

Scattered Pearls

Selected sayings and anecdotes
of the illustrious Auliya



Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa
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HADHRAT ABU MUHAMMAD JA'FAR SAADIQ (rahmatullah alayh)

One night Khalifah Mansur said to his wazir (prime minister):

"Bring Saadiq to me. I want to slay him."

Wazir: "Do you wish to slay a man who has renounced the world; who has adopted solitude; who is engrossed in the worship of Allah and who has no worldly designs?"

Expressing his annoyance, the Khalifah said: "Go! Bring him so that I could slay him." In spite of the wazir's pleas, the Khalifah remained adamant. Finally the wazir was constrained to summon Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh). Meanwhile Mansur ordered his guards to kill Hadhrat Ja'far on his arrival. When the Khalifah removed his crown from his head it will signal the moment for slaying Hadhrat Ja'far.

When Hadhrat Ja'far appeared, the Khalifah stood up in respect. With great honour and humility he welcomed Hadhrat Ja'far. In fact, he ran forward to greet Hadhrat Ja'far. He brought Hadhrat Ja'far to sit on the royal stage. The guards were greatly surprised by the reverence and honour which Mansur showed to Hadhrat Ja'far. The Khalifah said to Hadhrat Ja'far: "Is there any thing you need?"
Hadhrat Ja'far: "Do not inconvenience me again by calling me. Leave

me to worship Allah." Mansur allowed Hadhrat Ja'far to leave with utmost respect.

After the departure of Hadhrat Saadiq, the Khalifah began to shiver uncontrollably and fell down unconscious. He remained unconscious for three days. According to some, he was unconscious for the duration of three Salaat which became qadhaa.

When the Khalifah regained conscious, the wazir asked for an explanation. The Khalifah said: "When Saadiq entered, a huge serpent was at his side. The one jaw of the serpent was touching the ground and the other jaw, the ceiling. The serpent was implying to me: 'If you harm him I shall swallow you along with the whole stage.'"

As a result of the fear for the serpent, the Khalifah did not know what he was saying or doing. He said: "I apologized and became unconscious."

Once Hadhrat Daud Tai (rahmatullah alayh) said to Hadhrat Ja'far (rahmatullah alayh):

"O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ)! My heart has darkened. Give me some naseehat."

Hadhrat Ja'far:

"O Abu Sulaiman! You are the zaahid of the age. You are not in need of my naseehat."

Hadhrat Daud said: "O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ)! Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to you all excellences and virtues. It is incumbent on you to admonish everyone."

Hadhrat Ja'far: "O Abu Sulaiman! I fear that on the Day of Qiyaamah my grandfather may apprehend me and demand: 'Why did you not fulfil the demands of my obedience?' This mission is not correctly discharged by genealogy. It is fulfilled by maintaining a beautiful relationship with Allah Ta'ala."

Hadhrat Daud wept profusely and commented: "O Allah! When this is the state of him whose grandfather is the Rasool, whose mother is Faatimah (radhiyallahu anha) and who is a beacon of Knowledge, who is this non-entity Daud to become vain and proud?"

One day Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) said to his disciples: "Come, let us pledge and promise that whoever among us will be saved on the Day of Qiyaamah, he will intercede on behalf of the others."

The disciples said: "O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ)! What need do you have for our intercession when your grandfather will be

the intercessor for entire creation?"

Hadhrat Saadiq: "I feel ashamed of my deeds. How can I look my grandfather in the face on the Day of Qiyaamah?"

When Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) went into solitude, refusing to emerge, Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) visited him and said:

"O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ)! The people are deprived of your blessings. Why have you gone into solitude."

Hadhrat Ja'far: "Now, I consider this to be appropriate. Trust has departed. People are engrossed in their own thoughts and needs. While they profess love and friendship, their hearts are filled with scorpions."

5. Once when a man saw Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) wearing fine, expensive garments, he commented:

"O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ)! It is not befitting for the Ahl-e-Bait to wear such garments."

Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq took the man's hand and pushed it inside his (Ja'far Saadiq's) sleeve. The lining under the fine cloth was of such coarse sack-cloth which hurt the man's hand. Hadhrat Ja'far commented:

"This (the external cloth) is for creation and that (the coarse lining) is for the creator." (His externally adorned garments were to conceal his piety while the simple coarse sack-cloth was the demand of his high level of piety.)

6. Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) asked Hadhrat Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh):

"Who is an intelligent man?"

Imaam Abu Hanifah: "One who can distinguish between good and bad."

Hadhrat Ja'far: "An animal is also able to distinguish between good and bad. An animal recognizes a man who is kind and cruel to it."

Imaam Abu Hanifah: "Who then is an intelligent person?"

Hadhrat Ja'far: "A person who is able to distinguish between two acts of goodness and two acts of badness so that he could choose the greater act of goodness and the lesser evil." (The rule of choosing the lesser evil applies when confronted by two evils and there is no third option. To save oneself from either of the evils has to be chosen. In such an eventuality, the lesser evil is adopted.)

7. A man whose purse containing gold coins was lost. He accused Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) of having stolen it. This man was not aware of the identity of Hadhrat Ja'far. On asking the man about the contents of the purse, he said that the purse contained 1,000 dinars. Hadhrat Ja'far took the man home and gave him 1,000 dinars.

A short while later when the man discovered his purse with the money intact, he returned to Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq, presented the 1,000 dinars and apologized. Hadhrat Ja'far said: "I do not take back what I had given." When the man learnt who Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq was, he left feeling very ashamed.

8. A man said to Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh): "Show me Allah. I want to see Him with my eyes."

Hadhrat Ja'far: "Have you not heard (i.e. in the Qur'aan) it is said to Musaa (alayhis salaam): 'You can never see Me.' ?"

The man said: "I have heard it. But this is the Millat (Deen) of Muhammad (ﷺ). Someone calls out: 'My heart has seen Allah'. Another says: 'I do not worship a being I cannot see'." (This man was referring to statements of the Auliya of this Ummah. If they could make these claims, then there can be nothing wrong in the demand to see Allah. So thought this man.)

Imaam Ja'far Saadiq ordered his mureeds (disciples) to tie the man and toss him into the river Dajla. This was done. The water swallowed him. As he bobbed up, he cried: 'O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ), help! Help!'

Hadhrat Ja'far exclaimed: 'O water take him.' The water submerged the man. This occurred several times. Each time when he surfaced, he cried out: 'O son of Rasulullah (ﷺ), help! Help!' Finally when he lost all hope, he called out: 'O Allah, help me!' Hadhrat Ja'far ordered his disciples to bring him out of the river. After the man had rested and gained his composure, Hadhrat Ja'far asked: "Did you see Allah?"

The man: "As long as I called to others, there remained a veil concealing Allah. When I turned my attention only to Him, seeking His aid, a window opened up in my heart from which I saw Him."

Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq said: As long as you called: 'Saadiq! Saadiq!', you were a kaathib (liar). Now guard this window."

(Saadiq means true. As long as the man was calling 'Saadiq', his belief in Allah was defective, hence Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq described him as being kaathib. When he abandoned calling creation to aid him and turned his gaze to Allah, he became a true believer.)

9. Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) said: "A sin preceded by khauf (fear of Allah) and followed by taubah (repentance) draws the

servant closer to Allah. Ibaadat preceded by and followed by ujub (vanity) takes the servant far away from Allah."

(This statement should not be misunderstood. Sin never leads to the proximity of Allah Ta'ala. Sin leads to the Wrath and punishment of Allah. The statement here means that the person understands the act to be sinful. He does not justify the sin. He has no intention of committing the sin. He is always fearful of Allah's punishment. However, in a moment of weakness and negligence, his nafs overwhelms him and casts him into sin. He then regrets and repents.)

10. He said: "A man who is proud on account of his ibaadat, is a sinner and a sinner who regrets and repents is an obedient servant."

11. Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq (rahmatullah alayh) was asked: "Who is superior—a patient durwaish or a wealthy man who is grateful?" Hadhrat Ja'far said: "The patient durwaish. The heart of the wealthy man is attached to his wealth while the heart of the durwaish is with Allah Ta'ala."

(Durwaish or dervish—a pious poor person.)

12. He said: 'Ibaadat without taubah is not proper because Allah Ta'ala has placed taubah before ibaadat. The Qur'aanic aayat says: "Those who engage in Taubah, those who are involved in ibadah.."

First taubah is mentioned. (This statement does not mean that ibaadat is not valid if not preceded by taubah. However, when a man contaminated by sin worships Allah, he does not derive the full benefit and reward of the ibaadat. The bandah-servant of Allah-should therefore, always repent.)

13. He said: "True Thikr (remembrance of Allah) is to forget everything else. Allah Ta'ala suffices for all the things forgotten by virtue of His Thikr."

14. He said: "A Mu'min is he who always stands in confrontation of his nafs. An Aarif is he who stands in the presence of Allah Ta'ala."

15. He said: "Whoever struggles against his Nafs-e-Ammaarah for the sake of Allah, finds Allah."

16. He said: "Ilhaam (inspiration from Allah) is an attribute of the accepted servants of Allah."

17. He said: "The attempt to rationally disprove ilhaam is a sign of the irreligious people."

18. He said: "Allah Ta'ala is more hidden in His servants than a black ant walking on a black stone in an intensely dark night."

19. He said: "The secret of reality was unlocked for me when I was

branded a madman." (True lovers of Allah Ta'ala are generally branded as mad by people of the world.)

20. "Among the good fortunes of a man is that his enemy is an intelligent person."

21. He said: "Beware of the company of five persons:

A liar. You will always be misled by him.

A stupid person. Even if he intends to benefit you, he will harm you without realising it.

A miser. He will destroy your valuable time.

A coward. He will leave you in the lurch at the time of need.

A faasiq. On account of greed, he will betray you for a morsel of food.

22. He said: "Allah Ta'ala also has paradise and hell on this earth.

Paradise is safety and hell is unsafety. Paradise is to assign all affairs to Allah. Hell is to assign all affairs to the Nafs-e-Ammaarah."

HADHRAT UWAIS QARNI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Regarding Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh), Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Uwais Qarni is the noblest of the Tabieen with ihsaan."

(The highest stage of ihsaan is to worship Allah Ta'ala as if you are seeing Him.)

Sometimes Rasulullah (ﷺ) would turn in the direction of Yemen and say: "I perceive the fragrance of love from Yemen."

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Tomorrow on the Day of Qiyaamah Allah Ta'ala will create 70,000 malaa-ikah in the image of Uwais Qarni who will enter in their midst into Jannat. No one will recognise him except those whom Allah wishes." Since he engrossed himself in ibaadat in concealment, fleeing from people, Allah Ta'ala will preserve his concealment even in the Aakhirah. Allah Ta'ala has said: "My Auliya are under My Mantle. None besides Me knows them."

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "In my Ummat is a man whose shafaa'at (intercession) will be accepted on behalf of so many people whose number equals the hairs on the sheep/goats of the tribes of Rabeeh and Mudhir."

These two Arab tribes possessed the most sheep and goats, hence the analogy. When the Sahaabah enquired about the identity of this

man, Rasulullah (b) said: "A servant among the servants of Allah."

The Sahaabah responded: "We all are the servants of Allah. What is his name?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Uwais Qarni."

Sahaabah: "Where is he?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ): "In Qarn."

Sahaabah: "Have he seen you?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ): "Not with his physical eyes, but he has seen me with his spiritual eyes."

Sahaabah: "Such an ardent lover, but why has he not entered into your companionship?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ): "There are two reasons. The first is ghalbah haal (i.e. he is always in a high spiritual state which makes him oblivious of everything besides Allah Ta'ala). The second is his profound observance of my Shariat. His mu'minah mother is extremely old and blind. He tends to camels and with his earnings he supports his mother."

Sahaabah: "Can we see him?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (d): "You will not see him, but Umar and Ali will see him. His entire body is covered with hair. On the palm of his hand and left side is a white spot, the size of a dirham, which is not the mark of leprosy. When you meet him, convey my salaam to him and tell him to make dua for my Ummat. Among the Auliyya those who are the Atqiyaa (a very lofty category of Auliyya), he is the holiest."

Sahaabah: "Where shall we find him?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ): "In Yemen, he is a camel-herd known as Uwais. You should follow in his footsteps."

As Rasulullah's (ﷺ) demise neared, the Sahaabah asked: "To whom shall we give your jubbah (cloak)?"

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "To Uwais Qarni."

After the demise of Rasulullah (ﷺ) Hadhrat Umar and Hadhrat Ali (dma) journeyed to Kufa. After delivering a Khutbah, Hadhrat Umar (d) said: "O people of Najd, all of you stand up."

Everyone obeyed. He then enquired: "Is any among you from Qaran?" When they said, 'yes', he asked for information about Uwais Qarni.

They replied: "We do not know him. However, there is a madman who has become estranged from people. He flees from people. When Hadhrat Umar (d) enquired of his whereabouts, he was told that he (Uwais Qarni) tends to camels in Wadi Urnah. At night he eats dry bread. He does not enter the town. He does not speak to anyone. He does not eat what people generally eat. He does not know what is grief and happiness. When people laugh, he cries. When they cry, he laughs."

Hadhrat Umar and Hadhrat Ali (ra) travelled to that valley (Wadi Urnah). Ultimately when they discovered him, he was engaged in Salaat. By the command of Allah, angels were tending to the camels. On perceiving the presence of human beings, Uwais terminated his Salaat, and said "Assalaamu Alaikum".

Hadhrat Umar Farooq () replied: "Wa-Alaikum Salaam", and asked: "What is your name?"

Uwais: "Abdullah (i.e. a slave of Allah)."

Hadhrat Umar: "We all are the servants of Allah. What is your specific name?"

Uwais: "Uwais".

Hadhrat Umar: "Show me your right hand."

When Hadhrat Uwais showed his hand, Hadhrat Umar (d) seeing the mark indicated by Rasulullah (b), kissed his hand, and said:

"Rasulullah (ﷺ) has conveyed salaams to you; sent this cloak for you and commanded that you make dua for his Ummah."

Uwais: "You are more qualified to make dua because there is no one nobler than you."

Hadhrat Umar: "I am always engaged in this duty of dua. However, you have to comply with the order of Rasulullah (b)."

Uwais: "O Umar! Think carefully. Perhaps Rasulullah (ﷺ) had in mind someone else besides myself."

Hadhrat Umar: "All the signs indicated by Rasulullah (ﷺ) exist in you."

Uwais: "Give me the cloak of Rasulullah (ﷺ) so that I may make dua."

Taking the cloak, Hadhrat Uwais said: "Wait here."

He went a distance, fell into Sajdah and supplicated: "O Allah! I shall not don this mantle as long as You do not forgive the entire Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ), for he has presented this cloak. Rasulullah (ﷺ), Umar Farooq and Ali Murtaza have discharged their duties."

A Voice exclaimed: "We have forgiven a number by virtue of your intercession."

Uwais: "O Allah! As long as You do not forgive all, I shall not don this mantle."

The Voice: "I have forgiven thousands."

Uwais: "I am petitioning for the forgiveness of all."

This performance was enacted several times. Each time, The Voice announced an increase in the number of persons forgiven by virtue of Hadhrat Uwais' intercession. Meanwhile Hadhrat Umar and Hadhrat Ali () unable to hold their patience came near to Hadhrat Uwais to see what was happening. When Hadhrat Uwais saw them, he exclaimed: "Why have you come? I would not have donned this mantle as long as Allah Ta'ala had not forgiven the entire Ummah of Rasulallah (ﷺ)."

Gazing at Hadhrat Uwais with deep intent and concern, Hadhrat Umar () perceived 18,000 spiritual kingdoms under the simple shawl Hadhrat Uwais was wearing at the time. Hadhrat Umar (), now overwhelmed by spiritual enthusiasm, lost complete interest in himself and his Khilaafat. In an ecstatic mood he cried out: "Is there anyone prepared to accept my Khilaafat in exchange for a piece of bread?"

Hadhrat Uwais said: "Only a man lacking in intelligence, will purchase it. What are you talking of buying and selling! Abandon it! Whoever wishes, can pick it up."

Then donning the mantle of Rasulallah (ﷺ), Hadhrat Uwais said: "As a result of the barkat of this mantle and my

intercession, the number of people of the Ummah of Muhammad (b) forgiven, equals the number of hairs on the bodies of the goats of the tribes of Rabeeah and Mudhirr."

Hadhrat Umar: "O Uwais, why did you not meet Rasulullah (ﷺ)?"

Uwais: "Perhaps you saw the blessed forehead of Rasulullah (ﷺ). Tell me, were Rasulullah's (b) eye-brows fine or broad?" [Arabic in manuscript margin, bk 1, pg 31]

Surprisingly, neither Hadhrat Umar () nor Hadhrat Ali () was able to describe Rasulullah's (ﷺ) eye-brows.

Uwais: "You are he Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ)?"

Hadhrat Umar: "Most certainly we are."

Uwais: "On the day when the blessed tooth of Rasulullah (ﷺ) was martyred, why did you not martyr your own teeth?

The requirement of love was that you conformed."

Hadhrat Uwais opened his mouth and they observed that all his teeth were missing. He said: "I broke my teeth without seeing the mubaarak face of Rasulullah (b). After having broken a tooth, I was not satisfied. Perhaps another tooth of Rasulullah (ﷺ) was martyred, not the one I broke in my mouth. In this way I continued breaking my teeth until all were removed.

Both Hadhrat Umar and Hadhrat Ali () were overcome with emotion. Now they learnt a new concept of love and devotion. They resolved to learn this devotion from Hadhrat Uwais. Hadhrat Umar () then said: "O Uwais, make dua for me."

Uwais: "I have already made dua. You should not desire more. In the Tashahhud of every Salaat I say: "O Allah! Have mercy on all the believing men and women and forgive them."

If you reach the grave with the safety of Imaan, then most certainly, you have obtained my dua. I do not want to destroy my dua.

Hadhrat Umar: "Counsel me."

Uwais: "Umar, have you recognized Allah Ta'ala?"

Hadhrat Umar: "Yes, I recognized Him."

Uwais: "It is best that you recognize only Allah Ta'ala and no one besides Him."

Hadhrat Umar: "Say something more."

Uwais: "Allah Ta'ala knows you. It is best that besides Allah Ta'ala, no one else knows you."

Hadhrat Umar () then attempted to present a gift of some money to Hadhrat Uwais. Hadhrat Uwais producing two dirhams from his pocket, said: "This is my earning for tending camels. If you can vouch that these dirhams will be depleted before my death, I shall then accept more."

Obviously, Hadhrat Umar () could not comply, hence Uwais refused the gift.

Hadhrat Uwais: "Both of you had undergone considerable hardship to reach me. Now return. Qiyaamat is near. We shall then meet where there shall no longer be any separation. Presently I am in a dilemma. I am concerned with the preparations for this journey."

They bid farewell and took leave with heavy hearts.

2. After the departure of these two eminent Sahaabah, people began to honour Hadhrat Uwais. Since their excessive veneration agitated him, he fled from that place. Thereafter he was not seen again by anyone except once by Hiram Ibn Hibbaan (rahmatullah alayh) who gave the following account of his encounter with Hadhrat Uwais (rahmatullah alayh):

"When I heard of the status of the Shafa'at (Intercession) of Hadhrat Uwais, I was overtaken by an intense yearning to meet him. I went to Kufaa and set out in search of him. It was my great fortune to locate him making wudhu on the banks of the river Euphrates. I found him fitting the description of him I had heard. After exchange of Salute actions, he looked intently at me. I desired to shake his hands, but he refused. I said:

"Uwais, may Allah have mercy on you and forgive you."

His physical weakness and forlornness reduced me to tears in profusion. Uwais (rahmatullah alayh) also wept and said:

"Hiram Ibn Hibban, may Allah Ta'ala grant you a good reward. What has brought you here? Who showed you the road to me?"

Hiram Ibn Hibban: "How do you know my name and the name of my father? You have never met me before."

Hadhrat Uwais: "He Whose Knowledge is all-encompassing has informed me. My rooh has recognized your rooh because the arwaah (souls) of the Mu'mineen recognize each other."

Hiram: "Narrate a Hadith of Rasulullah (ﷺ) to me."

Hadhrat Uwais: "I did not meet Rasulullah (ﷺ), but I have heard of his attributes from others. I have no desire to be a

Muhaddith or a Mufti or a narrator because I am engrossed in an abundance of activity."

Hiram: "Recite an aayat of the Qur'aan so that I hear it from your blessed tongue."

Uwais: After reciting

أَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

he wept uncontrollably and recited:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I did not create jinn and man except that they worship Me."

Then he let out such a frightening screech that I thought he had become insane. He said: "O Ibn Hibban, what has brought you here?"

I replied: "To become your friend and to reform myself." Hadhrat

Uwais commented: "I cannot even think of a man who has recognized Allah Ta'ala, having any love and desire for others and deriving comfort from others besides Allah." I said: "Give me some naseehat".

He replied: "Keep Maut under your pillow when sleeping. When you wake up, don't cherish hope of life. Never consider sin as being minor. If you consider sin as being minor, know that you are considering Allah Ta'ala as being insignificant."

I asked: "Where should I take up residence?" He said: "In the Land of Shaam." I said: "How shall I earn my living there?"

Hadhrat Uwais said: "Alas! Pity those souls who are beset with doubt and uncertainty and refrain from accepting naseehat."

I said: "Give me more naseehat." He said: "O son of Hibban! Your father has died. Aadam, Hawwaa, Nooh, Ibraaheem, Musaa, Daawood (alayhimus salaam), all have died. Muhammad (ﷺ) عاينه وسالم

) too have died. Abu Bakr, the first Khalifah has also died and my brother Umar has departed from this earthly abode. Oh Umar! Oh Umar!"

I said: "May Allah have mercy on you. Umar has not yet departed."

Hadhrat Uwais said: "Allah Ta'ala has informed me of his demise. You and I are among the dead."

He then recited Durood and made some dua, and added: "It is my advice that you cling to the Kitaab of Allah and adopt the path of Islaah (moral reformation). Never for a moment be forgetful of Maut. Never take even one step beyond the fold of the Jama'ah of the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ), for then, Allah forbid, you will become without Deen and land in Jahannum."

After making dua, he said: "Son of Hibban, go! Neither will you see me again, nor will I see you. Remember me in your dua. I too shall remember you in my dua. Now don't follow me, I am going."

I desired to accompany him a few steps, but he refused. He wept and so did I. I gazed long after him until he disappeared from sight. Thereafter, I never again heard of him.

3. Hadhrat Rabee' (rahmatullah alayh) gives the following narrative of his encounter with Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullah alayh): "I set out with a yearning to meet Uwais. I found him engaged in Fajr Salaat. As he completed his Salaat, he immediately commenced thikr. He continued with thikr until Zuhr. After Zuhr he again became involved in thikr until Asr. In this way he continued until Fajr of the next day. He maintained this practice for three days. During this entire period he neither ate nor slept. On the fourth night he took a short nap. He suddenly awoke with a start, jumped up and supplicated:

"O Allah! I seek Your protection from sleeping to the satisfaction of the eyes and from eating to the satiation of the stomach."

On hearing this, I decided that I had seen enough and returned."

4. His practice was to remain awake in ibaadat the entire night. He would say: 'Tonight is the night of Sajdah; tonight is the night of Ruku'; tonight is the night of Qiyaam.' In the way would he spend the nights worshipping Allah Ta'ala.

5. Someone asked: "How should Salaat be performed?" Hadhrat Uwais said: "I desire that before completing ~~سجدة~~ in Sajdah (during the night) it is already morning. Ibaadat should be like the worship of the Angels."

6. Someone asked: "What is khushu' (concentration in Salaat)?" He replied: "If you are struck with a spear, you remain oblivious of it."

7. He was asked: "How are you?" He said: "Like one who gets up in the morning, not knowing if Maut will grant him respite until the evening."

8. Hadhrat Uwais said: "A man who loves three things, Jahannum is closer to him than his jugular vein: Delicious food; fine garments and association with the rich."

(This naseehat does not apply to the masses who find it difficult to abstain from even haraam on account of extreme deficiency of Imaan. The advice of Hadhrat Uwais–(rahmatullah alayh)–is directed to Auliya of high rank. As far as weaklings engrossed in material pursuits are concerned, the minimum demand is to eat, drink and participate in worldly affairs within the permitted confines of the Shariah–in moderation.)

9. People said to Hadhrat Uwais: "There is a man nearby who has been sitting in a grave with a kafan for the past 30 years, weeping profusely."

On his request, Uwais was taken to view this man in the grave. The man was reduced to a skeleton. He was like a dried out weed and was crying. Hadhrat Uwais said: "The kafan and the qabar have diverted you from Allah. Both these objects constitute a veil for you in the Path (leading to Allah Ta'ala)."

His statement struck a responsive chord in the heart of the man. His spiritual eyes opened and he realised his folly. He let out a terrible scream and expired in that grave in which he had spent 30 years. If even the grave can become a veil and an obstacle in the path of spiritual progress, what is the effect of the numerous other pursuits and objects of the material world?

10. Once for three days he was without food. On the fourth day he found a dinar (gold coin) laying on the ground. Thinking it to be the

lost property of someone, he left it. As he walked on, a wolf with a loaf of bread in its mouth approached him. The wolf left the bread in front of him. Uwais thought that the wolf had snatched the bread belonging to someone. As he thought, the wolf said: "I am the servant of the Same Being Whose servant you are." The wolf then disappeared. Hadhrat Uwais realising that the bread was sent by Allah Ta'ala, ate it.

11. Hadhrat Uwais said: "Nothing remains hidden from a person who has recognized Allah Ta'ala." "Safety is in solitude. True solitude is that there is no room in the heart for thinking of others. Solitude in which the mind is occupied with the thoughts of others is defective." "When two people gather to indulge in futility, shaitaan departs because he has achieved his objective. There is no longer a need for his presence since these two are sufficient to deceive each other. Both are forgetful of Allah Ta'ala." "Keep your heart alert so that aliens do not gain entry." (i.e. Always remember Allah Ta'ala, for Thikrullah prevents shaitaan from entering the heart of man.) "I searched for glory and I found it in humility. I searched for kingdom and I found it in admonishing people (i.e. giving them naseehat). I searched for culture and found it in truth. I searched for holiness and found it in poverty. I searched for Nisbat and found it in piety. (Nisbat refers to a special relationship of proximity with Allah Ta'ala.)

I searched for honour and I found it in contentment (i.e. contentment with whatever Allah Ta'ala has ordained). I searched for comfort and found it in zuhd (abstinence –renunciation of the world).

I searched for independence and found it in tawakkul (trust in Allah)."

12. When Hadhrat Uwais walked in the road, mischievous children considering him to be a mad man would pelt him with stones, mocking and jeering. He would say: "Pelt me with small stones. Big stones draw blood which breaks my wudhu."

13. It is narrated that towards the close of his life he joined Hadhrat Ali (d) in the Battle of Siffeen and was martyred. Among the Auliya there is a category called Uwaisiyyah. Those in this class do not need a Shaikh (Spiritual Mentor). Just like Hadhrat Uwais, they acquire spiritual elevation without the medium of a Shaikh. Hadhrat Uwais (rahmatullah alayh), despite not having physically associated with Rasulullah (ﷺ) gained spiritual elevation by virtue of Nabi-e-Kareem's (b) baatini (spiritual) medium. This pedestal occupied by these Auliya is extremely lofty. Only Allah Ta'ala decides who is to be favoured with this rank.

HADHRAT HASAN BASRI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Hasan Basri's mother was a servant of Rasulullah's (ﷺ) noble wife, Hadhrat Umm-e-Salmah (radhiyallahu anha). Sometimes during infancy when his mother was engaged in some service, he would cry. To pacify the infant, Hadhrat Umm-e-Salmah (radhiyallahu anha) would place her blessed breast in his mouth. The baby would suck and miraculously milk would emerge. It is said that the innumerable blessings acquired by Hadhrat Hasan Basri were the product of this milk of the holy household of Rasulullah (ﷺ). Hadhrat Umm-e-Salmah (radhiyallahu anha) undertook the responsibility of caring for Hasan. She would always make dua: "O Allah! Make him the leader (i.e. spiritual leader) of men."

2. Once during childhood Hadhrat Hasan drank water from a mug in which water was left for Rasulullah (ﷺ) in the home of Hadhrat Umm-e-Salmah (radhiyallahu anha). When Rasulullah (ﷺ) enquired about the person who had drunk [drank or drunk?] from his mug, he was told that it was Hasan. Rasulullah (ﷺ) commented: "My knowledge will be diffused into him in proportion to the water he drank from the mug."

Once Hadhrat Umm-e-Salmah (رضی عنہ) placed Hasan on Rasulullah's (ﷺ) lap. Rasulullah (ﷺ) made much dua for him. Thus, the greatness of Hadhrat Hasan Basri is attributable to all the spiritual blessings he gained from the holy household of Rasulullah (ﷺ).

3. When Hadhrat Hasan was born he was brought to Hadhrat Umar (رضي عنه) who said: "Name him Hasan because his face is so beautiful." (He was extremely handsome.)
4. Hadhrat Hasan Basri was a Taabi-ee who had the good fortune of meeting 120 Sahaabah among whom 70 were participants of the Battle of Badr. He was the mureed of Hadhrat Hasan, the son of Hadhrat Ali (رضي عنه). According to another version recorded in Tuhfah, it is said that he was the mureed of Hadhrat Ali (رضي عنه) who had conferred on him the mantle of spiritual mentorship (i.e. made him his Khalifah in the spiritual realm).
5. The fear of Maut was so overwhelming in him that from the time of his youth when he pledged himself to prepare for the Aakhirah, he never laughed until death overtook him at the age of 70.
6. For his entire life, until the age of 70, he always remained with wudhu.
7. Once a Wali said: "Hasan has surpassed us all because the whole creation is in need of his knowledge while he needs none besides Allah Ta'ala. He is therefore our chief."
8. Hadhrat Hasan was asked: "What is the meaning of Islam and who is a Muslim?" He replied: "Islam is in the books and Muslims are in the grave."
9. When asked: "What is pure Deen?", he said; "Piety". People asked: "What destroys piety?" He said: "Greed and desire."
10. Hadhrat Hasan said that an ill physician (i.e. spiritual mentor) should first treat himself before treating others (i.e. he should first reform himself morally and spiritually).

11. People complained: "Our hearts are asleep, hence your advices do not benefit us." Hadhrat Hasan said: "Your hearts are dead. A sleeping person can be woken up, but a dead man cannot be aroused."

12. Someone said to Hadhrat Hasan: "Some people overwhelm our heart with fear with their talks." (He was referring to the advices of Hadhrat Hasan.) He replied: "It is better today to be in the company of those who instil fear in you so that tomorrow on the Day of Qiyaamah you will have hope in the mercy of Allah."

13. A man said to him: "Some people find fault with your statements and criticize you." Hadhrat Hasan replied: "I find myself full of fault. While I am searching for Divine Proximity, I cherish the desire for Jannat. But both these attitudes are contradictory. Furthermore, I do not hope to be immune from the criticism of people. Even Allah Ta'ala, The Absolute One, has not been spared by their tongues." (Although the wish or desire for both Jannat and nearness to Allah Ta'ala are in reality not negatory or contradictory, the exceptionally lofty spiritual status and proximity of the Auliya preclude them from all motives except the Goal of Divine Proximity. Their worship of Allah is neither for fear of Jahannum nor for the hope of Jannat. Their gaze is focussed on only Allah's Pleasure.)

14. It was said: "Some say that preaching (giving naseehat) to people should be embarked on only after one has become morally purified." Hadhrat Hasan commented: "Shaitaan desires that the door of Amr Bil Ma'roof Nahyi anil munkar (commanding righteousness and prohibiting evil) be closed."

15. Once while Hadhrat Hasan was lecturing, the tyrant Hajjaaaj with his unsheathed sword and army arrived. A pious man present in the gathering said to himself: "Today is a test for Hasan. Will Hasan proclaim his naseehat in the presence of Hajjaaaj or will he resort to flattery?" Hajjaaaj sat down in the gathering. However, Hadhrat Hasan did not pay the slightest attention and continued his talk. Hajjaaaj's presence did not exercise the slightest influence on him. He did not even look at Hajjaaaj. The pious man said: "Indeed, Hasan is hasan (i.e. beautiful)."

On the termination of the lecture, Hajjaaaj went forward. Kissing the hand of Hadhrat Hasan, he said: "If you wish to see a man, look at Hasan."

16. Once Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ) spent three days in Basrah. He had issued an order prohibiting lectures in the Musaajid. When he attended a gathering of Hadhrat Hasan he found him giving a lecture. Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ) interrogated him:

"Are you an Aalim or a student?"

Hadhrat Hasan replied: "I am neither an Aalim nor a student.

However, I deliver the words of Rasulullah (صلی و سلم علیہ) which have reached me." On hearing this reply Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ) left without preventing Hadhrat Hasan from lecturing. When he was told that his interrogator was Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ), he descended from the mimbar and went in search of Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ). When he linked up with Hadhrat Ali (رضی عنہ), he (Hadhrat Hasan) said:

"For Allah's sake teach me how to make wudhu."

A container of water was brought and Hadhrat Ali (رضي عنه) demonstrated the method of making wudhu. Since that time that spot is known as Baabut Tasht (Portal of the Basin).

17. Once during a severe drought in Basrah, two hundred thousand people gathered on the outskirts for Salatul Istisqa (to pray for rain). A mimbar was set up and Hadhrat Hasan was requested to mount it and supplicate for rain. He said: "If you wish for rain, expel me from Basrah."

(His humility constrained him to believe that he was the cause of the drought. Droughts are generally the consequences of the sins of people.)

18. One day Hadhrat Hasan heard the Hadith which says that the very last man of this Ummah to emerge from Jahannum after 80 years will be a person named Hannaad. Hadhrat Hasan lamented: "I wish Hasan was that man." (The degree of his humility and overwhelming fear created in him the perception that he (i.e. Hadhrat Hasan) may never emerge from Jahannum. Therefore, if he was Hannaad, his salvation was ensured.)

19. Once when he spent the entire night weeping, he was asked: "Hadhrat, why do you weep so much inspite of being such an Aabid (worshipper) and Muttaqi (pious)?" Hadhrat Hasan said: "I fear that I may have committed such a deed which negates my ibaadat. As a result of it Allah Ta'ala may say: 'Hasan! You have no position by Us. None of your acts of worship is acceptable.'"

20. Once he accompanied a janaazah. After the burial he cried profusely and said: "O people! Know that the end of this world and

the beginning of the Hereafter are this grave. The Hadith says that the qabr is a station among the stations of the Aakhirah. Why do you love a world whose end is the grave? Why do you not fear the world of the Aakhirah the beginning of which is the grave? This is your ending and your beginning."

21. During his childhood he had committed a sin. Whenever he had a new kurtah sewn, he would write a reminder (of the sin) on it. This reminder constantly reduced him to tears.

22. Once the Khalifah, Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Aziz (rahmatullah alayh) wrote a letter requesting some naseehat. Hadhrat Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) responded: "If Allah is not your hepler, have no hope in anyone." On another occasion he wrote: "Know that the day after which there will no longer be this world (the Aakhirah) is near."

23. When Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) learnt that Hadhrat Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) was proceeding for Hajj, he wrote requesting permission to accompany him (Hadhrat Hasan). In response, Hadhrat Hasan wrote: "Forgive me (i.e. he declined permission). I wish to remain in Allah's veil of concealment. If we are together, we shall become aware of our mutual defects and think ill of one another."

(Although these illustrious Souls never despised anyone on account of sins and defects, Hadhrat Hasan presented this pretext for his desire of solitude. Travelling with a contemporary would be an encumbrance which would disturb the solace of his solitude.)

24. Counselling Hadhrat Saeed Bin Jubair (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Hasan said: "Never enter into companionship with kings.

Never reveal your secrets to anyone. Never listen to music. The end result is always calamitous."

25. Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) asked: "In what lies the corruption of the people?"

Hadhrat Hasan: "In the death of the heart."

Maalik Bin Dinaar: "What is the death of the heart."

Hadhrat Hasan: "The love of the world."

26. Once Hadhrat Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) went to the home of Hadhrat Hasan (rahmatullah alayh) for Fajr Salaat. When he arrived at the door he heard Hadhrat Hasan making dua and a group responding 'Aameen, Aameen'. He waited outside until it was Fajr time. When he entered he found Hadhrat Hasan alone. After Salaat, Hadhrat Abdullah enquired about the mystery. He first took a pledge of secrecy from him, then informed Hadhrat Abdullah that every Friday night a group of jinn attended for lessons. After lessons when dua is made they responded with 'Aameen'.

27. Qaari Abu Amr was a famous teacher of the Qur'aan. Once he cast a gaze of lust on a handsome lad who had come to learn the Qur'aan. In consequence of this evil glance Abu Amr forgot the entire Qur'aan. From the Alif of **ال** to the Seen of **س**, the entire Qur'aan departed from his heart. His shock and grief were unbearable. He explained this calamity to Hadhrat Hasan who said: "It is now the time of Hajj. Perform Hajj. After Hajj proceed to Musjid-e-Khaif where you will find an old man sitting in the mihraab in worship. After he completes his ibaadat ask him to make dua for you.

After Hajj when Abu Amr entered Masjid-e-Khaif he saw a group of people inside. Shortly afterwards a saintly person entered. Everyone regarded him with honour and reverence. After counselling the group, the saintly person and all others except the old man departed. Abu Amr stepped forward and narrated the calamity which had befallen him. The buzrug raised his eyes towards heaven in supplication. To his wonder and joy Abu Amr discovered that the Qur'aan Shareef had returned to his heart. In sheer joy and ecstasy he fell at the feet of the buzrug who asked: "Who directed you to me?"

Abu Amr: "Hasan Basri."

The Buzrug: "Hasan has disgraced me. Now I too shall disgrace him. He has revealed my secret. I too shall reveal his secret. The buzrug whom you had seen at the time of Zuhr (the one who had lectured to the group) was Hasan Basri. He comes daily to us. Discusses with us and by Asr he is back in Basrah. What need did he have to direct you to me?"

(In other words, Hadhrat Hasan being such a great saint could have made dua for Abu Amr instead of directing him to the buzrug in Masjid-e-Khaif thereby exposing him.)

28. A man in need once brought his horse to Hadhrat Hasan and offered it for sale. Hadhrat Hasan bought the horse. That night the former owner of the horse saw the horse together with a few hundred horses grazing in Jannat. On making enquiries, the Angels informed him: "These horses had belonged to you. Now they are the property of Hasan."

In the morning the man hastened to Hadhrat Hasan and implored him to cancel the sale. He offered to refund the money. Hadhrat Hasan refusing, said: "I have also seen the dream you had seen." The man departed with a heavy heart. During the night Hadhrat Hasan saw in a dream beautiful palaces in Jannat. He asked: "To whom do these palaces belong?" The Angels said: "To the person who gladly cancels a sale." He sent for the man, cancelled the sale and returned the horse.

29. Hadhrat Hasan's neighbour, Sham'oon was a fire-worshipper. Sham'oon was in his death-throes. Hadhrat Hasan visited him. He observed that Sham'oon's face had darkened as a result of his years of fire-worshipping.

Hadhrat Hasan: "Abandon fire-worship and become a Muslim. Perhaps Allah will have mercy on you." Sham'oon: "Three things have turned me away from Islam. One: The world according to you (Muslims) is evil, but you remain in its pursuit. Two: You believe that death is true, but you do not make preparations for it. Three: You claim the wonder of Allah's Vision, but on earth you act in conflict with His wishes."

Hadhrat Hasan: "This is a sign of those who recognize the truth. The true Mu'min acts accordingly. But tell me, what have you gained by destroying your life in fire-worship? Even if a Mu'min does no good, at least he testifies to the Unity of Allah. You have worshipped the fire for seventy years. If you and I fall into the fire, it will burn us

both without caring for your worship. However, my Allah has the power of preventing the fire from burning me."

So saying, Hadhrat Hasan took Allah's Name and plunged his hand into the fire. He held his hand for a long time in the fire which had no effect on him. Seeing this, Sham'oon's heart opened up. The light of guidance had penetrated his heart. He said: "I have worshipped the fire for 70 years. What can I achieve in the few moments there remain of life?"

Hadhrat Hasan: "Become a Muslim!"

Sham'oon: "Write a document stating that if I embrace Islam, Allah will forgive me."

Hadhrat Hasan wrote the document and presented it to Sham'oon who said: "Let the pious elders of Basrah endorse it with their signatures." This request was complied with. Sham'oon said: "O Hasan, when I die, give me ghusl and bury me. Place the document in my hand so that I have proof of my Islam."

Sham'oon recited the Kalimah and died. His wasiyyat was fulfilled by Hadhrat Hasan.

Hadhrat Hasan returned home overwhelmed by worry. He thought: "When I myself am immersed in sin, how could I have furnished a guarantee of forgiveness to another man?" In this distressful state he fell asleep. In a dream he saw Sham'oon donned in beautiful garments with a crown on his head strolling in Jannat. Hadhrat Hasan: "How did it fare with you?"

Sham'oon: "Allah forgave me by His mercy. I am unable to explain the bounties He has bestowed to me. There now no longer remain on you any responsibility. Here take your document. I no longer have need of it."

When Hadhrat Hasan's eyes opened he discovered the document in his hand. He profusely thanked Allah and said: "O Allah! You act without cause. Everything is dependent on Your act. When you have forgiven a man merely on one statement (the Kalimah) after he had worshipped the fire for seventy years, why will You not forgive a man who had worshipped you for seventy years?" (The boundless rahmat of Allah Ta'ala could be understood from the episode.)

30. Tawaadhu' (humility) was an outstanding attribute of Hadhrat Hasan. He considered himself inferior to everyone else. One day while walking along the bank of the river Dajlah he saw a Habshi (Abyssinian) with a woman and a wine-bottle. A thought crossed his mind: 'This man cannot be better than me because he is with a woman and consuming wine.' As the thought crossed his mind a boat with seven occupants appeared on the river. Suddenly the boat began sinking. Seeing the plight of the boat-people the Habshi dived into the water and safely brought out one person. He returned and brought out a second man. He continued his rescue until he had saved six people. Turning to Hadhrat Hasan, the Habshi said: "If you are better than me, then save the seventh one. O Imaam of the Muslims! This woman is my mother. The bottle contains water. I am here to test you. I have seen that you have failed the test."

Hadhrat Hasan now realised that the Habshi was a close servant of Allah appointed to test him (Hasan). He fell at the Habshi's feet imploring: "Just as you have saved the six persons from drowning in the sea, save me from the sea of egotism and deception."

The Habshi: "May Allah brighten your eyes (i.e. spiritual eyes)."
Never again did Hadhrat Hasan regard himself better than any person. His state of humility reached such a pinnacle that once seeing a dog he supplicated: "O Allah! Accept me by virtue of this dog."

31. Once on seeing an intoxicated man swaying from side to side while walking in a muddy path, Hadhrat Hasan counselled: "Walk carefully otherwise you will slip." The man responded: "O Imaam of the Muslims! You walk carefully. If I slip, I alone fall. If you slip, the whole Ummah falls (i.e. strays from the Path of Truth)." This response made an indelible impression on the heart of Hasan Basri.

32. A lad was walking with a flame in his hand. Hadhrat Hasan Basri said to him: "From where did you get the flame?" The lad extinguished the flame and said: "Where has the flame gone?"

33. Once Hadhrat Hasan Basri said to his disciples: "If you should see the Sahaabah you would say that they are mad men and if they should see you, they would not consider you to be Muslims. They were horsemen flying like birds as swift as the wind while we are like those seated on the wounded backs of asses."

34. A Bedouin asked the meaning of sabr (patience). Hadhrat Hasan said: "Sabr is of two kinds. One: Sabr when calamity and misfortune strike. Two: Sabr regarding the prohibitions of Allah Ta'ala (i.e. restrain oneself from indulgence in the things prohibited by Allah Ta'ala)."

35. "A man should strive to acquire beneficial knowledge and excellent deeds accompanied by sincerity, contentment and beautiful patience. I cannot explain the lofty status which a man of this acquisition will gain on the day of Qiyaamah."

36. "A sheep is more alert than man. On hearing the call of the shepherd it stops grazing while man ignores the call of Allah for the sake of his desires."

37. "Ma'rifat (i.e. a high perception of divine recognition) is abandonment of lowly desires."

38. "Jannat cannot be attained merely by good deeds. Good intentions are essential."

39. "Fikr (contemplation) is a mirror in which good and bad are visible."

40. "Futile talk is evil. Silence devoid of fikr is futility and disgraceful."

41. "It is mentioned in the Tauraah that a man who adopts qanaa-at (contentment) becomes independent of all people; whoever adopts solitude, finds safety; whoever shuns lowly desires is emancipated; whoever abandons hasad (jealousy) has discovered friendship; whoever spends his life in sabr has found [page 31]." Re: p73 bk2

42. "Wara' (piety) has three stages: To speak the truth even in anger; abstention from the prohibitions of Allah Ta'ala; constancy in the execution of Allah's commands."
43. "A little piety is better than a thousand years of (Nafl) Saum and Salaat."
44. "Contemplation (fikr) and wara' (piety) are the noblest deeds."
45. "Nifaaq (hypocrisy) is the contradiction between the baatin (the heart / intentions) and the zaahir (verbal proclamation)."
46. "All true Mu'mins who have passed away had the fear of having nifaaq in them."
47. "The compensation for gheebat (speaking ill of people in their absence) is istighfaar (i.e. to seek forgiveness from Allah Ta'ala)."
(If the person is aware of the gheebat, it will also be necessary to seek forgiveness from him.)
48. "Man will have to give a reckoning for the halaal and haraam of this world in which he had participated."
49. "Every person (i.e. with love of the world in his heart) will depart from this world with three regrets: (1) His desire for accumulation of wealth will be unfulfilled. (2) Unrealized goals. (3) Having made no preparations for the journey of the Hereafter."
50. Someone reported to Hasan Basri that a certain man was in his death throes. He commented:
"He was in his death throes since his appearance on earth. He will now be released."

51. "He who has no love of the world will be saved. The one entrapped in the world is ruined. Those who are not proud of the bounties of the world will be forgiven."
52. "An intelligent man abandons the world and develops the Aakhirah."
53. "In this world there is no animal more rebellious than the nafs."
54. "Allah disgraces a man who honours (loves) gold and silver."
55. "A man who regards himself as a leader of the community is astray."
56. "A man who narrates the defects of others to you, will most assuredly narrate your defects to others."
57. Once when Hasan Basri saw a man eating in the qabrustaan (cemetery), he said: "This man is a munaafiq (hypocrite). A man whose desires agitate in the presence of the dead has no belief in Maut and the Aakhirah. Whoever does not believe in Maut and the Aakhirah is a munaafiq."
58. On the night that Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) died, a buzrug saw in a dream the portals of the heaven opening and a voice proclaimed: "Hasan Basri has reached Allah Ta'ala."

HADHRAT MAALIK BIN DINAAR (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar (rahmatullah alayh) was a contemporary of Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh). Once he got into a ferry boat. When the boat was in the middle of the river, the pilot asked for the fee which Maalik Bin Dinaar was unable to tender. The pilot mercilessly beat him until he became unconscious. When he revived, the pilot threatened to throw him overboard if he failed to make payment. By the command of Allah Ta'ala a shoal of fishes surfaced. Each one had a dinar (gold coin) in its mouth. Hadhrat Maalik took one dinar and handed it to the pilot who fell at his feet ashamed, profusely apologizing. Hadhrat Maalik stepped off the boat and walked away on the surface on the water until he was out of sight.
2. Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar was very handsome and extremely wealthy. He lived in Damascus. The following is the episode which led to his reformation. He used to spend time in I'tikaaf in the beautiful Jaami Musjid built by Hadhrat Muaawiyah (رضي الله عنه). Once he developed the desire to become the mutawalli (trustee) of the Musjid. He, therefore, decided to remain in the Musjid and engaged

in ibaadat to impress the musallis. He spent the whole year in I'tikaaf in the Musjid. Whenever people entered the Musjid they would find him performing Salaat. After one year he came out of the Musjid and heard a voice saying: "O Maalik! Alas! Why don't you repent. Shame on your year's of deceptive worship."

Cleansing his heart from riyaa (show) he passed the entire night in ibaadat. In the morning he saw a group of musallis at the entrance of the Musjid. They were discussing the poor state of the Musjid's administration. They unanimously decided to appoint Maalik Bin Dinaar as the mutawalli. They said that there was no one better qualified for this post than Maalik Bin Dinaar.

When the group approached Maalik Bin Dinaar, he was engaged in Salaat. After he completed his Salaat, they informed him of their decision to appoint him the mutawalli. When he heard this he said to himself: "O Allah! For a whole year I worshipped you with riyaa, but no one paid any heed to me. Now after a single night's ibaadat with sincerity, so many people have turned to me by Your command. I take oath by You that I shall not accept this offer." So saying, he came out of the Musjid and engrossed in ibaadat life-long.

3. In the city of Basrah an extremely wealthy man had died leaving his only daughter. This girl who inherited her father's entire estate was very beautiful. She went to Hadhrat Thaabit Bunaani (rahmatullah alayh), the renowned saint, and said: "I wish to be married to Maalik Binaar so that I derive aid in ibaadat and the Deen." Hadhrat Thaabit put this proposal to Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar, but he declined, commenting: "I have abandoned the world.

Woman is also part of the world. I have no desire of violating my pledge."

4. Once while Maalik Bin Dinaar was resting in the shade of a tree, a snake was fanning him with a Narcissus branch.

5. Hadhrat Maalik Bin Dinaar frequently resolved to participate in Jihaad. When finally he acquired the opportunity, he was overtaken by a severe fever which rendered him helpless. Lamenting his fate, he said to himself: "Maalik, if you had any status by Allah, you would not have become ill at such an opportune time." Full of grief he fell asleep. In a dream he heard a caller saying: "If you had today gone in Jihaad, you would have been captured. The kuffaar would have ruined your Imaan by forcibly feeding you pork. This fever is a beautiful gift for you." Waking up from his dream, Maalik Bin Dinaar abundantly expressed his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala.

6. Once, after a long spell of illness he went into the bazaar. Due to excessive weakness he was hobbling along. The Sultan with his retinue happened to pass through the bazaar. The soldiers were clearing the street, harshly ordering people to step aside to make way for the royal procession. On account of his weakness, Maalik Bin Dinaar was unable to move quickly. A soldier struck him with a whip. Feeling the sharp pain, Maalik spontaneously exclaimed: "May Allah cut off your hand." The next day, he saw the soldier laying in the street with his hand cut off. Hadhrat Maalik grieved much for having blurted out the curse.

7. The neighbour of Maalik Bin Dinaar was a physically strong evil young man who caused much distress to people. Once the people

complained to Maalik Bin Dinaar about the oppressive conduct of the young man. Maalik Bin Dinaar went to counsel him. The young man responded: "I am a royal servant. No one can tell me anything." He displayed an evil temper. Maalik said: "I shall complain to the king." The young man said: "He is most gracious and kind and will not apprehend me." Maalik Bin Dinaar returned crestfallen.

After some time, the people again complained about the evil and oppressive conduct of the young man. Maalik Bin Dinaar again set off to counsel the young man. Along the way he heard a voice saying: "Do not pursue My friend." Maalik Bin Dinaar, greatly surprised went to the young man who exclaimed: "You have come again!" Maalik Bin Dinaar said: "I have come to give you glad tidings. Allah Ta'ala says that you are His friend." The young man said: "If this is so, I give all my wealth in the path of Allah."

After having contributed his entire estate in the path of Allah, he left, never to be seen again. Maalik Bin Dinaar saw him in Makkah. He had become extremely lean and weak. He was supplicating:

"Allah has called me His friend. I have sacrificed myself for Him with all my heart. I know that His pleasure is in ibaadat. Never shall I displease Him. I repent."

As he supplicated, his soul departed from his earthly body.

8. Once Maalik Bin Dinaar rent a room next to the home of a Jew. His room was adjacent to the entrance of the Jew's home. The Jew spitefully always deposited garbage and filth in Maalik's entrance.

Even his musalla would at times be soiled. This treatment continued for a long period, but Maalik Bin Dinaar never complained.

One day the Jew came and said: "Does the garbage I deposit in front of your room not distress you?"

Maalik: "It does distress me, but I wash and clean the place."

Jew: "Why do you tolerate so much distress?"

Maalik: Allah has promised substantial reward for those who contain their anger and forgive people."

Jew: "Truly, your Deen is beautiful. It commands toleration of even the hardships presented by enemies."

The Jew was so affected by the beautiful conduct of Maalik Bin Dinaar that he embraced Islam.

9. Maalik Bin Dinaar visited a man in his death throes. He endeavoured to induce the dying man to recite Kalimah Shahaadat. The only response was: "Ten, eleven-ten, eleven." The man said: "In front of me is a mountain of fire. When I wish to recite Kalimah Shahaadat, the mountain of fire rushes towards me. Maalik Bin Dinaar enquired about the man's deeds and he was told that this man dealt in interest and would give less when weighing.

10. Once Maalik Bin Dinaar and Ja'far Bin Sulaimaan were together in Makkah Muazzamah. When Maalik Bin Dinaar commenced the Talbiyah, saying he fainted. When he revived, Ja'far bin Sulaimaan asked the reason for his unconsciousness. Maalik Bin Dinaar said:

"I feared to hear a voice which would respond

(There is no presence for you)."

11. When reciting the aayat

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ط

Maalik Bin Dinaar would restless, weep much and say: "If this was not a Qur'aanic aayat, I would not have recited it because it means: Only You do we worship and only You we seek aid, but we worship our nafs and seek aid from other."

12. Once a woman said to Maalik Bin Dinaar: "You are a man of riyaa." (Riyaa means to worship in order to impress others.)

Maalik Bin Dinaar: "For the past 20 years no one called me by my name. Finally, you have recognized me."

13. Maalik Bin Dinaar said:

"A companionship which will be of no benefit on the day of Qiyaamah is futile."

"A man who indulges in idle conversation and remembers Allah little, lacks knowledge. His heart is blind. His life is ruined."

14. Maalik Bin Dinaar said that in one of the Divine Scriptures, Allah Ta'ala said:

"The least punishment I give to an Aalim who loves the world is the elimination from his heart of the pleasure of thikr."

15. After Maalik Bin Dinaar's demise, a buzrug saw in a dream a scene on Qiyaamah. The angels were leading Maalik Bin Dinaar and Muhammad Waasi' to Jannat. The buzrug (in his dream) wondered: "Who will be allowed to enter first into Jannat?" Soon he observed that Maalik Bin Dinaar was permitted to enter first. The buzrug commented: "Muhammad Waasi' was a greater Aalim and enjoyed greater spiritual perfection." The Angel responded: "True, but Muhammad Waasi' owned two sets of garments while Maalik Bin Dinaar had only one set. He has therefore been granted prior entry into Jannat."

HADHRAT MUHAMMAD WAASI' (rahmatullah alayh)

1. He was among the Tab-e-Taabieen having had the honour of meeting a large number of senior Tabieen.

Hunger was his salient feature. His diet was mainly dried out bread immersed in water. He would say: "One who is contented with dry bread is never dependent on others." Sometimes extreme hunger would drive him to the home of Hadhrat Hasan Basri who would become delighted to receive him. One of his sayings is:

"Fortunate is the man who wakes up in the morning hungry, sleeps hungry and remembers Allah Ta'ala in his hunger."

2. A man asked for some naseehat. Muhammad Waasi' said: "Adopt abstinence (zuhd). Abandon greed. Know that all people are dependent. Do not ask your needs from anyone. If you follow this advice, you will become independent and you will acquire the kingdom of both worlds."

3. Once he said to maalik Bin Dinaar: "It is more difficult to guard the tongue than guarding gold and silver."

4. Someone enquired: "How are you?" Muhammad Waasi' said: "What can I say about a man whose life is decreasing and sins increasing?"

5. He said: "A Saadiq (true saint) is not a perfect Saadiq as long as his khauf (fear) and raja (hope) are not equal. (There should be neither excess or deficiency in these attributes. A perfect balance between the two is necessary excess or deficiency leads to transgression of the limits.)

HADHRAT HABIB AJMI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his reformation, Hadhrat Habib Ajmi was an extremely wealthy money-lender. He gave loans on interest to the people of Basrah. His daily routine was to visit his debtors and extract payment. He would not return without having squeezed out payment from his hard-pressed debtors. If debtors were unable to pay, he would levy a charge for his wasted time.

One day when he visited a debtor, the latter's wife informed him that her husband was not at home. She had no money to give to Habib Ajmi. The only thing she had was some meat which Habib demanded. He took the meat, gave it to his wife and said that it was an interest payment. He instructed her to cook it. His wife complained that there was neither firewood nor flour for baking bread. He said that he will obtain both as interest from debtors. He set off to procure these items from other debtors. After a short while he returned, having extorted some firewood and flour.

His wife prepared the food. Meanwhile a beggar appeared at the door

and asked for some food. Habib rebuffed him, saying that there was nothing to give. The beggar left crestfallen.

When Habib's wife opened the pot to dish out the food, she was shocked to discover the pot filled with blood. She called her husband and exclaimed: "Look at the consequences of your evil." The sight of the blood shocked Habib Ajmi. His heart opened up and he said to his wife: "Be witness that I repent and shall abstain from all evil deeds."

The following day he set out of his house with the intention of waiving all the monies owing to him. A group of children playing in the street said: "Look out! Here comes Habib, the devourer of interest. Be careful! Don't let the dust under his feet contaminate you. We all will then become miserable and unfortunate as him." Those remarks grieved him.

He then went to Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) whose counselling reduced him to tears. He repented and resolved to lead a life of piety. On his way back home he met one of his debtors who promptly fled on seeing Habib Ajmi. Habib called to the debtor: "Do not flee. Now I have to flee from you."

As he proceeded home he came across the same group of boys he had met earlier. They spoke among themselves: "Give way! Habib is returning after having repented. Let not our dirt fall on him least Allah Ta'ala records us as transgressors." In sheer elation, Habib Ajmi exclaimed: "O Allah! Only today have I repented and You have so quickly exalted my name."

2. After his reformation, Habib Ajmi publicly announced the waiver of all debts owing to him. He forgave all his debtors. He contributed all his wealth in the path of Allah. When he had no more assets, a man claimed that the kurtah Habib was wearing belonged to him. Habib Ajmi removed it and handed it to the claimant. Another man claimed the shawl Habib's wife had. Habib Ajmi gave him the shawl.

3. He constructed a small hut on the bank of the river Euphrates. He and his wife spent their time worshipping in the hut. He would spend the day in the company of Hadhrat Hasan Basri and pass the night in ibaadat.

4. One day his wife told him to show some concern for bringing food as there was nothing to eat. He promised to find some work. He left home and spent the day worshipping Allah Ta'ala. When he returned home in the evening his wife said: "You have brought nothing." Habib said: "My employer is gracious, hence I was ashamed of asking for anything. He said that he will give me something after ten days." After passing of the ten days, Habib Ajmi thought: "What shall I now take home?" While he was in this thought, Allah Ta'ala sent with an unknown person a bag of flour, a slaughtered goat, a container of butter, honey and 300 dirhams.

The person who brought the goods to Habib Ajmi's home said to his wife: "When Habib comes, tell him to be more diligent in his work. I shall increase his remuneration."

When Habib Ajmi returned, he was pleasantly surprised and grateful to behold the bounties sent by Allah Ta'ala.

5. Once a grieving woman came and lamented that her son was lost. She was unable to bear the separation. Habib Ajmi asked if she had anything with her. She replied that she had two dirhams. He took the two dirhams and gave it to the poor. After making dua, he said: "Go, your son has returned." Even before she reached home the child was found. Hugging him she asked for an explanation. The boy recounted the following episode: "I was in Kirmaan. My teacher sent me to buy meat. Suddenly a strong gust of wind lifted me. I heard a voice commanding: "O Wind! Blow him to his home."

6. Habib Ajmi, being a non-Arab, was unable to pronounce the Arabic words correctly. Once Hadhrat Hasan Basri arrived at Habib Ajmi's home at the time of Maghrib. Habib Ajmi had already commenced Maghrib Salaat. When Hasan Basri heard Habib Ajmi reciting instead of he decided not to follow him in Salaat. He thus performed Salaat separately. During the night Hasan Basri in a dream was blessed with Allah's Vision. he asked: "O Rabb, in what lies Your pleasure?"

Allah Ta'ala said: "You have found My Pleasure, but have not recognized its status." Hasan Basri: "What is it?" Allah Ta'ala: "If you had followed Habib Ajmi in Salaat, it would have been better for you than your Salaat of a lifetime. You thought of external perfection without taking cognizance of the purity of the heart."

7. Once when Hadhrat Hasan Basri was pursued by the police of the tyrant Hajjaaj, he took shelter in the hut of Habib Ajmi. When the police arrived, they questioned Habib Ajmi about the whereabouts of

Hasan Basri. Habib Ajmi informed them that he was inside the hut. Even after thoroughly searching the hut, they could not find Hasan Basri even though their hands passed seven times over him. After the police left, Hasan Basri said to Habib Ajmi: "You failed to observe the rights of your Ustaadh. You informed the police of my whereabouts."

Habib Ajmi said: "If I had spoken a lie, they would have discovered you." Hasan Basri asked: "What did you recite?" Habib Ajmi said: "Aayatul Kursi twice, Surah Ikhlaas 10 times, Aamanar Rasool 10 times. Then I supplicated for Allah to protect you."

8. Once Hadhrat Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayh) and Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) met. While they were conversing, Habib Ajmi (rahmatullah alayh) appeared on the scene. Imaam Ahmad said to Imaam Shaafi: "I shall ask him something." Although Imaam Shaafi discouraged Imaam Ahmad, the latter asked Habib Ajmi: "If a person has missed one of the five Salaats (and cannot recall which one), what should he do?"

Habib Ajmi: "He should repeat all five Salaat because he was forgetful and disrespectful to Allah Ta'ala."

Imaam Shaafi to Imaam Ahmad: "I told you not to question him. These people who have reached Allah Ta'ala have a different approach."

9. When he would hear the Qur'aan being recited, he would weep. People asked: "How do you understand the Qur'aan which is in Arabic while you are a non-Arab?"

Habib Ajmi said: "My tongue is non-Arab and my heart is Arab."

10. A durwaish (saint) recognized the lofty spiritual rank of Habib Ajmi, enquired: "How did you, a non-Arab, acquire this lofty rank?"

The durwaish heard a voice responding: "Although he is a non-Arab, he is a Habib (i.e. a Lover of Allah)."

11. A murderer was executed by hanging. People dreamt that he was strolling in Jannat dressed in beautiful garments. Asked for the reason for his entry into Jannat despite being a murderer, he said: "While I was hanging on the gibbet, Habib Ajmi happened to pass by. He took pity on me and prayed for my forgiveness."

HADHRAT ABU HAAZIM MAKKI (rahmatullah alayh)

Hadhrat Abu Haazim (rahmatullah alayh) had the good fortune of meeting many Sahaabah. He was therefore a Taabi-ee.

1. The Khalifah, Hishaam Bin Abdul Maalik asked him: "How can salvation in the Hereafter be achieved?"

Abu Haazim said: "Acquisition of wealth lawfully and spending it lawfully."

The Khalifah asked: "Who can do this?"

Abu Haazim: "He who wishes for Jannat, fears Jahannum and searches for Allah's Pleasure."

2. He said: "Abstain from the world. I have heard that on the Day of Qiyaamah an Aabid (Worshipper) who loved the world will be

exhibited in the vast multitude of people and an Angel will say: 'This is the man who loved what Allah detested.'

"There is nothing on earth, the ultimate end of which is not regret."

"On earth there is no luxury devoid of grief." "This world is such an evil abode that even its insignificant things attract a person more than the great wonders of Jannat."

3. "I discovered all things in two things:

One: What has been ordained for me.

Two: What has not been ordained for me.

Even if I flee from the things ordained for me, they will reach me, and even if I pursue what has not been ordained for me, it will elude me."

4. Once when he passed by the butcher's shop, the butcher said:

"The meat today is of high quality. Take some."

Abu Haazim said: "I have no money."

The butcher: "You can pay when you are able to."

Abu Haazim: "Let me consult first my nafs."

The butcher: "It is for this reason that you are so weak and only skin and bone."

Abu Haazim: "This is sufficient for the worms (i.e. in the grave)."

5. A buzrug set out for Hajj. In Makkah Muazzamah he went to meet Abu Haazim whom he found sleeping. The buzrug waited. When Abu Haazim awoke, the buzrug greeted. Abu Haazim said: "I have just

seen Rasulullah (ﷺ) in a dream. He said that caring for your mother is better than performing Hajj. You should cancel your plan for Hajj." The buzrug obeyed and returned home to take care of his mother.

HADHRAT KWAAJAH UTBAH IBNUL GHULAAM (rahmatullah alayh)

1. The following episode led to his reformation and renunciation of the world:
2. Once during winter people saw him perspiring excessively. When asked for the reason, he said: "Some time ago I had a few guests who scratched off some sand from my neighbour's wall to wash their hands therewith. Although my neighbour have forgiven this act, whenever I come to this spot, I perspire (on account of fear for the misdeed committed)."
3. Once his mother said: "O Utbah! Have mercy on yourself." Utbah said: "I desire that mercy be shown to me on the Day of Qiyaamah.

This world is a life of a few days. Tolerating hardships here will result in mercy and comfort in the Hereafter."

HADHRAT RABIAH BASRIYYAH (rahmatullah alayha)

1. On the night Hadhrat Rabiah (rahmatullah alayha) was born, the house was in complete darkness. Her father was unable to buy even oil for the lamp on account of his poverty. There was no garments to wrap the new born babe. She was the fourth daughter hence was named Rabiah (i.e. the fourth). Her mother asked her father (Rabiah's father) to go to a neighbour for some oil. Rabiah's father had vowed never to ask anything from anyone. However, to satisfy his wife, he went to the neighbour's house, knocked on the door and came away before anyone opened it. On his return, he told his wife that the door was not opened. Grief-stricken he fell asleep. In a dream he saw Rasulullah (ﷺ) telling him:

"Do not grieve, this girl born to you is exceptionally fortunate and holy. By her intercession 70,000 people of my Ummah will be forgiven. Go to the governor of Basrah and convey to him this message written on a page:

"Every night you recite 100 Durood on me and on Friday night 400 times. Last Friday night you forget to recite the Durood. As a compensation for this omission give this person 400 dinars."

Rabiah's father woke up crying. He wrote out the message and went to meet the governor. He handed the letter to a guard. When the governor read the letter he was moved by the fact that Rasulullah (ﷺ) had remembered him. He ordered 10,000 dirhams to be given to the poor as a token of gratitude. He went out to meet Rabiah's father. After presenting him with the 400 dinars, he said: "In future whatever your needs are, come to me without any hesitation."

2. After she came of age, her parents passed away. There was a great famine in Basrah. The sisters were separated. A cruel man abducted her. He enslaved her and finally sold her cheaply. All day long she worked for her master and spend the night in ibaadat. One night her master woke up and heard her supplicating. When he went to investigate he saw a lamp miraculously hanging in mid-air above her lighting up the entire room. She was saying: "O Allah! You know that my heart's desire is to serve You, and the light of my eyes is in Your service. Since You have subjected me to be in the service of people, I am late for Your service."

Rabiah's master resolved to set her free. In the morning, he emancipated her and said: "You are free to go. If you choose to stay here, you are welcome. However, then I shall serve you." Taking permission she departed to spend her time in the ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala.

3. Once while she was in the service of her master she was sent on an errand. Along the way a man accosted her. In fright she fled, slipped and broke her hand. Praying to Allah Ta'ala she cried: "O Allah! I am forlorn, without mother and father. Now my hand too is broken. But I do not care for these calamities if You are pleased with me. Are You pleased or displeased with me?"

A voice called to her: "On the Day of Qiyaamah even the Muqarrab (very close) Angels will envy your rank."

4. Daily she performed a thousand raka'ts Nafil Salaat.

5. When she went for Hajj she took along an emaciated donkey on which was loaded her few belongings. The ass died along the journey. The people accompanying her offered to carry her belongings, but she refused, saying: "Proceed! I did not come relying on you." The caravan continued, leaving her behind. With her perfect trust in Allah Ta'ala she supplicated for His aid. Even before completing her dua, the donkey came to life. Rabiah continued her journey and reached Makkah Muazzamah.

6. Rabiah in her yearning for Allah, prayed to be shown His Vision. A Voice said to her: "If you desire Me, I shall reveal a manifestation (Tajalli) of Myself and in a moment you will be reduced to ash." Rabiah said: "O Allah! I lack the power for Your Tajalli. I wish for the rank of Faqr (i.e. an extremely lofty spiritual status of divine proximity)."

The Voice said: "O Rabiah! Faqr is the famine of My Wrath. We have reserved it exclusively for those Men (Auliyaa) who have completely reached Us. There remains not even the distance of a hair between them and Us. At that juncture, We rebuff them and distance them from Our Proximity. In spite of this, they do not lose hope in Us. They again commence their journey towards Us. While this is their condition, you are still wrapped in the veils of time. As long as you are with the folds of these veils and have not entered into Our Path with a true heart, it is improper for you to even mention Faqr."

The Voice then commanded Rabiah to lift her gaze towards the heaven. As she complied, she observed a vast rolling ocean of blood suspended in space. The Voice said: "This is the ocean of blood of tears of My Lovers who are lost in My Absorption. This is their first stage (in their journey to reach Allah)."

7. Once, Rabiah overcome with tiredness, fell asleep. A thief entered and took her shawl, but he was unable to find his way out. When he replaced the shawl, he saw the exit. Again he took the shawl and lost the way. He replaced the shawl and saw the way out. He repeated

this process several times. Then he heard someone saying:

"Why bring a calamity on yourself? She whose shawl this is, has handed herself over to another Being. Even Shaitaan cannot approach her. A thief is not able to steal her shawl. Leave it and depart."

8. Once when Rabiah was on a mountain, the wild beasts of the jungle gathered around her and stared at her in wonder.

Coincidentally, Hadhrat Hasan Basri appeared on the scene. All the animals scattered and disappeared into the jungle. In surprise he said:

"The animals fled when they saw me. Why did they stay with you?"

Rabiah asked: "What did you eat today?"

Hasan Basri: "Meat and bread."

Rabiah: "When you have eaten meat, why should they not flee?"

9. It was said to Rabiah: "Hadhrat Hasan says that if on the Day of Qiyaamah he is deprived of Allah's Vision for even a moment, he will lament so much that the inmates of Jannat will take pity on him."

Rabiah said: "True, but this claim is appropriate for only a person who does not forget Allah Ta'ala here on earth for a single moment."

10. People asked: "Why do you not take a husband?"

Rabiah responded: "I am saddled with three concerns. If you remove these worries from me, I shall take a husband. One: Tell me, will I die with Imaan? Two: On the Day of Qiyaamah will my Record of

Deeds be given in my right or left hand? Three: On the Day of Qiyaamah will I be among the people of the right side or the left side?" The people said that they were unable to give her assurances regarding these issues. She said: "A woman who has these fears has no desire for a husband."

11. She was asked: "From whence have you come and whither are you going?"

Rabiah said: "I came from that world and I am returning to that world." The People asked: "What are you doing in this world?" Rabiah let out a cry of lament. They asked: "Why are you lamenting?"

Rabiah said: "I obtain my rizq from that world while I am doing the work of this world."

12. When asked for the cause of her constant crying, Rabiah said: "I fear separation from Allah Ta'ala. I fear that at the time of maut I may be rebuffed and it be announced: "You do not deserve to be in Our Presence."

13. She was asked: "When is Allah pleased with a person?" Rabiah replied: "When he expresses gratitude for the effort (on His Path) just as he expresses gratitude for bounties."

14. Rabiah said: "As long as Allah Ta'ala does not grant the taufeeq, a person will not be able to repent for sins. (Thus, sincere repentance indicates acceptance of the taubah.)

15. "As long as man's heart is not alert, his other limbs cannot find the path of Allah. An alert heart is a heart lost in divine absorption. Such a heart is not in need of the aid of other limbs. This stage is called Fana (annihilation)."

16. "Only verbal istighfaar is the act of liars. When a vain person makes taubah, he should again make taubah (for the sin of vanity)."

17. Once Rabiah kept seven fasts and spent the entire night in Ibaadat. On the seventh day someone presented her a bowl of milk. When she went to fetch the lamp, a cat came and drank the milk. She decided to break fast with water. When she brought a cup of water, the lamp was extinguished. As she lifted the cup, it slipped and broke. She drew a sigh and said: "O Allah! What are You doing to me?" A Voice said: "O Rabiah! If you desire the bounties of the world, We shall bestow it to you, but then We shall remove Our love from your heart. Our love and worldly bounties cannot coexist in one heart." Henceforth, Rabiah severed all her worldly hopes and her attitude was like that of a person in his death throes. Each morning she supplicated: "O Allah! Keep me engrossed in You and do not allow the people of the world to divert me."

18. Once when Hadhrat Hasan Basri went to visit Hadhrat Rabiah, he found one of the wealthy and prominent citizens of Basrah standing with a bag of money, weeping at her door. On enquiring, he said: "I have brought this gift for Rabiah. I know she will refuse it, hence, I am crying. Do intercede for me. Perhaps she will accept it." Hasan Basri went inside and delivered the message. Rabiah said: "Since I have recognized Allah, I have renounced the world. I am not aware of its source—whether halaal or haraam?"

19. Maalik Bin Dinaar went to visit Rabiah. He found in her home only a partly broken jug which she used for wudhu and drinking water; a very old straw-mat on which she slept and a brick which she used as

a pillow. Maalik Bin Dinaar said: "I have many affluent friends. Shall I ask them to bring some items for you?"

Rabiah said: "O Maalik! Is my Provider, your Provider and the provider of the wealthy not the same Being?" Maalik said: "Yes."

Rabiah: "What, has He forgotten about the needs of the poor on account of their poverty while he remembers the needs of the wealthy?" Maalik Bin Dinaar: "It is not so."

Rabiah: "When He never forgets anyone, why should we remind Him? He has wished this condition for me and I am pleased with it because it is His pleasure."

20. Rabiah supplicated:

"O Allah! My duty and my desire on earth are Your remembrance and in the Akhirah, Your Vision. You are the Master."

"O Allah! Maintain the presence (i.e. concentration) of my heart or accept my ibaadat devoid of concentration."

21. When her time to depart from earth was near, the illustrious Mashaa-ikh gathered by her.

She said: "Go away and leave place for the Angels." They all went out and closed the door. While they were waiting outside, they heard from within a voice reciting:

"O Soul at Rest! Return to your Rabb."

For a long while thereafter there was silence. When they went inside

they discovered that Rabiah's soul had taken flight from this world and had reached Allah.

22. In a dream someone asked her: "What transpired when Munkar and Nakier came to You?" Rabiah said: "When they asked me: "Who is your Rabb?", I said: "Go back! Say to Allah: When You had never forgotten this weak woman despite Your remembrance of entire creation, how can she forget You when on earth You were her only remembrance? Why do you send Angels to question her?"

23. Muhammad Aslam Toosi and Nu'maa Tartoozi (rahmatullah alayhima) stood at her grave side. One of them said:

"O Rabiah! During your lifetime you made bold and audacious claims of having renounced the world. Tell us, what has transpired now with you?" From inside the grave, Hadhrat Rabiah (rahmatullah alayha) spoke: "May Allah grant me barkat in what I have seen and am seeing (i.e. of the wonders of the spiritual realm)."

HADHRAT FUZAIL BIN IYAAZ(rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his reformation and renunciation of the world, Hadhrat Fuzail was the chief of a band of highway robbers. He operated in the desert attacking and looting passing caravans. Even while a bandit he wore simple garments of sackcloth and a woollen cap. A tasbeeh was always strung around his neck. When his band of dacoits brought their plunder, he would take whatever he desired and distribute the remainder among them.

Although his profession was dacoity, he always performed Salaat in Jamaat. He would expel any member of his band, who did not participate in Jamaat Salaat.

Another noble trait in him was that he had strict instructions for

observing the Purdah of the female travellers in the caravans. Sufficient means for continuance of the caravan's journey were also left with the people. Fuzail Bin Iyaaz would also keep account of the persons and the amounts he robbed. (Allah Ta'ala had wonderful plans for Hadhrat Fuzail, hence these noble characteristics were in him despite him being the leader of dacoits.)

2. Once a big caravan laden with wealth had to pass through the territory where Fuzail's bandits operated. As the caravan approached his territory, the people were gripped by fear and worry. Before entering into the feared zone, a man who had brought along considerable wealth thought of burying his wealth in the wilderness. Even if the caravan is looted, his gold and silver would be safe. While searching in the wilderness for a convenient place to conceal his gold, he came across a tent in which a buzrug was sitting on his musalla engrossed in Thikrullah. This was an ideal place to hide the gold. He spoke to the buzrug who indicated to the merchant to leave the bag in one corner of the tent. After doing so, he left for the caravan.

As expected, Fuzail's bandits looted the caravan. After the robbers had left, the merchant returned to the tent to reclaim his wealth. When he reached the tent, he was shocked to discover that all the bandits were there dividing the loot. Now to his dismay he realised the 'buzrug' was Fuzail, the leader of the bandits. He lamented the fact that he had destroyed his wealth with his own hands.

When Fuzail saw the merchant, he called him. Full of fear, the

merchant stepped forward. Fuzail asked: "What do you want?"

Merchant: "I came for my amaanat (trust) which I left by you."

Fuzail: "Take it from where you had left it." At first the merchant thought Fuzail was mocking him. However, when Fuzail insisted, the merchant took his bag. Surprised and amazed he left for the caravan.

In surprise, the robbers asked: "Why did you return his money? We did not obtain any money in this caravan." Fuzail said: "He trusted me and entertained a good opinion of me. I, therefore, honoured his trust. I hold a good opinion of Allah Ta'ala. By His fadhli, He too will uphold my hopes in His mercy."

After this episode, the bandits looted another caravan in which they had acquired much wealth. When they sat down to eat, one of the travellers asked for their leader. The bandits said: "He is at the riverside engaged in Salaat."

Traveller: "This is not the time for Salaat."

Bandit: "He engages in Nafil Salaat."

Traveller: "Why does he not eat with you?"

Bandit: "He is fasting."

Traveller: "It is not Ramadhaan."

Bandit: "He keeps Nafil fasts."

Hearing this, the traveller was very surprised. He went to Fuzail and asked: "Tell me, what relationship is there between robbery and Salaat, Saum?"

Fuzail: "Do you know the Qur'aan?"

Traveller: "Yes."

Fuzail: "Did you not recite the aayat:

وَالْآخِرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
وَالْآخِرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

This reply surprised the traveller even more. He left wondering at the condition of this leader of the bandits.

3. In the beginning he was deeply in love with a woman. He would send his share of the looted wealth to this woman.

4. One night when a caravan entered Fuzail's territory, he heard a Qari reciting:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ
مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ۖ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
مِن قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۖ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

"What! Has the time not arrived for the believers that their hearts mellow with fear for the thikr of Allah?"

This aayat struck Fuzail's heart like an arrow. He exclaimed: "Alas! How long will I continue ruining my life with banditry? The time has arrived for travelling in the path of Allah." He was overcome with profound regret and wept abundantly. He resolved to reform himself.

5. After repenting, Fuzail Bin Iyaaz set out for another wilderness. He found that a caravan had put up camp there. He heard a traveller telling his companion: "We are about to enter Fuzail's domain. We have to be careful."

Fuzail said: "Have no fear. I have repented. I now am fleeing from you."

6. After repenting, Fuzail journeyed to meet all those people whose rights he had plundered. He had to make amends otherwise his repentance would be incomplete. All his victims except a Jew, forgave him. The Jew said: "If you want me to forgive you, then remove this dune of sand in front of us. For many days, Fuzail laboured, carrying away the sand. One day Allah Ta'ala sent a strong wind which blew all the sand of the dune away. When the Jew saw what had happened, he said: "I had taken an oath that as long as you do not return my money, I shall not forgive you. Near my bed is a bag of Ashrafis (gold coins). Bring it to me so that my oath is fulfilled to enable me to forgive you." Fuzail took the bag and gave it to the Jew. When the Jew opened the bag, he said: "First make me a Muslim, then I shall forgive you."

After the Jew had embraced Islam, he said: "Do you know why I became a Muslim?"

Fuzail: "I do not know."

Former Jew: "I have read in the Taurah that when a man who has sincerely repented touches sand, it becomes gold. That bag had contained some sand which turned into gold by your touch. I have now realised the truth of your Deen."

7. Once Fuzail said to a man: "Take me to the king. In my lifetime I had committed many crimes. I want the king to punish me. The man took Fuzail to the king and put forward his request. The king, however, recognized him and honoured him. He ordered all present to honour and revere Fuzail. A group of noblemen was sent by the king to accompany Fuzail until his home. This treatment greatly grieved him. Seeing his grief, his wife asked: "Are you wounded?" Fuzail: "Yes, I have been wounded." His wife: "Where?" Fuzail: "My heart has been wounded."

8. When Fuzail resolved to go for Hajj, he said to his wife: "I intend to go for Hajj. The road is difficult and treacherous. I do not want to impose any hardship on you. If you wish, I shall set you free." His wife: "I have been with you all these years. I have never been separated from you. I shall live with you and serve you. I shall go with you."

They thus set off together on the journey which Allah Ta'ala made easy for them. He finally settled in Makkah Muazzamah.

9. In addition to having met many Auliya, Fuzail stayed for some time in the company of Imaan Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) gaining considerable knowledge.

10. The people of Makkah would attend Fuzail's discourses. Once some of his relatives came to visit him in Makkah. He did not open the door. Standing on the balcony, he said: "May Allah Ta'ala bestow good intelligence to you. May He keep you occupied in some pious activity."

The manner in which he delivered his naseehat made such an impact on his relatives that they all fainted. When they became conscious, they left to return to their homeland. Fuzail, standing long on the balcony, gazed sadly at them, crying and making dua for them until they disappeared from sight.

11. One night, the renowned Khalifah, Haroun Ar-Rashid said to his wazier: "Take me to a buzrug, for my heart has become hard and corrupt." The wazier (prime minister) took the Khalifah to Hadhrat Sufyaan Bin Uyainah (rahmatullah alayh). The wazier knocked at the door. Sufyaan Bin Uyainah asked: "Who is it?" Wazier: "Ameerul Mu'mineen has come."

Sufyaan: "Why did you not inform me earlier. I myself would have come to meet him." Hearing this, Haroun Ar-Rashid said: "This is not the type of buzrug I am searching for. Why have you brought me here?" Hadhrat Sufyaan said: "That type of buzrug is Fuzail Bin Iyaaz and no one else."

When they arrived at Hadhrat Fuzail's home, the wazier knocked on the door.

Fuzail: "Who are you?"

Wazier: "Ameerul Mu'mineen is here."

Fuzail: "What work has he with me? Do not take up my time."

Wazier: "Obedience to the Ameer is incumbent."

Fuzail: "Don't distress me."

Wazier: "Permit us to enter otherwise we shall enter without permission."

Fuzail: "You have no permission. To enter without permission is your decision."

Both entered. Fuzail extinguished the lamp so that his eyes do not fall on Haroun Ar-Rashid. The room was in darkness. Haroun Ar-Rashid managed to take Fuzail's hand. Fuzail said: "How tender is this hand. If only it could be saved from Jahannum." So saying, he began performing Salaat. The Khalifah wept. When Fuzail completed the Salaat, Haroun Ar-Rashid said: "Give me some advice."

Fuzail: "Your father was the paternal uncle of Rasulullah (ﷺ) . – Haroun Ar-Rashid was a Sayyid. – He, (i.e. Hadhrat Abbaas –(ra) had asked Rasulullah (ﷺ) : 'Appoint me the ruler of some region.' Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: 'I appoint you the ruler of your nafs. Your nafs in Allah's obedience is better than a thousand years of people's obedience (to you). On the Day of Qiyaamah, (earthly) kingdom will be the cause of regret.' Haroun Ar-Rashid: "Say something more."

Fuzail: "When Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez became the Khalifah, he sent for Hadhrat Saalim Bin Abdullah, Hadhrat Rajaa Bin Hayaat and Hadhrat Muhammad Bin Ka'b (rahmatullah alayhim), and said: 'I have become involved in this affair (of the Khilaafat). Guide me.' One of the three elders said: 'If you desire salvation in Qiyaamah, treat

the aged Muslims as you would treat your mother and father; the young like your brothers; the children like your own children; women like your mother and sisters."

Haroun Ar-Rashid: "Say something more."

Fuzail: "Be kind to the pious and do good to your offspring and brothers. I fear that your handsome form may perhaps be entering Jahannum. Your face will there become ugly."

Haroun Ar-Rashid wept and said: "Say something more."

Fuzail: "Fear Allah! Be prepared to answer to Him. On the Day of Qiyaamah, Allah will question you about every single one of your subjects. If even an old lady in your domain slept hungry, on the Day of Qiyaamah she will grab hold of you and demand justice in the Divine Court."

Unable to bear the impact of this naseehat, the Khalifah fainted. The wazier said to Fuzail: "This is enough. You have killed Ameerul Mu'mineen."

Fuzail: "O Haamaan! Be quiet! I have not killed him. You and your people have killed him." (Haamaan was the wazier of Fir'oun.) By this time Haroun Ar-Rashid had regained conscious and had heard the comments of Fuzail. The Khalifah said to the wazier: "Have you heard? He said that you are Haamaan, which means I am Fir'oun." Addressing Fuzail, the Khalifah said: "Hadhrrat, do you have any debt?"

Fuzail: "Yes, I am indebted to Allah."

Haroun Ar-Rashid: "I am asking about debt owing to people."

Fuzail: "Allah Ta'ala has bestowed bounties to me in such abundance

that I have no need to incur debt." Haroun Ar-Rashid presenting a bag containing 1,000 dinars said: "I have acquired this in a lawful way. It came to me as inheritance from my mother. Do accept it."

Fuzail: Alas! You have derived no benefit from my naseehat. It is indeed surprising that while I have called you towards salvation, you plan to ruin me. I said that you should give to those who deserve, but you give to those who do not deserve."

Fuzail then asked Haroun Ar-Rashid to leave. He closed the door on them. Outside, the Khalifah said to his wazier:

"Truly, this is a man of piety and excellence."

12. One day, Fuzail taking his son in his lap played with him. The boy said: "Do you love me?" Fuzail: "Yes." The son: "You also love Allah. The love of two cannot co-exist in one heart." Fuzail understood that this comment of the boy was a reminder from Allah Ta'ala. He put the boy down and became absorbed in ibaadat.

13. Someone asked: "When does a man attain excellence in his relationship with Allah Ta'ala?" Fuzail said: "When obtainal and denial (of bounties of Allah) are the same."

14. Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) said that he heard Fuzail Bin Iyaaz (rahmatullah alayh) say: "The searcher of the world is contemptible." He also said: "Remain a follower. Do not become a leader. It is nobler to be a follower."

15. His love for solitude constrained him to say: "I wish to become sick so that I be prevented from meeting people." (Severe illness will allow him to be absent from the Musjid. He will thus be in solitude.) "One should take to solitude in such a place where no one sees one."

16. Fuzail said: "I am grateful to a man who does not greet me when he sees me and does not visit me when I am sick."

"A man who mingles with people is far from goodness."

"The tongue of a person who fear Allah, remains silent."

"When Allah befriends a man, He casts him in difficulties and He gives prosperity to His enemy." (i.e. Worldly prosperity which in reality is a delusion, the end of which is everlasting perdition.)

"Everything has its fixed Zakaat. The Zakaat of Aql (intelligence) is contemplation. It is for this reason that Rasulullah (ﷺ) was always seen in a contemplative mood."

"Just as weeping in Jannat is surprising, so too is laughing on earth surprising. Neither is Jannat an abode of crying nor is the world a place of laughing."

"A man who has Allah's fear, does not indulge in futility. The love of the world does not occur to him."

"All things fear a man who fear Allah and a man who does not fear Allah, fears all things."

"A man's fear (for Allah) is proportionate to his knowledge (of Allah)."

"A man's zuhd on earth is proportionate to his love for the Aakhirah." (The greater his love for the Aakhirah, the more will he abstain from the world and its pleasures.)

"Allah has accumulated all evils in one place. Its key is this world."

"It is easy to enter the world, but to leave it freed of liabilities is difficult."

"The world is like an asylum and its inmates like insane people."

Insane people are always kept imprisoned."

"Even if the Aakhirah was of sand and this world of gold, man's striving should be for the Aakhirah which is everlasting. This is more so, since the world is of sand and temporary and the Aakhirah of gold."

"An arrogant man is deprived of humility. Allah Ta'ala loves humility (tawaadhu')."

"It is difficult to find three persons – A practising Aalim; a man who practices righteousness with sincerity and a brother without fault." Allah curses a man who overtly professes friendship for a brother Muslim, but covertly is his enemy. It is possible that he may become blind and deaf."

"A man who is pleased with the decrees of Allah, is a Zaahid and an Aarif."

"True tawakkul (trust in Allah) is to sever all hope in anyone besides Allah and to fear only Him. A man of tawakkul is grateful to Allah."

"If someone asks you: Are you the friend of Allah?, then remain silent. If you say that you are not, you become a kaafir. If you say that you are His friend, you are a liar because your deeds are not the deeds of a friend of Allah."

"Many people emerge from the bathroom purified while many people return from the Ka'bah contaminated (with sins, i.e. their sins are not forgiven)."

"Smiling in front of a faasiq ruins one's Deen."

"When a man curses an animal, it responds: 'May the curse fall on the one who is the greater sinner of us two and 'Ameen' from us

both."

"If I am told that only one of my duas will be accepted, I shall supplicate for the good of the king. If the king becomes good, it will benefit the whole nation."

"Excessive eating and excessive sleeping ruin a man."

"Allah Ta'ala revealed to a Nabi: "Give sinners the glad tidings of forgiveness if they repent and warn the Siddiqueen (Auliya) that if on the Day of Qiyaamah, I apply the code of justice, they all will be liable for punishment."

17. Once when Fuzail saw his son polishing a dinar (gold coin), he said: "Abandoning this futile act is better for you than ten Hajj and ten Umrah."

18. For 30 years no one saw Fuzail laugh. But when his son died, Fuzail smiled. When asked for the reason, he said: "Allah Ta'ala is pleased with my son's death, hence I smiled to conform with His pleasure."

19. Once a Qaari recited the Qur'aan beautifully. Fuzail said: "Recite to my son, but do not recite Surah Al-Qaariah. My son is overcome with excessive fear of Allah. He is unable to bear hearing about the calamities of the Akhirah."

The Qaari recited to Fuzail's son. Forgetting about Fuzail's warning, he recited also Surah Al-Qaariah. The son let out a piercing scream and dropped down dead.

20. Fuzail said: "I do not envy the Ambiya. They too have to go through the stages of the Qabr, Qiyaamat and Siraat. I do not envy

the Angels. They have greater fear for Allah than man. I, however, envy the child whose mother never gave birth to it."

21. Fuzail had two daughters. He was very scrupulous in their upbringing, when he was about to die. He said to his wife: "After my death, take my daughters to Mount Abu Qais and say to Allah: "Fuzail had cared for them until his last. Fuzail has now assigned them to Your care." After his demise, his wife fulfilled his wasiyyat. While making dua, the king of Yemen happened to pass by with his retinue which included his two sons. He made enquiries and proposed that Fuzail's daughters be married to his sons. In this way did Allah Ta'ala care for the daughters of Fuzail. They married princes and lived in palaces.

22. Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) said: "When Fuzail Bin Iyaaz died, even the heavens and the earth wept. An eerie silence was perceived."

HADHRAT IBRAAHIM BIN ADHAM (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his reformation, he was the proud king of Balkh. (Balkh today is a province of Afghanistan.) Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Ibraahim Bin Adham is the Key of the Knowledge of the Auliyyaa."

2. Once when he visited Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), many in the gathering viewed Ibraahim Bin Adham with contempt. Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Sayyiduna Ibraahim!", and greatly honoured him. In surprise someone asked: "How has he become our leader?"

Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "He is always in the remembrance of Allah, while we are engrossed in remembrance of the world."

3. When he was the king of Balkh, he led a life of great pomp and splendour. One night while he was sleeping in his palace, he heard a sound on the palace roof. He called out: "Who's there?" A voice said: "I am searching for my camel."

Ibraahim: "How can you search for your camel on the palace roof?"

The Voice: "How can you search for Allah in this palace?" Suddenly, he was overwhelmed with fear of Allah.

The next day, while he was seated on his throne in his royal court, a stranger who inspired awe in onlookers suddenly entered, no one had the courage to question the stranger. He boldly came forward, stood in front of the throne and said: "Who is the owner of this inn?"

Ibraahim: "This is not an inn. It is my palace."

Stranger: "Before you to whom did it belong?"

Ibraahim: "To my father."

Stranger: "And before your father to whom did it belong?"

Ibraahim: "To my grandfather."

Stranger: "Where are they now?"

Ibraahim: "They are no longer living."

Stranger: "Is this then not an inn where people tarry for a while and depart?"

The stranger suddenly disappeared just as mysteriously as he had appeared. Ibraahim Bin Adham terminated the session and went out in search of the stranger. When he located him after great difficulty, Ibraahim asked his identity. The stranger said: "I am Khidhr."

Ibraahim was overcome with fear.

4. Once Ibraahim Bin Adham set out with a group of his soldiers on a hunting excursion, possibly to divert his mind from the perplexing events of the past few days. While hunting, he was separated from the rest of the party. Suddenly, he heard a voice repeatedly

exclaiming: "Wake up before death awakens you." Suddenly, a buck appeared. Ibraahim went in its pursuit. The buck said: "I have come to hunt you. You cannot catch me. Has Allah Ta'ala created you for this?" He turned away with these words ringing in his ears. Now fear had completely overwhelmed Ibraahim Bin Adham. Then he began hearing these words being omitted from his own breast. The spiritual realm now opened up for him. He repented and resolved to renounce his throne and the world.

While walking he met shepherd with a flock of sheep. He exchanged his royal garments for the shepherd's simple dress and presented all the sheep to the shepherd. The sheep incidentally belonged to Ibraahim. Thus he cast off the garments of the world and donned the raiments of the spiritual realm. Dressed like a shepherd he wandered off into the wilderness to search the capital he required for his journey into the Hereafter. He wandered alone in the wilderness, repenting and passing his time in Allah's remembrance.

On his journey in the wilderness he saw a blind man walking on a narrow bridge across a river. Ibraahim shouted: "Be careful! Be careful! Suddenly the blind man was high in the air. He lifted Ibraahim and took him across the river. Ibraahim was left wondering in amazement.

He took up residence for nine years in a cave near to Nishaapur. He would spend the whole week inside the cave, emerging only on Thursdays to collect firewood which he sold in Nishaapur. On Friday

morning he would sell the wood in Nishaapur. After Jumah Salaat, he would give half of his earning to some faqeer and with the other half he would buy bread which would suffice until the next Friday.

5. In winter the region, including the cave, was covered with ice. One night he was in need of ghusl. He broke the ice and managed to gain from it some water for ghusl. With the iced water he bathed and passed the remained of the night in Salaat. By Fajr he was shivering uncontrollably as a result of the intense cold. He thought that he would die of the cold. Suddenly he felt something, like a warm blanket, being thrown around him. Feeling the warmth, he fell asleep. When he woke up, he saw that it was a huge snake which had kept him warm by having wrapped itself around him. Overcome with fear, Ibraahim prayed: "I am unable to bear the form in which You have sent Your aid." As he supplicated, the serpent disappeared into the ground.

6. When the people discovered his identity and his lofty spiritual rank, Ibraahim Bin Adham fled from the cave and set off for Makkah, after his departure, Shaikh Abu Saeed (rahmatullah alayh) visited the cave and commented: "Subhaanallah! Even if this cave was filled with musk it would not have been as fragrant as it has been left by the short stay of that noble soul. It is indeed soothing to the soul."

7. While journeying through the wilderness, Ibraahim Bin Adham met a buzrug who imparted to him the Ism-e-A'zam (The rare and greatest Name of Allah Ta'ala known to only a few selected Auliyyaa). Shortly thereafter he met Khidhr (alayhis salaam) who said: "O Ibraahim! The one who taught you the Ism-e-A'zam is my brother,

Ilyaas." Ibraahim Bin Adham became the Mureed of Hadhrat Khidhr.

It was through the agency of Hadhrat Khidhr that Ibraahim Bin Adham attained such lofty spiritual height of divine proximity.

8. Along his travels when he reached Zaatul Irq, he came across a group of 70 durwaishes who were lying dead. Blood was still flowing from their bodies. When he went near, he found one of them was still alive.

Ibraahim: "O young man! What has happened?"

Young man: "We are a group of Sufis. We set out in the wilderness with trust in Allah. We had pledged neither to speak to anyone nor fear anyone besides Allah Ta'ala. Our motion and rest would be only for Him. When we met Khidhr, we were overjoyed. We said that we had attained our goal. We were delighted that such a great person came to welcome us. Then came the divine rebuke: "Violators of your pledge! What was your pledge? You have forgotten Me and have been attracted by others. I shall take your lives for this crime."

The dying Sufi continued: "O Ibraahim! All these extinguished bodies you are observing are the consequence of the violation of that Vow. O Ibraahim" If you too are prepared for this then proceed, otherwise retrace your steps."

In amazement, Ibraahim said: "Brother, tell me, how did you escape?" Young Sufi: "They were accomplished while I am a novice in this field, hence I was spared to live a while." He too then expired.

9. After wandering for many years in the wilderness, Ibraahim Bin Adham finally reached Makkah Muazzamah. Numerous people in Makkah became his disciples. While in Makkah he would earn his living by selling firewood which he would gather himself. Sometimes he would work as a farmhand.

10. When he had abandoned his throne, he had left behind an infant son. After the son attained manhood, he made enquiries about his father. His mother narrated the episode of his father's renunciation of the world and told him that his father was presently in Makkah Muazzamah. Four thousand inhabitants of Balkh accompanied the young prince to Makkah. When they finally reached Musjidul Haraam, the prince saw many durwaishes.

When he questioned them about Ibraahim Bin Adham, they said: "He is our Shaikh. He has gone to gather firewood." The prince went to the outskirts where he saw an aged man with a pile of wood on his shoulder. This sight reduced the prince to tears. Controlling himself, he followed his father at a distance. When they reached the market-place, he heard his father exclaiming: "Is there anyone with wholesome money to purchase a wholesome product?" A man gave some bread in exchange for the firewood. Ibraahim Bin Adham gave the bread to his mureeds while he became engrossed in Salaat.

Ibraahim's teaching to his mureeds was to guard their gaze from young lads and females. Ibraahim and his disciples began making tawaaf of the Ka'bah. During the tawaaf, his gaze fell on his son.

Paternal love kindled and his gaze was momentarily fixed on his son. His mureeds were astonished. After tawaaf, they asked Ibraahim to explain the mystery of his conduct. He said: "When I left Balkh, I left behind a milk-suckling boy. That lad appears to be my son."

The next day a mureed of Ibraahim went to the caravan of Balkh. He found the young prince seated on a chair reciting the Qur'aan. The prince was weeping. The following conversation transpired:

Durwaish: "From where do you hail?"

Prince: "From Balkh."

Durwaish: "Whose son are you?"

The prince wept and said: "I never saw my father. Yesterday I saw a man, but I am not sure if he is my father. I fear that he may flee if I ask him. My father's name is Ibraahim Bin Adham."

Durwaish: "Come, I shall take you to him."

Ibraahim was sitting with his mureeds at Rukn-e-Yamaani when he saw the mureed approaching with his son and his wife (i.e. the queen, Ibraahim's wife). When the mother saw Ibraahim, she lost control, wept and said: "Son, that is your father." All the mureeds as well as others cried loudly. The prince fainted. When he regained conscious, he greeted his father. Ibraahim, returning the salaam, embraced his son and asked: "What Deen are you following?"

Prince: "The Deen of Muhammad (ﷺ)." .

Ibraahim: "Do you know the Qur'aan?"

Prince: "Yes, I know it."

Ibraahim: "Al-hamdulillah! Have you acquired any knowledge?"

Prince: "Yes, I have."

Ibraahim: "Al-hamdulillah!"

Ibraahim stood up and began walking away. But his son held on to him while his wife was pleading. Ibraahim lifted his face to the heaven and said: "O Allah! Set me free." Instantly, his son dropped down dead.

Later when his disciples asked for an explanation, Ibraahim said:

"When I embraced my son, his love kindled in my heart.

Immediately, a Voice reprimanded: "O Ibraahim! You are claiming to love Me but you associate with another being. You admonish your disciples to abstain from looking at boys while you look with love at your son and wife." I then supplicated: "O Allah! If his love will divert me from You, either take my life or take his life." The dua was accepted and his life taken."

Some Auliya have an extremely close relationship of Divine Love. They are on a different spiritual plane. Having abandoned the world and its pleasures in entirety, great trials are imposed on them in the journey of Divine Love. Just as Hadhrat Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) was called on to sacrifice his son, Ismaail (alayhis salaam), so too are certain Auliya required to make great sacrifices for the treasure of Divine Love.

11. When Ibraahim Bin Adham was asked for the reason for having abandoned his throne, he said: "One day while sitting on my throne I was looking in the mirror. I reflected and realised that my destination was the grave; the journey ahead was long and arduous; there was no companions and no food for the journey. The Judge is just and I lack evidence. My kingdom then appeared detestable to me."

12. Someone asked: "Why don't you marry?" Ibraahim said: "Does a person take a wife to make her walk bare feet and to remain hungry? If I can, I would give talaaq to even myself. How can I then tie others to myself? How can I deceive a woman?"

13. When Ibraahim Bin Adham heard a durwaish complaining about another durwaish, he said: "You have adopted sainthood without any benefit. You have purchased durwaishi (sainthood) without any payment." The durwaish said: "Does one purchase sainthood?" Ibraahim replied: "Yes. I have purchased it in exchange for the kingdom of Balkh. This too, is a cheap price for such a priceless treasure."

14. A man presented a thousand dirhams to Ibraahim Bin Adham. He said: "I have never accepted anything from the poor." The man said: "I am wealthy." Ibraahim: "Do you need more wealth?" Wealthy man: "Yes, I need more." Ibraahim said: "When you are in need of more, then you are the chief of the poor. Take what you have brought."

15. Ibraahim Bin Adham said:

"The sign of an Aarif is that he is always in contemplation. He derives lesson from everything and praises Allah. He is always active in the

obedience of Allah."

"Tomorrow on the Day of Qiyaamah, the act which seems so difficult here on earth for you, will be the heaviest in the Meezaan (Scale of Deeds)."

"When three veils are lifted, the door of spiritual treasures opens for the Salik:

Even if he acquires the kingdom of both worlds, he is not delighted. If this kingdom is snatched away, he does not grieve. If he grieves, it indicates greed and anger. This is a sign of his contemptibility which deserves punishment.

He desires no praises. A man who loves to be praised lacks courage in entirety. One who lacks courage is put to shame.

16. Ibraahim Bin Adham asked a man: "Do you wish to enter the assembly of the Auliya of Allah? Have no care for either this world or the next. Become absorbed in Allah. Consume halaal food even if you do not spend the night in prayer and the day in fasting."

17. "No one has attained sainthood by (only) Salaat, Saum, Hajj and Jihaad. But, he who knows what he is eating, attains sainthood."

As long as a man is not scrupulous regarding his food, he will never gain nearness to Allah Ta'ala by virtue of abundance of worship.

18. People were highly praising a young man. It was said that his spiritual state was extremely lofty. He was a man of wa'id (experiencing states of spiritual ecstasy). Ibraahim Bin Adham asked to be taken to the young saint. When he was taken there, the young man asked Ibraahim to be his guest for three days. He observed the young man for three days and was impressed by his worship and

rigorous acts of austerity. In fact, Ibraahim felt ashamed of himself, for he found that in comparison to the young man he was lacking. Ibraahim then thought: "Let me examine him more intensely. Perhaps a shaitaan has influenced him and is keeping him in a state of delusion." On closer examination, Ibraahim discovered that the young man's food was not halaal. He commented: "Allahu Akbar! This is the influence of shaitaan." He asked the young man to be his guest for three days.

Ibraahim brought the young man home and he joined in meals. Immediately, there was a transformation in the young man's condition. The former state of spiritual fervour, enthusiasm and vigour dissipated. Highly agitated, he said: "What have you done to me?" Ibraahim said: "Your food was not halaal. Shaitaan would enter into you along with the food. He freely came into your body and emerged. Now that halaal food has entered into your body, shaitaan has been unable to demonstrate his influence. Now your true state has been exposed. The basis of spiritual progress is halaal rizq."

19. Ibraahim Bin Adham said to Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh): "Although you have considerable knowledge, you are in need of some yaqeen."

20. Hadhrat Shafeeq (rahmatullah alayh) asked Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh): "Why do you flee from people?" Ibraahim responded: "My Deen is in my lap. With it I flee from city to city and mountain to mountain to protect it from shaitaan and make my exit with safety from the doorway of Maut."

21. After completing Salaat, he would cover his face with both hands. When asked about this, Ibraahim Bin Adham said: "I fear that Allah Ta'ala may fling my Salaat into my face."

22. One day, he did not obtain a single morsel to eat. In gratitude he performed 400 raka'ts Salaat. The next day again he had nothing to eat. Again he performed 400 raka'ts. This continued for seven days. After seven days of hunger, Ibraahim Bin Adham was overcome by extreme hunger and weakness. He prayed: "O Allah, send some food now." Suddenly a young man appeared and said: "Do you wish to eat?" When Ibraahim said, 'Yes', the young man took him to a luxurious mansion. Now recognising Ibraahim Bin Adham, the young man said: "I am your slave and this mansion belongs to you." (The slave and the mansion were part of Ibraahim's estate which he had renounced when he had abandoned the throne).

Ibraahim said: "I am setting you free. This mansion and its belongings are now your property." He departed without eating and supplicated:

"O Allah! I asked for a piece of bread. You put the world in front of me. Henceforth I shall ask for nothing besides You."

23. Once he spent the night with three disciples in a dilapidated Musjid. There was no door and an extremely cold wind was blowing. To shield his mureeds from the cold gust, he stood the entire night in the doorway.

24. When anyone wished to stay with him (as his mureed), Ibraahim Bin Adham stipulated three conditions: (1) I shall serve everyone.

(2) I shall give the Athaan. (3) Whatever I acquire, I shall distributed it equally among the mureeds.

25. A man who had wandered around the whole day in search of employment was returning empty-handed. He thought of his hungry wife and children at home. What will he tell them today? On his way home, he saw Ibraahim Bin Adham sitting peacefully. With a heavy sigh, the man said: "You are sitting so peacefully without a care in the world. I envy you." Ibraahim said: "Give me your sigh in exchange for all the ibaadat I have so far made."

A grief stricken heart has great value in Allah's court. In a Hadith Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says: "I am in the broken hearts of people."

26. Once when someone asked him for his profession (i.e. worldly occupation by means of which one earns a living), Ibraahim Bin Adham said: "The office-bearers of Allah are not in need of a profession."

When Mu'tasim Billah asked him the same question, he replied: "I have left the world and the Aakhirah for their searchers. For myself I have chosen Allah's remembrance in this world and Allah's Vision in the Aakhirah."

27. Ibraahim Bin Adham was asked: "Have you ever experienced happiness in your state of poverty?" He replied: "I experienced happiness several times. On the first occasion I was in a boat. My garments were tattered and torn and my hair dishevelled. People were mocking me. A man was repeatedly tugging at my hair and

punching me. All expressed their mirth in laughter. Seeing the disgrace of my nafs, I became delighted.

On the second occasion (also in the boat), suddenly a storm threatened to wreck the boat. The pilot accusing me of ill-luck instructed that I be thrown overboard. I was harshly grabbed and hauled to the edge of the boat. Just as they were about to cast me overboard, the storm subsided. I was then left. Again I experienced happiness on account of the disgrace suffered by my nafs.

The third time I was overcome with weakness and tiredness. I fell asleep in a Musjid. The people grabbed me and pushed me down the steps. As I rolled down hitting my head, blood gushed out. Each step I went down, Allah Ta'ala revealed a spiritual realm to me. The happiness of this revelation ended when I landed at the bottom. I wished that the steps were endless so that I could perpetually roll down experiencing the exhilaration of the revelation of spiritual realms."

28. Once he journeyed several days in the wilderness. He could not find anything to eat. He thought: "I have a friend living nearby. If I go there, I shall have something to eat." Immediately he abandoned the idea since he concluded that his tawakkul had weakness. He entered a Musjid and said: "I repose my trust in The Being Who is alive and Who will not die." A Voice said: "Allah has removed from earth those who had trust in Him." Ibraahim said: "Why is this so?" The Voice responded: "A man who thinks of going to friends for food is not a mutawakkil (one who has trust in Allah)?"

29. Once Ibraahim Bin Adham asked a man: "From whence do you eat?" The mans said: "I do not know. Ask Allah Ta'ala. I have no time for such nonsense."

30. Someone asked: "How do you spend your time?" Ibraahim Bin Adham replied: "I have three vehicles. When I acquired a ni'mat (bounty), I ride the vehicle of shukr and go to Him. When I worship, I ride the vehicle of ikhlaas to Him. When I commit a sin, I ride the vehicle of istighfaar and go to Him."

31. A number of Mashaa-ikh were sitting at a place. Ibraahim Bin Adham attempted to join them but they prevented him. It was said to him: "We perceive the odour of kingdom in you."

When this was the reaction of the Mashaa-ikh notwithstanding the exceptionally lofty spiritual rank of Ibraahim Bin Adham, what can now be said in regard to others?

32. Someone asked: "Why is there a veil screening the heart from Allah Ta'ala?" Ibraahim Bin Adham said: "Because the enemy of Allah is taken as a friend and the bounties of the Aakhirah are forgotten."

33. Advising a man, Ibraahim Bin Adham said: "Take Khaaliq (The Creator) as your friend and abandon makhlooq (the creation)."

"Open the purse. Eliminate love for wealth. Spend in Allah's path and prevent your tongue from evil conversation."

Lies, abuse, flattery, back-biting, gossip, and nonsensical talk are all evil conversation.

34. When a man asked for naseehat, Ibraahim Bin Adham said:

"Do six things. When you commit a sin against Allah Ta'ala, refrain

from eating the food He provides. When you wish to sin, get out of His territory. Sin in a place where He cannot observe you. At the time of death, ask Malakul Maut to grant you respite for taubah. Do not allow Munkar and Nakeer to approach you in the grave. When you are sentenced to Jahannum, refuse to enter it."

The man said: "No one can achieve this. How then can I do these?" Ibraahim said: "If you are unable, then refrain from sin." The man repented and died in Ibraahim's presence.

35. People asked: "Why are our duas not accepted?" Ibraahim Bin Adham replied: "You know Allah, but you do not worship Him. You recognize His Rasool and the Qur'aan, but you do not obey. You eat His bounties, but you are not grateful. You do not prepare for Jannat nor arrange for safety from Jahannum. You acknowledge shaitaan as the enemy, but you do not abhor him. You know Maut will arrive, but you do not prepare for it. You bury your parents in the grave, but you derive no lesson. You know that you have defects in you, but you search for the faults of others. How can your duas be accepted?"

36. Once when the people complained of the high price of meat, Ibraahim Bin Adham advised: "Do not buy meat. The price will then fall."

37. Once Ibraahim Bin Adham and other were picking up dates. Each time he filled his garment, someone would snatch it from him. He would renew the effort only for the dates to be snatched away. This occurred 40 times. Thereafter no one took his dates. He heard a Voice saying: "The forty times are in expiation of the forty golden

shields with which soldiers paraded in front of you when you were a king."

38. Once he was employed to guard an orchard. One day the owner asked him to bring some pomegranates. Ibraahim Bin Adham brought a few but all were sour. Annoyed, the owner said: "After all this time you are unable to differentiate between sweet and sour pomegranates." Ibraahim said: "You employed me to guard the orchard, not to eat the fruit." The owner said: "It appears from your piety that you are Ibraahim Bin Adham." His identity exposed, Ibraahim Immediately departed.

39. Ibraahim Bin Adham said: "In a dream I saw Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) holding a book in his hand. I asked him: "What are you doing with this book?" Jibraeel (alayhis salaam): "I am recording the names of Allah's devotees." Ibraahim: "Will you record my name too?" Jibraeel: "You are not a devotee of Allah." Ibraahim: "At least I am a friend of Allah's devotee."

After a short pause, Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) said: "Allah Ta'ala commands that your name be written at the top of the list." In this path hope is acquired from hopelessness."

40. One night Ibraahim Bin Adham was in Musjidul Aqsa. Since the caretaker did not permit anyone to sleep inside the Musjid, Ibraahim concealed himself by wrapping himself in a carpet. Late in the night he saw the door automatically open. A Shaikh with a group of forty durwaishes entered. All of them were dressed in sackcloth. After performing two raka'ts, the Shaikh turned to face the group. One in the group said: "Is there anyone who does not belong to us?" the

Shaikh said: "Yes – Ibraahim Bin Adham. He has not tasted the pleasure of 40 days of ibaadat." Ibraahim came out of concealment and said: "True, but why?"

The Shaikh: "You had purchased some dates in Basrah. You saw a date which belonged to the seller and thought that it was yours. You picked it up." Ibraahim Bin Adham returned to Basrah and requested the seller to forgive him. Ibraahim's attitude had such an impact on the seller that he gave up his business and set out in the path of Allah. Ultimately he was accepted into the assembly of the Abdaal.

41. One day outside the city precincts, Ibraahim Bin Adham met a soldier who asked: "What is your name?" Ibraahim: "A servant of Allah, i.e. Abdullah." When the soldier asked for the direction to the city, Ibraahim pointed towards the qabrustaan. Thinking that Ibraahim was mocking him, the soldier beat him fiercely drawing much blood. He put a rope around his neck and brought him to the city. The people reprimanded the soldier and said: "This is Ibraahim Bin Adham." The soldier regretting his misdeed apologized profusely. Ibraahim said:

"You have made me deserving of Jannat. I made dua that you too attain Jannat."

A buzrug saw in a dream the inmates of Jannat gathering pearls. He asked: "Why are you gathering pearls?" They replied: "A foolish man

wounded Ibraahim Bin Adham's head. We have been commanded to scatter these pearls on him when he enters Jannat."

42. Ibraahim Bin Adham saw an intoxicated man lying in the street. He was frothing from his mouth. Ibraahim washed the man's mouth and with a heavy heart sighed: "The mouth which should be involved in the thikr of Allah should not be in this condition."

At night, Ibraahim dreamt that an Angel was saying: "You cleansed his mouth for the sake of Allah, hence Allah has cleansed your heart." When the man sobered up, people informed him of what had transpired. He was so much affected by what he heard that he repented and devoted himself to the remembrance of Allah.

43. Once Ibraahim Bin Adham was discussing with a buzrug on a mountain. The buzrug asked: "What is the perfection of a man of truth?" Ibraahim said: "If he says to a mountain: 'Move!', it will move." As he spoke, the mountain began to move. Ibraahim said to the mountain: "I did not order you to move. I only cited an example." The mountain became motionless.

44. One day Ibraahim Bin Adham was sitting on the banks of the river Dajlah sewing his tattered shawl. A passer by who recognised him said: "What did you gain by abandoning the kingdom of Balkh?" Ibraahim threw his needle into the river and made a sign with his hand. Instantaneously, thousands of fishes emerged. From the mouth of every fish a golden needle protruded. Scanning the river, Ibraahim said: "I do not want these needles. I want my needle." All the fish disappeared under water and a tiny fish emerged with

Ibraahim's needle in his mouth. Taking his needle, he commented:

"The least acquisition for abandoning the throne of Balkh is this."

45. Once when he drew the bucket from the well, it was filled with silver. He dumped it and lowered the bucket. When he brought it out, the bucket was full of gold. He dumped it and lowered it again. This time it was full of precious stones. He said: "O Allah! I need water for wudhu. I am not in need of the wealth of this world." The fourth time when he brought out the bucket, it was filled with water."

46. Towards the end of his life, he disappeared. It is not known where he had died. Some say that he died in Baghdad while others claim Shaam. It is said that his grave is near to the grave of Loot (alayhis salaam). Allah knows best.

47. It is narrated that on the occasion of his death, a Voice was heard proclaiming: "Today the Safety of the world has died!"

HADHRAT BISHR HAAFI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Before his reformation, Hadhrat Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh) was a drunkard. One day on his way to the pub he saw a piece of paper on which was written بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ laying in the street gutter. He stopped to pick it up. He cleaned the paper, applied perfume to it and placed it on a high shelf in his home.

That night a buzrug was commanded in a dream: "Go to Bishr and tell him: You had perfumed and honoured My Name, I shall cleanse you of your sins and elevate you." The buzrug's eyes opened. He thought: "Bishr is a faasiq. My dream is false." He took wudhu,

performed two raka'ts and went to sleep. He saw the same dream. He woke up. With the same thought in mind, he fell asleep. For the third time he saw the same dream.

In the morning, the buzrug sent for Bishr but was informed that he was in the pub. He went to the pub, stood outside and enquired about Bishr. He was told that Bishr was lying in a drunken stupor. The buzrug said: "Tell him that someone has brought a message from Allah Ta'ala." When this message was delivered, it penetrated his heart, sobering him. Bishr was overcome with fear. He said to his friends in the pub: "I do not know if this is a message of reprimand or punishment. Farewell! You will not see me again." He emerged from the pub. The buzrug delivered the message and Bishr repented. Allah Ta'ala granted him a most elevated spiritual status.

2. Out of extreme love and devotion, he walked bare feet, hence he is called Bishr Haafi. Haafi means the bare-footed one. People asked him the reason for walking bare-feet. He said: "When I repented, I was bare-feet. I now feel ashamed to wear shoes. Allah Ta'ala says (in the Qur'aan) – 'He has made the earth a carpet for you'. It is disrespectful to walk with shoes on the carpet of a king."

3. Hadhrat Imaam Ahmed Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) spent much time in the company of Bishr Haafi (rahmatullah alayh). One day some of his students said: "It is quite surprising that although you are such a great Aalim and Muhaddith you associate with an insane man." Imaam Hambal said: "Although I have greater awareness of the knowledge I possess than that insane man, he knows Allah Ta'ala

more than what I know Him." Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal would say to Bishr Haafi: "Narrate to me from your Rabb."

4. One night Bishr Haafi went to his sister's home. Suddenly he halted in the entrance. He was overwhelmed by a state of bewilderment. He remained standing in contemplation the entire night. In the morning he left for Fajr Salaat. After returning from the Musjid, his sister asked for an explanation for his queer behaviour. He said: "I wondered that in Baghdad besides myself, there are two kaafirs whose names are also Bishr. My name too is Bishr. Allah Ta'ala favoured me with Islam. What did I do to deserve Islam and what did they do to deserve kufr? This condition of wonder occupied my mind the whole night."

5. Hadhrat Bilaal Khawwaas (rahmatullah alayh) met Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) in the wilderness of Bani Israaeel. Bilaal Khawwaas asked: "What is your opinion of Imaam Shaafi?"

Hadhrat Khidhr: "He is among the Autaad." (This is a class of Auliya.)

Bilaal Khawwaas: "What do you say about Imaam Ahmad Hambal?"

Hadhrat Khidhr: "He is a Siddique."

Bilaal Khawwaas: "And Bishr Haafi?"

Hadhrat Khidhr: "He is unique. After him there will not be anyone like him."

6. Bishr Haafi was so scrupulous in his taqwa that he never drank water from the water-canal erected by the king.

7. A buzrug said: "Once in winter I visited Bishr Haafi. Due to insufficient clothes he was shivering of the intense cold. I asked him, why he was undergoing so much hardship. He said: "I am thinking of those durwaishes who are unable to afford garments to protect them against the cold. I have no money with which to aid them. I find it comforting to at least physically conform with them by sharing their plight."

8. Defining Faqr (poverty), Bishr Haafi said: "The people of Faqr are of three classes.

1st Such men who have diverted their gaze in entirety from people. Neither do they ever ask anything from anyone nor do they accept anything from anyone. They are known as Roohaaniyeen. They obtain from Allah Ta'ala whatever they ask for.

2nd This class of Fuqaraa do not ask anyone for anything. However, they accept if given to them. They are the middle class and are the Mutawakkileen.

3rd These Fuqaraa adopt patience (sabr) and strive against their desires. They spend their time in Thikrullah.

9. Bishr Haafi narrated the following episode: "One day Hadhrat Ali Jurjaani (rahmatullah alayh) was sitting near to a fountain in the forest. I went near. When he saw me he exclaimed: "Today I must have committed some great sin, hence I saw a human being." He then fled. I pursued him until I reached him and implored: "Give me some advice." He replied: "Conceal poverty (faqr) and adopt sabr.

Abandon the desires of the nafs. On earth keep your house emptier than the grave so that you will have no regret when you have to depart from this earth at the time of Maut." (Ali Jurjaani-rahmatullah alayh- was a majzub who lived in forests and desolate places, fleeing from people.)

10. Some people who were proceeding for Hajj requested Bishr Haafi to accompany them. He said that he would accompany them if they agreed to accept the following three conditions:

← No one should take along any provisions for the journey.

↑ No one should ask anyone for anything.

→ If anyone presents something, it should not be accepted.

The people said that while they accept the first two conditions, the third condition was not acceptable. Bishr Haafi said: "Your tawakkul is on the provisions of others. If your trust was solely on Allah Ta'ala, you would have attained the rank of wilaayat (sainthood)." He thus refused to join them. This high degree of tawakkul is the quality exclusive of certain Auliya. It is not a degree of tawakkul for everyone. Nor is every person able to adopt this special degree of tawakkul.

11. Once Bishr Haafi asked Khidhr (alayhis salaam) to make dua for him. Khidhr (alayhis salaam) said: "May Allah Ta'ala make ibaadat easy for you and may He conceal your ibaadat from yourself." In other words, one should not entertain the idea that one is engrossed

in much ibaadat. Such an attitude is ujub (vanity) which destroys one's ibaadat.

12. One day in the qabrustaan he saw a wonderful scene. The inmates of the grave were out and it appeared that they are gathering something furiously. Bishr Haafi supplicated: "O Allah! Reveal this mystery to me." He was commanded to question the inmates of the grave. When he asked, they responded: "A week ago a pious man who passed here recited Surah Ikhlāas thrice and bestowed the thawaab to us. From that time until now we are gathering that thawaab."

13. Once in a dream, Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Bishr, do you know why Allah Ta'ala has elevated you above your contemporaries?" Bishr Haafi said that he did not know. Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Because you follow my Sunnah, honour the pious, admonish Muslims, and you love my Sahaabah and my companions." While all Auliya have these qualities in common, Bishr Haafi was outstanding in this sphere.

14. On another occasion, Rasulullah (ﷺ) gave Bishr Haafi the following advice in a dream: "The kindness which the wealthy show to the poor for the sake of acquiring thawaab is noble. However, it is nobler for the poor to refrain from presenting their needs to the wealthy. They should repose reliance on only Allah Ta'ala."

15. He said: "If you want honour, abstain from three things:

∂ Placing your needs in front of people.

- Speaking ill of others.

÷ Accompanying the guest of another person."

"A man who desires recognition on earth, does not experience the sweetness of the Akhirah."

16. Bishr Haafi said: "If the only benefit of qanaa-ah (contentment) was respect on earth, striving for its acquisition would be commendable."

Qanaa-ah in the terminology of the Auliya means to be happily contented with whatever provision and condition decreed by Allah Ta'ala. The minimum gain of qanaa-ah is respect on earth. A contented person does not disgrace himself by self-imposed dependence on others. The spiritual rewards of qanaa-ah are immeasurable.

17. "The wish for worldly recognition is the product of love for the world." When a man wishes that people speak good of him and entertain a high opinion of him, he suffers from hubbud dunya (love of the world).

18. He said: "As long as a man does not erect a barrier of steel between his nafs and himself, he will never experience the sweetness of ibaadat."

A slave of desire has no understanding of ibaadat. His acts of worship are mechanical. Nafsaani desires increase spiritual blindness, hence such a person fails to comprehend and experience the sweetness of spiritual realities.

19. Bishr Haafi said: "Three acts are most difficult. (a) Generosity in poverty. (ب) Piety in privacy. (ج) Truth in fear. A

poor man spending in the path of Allah Ta'ala from his meagre provisions is a truly generous person. Piety is not restricted to ritual acts of worship. It has a wider meaning, bringing within its scope virtuous character, true fear for Allah Ta'ala and concern for the Akhirah. His good, kind and tender conduct is not merely a public exhibition. In privacy, at home, he remain a paragon of virtue in his relationship with his wife, children and servants.

When danger stares one in the face, it is difficult to proclaim the truth which one knows can result in hardship, hence Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "The noblest jihaad is proclamation of the truth in the presence of a cruel king."

20. Bishr Haafi said: "True piety is to eliminate all doubts and to constantly apprehend the nafs." Doubt in the Providence and Decrees of Allah Ta'ala negate taqwa. A man while not verbally doubting the Razzaaqiyat of Allah Ta'ala, indicates by his unlawful conduct that he does not honestly believe that Allah Ta'ala is the sole Provider of Rizq. If his belief was pure, devoid of doubts, he would not adopt haraam and doubtful ways of seeking a livelihood. Similar doubts exist in man's heart in almost all spheres of life. Most people lack true taqwa despite their abundance of worship. Also, taqwa demands that the nafs be perpetually held under restraint. Man has to reflect before he speaks or acts. If he fails to scrutinise his every word and deed, he lacks true taqwa.

21. He said: "Zuhd is an Angel who does not reside anywhere except in an empty heart." Zuhd (abstinence) means the attitude of worldly

renunciation or the total elimination of worldly love. A man who may be living in a hut in the forest cannot be termed a zaahid if there lurks worldly love in his heart.

22. He said: "A man who practises righteous deeds with sincerity is distressed by company." A natural attribute of a man who acts purely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala is love of solitude. Anything which disturbs his solitude distresses and terrifies him.

23. Bishr Haafi said: "A man's heart hardens even by glancing at a miser." How much more will this hardness be by eating the food of a miser or by associating with him?

24. He said: "As long as a man's enemy does not feel safe from him, he has not attained excellence." Roohaani excellence depends on purity of heart. This characteristic should be so outstanding that even one's enemy should feel at ease. Even an enemy understands that this man's honesty and purity of heart preclude the slightest vestige of malice, hence he feels safe. He knows that there is no need for him to fear any treachery. Only the Auliya attain such heights of excellence.

25. He said: "If you are unable to engage in Allah's ibaadat, at least refrain from disobeying Him." Ibaadat here refers to Nafil / optional acts of worship. While abstention from transgression is essential for all people, it has greater importance for a man whose stock of Nafil ibaadat is meagre.

26. He said: "Even if a man should lay in Sajdah Shukr for his entire life, he will never be able to correctly and sufficiently discharge the demand of Shukr. The bounties and favours of Allah Ta'ala are

innumerable. Even a lifetime of prostration is inadequate for expression of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'aan Majeed says:

"If you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to enumerate them."

When His bounties cannot even be enumerated, how can sufficient Shukr be offered?

27. When his time of departure from this world approached, Bishr Haafi became restless. Someone asked: "Do you love this life of the world?" He responded: "No! However, I fear to enter the Divine Court."

28. After Bishr Haafi's demise, a man who saw him in a dream, asked: "How did you fare by Allah?" He replied: "Allah Ta'ala reprimanding me said: "Bishr, why did you fear Me so much? Were you not aware that I am merciful and gracious?"

29. An aged lady came to Hadhrat Imaam Ahmad Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) and said: "I was weaving cotton on my veranda. The royal light was lit (i.e. the public lamp in the street arranged by the king). In this light I continued to spin cotton for a short while. Is the earning which I shall derive from this cotton lawful?"

Imaam Ahmad: "First tell me who you are?"

Old Lady: "I am Bishr Haafi's sister."

Imaam Ahmad: "That income is unlawful for you. Follow in the footsteps of your noble brother. When his hand would touch any

doubtful food, it would not co-operate." (i.e. His hand would become momentarily paralysed. In this way did Allah Ta'ala protect him from consuming any mushtabah [doubtful] food.) (See Tabsiratul Auliyyaa)

HADHRAT ZUNNOON MISRI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his renunciation of the world, Zunnoon Misri (rahmatullah alayh) was told of an Aabid (worshipper) who had imposed severe penances on himself. When Zunnoon Misri located the Aabid, he found the latter hanging upside down from a tree. The Aabid was addressing himself, saying: "O nafs! As long as you do not comply with my wishes in worshipping Allah, I shall keep you in this suffering until you perish."

This sight reduced Zunnoon to tears. The Aabid said: "Who is

weeping for a shameless sinner?" After exchanging salaams, Zunnoon went in front of the Aabid who said: "My body is not co-operating in the ibaadat of Allah. I am therefore punishing it."

Zunnoon: "I was under the impression that you had committed murder or some other major sin, hence this server self-imposed punishment."

Aabid: "There is no greater sin than association with people. All sins stem from this sin."

Zunnoon: "Truly, you are a great Zaahid."

Aabid: "If you want to see a great Zaahid, go onto that mountain."

Zunnoon Misri climbed the mountain. When he reached the top he saw in the distance a hut, as he approached the hut, he saw a decomposed human leg laying nearby. From inside the hut emerged a buzrug with one leg. Obviously, the cut-off leg had belonged to him. When Zunnoon asked for an explanation, the buzrug said: "One day while sitting in my place of ibaadat, a beautiful woman passed nearby. In a moment of weakness my nafs urged me to get up to take a look. As I got up and took a step forward, I heard a Voice rebuking: 'Have you no shame! For 30 years you have been worshipping Allah Ta'ala, but today you are obeying shaitaan!'"

Overcome with fear, shame and remorse, I cut off the leg which had taken the first step in the direction of transgression. Why have you come to this evil sinner? If you wish to meet a great Aabid, go to the peak of that mountain." (He pointed in the direction of the mountain.)

The height of the mountain deterred Zunnoon Misri from making an attempt to climb it. The buzrug then narrated the following account of the Aabid:

"He has been worshipping on that mountain for a considerable period of time. Once when someone said to him that a person obtains food only by working and earning a living, he vowed not to eat any food earned by human being. He passed his time in ibaadat. After undergoing the rigours of hunger for some time. Allah Ta'ala sent a swarm of bees. He lived on the honey prepared by these bees."

The meetings and talks of these saints made a profound impact on Zunnoon Misri. He repented and resolved to spend his life in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. As he came down the mountain he observed a blind bird on a tree. While he was reflecting on the source of the blind bird's sustenance, he saw the bird settling on the ground and pecking the soil with its beak. Miraculously a tray filled with seeds, emerged. Then there emerged a second container filled with water having the fragrance of roses. After satisfying itself, the bird returned to the tree-top and the utensils miraculously disappeared. Zunnoon's tawakkul and yaqeen were solidified by this episode.

As he walked in the forest he met a few of his old friends who had discovered a trunk of treasure. They were busy sharing the treasure. A board on which was inscribed the Name of Allah Ta'ala was also with the treasure. When they offered Zunnoon a share of the treasure, he declined and took the board and kissed the Name of Allah Ta'ala. That night in a dream a Voice said to him: "The others chose the wealth of the world. You chose Our Name. We have opened the doors of knowledge and wisdom for you."

2. Soon after his reformation, Zunnoon Misri was making wudhu at the river. Nearby was a mansion. A beautiful woman was standing on the veranda. Zunnoon approached and greeted. The woman said: "O Zunnoon, at first I thought you were a mad man. As I took a closer look and reflected, I thought you were an Aalim. As I examined you more, I thought you were an Aarif. Now that you have approached me, I have realised that you are none of the three."

Zunnoon asked for an explanation. The woman said: "If you were a madman, you would not have made wudhu. If you were an Aalim, you would not have looked at a ghair mahram female. If you were an Aarif, your mind would not have been occupied with anyone besides Allah Ta'ala."

The woman then miraculously became invisible, disappearing from sight. It was then that Zunnoon understood that the figure was not a woman, but a being appointed by Allah Ta'ala for his admonition.

3. One day while in a boat, a merchant's pearl was missing. Zunnoon was accused of having stolen it. He was severely assaulted. While the people were beating him, he raised his head to the heaven and said: "O Allah! You know that I am not a thief." Instantaneously thousands of fish, each with a pearl in its mouth, appeared on the surface of the water. Zunnoon took one pearl and handed it to the merchant. When the people observed this wonderful miracle they were full of remorse and apologised profusely. From that day he was called Zunnoon which means the man of the fishes.

4. Zunnoon's piety exercised a profound impact on his sister. One day while she was reciting the aayat

وَضَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَا
كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا
أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

she exclaimed: "O Allah! You bestowed mann and salwaa to Bani Israaeel, but not for the people of Islam. I shall not sit as long as You do not bestow to us too mann and salwaa."

As she spoke, mann and salwaa began raining on her. She left home the very same moment, entered the wilderness and was never again seen.

(Explain mann and salwaa)

5. Once along his travels, he saw thousands of people had assembled by a mountain. When he enquired he was informed that once a year a buzrug emerged from the mountain. He would blow on the crowd

and all the ailing people would immediately be cured. Zunnoon Misri also waited. Ultimately, a very old, frail and weak man emerged from the mountain side. His eyes were deep in their sockets. As he emerged, the mountain trembled. The buzrug faced the crowd and blew on the people. As he turned to leave, Zunnoon grabbed hold of his cloak and said: "You have cured the people of their physical ailments. Cure me of my spiritual ailments."

The buzrug said: "Leave my cloak. Allah is watching. He is observing that you have turned to another being besides Him. I fear that He may assign me to you and you to me."

He then violently broke free and disappeared into the mountain.

6. Once when Zunnoon Misri was found to be weeping profusely, he was asked for the reason. He said: "Last night I dreamt that Allah Ta'ala said: "When I created mankind, they split into ten groups. When I presented the world to them, nine groups inclined towards it. One group turned away from it. This one group split into ten groups. I presented Jannat to them. Nine groups inclined towards it. One group did not incline towards it. Then this group split into ten groups. I presented Jahannum to them. Nine groups fled from it. One group did not flee. I said: You did not incline to the world, neither did you desire Jannat nor feared Jahannum. What do you desire?"

They responded: "You know what we desire."

This small group of Allah's creation, namely, the select Auliya,

desire nothing besides the Vision of Allah Ta'ala. Their ibaadat is not for the acquisition of thawaab and Jannat nor for the fear of Jahannum. The only motive is the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

7. A young lad (minor) came to Zunnoon Misri and said: "I have inherited one hundred thousand dinars which I wish to present to you." Zunnoon said: "As long as you have not attained puberty, it is not permissible for you to spend your wealth." After the boy became baaligh (i.e. attained puberty), he came and contributed all his wealth in the path of Allah.

8. Once this lad (mentioned in No. 7 above) observed that Zunnoon Misri was in extreme difficulty due to poverty. He said: "Alas! If I had wealth today, I would have given it to you today." Zunnoon thought: "This lad has not yet fully understood the meaning of faqr." By the permission of Allah, Zunnoon Misri miraculously produced three pearls. He sent the lad with the pearls to the jeweller to ascertain the value of the pearls. He went and returned saying the each pearl was valued at 100 dinars (gold coins). Zunnoon instructed the lad to crush the pearls and discard them. He commented: "Understand that the Fuqaraa are not in need of wealth."

9. Zunnoon Misri said: "I admonished people for 30 years, but only one man correctly found the path of Allah. He was a prince. Once he came to my Musjid and heard me admonishing myself. I was saying: "There is no greater ignoramus than the weakling who fights the most powerful one." The prince said: "Explain clearly, what you are saying so that I too understand." I said: "Who is a greater ignoramus than one who fights with Allah Ta'ala?" (i.e. Transgresses the laws of

Allah Ta'ala.)

The prince left. He returned the following day and said: "Show me the way of reaching Allah Ta'ala." I said: "There are two ways – A short route and a long route. The long route is to abandon desires. The short route is complete renunciation of the world and everything besides Allah Ta'ala." The prince opted for the short route. He renounced the world donning the simple shawl of the Sufis, he set off into the wilderness engrossing himself in Allah's ibaadat. Finally he entered into the rank of Abdaaliyat."

10. A man came to Zunnoon Misri and complained of heavy debt. Zunnoon picked up a stone. As he touched the stone, it turned into a precious stone. The man took the stone, sold it and paid his debts.

11. One Eid night, Zunnoon Misri developed an intense desire for some delicious food. He said to himself: "If you agree to perform two raka'ts in which you complete the entire Qur'aan, I shall feed you delicious food." He commenced the Salaat and by morning time he had recited the whole Qur'aan in two raka'ts. Now his heart was delighted. He felt that after ten years of depriving himself of delicious food, he will be satisfying himself. This thought constrained him to vow: "I take oath by Allah that I shall never fulfil your desire."

Just when he took the oath, a man with a pot of delicious food approached and said: "I am a poor man. My family had not tasted delicious food. Today I had managed to have this food prepared for them because it is Eid. I fell asleep and in a dream Rasulullah (ﷺ) appeared and said to me: "If you wish to meet me on

the Day of Qiyaamah, then give this food to Zunnoon Misri and tell him to enter into a peace pact with his nafs for a short while. He should eat a few morsels from this food."

In obedience to Rasulullah's (ﷺ) command, Zunnoon Misri ate a few morsels. The man then took the pot and returned to his family.

Once an oath is taken, observance of it is incumbent provided that it is lawful. If for some reason the oath is violated (as in this episode), kaffaarah (compensation / expiation) is incumbent. The kaffaarah for violating a Qasam (oath) is to fast three days in a row. If due to extreme illness which is incurable or extreme old age one is unable to fast, then ten masaakeen (poor Muslims) should each be given two full meals or each one may be given the current Sadaqatul Fitr amount.

12. People were unable to comprehend his mystical statements. They accused him of being a Zindeeq (heretic / kaafir). He was put in chains and taken to the Khalifah who ordered him imprisoned for forty days. While he was in prison, his sister sent him some food, but he did not eat of it. After he was released, she said: I had prepared the food from halaal earnings." Zunnoon Misri said: "Yes, but the guard who brought the food was an oppressor."

Even the touch of a Zaalim (oppressor) spiritually contaminates the food. Such food affects the lofty spirituality of the Auliya. On his release the Khalifah posed certain intricate questions to Zunnoon. All

present in court were amazed at the wonderful answers which he gave very eloquently. The king was so touched that he became Zunnoon's mureed and sent him to Egypt in great honour.

13. On an intensely cold day when the entire wilderness was covered with ice, Zunnoon Misri saw a Jew scattering seeds on the ice.

Zunnoon: "What are you doing?"

Jew: "Today the ground is covered with ice. I am scattering seeds for the birds. Perhaps Allah will grant me its reward."

Zunnoon: "The seeds of an alien (i.e. kaafir) are unacceptable there (i.e. in Allah's Court)."

Jew: "Be it so. Nevertheless, Allah is seeing what I am doing. This suffices for me."

Sometime thereafter, during the days of Hajj, to his surprise and amazement Zunnoon Misri saw the same Jew making tawaaf around the Ka'bah with deep devotion. He said to Zunnoon: "See, how rewarding was my scattering of seeds. Just look at the beautiful reward I received." With great animation Zunnoon Misri supplicated: "O Allah! In return for a few seeds you bestowed this favour to a Jew who was engrossed in kufr for 40 years."

Zunnoon heard a Voice saying: "I do as I please. No one can comment on My affairs."

Allah Ta'ala is Independent. He is not bound by any laws. He acts as He pleases. Ikhlaas (sincerity) is rewarded by Allah Ta'ala with the treasure of Imaan. A kaafir who is sincere in his quest for the truth will find the Path of Imaan leading to Allah Ta'ala.

14. In a dream, Zunnoon Misri asked a friend who had died: "How did you fare by Allah Ta'ala?" His friend replied: "Allah Ta'ala forgave me because of two things: While on earth I had never taken anything from anybody and I had never filled my stomach for fear of becoming lazy in ibaadat."

15. Zunnoon Misri said:

"Glory unto Allah Who protects the People of Ma'rifat (the Auliya) from worldly relationships with the fear of Akhirah."

"The greatest veil (barring one from Divine Proximity) is the eye which does not see the prohibited things."

"A man whose stomach is filled with food does not acquire Hikmah (divine wisdom)."

"The most prosperous man is he who dons the raiments of taqwa."

"The body of a small-eater remains healthy, as the soul of one who abstains from sin remains healthy."

"There is nothing surprising when a man is patient in calamity.

Surprising is his pleasure and contentment in calamity."

"Those who fear Allah, find the Straight Road. Those who lack fear, go astray."

16. Zunnoon Misri listed the following acts as causes for the corruption and degeneration of Muslims:

Deficiency in righteous deeds.

Obedience to shaitaan.

The idea that Maut is a distant event.

Abandoning the pleasure of Allah and pursuing the pleasure of people.

Abandoning the Sunnah for the sake of nafsaani desires.

Citing the errors of the Akaabir (Senior Ulama and Auliyyaa) in justification of one's own faults, while ignoring their excellences and to denigrate them on account of some error.

17. "The sign of divine love is complete conformity with the Sunnah of Allah's Habib (i.e. Rasulullah – b)."

Conflict with the Sunnah testifies to the hollowness of the claim of love for Allah Ta'ala. Without strict obedience to the Sunnah, love for Allah Ta'ala is impossible.

18. Zunnoon Misri said: "Conform with Allah. Admonish people.

Oppose the nafs. Abhor the enemy (i.e. shaitaan)."

Abhorrence for shaitaan is to refrain from following his commands.

19. "When Allah loves a man, He reveals to him the faults of his own nafs. When He wishes to disgrace a man, He conceals his faults from him."

20. "A pious man neither looks at evil nor listens to evil."

"I have not seen a better guide showing the path of Ikhlaas (sincerity) than khalwat (solitude)."

"A man who adopts khalwat, clings to the pillar of Ikhlaas."

"A Sufi is one who instructs others to do such virtuous deeds which he himself has already practised."

21. Describing the meaning of an Aarif, Zunnoon Misri said: "An Aarif is one who fears Allah Ta'ala. His fear for Allah increases every moment because he constantly progresses in his state of Qurb-e-Ilaahi (Nearness to Allah). The sign of an Aarif is that while he is among people, he is in actual fact far from them. Whoever lacks these attributes is not an Aarif, for the Qur'aan says: "Verily, among the servants of Allah only the Ulama fear Him." (Ulama in this context refer to the Ulama-e-Rabbaani, the Aarifeen.)"The condition of the Aarif is ever-changing because mysteries of the spiritual realm constantly unfold for him. The Aarif is the most cultured and most respectful in creation. Ma'rifat (divine knowledge) develops him at all times."

22. He said: "There are three kinds of Ma'rifat.

Ma'rifat-e-Tauhid – This is the knowledge of the Unity of Allah. Every Muslim in general, possesses this degree of Ma'rifat.

Ma'rifat-e-Hujjat wa Bayaan – This is the knowledge of Scholars of Islam. It refers to the higher knowledge of the Shariah which the Ulama in general posses.

Ma'rifat-e-Sifaat – This is the knowledge of Allah's attributes. It is a revealed / inspired knowledge of the transcendental and spiritual realities. Allah Ta'ala reveals this knowledge to his select Auliya only.

23. "A man who lays claim to Ma'rifat is a liar."

24. "The king of the Aakhirah is the Zaahid and the king of the zaahid is the Aarif."

25. "Entering into companionship with Allah Ta'ala means to abstain from all things prohibited by Him."

26. He said: "There are four symptoms of a diseased heart: (i) It does not experience the sweetness of ibaadat. (ii) It is devoid of fear for Allah Ta'ala. (iii) It derives no lesson from the things and events of the world. (iv) It does not put into practise knowledge."

27. He said:

"When a man has reached the stage of Uboodiyat, he abandons the pleasure of the world."

Uboodiyat is the condition of perfect slavery – being the obedient slave of Allah. It is a stage subservient to Allah's Will.

"Knowledge is present, but there is a dearth of actions which conform with knowledge. There is a dearth of ikhlaas (sincerity) in actions."

"Love is present, but there is a dearth of truth in love."

"While the masses repent for sin, the elite (i.e. the Auliya) repent for ghaflat (carelessness, forgetfulness or not being always alert)."

28. Zunnoon Misri, speaking on taubah said: "There are two kings of taubah (Repentance):

(a) Taubah Inabat which means repentance due to fear for Allah Ta'ala.

(وسالم عايه صلى) Taubah Istijaabat which means repentance due to shame for Allah. The servant feels ashamed of the deficient

ibaadat he offers, hence he repents.

All parts of the human body have their own respective ways of Taubah. The Taubah of the heart is to resolve to abstain from haraam. The Taubah of the eyes is to resolve to guard them from looking at haraam. The Taubah of the ears is to resolve to prevent them from listening to haraam. The Taubah of the hands is to restrain them from stretching towards haraam. The Taubah of the feet is to prevent them from walking towards haraam."

29. He said:

"The deeds of one who fears Allah Ta'ala are excellent and the deeds of one who has hope in Allah Ta'ala are beneficial."

"Fear should be more than hope."

Khauf (Fear for Allah) and Rajaa (Hope in the mercy of Allah) are excellent attributes. Excess in any of these attributes is detrimental for spiritual progress. The equilibrium (i'tidaal) degree is to have slightly more khauf than rajaa. An excess of rajaa leads to negligence and deficiency in righteousness while an excess of khauf can lead to hopelessness, inertia and abandonment of righteous deeds.

"The nourishment of my soul is Thikrullah."

"Shame is to always fear punishment for sins already committed."

"Man speaks (to Allah) because of love. He remains silent because of shame and he becomes restless because of fear."

"Taqwa is to prevent the body from the pollution of sins and the soul from futile talk and to be in constant contemplation of Allah Ta'ala."

"Restraining the eyes and mind from indulgence in prohibited things

is also muraaqabah (contemplation on Allah Ta'ala.)."

"Tawakkul is not to have any expectation regarding anyone; to repose all trust on only Allah Ta'ala and to remain an obedient slave."

"Uns (a lofty stage of divine love) is that the heart is diverted from all worldly relationships and to be imbued with love for Allah and His friends."

"Fikr (to be concerned and in contemplation) is the key of ibaadat."

"Opposing nafsani desires is a sign of having attained Allah Ta'ala."

Such Attainment have limitless ranks of progress and elevation. The more the servant struggles against his nafs, the greater will be his degree of Wisaal-e-Haqq (Attainment of Allah's Proximity).

"Perpetual contemplation of the heart unlocks the truth of the transcendental realm for the soul."

"Among the demands of Ikhlaas is to save yourself from your enemy (shaitaan)."

"The sign of ikhlaas is that you do not become pleased when praised nor are you grieved when criticized."

"An example of seeing with the eyes is Ilm (knowledge) and an example of seeing with the heart is Yaqeen (faith as a result of spiritual vision)."

"A man who does not guard his nafs is devoid of ikhlaas."

"He who fears Allah, turns towards Allah."

On the contrary, a person fearing worldly objects, flees from them.

"A contented man experiences greater comfort than all the people of the world. He is the chief of all." Contentment here means to be

happily satisfied and pleased with whatever condition and circumstance Allah Ta'ala has decreed, be it prosperity or adversity. The one who possesses the attribute of Qanaa-ah (contentment) is happy and comfortable in all states.

"A man who strives in something which is not beneficial for him, destroys what is beneficial for him."

"A man who truly fears Allah Ta'ala possesses true friendship of Allah. His intelligence attains perfection."

"If you are unable to ascertain a man's baatini state (his spiritual and moral conditions) from his zaahiri state (practical deeds, characteristics, and outward appearance), do not enter into companionship (suhbat) with him."

A morally and spiritually elevated soul exudes its beautiful effect on the appearance and physical body of a pious man. If these effects are not discernable, the suhbat of such a man of unknown character should not be cultivated.

"A man whose heart is engrossed in Allah's remembrance forgets all things besides Allah Ta'ala."

30. Someone asked: "When can a man traverse the path of Khauf (the Road leading to Divine Proximity)?" Zunnoon Misri said:

"When he considers himself to be (spiritually) sick and he refrains from the world because he fears deterioration of his sickness."

31. Zunnoon Misri was asked: "What is the sign of Khauf?" He said:

"To become fearless of all things besides Allah Ta'ala." Such Khauf is cultivated by obedience to the Sunnah, adoption of the Sunnah,

perpetual Thikr, Muraaqabah (contemplation / meditation) and Muhaasabah (always taking a self-reckoning of one's deeds).

32. Zunnoon Misri said:

"Solitude is to be divorced from one's nafs."

"Everything which produces forgetfulness of Allah is called dunya (the world)."

"A malicious man is he who neither knows the Road of Allah nor asks others for the direction."

33. Giving naseehat to Hadhrat Yusuf Bin Husain (rahmatullah alayh), he said:

"Oppose your nafs to conform with Allah. Do not oppose Allah to conform with your nafs. Never despise any person even if he happens to be a mushrik for it is possible that he repents and is accepted in the Divine Court."

34. Someone asked for naseehat. Zunnoon Misri said: "Cultivate love for Allah. He will make you independent of all people. Oppose your nafs as long as it has not become submissive. When calamity befalls you, adopt sabr. Spend your life in the remembrance of Allah."

35. He said: "Do not be concerned of the past nor of the future. Consider the present as an opportunity."

Man should not squander his time in idle and futile ideas and thoughts either of the past or future. Every moment he gains should be utilized constructively, i.e. for the development of his Aakhirah.

36. Zunnoon Misri was asked: "What is the sign of a man who has gained perfect recognition of his nafs?" He replied: "He is always suspicious of his nafs. He never trusts his nafs."

37. While Zunnoon was in his last illness, someone asked: "What do you wish for?" He said: "That I become aware (of my last) sometime before Maut arrives." He then recited some verses:

Fear has indisposed me;

Yearning has scorched me;

Love has killed me;

Allah has resurrected me.

He then became unconscious. When he opened his eyes, Yusuf Bin Husain asked for some naseehat. Zunnoon said: "Don't engage me in conversation. Allah's favours have cast me into bewilderment." His soul then took flight from his earthly body.

38. On the night Zunnoon Misri died, 70 Auliya saw in their dreams Rasulullah (ﷺ) saying: "I have come to welcome the friend of Allah."

39. On his death, people saw the following words miraculously inscribed on Zunnoon's forehead: Translation:

He is the beloved of Allah.

He died in the Love of Allah.

He is the one killed by Allah.

He was smitten by the Sword of Allah.

40. The heat was unbearably hot when Zunnoon's Janazah was taken. Flocks of birds hovering over his Janazah provided shade.

41. As Zunnoon's Janazah passed by a Musjid, the Muath-thin was proclaiming:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Zunnoon raised his Kalimah finger. Thinking that perhaps he was alive, the people put down the Janaazah. When they examined his body they confirmed he was dead. However, his finger remained outstretched testifying to the Unity of Allah Ta'ala. Several attempts to lower the finger failed.

HADHRAT BAAYAZID BUSTAAMI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said about Hadhrat Baayazid Bustaami (rahmatullah alayh): "His superiority over us is like Jibraeel's superiority over all the Angels."

In further praise of him, Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi said: "The highest stage of Tauhid which other Auliya attained by their endeavours is the elementary (first) stage produced by the effort of Baayazid.

When they reached his elementary stage, they could not progress further, but became rooted in wonder and amazement."

2. His paternal grandfather was a Magian (fire-worshipper). However, his father was a great Wali and lived in Bustaam. His mother narrates: "While he was in my womb if a doubtful morsel of food entered my mouth, he would agitate so much that I would be compelled to remove it from my mouth."

3. Someone asked Baayazid Bustaami: "In Tariqat (the spiritual path) what is best for a man?"

He replied: "A pious mother. Then eyes which can see and ears which

can hear. If a man does not possess even one of these, death is better for him."

4. Once in the Madrasah he came across the Qur'aanic aayat in Surah Luqmaan:

"Be grateful to Me and your parents."

He left the Madrasah, came home and said to his mother: "Mother, I am unable to show gratitude to two being. Either ask me from Allah to serve you or allow me to serve Allah."

His mother who was a very saintly lady said:

"I have assigned you to Allah. Serve Him."

Baayazid took leave from his mother and journeyed to the land of Shaam where he engrossed himself in Ibaadat and Thikr. For three years he wandered in the wilderness of Shaam, abandoning food, drink and sleep. He enjoyed the suhbat (companionship) of 170 Auliya.

5. One day, after having spent a considerable period of time in Hadhrat Ja'far Saadiq's company, the latter said: "Baayazid, bring that kitaab from the shelf." Baayazid said: "Where is the shelf?" Hadhrat Ja'far: "You have been so long here, yet do not know where the shelf is." Baayazid: "I had never raised my head in front of you. I therefore do not know where the shelf is." Hadhrat Ja'far: "Now proceed to Bustaam. You have attained the lofty ranks."

6. When Baayazid was informed of a Wali, he went to meet him. On reaching the place, he saw the buzrug spitting in the direction of the Qiblah. Baayazid turned away without meeting the buzrug. He

commented: "If he was aware of the stages of Tariqat, he would never have violated the Shariah by spitting in the direction of the Qiblah."

7. After a separation of many years, Baayazid decided to visit his mother. He first went to Madinah Munawwarah for ziyaarat. When he finally reached home it was Fajr time. Standing at the door of his mother's hamlet, he could hear her making wudhu. He listened and heard her supplicating: "O Allah! Keep my wayfarer in comfort. Let the Auliya be pleased with him. Give him a beautiful reward."

Baayazid broke down in tears and knocked in the door. His mother asked: "Who is it?" He said: "Your wayfarer." Embracing him, she said: "You stayed away a long, long time. The tears I have shed for your love has taken away the light of my eyes (she had become blind). Worry has bent my back."

8. He said: "The ranks I have achieved are the fruit of my mother's duas." One night his mother asked for water. There was no water in the house. It was an extremely cold night. The young Baayazid (then a boy of 8) went to the river to fetch some water. The river was at a distance from the house. By the time he returned, his mother had fallen asleep. Not wanting to disturb his mother, he stood at her bedside holding the mug of water least his mother opened her eyes. The entire night passed with Baayazid waiting with the mug in his hand. On account of the extreme cold, the water had frozen. When his mother awoke, she was deeply touched by her son's devotion and obedience. The dua which emanated from her heart reached its target in the Divine Court.

9. The following episode illustrates the tenderness of his heart and the affection for Allah's creation. On his return from Hajj, he purchased some food in the city of Hamdaan. When he reached his home and opened the parcel he found some ants. He lamented: "Alas! I have rendered them homeless." He closed the parcel and returned to Hamdaan where he set the ants free at the place where he had bought the food.

10. At the door of the Musjid, Baayazid Bustaami was found weeping. When questioned, he said: "I find myself as impure as a woman in her haidh. I fear that my presence will pollute the Musjid."

11. Once in a state of ecstasy, Baayazid uttered: "Glory to me. Great is my rank." Later when he was questioned by his mureeds, he said: "If I again make this utterance, slay me." When he went into solitude, he was again overwhelmed by ecstasy and he repeated the same words. His mureeds rushed into the room with the intention of slaying him as commanded. On entering the room, to their amazement they discovered the whole room was filled with Baayazid's form. The mureeds struck their daggers at this form. But it was as if they were striking water. The daggers had no effect on Baayazid Bustaami.

After some time, the huge form began diminishing until the original form of Baayazid appeared.

12. One day Baayazid holding a red apple in his hand, commented: "This is lateef." (Lateef literally means nice, beautiful, fine.) A Voice reprimanded: "Baayazid! Have you no shame? You have described an apple with My Name." (Al-Lateef is one of the Beautiful Names of

Allah Ta'ala.) As a punishment for this error, the remembrance of Allah was effaced from Baayazid Bustaami's heart for forty days. He vowed never to eat any of the fruit of Bustaam.

13. Hadhrat Abu Musaa (rahmatullah alayh) asked: "In your quest for Allah, what did you find the most difficult?" Baayazid Bustaami said: "The most difficult was to incline the heart to Allah with His aid. When I gained His aid, my heart inclined to Him without my effort."

14. Once while walking, a dog approached from the opposite side. Baayazid stepped aside to make way for the dog. This action constrained the disciples to also make way for the dog. A disciple asked: "Allah Ta'ala has made man the noblest creation. However, by making way for the dog you have elevated it over us. This is irrational and in conflict with the Shariah. Baayazid Bustaami said: "The dog asked me: 'Why did Allah make me a dog and you the king of the Aarifeen? What was my fault and what was your excellence?' I searched my heart and understood that our superiority over the dog is purely the kindness of Allah Ta'ala. I therefore made way for the dog."

15. One day while crossing a narrow bridge, a dog approached from the other side. To avoid brushing against the dog, Baayazid pulled his cloak towards himself. The dog spoke: "Why did you do this? If I am dry, there is no harm in your garment touching me. If I am moist, a little water can cleanse your cloak. But, even the seven oceans cannot purify you of your pride. Baayazid said: "You have spoken the truth. While there is zaahiri (external) impurity in you, there is baatini (spiritual) impurity in me. Come live with me so that I may be

purified."

The dog: "We cannot live together. You are the Maqbool (accepted and honoured) leader of mankind while I am mardood (accursed and buffered). Secondly, I do not hoard a bone for the next day while you hoard food for tomorrow." Baayazid lamented: "Alas! When I am not deserving of the company of even a dog, how can I gain Allah's Proximity?"

16. A mureed of Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) set off for Hajj. On his way he stopped in Bustaam to visit Baayazid Bustaami.

Baayazid: "Whose mureed are you?"

Mureed: "Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi's."

Baayazid: "Tell me something of his actions and statements."

Mureed: "He is completely independent of entire creation. He has total trust in Allah Ta'ala. He says: "If rain does not descend from the heaven; grain ceases to grow from the earth and creation becomes my children, then too I shall not abandon tawakkul."

Baayazid: "He is a kaafir and a mushrik. Even if I become a crow, I shall not face the direction of his city. Tell him that he is testing Allah Ta'ala very cheaply. If he is hungry, let him beg from someone and eat. He should not disgrace tawakkul. I fear that perhaps the land be destroyed on account of his evil."

(Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi – rahmatullah alayh – was among the Auliya. Even Auliya are sometimes deceived by the nafs. Ujub

[vanity] is a very subtle and hidden disease. It is not everyone who has the ability to detect this evil, especially if it happens to be existing in a great Shaikh of Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi's stature. It requires a spiritual giant such as Baayazid Bustaami to diagnose the ills of illustrious spiritual guides.

It should also be understood that the terms 'kaafir' and 'mushrik' employed by Baayazid Bustaami in this context do not connote the technical meaning as known in the Shariah. Actions and things permissible for the masses can be major sins if perpetrated by the select Auliyyaa. Baayazid's designations here should not be understood as fatwas of kufr expelling Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi from the fold of Islam. The Auliyyaa who are the true Aarifeen, operate on an exceptionally lofty spiritual plane, the conception of which is incomprehensible to us laymen.)

The mureed, instead of proceeding for Hajj, returned to his Shaikh and reported the comments of Baayazid Bustaami. After prolonged reflection, Hadhrat Shafeeq Balkhi recognized the spiritual ailment to which Baayazid Bustaami had referred. He said to his mureed: "Did you not ask him – 'If Shafeeq Balkhi is a kaafir and mushrik, then what is your status?' The mureed said: "I did not ask him." The Shaikh sent him back to Baayazid with the instruction to pose this question to him. On arrival, the mureed asked Baayazid: "If Shafeeq Balkhi is a kaafir and mushrik, then who are you?" Baayazid: "This question is his second act of childishness. Whatever I say, you will not understand."

Mureed: "Write it on a paper."

Baayazid wrote: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ "Baayazid is nothing." He gave the paper to the mureed who delivered it to Shafeeq Balkhi. When the mureed arrived, Shafeeq Balkhi was in his last illness (maradhul maut). After reading Baayazid's message, Shafeeq Balkhi renewed his Imaan. He recited Kalimah Shahaadat and died.

17. One night Baayazid was unable to concentrate in his ibaadat. Inspite of his endeavours, he simply could not experience the usual sweetness of his ibaadat. After searching his house, he found a bunch of grapes. He gave it to a beggar. Thereafter he experienced the pleasure of Thikrullah. In view of the lofty state of tawakkul of the Auliyyaa, even lawful possessions adversely affect their spirituality. While ordinary people are not required to imitate such austerity which is exclusive with the select Auliyyaa, it is imperative to at least abstain from mushtabah (doubtful) food and futile acts. Such things and acts are highly detrimental for Roohaani (spiritual) progress.

18. One of Baayazid's neighbours was a very poor Yahoodi (Jew). Once the Yahoodi went on a journey. Due to extreme poverty his wife could not afford buying oil for the lamp. Since the house was in pitch darkness during the night, the Yahoodi's baby son would cry in fear. Taking pity, Baayazid left his own lamp every night in the Yahoodi's home. The baby would feel comforted. When the Yahoodi returned, his wife told him of Baayazid's kindness. The Yahoodi said:

"Alas! We have lived in darkness despite such a noble guide living nearby." He went to Baayazid and embraced Islam.

19. Once Baayazid Bustaami stretched his legs. A man contemptuously tramped on him. Allah Ta'ala punished the man with the disease of leprosy which led to his death.

20. A man said boastfully: "I too can do what Baayazid does (i.e. his ibaadat)." Once when he visited Baayazid, the latter looked at him and sighed. The impact of Baayazid's sigh rendered the man unconscious. He remained in this state for three days and three nights. After he regained his senses, Baayazid said: "An ass cannot carry the load of an elephant."

21. Hadhrat Bu Saeed Maikhori (rahmatullah alayh) decided to test Baayazid Bustaami. With this thought in mind he met Baayazid who said: "I have assigned wilaayat (sainthood) and karaamaat (miracles) to my mureed, Bu Saeed Raa-ee. Go to him."

When Bu Saeed Maikhori arrived at the home of Bu Saeed Raa-ee, he found the latter engaged in Salaat. After completing Salaat, Bu Saeed asked: "What do you want?" Bu Saeed Maikhori said: "I want fresh grapes." It was not the season for grapes. Bu Saeed Raa-ee broke a knife into two, buried one portion near to himself and the other portion near to Bu Saeed Maikhori. Instantaneously, two grape vines began growing. The vines simultaneously yielded fruit. While the grapevine in proximity to Bu Saeed Raa-ee produced delicious white grapes, the tree near to Bu Saeed Maikhori yielded dark grapes of poor quality. When he asked for an explanation, Bu Saeed Raa-ee

said: "Since your intention was to put us to test, your heart's condition has become manifest in the grapes."

Bu Saeed Raa-ee then presented a shawl to him, adding: "Guard it well. Don't lose it." Bu Saeed Maikhori proceeded for Hajj. Although he took great care to guard the shawl, he lost it in Arafaat. When he returned to Bustaam, he was amazed to see the shawl by Bu Saeed Raa-ee.

22. Someone asked Baayazid Bustaami: "Who is your murshid (spiritual mentor)?" He said: "An old lady. Once I was walking in the forest when I met an old lady carrying a load of flour on her head. She requested me to carry her load to her home. I beckoned to a lion which had suddenly appeared, and it submissively came near. I told the old lady that the lion will carry her load until her home. I then asked her what would she say when people observed the lion carrying her load. She replied: "I shall say that today I met an oppressor who was showing off."

I said: "Why will you described me as an oppressor showing off?" The old lady said: "Allah Ta'ala has created the lion free, but you want to impose a burden on it, hence you are an oppressor. Secondly, you wish to advertise that you are a holy man capable of demonstrating miracles. This is the worst disease. You are therefore nothing but a show-off."

Baayazid said: "This naseehat of the old lady impressed me. I learnt a lesson and repented. She is therefore my mentor."

23. Baayazid said: "Tariqat cannot be obtained without obedience to the Shariah. He who claims to be on Tariqat without following the Shariah, is a liar."

24. Baayazid said: "It was revealed to me – "Our treasury is filled with ibaadat. If you wish to meet Us, present such treasures which are not in Our treasury." I asked: 'O Allah! What is lacking in Your treasury?'

The reply came: "Humility and weakness. We grant proximity to the humble and weak."

25. He said:

"Superior to the bounties of both worlds is the understanding that without Allah's kindness, one cannot achieve anything merely by effort and concern. Nevertheless, man has been commanded to make effort. Whatever goodness is achieved after effort should be attributed to the fadh'l (kindness) of Allah Ta'ala."

"Even if Allah forgives me and entire creation, it is insignificant in relation to His mercy."

"To become proud on account of ibaadat is a major sin of great proportion."

"When I renounced the world and adopted Allah's love, I realised that even my own being was an enemy."

"A true Aarif is one who renounces all wishes and desires, and is pleased with the choice of Allah Ta'ala."

"He who annihilates himself in Allah's remembrance, discovers the eternal life."

"A man who flees from people and adopts silence is an Aarif."

"Do not adopt the companionship of a man who has acquired knowledge for the sake of worldly honour."

"It is simple to renounce the world, for there is nothing more contemptible than it."

"Allah Ta'ala bestows three attributes to His close servants:

a) Generosity like the ocean.

b) Love like the sun.

c) Humility like the ground.

"When Allah accepts a servant, He appoints a Fir'oun to distress him (Allah's servant)."

"The company of the pious is better than pious deeds and the company of the evil is worse than evil deeds."

"A man who recognizes Allah has no need to ask from anyone. Whoever has not recognized him is always in need."

"He who abandons his lowly desires, reaches Allah."

"All creation submits to the one who has reached Allah."

"A man who does not understand that his nafs is the most contemptible, has absolutely no rank in piety."

"When a man becomes aware of his fault, he attains excellence."

"When a man disassociates from people, Allah presents His Qurb (Proximity) to him."

"The worst calamity for the body is to become forgetful of Allah Ta'ala."

"I asked Allah for the way to enter into His path. He said: "Abandon your ego and you can enter."

26. After Baayazid's demise a buzrug saw him in a dream. The buzrug asked how he had fared by Allah Ta'ala. Baayazid said: "Allah Ta'ala asked: "What have you brought for Me?" I said: "Tauhid." Allah Ta'ala asked: "Have you forgotten the night of the milk?" Baayazid then realised that even his lofty degree of Tauhid too was defective.

Explanation: One night after having drunk some milk, Baayazid developed a pain in his stomach. He concluded that the stomach-pain was due to the milk. Allah Ta'ala referred to this idea which attributes effects to causes other than Allah Ta'ala. He is the Sole Cause. All things are intermediaries operating by His direct command and intervention. Although it is permissible to attribute events to their mundane causes created by Allah Ta'ala, Auliya of Hadhrat Baayazid's standing and Ma'rifat are not expected to demonstrate the slightest forgetfulness of Allah Ta'ala. The attribution of events to their mundane causes or intermediaries by the Auliya constitute 'shirk' in the religion of Ma'rifat.

27. Hadhrat Ahmad Khadrawi's wife said: "Let me tell you of the rank of Baayazid. Once after making tawaaf of the Ka'bah, I fell asleep. In a dream I saw myself near to the Divine Arsh (Allah's Throne). Below the Arsh I beheld a wonderful orchard in which was a thousand flower-trees. On every leaf and petal was inscribed:

Insert Arabic (Baayazid Wali Allah)

Baayazid is the Wali of Allah."

28. In a dream someone asked Baayazid Bustaami to define Tasawwuf. He said: "Tasawwuf is abandonment of comfort and

adoption of struggle."

This abandonment and adoption have a variety of degree and phases. The very minimum degree which is compulsory on every Muslim is to abandon all unlawful and futile comforts and to struggle against the evil dictates of the nafs.

HADHRAT ABDULLAH BIN MUBAARAK (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his reformation and entry into the Path of tasawwuf, he was intensely in love with a beautiful slave-girl. His love for her continued for a great length of time. Once during a winter night, he stood near her home in the hope of seeing her. He stood waiting the entire night until the morning, but in vain. In the morning he was smitten by remorse for having wasted the night. He said to himself: "If I had spent the night in worshipping Allah, it would have been a thousand times better than what I have done."

Allah's fadh'l opened up his heart. His perishable love was replaced by Divine Love. He repented and engrossed himself in Allah's remembrance.

2. Once his mother went out searching for him. She found him sleeping in an orchard near a rose tree. A snake was fanning him with a branch from a Nargis (Narcissus) tree.
3. His practice was to go for Hajj one year, Jihaad the next year and trade the third year. He would contribute the profit of his trade to the poor and needy.
4. Once Abdullah Bin Mubaarak borrowed a pen, but forgot to return it. When it occurred to him to return the pen, the owner has already left for the land of Shaam. Abdullah Bin Mubaarak journeyed to Shaam to deliver the pen.
5. Once while he was walking along the road the people told a blind man: "Ibn Mubaarak is approaching. Ask him whatever you wish." The blind man stopped Ibn Mubaarak and begged him to make dua for the recovery of his vision. As a result of Ibn Mubaarak's dua, the blind man regained his vision.
6. Once on a Hajj journey, Ibn Mubaarak strayed off the path in the wilderness. He was delayed so long that he concluded that he would be unable to reach Arafaat in time as there remained only four days. Suddenly he saw a very old and weak lady who said: "Come with me. I shall take you to Arafaat."

He accompanied her. Ibn Mubaarak explains: "I went with her. Whenever a river appeared she instructed me to close my eyes. I would close my eyes. I would perceive myself walking on the water. On her instruction I would open my eyes to discover ourselves on the opposite bank of the river. Soon we reached Arafaat."

After Hajj the old lady said: "Come with me to meet my son. He has been worshipping in a cave for many years." When they reached the cave, Ibn Mubaarak saw a young man. His body was like a rake, but his face was glittering. The young man said:

"I know that my Maut is to take place, hence Allah Ta'ala sent you to give me ghusl and bury me." As he spoke, his soul departed. Ibn Mubaarak gave him ghusl and after Janaazah Salaat buried him. The old lady instructed Ibn Mubaarak: "Now go. I shall spend my life at the graveside of my son. When you come next year, you will not find me. But, always remember me in your dua."

7. Once after completing Hajj, Ibn Mubaarak fell asleep by the Ka'bah. In a dream he saw two Angels. The following conversation took place between the Angels:

First Angel: "How many people had performed Hajj this year and how many had their Hajj accepted?"

Second Angel: "Six hundred thousand persons performed Hajj, but not a single Hajj has been accepted. However, in Damascus there is a shoemaker, Ali Bin Muwaffiq. Although he did not come for Hajj, his Hajj has been accepted and for his sake Allah Ta'ala has accepted everyone's Hajj."

On waking, Ibn Mubaarak was very surprised. He set off for Damascus to investigate. On arrival he met the shoemaker who

presented the following narration to Ibn Mubaarak:

"I am a shoe-repairer. For many years it was my heart's desire to perform Hajj. After a long time I had managed to save 300 dirhams. I therefore resolved to perform Hajj this year.

One day we perceived the fragrance of food cooking in our neighbour's home. My wife told me to ask the neighbour for some of the food. When I approached my neighbour he said: 'Brother, the food we have cooked today is not lawful for you. We have been starving for the past seven days. Today I saw a dead ass. I cut some of its flesh which we have cooked today.'

The shoemaker said: "My heart shivered with fear of Allah Ta'ala. I gave him the 300 dirhams which I had saved."

Ibn Mubaarak narrated his dream to the shoemaker and added: "The Angel spoke the truth."

8. Once while Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak was walking in the road, he met a Sayyid who said: "Why do you have a superior rank than me although I am a Sayyid?" Ibn Mubaarak said: "Most assuredly, your father is Rasulullah (b) and my father was astray. Your father left the estate of Hidaayat (Guidance) which I acquired. It is for this reason that I received this rank. My father left the estate of deviation which you acquired. It is for this reason that you hold no rank."

That same night, in a dream Ibn Mubaarak saw that Rasulullah (b) was annoyed. When he asked for the reason, Rasulullah (b) said: "Why did you find fault with my children?" Ibn Mubaarak awoke and

set off to meet the Sayyid. Meanwhile, Rasulullah (b) appeared to the Sayyid as well and said: "If your deeds were noble, Abdullah would not have disgraced you." The Sayyid too set off to meet Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak. Both met in the road. After narrating their dreams, both repented.

9. Hadhrat Suhail (rahmatullah alayh) frequently visited Abdullah Bin Mubaarak. One day while leaving Ibn Mubaarak's home, Suhail said: "In future I shall not come to your house. The young girls in your home were teasing: 'Come to us Suhail! Come to us Suhail!', I detest this." Ibn Mubaarak proclaimed outside: "People, come perform the Janaazah Salaat of Suhail." Then Suhail died. When the people asked Ibn Mubaarak to explain how he knew of Suhail's imminent death, he said: "Suhail said today that young girls in my house were calling him. There are no young girls in my home. The Houris of Jannat were calling him. That was a sign of his imminent death."

10. One day Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak was travelling in the border territory of Byzantine. He came across a crowd of people severely beating a man who was shackled. I went up to him and asked him for an explanation. He said: "According to our religion, it is not permissible to mention the name of our chief idol as long as one has not been purified of sins. I committed the error of taking its name without having been purified of my sins. I am therefore being punished. I also cannot cry because I fear the great idol."

Ibn Mubaarak commented: "Shukr unto Allah. Allah bestowed to me that religion in which a sinner is purified of sins by mentioning the

Name of Allah. When he acquires Ma'rifat of Allah fully, he adopts silence."

11. Once during Jihaad, Ibn Mubaarak was engaged in combat with a kaafir. When it was time for Salaat, he sought permission from the kaafir to disengage until he had performed Salaat. The kaafir agreed and Ibn Mubaarak performed his Salaat. After Salaat the duel resumed. When it was the kaafir's prayer time, he sought Ibn Mubaarak's permission to say his prayers. Ibn Mubaarak agreed. While the kaafir was worshipping an idol, Ibn Mubaarak became enraged and decided to kill the kaafir forthwith but he heard a Voice reprimanding: "Beware! Think of the aayat: 'Honour promises. Verily, (you) will be questioned (in Qiyaamah) about promises.'

Ibn Mubaarak wept. When the kaafir completed his prayers, he asked Ibn Mubaarak the reason for weeping. Ibn Mubaarak explained. The kaafir said: "It is dishonourable not to worship a God who becomes annoyed with even His friend for the sake of an enemy." The kaafir then embraced Islam.

12. Ibn Mubaarak narrated: "I saw a man wanting to enter the Ka'bah. As he attempted, he fell down unconscious. On reviving, he recited Kalimah Shahaadat. When I asked him for an explanation, he said: "I was a fire-worshipper. I disguised myself to see what is in the Ka'bah. As I was about to enter, a Voice reprimanded: 'You are the enemy of a Friend. How can you enter the House of the Friend?' I then embraced Islam with a true heart."

13. People asked: "What is most beneficial for a man?"

Ibn Mubaarak: "Perfect intelligence."

People: "If he lacks perfect intelligence?"

Ibn Mubaarak: "Beautiful manners."

People: "If he lacks beautiful manners?"

Ibn Mubaarak: "Seeking advice from a kind brother."

People: "If he has no such brother?"

Ibn Mubaarak: "Then silence."

People: "If he is unable to remain silent?"

Ibn Mubaarak: "Then death is best for him."

14. Ibn Mubaarak said:

"Giving one dirham as Qardh-e-Hasnah is more meritorious than giving a thousand dirhams in charity."

Qardh-e-Hasnah means a beautiful loan, i.e. giving a loan to a person in difficulty and not pressing him for repayment.

"A man who takes even a shell from haraam wealth can never be a mutawakkil (i.e. one who has tawakkul)."

"Tawakkul does not negate effort to earn. Both tawakkul and effort are acts of worship."

"Man tolerates disgrace in the pursuit of all worldly things."

"Piety brings a man in the protection of Allah."

"The reward of caring for one's wife and children and teaching them the Deen is greater than the reward of Jihaad."

"Behave humbly with those who occupy a lower level than you here on earth."

15. Before he died, Ibn Mubaarak gave all his wealth in the path of Allah. A mureed reminded him that he had three daughters and should leave something for them. Ibn Mubaarak said:

"I have left Allah for them. When Allah is the maintainer of a person, he has no need of Abdullah."

16. In his last moments, he opened his eyes, smiled and recited the Qur'aanic aayat:

لِيَسْتَلْ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَمَلُونَ

"For the likes of this should people strive."

He closed his eyes and departed from this worldly abode.

17. Someone who saw Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri in a dream asked:

"How did Allah Ta'ala deal with you?" Sufyaan said: "Allah Ta'ala forgave me." When asked about the fate of Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak, Sufyaan Thauri said: "You ask about him? Allah has included him in that group of His devotees who are daily admitted twice into the Divine presence."

HADHRAT SUFYAAN THAURI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. One day when Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) entered the Musjid with his left foot, he heard a Voice rebuking him: "O Thaur! This disrespect for the Musjid is reprehensible." (Thaur means buffalo.) Henceforth he was called Sufyaan Thauri. The fear which the Voice instilled into him made him unconscious. When he regained his senses, he severely slapped himself many times, saying: "My name has been effaced from the role of human beings." This incident led to his reformation and entry into the spiritual path.
2. Once in the Musjid, Sufyaan Thauri saw the Khalifah of the time fiddling with his beard during Salaat. Sufyaan Thauri said: "This is

not Salaat. On the Day of Qiyaamah this Salaat will be struck into your face." In annoyance and anger the Khalifah exclaimed: "Shut up!" Sufyaan Thauri said: "Why should I not proclaim the truth?" In a fit of rage, the king ordered Sufyaan Thauri to be executed by hanging. When the time for his execution neared, Sufyaan Thauri was sitting in the company of Hadhrat Sufyaan Bin Uyainah and another buzrug. At this time the king and his ministers were in discussion in the palace. Sufyaan Thauri said: "I am not concerned about being hung. I cannot conceal the truth." Then he supplicated: "O Allah! I am innocent. Punish the king." As he was making dua, a severe earth tremor struck. The king and his ministers were all swallowed by the earth. Sufyaan Bin Uyainah commented:

"We never saw anyone's dua so effective, swift and powerful."

3. The successor of the king mentioned above had great faith in Sufyaan Thauri. He was a devoted follower. Once when Sufyaan Thauri became severely ill, the king sent an experienced physician who was a fire-worshipper. After examining Sufyaan Thauri the physician said: "His liver has split into bits out of fear for Allah. A Deen which produces such an effect, must indeed be the true Deen." He then embraced Islam. When the king heard of this development, he commented: "I thought that I had sent a physician to a patient, but in fact I had sent a patient to the physician."

4. While still young, Sufyaan Thauri had developed a hunched back. When he was asked about his bent back at such a young age, he said:

"Three of my Ustaadhs were great Aabids and Zaahids. But while

dying, they lost their Imaan. One became a Yahoood; the second a Nasaara and the third a fire-worshipper. Fear of Allah has bent my back. I always ask Allah for a death with Imaan."

5. A man sent two packets of Ashrafis (gold coins) as a gift to Sufyaan Thauri with the message:

"My father was your close friend. He has now died. I am sending this gift from his lawful earnings. Do accept it." Sufyaan Thauri returned the money with the message: "My friendship with your father was on account of the Deen, not for any worldly motive."

6. Once a young man who missed his Hajj, let out a sigh of grief. Sufyaan Thauri said to him:

"I have performed four Hajj. Exchange the thawaab of your sigh for the thawaab of my four Hajj."

The youth happily agreed. At night, Sufyaan Thauri dreamt a Voice saying:

"You have indeed struck a wonderful bargain cheaply. If the reward of that sigh has to be distributed to all the participants of Arafaat, everyone would become wealthy."

7. Once when he went to the public bath, Sufyaan Thauri saw a young lad. Ordering the people to expel the boy from the bath, he said:

"With every woman there is one shaitaan. But accompanying a young boy are 18 shayaateen whose mission is to ensnare people."

8. Sufyaan Thauri said:

"When good deeds are practiced, the Angel records these in the Record of Goodness. When people speak about their good deeds, the

Angel records the deeds in the Record of Riyaa (show and ostentation)."

"An Aabid (worshipper) who associates with a ruler is a man of riyaa."

"There are ten kinds of weeping. Of these, nine are the result of riyaa and one, the product of fear for Allah. If in an entire year one tear-drop is shed because of Allah's fear, it is better than a lifetime of weeping for other reasons."

"A man who adopts solitude in this world, attains salvation in the Hereafter."

"It is best to remain hidden from the gaze of people."

"The sleep of worldly people is better than their remaining awake. While sleeping, they are aloof from the world."

"Noble is the king who adopts the company of the zaahid, and evil is the zaahid who adopts the company of the king."

"The first ibaadat is seclusion then the quest of knowledge, then giving practical expression to knowledge, then dissemination of knowledge."

"Acquire the world according to the needs of the body and acquire the Aakhirah according to the needs of the soul."

"If sin has a physical stench, no one would have been able to come near to another person."

"Giving charity from haraam wealth is like washing garments with urine."

"A good act extinguishes the Wrath of Allah."

"Yaqeen is a propensity of the heart. When Yaqeen becomes perfect,

a man acquires Ma'rifat. The belief that all calamities are from Allah Ta'ala, is Yaqeen."

9. It was said to Sufyaan Thauri: "Rasulullah (ﷺ) said that Allah Ta'ala regards as enemies those who consume meat in abundance. What is the wisdom underlying this?"

Sufyaan said: "Meat in this context refers to gheebat. Gheebat of a Muslim is like devouring dead meat. A person who indulges in gheebat is abhorred by Allah Ta'ala."

10. Sufyaan Thauri said to Hadhrat Haatim (rahmatullah alayh):

"I shall tell you four things which people generally are guilty of:

a) Criticizing and accusing people. This brings about negligence in the execution of Allah's laws.

b) Jealousy for the progress of a Muslim. This leads to ingratitude.

c) Accumulation of haraam assets. This causes forgetfulness of the Aakhirah.

d) To become careless regarding the warnings of Allah Ta'ala and to lose hope in His promises. This lead to kufr."

11. Sufyaan Thauri had great affection and mercy for creation. Once when he saw a bird suffering in a cage, he set it free. The bird frequently visited him and watched him in ibaadat. After his death, the bird flew along with the Janaazah. It would sometimes settle with grief on the Janaazah. After burial, the bird sat on the grave grief-stricken. A Voice spoke from the grave: "Allah has forgiven Sufyaan on account of his affection for creation."

HADHRAT ABU ALI SHAFEEQ BALKHI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Prior to his reformation, Hadhrat Abu Ali Shafeeq Balkhi (rahmatullah alayh) was a trader. During one of his business trips in Turkistan, he went to see a famous temple of the idolaters. When he saw a man worshipping an idol, Shafeeq Balkhi said: "Don't you have any shame? You are worshipping a powerless object." The idolater responded: "Don't you have any shame? You wander from land to land in search of your rizq. Can your God not provide rizq for you in your land?"

This remark struck a responsive cord in his heart. He immediately

returned to his homeland, Balkh. Along the journey, he met a man who asked: "What is your occupation?" Shafeeq Balkhi replied: "Trade." The man said: "What has been decreed for you is obtainable in your home. It is obvious that you are not grateful to Allah."

This comment had a further impact on him. When he reached home he learnt that the ruler of Balkh had apprehended one of his neighbours on suspicion of having stolen his (the ruler's) dog. Shafeeq Balkhi approached the ruler and pleaded for his neighbour's release. In a sudden state of emotion Shafeeq Balkhi said that the dog will be found within three days. The neighbour was released on the assurance given by Shafeeq Balkhi. After three days a man appeared at Shafeeq Balkhi's home with the dog. He sent the dog to the ruler. From that day Shafeeq Balkhi renounced the world and entered the path of tasawwuf.

2. Shafeeq Balkhi had acquired knowledge of the Shariat and Tareeqat from 1,700 Ustaadhs. He said: "I discovered the pleasure of Allah in four things:

- a) Contentment with the rizq Allah provides.
- b) Ikhlaas (sincerity).
- c) The knowledge that shaitaan is the enemy.
- d) Accumulating the requisites of the Aakhirah."

3. Once during a famine he saw a slave strolling happily. Shafeeq Balkhi said: "People are overcome with grief on account of the famine, but you are strutting around so happily." The slave said: "I am not concerned. My master has an abundance of food. He ensures

that I do not remain hungry." This reply profoundly affected Shafeeq Balkhi who supplicated: "O Allah! This slave has so much trust on his mater's food. Why should I not have trust in You Who are the King of kings?" Thereafter, his tawakkul developed in perfection. He would often say that he was the mureed of the slave.

4. In a lecture in Samarqand he once said: "If you are corpses, go to the qabrustaan. If you are children, go to the Madrasah. If you are insane go to the madhouse. If you are kaafir, go to kufristaan (the land of the kuffaar) and if you are Muslims, then choose the Straight Path of Islam."

5. Shafeeq Balkhi set off for Hajj. When he reached Baghdad, the Khalifah, Haroun Rashid highly honoured him and asked for naseehat. Shafeeq Balkhi said: "Allah Ta'ala has made you the representative of the four Khulafa-e-Raashideen. You will be questioned about truth, justice, shame and knowledge. Allah has granted you wealth to give to the needy. He has given you power to compel people to observe the Shariah. If you fail in these duties, then in Qiyaamah you will be the leader of the inmates of Jahannum. The Khalifah is like a fountain and his subordinate officers like streams springing from the fountain. Govern righteously so that your offices emulate you."

When Haroun Rashid asked for more naseehat, Shafeeq Balkhi said: "If you are overwhelmed by thirst in a desert and someone offers you water in exchange for half your kingdom, will you accept?" The Khalifah said: "Yes."

Shafeeq Balkhi: "If after drinking the water, you are unable to urinate and suffer great pain and distress, a physician says that he will cure you for half your kingdom, will you agree?"

The Khalifah said: "Yes."

Shafeeq Balkhi: "A kingdom which worth a cup of water and its release is not worth to be proud of." Haroun Rashid wept profusely.

6. He said:

"The rizq and acts of virtue of a man who has tawakkul on Allah, increase. He becomes generous. He is not affected by shaitaani wasaawis in his ibaadat."

"A man who complains during calamity, quarrels with Allah Ta'ala."

"The sign of fear for Allah is abandonment of prohibitions. The sign of hope is constancy in ibaadat. The sign of love is enthusiasm and repentance."

"Nine-tenths of ibaadat consists of fleeing from people and one-tenth is to adopt silence."

"Three things destroy a man:

- a) Committing sin in the hope of repenting.
- b) Abstaining from repentance in the hope of life (i.e. taubah is delayed for a later date).
- c) Refraining from repentance in the hope of Allah's mercy."

"Allah Ta'ala gives life to the Aabideen (His devotees) after their death and death to the sinners even during their earthly lifetime."

"Maut cannot be stalled. Always be prepared for it."

"I consider hospitality to the guest the noblest act. Only Allah is aware of the reward of hospitality."

"Seven hundred Ulama unanimously said: "A Zaahid is one who does not befriend the world. A wealthy man is one who is contented with whatever has been predestined for him. A wise man is one who cannot be deceived by the world. A durwaish (dervish) is one who does not ask for more. A miser is one who honours wealth more than humanity and refrains from giving."

HADHRAT IMAAM ABU HANIFAH(rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Hanifah Nu'min Bin Thaabit (rahmatullah alayh) was a Taabi-ee. Illustrious Auliyaas such as Fuzail Bin Iyaaz, Ibraahim Bin Adham, Bishr Haafi and Dawood Taai (rahmatullah alayhim) were among his students.

2. It is narrated that when Imaam Abu Hanifah presented himself at the Raudha-e-Mubaarak (the Holy Grave) of Rasulullah (ﷺ) he recited:

(Insert Arabic Assalaamu Alayka ya Sayyidul Mursaleen)

"Salaam on you, O Leader of the Ambiya!"

the reply from within the Holy Sepulchre came:

(Insert Arabic Wa Alaykas salaam ya Imaamul Muslimeen)

"And Salaam on you, O Imaam of the Muslims!"

3. Once Imaan Abu Hanifah dreamt that he was exhuming the bones of the holy body of Rasulullah (ﷺ) and sorting them out. He woke up full of fear. He asked Ibn Sireen, the famous interpreter, for the interpretation of his dream. Ibn Sireen said: "Congratulations! In the knowledge of Hadith you will attain the ability of distinguishing between Saheeh (authentic) and Maudhu' (fabricated) ahaadith."

4. In a dream, Rasulullah (ﷺ) informed: "O Abu Hanifah! Allah has created you to revive my Sunnah. Do not adopt seclusion."

5. Once Imaan Abu Hanifah attended a Janaazah. It was an extremely hot day. The only shade in the vicinity was the shadows of a wall. However, Imaam Abu Hanifah remained standing in the blazing sun. When people insisted that he stand in the shade, he said: "The owner of the house is my debtor. It is not permissible for me to derive any gain from him because the Hadith says: "The benefit produced by every qardh (loan given) is ribaa."

6. Initially it was Imaam Abu Hanifah's practice to perform 300 raka'ts every night. One day while walking in the street he overheard someone telling another person: "He performs 500 raka'ts every night." Henceforth he increased his nightly practice to 500 raka'ts.

7. Once Imaan Abu Hanifah honoured a wealthy man on account of his worldly rank. To compensate for this error Imaam Abu Hanifah recited the Qur'aan Shareef a thousand times.

8. When a difficult mas'alah (Deeni question) confronted him and there appeared to be no solution, Imaam Abu Hanifah would recite the Qur'aan Shareef 40 times. By the barkat of this recital, the Mas'alah would be solved.

9. Commenting of the adab (respect) of Imaam Abu Hanifah, Hadhrat Dawood Taai said that in 30 years he never saw Imaam Abu Hanifah stretching his legs or removing his headgear, neither in public nor in seclusion. When Dawood Taai asked the reason for such respect even in seclusion, Imaam Abu Hanifah said:

"How can I respect people in public and be disrespectful to Allah Ta'ala in seclusion?"

10. There was a wealthy man who had a great aversion for Hadhrat Uthmaan (رضی عنہ). He even branded Hadhrat Uthmaan (رضی عنہ) a Yahoodi. Imaam Abu Hanifah sent for him and said: "I wish to arrange your daughter's marriage to a (certain) Yahoodi." The man, greatly annoyed, exclaimed: "How can you utter such a notoriety while you are the Imaam? This is not permissible." Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Your opinion in this matter is of no significance. Rasulallah (صلی وسلم عایہ) , himself gave two of his daughters in marriage to a 'Yahoodi'." The Yahoodi understood and repented. Two daughters of Rasulallah (صلی وسلم عایہ) on different occasions were married to Hadhrat Uthmaan (رضی عنہ).

11. In a dream Hadhrat Yahya Muaaz Raazi (rahmatullah alayh) asked Rasulullah (ﷺ) : "Where should I search for you, O Rasulullah?" Nabi-e-Kareem (ﷺ) said: "Search for me by the knowledge of Abu Hanifah."

12. A man who frequently sat in Imaam Abu Hanifah's company asked for a loan of a large sum to relieve him of his financial distress. Imaam Abu Hanifah advanced the loan. The man promised to repay the loan on a certain date. On due-date he was unable to pay. Feeling ashamed, he no longer visited Imaam Abu Hanifah. Although Imaam Abu Hanifah wondered at the absence of his friend, he could not understand the reason. Imaam Abu Hanifah had forgotten about the loan and the friend's promise.

One day after Salaat, Imaam Abu Hanifah decided to confront the man to ascertain the reason for his aloofness. When the man saw Imaam Abu Hanifah approaching, he turned and quickly walked away. Imaam Abu Hanifah followed. When the man saw Imaam Abu Hanifah following him, he broke into a run in order to escape. Imaam Abu Hanifah also ran after him. When the man realised that Imaam Abu Hanifah was nearing him, he hid his face in his hands in shame, facing the wall of a building. Imaam Abu Hanifah lightly placed his hands on the man's shoulders and asked the reason for his peculiar behaviour. Highly embarrassed, the man explained his inability to repay the loan. Now Imaam Abu Hanifah recalled the loan he had given. He took the man home and gave him a similar large sum to pay his debts.

HADHRAT IMAAM SHAAFI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) asked Hadhrat Khidhr's opinion regarding Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayh). Khidhr (alayhis salaam) said: "He is among the Autaad."

(In the hierarchy of the Auliya of unknown identities, there are 12 classes. Autaad is one of the top-ranking classes.)

2. In the beginning, Imaam Shaafi remained in seclusion deriving baatini (spiritual) knowledge and direction from Hadhrat Saleem Raa-ee (rahmatullah alayh).

3. The reverence he had for Sayyids constrained Imaam Shaafi to stand in respect for even little boys of the family of Rasulallah (ﷺ).

4. Once when going for Hajj, Imaam Shaafi took with him 10,000 dinars (gold coins). People advised him to invest the money in lucrative business ventures. Imaam Shaafi listened to the advices, but did not respond. He went to the outskirts of Makkah Muazzamah and made a heap of the gold coins. He sat down and gave a handful of dinars to every passer-by. Soon the whole pile of gold was depleted.

5. In terms of a treaty, the emperor of Room paid an annual sum to Khalifah Haroun Rashid. Once, the emperor sent the annual levy with a deputation of Christian priests. On this occasion the emperor has also issued the following ultimatum to Haroun Rashid:

"If the Ulama of your religion defeat these priests in debate, I shall continue to pay the levy. If they fail, I shall terminate it." Haroun Rashid assembled the Ulama on the banks of the River Dajla and requested Imaam Shaafi to debate with the Christian priests. Imaam Shaafi spread his musalla on the river-water. Seating himself on the carpet, he challenged the priests: "If you wish to debate, come here

on the water."

When the priests beheld this miraculous scene, the vista of guidance opened in their hearts. All embraced Islam. When the emperor learnt of this development, he said: "We are fortunate, that man (i.e. Imaam Shaafi) did not come to Room. The whole population would have embraced Islam."

6. Imaam Shaafi said: "Whoever taught you even a little respect, consider him to be your Ustaadh."

"Do not vie with others in the accumulation of wealth. Vie with them in ibaadat. Wealth remains behind on earth while ibaadat accompanies you into the grave."

7. During his last illness, Imaam Shaafi wrote a wasiyyat naamah (last testament) to be given to a particular person who was not present. He also instructed that the man be told to give ghusl to his (Imaam Shaafi's) body. However, the man was not present when Imaam Shaafi died. He was in Egypt, hence someone else had to give the ghusl. When the man returned from Egypt many days later, the testament was given to him. The verbal message too was delivered. In the wasiyyat naamah was written: "I am in debt for 70,000 ..." The man paid Imaam Shaafi's debt and said that ghusl here referred to the debt owed by Imaam Shaafi."

HADHRAT IMAAM AHMAD HAMBAL (rahmatullah alayh)

1. The Mu'tazilah sect had brought great distress and suffering to Imaam Ahmad Hambal (rahmatullah alayh). While the deviant Mu'tazilahs propagated the erroneous belief of the Qur'aan being the created word of Allah, Imaam Hambal was their leading opponent teaching that the Qur'aan was the uncreated Word of Allah Ta'ala.

The Khalifah Ma'moon too entertained the Mu'tazilah view. Imaam Ahmad was arrested and brought in front of the Khalifah who ordered him to retract his belief. When Imaam Ahmad refused, he was put in chains and severely flogged. In spite of his frail body, he preserved and submitted to the torture, but never abandoning the truth.

While flogging Imaam Ahmad, his izaar (the garment covering the lower part of the body) was about to fall off. Two hands miraculously appeared, tied the izaar and disappeared. When the king beheld this wonderful episode, he ordered Imaam Hambal to be released. He finally succumbed to the wounds of the torture and died. On his death-bed he was asked about the Khalifah, Ma'moon. Imaam Hambal said:

"He had punished me for the sake of Allah because he thought I was propagating falsehood. On the Day of Qiyaamah, I shall hold no claim against him."

2. Imaam Ahmad Hambal narrated the following episode: "Once in the wilderness I lost my way. A bedouin was sitting in a corner. I went up to him and asked for directions. He became restless and wept. Thinking him lost and hungry, I offered him some bread. In anger he said: 'O Ahmad Hambal, you are not pleased with Allah. You offer rizq like Allah while you have lost the way.' I said to myself: 'O Allah! You have concealed such noble servants of Yours in such remote corners of the world.' Discerning my thoughts, the bedouin said: 'There are such servants of Allah, by whose command

the entire earth can be transformed into gold.' When I looked, I beheld gold as far as my eyes could see. I was overcome by ecstasy. I heard a Voice saying: 'This man is Our beloved servant. If he wishes, We shall cast the entire universe into turmoil. Be grateful to Us for having allowed you to meet him. You will never again see him.'

3. While he was in Baghdad, Imaam Hambal would not eat anything which was produced there. His food would be brought from the city of Mosul. Explaining his action, he said: "Hadhrat Umar (رضي عنه) had made waqf the lands of Baghdad for the Ghaazis (Muslim Mujaahideen). These lands are lawful only for them."

4. Since the use of silver and gold is permissible only in jewellery for females and as money, Imaam Ahmad Hambal would instruct people not to sit in the company of those who had silver surmah containers.

5. Once when Imaam Hambal was blessed with the vision of Allah Ta'ala in a dream, he asked: "O Allah! How should Your Proximity be cultivated?" Allah Ta'ala said: "By means of tilaawat of the Qur'aan." Imaam Hambal asked: "With or without understanding?" Allah Ta'ala said: "With and without understanding."

6. Someone asked: "What is zuhd?"

Imaam Hambal: "The zuhd of the masses is abstention from haraam and the zuhd of the elite is abstention from the desire of increase in halaal."

Zuhd is to renounce the world. In so far as the masses are concerned, zuhd is to renounce all unlawful and reprehensible deeds and acts. The zuhd of the Auliya is of a different and higher kind. To

gain nearness to Allah Ta'ala, abstention from even lawful desires becomes necessary. Such renunciation is of a variety of degrees depending on the spiritual abilities of the Auliya.

There is a much higher type of zuhd which Imaam Hambal defined: "The zuhd of the Aarifeen is to abandon everything besides Allah Ta'ala."

7. During his last moments his son asked about his condition. Imaam Hambal replied: "This is not a time for answering. Make dua that Allah takes me with Imaan. Shaitaan is saying to me: 'O Ahmad! Alas! You are departing in the safety of Imaan.'

But, I say: 'As long as breath remains, there is no certainty of Imaan. I still have some breath left and this is the perilous stage. May Allah have mercy.'

After making this statement, Imaam Ahmad Hambal passed away. Rasulallah (ﷺ) said: "Imaan is suspended between hope and fear."

8. Flocks of birds accompanying the Janaazah of Imaam Ahmad Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) wept. On beholding this scene, two thousand Jews embraced Islam.

HADHRAT DAWOOD TAAI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Before his reformation, Hadhrat Dawood Taai (rahmatullah alayh) once heard a poet reciting a couplet which made a tremendous

impact on him. His heart turned away from the world. In bewilderment he explained his condition to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) who advised him to remain in seclusion. After a few days Imaam Abu Hanifah advised him to sit in the company of the Auliyyaa. After spending a year in the company of different Mashaa-ikh, he became the Mureed of Hadhrat Habib Raa-ee (rahmatullah alayh).

2. Hadhrat Dawood Taai lived in a large house which he had acquired prior to his entry into the path of renunciation. One part of the house collapsed and he moved into another part. He never made an attempt to repair the collapsed part. Some time later, the part in which he was living, also collapsed. He moved into another part. As time passed, this section too collapsed, leaving only part of the roof intact. He lived under this shelter. After he died, the roof also collapsed.

3. The following are some of his sayings:

One who lacks consideration for others, lacks Deen.

Futile gazing is as reprehensible as futile conversation.

Abandon the company of people.

The dead are waiting for you.

Strive for the acquisition of the Deen like you are striving for the acquisition of the world.

Prevent your tongue from evil and remain aloof from people.

4. Once the Khalifah, Haroun Rashid came with Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) to visit Hadhrat Dawood Taai. However, he

refused to allow them to enter his home, saying: "I do not wish to meet people of the world and oppressors." On the insistence of his mother he relented and allowed them to enter. He allowed them to remain only a few moments. When about to leave, Haroun Rashid presented some gold coins to Dawood Taai. Refusing to accept, he said: "I had sold my house in exchange for halaal money. I am still using from that money for my needs. I have supplicated to Allah Ta'ala to remove me from this world when my money finishes."

Later Imaam Abu Yusuf learnt from a close associate of Dawood Taai that he had 10 dirhams left from the money he had received for his house. On the basis of Dawood Taai's daily expenses, Imaam Abu Yusuf calculated that the money will be depleted after a certain number of days. When that number of days expired, Imaam Abu Yusuf said: "Today, Hadhrat Dawood Taai has died." On making enquiries, it was learnt from Dawood Taai's mother that he was engrossed in ibaadat the entire night. Finally he died in Sajdah.

5. While Dawood Taai was in his last illness, a buzrug saw him reciting the Qur'aan Shareef in the blazing sun on a fiercely hot day. When the buzrug advised him to come into the shade, Hadhrat Dawood Taai said:

"I detest submitting to my nafs."

He died that very same night.

HADHRAT HAARITH MUHAASABI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Haarith Muhaasabi (rahmatullah alayh) was a contemporary of Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh). His abstinence from mushtabah (doubtful) food was of such a high

degree that his fingers would become paralysed if he touched such food. Once he visited Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). A neighbour in whose house a marriage had taken place had sent some of the walimah food to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi. This food was served to Hadhrat Muhaasabi. As he took a morsel of the food, his fingers became limp. Nevertheless, he quickly put the morsel with great difficulty into his mouth, but it would simply not go down his throat. He left the room, spat out the food and went home. After some days when Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi met him, he (Hadhrat Junaid) asked him to explain his abrupt departure of the other day.

Hadhrat Haarith Muhaasabi said:

"Whenever I stretch my hand towards mushtabah food, it is Allah's great favour that my fingers become limp. However, in deference for you I managed to put the morsel of food in my mouth, but it was rejected by my throat. I spat it out and left."

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi again invited Hadhrat Haarith Muhaasabi to his home. This time he served a piece of dry bread which Hadhrat Muhaasabi ate with relish. Hadhrat Muhaasabi commented: "This suffices for the durwaish."

2. Hadhrat Haarith Muhaasabi inherited 30,000 dirhams from his father's estate. He handed the whole amount to the Baitul Maal (the state's treasury) and said:

"Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: 'The Qadriyyah are the Majoos

(fire-worshippers) of this Ummah.' My father was a member of the Qadriyyah sect. The Majoos are not Muslims, hence it is not permissible for me to inherit from my father."

3. He said:

Do not take oaths.

Do not speak a lie.

Do not make promises. If a promise has been made, honour it.

Do not curse anyone, even if the person is an oppressor.

Do not seek compensation for anything from anyone.

Do not testify in a case of kufr, shirk and nifaaq.

Do not intend to commit a sin whether it be a sin of the heart or of the body.

Do not impose on anyone. Rather remove the difficulties of others.

Do not wish for an honoured position in the world and regard all others to be nobler than yourself.

Obedience to the laws of Allah Ta'ala is Sabr.

The understanding that all worldly causes are from Allah and to be grateful for even misfortunes are called Tasleem (complete submission).

Severance of relationship with the enemies of Allah is called Haya (Shame).

Divine Love means to shun the world.

To abandon sin on account of the fear of being apprehended (in the hereafter) is called Khauf.

Fleeing from people is called Uns (i.e. an elevated stage of Divine Love).

A Saadiq (Truthful one) is a person who is pleased when he is criticised. He always seeks Allah's refuge.

He who has adorned his nafs by struggle, has found the straight path.

Allah bestows the ability of following the Sunnah to the one who has ikhlaas (sincerity) and engages in Muraaqabah (contemplation).

HADHRAT ABU SULAIMAAN DAARAAEE (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Abu Sulaimaan Daaraaee (rahmatullah alayh) said:
Everything has its corrosion. Eating to the degree of satiation is the corrosion of the heart's purity. Ihtilaam (nocturnal discharge of semen) is a punishment for filling the stomach.

A man who eats his stomach full suffers six calamities:

- 1) He does not experience pleasure in ibaadat.
- 2) His memory in remembering wisdom decreases.
- 3) He is unable to be affectionate to people.
- 4) Ibaadat is onerous on him.
- 5) His lust increases.
- 6) He is preoccupied with the toilet.

2. He said:

A man in whose heart is noor (spiritual light) is angered by nafsani desires. That noor separates him from the world and inclines him to the Akhirah.

Abandonment of ego is called Tawaadhu' (humility). (As long as one thinks of oneself as being something, one lacks humility.) He who does not recognize his nafs does not understand the meaning of Tawaadhu'.

One who speaks without thinking always regrets.

Eating less, sleeping less and speaking less are the signs of a sincere taubah.

The Thikr of Allah effaces sins and His Ridhaa (being pleased with Him) severs vain hopes.

HADHRAT SHAH SHUJA' KIRMAANI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Shah Shuja' Kirmaani (rahmatullah alayh) was a member of the royal family. After he took to the path of renunciation he did not sleep for 40 years. After this long period, he fell asleep for a few moments and in a dream saw the Vision of Allah Ta'ala. In his dream he said: "O Allah! I searched for You in awakefulness, but found You in a dream." Allah Ta'ala said: "This is the consequence of your awakefulness."

Thereafter he would generally take a short nap in the hope of experiencing Allah's Vision. He frequently said: "I will not exchange my dream for the awakefulness of both worlds."

2. Hadhrat Kirmaani had a very beautiful and saintly daughter. The king of Kirmaan proposed marriage to her. Hadhrat Kirmaani promised to give an answer to the proposal after three days. During this period, he wandered from one Musjid to another in the hope of finding a sincere durwaish with whom his daughter may marry. On the third day he found such a durwaish. When Hadhrat Kirmaani asked the durwaish if he wished to marry, he said that no one would give their daughter to a pauper. With the consent of the daughter, the nikah was performed. When she arrived at the home of her husband, she found only a piece of bread and some water in a mug. She asked: "Why have you kept this?"

Durwaish: "Yesterday I ate half of the bread and drank half of the water. I have left the balance for today."

His wife: "I want to go to my father."

Durwaish: "I knew that a woman of the royal family cannot spend her life with a faqir."

His wife: "It is not as you say. I want to complain to my father about the assurance he gave me. He promised that he would perform my nikah with a pious man, but he married me to a man who is not grateful to Allah Ta'ala. A man who hoards food for the next day contradicts tawakkul. Choose between the bread and me. Either the bread stays or I."

This episode illustrates the exceptionally lofty state of her zuhd and taqwa. Even a piece of bread in the home is regarded as negatory of tawakkul by certain Auliya of the calibre of Hadhrat Kirmaani's daughter.

3. Hadhrat Abu Hafs (rahmatullah alayh) wrote to Hadhrat Kirmaani: "I viewed myself in my nafs, actions and defects. I acquired only hopelessness."

Hadhrat Kirmaani replied:

"I have made your letter the mirror of my heart. If my dissatisfaction with my nafs is sincere, then I have hope in Allah. When I have hope in Allah, I shall have fear. When I have fear, I shall have no hope in my nafs. When I shall have no hope in my nafs, I shall be able to remember Allah. When I shall remember Allah, I shall become independent from creation. When I shall gain independence from creation, I shall reach Allah."

4. Hadhrat Kirmaani said: "The grace of gracious men and the sainthood of saintly men remain as long as they do not regard their grace as grace and their sainthood as sainthood."

When a man become conscious of his excellences, he becomes afflicted with ujub (vanity) which negates his lofty attributes.

5. He said: "A faqir remains Allah's secret as long as the faqir conceals his faqr. When he reveals it, it is snatched from him."

6. Sidq has three signs:

i) Dislike for the world.

ii) Aloofness from people.

iii) Dominance over desire.

7. He said: "A wise man is he who does not look at haraam, abandons desire, remembers Allah with his heart, follows the Sunnat with his body and consumes halaal food."

HADHRAT YUSUF BIN HUSAIN (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Yusuf Bin Husain (rahmatullah alayh) was the mureed of Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri (rahmatullah alayh). He was extremely handsome and by nature had a beautiful disposition.

The daughter of an Arab chief once saw him and was overwhelmed by love. She too was famed for her beauty. One day when she found an opportunity to see him in privacy, she expressed her burning love for him. Fear of Allah overcame Yusuf Bin Husain and he promptly fled. During the night he dreamt that Hadhrat Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) was seated on a throne. Rows of malaa-ikah were standing with reverence in front of him. When Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) saw Yusuf Bin Husain, he (Nabi Yusuf) arose from the throne and stepped forward to welcome him. He honoured Yusuf Bin Husain by seating him on the throne. Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) said to Yusuf Bin Husain:

"When the fear of Allah gripped you when the daughter of the Arab chief expressed her love for you, Allah Ta'ala said to me:

'O Yusuf, look! You had supplicated to Me to save you from the evil of Zulaikha. Here is Yusuf (Bin Husain) who did not even look at the daughter of the Arab chief for the sake of My Fear.'

Nabi Yusuf (alayhis salaam) added:

'I have been instructed to welcome you. You will attain the ranks of the Auliya of the Deen. Go to Zunnoon Misri and acquire the Ismul

A'zam from him."

When his eyes opened, Yusuf Bin Husain journeyed to Egypt. He spent a year in the suhbat of Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri (rahmatullah alayh). After expiry of the year, Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri said: "Ask whatever you wish for." Yusuf Bin Husain said: "Impart to me the Ismul A'zam." Zunnoon Misri remained silent. After another year had passed Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri gave a dish covered with a cloth to Yusuf Bin Husain instructing him to deliver it so a buzrug near to the river Nile. Along the way, Yusuf Bin Husain detected a movement in the dish. Curiosity led him to open the lid. As he did so, out jumped a mouse. Feeling highly ashamed of himself, he closed the dish and delivered it to the Buzrug. When the buzrug found it empty, he said: "When you could not guard even a mouse, how can you guard the Ismul A'zam?"

Full of shame he returned to Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri who commented: "I had prayed to Allah Ta'ala seven times requesting for consent to impart the Ismul A'zam to you. Each time it was intimated to me to put you to test. It has now transpired that you have not yet developed the ability to guard the Ismul A'zam. Now return to your land. You will acquire the Ismul A'zam in due course."

2. On Yusuf Bin Husain's departure, Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri gave the following naseehat: "Forget whatever you have learnt (i.e. of book-knowledge) so that all veils are lifted. Forget me too. Do not mention to anyone that I am your Shaikh. Give naseehat to people and call

them to Allah. Do not think of yourself as the intermediary (between Allah and His servants)." He returned to his homeland, the land of Re.

3. In his homeland he engaged in discourses. On account of the opposition of the establishment Ulama (Ulama-e-Zaahir), his audience dwindled. One day not a single person attended hence he thought of abandoning his discourse. An old lady reprimanding him said: "You had pledged to Zunnoon that you would admonish people. You now think of violating your pledge." This admonition alerted him and he continued with his bayaans (discourses / lectures) for the next 50 years. He became indifferent to the number of people present in the audience.

4. Hadhrat Yusuf Bin Husain said:

A man who believes in the omnipresence of Allah, flees from people. Allah eliminates all thing besides Himself from a heart which truly remembers Him.

A Saadiq conceals his ibaadat and takes to seclusion.

The thirst (for Allah's love) of one drowned in the ocean of Tauheed is never quenched.

The noblest object is ikhlaas.

You are a slave. Therefore live like a slave (obeying the commands of Allah).

Those who recognise Allah by reflection (fikir), increase their ibaadat.

5. After the death of Yusuf Bin Husain, a buzrug saw him in a very lofty spiritual rank. The buzrug asked: "How did you attain this rank?"

Yusuf Bin Husain replied: "I had never mingled good with evil while I was on earth."

HADHRAT ABU HAFS HADDAAD (rahmatullah alayh)

1. By profession, Hadhrat Abu Hafs (rahmatullah alayh) was a blacksmith. He has therefore been called Haddaad (Blacksmith). Prior to his reformation he was in love with a beautiful girl. He went to enlist the aid of a famous magician. The sorcerer advised him to abstain from all acts of ibaadat for 40 days. Thereafter, his magic will have the necessary affect on the girl. After 40 days Abu Hafs Haddaad again visited the sorcerer. As much as he endeavoured, the magic was ineffective. The sorcerer said: "You must have rendered some act of Ibaadat hence the ineffectiveness of my magic."

Abu Hafs Haddaad: "I did not worship at all. However, I would remove stone in the pathway to save people inconvenience."

Sorcerer: "Alas! You have refrained from the ibaadat of such a God Who had accepted such an insignificant act of virtue and rendered the magic ineffective. He even overlooked your disobedience of 40 days."

This statement of the sorcerer made a tremendous impact on the heart of Abu Hafs Haddaad. He repented, renounced the world and engrossed himself in Thikrullah.

2. Hadhrat Abu Hafs Haddaad daily earned one dinar. In the darkness of the night he would give the dinar to some faqir or throw

it into the home of a struggling widow. He distributed his dinars nightly in a way that no one knew who gave the money.

3. One day while in his workshop he heard a blind man reciting a Qur'aanic aayat. The effect of the aayat transported him into a state of ecstasy. He was beyond himself. In this state of ecstasy he removed a red-hot iron from the furnace with his bare hands. Holding it in his hands he instructed his staff to hammer it. All were amazed to observe this miraculous scene. When the state of ecstasy ended, he saw the red-hot iron in his hands. He threw it aside, gave away his workshop and went into complete seclusion. He said: "I had endeavoured much to conceal my condition, but Allah Ta'ala had willed otherwise."

4. He said: "For thirty years I struggled to put into full practice a Hadith, but failed." When asked for the Hadith, he cited: Insert Arabic Man hasanal Islam ...

"Of the beauty of a man's Islam is his abandonment of that which does not benefit him."

5. Once Hadhrat Abu Hafs Haddaad went into the wilderness with a group of his mureeds. While lost in the absorption of Allah's remembrance, suddenly a wild buck appeared and settled peacefully in his lap. Hadhrat Abu Hafs wept and the buck left. When a mureed asked for an explanation, Hadhrat Haddaad said: "I thought that if at this time I had a goat I would have been able to give my companions (mureeds) a treat. As this thought passed through my mind the buck came to me."

He was then asked: "When Allah Ta'ala has so much regard for you, why do you weep?"

Hadhrat Abu Hafs replied: "The arrival of the buck by the command of Allah Ta'ala threatened to distance me from the Court of Allah. If Allah Ta'ala had wished goodness for Fir'oun, He would not have fulfilled the wish of Fir'oun by commanding the river Nile to flow."

Explanation: Although Fir'oun claimed to be god, he was fully aware of the existence of Allah Ta'ala. When he was challenged to command the Nile to flow in the opposite direction to prove his claim of godhood, Fir'oun sincerely prayed to Allah Ta'ala to grant his wish.

Allah Ta'ala accepted his prayer and the river Nile flowed in the opposite direction. But, Fir'oun remained a kaafir and died a kaafir.

Hadhrat Abu Hafs was referring to this episode to illustrate to his mureeds that miraculous events are not always the sign of divine acceptance. The story of Fir'oun brought fear to him, hence he cried when his wish was so swiftly accepted.

6. Whenever Hadhrat Abu Hafs was angered, he would immediately break into light-hearted talk. After his anger subsided, he would revert to serious discussion.

7. A man whose donkey was lost was overcome with grief. Hadhrat Abu Hafs made dua: "O Allah! As long as his donkey is not found, I shall not move a step forward." The donkey immediately appeared.

8. Once in a wilderness, Hadhrat Abu Hafs Haddaad was without water for 16 days. On the 17th day he came across a stream, but did not drink any water. He sat down in contemplation. Coincidentally,

Hadhrat Abu Turaab Bakshi (rahmatullah alayh) appeared on the scene and asked: "What are you contemplating?" Hadhrat Abu Hafs replied: "After 16 days I found water today. Now within me is progressing a debate between Ilm and Yaqeen. If Ilm gains the upperhand, I shall drink water. If Yaqeen dominates, I shall abstain and proceed my journey." Hadhrat Abu Turaab commented: "This rank belongs exclusively to you."

9. Commenting on hospitality to the guest, Hadhrat Abu Hafs said that a guest is a messenger sent by Allah Ta'ala, hence kindness to him should be for the sake of Allah Ta'ala.

10. He said:

"He who does not follow the Sunnah nor understands his own evil is not a man."

"Know the calamity of your speech." (Before speaking one should reflect on the contemplated talk and its consequences.)

"Ask Allah for the pleasure of silence so that you spend your life in silence."

"The world is an abode which perpetually involves man in sin."

"Bukhl (miserliness) is to refrain from sacrifice."

"Sacrifice means to accord priority to the rights of others in both Deeni and mundane affairs."

"A noble man is one who is graceful (kind, generous and forgiving) to others while hoping for the grace of Allah."

"A pious man is one who is subservient to the Sunnah and consumes halaal."

"A man who does not consider himself to be evil is arrogant. An

arrogant man is ruined."

"Khauf (fear of Allah) is the lamp of the heart by means of which vice and virtue are discerned."

"A man who always searched for the kindness of Allah is never ruined."

"Taqwa is in halaal rizq."

"Tasawwuf is total and perfect respect."

"Abstention from sin after taubah is a true taubah."

"Be obedient to the Chief, Muhammad (ﷺ) so that all chiefs become obedient to you."

11. During his dying moments Hadhrat Abu Hafs Haddaad (rahmatullah alayh) said: "One should regret whenever thinking of anyone (besides Allah Ta'ala)."

HADHRAT HAMDOON QASAAR (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Hamdoon Qasaar (rahmatullah alayh) was the mureed of Hadhrat Abu Turaab Bakshi (rahmatullah alayh) and the Shaikh of Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri and Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayhim).

2. Once he was sitting by a dying friend. The moment he died, Hadhrat Hamdoon Qasaar extinguished the lamp. Explaining his action, he said: "As long as he was alive, the lamp was his property. It now belongs to his heirs. It is not permissible to use it without their consent."

3. He was asked the reason for the effectiveness of the discourses of the Auliya and Ulama of earlier times. He said: "They spoke for the progress of Islam and for their safety from the nafs."

4. Hadhrat Hamdoon Qasaar said:

"Adopt the company of an Aalim and stay away from a jaahil."

"Follow the Mutaqaddimeen (i.e. the great Auliya and Ulama of the early era of Islam)."

"Obedience to the nafs blinds a man (i.e. renders him spiritually blind)."

"Think of yourself as evil and others as intoxicated and fear the possibility of you too becoming intoxicated (i.e. going astray)."

"Generosity produces virtue and miserliness produces vice."

"Eating much is the root of all sickness and a calamity for the Deen."

"The searcher of the world will be contemptible in the Aakhirah."

"Zuhd (abstinence) is to be contented with whatever Allah has provided and to refrain from asking for more."

HADHRAT MANSOOR AMMAAR (rahmatullah alayh)

1. A slave was sent with four dirhams by his master to make a purchase. Along the way he stopped to listen to a lecture being given by Hadhrat Mansoor Ammaar (rahmatullah alayh). Present in the audience was a very poor durwaish. While speaking, Hadhrat Ammaar said:

"Who will give this durwaish four dirhams in return for four duas from him?" The slave offered the four dirhams. When the buzrug asked him what duas he wished for, the slave said:

1) "That I be freed. 2) That Allah Ta'ala grants my master the taufeeq of taubah. 3) That I obtain another four dirhams. 4) That Allah Ta'ala bestows His mercy to me, to you and this entire audience."

The durwaish supplicated accordingly. When the slave returned, his master was very annoyed and demanded an explanation. After the slave explained what had happened, the master emancipated the slave and presented four hundred dirhams to him while he, himself sincerely repented. That night in a dream a Voice said to the master:

"We have bestowed Our mercy on you, on the slave, on Mansoor Ammaar and on the entire audience (of that gathering)."

2. Hadhrat Mansoor Ammaar (rahmatullah alayh) said:

Allah has created the hearts of the Aarifeen for His Thikr, and the hearts of the seekers of the world for greed.

The best man is he whose profession is ibaadat, whose yearning is for durwaishi (the state of poverty of the Auliya), whose desire is for seclusion, whose hope is the Akhirah, whose Maut is constantly in front of him and who is always thinking of taubah.

The heart of man is of Noor. When the love of the world enters, it darkens and dispels the Noor.

One who associates with creation remains far from the Creator.

A man who is not patient when overtaken by worldly misfortunes will be involved in the misfortunes of the Akhirah.

A renouncer of the world is free from worry and one who maintains silence has no need to apologise.

He is a vile transgressor who perpetrates such a sin from which he can abstain.

3. After his death, Hadhrat Abul Hasan Sha'raani (rahmatullah alayh) saw him in a dream and enquired of his fate. Hadhrat Mansoor Ammaar (rahmatullah alayh) responded: "Allah forgave me and said: "Deliver your discourses of Our praise among the Malaa-ikah in the heavens in the same way as you had done among the people on earth."

HADHRAT AHMAD BIN AASIM ANTAAKI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Someone asked: "Do you yearn for Allah?" Hadhrat Antaaki replied: "No. man yearns for an absent being. Since Allah is constantly present, I do not yearn for Him."

2. He said: He who fears the nafs attains salvation. One who fears (Allah) is grateful (to Allah). Zuhd has four signs:

- a) Trust on Allah.
- b) Dissociation from creation.
- c) Cultivation of sincerity (ikhlaas).
- d) Bearing the calamities of Allah Ta'ala.

Man's hayaa (shame) and khauf (fear) are proportionate to his ma'rifat.

The beauty of the heart is in silence.

A wise man is one who is grateful for the bounties of Allah Ta'ala.

Tawaadhu' (humility) is the elimination of pride and anger.

The select servants of Allah are always in a contemplative mood.

3. Explaining the conception of Yaqeen, Hadhrat Ahmad Bin Aasim Antaaki said: "Yaqeen is a noor which Allah bestows to a bandah (His

servant). This noor enables the bandah's heart to view the Aakhirah and veils are lifted."

4. "The following five things purify the heart:

Companionship of the pious.

Tilaawat of the Qur'aan.

Tahajjud Salaat.

5. Hadhrat Antaaki (rahmatullah alayh) always emphasised the cultivation of the spirit of sacrifice to his mureed. One night 29 mureeds visited him. He spread the cloth and on account of lack of food he broke some bread into 29 pieces, placing one piece in front of each mureed. Then he removed the lamp. After some time when the lamp was returned, it was seen that all the pieces of bread were intact. No one had eaten. Having realised how little bread there was, every mureed left his share for the next one.

HADHRAT ABDULLAH BIN KHABEEQ (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Khabeeq was a resident of Kufaa. He said:

The heart is for the purpose of ibaadat.

One who fears, does not give expression to the desires of the nafs.

Acquire only what will benefit you in the adobe of the Hereafter.

A select bandah is one who flees from creation to the Creator.

Abstention from sin is the sign of khauf.

Of all attributes, ikhlaas is the most difficult.

HADHRAT JUNAID BAGHDAADI (rahmatullah alayh)

1. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) was the nephew and mureed of Hadhrat Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh). Someone asked Hadhrat Sirri Saqati: "Can a mureed's rank surpass the rank of his Shaikh?"

Hadhrat Saqati said: "Yes. Junaid's rank is higher than my rank."

2. Envious persons and mischief-makers criticised and reviled Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi. They made many false allegations about him to the Khalifah of the time. The Khalifah said that as long as an accusation against Junaid Baghdaadi cannot be proven with evidence it is not proper to punish him. Nevertheless, the Khalifah decided to put Junaid Baghdaadi to test. A very beautiful slave-girl was adorned and instructed to tempt him. She had to appear in front of him, lift her veil and converse alluringly with him. She was instructed to say that she was an extremely wealthy woman. If he satisfied her desire once, she would give him all her wealth, reform herself and become engrossed in ibaadat.

The slave-girl went to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi and set in motion

her performance as instructed by the Khalifah. However, he immediately lowered his gaze and bent his head. After a few moments of meditation he lifted his head. While the woman was engaged in her devices of allurements, he sighed and blew in her direction. She promptly dropped down dead.

The observer sent to keep an eye on the woman and Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi reported this episode to the Khalifah. Since the Khalifah was in love with this girl, he was overcome with grief. He commented: "I did to him what I should not have done. I have now to see what I did not want to see." The Khalifah visited Hadhrat Junaid and said: "How did your heart tolerate the separation of such a beloved one from the world?"

Hadhrat Junaid said: "You are the Ameerul Mu'mineen who should have affection for the Mu'mineen. How could you tolerate the ruin of my forty years of riyazat and ibadat?"

3. After he commenced to give public lecture, he said: "I am not giving these discourses out of my freewill. Thirty Abdaal have compelled me to do so."

4. A Sufi is one who acts devotedly according to the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

5. People sin and I suffer because I consider them to be parts of my body. The Mu'mineen are like a single body.

6. For thirty years it was the practice of Hadhrat Junaid to repeat his Salaat if any stray thought entered his mind.

7. Hadhrat Junaid said to his mureeds: "If besides Fardh Salaat, it was better to perform Nafl Salaat than to give you naseehat, I would never sit among you to admonish you."

8. He perpetually fasted. When a guest came, he would break his fast (Nafl fast). He said: "Pleasing the guest is not less than Nafl fasting."

9. A fire-worshipper donning the garments of Muslims and pretending to be a Muslim sat in the Musjid to listen to Hadhrat Junaid's discourse. Later he went to Hadhrat Junaid and said: "Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Beware of the spiritual vision (firaasat) of the Mu'min, for verily, he looks with the noor of Allah."

The fire-worshipper wanted to test this saying of Rasulullah (ﷺ) . When he asked for an explanation of the Hadith, Hadhrat Junaid said: "It means that you should become a Muslim." Realising that his identity has been miraculously revealed to Hadhrat Junaid, the fire-worshipper sincerely and eagerly embraced Islam.

10. Hadhrat Junaid's eyes once pained severely. A non-Muslim physician advised him to abstain from applying water into his eyes. Hadhrat Junaid said: "I shall most certainly make wudhu." During the night he made wudhu and performed Ishaa Salaat. In the morning there was no pain in his eyes. A Voice said: "Junaid, for the sake of My ibaadat you ignored your eyes. I have therefore eliminated your pain."

When the physician visited Hadhrat Junaid and learnt of his overnight cure, he asked: "What remedy did you adopt to cure you in a single

night?" Hadhrat Junaid said that he was cured by wudhu. The physician commented: "This is the remedy of the Creator, not of the creation." He promptly and sincerely accepted Islam.

11. A buzrug who sat out to visit Hadhrat Junaid, saw shaitaan fleeing in the road. When he (the buzrug) arrived at Hadhrat Junaid's home, he saw the latter in a furious state. The buzrug said: "When a man become angry, shaitaan dominates him. Don't become so angry."

Then the buzrug narrated the episode of shaitaan fleeing. Hadhrat Junaid said: "When I display anger, shaitaan flees because my anger is for Allah's sake while the anger of others is for the sake of the nafs."

12. A man complained: "There are no longer Deeni brothers in this age." Hadhrat Junaid said: "If Deeni brothers are only those who alleviate your difficulties, then indeed they are non-existent. If you mean the non-existence of original Deeni brothers (i.e. true Mu'mineen), then you are a liar. Deeni brothers are such Muslims whose difficulties you should alleviate and aid them in their difficulties. There is no dearth of such Deeni brothers."

13. Someone asked: "When is the heart happy?" Hadhrat Junaid said: "When Allah Ta'ala is in the heart."

14. One night Hadhrat Junaid was unable to concentrate in his ibaadat. His heart was in turmoil. He came out of his house and saw a man covered in a shawl sitting in his doorway waiting for him. Hadhrat Junaid said: "Now I understand the cause of my lack of concentration. It was your waiting here." The man said: "What is the

medicine of the nafs?" Hadhrat Junaid said: "To oppose it."

Addressing himself, the man said: "O nafs! I have said this to you a thousand times. Today you have heard it from this illustrious buzrug." He then left. Hadhrat Junaid engrossed himself in ibaadat. The turmoil had disappeared.

15. Once when a healthy man appeared and asked for some assistance, Hadhrat Junaid thought: "He is able to work. Begging is improper for him."

During the night, Hadhrat Junaid dreamt that a covered tray was presented to him. A Voice instructed him to eat. When he opened the tray he saw the dead body of the healthy beggar in it. Hadhrat Junaid retorted: "I am not the devourer of dead bodies." The Voice said: "Why then did you devour him during the day?"

His eyes opened with a shock. He took wudhu, performed two raka'ts and repented for the thought he had entertained. He set out in search of the man. After spending much time searching, he met him on the banks of the river Dajla. On seeing Hadhrat Junaid, the man said: "Junaid, have you repented for yesterday's fault?" When Hadhrat Junaid affirmed his taubah, the man recited the following aayat:

Translation:

"He accepts the taubah of His servants."

He added: "Now, go! Do not ever indulge in gheebat."

Explanation: Even a baseless suspicion is considered as gheebat in so far as the Auliya are concerned. In terms of the Shariah, although a

baseless suspicion is sinful, it is not gheebat. An ill statement verbally uttered in a man's absence is gheebat, even if true.

16. A mureed of Hadhrat Junaid was deceived by shaitaan. The mureed thinking himself to have attained perfection, no longer discerned the need to remain in the company of his Shaikh. He went into seclusion. Frequently he experienced the angels taking him on a camel for a visit to Jannat. Feeling highly pleased with himself, the mureed made public his experiences.

One day Hadhrat Junaid went to him and said: "When tonight you visit Jannat, recite ." The mureed did so when he experienced his tour of Jannat. As he recited the shayaateen who were masquerading as angels fled. He now saw that he was sitting on an ass and the bones of dead people in front of him. His eyes opened to the reality of his condition. He repented and realised the imperative need for him to remain in the company of his Shaikh.

17. One of Hadhrat Junaid's mureeds in Basrah had gone into seclusion. While in seclusion he thought of committing a sin. When he looked in the mirror he saw his face had become black. He was filled with remorse and grief. After three days the blackness disappeared. Then arrived Hadhrat Junaid's letter in which was written: "Step into the Divine Court with care and respect. For the past three days I was acting as a washerman washing away the blackness of your face."

18. Hadhrat Junaid together with eight of his select mureeds participated in Jihaad against the kuffaar of Room. A kaafir martyred the eight mureeds. Hadhrat Junaid saw nine [???] suspended in the

air. The eight souls of the mureeds entered their respective [???]. Seeing the ninth one empty, Hadhrat Junaid concluded that it was destined for him as he too would be martyred. He therefore resumed to fight. The same kaafir who had martyred the eight mureeds appeared and said:

"Make me a Muslim. You return to Baghdad and continue with your duty of guiding people."

The kaafir embraced Islam and fought valiantly, killing eight kuffaar. Finally he was martyred. His rooh entered the ninth [???]. As it entered, all nine [???] disappeared. The ninth one was destined for the new Muslim.

19. Hadhrat Junaid said:

Follow the Qur'aan and Sunnah. Never follow a man who does not follow the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

Abandon the world, the people of the world, shaitaan and the desires of the nafs.

The evil thoughts (waswasah) of the nafs are worse than the waswasah of shaitaan. Shaitaani waswasah can be neutralised by reciting La houla . . . , but it requires struggle to overcome the waswasah of the nafs.

He who follows Nafs-e-Ammaarah is destroyed. (Nafs-e-Ammaarah is the evil and rebellious nafs which commands only transgression.)

A human being becomes a human being by virtue of character, not by appearance.

The hearts of Allah's friends (the Auliya) are the receptacles of divine mysteries.

Obedience to the nafs is the foundation of corruption.

One who considers his nafs to be evil is a good servant of Allah.

By renouncing the world and adopting seclusion Imaan remains safe, the body healthy and the heart happy.

He who does not complain and patiently bears hardships is noble.

Blindness is better for the eye which does not derive lesson from the creation of Allah. Dumbness is better for the tongue which does not make the Thikr of Allah. Deafness is better for the ear which does not listen to the truth. Death is better for the body which does not worship Allah.

The world derives adornment from the Sufis like the heavens derives adornment from the stars.

One who guards his heart, guards the Deen.

Tasawwuf means to follow the Qur'aan and Hadith and to become engrossed in ibaadat.

The worst evil of a Sufi is bukhl (stinginess).

Ikhlāas demands that you do not deem your good deeds worthy of acceptance.

20. During the final moments of his life while on his death-bed he requested for wudhu. He was assisted to make wudhu. When the people forgot to make khilaal of his fingers, he reprimanded them. Khilaal was then made. He went into Sajdah and wept profusely, they asked: "Why do you weep so much inspite of having worshipped so much?" Hadhrat Junaid said: "I never was so much in need as the present moment." He then began tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef and said: "At this time there is no greater comforter for me than the

Qur'aan. I am seeing the ibaadat of my entire life suspended in the air. A strong wind is swaying it. I do not know if this wind is a separator or an uniter (i.e. separating man from Allah or uniting him with Allah). On the other side I am observing Malakul Maut, the Siraat and the Just Judge. I do not know which way I will be commanded to go."

He recited 70 aayaat of Surah Baqarah and then lapsed into the state of Sakaraat (death throes). When people persisted that he recite 'Allah, Allah', he responded: "I have not forgotten Him." He commenced thikr and counting on his fingers the number of times. When he reached the Kalimah finger (forefinger) of his right hand, he raised it and recited Bismillahir . . . He closed his eyes for the last time.

21. While giving Hadhrat Junaid's body ghusl, an attempt was made to open his eyelids for the application of water. A Voice said: "His eyes closed in Our happiness. It will open only after having attained the bounty of The Vision (of Allah)."

Then an attempt was made to open the closed fingers of his hand. The Voice said: "The hand which closed with Our Thikr will not open without Our command."

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