah Ta'ala has given knowledge of the Qur'an and he remains engrossed in reciting it, and acting upon it day and night; and a man whom Allah Ta'ala has given wealth and he is all the time busy spending it generously for the cause of Allah". (Majma-uz-Zawaaid).

We have already quoted a Hadith in Chapter Two, at serial No. 3, to the following effect, "Those who have much property shall gain scanty rewards, except for those who spend for the cause of Allah, with both hands, giving to those on their left and on their right, before them and behind them". In another Hadith quoted at serial No. 7 in Chapter 2, Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "He is not a (true) Mo'min at all who eats his fill while his neighbour is suffering from hunger".

We have discussed the subject in detail in the foregoing chapters of this book, the crux of which is that it is below the dignity of a true Muslim to hoard up wealth. The necessity of wealth is like the necessity to void bowels; if a person cannot ease himself for a day or two, he shall have to consult the physician, but if somebody suffers from loose bowels, he shall have to go to the doctor for treatment and cure.

Now, if the foolish person keeps this waste in his house, not bothering to sweep it away, his house will be filled with foul smell, he will go distracted and will be sure to fall a prey to diseases. Likewise, wealth is necessary for life and we have to procure it by various means; but, at the same time, it has a filthy aspect and its excess can be harmful to the soul, if it is not given away and disposed of immediately, like sewage.

The diseases that breed on wealth are: pride and vanity, disdain for others and looking down upon the humble, wanton debauchery and licentiousness, etc. In short, the rich are prone to all manner of afflictions that tarnish the soul. This is why Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam supplicated Allah Ta'ala, saying:

"O Allah, make the provision of Muhammad's family sufficient to sustain life".

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam wished that his descendants should not be made to possess excessive wealth, which brings corruption in its wake. For the same reason, we see that most of the descendants of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam do not possess much wealth.

There may be some exceptions, but they only prove the rule, and not the contrary. May Allah aid the author, the most insignificant of His men, to understand the corrupting nature of wealth. How blissful is the life of those who hate this world and its wealth!

HADITH: 5

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "If some people withhold Zakaat (refuse to pay it), Allah Ta'ala inflicts famine on them".

Note: Nowadays, the calamity of famine has become a great problem and thousands of plans are under way to save mankind from a world famine, though most of these plans seem to produce little result. The fact is that, when Allah Ta'ala sends a calamity to punish men for their sins, no power on earth can prevent its onslaught. Men may form thousands of plans to check its advance, frame numerous laws (and call the governments for aid), but a thing decreed by the Sovereign Lord of the Universe must come to pass, unless He wills it otherwise.

Allah Ta'ala has revealed to us the real malady and told us about its proper treatment and cure. Now, if we wish to redeem suffering we shall have to follow the proper remedy. It would be utter folly to indulge in the very acts that cause the disease and then complain of its spreading more rapidly.

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has specifically described for his Ummah how evil pursuits cause specific calamities and afflictions in this world; the humble author has briefly recounted all this in his booklet, 'al-l'tidaal'. As this is beyond the scope of the present book, readers may refer to that booklet and see how gravely concerned Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was about his people on that account, and how he warned them against all such evil practices, saying, in effect:

"When my Ummah falls into such and such evils; they will be afflicted with calamities like: violent windstorm, men being swallowed up by the earth, metamorphosis (faces transformed into evil shapes), earthquakes, pelting with stones from the skies, the domination of enemies over the Muslims, plagues and pestilences, mutual slaughter and bloodshed, with holding of rains, storms, the hearts becoming intimidated and awed by unknown fears, the supplications of the pious not being accorded acceptance, etc."

Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam enumerated these afflictions and misfortunes fourteen hundred years ago, together with the particular evil deeds that cause each of these. The warning was given long ago and, today, we have tested the truth of these sayings by experience.

Today the predictions are coming true, in exact accordance with the minutest details given in the Ahadith. Would that we understood the true significance of the sayings of Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, whose heart was

full of love and compassion and who was sent as a mercy, not only for the Muslims, but for all mankind; following the rules of conduct laid down by him, is extremely beneficial for all created being.

When the Muslims themselves do not set great value on these revelations, in spite of claiming to be true Muslims, how can we blame the non-Muslims for not knowing that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has taught us golden rules for protection against afflictions and calamities of this world. Even today, if mankind hold fast to these excellent forms of conduct and moral principles, they can win salvation and protection against afflictions.

Very often, the non-Muslim patients get themselves treated by the Muslim doctors or physicians and the Muslim patients often go to non-Muslim doctors for treatment. If only, people acted according to the rules prescribed by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who was undoubtedly the wisest of all wise men, what a bliss would it be to live in the world, which will become an abode of peace forever.

At this point, I think it worth referring to two more Ahadith, which contain warnings by Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam: Ibne Umar Radhiyallahu anho relates that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said; "O Fraternity of Muhajireen, there are five (dreadful) sins; if you fall into these, and I take refuge in Allah from the evil of these sins lest you fall into them (you will face horrible disasters).

Firstly, when people openly indulge in acts of shamelessness and fornication, they will be punished with plague and such diseases as were never heard of before. Secondly, when people begin to give false measure in their business dealings, they will be subjected to starvation, hardships and oppression by rulers.

Thirdly, if people stop paying Zakaat, rain will be withheld from them and, were it not for the animals, not a single drop of rain would fall upon them (as animals are innocent creatures of Allah Ta'ala, a little water would be showered for them). Fourthly, the community that does not honour its contracts and treaties will be condemned to domination by other nations, who will rob them of all their wealth and belongings.

Fifthly, a nation that enforces laws in contravention of (i.e. opposed to) the law of Allah, will be torn asunder by disruption and internal fighting". (Targheeb). If we consider these carefully, we shall see that we are suffering from most of the evils described in the Hadith and, in consequence thereof, most of the calamities mentioned therein have actually befallen us.

Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho reports that once Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Five things are in return for five acts". When someone asked what this meant, he explained, "When people are treacherous about the covenant they have made, their enemies are given power over them; when people judge and rule in contravention of the commandments of Allah, death becomes prevalent among them; when people do not pay Zakaat, rains are withheld from them; when people give short measure and weight, the produce (of their lands, etc.) becomes scanty and they are afflicted with famines". (Targheeb).

Most probably, the Hadith has been narrated in an abbreviated form. That is why the narrator has mentioned only four things in the explanation. This Hadith says that those who frame laws against the canon of Allah Ta'ala are punished with frequent deaths; the preceding Hadith states that the offence is punished with causing fighting among the members of the society. The two Ahadith may be understood to describe two different modes of punishment. Or, taken together, both may be read as meaning 'frequent deaths from mutual fighting', which has indeed become a common sight nowadays.

Both Ali and Abu Hurairah Radhiyallahu anhuma have reported Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, in effect, "When people of my Ummah do fifteen things (among these he numerated): when Zakaat is looked upon as a penalty (i.e. people pay Zakaat with a heavy heart, as though it is a penalty or, alternatively, when the collectors collect Zakaat like a tax), then look for violent windstorms, earth quakes, men being swallowed up by the earth, metamorphosis, stones being pelted from skies, and calamities following one another in rapid succession like beads of a rosary falling one after the other when its string is cut".

I have given these Ahadith, in full, in my book, 'al-I'Tidaal' and detailed all the fifteen evils that are punished with these severe inflictions. In that book, I have also quoted other Ahadith on the subject, but here, I have made a passing reference to the Ahadith as they also mention withholding of Zakaat.

HADITH: 6

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "No property is ever destroyed in a jungle or in a river for any other reason than the non-payment of Zakaat (on the part of its owners)".

Note: In other words, apart from the punishment in the Akhirah, prescribed for non-payment of Zakaat, the evil effects of withholding it also appear in this world and it causes one's property to be destroyed.

In another version of the Hadith, a story has also been related that Ubadah bin Saamit Radhiyallahu anho says that once, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was sitting in the shade, at 'al-Hateem' in the Holy Masjid of Makkah Mukarramah, a man came and said, "O Rasulullah the property of such and such household that was lying on the sea shore has been destroyed". (It might have been washed away by the sea waves).

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "No property is destroyed on land or on the surface of the sea (anywhere in the world) for any other reason than non-payment of the Zakaat due on it. So, protect your property by paying Zakaat and treat your patients with giving away (things as) Sadaqah, and check the onslaught of sudden calamities by making supplications unto Allah Ta'ala; for, a supplication removes an affliction that has fallen and also forestalls the impending calamities".

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam would often say, "When Allah Ta'ala wills the subsistence of a people or wills that they thrive, He makes them chaste and innocent of sins and adorns them with liberality, large-heartedness and gentleness of disposition. And when He wills the extinction of a community, He causes them to betray their trusts" and then recited the following Ayat from the Holy Qur'an:

"Even as they were rejoicing in that which they were given, We seized them unaware, and Lo! They were dumb-founded". (al-An'aam: 44) (Kanz)

The Ayat occurs in section (Ruku) five of Surah al-An'aam. The two Ayaat preceding it describe a general truth about the various phases in the deterioration of a community before it is finally ruined by Allah Ta'ala, in order that other people might take admonition and learn a lesson. Allah Ta'ala says:

"We have sent Ambiya already unto peoples that were before thee, and (when they denied the Ambiya), We visited them with tribulation and adversity (caused them to suffer from ailments and afflictions), in order that they might grow humble. If only, when our disaster came on them, they had been humble! (For, then, their sin would have been forgiven and they would have been shown mercy). But their hearts were hardened and the Shaitan made all that they used to do (that they had indulged in, since long) seem fair unto them (and, therefore, they remained engrossed in the pursuits that charmed their eyes).

Then, when they forgot that where-of they had been reminded, We opened unto them the gates of all things (comforts and luxuries) till, even as they were rejoicing in that which they were given, We seized them unaware and Lo! They were dumb-founded". (al-An'aam: 42-44)

We should take admonition from these Ayaat. If a man is leading a life of comforts and luxuries, in spite of his acts of disobedience, then he is in a very dangerous situation. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "When you see Allah Ta'ala granting abundance of worldly goods to a man, in spite of his persistence in acts of disobedience, it is just a way of bringing him little nearer destruction (Istidraaj)". He then recited the verse:

"When they that whereof they had been reminded, We opened unto them the gates of all things till, even as they were rejoicing in that which they were given, We seized them unaware and Lo! They were dumb-founded".

Abu Haazim Rahmatullah alaihe is reported to have said, "If you see that Allah Ta'ala continues to bestow His bounties upon you, in spite of your persistence in disobedience, be fearful of Allah. For, every bounty does not bring you nearer to Allah Ta'ala is a misfortune". (Durre Manthur).

The subject will be explained further in Chapter six, under Hadith 17. Since wealth is one of the greatest bounties of Allah Ta'ala, it should be employed as a means of achieving nearness to Him. If, instead of spending it generously for winning nearness to Allah Ta'ala, someone refuses even to pay Zakaat, which is one of the most important commandments of Allah Ta'ala, he will undoubtedly be a disobedient person and should not entertain hopes of keeping his wealth for long. For, he is himself adopting measures to destroy his property and, if his property is not destroyed in spite of his disobedience, it will be more dangerous, as it forebodes a worse misfortune. May Allah, in His infinite Mercy, save us from it.

HADITH: 7

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "Zakaat never mingles with any property without destroying it".

The Ulama have given two different interpretations of the Hadith, and both are correct, because the wording of the Hadith supports both interpretations.

One interpretation is that, if Zakaat is not paid out of a property on which it is due, it is mixed up with that property and causes its destruction. According to this reading, this Hadith conveys exactly the same meaning as indicated in the preceding Hadith. Hafiz Ibne Taimiyya Rahmatullah alaihe prefers this interpretation, as he has included this Hadith in his book, 'Muntaqaa', in a chapter captioned on paying 'Zakaat without delay'.

Humaidi Rahmatullah alaihe has also covered this Hadith, adding that, if Zakaat has become incumbent upon you and you have not paid it, then that which is forbidden (Haraam) will destroy that which is lawful (Halaal). That is to say, the amount of Zakaat, withholding which is forbidden, destroys the amount which may be kept back after Zakaat has been paid on it.

The other view, reportedly held by Imaam Ahmad Ibne Hanbal Rahmatullah alaihe, is that if a man who is rich, owning seven and a half tolas of gold (approximately 87.2 grams) or fifty two and half tolas of silver (approximately 310.3 grams) or anything of equal value, exceeding his basic needs, nevertheless receives Zakaat from others, pretending to be a poor man, the amount of Zakaat received by him will destroy the property already lying in his possession. (Mishkaat)

This Hadith contains a strict warning for those who pretend to be poor and receive Zakaat by deceiving others, though they possess enough property to make Zakaat incumbent upon themselves.

The amount of Zakaat taken in this way, causes destruction of one's own property and thus, one has to suffer a great loss in return for a paltry gain. Then it is no use cursing the thieves or those who have taken it by force. A man's wrong action causes destruction of his own property and the sin of taking Zakaat undeservedly shall remain registered against him.

HADITH: 8

Abdullah bin Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho says, "He who acquires pure property (by lawful or 'Halaal' means) but does not pay Zakaat, makes his property impure and he who acquires impure property (by unlawful or 'Haraam' means) and spends some of it as Zakaat cannot thus purify his property".

Note: What a severe threat for those who neglect to pay Zakaat. The entire property acquired by untiring efforts and hard labour, through lawful (Halaal) means, becomes impure by a slight act of niggardliness on the part of its owner and negligence in paying Zakaat!

In a Hadith Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has been reported as saying: "He who acquires by unlawful (Haraam) means, and then gives it as Sadaqah shall receive no reward for it and will face the evil consequence of

earning it unlawfully". (Targheeb). Thus, he will suffer the evil influence of unlawful earnings and receive no blessings for giving Sadaqah.

HADITH: 9

Asmaa binte Yazid Radhiyallahu anha reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Any woman who wears a gold necklace round her neck shall be made to wear a similar necklace of fire round her neck on the Day of Resurrection; and any woman who puts a gold ear ring in her ear shall have a similar ring of fire put in her ear, on the Day of Resurrection".

Note: The Hadith apparently indicates that it is unlawful for women to wear gold ornaments. Some Ulama are said that it pertains to the early period of Islam, because the Ulama are agreed to allow the wearing of gold or silver ornaments for women, as supported by many other Ahadith. Other Ulama have said that this Hadith, with many other Ahadith of the same subject import, applies to those who do not pay Zakaat on their ornaments; and certain Ahadith also support this view.

For example, a Hadith reports Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha as saying: "I visited Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam with my maternal aunt, both wearing gold bracelets on our hands. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked, "Do you pay Zakaat on your bracelets?" and when we replied, "No", he said, "Aren't you afraid of having bracelets of fire on you by Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Resurrection? Do pay Zakaat on them". (Targheeb). The Hadith clearly states that women shall be made to wear ornaments of fire on the Day of Resurrection, in case they have not paid Zakaat on their ornaments.

Muslim women should be very particular about paying Zakaat, lest the ornaments adorning their persons today should become the blazing flames of Jahannam and torment their bodies, on the Day of Resurrection. The Hadith reports Asmaa Radhiyallahu anha as saying that she did not pay Zakaat on the bracelets.

It was perhaps because, at that time, she was ignorant of the law of Zakaat about ornaments. The fact becomes evident from another Hadith in which she is reported as asking a question on the same point. Or, probably she regarded ornaments to be one of the basic needs of a woman (like clothing) though, actually, it is not one of the necessities of life, but something referring exclusively to gold ornaments, but apply to silver ornaments as well.

Aishah Radhiyallahu anha says; "Once, when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came to my house while I was wearing two thin bracelets of silver on my hand, he asked, "What is this Aishah?" I said, "I have got these two ornaments to adorn myself for you". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked, "Do you pay Zakaat on them?" I said, "No". He said, "This is sufficient to take you to the fire of Jahannam". (Targheeb).

Here, in addition to the reason mentioned under the preceding Hadith, another possible reason why she said so might be that silver bracelets are usually light and, as such, their weight is less than the prescribed limit for making Zakaat payable on them. And the saying of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam may be understood to mean that, if even a small ornament when taken along with others totals up to the prescribed standard, it becomes incumbent to pay Zakaat on them.

It has been related in another Hadith to the effect that a woman came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam accompanied by her daughter who wore two heavy gold bangles on her hands. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked her, "Do you pay Zakaat on them?" She replied, "No". He then said, "Will you be glad to have Allah Ta'ala put two bangles of fire on your hands, on the Day of Resurrection?" Hearing this she placed the bangles before Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and said, "I give these away for the sake of Allah and His Rasul". (Targheeb)

It was a peculiar characteristic of the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum, men and women alike, that on hearing a command given by Allah Ta'ala or His Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, they accepted it and hastened to comply with it without hesitation or argument.

According to these Ahadith, the same rule applies both to gold and silver ornaments, and those who do not pay Zakaat on ornaments of either kind are threatened with the fire of Jahannam on the Day of Resurrection. It makes little difference with one Hadith mentioning only gold and the other, only silver.

Some Ulama have said that all Ahadith that do not mention Zakaat and make a distinction between gold and silver, do so because of vanity in adornments of the body. Accordingly a tradition transmitted by Abu Dawood and Nasaai, also corroborates this view: "O Women, don't you consider silver good enough to make ornaments with, for adorning yourselves? I assure you that any woman who adorns herself with gold, which she displays, will be punished for it". (Targheeb).

It is commonly observed that women do not set much value upon silver ornaments, especially among those ladies who have vanity because of their so called high birth and do not consider silver ornaments to be fit objects for display or showing their superiority. If such a woman is wearing silver bracelets she would not, at all, think of displaying them, but with gold bracelets she will, out of her vanity, try to attract the attention of other people towards these by lifting her hands to adjust her head dress, or wave her arms pretending to drive away a fly, and when she meets a visitor or she herself goes to visit someone else, her head dress seems to slip every now and then and she raises her hands each time to readjust it, in order to show off her bracelets.

It seems that the head dress will never stay in place, and the fly she is trying to drive away will never let her alone. All these motions and gestures are mere excuses to display her gold bracelets. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that ornaments should not be worn for the sake of vanity and Zakaat should be regularly paid on the ornaments. If someone does not have due regard for both these points, she will have to suffer punishment in Jahannam.

HADITH: 10

Dhahaak Radhiiallaho anho says, "When Allah Ta'ala ordered the payment of Zakaat, some people among the 'Munafiqeen' (Hypocrites) would, give (as Zakaat) fruits of the worst quality that they possessed. At this, Allah Ta'ala sent down the Ayat:

Note: The verse referred to in the Hadith is given below, in full:

"O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have earned (on good causes) and (spend the fruit etc. of the best quality) out of that which We bring forth from the earth for you, and seek not the bad (with intent) to spend thereof (as Sadaqah), when you would not take it for yourselves save with disdain if someone were to give you similar things as a gift, or while paying back what he owed you); and know that Allah is Absolute and worthy of all praise". (al-Baqarah: 267)

There are a number of Ahadith explaining this Ayat and all of them carry almost the same meaning. Baraa Radhiiallaho anho relates, "These Ayaat were revealed concerning us, the Ansaar of Madinah. We owned orchards and each one of us brought small or large quantities of fruit to the Masjid, according to the produce of his fruit plantation. Some people would bring one or two clusters of dates, etc., and hang them up in the Masjid.

Whenever any of the poor ones living in the 'Suffah' felt hungry, he would go to the hanging bunch, strike it with a stick and eat the few ripe or unripe dates that fell off it, to satisfy his hunger. Others who had a weak interest in Sadaqah, used to bring clusters of the worst quality. The above Ayat was revealed on this account and it means that if you were given bad or rotten fruit as a gift, you would accept it just to avoid embarrassment in returning it to the donor, otherwise you would not be happy to accept it. After this, those people began to present clusters containing dates of good quality".

There are numerous Traditions on this subject. Another Hadith has the following narrations: Some people bought goods of the cheaper quality from the market and then gave them away as Sadaqah; so the above Ayat was revealed concerning this habit. Ali Radhiiallaho anho relates that this Ayat was revealed concerning obligatory Zakaat. There were some people who, when they picked dates, selected and put away those of the best quality and, when the collector came to collect Zakaat, put before him the fruit of inferior quality. A Hadith says: "Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam entered the Masjid with a stick in his hand, with which he struck a bunch of

dates of very inferior quality that someone had hung up there and said, "If the owner (of the Sadaqah) had hung up a bunch of better dates, what harm would have come to him? He will be given dates of the same poor quality in Jannah". (Durre Manthur).

Aishah Radhiyallahu anha reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying: "Do not give to the poor what you would not eat yourself". (Kanz). It has been narrated in another Hadith that Aishah Radhiyallahu anha once intended to give some spoilt meat as Sadaqah, but Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said to her, "Do you want to give as Sadaqah what you do not like to eat yourself?" (Jam-ul-Fawaaid). The Hadith means that, as you are giving away Sadaqah for the pleasure of Allah, try to give the best goods, as far as possible. But this does not mean that, if someone cannot afford good things, he should not even give things of poor quality, which would mean that such persons would give nothing as Sadaqah.

It is better to give away something, be it of an inferior quality, than not to give anything at all. Of course, giving away things of bad quality can also be a way of withholding Zakaat. We have already quoted a Hadith at serial No. 6 in Chapter four, which lays down the rule about the quality of things to be given as Zakaat: Allah Ta'ala does not demand from you the best of your property, nor does He require you to give the worst. You are required to offer the average quality of goods.

During his caliphate, Abu Bakr Siddiq Radhiyallahu anho wrote a letter to his subordinates telling them, in detail, the commandments of Allah Ta'ala regarding the collection of Zakaat. He wrote, in the beginning of the letter: These are the orders for collection of Zakaat; The people may pay to the collector if asked to pay according to the prescribed detail, but whosoever asks for more than that, must be refused.

When sending Mu'az Radhiyallahu anho to the Yemen as a governor, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam advised him to command people to observe Salaat and to pay Zakaat, and then said, "When they pay Zakaat, avoid taking the best of their property; and protect yourself against the curse of an oppressed person, for there is no barrier between Allah Ta'ala and the supplication of the oppressed".

Imaam Zuhri Rahmatullah alaihe says, "When the collector of Zakaat sent by the government comes, the goats should be apportioned into three flocks; one containing the best of the whole lot, another containing the worst and another containing those of medium quality. The collector should then take Zakaat from among those of the medium quality". (Abu Dawood).

That is to say, this is the guideline to be observed while collecting Zakaat, but if the giver wants to give the best of his possessions, of his own sweet will, it may be accepted from him, as illustrated by the incidents from the lives of the Sahabah Radhiyallahu anhum related under Hadith six in chapter four of the book, together with a Hadith that, if someone gives the best of his possessions or something in excess of what is due from him, Allah Ta'ala will grant him additional rewards for that. Therefore, the donor should select the best of what he possesses for giving as Sadaqah, because only such property as is spent for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala shall be really of benefit.

Imam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe says that whosoever wants to pay Zakaat, keeping the Akhirah in view, must follow certain rules and observe proprieties, and has explained those rules and proprieties in great detail. In the following pages, these rules are discussed briefly and with occasional necessary explanations. (It is not, of course, an exact translation). Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has given eight guide lines regarding payment of Zakaat:-

1. We should know, in the first instance, why Zakaat was made incumbent and made one of the five essentials (pillars) of Islam.

These are three reasons;

- (a) In reciting the Kalimah, a man asserts his beliefs in Allah Ta'ala as the only Deity to be adored, Who has no associates or partners. The profession of this faith becomes a truth when his heart is knowingly dissociated from everything else, as true love admits of no rivalry or partnership, and mere verbal expression of love has no value.

A man's true love is put to trial when there are other rivals, each claiming his love, wealth being something that man loves by nature. So, Allah Ta'ala has made it incumbent upon men to spend wealth, as a touchstone for the truth of

their love for Him and their belief in Him as the only Being worthy to be obeyed. Through Sadaqah a man's love for Allah Ta'ala is judged, as indicated in the Ayat:

Lo! Allah has brought from the Mo'mineen (believers) their lives and their wealth because Jannah will be theirs". (at-Tawbah: 111)

'Buying of lives' is through Jehaad; it is, of course, easier to give money than to offer one's life. On the basis of spending money, as a trial of one's love for Allah Ta'ala, men are found to fall into three categories:

Firstly, those who are true in their assertion of the Oneness of Allah Ta'ala and who associate no partners with Him in their love for Him. They are the ones who fulfil their covenant perfectly, as they sacrifice all their belongings for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, keeping back neither a dirham nor a dinar.

The requirement of obligatory nature of Zakaat becomes meaningless in their case. It is reported of certain divines when they were asked, "How much Zakaat is due on two hundred Dirhams?" They replied, "According to Shariah it is incumbent upon common people to spend five Dirhams out of every two hundred Dirhams, but for us, it is necessary to spend everything, keeping nothing back". That is why Abu Bakr Siddiq Radhiallahohunho presented all he possessed to Rasulullah Sallallahohunho alaihe wasallam, keeping nothing with himself, thus proving his perfect love for Allah Ta'ala.

Secondly, there are people of average sort who keep back some wealth to serve them for their needs and give the rest away. They do not indulge in luxuries of life but keep only sufficient provision for their own use and spend the surplus wealth for the cause of Allah.

They too, do not restrict their spending to the prescribed limits of Zakaat, but spend whatever exceeds their requirements, which is often more than the amount due. That is why some followers (Tabi'een) of the Sahabah Radhiallahohunhum like Imaam Nakha'ee, Sha'bee and others Rahmatullah alaihim are of the view that there is much due on property, apart from Zakaat, and they hold that it is incumbent upon the rich to fulfil the needs of the poor, if they find them in need of help, even if they have to give more than the Zakaat due on their property.

However, according to 'Fiqh,' the sounder view is that it is Fardh-e-Kifaya (a general obligation whose fulfilment by an adequate number absolves all) to supply the need of an extremely poor man who is in danger of suffering death. The opinions differ as to whether it is obligatory to give free help to such a person, or mere lending of money can absolve people of their responsibility. (Those who are in favour of lending money, rather than free help, fall into the third category defined below.)

Thirdly, there are people who spend strictly in accordance with the prescribed standards, neither more nor less than the calculated amount. The majority of people fall into this last category: they love worldly wealth and spend like the niggardly, being less concerned with the life in the Akhirah.

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe has not mentioned the fourth category, viz. Those who spend less than the prescribed amount, or do not pay Zakaat at all. Such people are altogether false in their claims of love for Allah Ta'ala, so he did not regard them as worthy of mention.

(b) A second object in making Zakaat obligatory (Fardh) is to purify men's hearts of miserliness, which is a fatal attribute. Rasulullah Sallallahohunho alaihe wasallam has said, "Three things are fatal attributes:-

(i) Niggardliness which is practised: i.e. if a person is miserly by nature, but behaves generously in defiance of his habit, miserliness will not harm him; miserliness becomes fatal only when a person actually acts like a miser.

(ii) Passion which is acted upon. If a man of ardent passions exercises restraint, no harm will come to him; passion becomes fatal only when it is indulged in.

(iii) Self-conceit. i.e. a man's considering his own opinion as the best. There are many Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an and numerous Ahadith depreciating miserliness, some of which we have quoted in Chapter Two of this book. 'The only way to cure a person of miserliness is for him to cultivate the habit of spending money.

When it is desired that a man should cease to love someone, he is advised not to associate with that person and, with effort, try to keep away from him. Zakaat is called a 'purifier', as it purifies a man of the filth of avarice and miserliness. The more generously a man spends and the happier he is while spending for the love of Allah, the more purified he will be of miserliness'.

(c) Another reason for making Zakaat obligatory appears to be that it is an expression of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for the bounty of wealth bestowed by Him. Each of us receives countless Bounties from Allah Ta'ala, both in the form of wealth and in the form of physical faculties; so, the physical devotions serve as thanksgiving for bodily gifts, while devotions involving spending of money serve as thanksgiving for the bounties of wealth and other worldly goods.

How mean and ungrateful is a person who sees a beggar suffering abject poverty and destitution, but his heart is not moved with feelings of gratitude for Allah Ta'ala, Who has bestowed numerous bounties upon him, saving him from the humiliation of begging from others and, above all, raised him to a position where others beg favours of him.

Is it not binding upon him to express gratitude to Allah Ta'ala and spend at least one tenth (of the produce of his lands) or one fortieth (of the money kept with him for a year), for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala?

2. Another propriety to be observed concerns the proper time for giving away Zakaat. In the first place, it is important that one should hasten to pay Zakaat and give it away even before it falls due, because this shows his concern and willingness for obeying the commandments of Allah Ta'ala. And, it also delights the hearts of the needy persons.

On the other hand, if a man makes delay in giving Zakaat, he may suffer an affliction or a loss of his property. The Ulama who hold that it is necessary to lose no time in paying Zakaat also say that it is sinful to make delay in its payment. So, when it occurs to a person to spend money for the sake of Allah, he should not delay in doing so and regard it as an idea put in his mind by an angel, as a Hadith says, "Everybody is being advised by an angel and tempted by a Shaitan".

The angel wants him to do good and to follow the truth, so, when anyone finds, within himself, an inclination to do good, he should express gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. The Shaitan persuades a man to do evil and go against what is true, so when a person finds himself inclined towards evil, he should recite:

"I seek refuge in Allah against Shaitan, the outcast one". (Saadah)

A Hadith says that (allegorically) the heart of man is between two fingers of Allah Ta'ala, which He turns about as He wills. The first thought of spending for the sake of Allah might be followed by a second thought, a prompting by the Shaitan to keep money with oneself. For, Shaitan keeps on forewarning a person against impending want and need. We have already discussed this point under Ayat No. 2 in Chapter Two.

And following the exhortation of the angel, there is an evil prompting by Shaitan. So, a man should hasten to pay Zakaat before the second thought occurs to him. And if anyone wants to pay the entire amount of Zakaat due from him, at a time, it is good to specify a month for its payment.

It would be better to appoint, for the purpose, one of the sacred months, in order that one might earn maximum blessings for Zakaat. For example, Muharram is a sacred month, being the first month of Hijri calendar and one of the four sacred months of the year. Besides, the tenth of Muharram is an auspicious day. For, according to a Hadith, if anyone spends liberally on his family on the Day of Ashurah (10th of Muharram), Allah Ta'ala will be liberal to him the rest of the year. Another sacred month is Ramadhan; a Hadith says that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was the most generous of men, and during Ramadhan he was more generous than the wind which blows freely.

In this month, there is a night (Lailat-ul-Qadr) which is better than a thousand months and, during it, Allah's Favours to His men go on increasing day by day.

Similarly, Zhul-Hijjah is a sacred month and a great many blessings are associated with it; it is the month of Hajj, of which the first ten days are called 'Ayyam-um-Ma'loomat' (the well known days) and the next three days (Ayyam-e-Tashreeq) or the 11th, 12th and 13th of the month) have been termed, in the Holy Qur'an, as Ayyam-um-Ma'doodat (the appointed days). The Holy Qur'an exhorts the Mo'mineen (believers) to make excessive Zikr of Allah Ta'ala during these days (hence their blessedness).

Therefore, if anyone decides to pay Zakaat during Ramadhaan every year, he should fix the last ten days of the month for this purpose, while a man giving it during Zul-Hijjah should do so during the first ten days.

The humble author Muhammad Zakariyya Rahmatullah alaihe would take the liberty to suggest that, as every body does have some idea of the entire amount payable on his property for a year, he should bear it in his mind and keep on paying Zakaat little by little throughout the year.

And when the year comes to an end, he should work out the exact amount payable on his property and pay off the difference that still remains due from him. If the calculations show that what has been spent is more than what was due, he should express gratitude to Allah Ta'ala, with whose aid he has been able to spend more than the prescribed amount. This method of paying Zakaat has three advantages:-

(i) If the Zakaat payable for the whole year is a large amount, it is difficult to give it away at a time. And it is desirable that Zakaat should be paid willingly.

(ii) One does not often find correct occasions for giving Zakaat; by this method, a man may spend whenever suitable circumstances arise.

On the other hand, if a man calculates Zakaat at the end of the year and then sets it aside for spending in small amounts during the following year, each day that passes will count against him for delaying the payment of Zakaat. Besides, one might, through accident, cause injuries to him self or lose his property and, may consequently, fail to pay Zakaat in full and thus commit a sin.

(iii) If a man gives away in small amounts, he may spend by chance more than what is due from him every year. Giving away in excess of what is actually due is a commendable act of virtue. As for those who make calculations and pay the Zakaat due for the year in one instalment, most of them find it hard to pay more than the prescribed amount. In this connection, it should be kept in mind that Zakaat falls due after every lunar year and not after a solar year.

Some people maintain the account of Zakaat according to the solar calendar and thus delay its payment successively every year. In this way, after thirty-six years of lunar calendar, they will have paid Zakaat for thirty-five years only and the dues for one complete year shall remain outstanding against them.

3. It is also proper to give Zakaat secretly, which has many advantages: the giver is saved from self-esteem through display of generosity; and the receiver is saved from humiliation, as his poverty remains concealed. Hence it is more rewarding to give Zakaat secretly., unless there are good reasons for spending it openly.

The ultimate aim of giving Sadaqah is to purify a man from the evils of avarice and niggardliness. And the one giving it openly may develop in his heart a desire for worldly recognition. This evil is more harmful to the soul than avarice and miserliness, and most people suffer from a weakness for fame and recognition.

The evil of miserliness shall assume the form of a scorpion to sting the miser in the grave, while a man's love for worldly recognition shall become a python that shall bite him. So, the one who controls his miserliness, but becomes a victim of worldly recognition or fame, is like a man who kills a scorpion and feeds it to a python, which grows stronger and more dangerous. It is, of course, necessary to kill both the scorpion and the python; it may be that killing the python is more important than killing the scorpion.

4. Sometimes, it is wise to pay it openly for good and religious reasons. For example, if a person wants to exhort others or thinks that others will follow his example or has some other religious motives in his mind, it will be more rewarding for him to pay Zakaat openly. We have already discussed these two points at length under Ayat No. 9 in Chapter One.

5. Another guideline for giving Sadaqah is that one should protect it from being wasted through 'mann' (taunting the poor about one's favours to them) or 'azaa' (causing harm to the one who receives Sadaqah). 'Mann' is the sin of a person who is conscious of his favours to the people and keeps reminding them of their obligations. 'Azaa' means suffering caused to others; it includes mental discomfort caused by the vanity of a person who keeps reminding them that their needs are met through his generosity. We have already discussed this subject in detail under Ayat No. 8 in Chapter one.

6. Still another propriety to be observed while giving Zakaat is that a man should regard the amount of his Zakaat, however large, to be an insignificant amount. Otherwise, he may fall into the sin of pride and exultation in what he has accomplished by way of virtue (I'jaabun-Nafs). Exulting and taking pride in something accomplished (be it an act of virtue or something material) is one of the worst sins, fatal to the soul and causing one's virtues to be wasted away.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah Ta'ala has reproached the Muslims for feeling proud of their large numbers, on the occasion of Huneyn, with words:

"Allah gave you victory (over your enemies) on many fields and on the day of Huneyn, when you began to exult (and feel proud) in your multitude, but it availed you nothing; (the Kaafirs began to shoot arrows at you in large numbers which caused consternation among you) and the earth (from the battle field) in flight.

Then, Allah Ta'ala sent His peace of reassurance down upon His Rasul and upon the Mo'mineen (believers) and sent down hosts (of angels) that you could not see (for your help) (at-Taubah: 25-26)

The authentic books of Ahadith relate many Traditions about the well-known Battle of Huneyn and there are numerous Ahadith which give details of this battle. A brief account of the expedition is given below:-

It was during Ramadhan al-Mubarak in the eighth year of the Hijrah (Migration) that Makkah Mukarramah was conquered and thereafter Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam led an expedition to al-Huneyn (during the same month) to give battle to the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif (who had gathered there to re-capture Makkah Mukarramah). In this battle, the Muslims were larger in number than in all the previous expeditions when their number was small.

Therefore, some of them felt proud and said that they could not be defeated because of their superiority in numbers. As Allah Ta'ala does not like people who exult in their superiority over others, the Muslims were made to suffer defeat in the early part of the battle.

The above Ayat refers to this very incident:

"You began to exult and feel proud in your multitude but it availed you nothing"

Urwah Radhiallaho anho says, "When Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam had conquered Makkah, the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif rose up against the Muslims and, at Huneyn, there was a gathering of these tribes, who were about to make war on the Muslims". Hasan Rahmatullah alaihe is reported to have said, "After the conquest of Makkah, the Muslims from Makkah Mukarramah also joined the troops of the warriors from Madinah Munawwarah. Some said, "By Allah, we can now make a united front against the tribes of Huneyn".

Rasulullah Sallallohu alaihe wasallam was grieved to learn about their proud and boastful remarks". (In short, the Muslims had to suffer defeat on account of their exultation and taking pride in large numbers). (Durre Manthur)

The Ulama have said that the more insignificant an act of virtue is, in one's own sight, the more creditable it becomes in the sight of Allah Ta'ala. Similarly the more hateful a sin appears to a sinner himself, the less grievous will it be in the sight of Allah. It follows, that, even after a minor lapse, one should reproach oneself for having done a foolish act that should never have been done and should, in no case, take a sin lightly, nor say, 'It was a slight mistake on my part, so what?'

Some Ulama have said that three things are required for an act of virtue to become perfect:-

Firstly, the doer should not consider highly his virtue; he should rather regard it as an act not worthy of mention.

Secondly, as soon as a thought occurs to do a good deed, he should hasten to perform it, lest a second thought or some other circumstances might prevent him from acting accordingly.

Thirdly, he should perform the act of virtue secretly. And a man should regard what he has given away as paltry amount, in comparison with the large fortunes spent on himself or kept back with himself. Then, he should make an estimate of the amount spent for the sake of Allah Ta'ala and set it against what he has kept with himself. For example, if someone has given away one third of his possessions for the cause of Allah Ta'ala, he is like one who spends one third for the love of Allah Ta'ala, Whom he adores and loves as his Sovereign Lord, but keeps two-third for himself.

And, even though someone were to spend his entire wealth (though such instances are rare nowadays) he should think that, in reality, all his property belongs to Allah Ta'ala who has, in his Infinite Bounty and Kindness, allowed him to spend out of it for his personal needs. Thus a man giving away Sadaqah is like one spending out of the money entrusted to him by someone who, in handing it over, has said, 'keep it with you as a trust but you can spend it for your needs, as you use your own property'. Now, if the trustee were to return to him more or less the same amount, after some time, he would be doing no favour to him who had consigned it to him; because returning of the entrusted property (to its owner) is by no means a great deed of virtues.

Although Sadaqah, for the love of Allah Ta'ala, appears like returning what has been bestowed upon us by Him, yet Allah Ta'ala has promised bountiful rewards and infinite blessings for Sadaqah given in His name; so, while Sadaqah cannot be equated to returning of the trust, it is like returning far less than the amount entrusted and, then, receiving much more as a reward for fulfilling the trust.

It is like someone keeping a hundred rupees in trust and, after sometime, returning only fifty or sixty rupees; for which the kind owner promises a reward of fifty or sixty guineas (pounds); or, as though the owner took back fifty rupees out of a hundred rupees kept in trust with a person, but issued him in return a cheque for five hundred rupees. It follows from the above that while giving Sadaqah the giver should not boast, nor inwardly feel proud of his generosity, but should feel shy like a trustee who fails to return the entire amount of trust to its owner, having spent part of it on his own needs.

To give another example, the man giving Sadaqah is like a person with whom someone has kept a hundred rupees in trust but who returns only fifty rupees saying, 'since you allowed me to use your money, I have spent (or kept myself) fifty rupees and I am returning only fifty rupees'.

While saying this, the trustee will, naturally feel ashamed of him self and shall wear the humble expression of a person whose pride and self-respect have been crushed. He will feel remorse for spending out of the money entrusted to him by a kind-hearted person and bow in gratitude to him for not demanding the entire amount of trust. This should be the position in which a person giving Sadaqah should imagine himself and such should be his thoughts. For, in reality, the giver is returning (in the form of Sadaqah) only a fraction of the property that was entrusted to him by Allah Ta'ala Himself, while he has spent a major portion on his own food, etc., and kept back another big portion for his own use.

The money that we give to the poor or spend in other ways for the love of Allah Ta'ala is like money returned to Allah Ta'ala, the poor man being just an agent sent by Allah Ta'ala to demand the return of the property kept with us as a trust. On such occasions, people flatter the agent and ask him to put in a word of recommendation in their

favour, to beg his master that he should excuse their inability to return the entire amount of trust and should accept from them the little they can afford, for they are needy and going through difficult circumstances.

In short, if someone cannot repay, on demand, the entire amount of trust he coaxes the agent sent by the owner to beg pardon for him from his master. Similarly, the rich should treat the poor with kindness and affection while giving Sadaqah for the love of Allah, for they are the emissaries of Allah Ta'ala, to Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the entire universe – the Almighty Allah Who is All-Powerful and Absolute, the eternally besought of all, Who has granted everything to all mankind, Who could, if He willed, snatch away everything from you instantaneously and make you destitute like the beggar standing before you.

In truth, the entire wealth and riches of the world belong to Allah Ta'ala alone and, though it pleases Him to see His men spending all that they possess for His sake, yet in His mercy He did not enjoin spending of the entire property for the love of Him, which we might have found hard to obey, being inhibited by our innate avarice and miserliness.

7. Another important principle to be observed while giving away Sadaqah, and especially Zakaat, which is an obligation and an important commandment of Allah Ta'ala, is that one should give away things of the best quality simply because Allah Ta'ala is beyond all defects or imperfections and He accepts only such property as is faultless. Granting that the Sadaqah that we give passes into the hands of Allah Ta'ala, how impertinent, how shameless would it be of the person who kept with himself the best things and gave away things of inferior quality in the service of Allah, Who is the sole and real possessor of all things and Who has bestowed all these goods upon him? Isn't it like a cook who prepares delicious food for him self and gives stale bread and foul smelling curry to his master?

What then should be the attitude of the master towards a servant like him? The masters in this world are not aware of what their servants do in their absence, but Allah is All-Knowing, and Well Informed about everything. All our deeds are before Him. He knows the thoughts that come to our minds. How ungrateful would be the person who gave things of bad quality for the sake of Allah, out of the property that actually belongs to Allah Ta'ala Himself?

Again, everybody knows that all that he is spending is for his own ultimate benefit; it will be given back to him with manifold increase at a time when he shall need it badly. Then, how foolish is the person who preserves bad and rotten things for his own use and leaves behind things of good quality to be used by others. A Hadith has it, to the following effect: "A man says, 'My property, my property, whereas his property really consists of what he eats and uses up, what he wears and makes threadbare and what he gives away as Sadaqah and so preserves for the Akhirah; everything else is left to others (his heirs)".

Another Hadith says, "Many a Dirham is of greater value than a hundred thousand Dirhams; it is a Dirham earned lawfully and spent most willingly for the cause of Allah, which is better than spending an amount of a hundred thousand Dirhams earned by doubtful means".

8. While paying Zakaat, a man should also take care to spend it on such occasions that can bring him increasing rewards. If Sadaqah is given to persons who possess one or more of the following six qualities, one can earn bountiful rewards; the more of these qualities are found in a person, the more deserving he will be for receiving Sadaqah and the greater will be the reward for spending on him:

(a) The man should be pious and righteous, least concerned about worldly interests and devoted to deeds that are beneficial for the Akhirah. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Let not anyone but the pious eat your food". (already quoted at serial No. 23 in Chapter one.)

The reason is that the pious man will gain strength from your food for his devotional prayers and for other acts of piety and, on account of your assistance, you will share the blessings and rewards of his deeds in obedience to Allah Ta'ala.

(b) The one receiving Sadaqah should be an Alim or one devoted to religious studies. For, in this way, you will be helping him to acquire knowledge; and pursuit of knowledge is the best of all devotions, its excellence depending upon the intentions of the scholar.

Abdullah Ibne Mubarak Rahmatullah alaihe, the renowned Muhaddith and a great Divine, was very particular about giving his favours to the Ulama. When someone asked him, "Wouldn't it be better if you also granted favours to people other than the Ulama", he replied, "In my estimate, no other status except Nabuwat is more exalted than that of the Ulama. When a seeker of knowledge turns his attention to something else, it distracts him from his pursuit of knowledge; it is therefore, most desirable to help him to devote all his time to learning of knowledge".

(c) The man receiving Sadaqah should be a true 'Muwahhid' in his piety. The sign of a true Muwahhid i.e. strict believer in monotheism or the oneness of Allah Ta'ala is that, on receiving a favour from someone, he bows in gratitude to Allah Ta'ala believing, from his heart, that the favour was really from Allah Ta'ala, Who alone (and none else) is the True Giver, while the man giving it to him is just an intermediary who has been assigned the duty to carry it out.

Luqman Alaihissalam advised his son, thus: Let not anyone other than Allah Ta'ala be a Benefactor to you. Regard anyone else's favour to you as a loan. He who feels obliged to the intervening agent does not know the True Benefactor, Allah Ta'ala. Such a one does not realize that the man giving a boon is just an intermediary: Allah Ta'ala put it in his heart to give a boon to so-and-so. He, therefore, could not help doing you a favour.

When this is firmly believed, then a person takes no notice of the causes or means of things but looks up to Allah Ta'ala, the Causer of all Causes (Musabbib-ul-Asbaab). Doing a favour to such a one is more beneficial than granting favours to a person who shows gratitude to you extravagantly. For, the one who is flattering you today may speak ill of you next time when you do not oblige him. On the contrary, a true Muwahhid will never speak ill of you, as he regards you as an intermediary.

(d) The one receiving your Sadaqah should be a person who never lets others know about his neediness, nor complains to others of his straitened circumstances. Especially deserving of your help is the man who, when in affluence used to behave generously towards people but who, because of hard times, finds it difficult to keep up appearances. Such a needy person wears only an appearance of affluence and Allah Ta'ala says in the Holy Qur'an, in praise of such persons:

"The unthinking man accounts them wealthy".

This Ayat occurs in section (Ruku) 37 of Surah al-Baqarah and is given below, in full:

"(Sadaqah is) actually for the needy who are straitened for the cause of Allah (for the cause of Deen) and they cannot go about the country (in search of livelihood). The unthinking man regards them to be wealthy because of their restraint (refraining from asking favours). Yet you can recognize them by their signs. They do not beg men with importunity. And whatever good thinking you spend (on the needs of such people), Allah knows it. (al-Baqarah: 273)

Note: That is to say, in normal conditions, the reward for spending on such people is greater than that of giving Sadaqah to common people. However, in certain circumstances, one may earn even greater reward for spending on other people. For example, the reward for spending on common people increases when they are in great need of help, while these seemingly rich persons are expected to get help from other sources.

In normal circumstances, it is more rewarding to help such people (as have been described in the Ayat). Sometimes, it becomes more urgent and more rewarding to help the less pious and even the non-believing person.

It is noteworthy that this Ayat applies most suitably to the Ulama of India and Pakistan who have devoted their lives to the propagation of knowledge. So, the most deserving persons for Sadaqah are those who have devoted their lives to the cause of religious knowledge. Some unthinking people object to the giving of Sadaqah to those engaged in religious studies saying, 'Can't these people earn their living?' The answer to this objection is contained in the above Ayat of the Holy Qur'an which says:

"They cannot go about the country".

i.e. a man cannot busy himself with two pursuits at a time, one of which demands whole hearted concentration. And he who has a little taste for knowledge must have learnt by experience that the acquisition of knowledge demands a

single-minded concentration and whole time devotion. And, while doing business, one cannot serve the cause of knowledge perfectly well. Thousands of instances can be quoted to illustrate this point. (Bayan-ul-Qur'an)

Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says, "The poor ones mentioned in this Ayat are 'the Fraternity who lived in the Suffah (veranda) in the Holy Masjid at Madina Munawwarah (called Ashaabus-Suffa)".

They were also a fraternity of the seekers of knowledge who remained in blessed companionship with Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, in order to acquire the knowledge of the formal regulations of Islam as well as the spiritual concepts. Muhammad Ibne Ka'b Qurazi Rahmatullah alaihe says that the Ayat refers to the fraternity of the Suffah who had no houses for shelter, nor any wives or children to live with. In this Ayat, Allah Ta'ala has exhorted the Mo'mineen (Believers) to give Sadaqah to those people. Qatadah Rahmatullah alaihe says that, in this Ayat, the reference is to those who had devoted their lives for Jehaad in the path of Allah and could not engage in business to earn their living. (Durre Manthur).

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe says, "They are those who do not beg for help, for they are rich with the wealth of faith (Imaan), because of self control over their desires. One should look for such people and give them Sadaqah. Especially, one should try to find out the private difficulties of such religious people and spend money on the deserving". It is far more rewarding to help such people than to spend money on common beggars. It is however difficult to find them, because they do not let others know of their conditions and, therefore, people regard them as well-to-do.

(e) The person receiving your Sadaqah should be a man who has to support a large family, or is suffering from a disease or any other infirmity which prevents him from earning his livelihood. Such people also fall into the category of those mentioned in the Ayat.

Such people are in straitened circumstances owing to their poverty or scanty provisions or because of their absorption in devotions or due to some other unavoidable circumstances that have made them incapable of finding self sufficient means.

It was in view of such considerations that Umar Radhiallaho anho used to give ten goats or even more to some families and, when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam acquired some property, which he had got as booty without fighting the enemy (called the 'Faiy'), he gave two portions to a married man and one to the unmarried.

(f) A single man also earns increasing reward for giving Sadaqah to one of his relatives, getting thereby the blessings of Sadaqah as well as the reward for showing kindness to his relatives as a means of showing strong ties of kinships. We have already discussed this point under the Hadith given at serial No. 6 in Chapter three.

After recounting six qualities of the persons who are more deserving for receiving Sadaqah, Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe writes: "These are the qualities which should preferably be found in a person receiving Sadaqah. What is more, the qualities may vary in degree and, thus, the Sadaqah will earn different graduations according to the high or low degree of the quality possessed by the beneficiary. For example, a high degree of piety may earn higher reward than a low degree of that quality; a number of distinctions exist between the close relatives and the distant relations, and in other virtues also, Therefore, one should look for a person who possesses a quality in a high degree. And if someone were to combine all these qualities in his person, he would be highly valued and an asset for the giver; by spending on whom he can earn maximum blessings and rewards from Allah Ta'ala.

Indeed, if a man knows such a person, he should try to spend as much on him as he can. If not, he should search for one possessing all these qualities. If, after making efforts, a man can find such a one, he will earn double blessings; one for searching for such a pious being and the second for well-deserved spending. It is also possible that, after giving Sadaqah to a person who, in your estimation, seems to possess some or all of these qualities, you come to know that he does not really possess these qualities.

Even then, you will earn the blessings of making an effort to search for such a person and, in addition, your heart will be cured of the evil of miserliness; love for Allah will be firmly rooted in your heart and you will be granted the power to exert yourself in acts of obedience to Him.

"These three benefits of Sadaqah are highly valuable in themselves as they strengthen the heart of man, inspiring it with the longing to meet Allah Ta'ala. These advantages will accrue in any case, and one can gain additional rewards for spending it in desirable places. There are yet more advantages of giving Sadaqah to the pious.

When such beings receive a favour from someone, they invoke Allah's blessings for him, and remain concerned for his well-being. Indeed, the good wishes coming from the hearts of the pious can exert great influence and their benedictions improve his worldly life with a bright future in the Akhirah. Allah Ta'ala has invested the supplications of the pious with effective fulfilment". (Condensed and adapted from Ihyaa-ul-Uloom).