

TOWARD THE DIVINE PRESENCE
(BOOK THREE)

Talks of
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DEDICATION

To you who have come, knocking at many doors to see if truth may perchance be concealed behind them, to the wide-open door of Islam, looking beyond the stereotypes into its infinite depth and breadth, this book is dedicated with love, in the hope that it may provide you with a key which will unlock every closed door on your journey toward the Divine Presence.

INTRODUCTION

(In this talk Sheikh Nazim addresses a gathering of English men and women who are interested in spiritual matters.)

You can't remember it, but it is a reality that we were in the Heavens and then we came here for a while, for a very short while. One hundred years ago none of our group was present, and after one hundred years none of us will be on earth; perhaps only that little one, a child of three - going to be 105. But I am seeing that there is no more time for mankind on this planet.

We haven't any authority to speak on behalf of our own opinions but according to holy books we may speak. Not from ourselves, but all holy books speak of a last day for this planet, and science also can say that every moving thing must one day come to a stop - every moving thing, and we are moving. Even if we do not look at our holy books, science says that there must come some time when this our planet is going little by little to be tired of turning and moving, and that there must be something to end it.

But we are believers in the holy books that the Lord of the worlds has sent us and in what they say. From beginning up to end, so many prophets, 124,000 prophets at various times and in various countries, have come. They never met with each other in an assembly to make an agreement that when we come to people we must say this or that, but they came over thousands and thousands of years. In every country you can find prophets, and they came to proclaim the same principles of belief, so that we can't say that they are saying something with no reality. It must be something true because all of them have said that a day will come to this planet when life is going to stop, when everything is going to stop, and then the Last Day will come.

They have said this and we believe it. There is nothing to object to in it because we haven't any proof for objecting, for rejecting what they are

saying; perhaps it may come, we can say, but we can't say that it is impossible. But in our time it is a new fashion for people to be atheists, rejecting every belief. But they are wrong, totally wrong people.

There was a famous Muslim philosopher who is well-known in Western countries also, Ibn Sina, Avicenna. He was a philosopher, trying to put spiritual knowledge side by side with intellectual knowledge - to do it in such a way that people could benefit, not quickly rejecting everything; in our time they are calling it "positive knowledge." It is something that you can observe or you can test, and then scientists build knowledge on that base, observing and then testing all the knowledge that scientists or scholars or learned people are so proud of in our time.

Once a scholar, a big scholar, so proud of his knowledge, was sitting like this on a chair and saying to people, "O people, you can ask me anything, as you like; I am ready to answer." Then someone, like this young boy, said, "O my master, I have one question. How many hairs do you have in your beard?"

Who knows how many? You know how many hairs you have here, how many teeth you have? He did not know. So many people whom I am asking don't know even how many teeth they have.

How can a person know everything if he is ignorant about himself about herself? So many people still do not know what is inside themselves. Where are your lungs, your liver, where are your kidneys? So many people don't know. That is easy, simple; but that boy asked how many hairs were in his beard, and he was astonished, not knowing what is the answer. And then another one asked, "In an ant, where are the intestines - in the first or the second half of its body?" And he had never seen in books where such knowledge was to be found.

Yes. One cannot know everything. In our time people are proud of their knowledge and they are trying to produce thousands and thousands of

books, but I don't think that anyone may be able to keep all knowledge in his head; never - it is impossible.

And we have, also, a kind of knowledge coming through traditions. You can't reject it. Although we have never seen such things, we are accepting that they could happen. And historical events, also; thousands, millions of events, have passed away, and those have come to our knowledge through traditional sources. How can you reject them? Perhaps so many astonishing events may have taken place which do not happen in our days - so many miracles, coming to us through traditions. But even if they do not happen in our days, why are we rejecting them?

And that philosopher, Avicenna, was saying, "O people, if there comes to your ears something that you have never heard of before, even if it is not an accustomed thing to you, even if it is such an unexpected or extraordinary happening, don't be in a rush to reject it. Even if you are not going to accept it easily, you must not be in a hurry to reject it because, if you say that to accept something without asking for evidence is a kind of foolishness, to reject it without evidence is also foolishness." And we are asking, "With what evidence can people reject the possibility that there may be a last day for this world?" No evidence; rather, science can say that it is going to be finished one day, even the sun. Therefore, we are believers.

I saw just now when I was coming a big sign on a building, writing on it "SAFEWAY." It affected my heart, and I am asking if people now are on the Safe Way or not. What that building was I don't know. A supermarket? I was thinking that it must be a church, a chapel, a synagogue or such a thing, writing "SAFEWAY" on it. A supermarket? But the meaning is very good.

Everyone must choose the Safe Way for his life, and the Safe Way is to believe - to believe in something, because beliefs never harm people but without beliefs people are going to be harmed.

Once some seven or eight young people came to me. Since we are religious people, they always like to discuss about God; they are trained to be always in opposition to religious people, the new fashion now in our countries, also. Therefore they came to me and asked, "O sheikh, Sheikh Nazim, do you believe in Paradise and Hell and so on?"

"Yes, I said. "I believe."

"You have proof?"

"Yes, I have proof. But you will not accept my proof, because we have traditional proofs from the beginning up to the end. If you accept traditions as knowledge, we believe in that. And if you reject them, then you must reject the whole history of mankind which has come through traditions."

Then they said, "But we are in doubt."

"You may be in doubt but you can't reject it. And I am asking you to take a Safe Way for your life. Now, I will put a glass of milk here to drink and you sit here. Then when I put it here, someone comes running and says to me, 'O sheikh, don't put this milk there for those people to drink because the one who brought it to you took a snake out of it.' Then would you drink from this milk?" I asked them.

They said, "No."

"Why wouldn't you drink it? It is milk, and you didn't see that snake taken out of it. Why don't you drink? Why do you believe that person? Perhaps, after you, he will come to drink all of it, playing a trick on you. Why do you believe it?"

"Perhaps it may be true. Therefore the safe way is not to drink."

If you are accepting this, what is the Safe Way? So many sources, traditional sources, speak about the Last Day, about the Resurrection, about the Judgment Day, about Paradise, about Hell. What is the evidence for

rejecting that? And so many people are accepting it and believing. What is the matter with you to reject it?

If it is correct, then it doesn't matter; we will not lose anything. Are our believers any different in their lives from unbelievers? Yes, we can find some differences. For although our physical life is the same as theirs, in our inner life we are happy while they are unhappy, because we believe in Eternal Life.

Day by day I am more happy on behalf of myself. Now one year has passed since we last met here, and a day is coming, quickly, when the whole of life will finish, will end. But I am not displeased or sorry that my life is each day approaching nearer to its end because I believe that that end is going to be a new beginning and I am happy. I am not sorry to see my beard getting whiter each day; no, I am happy. But those people, they are not happy.

Unbelievers, for what are they going to be happy? If it is a young person, tomorrow he is going to lose something of his youth, to be down, a little bit, a little bit, a little bit more down - not going up; coming down. And we are giving ourselves the most difficult punishment: to make ourselves hopeless of Eternal Life.

If we believe, we are happy; if not believing, we are putting that punishment on ourselves. If we believe in the Last Day, does that do some harm to our physical bodies? No; instead happiness and hope give more strength to believers. They are able to taste well from everything, from every kind of favor in this world. A believer can guard his eyes through his beliefs; his tongue, his ears, his stomach, his heart, every part of his body is going to be excellent, never getting a complaint. And so many saints in Christianity and in Islam who have reached real faith, their physical bodies served them throughout their lives, and after death so many of them can be found as they were buried.

Once I was in Daniascus. There the government was opening a motorway in a place where a saint was buried, and they had to take away that grave. He was a grand-wali, a grandsheikh, a great saint¹. After five hundred years his body was going to be taken out of the ground, and people gathered to look at him when the grave was opened.

I was there because he was a sheikh of tariqat; our Grandsheikh, Sheikh 'Abdullah, had been there seven years in seclusion, and I was invited to be there while the ceremony was going on. When they opened the grave, a very beautiful scent came from it. And ten days later, I was again passing by that place where his grave had been. Little boys were going down and taking out earth, bringing it to me so I could smell it. A sweet scent like roses was there.

They opened the grave, and his body was there in its shroud; and I saw that his long beard, on his chest, had more black hair than mine, five hundred years after he had been put there. And so many saints, or all saints, are alive in the same condition, here and There.

It is an unbelievable thing, but you can look, you can see it. And therefore believers are on the Safe Way, while unbelievers are punishing themselves. And we are saying, "O our friend, you are free to believe or not to believe, but you are punishing yourself."

We are saying, "Believe in your Lord. Then you can be a good person because one who believes in his Lord feels responsibility for himself." But that new generation which has come, it does not care about any responsibility; you know, in your country. More freedom, more freedom, more freedom means that they do not want responsibility in front of anyone, here or Hereafter; leave aside the Hereafter, they mean to say that we don't want to have any responsibility here because responsibility takes us away

¹ Muslim saints are known as awliya (singular, wali), the "friends" of God.

from freedom. When we are free for everything, it means that we do not have any responsibility.

No-responsibility creatures are in the jungle, not living in a city - no. Whoever lives among people must carry responsibility here. But to feel responsibility only here, now, is not enough to make a person a good one, because sometimes people do evil hiddenly, justice never reaching them. But the one who believes that his Lord is looking at him wherever he goes, that He is with him, feels more responsibility.

Anyone who believes in his Lord must believe in responsibility, and whoever believes in responsibility must try to carry it in a good way, not leaving it. Therefore all the prophets came and informed people that there is a Lord and there is a Judgment Day; these two pillars of belief have never changed from the beginning up to the end, and that is in our holy books, coming to us traditionally. Therefore I said that I don't think that after perhaps one hundred years there may even be anyone on earth, even of those who are born ten years, twenty years, fifty years from this time, or that there will be one hundred years more of the period of this life, the Last Day is so near; as Jesus Christ also said, "The Last Day and I are as close to each other as these two fingers, the time was so near when I came." - and two thousand years and more have passed since Jesus Christ. And the Last Prophet, Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, peace be upon them all, said, "I have come at that time in the day of the life of mankind on earth that, if you say it began with the dawn of Adam, when he came on earth, and went on up to eveningtime, I have been sent at 'Asr time²."

Therefore the day of mankind which is appointed for our meeting in this life is approaching its end, and we are observing every day so many signs, about which we have been informed through holy books or through traditions, that it is approaching. And that is Armageddon, about which it is written also in

² 'Asr is the third of the five daily prayers, observed in the latter part of the afternoon

the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Holy Qur'an that it should be soon, and so many people will go away, dying. And after that there should come, also, a period, a short period, when this world is going to be renewed or rebuilt.

In our time people are mostly interested in their physical lives, not interested in their spiritual lives; people are running, going, coming, for only their physical bodies' pleasures or their minds' pleasures. Very, very, very, very, very few people may be interested in the spiritual life and spiritual pleasures. But physical pleasures, from the first to the second, are always going to be less, while if anyone tastes spiritual pleasures, they are going to increase each day. And I am feeling that this year there is more pleasure spiritually among our attenders; I am feeling that in myself, also. Spiritual pleasures are increasing and physical pleasures are becoming less.

And after this Armageddon, people will come to fill this world more than it is full now. People or governments are worrying about population, thinking of enforcing birth control because there are too many people on this planet; they are too afraid, our scholars and governments, saying, "You must have birth control." They imagine that people are coming to this life by their orders, and by their orders are going away.

That is a new kind of foolishness, to make a "control" on birth. No one can control it except the Creator, the Lord of the worlds. Then, if it is now five billion, at that time, after Armageddon, so many people will go away, dying, and this world is going to be empty, as it was one thousand years ago. How many people were living at that time, one thousand years ago? Now, after Armageddon, it is going to be such an empty world. And then the Lord will send so many of His servants; people will have so many children that it is going to be twice as many as this, and everyone is going to be happy.

Those people, all of them, will work for their spiritual lives. They will give only a little time for their physical bodies, and it is going to be enough for them.

Enough pleasure, also. If they taste only one piece of food, it will give them as much pleasure as eating a whole lamb; if drinking a little potful, it may give them more pleasure than drinking big jugs. Everything at that time is going to be in a spiritual way, through spiritual powers. If you want to go from here to Scotland, it will be possible to go in a moment from here to Scotland, or farther away.

It is possible. You must not say, "No, it is impossible"; you haven't any evidence to reject it. One hundred years ago no one accepted or believed that a person could go from England to America in three hours; they would have said, "How can it be?" But it is going to be now. And that spiritual power is more than those concordances' flights' power; at that time, people are going to be persons of divine attributes. Now most people have technical characteristics, making them more tied to the earth; but in that time, when we believe that Jesus Christ will come³, also, these ties will be cut from our feet, making us rise to the Heavens.

And, as our holy books are informing and proclaiming, those days are approaching now, quickly, and I myself hope to reach and to see that time, that period. What about all of you? All of you we hope will insha-Allah reach those days, those happy days. Now people are living through unhappy days, but those are going to be happy days for everyone who may reach that time. And thank you for listening, for your attention.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. We are asking from our Lord endless Mercy Oceans for the occasion of Holy Ramadan. This holy month is for the whole universe, for all the Children of Adam.

³ Referring to the return of Jesus, peace be upon him, to this world during the last days, according to Islamic belief

Allah Almighty is ar-Rahman. He has endless Mercy Oceans. He has ninety-nine Beautiful Names, and each Holy Name has a Mercy Ocean and each Mercy Ocean is endless. Ar-Rahman is one of the ninety-nine Beautiful Names, and its Mercy Oceans in the universe are making everything to appear from endless Power Oceans. Everyone, every creature, takes its share from those Mercy Oceans that belong to the Holy Name of ar-Rahman. Everything in existence must take a share from that Mercy Ocean; believers and unbelievers, they take their shares from that Holy Name. And during the whole month, the holy month of Ramadan, those Mercy Oceans are raining on all the people living on this earth. And we are asking through those Mercy Oceans forgiveness and endless favors from Allah Almighty.

Every prophet brought a message from the Lord, Allah Almighty, and the Last Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h.⁴, - brought the last Message and it is the perfect one. He brought that Message during twenty-three years. The whole Qur'an, the Holy Qur'an, the Glorious Qur'an, guides people to the unity of Allah Almighty. All the prophets came just to proclaim that there is no God but Almighty Allah and that absolute existence is for Allah Almighty only.

Now, we are here, we are in existence. One hundred years ago none of these people was in existence, and perhaps one hundred years from now none of us will be in existence. Therefore our existence in this world has been given to ourselves by Someone, and then it is going to be taken from us, so that no one can claim that we are something having existence, absolute existence. That is only for One, whose existence must be. That One causes everything to be in existence, and we have been called into existence to proclaim the unity of Allah Almighty..

⁴ "Peace be upon him," the traditional Islamic invocation of God's blessings upon Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets

Allah Almighty gave us, the Children of Adam, ego, nafs, so that we have a special station, a special place, among all creatures. More than any other creature we have been honored. If we hadn't been given egos, we would be like angels⁵, but Allah Almighty made the Children of Adam to be deputies for Him on the earth and in the universe. All of us, we are candidates to be deputies, khalifas, of Allah Almighty here and Hereafter.

Then, everyone has that opportunity or chance to be a real deputy of Allah Almighty, and every prophet came just to teach and to guide and to show people how they may be able to reach that position of being real deputies. As many as there are Children of Adam in existence, in the Divine Presence we have thrones, and everyone's name is written on one of them; if we can do our best during this life, we have a way to reach that throne and to sit on it in the Divine Presence. We must have some method, some teaching, so that we may be able to reach that throne, that place, and sit on it.

We have been invited by Allah Almighty to come and sit on that seat in His Divine Presence. It is the top point of honor that can be given by Allah Almighty to His creatures, and it is for us. We are very fortunate people, among all creatures; even the angels, they were asking for that honor to be for themselves, but Allah Almighty just appointed that honor for the Children of Adam. They may be black ones, may be white ones, may be yellow ones, may be red ones; no worry. Pakistanis, also, they are candidates for that; African people, also, not only European people, no. Asian people, also - everyone whose name is written among the Children of Adam, they are candidates, they have seats in the Divine Presence.

Allah Almighty does not look at our shapes, our forms. He looks at our hearts. And He put there a very precious thing, in our hearts, and it has been protected by divine protection; no one may be able to take that precious

⁵ That is, always obedient and submitting to God, since angels do not possess freewill

thing from our hearts. Satan is running after it, but even if there were millions of Satans and their powers all came together, it would be impossible to take away that precious point from the hearts of the Children of Adam, whether they are English or French or Russian or unbelievers; Allah Almighty gave that honor to everyone, not only to Muslims or to believers, but in general all people have that honor from Allah Almighty. And it is in a safe place, and the Guardian of that point in the hearts of the Sons of Adam is Almighty Allah. No one can touch that; it stays there. Divine lights burn anyone who may put his hand there; it is impossible. And Allah Almighty is calling us to His Divine Presence, to take our seats, inviting us to His divine feast in His Divine Presence.

Now we are living in this life and we do not know about ourselves yet. You have been created for the love of Allah Almighty; your heart has been put inside you to be the place at which Allah Almighty looks, and He put from His love into the hearts of the Children of Adam and your honor comes from that. He loved and He created, and His divine love is in every heart of the Children of Adam.

We do not know about ourselves. We know only who we are, as, "I am Muhammad Knight, a Scottish person, a teacher" - name, surname, father's name, mother's name, motherland, and nothing else. And your knowing about yourself is the entrance of divine knowledge about your Lord; when you know about yourself, that is an opening to the Lord's knowledge. .

People now are asking a question, but it is not a correct one: they are beginning to ask about the Creator, about Allah Almighty, who He is, how He is, while leaving themselves. You must ask about yourself, "Who am I? What is my position in the universe? What is the meaning of being from mankind? Who are they?" You must begin from yourself and then you may ask who is the Creator, how He is, who He is. We are asking questions in the opposite

way, and anyone who leaves himself and asks about the Creator, he is never going to reach an understanding of the Lord, Allah Almighty.

We must understand and we must know about ourselves first. And all knowledge and perfect information about ourselves was brought by the Last Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, peace be upon him and upon them, in the Holy Qur'an. And we are in need of an opening; without an opening you can't enter it. Therefore the Holy Qur'an has an opening; the first surah is the Surah of Opening⁶. That surah gives us details about everything, about ourselves and about the Lord, Allah Almighty, and the relationship between ourselves and our Lord. And we must return to that Opening.

It is impossible for a servant to reach that point without understanding about his ego. He must understand about his ego because ego becomes a hindrance, preventing you from reaching your reality in existence. Always that ego comes and covers it; always ego prevents a person and does not let him reach real knowledge about himself. Therefore we have been ordered to take away that huge veil and hindrance. If you can't take it away, you can't reach the reality of the real knowledge about yourself that makes a way for you to reach the Divine Presence and divine knowledge.

The first man and first prophet, Adam, p.b.u.h., was with his Lord, Allah Almighty; he was in Paradise, he was with his Lord, seeing and hearing. But when his ego made a trap for him, then a huge barrier, a huge veil, came between his Lord and himself, making him come down. And that huge veil comes among his children; as long as they live on earth, that veil is between themselves and their Lord. And he was told that if you can take it away, the barrier of your ego, quickly you may be with your Lord, as before.

Our Lord is with us but we do not feel that; we think that the Lord is on His Throne, too far away, or that our Lord will be with us on the Last Day. No

⁶ The first surah, al-Fatehah, "the Opening," consists of seven short verses which are always recited in the Islamic prayers (salat, namaz)

one thinks or feels that our Lord is with ourselves and that without our Lord we can't be in existence for even a moment or a second, or less than a second; you can't be in existence if our Lord is not with you. All things stand in existence by their Lord; if He is not there, nothing will be in existence. But we are heedless. We do not consider or think that Allah Almighty is with ourselves; we make Him far away.

That is ego, coming and making a huge veil. You can't observe it, you can't think about it. Therefore, from the beginning, from the time of Adam, we have been ordered to take away that veil and to be with our Lord, Allah Almighty. We have been ordered to cut away that veil, and all worshipping and all shari'ahs⁷ are for taking away our ego and its veils.

The most effective action for taking away that veil is fasting. Therefore Allah Almighty ordered every nation, through every prophet, to fast; and we are fasting for that purpose: to take away our ego's veil and to be with our Lord.

When Allah Almighty spoke to Moses, p.b.u.h., on Sinai, between Moses and his Lord there were 70,000 veils. And Allah Almighty ordered the nation of Muhammad, p.b.u.h., to fast, and He says that when the time of breaking fast⁸ comes, I am leaving only one veil between Myself and My fasting servant. If we could cut that veil, we would be with our Lord, Allah Almighty; we would be in Unity Oceans, and you can't come back from that Ocean. Therefore Allah Almighty is keeping that one veil between you and Himself until we finish our period in this life. Otherwise anyone who reaches the time of breaking fast would be taken away and disappear; he would be with his Lord at break-fast in the Divine Presence.

⁷ The divinely-revealed law coming through such prophets as Adam, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them all

⁸ In Islamic fasting, whether the obligatory fasting of Ramadan or voluntary fasting at any other time, the period of fasting is from dawn to sunset. The fast must be broken at sunset food or drink (iftar), followed by the sunset (Maghrib) prayer. Fasting is resumed again the following morning just before dawn, after a pre-dawn meal (suhur)

We are thanking our Lord that He gave us such a powerful means for coming closer to His Divine Presence, and we hope that one day, when our lives are ended, we will be in His Divine Presence and that He will grant us to be in His Divine Presence forever. And therefore we must try to take away that veil between ourselves and our Lord, Allah Almighty.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. O our Lord, we are nothing, or trying to be nothing. You are in existence, and for the sake of Your Holy Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., we are in existence. All glory and praise and thanks to You, o our Lord. Grant us those things that we are in need of. We are intending to be obedient servants and we are asking Your divine help.

We are sitting here to learn how we can be obedient servants. That is important for our lives because we have been invited to the Divine Presence. The Last Day will come and everyone must die, and then Allah Almighty will bring them to life in His Divine Presence. Everyone must believe that there is a Gathering Day and that, as he came to this life and knew nothing, the one who sent him to this life will also bring him to the next life in His Divine Presence.

We are intending to be obedient servants to our Lord, Allah Almighty. The way that reaches that station of being obedient servants to our Lord passes through believing in His beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., and our faith also lies in believing in beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h. And for everyone, belief in beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., must be through knowing him and recognizing him and loving him.

Allah Almighty sent every prophet among his own nation, and He made each one to be the most noble person among his nation. Every prophet was a perfect one in his physical body and a perfect one in his mind; they were

perfect-looking, also, because Allah Almighty made them in perfection outwardly and inwardly, since those people who are calling to Allah Almighty must be in perfection. It is not divine wisdom to send to people a person in whom, if they look at him, they see anything that makes them dislike him. Therefore they were perfect outwardly and in their souls; their appearance and their physical bodies were perfect, and their characteristics were also perfect..

And the Last Prophet, also, our Prophet, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., was in perfection outwardly; if anyone looked at him, he was carried away. And Allah Almighty also gave him such characteristics that Muhammad, p.b.u.h., was unique among all prophets, among all creatures. No one can reach our Prophet's perfection in his physical body or in his characteristics.

Allah Almighty praises him for having the best characteristics. Allah gave to him from His attributes, and our Prophet is the most perfect one among prophets, among all people, with every perfection that a person may have. Therefore knowledge about the Holy Prophet, p.b.u.h., must be learned by everyone. As much as we can learn about beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., our hearts will run toward him with love.

Firstly, Allah Almighty gave him the most beautiful names. Muhammad, p.b.u.h., means "the Praised One," here and Hereafter; on earth and in the Heavens he has been praised. And then Allah Almighty gave him the best of every good characteristic. All prophets have the characteristic of being truthful; they never told lies. And our Prophet, up to time when prophethood came to him, was known as the truest one among his tribe, among his nation, and he was called "Muhammad al-Amin⁹", the was, throughout his life, the truest one.

⁹ Muhammad the Trustworthy," the title given to Muhammad, p.b.u.h., by his people long before his call to prophethood, due to his extraordinarily upright and truthful nature, which was well-known to all

He was the prophet before creation appeared; no creation had yet appeared when his name was written as prophet in the Divine Presence. La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger, was written on the Divine Throne; the first writing was "La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah." That writing, "La ilaha illa-Llan," is never found without "Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," p.b.u.h. No one knows at which time "La ilaha illa-Llah" was written; in pre-eternity it was written, although no one can know when, and after it was written "Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," p.b.u.h.

He was the first among creatures, he was the first among prophets, and his nation, also, was created first; but Allah Almighty sent him after all the other prophets, as when there is an invitation and the king is invited to that feast. The king does not come first but comes last, yes? Therefore the Seal of the Prophets was the first among creation but he was the last of the prophets to come to this world.

And when he came, for forty years he never said or proclaimed anything about his prophethood. Then, when he reached forty years, Allah Almighty sent the Angel Gabriel and ordered Muhammad, p.b.u.h., to proclaim that he is a prophet, the Last Prophet, the prophet for everyone on earth, here and Hereafter. And people around him were surprised. They said, "How can he say this? He never told a lie throughout his life but now he is saying something that we can't accept. We worship idols; so many idols we pray to, and now he is saying that all your idols are batil, false, that you must leave them and you must worship the Lord of the Heavens, the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the Children of Adam." They were so surprised, saying, "How is that one calling us to something that we have never even heard about, while he has never told a lie? What shall we do?"

But he was truthful, the truest one who ever lived on earth, and invitation was correct, because he was inviting all people to the Divine Presence and

he was coming to bring people to his way; and whoever comes on his way is going to be beloved by his Lord, Almighty Allah. Therefore, he was calling to a way; the one who may be on it can be a saint, a wali, a beloved one to his Lord, Allah Almighty

And his Message is continuing up to today, his invitation is continuing throughout East and West. He is calling people to their Lord, to Allah Almighty. He is not calling people to worship himself or to be servants to him, but he is calling people and saying, "O people, I am a servant of your Lord. Your Lord is my Lord. All of you, you must come and must be obedient servants and worshippers of your Lord. He gave to me from His divine love, and I represent divine love. Nothing is more precious in the Divine Presence than divine love, and I am coming to give you what my Lord gave to me from His divine love. I am coming, o people, o my Lord's servants, and asking to make you sharers in that love; I am bringing love to humanity. My Lord gave it to me. For that reason I am 'beloved Muhammad'," he says, "and I have brought you divine love. Come and take. I am giving."

Anything better than this? Who can consider anything to be more precious or more valuable than this? And in the Divine Presence there are endless Love Oceans; that love makes you "high." Yes, that is also the meaning of making you high; "high" is also to live our life with love, in divine love.

Therefore the Last Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, just brought to the world divine love. We can't carry it by ourselves. The love of the Lord, Allah Almighty, comes to the Prophet's heart and then through the Prophet's heart it goes through awliyas' hearts, and awliyas' hearts are sources of divine love. Anyone who finds our Lord's awliya and goes to their hearts, takes his share of divine love.

You must know about the Last Prophet. We just gave a very short description of him, but it may be enough for anyone to know about beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h.; when you think about his name, it is enough for you to

know him and to love him, also. Allah Almighty loves him and gives to him, and he is calling us to his way.

And Allah Almighty gave him five hundred commands. Anyone may be able to practice all of them or some of them, and the divine wisdom in giving those five hundred commands is that for each one which we are practicing, we are taking more share from divine Love Oceans.

All of them are acts of worship or of charity. Worshipping is for your Lord and charity is for His servants and the creatures of your Lord, Allah Almighty, and both of them make Him pleased with you: every worship makes your Lord pleased with you, and every charity that you do for His creatures and for His servants also makes Him pleased with you. And if Allah Almighty is pleased with you, then He grants to you more love from His divine Love Oceans.

That is the message of the Last Prophet; that is the way of beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., showing us how to reach to that, so that we may have more share of Love Oceans, divine Love Oceans.

Then Allah Almighty, through His Prophet, also prohibits certain actions, the actions of devils. Evils are the actions of devils, and He prevents and prohibits His servants from those, saying, "Don't do this, don't do that." And as long as you are saying, "O our Lord, for Your sake I am leaving this bad action or this bad characteristic of my ego," then everything that you are leaving for the sake of the Lord, Allah Almighty, makes Him pleased with you, and you will come spiritually closer to Allah Almighty and He will give you more love, more share of divine Love Oceans.

Love carries you to the endless Beauty Oceans of the Lord, Almighty Allah, and to Perfection Oceans, the absolute perfection of Allah Almighty, carrying you to that Ocean, also.

Now, during this holy month we are practicing fasting. That fasting helps us to keep orders and to leave evils and devils. Therefore it is a lovely practice

to Allah Almighty because it makes servants to be closer to their Lord, and during this month it always rains on people, on His servants, from Love Oceans.

Try to take more share during this holy month from Love Oceans. Allah Almighty gives to his servants from His divine love. Why are you not asking? You must ask, ask and take, and you will be happy.

The one who is given from divine love, he does not die¹⁰. Animals die because animals do not carry that love. Once a sheikh died, but it was not like common peoples' dying. He died, and his murid, disciple, buried him. We put our dead bodies facing Makkah, and that murid was trying to turn his sheikh's face to qiblah¹¹ in his grave, uncovering his face. Then his sheikh spoke: "O my son, He has turned our face to Himself. Our face was not turned toward anyone else during this life; only at one Face it was looking, not at many faces - no. At His Face, only at His Divine Face," he said.

And the murid was too frightened. "O my master, are you alive? How am I burying you? I thought you had died!"

"No," his sheikh said. "Look! You are speaking with your breath but I am speaking without breathing; with my soul I am speaking. I am dead from your life but I have real life. The lovers of their Lord, they do not die. Leave me; cover my grave and go out, quickly. I am going."

That is the lovers' condition. They are in the paradise of love here, in their graves, and also in the Hereafter. If no love, there is no meaning for

¹⁰ That is, his body dies but does not decay, and his soul is alive in another life, hearing, seeing, feeling and knowing

¹¹ The direction of the Holy K'aba in Makkah, the sacred House of God which Muslims face during their worship as the focal point of this physical world, a material symbol of their Lord's presence. At death a Muslim is laid to rest in the grave with his or her face turned toward the qiblah.

Paradise. May Allah Almighty give you from His endless Love Oceans, and bless you and forgive us.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent, the Lord of Abraham, the Lord of Moses, the Lord of Jesus Christ, the Lord of beloved Muhammad, peace be upon him and upon them.

We are asking Allah Almighty's blessings during this holy month, and asking also that His blessings continue forever for ourselves and for every one of the Children of Adam, and that He keeps us from misguidance and misguided people, because man during this life may be guided or may be misguided. Those who are misguided, their ways are going to Hell here and Hereafter, and the ones who have been guided, their way is going to Paradise here and Hereafter. Therefore we are in need of praying to our Lord and asking Him for guidance in our lives; and, as His servants ask, He gives guidance.

That is an important thing for our lives, to ask for guidance from our Lord, Allah Almighty. People are between haqq and batil, truth and falsehood, and everyone must learn and must know what is truth and falsehood. We are in need to follow truth during our lives because it gives us honor and peace here and Hereafter, while falsehood grows from misguidance and makes troubles, giving sufferings to people here and Hereafter.

Our Grandsheikh, may Allah bless him, was saying, "When a person accepts truth, when he proclaims truth first by his tongue, then that truth must come to his heart." He proclaims it with his tongue and he believes it in his heart, confirming or acknowledging it. First we proclaim truth, and then it is going to be in our hearts.

What is going to happen when truth is in someone's heart? What is the sign that a person has truth and that he has accepted truth in his heart? There must be a sign.

Allah Almighty says in His Glorious Qur'an, "Wa qul, Ja'a-l-haag wa zahaqa-l-bātil"¹² - when truth comes, falsehood goes away; truth defeats falsehood. Therefore, when we proclaim truth with our tongues, it prevents our tongues from uttering any falsehood; then, more than that, when our hearts accept truth and truth is in our hearts, it also takes away every falsehood from our hearts.

The first thing, when truth comes into our hearts, is that it takes away every bad thought and bad intention and bad characteristic. In our books that have come through traditions from every prophet up to the Seal of the Prophets, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., it is stated that there are so many bad characteristics in our hearts, in number sixty false and bad characteristics within our hearts. When truth comes, it takes those away, defeating them.

The first and most dangerous falsehood is kufr, to deny the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah. When truth comes, a person must believe in the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah; he must say that there is a Creator who created all the worlds, who created the universe, who created the Heavens, who created Paradise and Hell. Truth makes him proclaim and believe that there is one Lord, creating, giving life, and taking life away. That is the first and most important thing when truth enters into our hearts: to proclaim the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah.

Then, we proclaim that the Lord, Almighty Allah, has eternal life from pre-eternity up to post-eternity, and we proclaim the truth that there is an eternal life for the Children of Adam; for believers and for unbelievers, also, because those who do not believe in eternal life are not going to die and finish, no. They also have eternal life, and truth in our hearts makes us believe in that

¹² And say, (O Muhammad), Truth has come and falsehood has perished." (XVII:81)

eternal life. No need to believe in this life because we are living in it; but, when we are believers, we believe in unseen things, and the way to our Lord passes through unseen territories. We believe in the life unseen. If you want to see, you must first believe in the Unseen; then you may see it, you may reach that point. Therefore we believe in unseen worlds and Heavens, and we believe in the eternal life.

That is the result of accepting truth, taking away, one after the other, the bad characteristics from our hearts. When truth comes, falsehood must go away. Every bad characteristic belongs to falsehood, and if real truth comes and enters into your heart, it must take that away. And one of the biggest falsehoods and worst characteristics of the Children of Adam is that they like this life. The love of dunya, the love of this life - that is the biggest sin, which is the source of evils.

As long as people love this dunya, this life, troubles will never go away; every day they will fall down more and more, sinking into sufferings. Therefore, if truth comes to your heart, it takes away the love of dunya and changes that love into the love of your Lord, the love of Allah Almighty. That is the sign that you love your Lord, Almighty Allah, defeating in your heart the love of this world, the love of this life, because if we give our love to a temporary thing and it goes, our love finishes. But that love is something given to us to put in a suitable place.

Once the Angel Gabriel came to Prophet Muhammad, p.b.u.h., and said to him, "O Muhammad, you may put your love with anyone whom you may select; as you like, you may put your love with that thing. But you must know that everything that you love in this world is going to leave you." If you put your love with your family, with your wife, with your children, with your business, with your car, with your castle, with your ranks - anything or anyone you may put your love with, you must know that it will go away and

leave you, and your love will go with it and finish, so that it is falsehood to put our love there because Allah Almighty gives us that love and it is divine.

You must be very careful where you put that precious thing, whether losing it or protecting it. If you give your love during your life to anyone - to your wife or your children or your castle or your business – then it is lost, finished, because when you leave this life, that love will not be with you. Those people or those things will stay here and you will go without love; your love will stay behind.

That is falsehood. But when truth comes to your heart, truth says to you, "Don't give your love except to the eternal existence of your Lord, Allah Almighty. Give Him your love because that love comes from Him; give it back to Him, also. When you are here, that love is with you; if you go, it goes with you. You are with your Lord here, and when you go from this life, He does not leave you. He is with you forever; in the eternal life, also, He is with you, and you are not going to lose your love. You will gain it because you have put it with the correct and suitable one."

Therefore, truth, when it comes to the heart of a person - he may be a Christian, he may be Jewish, he may be Buddhist, he may be Muslim; no difference - that love of the Lord with truth must be in that person's heart; otherwise he is a liar. A real Muslim, a real Christian, a real Jew, a real Buddhist, a real Zoroastrian, must have truth with himself. If falsehood is in his heart, he will run to this life's enjoyments and he will represent falsehood. The one who represents truth, his heart must be with his Lord; he must give his love only to his Lord, Almighty Allah.

Therefore we are asking for that truth. Don't cheat yourself and don't cheat others. Everyone must look into his heart, at who is there. His love is with whom - with very temporary things or with the Eternal Lord, Allah Almighty?

We must think about it, because our breaths are limited. Each day 24,000 breaths are finishing, and we have a limited number, millions or billions. Their number is written, and every moment, every second, we are taking and finishing them. Then, before our breaths finish, we must look after ourselves, at where we are putting our love. We still have an opportunity to change that love from temporary things to the eternal and permanent existence. That is important.

Every prophet just came to make it firm for everyone, so that they may give their love only to their Lord. "O people, your Lord gave you that love, and He is asking it back from you to Himself." That is important.

We are not playing; we have not come into this life to play with families, with wives, with children - no. There are some places in our bodies which belong to children, to wives, to animals, to farms, to flowers, but love is for Allah Almighty only. And the main sign comes: when truth enters into your heart, when that love goes to Allah, it takes falsehood away. And that is falsehood, to put your love with temporary things; that is falsehood. You must change it, you must give your love to the eternal existence of Allah Almighty, the Lord. We must try; we must try to do it.

Titles are not important - Muslim, Christian, Jewish, to be a sheikh, to be a priest, to be a rabbi, to put a big thing on your head; no.

Important is this: to whom you are giving that love. The one who gave you that love, you must give it to Him. No one else is suitable for that love; only your Lord, and He will ask on the Day of Resurrection: "What did you bring, O My servant? What did you bring to Me?"

Fasting; praying, giving charities, going on pilgrimage: all of them - for what? For the sake of that love; you are giving your love to your Lord. Present Him with fasting, with worshipping; every kind of worshipping makes you present your love to His Divine Presence. Yes; the real aim of every kind of

worshipping and charity is to say, "O my Lord, I am presenting to You my love through this worship. It is not suitable for You, our worshipping. We can only give You our love." And He is asking that love from His servants.

If everyone gathered and gave their love to their Lord, this life would be a paradise. But we are not giving our love to our Lord; we are only giving something, some nonsensical things, and we are living in hell. Our lives are full of sadness, of fear, of hopeless things, of troubles and sufferings. That is the reason, because falsehood is in our hearts; truth has not yet come and entered into your heart to defeat falsehood from your heart. Yes, everyone is carrying his responsibility.

May falsehood be taken away from your heart and truth come and enter into your heart, and may Allah Almighty make for you a private situation in a private world. You may be with people, you may walk with them in this life, but you will see some other ones. You will live in another London-city, not this London. There is another London, also; there is not only one London for the Lord, Almighty Allah. He is the Creator, and when He orders there to be in existence one billion Londons for His sincere servants, they are ready. Yes; that is the truth, and when truth comes, falsehood goes away.

The one who has truth in his heart may live in another London with other ones, with some people whose faces are like sunshine. Their roads, their streets are clean; no sound harms your senses; no one looks at another with wildness. Silver domes, golden towers. Yes, that is the barakah, the blessing of being with truth. "When truth comes, falsehood goes away¹³," Allah Almighty says.

Therefore we are asking forgiveness for everything, and we are asking divine help for taking away falsehood from our hearts and putting that truth into our hearts, truth going through our bodies, through our minds and around ourselves. May Allah give it to you. When I say something, I have

¹³ VII:81

been authorized to give that good tidings to you through my Grandsheikh; you must see it, also. Therefore, when I am saying that there are other Londons, you may see them. When truth comes clearly into your heart, it, is so easy; I may take you to that London. Wa min Allah at-taufiq¹⁴."

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Benificent and Most Munificent. He knows what we are in need of and He gives what we are in need of. Believers, they are in need of divine support throughout their lives, and the one who has strong faith and belief, he receives more support. And, also, as much as we know we are weak and in need, Allah Almighty gives us more support.

Our Grandsheikh was always speaking about the good attribute which is more lovely to Allah Almighty than anything else: Allah Almighty likes His servant to ask from Him and to say, "O my Lord, I am Your weakest and most needy one." This attribute of servants is most lovely to our Lord, Allah Almighty, and we are saying, "O our Lord, we are the weakest ones and the most in need of Your divine support." And Allah Almighty gives that support, and, if we are sincere, He gives to us also from His endless favors.

We are in a holy month, and that holy month is teaching us. Fasting teaches servants that they are in need of their Lord at every time. And when a person fasts and thinks about his Lord, Allah Almighty looks at what is in His servant's heart, at who is there, because Allah Almighty created man and He made one part of our bodies for Himself only. He never accepts to have a partner for Himself, and the most precious part of your body is that part. Your heart is that precious one, and it belongs to the Lord, Almighty Allah.

And He looks there; every day Allah Almighty looks at our hearts. Why does He look? He looks to see what His servant is doing with that precious part.

¹⁴ And the guidance is from God

Allah Almighty says, "O My servant, My face is toward your face, but your face is toward where? O My servant, put your face in front of My Divine Face." But your face is mostly not in front of His Divine Face, and we are asking forgiveness.

All prophets and all shari'ahs came to teach people that they must put their faces in front of their Lord's Divine Face. People are running after finding peace and happiness and satisfaction through this world, but it is impossible; if you look and your face is not toward your Lord's Divine Face, no one can find peace and satisfaction and happiness in his heart. And every day Allah Almighty looks and tries His servants, to see whether His servant is with Him or is with someone else.

Once there was a grandsheikh, and one day he went up to the mimbar for the Jum'ah khutbah¹⁵, addressing a huge crowd of people; so many scholars, they were listening to him, also. And he was saying: "O people, look at me and listen. Judgment Day is approaching, and everyone must be present on that Day, the Last Day, the judgment day for everyone. And the Judge, He is your Lord, Allah Almighty.

"Don't be afraid! He is only going to call you one by one. He can do anything! He will make judgment on everyone one by one and at the same time He will make judgment for everyone, and everyone will think that Allah Almighty, his Lord, is judging himself only, while He is really going to give judgment for everyone who is in that place.

"He will call you and ask you only one question, nothing else." And they were listening carefully. "If you can give a correct answer, it will be all right; no need to ask a second question. If not, it will be difficult for you. Your Lord will

¹⁵ Mimbar: a pulpit, generally with steps leading up to a raised platform. Jum'ah khutbah: the sermon of the Friday congregational prayer

ask everyone, will ask you, 'O My servant, I was with you during your life. You - with whom were you?'"

That is the question, only one question: "O My servant, with whom were you?" That is the question. If you can say, "O my Lord, I was with You," then every question will have been given its answer and your Lord will be happy with you, pleased with you; you will have made Him pleased with you. If not, too much trouble is waiting for you.

Therefore, every prophet just came to teach us how we should be with our Lord at every time, and we must try to be with him throughout our lives. Therefore, Allah Almighty made every action of mankind to be governed by a rule:

Every moment and every action, they have a value, and you must consider the value of your actions and you must think about that action. When you are going to act, you must know that someone is looking at you and that that someone is your Lord. His Face is toward your face; His Face, His Divine Face, is toward your heart, and His Divine Face and Its gaze is on you.

When you keep that adab, good manners, then your Lord, Allah Almighty, is going to be with you, every time; with His endless favors He will support you for everything. As long as you consider your Lord, more support will come to you. And our Grandsheikh was always speaking about real faith, acceptable faith - how it must be so that Allah Almighty accepts that faith, and which kind of faith supports its owner, divine support always protecting him.

We must consider always in our hearts that Allah Almighty, by day or night throughout our whole life, is looking at us; His divine Gaze is never taken away from anyone. If you consider that my sheikh is looking at me everywhere, you will be careful about every action that you are going to do. Then what about Allah Almighty, never leaving you even for the smallest unit of time, looking at you? That gives us real faith in Allah Almighty.

If Allah Almighty gives to us from His favors, sometimes we forget our Lord because we are occupied with the enjoyment of favors during this life. But Allah Almighty gives His servants mostly troubles.

When Allah created man, Adam, He had not yet blown into him from His Divine soul, so that only Adam's body was lying, without a soul. Then Allah Almighty ordered a rain to fall on him. It rained for forty years only sadness; sadness, sorrow and suffering rained on his body. Then it stopped, and for one year it rained a rain of enjoyment and happiness.

Therefore, in forty years only one year of happiness and enjoyment comes during our lives¹⁶. What is the divine wisdom in that? There are so many wisdoms for that rain on Adam, and on his children, also, it is the same,

If a person speaks to his Lord, calling him, "Yā Karim!"¹⁷ Allah Almighty calls to His servant and says, "O My servant, you are still in that world, you are in prison. Then how are you saying 'Ya Karim'? What do you know about My karam, My favors? This world, this life, is a prison for everyone, for believers and unbelievers. You must be patient. When you get to Paradise, Paradise is the place of My favors. This world, this life, is not the place of My favors yet!"

Troubles and sufferings and sorrows always cover this life, O people, and you can only breathe through your beliefs. Those who believe, they can take themselves out of that sorrow and sadness; but the ones who haven't any beliefs or faith, they are always in darkness, in sadness, in sorrow. And the divine wisdom of Allah Almighty's making too much sufferings and sorrows for man here is because when we are in sadness, in troubles and suffering, we ask for someone to help us; "Ya Aman, ya Rabbi!"¹⁸ we must say, we

¹⁶ That is, the ratio of suffering to happiness in this world's life is one to forty

¹⁷ O Generous One." Al-Karim is one of the ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah. Sheikh Nazim adds parenthetically, "Karim means the One who gives endless favors, with happiness and enjoyment

¹⁸ O Trustworthy one, O my Lord!

must call to Him. When we are rich we think that we are not in need of anyone and we do not call to Him, but when we are in trouble, then we remember that one who can help us in any condition, in any situation.

Therefore, throughout our whole life, suffering powers our lives. Allah Almighty likes His servants to call Him and to ask from Him. When you call, "O my God!" He says, "O My servant!" and without your heart burning, that addressing to Allah does not come. If that calling to Allah comes from your heart, He accepts it; if it only comes from your lips, it does not reach there as it does when it comes from your heart. Therefore Allah Almighty makes sorrows and sufferings for His servants so that they may remember Him and His blessings and favors.

And Allah Almighty is always trying His servants; everyone is going to be tried. Trying makes our faith stronger; if He does not try you, you will stay on the same level, and for that reason Allah Almighty tries His servants and gives them more power through their beliefs and faith. Therefore, everything that falls upon people is a trial from Allah Almighty. And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., says, "If two days of your life are equal, the same, it is a loss. Today must be more than yesterday and tomorrow must be more than this day."

What does it mean? It is not that if you pray forty rak'āts¹⁹ today you are going to do forty-one tomorrow, and after tomorrow forty-two; no. But as we grow in our mother's womb and come to this life, and grow day by day from a one-day-old baby, a two-day-old baby, then one week, one month, one year, we grow up to forty years; forty years, it is a perfection for our physical body and for our mind. Then, from forty, our physical body begins to go down, becoming weaker, but our spiritual power must go on to perfection. Day by day our faith must reach to a point that, when you reach that level, there should be a new world in your view.

¹⁹ Rak'ats are the cycles which make up the Islamic prayer or salat

Now all of us, we are going through a black tunnel. But we must continue on our steps; then we will reach that horizon and we will see another world that is now unseen to ourselves. If you reach that point before leaving this life, you are fortunate; you will have reached the real position of being deputy of your Lord, Almighty Allah.

That is the meaning of that hadith, that saying of the Prophet, p.b.u.h., that day by day we must approach that horizon. If you stay on the same step, then you are losing; each day you must put your foot on the next step. Before death comes, you must finish your steps and you must be at that horizon, looking at unseen worlds, looking at the Heavens, looking at your heavenly station in the Divine Presence. Those are fortunate people, rijal-Allah.²⁰

Therefore Allah' Almighty tries His servants every day. If a person passes that examination, that trial, then he improves to the second level. And Allah Almighty does not try you with enjoyable happenings, but He tries His servant with something to see if he can carry it or not, not giving to you a sweet - no. Too many sufferings fall on people. The one who can carry them is improving in his steps toward his divine station in the Divine Presence.

Therefore believers, they know that there is trying by Allah Almighty and they prepare themselves to carry it. It may be by anything, any kind of a trial. And mostly Allah Almighty tries His servants by each other, and He likes you to bear each other without getting angry with each other. Anger is wildness and Allah Almighty never likes it. And every day, from morning time up to sleeping time, you must be awake, seeing from where a trial is coming to you, so that you may be ready to keep that. If you keep it - one step more, one step more - your faith gets to be stronger.

This holy month is teaching us, also, to bear, to be patient, and to be able to carry everything that is difficult for our ego. Every difficult thing makes our

²⁰ People of God

faith stronger, and as much as our faith is stronger, we are coming closer to our Lord and to His Divine Presence.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Allah Almighty honored us, the children of Adam, making us candidates to be the deputies of our Lord in this world, in this universe. And honor for the Children of Adam is to believe in their Lord - that He is in existence and that there is no God in existence but Allah Almighty.

From the first prophet up to the last one, Allah Almighty informed and proclaimed His existence and His unity. Whoever accepts that, he has been honored by the Lord, Almighty Allah. Allah Almighty proclaimed His existence and unity through the first prophet, and He also announced His Last Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h.

As we believe in all the prophets without making any distinction among them, at the beginning all mankind was ordered or invited to believe in all the prophets past or to come, and particularly in beloved Muhammad, peace be upon him and upon them²¹. His name was written on the Divine Throne before creatures were created, and "La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r rasul-Allah, there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger," is written in Arabic words everywhere in Paradise, also.

And it has been proclaimed by every prophet. Each prophet called his nation to believe in the Last Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h.; because to believe in their own prophet gave them honor, but to believe also in the Last Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, gave them more honor and more lights. Therefore Allah Almighty invited and ordered all nations, through their prophets, to believe in their own prophets and also to believe in the Last

²¹ See, for example, II:136, 285; III:81, 84; V:13 (12 in Pickthall's translation); XXXIII:7-8

Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., so that every prophet informed his nation about the Last Prophet through their holy books, and every holy book mentioned the name of the Last Prophet, Muhammad, p.b.u.h., by his name, as it is written on the pillars of the Throne, "La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," p.b.u.h.

Then, the last prophet before the Seal of the Prophets, Jesus Christ, p.b.u.h., also mentioned the name of the greatest prophet and the Seal of the Prophets, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., in his Gospel²², mentioning his name as "Ahmad,"²³ which they are translating as "Parakletos" in the original Greek Bible. He was saying that "Ahmad is coming just after me. He is going to be the prophet for all nations, and his nation, ummah, is the last of the ummahs."

As it is written, it was well-known, also, among scholars of the Christian faith. They knew from where he was going to come. It is written that the Last Prophet would come from Hijaz and it is mentioned that he would come from Makkah. And also there is written every detail to make his identity exactly clear, not leaving any doubt about it, because he was the last one and must be recognized by everyone. Since he was going to be the prophet for all the world or for all nations, he must be a well-known person among other nations, among Moses' nation and among Jesus Christ's nation and ummah, because he was going to come at a time when they should be ready. Therefore Allah Almighty did not leave out any sign for His beloved Muhammad, to make His Last Prophet to be well-known, and he was indicated in holy books.

The Jewish people, after their Temple was destroyed, spread all over the world, everywhere. They are clever people; perhaps they are the most clever

²² The scripture revealed to Jesus known as the Injil (Evangelos or Gospel), some parts or which may be preserved in the existing four Gospels

²³ The Praised One," coming from the same Arabic root and having the same meaning as Muhammad

ones among all nations. And I don't think that Jewish people would leave the good places of the earth, leaving Anatolia or Syria or Iraq or Iran or Europe or Egypt or any other country, such healthy-Wealthy countries, to go to the desert of Arabia²⁴; I don't think that they are such mindless people to go to live in the Arabian deserts, with fifty or sixty degrees centigrade and salty water and only palm trees growing, without any reason. Then why did they go there?

They were living in and around Yathrib (Madinah) and in Khaibar. Why were they there, for what purpose? This dunya, this world, is wide, and then it was not as it is now, so crowded; no, they could go anywhere and they could live in good places, so many open spaces at that time. Why did they choose those deserts? What was the reason?

The reason, the only reason, was that they knew that the Seal of the Prophets would come in the Arabian desert, in that country. It is written in the Holy Torah, in the Old Testament and the New Testament; they knew that he was going to be born there.

His grandfather's building²⁵ was the House of the Lord; Abraham, p.b.u.h., built that House, the House of the Lord, which is now there, in the middle of the desert. Nothing grew in that desert, nothing. And he said to his Lord, "O my Lord, I am leaving my descendants in a huge desert. Give them their rizq, provisions, and give them Your heavenly provisions, also. Send them, from Your Divine Presence, a messenger teaching them your wisdoms and Your holy words."²⁶

²⁴ Referring to the Jewish settlements in Yathrib (later known as Madinah) and surrounding areas during the Prophet's time

²⁵ The Holy Prophet's "grandfather" was the Prophet Abraham, who, together with his son Ishmael built the Sacred House of God, the K'abah, in the small desert settlement which became the city of Makkah

²⁶ See II:126–129, XIV:37

They knew about him; it was written. And they were expecting that that prophet would come from among themselves and that they would quickly go with him, all together. But divine wisdoms made that Last Prophet from the Sons of Ishmael, not from the Sons of Isaac, peace be upon them both; yes. And Christians, also, were living in Najran (now it is Aden and that area) and they were also expecting that Last Prophet. It is written in traditions; everything is clear in Islam.

During those years Damascus was in the hands of the Romans, Christians. The capital of the Eastern Roman Empire was in Constantinople, and Damascus was a very famous center of Christianity at that time.

There were two priests who were always together. They were looking for the Last Prophet. Once one said to the other, "As we know through our holy books, this is the right time for the Last Prophet to appear. Let us go and search for him."

They set out to look for the Last Prophet. They began their journey from Damascus and went through deserts, reaching Yathrib. When they entered Yathrib, one of them looked at the position of the mountains and valley and trees. The valley went like this, and the mountains and their rocks were burned-looking, like black coal, and the palm trees and gardens were inside. They looked, and one of them said, "This is the place that is described in holy books; it is the place to which the Last Prophet will immigrate," because it had those special characteristics.

Then they entered Yathrib, the town, and asked for the masjid, mosque, going there and entering. The Prophet, p.b.u.h., was there with his Companions, sitting among them.

No need for anyone to ask who that one was. He was like the full moon among stars; as he is going to be well-known on the Last Day, no one was in

need to ask, "Who is Muhammad?" They came and sat in front of him, and one of them said, "You are Muhammad."

The Prophet replied, "Yes, I am Muhammad."

Then the second one said, "And you are Ahmad."

And he said, "I am Ahmad, also."

The Prophet's names are written on all the masjid's walls in Madinah, about two-hundred-and-fifty names; but the Naqshbandi Order knows one thousand names for the Prophet, p.b.u.h. - one thousand! To have many names is a sign of a person's honor; the more names there are for a person, the more honor it is for him. Therefore he has been honored with one thousand names. As his name in Paradise is 'Abdul-Karim, in Hell it is 'Abdul-Qahhar; on the Divine Throne 'Abdul-Majid, on earth Muhammad, and in the Heavens Ahmad.²⁷

They addressed him exactly as they knew, as "Ahmad" and "Muhammad." Then they asked him, "Could you tell us what is the greatest witness in the Holy Book that has come to you?"

Then at that time the Angel Gabriel came and brought the verse, "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim. Shahid Allahu annahu la ilaha illa Hua, wal-malaikatu wal-ulu-l-'ilmi qaiman bil-qist. La ilaha illa Hua, al-IAzizu-l-Hakim"²⁸, - Gabriel just brought this verse to him and he recited it. Then those two priests fell upon his hands; upon his feet, also, saying, "You are that prophet about whom Moses informed us and about whom Jesus Christ gave good tidings. You are that prophet, and we are witnesses to that."

²⁷ As the various names of the Holy Prophet are derived from Allah Almighty's exalted divine attributes, different names are suitable for different situations

²⁸ In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. God (Himself) is witness that there is no deity but He, and the angels and the people of knowledge, standing firmly for justice. There is no deity but He, the Mighty, the Wise." (III:18)

Allah Almighty Himself is the Witness. Who can be greater than Him? He is saying, "I Myself am witness that I am the one, the Creator, the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of Creatures, the Lord of the Universe, the Lord of the Heavens, and I am that one besides whom no one may be able to do anything. I am that one who has eternal Power Oceans and eternal Knowledge and Wisdom Oceans with Myself," He Himself is witnessing for Himself. "And also all angels, they are witnesses to My unity and My existence. And everyone who has been honored with knowledge, every learned and knowledgeable person, also says 'La ilaha illa-Llah,' proclaiming My existence and My unity."

Therefore Allah Almighty gives honor to the Children of Adam by their saying "La ilaha illa-Llah," by their proclaiming the existence of Allah Almighty and His unity. That is the honor that we have been given, and that is the knowledge from which all knowledge comes; it is the source of all knowledge and all wisdoms, and knowledge comes forth from that source to say, "There is no God but Allah. All power, absolute Power Oceans and absolute Wisdom Oceans, are for Him, Almighty Allah."

Therefore, at all times, people who want honor receive honor by proclaiming the existence and unity of their Lord, Allah Almighty. If a person does not proclaim the existence and unity of Allah Almighty, he is never given honor or knowledge or wisdom; anyone who claims that he has wisdom and knowledge, he must proclaim the existence of God, Almighty Allah, and His unity. That verse is the greatest witness in the Holy Qur'an, and it includes everyone by saying "ulu-l-'ilm," the people of knowledge: those who have knowledge and wisdom, they say, "La ilaha illa-Llah, there is no God but Allah, Almighty Allah."

Now in our time all nations are falling into crises. And we are seeing that in our time, like a new fashion, ideas are coming for denying the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah, a new current from Satan; Satan and his helpers,

his devils, are teaching people to deny the existence of the Lord, Allah Almighty. As the first step, they are teaching people to deny the existence of the Creator; and second, they are teaching them to claim that each one is the creator of himself, so that there are endless "creators," each one claiming that only I am in existence. They are denying the Creator, Allah Almighty, and proclaiming their own lordship or godhood; anyone who has a little bit of authority is proclaiming his own lordship.

That is a sign of darkness in the hearts of people, and it makes the future of mankind in this world dark and black. That is the reason that in our time most of the honor of mankind is taken away and you can find only very few honorable people. Earlier there were a lot of honorable ones among people, but now a wrong system has come, wrong ideas which say that all people are "equal."²⁹ Now there is no respect for anyone, because that current which denies the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah, makes people like a flock of sheep or goats. No respect for anyone; they say, "I am as you are." No respect for parents, no respect for holy men, no respect for old people - nothing. Yes, you can find millions, perhaps billions, of such people.

It means that honor and respect have been taken away from people, although earlier there were a lot of honorable people. And it began from the year 1789, the French Revolution - from that time when honorable people became the "feet" and the "feet" became the "head";³⁰ holy books have informed us about this through traditions.

²⁹ The "wrong ideas" of equality referred to here are those which deny the existence or intrinsic ranks among human beings according to the value of their characteristics, abilities or actions, which is inherent in the ordering of the universe and any balanced social order, even those making the greatest claims of "equality. This principle is proclaimed in the Qur'an in such verses as VI:132: "And for all, there are ranks according to what they do."

³⁰ That is, the French Revolution brought about a total reversal of the natural order of society by opening the door to anarchy and mob rule, thereby making possible the infliction of untold oppression and suffering by upholding the domination of the lowest, most savage elements of the society

This is not a good sign, and it is a fruit of kufr, unbelief. That tree that was planted in the French Revolution is now giving its fruits; all the crises in the world are coming from that tree, its fruits, and we are eating them, bitterly eating. People must eat them; it is a punishment.

This life is every day getting to be more bitter. For what reason? Because people are denying the existence of Allah Almighty and they are saying, "Only we are in existence, not anyone else." Therefore we are advising people, as all prophets and their inheritors, awliya, advised the servants of God, Almighty Allah, to come and believe in the existence of Allah. That gives us honor, here and Hereafter. If we do not teach our children, do not look after their beliefs, then darkness will come on ourselves, also, and there will be no respect given to such people here or Hereafter.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Allah Almighty says, "Wa khuliqa-l-insanu dha'ifa"³¹, Allah created man weak." It means that people need a covering, they need support; they need to be protected and defended, also, from enemies. Therefore we are in need to have with ourselves something like an umbrella, to be under it in order to be in safety; we are in need of that here and on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah Almighty makes beliefs and faith to be an umbrella for everyone, protecting people here and Hereafter. In this world, during this life, everywhere, at every time, like rain, so many burdens are falling on people, raining heavily on them, so that without beliefs and faith you can't keep them away from yourself. Therefore Allah Almighty makes faith and beliefs for His weak servants, to keep them, to protect them, here and Hereafter.

³¹ " And We created man weak." (IV:28)

Each day you may face so many things that harm you and give you trouble and suffering. If no beliefs, you can't bear it; this life is a heavy burden. Without believing in the Lord, Allah Almighty, it is impossible to bear it; so many people are unable to bear it and kill themselves. But the one who believes in his creator, in his Lord, Allah Almighty, and who believes in the eternal life, it is all right for him: that is an umbrella giving a support to him to carry this life's heavy burden.

In our days, everywhere you are observing that people are getting down, and every day their complaints are increasing. And every day, glory to Allah Almighty! you are hearing about something that was not in existence earlier; every day some new thing comes out and goes on. It is difficult to explain how in our time the sources of evil are increasing day by day, but it indicates that heavenly occurrences are affecting people on earth. And we are observing also that, as long as people think that no relationship exists between earth and the Heavens, those troubles are increasing; we are observing that point.

People are saying that no relationship exists between earth and Heaven. They are telling themselves that we are now free from every divine command or divine control; they say, "We are taking our freedom." How can they say this, when divine commands have come to people through divine religions? But day by day people are leaving divine commands, and they think, "We can do anything and we are free. No one can prevent us from doing anything that we like to do." That is the idea, the new idea, of people.

Then, the Divine Controller says, "You are free. You can do anything, but you must know that punishment is always coming with you and running along with you. You are free to do, and I am free, also, to do anything to you, freely." That is the reason why every day crises and troubles and sufferings are increasing and not lessening.

People are thinking that economic conditions are the main reason for these crises. They are foolish people who are saying this; only no-mind people can say this, because we are observing the same crises in rich countries. If your country is not rich enough, I have been to one of the richest countries on earth, Switzerland, and I have seen that there, also, crises and depression are increasing among people. The more a person makes himself free from divine commands, the more he is going to be a slave to his ego, a servant and a slave to his ego's desires. And our ego's desires are endless; no matter how much you may run after it, to fulfill its desires, it is impossible to reach a limit. Therefore, even in rich countries, depression and crises are mounting.

What is the dawa', cure, for it? What is the cure? Allah knows His servants; the one who made this tape recorder knows best how you can use it. Allah Almighty created man and He knows best how man must use his life. Therefore I am saying that whoever wants to be free from divine commands, there must be something wrong in his head, and whoever thinks that crises are coming from economic problems, he is also an ignorant person, not knowing anything about mankind.

Allah Almighty knows our characteristics, and through the first prophet, Adam, He made for man, for the Sons of Adam, halal and haram³². Those are limits, to put a limit on our desires. But our egos want to be free for everything, and that is the end of our life, that is destroying us.

Therefore, as we are weak and may easily be carried away by our egos and by Satan, we are in need to protect ourselves under an umbrella of faith.

³² According to the Islamic teachings, the first man, Adam, was also the first prophet. After his descent to earth from his original home in Paradise, from which he and Eve were expelled after disobeying God, God revealed to him His laws of what is permissible (halal) and what is prohibited (haram) for the guidance of his descendants, humankind, who are to work out their return to the Paradise from which their souls have come, either during this life or through cleansing in the Life-to-come

What is that faith? You must believe in God, Almighty Allah, and you must keep the limits that He put for us, saying, "This you have permitted to take or to do, and that is prohibited for you."

-That puts a limit on our actions. If no limits in a religion, it is not a religion, it is not a faith. There must be limits. But now everyone wants to have a religion without putting any boundaries. That is the whole reason why people are going down, every day becoming worse; going from bad to worse, and from worse to worst, also.

We are in need to establish a shelter for ourselves in order to be in safety, and this is our shelter and umbrella: to believe in God and to believe in the Last Day. Therefore, every prophet just called people to believe in Allah Almighty, the Creator, and to believe in the Last Day. It is not enough to believe in God Almighty only while not believing in the Last Day, not believing in Paradise and Hell, because, without belief in the eternal life, people think that there is no responsibility for themselves. But "no responsibility" is for animals only; human beings have responsibility, and that is the main point that Allah Almighty ordered to all the prophets: to proclaim that there is an eternal life, there is a judgment day.

Everyone must be judged in the Divine Presence according to his actions during this life. That is responsibility. And without there being halal or haram, without there being some things which we are commanded to do and some others to leave, there is no responsibility.

We are carrying that responsibility. Therefore, everyone who has been ordered to do something or to leave off something is in need of strong willpower to keep those orders; without willpower you can't do anything. Your will must be above your ego's desires so that you can command your ego to do something or to leave something; without willpower it is impossible. And without worshipping, it is impossible for a person to take his will. power in his hands.

And among worships, there is no other worship like fasting for sharpening our willpower; fasting sharpens it to cut those egos' desires. Therefore fasting is important in our lives so that we can command our egos.

Now we are fasting from halal; during Holy Ramadan we are fasting and, leaving halal eating and drinking because Allah Almighty says to leave it³³. Then what about prohibited things? If you are leaving halal, you must be able to leave haram. And that is the benefit of fasting: you are sharpening your willpower. If for this one month you may be able to take command of your ego, Allah Almighty may support you during the other eleven months; you may be able at any time to command your ego. But if you leave your ego free during this month, during Holy Ramadan, your ego will carry you during the other eleven months.

Therefore we must try to fast and to practice after Ramadan, also. After Ramadan fasting is sunnah, not fard³⁴; the Prophet, p.b.u.h., made it a sunnah so that sometimes we may order ourselves to fast, to keep away from our egos' desires. Our egos are saying, "What about that fasting? It is not fard." You may answer it, "Yes, I know it is not fard, but the Prophet said, 'You may fast,' and as he fasted, therefore I must fast also."

That sunnah fasting also gives us some willpower. Therefore the Prophet, p.b.u.h., taught us and made fasting on certain days sunnah, particularly six days after 'Eid³⁵. And during each month, when the moon becomes perfectly full, the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth, the brightest days, may also be

³³ That is, while eating and drinking when one wishes is ordinarily permissible (halal), under the discipline of the Islamic fasting, one foregoes these ordinarily-halal activities, as well as engaging in marital relations, during the daylight hours, thereby making it easier to reject the ego's and Satan's promptings toward haram activities and pleasures

³⁴ Fard means "obligatory," while sunnah denotes something which was practiced or recommended by the Holy Prophet but which is not obligatory, such as the sunnah parts of the prayer or fasting at times other than Ramadan

³⁵ Referring to the six days of fasting during Shawwal (the month following Ramadan) after 'Eid al-Fitr, the Festival of Fast-breaking at the conclusion of Ramadan

sunnah fasts³⁶. And for the second 'Eid, from the beginning of Dhul-Hijjah, nine days or only the Day of 'Arafat³⁷; and in Muharram, also, ten days or two days or three days³⁸; and Rajab and Sha'ban, two holy months, also³⁹. Or every month you may fast three days, or you may fast every week on Monday and Thursday⁴⁰, as you like. This is sunnah in order to keep your ego under your control any time you may order it; and that day you may be in safety and you may feel a happiness within yourself, and Allah will support you. Therefore it is a good habit to follow sunnah fasting; for every occasion (mentioned above) you may observe it. It gives us more power, more willpower.

Fasting means to command and to keep your ego from any of its desires. Yes, it is fasting if your ego is asking for something to eat, to do, to say, and you say "No"; that is fasting, also. And fasting from evil keeps you under the shelter of your faith, because, for every trouble that reaches and touches people, its only reason is that they are fulfilling some desire of their egos. Then, after fulfilling your ego's desire, you must expect that something will touch you and harm you.

It is impossible for a person to run after his ego's desires without some harm touching him. It must be; it is a divine judgment. "Fa-man ya'mal mithqala dharratin khairan yarah, wa man ya'mal mithala dharratin sharran yarah"⁴¹:

³⁶ Fasting on the White Days" (Ayyam Baid), the 13th, 14th and 15th of every lunar month when the moon is at its brightest

³⁷ Fasting during the first nine days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah during the season of Hajj (Pilgrimage), or only on the Day of 'Arafat, the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah, the day preceding ; 'Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice

³⁸ Fasting during the first ten days of the month of Muharram, or on the 10th and the day preceding and/or following it (the 9th and 10th; the 10th and 11th; or the 9th, 10th and 11th)

³⁹ Fasting during the holy months of Rajab and Sha'ban

⁴⁰ Fasting each week on Mondays and Thursdays is also sunnah

⁴¹ Then whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it." (XCIX:7-8)

whoever does even the smallest thing of good, he must keep that reward with himself, in his heart, and whoever does the smallest thing from the desires of his ego, some punishment must touch him; he must await it, he must expect it. Only if he asks forgiveness from his Lord, Allah Almighty, saying, "O my Lord, I have made a mistake; forgive me," then that asking forgiveness carries that punishment away from him. Otherwise it is impossible; the one who runs after his ego's desires must be punished.

And we are asking forgiveness from Allah Almighty for everything in which we are following the desires of our egos. As long as people are following their desires, there is not going to be a good future for humanity on earth and darkness is awaiting it. Therefore all the prophets advised their nations to take a shelter.

I heard that in Switzerland some people are building a house above the ground and another underground to be their shelter from atomic weapons. But they are not shelters. The shelter for people is only their belief, their faith. As much as it is strong, it is most suitable for keeping and protecting you, here and Hereafter.

People are afraid of fire, atomic fire or other fires. In the next life also there is fire, and the shelter from that fire is only our souls. Here people are afraid of fire falling on them from the skies, but on the Day of Resurrection, Hell will send out bombs of fire as big as houses, and each person will be protected only under the shelter of his faith.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. May Allah Almighty keep us from falsehood. Every falsehood brings sufferings to people; therefore, until all falsehood goes away from this earth, sufferings are never going to finish. And Allah Almighty sent His prophets to take away falsehood from the earth, and finally our Prophet,

beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., just came to take away all falsehood from the earth and to spread truth everywhere.

We are living at a time when, in the general view, falsehood is filling every place and truth is secret, hidden. And most people are working for falsehood. They may know it or not know it; but if they are not working for falsehood directly, they are working indirectly, each one putting one stone to build falsehood on earth, and they are imagining that that building will be a shelter for themselves. But all of those who are putting even one stone for falsehood and entering under it, that building will fall on them and finish them, taking them away.

It is important for every believer to control his actions, his deeds. Without looking after his actions, everyone is going to lose. And Satan knows everything concerning the life of mankind; he knows all the paths, and in each path he puts something from that falsehood. In every religion Satan has put something from his secret traps, in every kind of thought he has put some of his tricks.

Therefore tariqats, and in our time the Most Distinguished Naqshbandi Order, are ordering thought-control to people. If you are able to make a control on your thoughts, you may be in safety from satanic ideas; but if someone is not able to control his thoughts, then satanic ideas and falsehood come into his mind through his thoughts.

If a person gets under the control of Satan, you can't say that he is an obedient servant to his Lord. And in our time, Satan controls almost all peoples' thoughts; he controls everyone, every community, every religion, claiming to control Islam, also, the last Message of Allah Almighty, wanting to take control of it. And in our time, I am sorry to say that Satan is controlling the thoughts of Muslims, also; a huge number of Muslims, their thoughts are just controlled by Satan. This is a reality; no doubt about it.

If Satan did not control the Muslim community, they must be the first on earth and their words must be listened to. But we are not the first. The Muslim world is only first from the end, not from the beginning; next to the last, all of it, because every level of Muslims - ignorant or learned people or scholars or statesmen, every level, every class of people - is controlled by Satan and satanic ideas; finished. Therefore we are not able to save ourselves from Satan's control.

While you are under his control, particularly while your thoughts are controlled by Satan, no hope for you to be an obedient servant to Allah Almighty; it is impossible. That thought of yours which is under satanic control will never let you be a sincere servant, an obedient servant and a beloved one in the Divine Presence. Therefore we are saying that almost all people are falling under satanic control in our time and Satan is controlling the earth now, from East to West, from North to South, without doubt, and he has established his hegemony and kingdom on earth. You may know it or not. If you know, it is better than being ignorant about that satanic control.

That is the first thing that we must think about as Muslims and believers. You must control yourself. If you find any control by Satan on yourself, on your actions or on your thoughts, you must look after them to make them clean.

Now we are in the holy month, Ramadan, and we have been ordered to fast. Grandsheikhs say that there are three kinds of fasting, and the most important fasting is the third kind, making a control on your thoughts, and that is the fasting of prophets and saints. If anyone is not able to control his thoughts, it means that his heart is in the hands of Satan, and the heart is the sultan which commands our organs and our limbs; otherwise our limbs and organs would be under our hearts' command. Therefore the most important kind of fasting is to control your thoughts while you are fasting.

This is a simple fasting that we are doing now, not eating or drinking; we are happy, also, in waiting for a good breakfast⁴² - that is our pleasure in fasting. This is the first level of fasting. But if you can try to guard your limbs, your organs, to make them fast, also, that is stronger than the first kind of fasting, so that you may be able to help your heart to take control of your thoughts; because as long as you leave your eyes without control, your ears without control, your tongue without control, to look, to say, to listen as they like, you will not be able to take control of your thoughts, since the source of thoughts comes through your eyes. This looking-around is the source of thoughts in your heart; with no control on your looking, on your eyes, there is no control on your thoughts. You must fall down, and Satan is able to take control of your thoughts through your looking. Therefore it is so important for the one who is fasting to try to take control of his eyes.

People think that just not eating and drinking is enough for fasting, but it is really the lowest form of fasting. We are asking to make our minds safe, safe from satanic ideas, and our thoughts clean from satanic control, and this fasting helps us, from the beginning up to its perfection. Even if you are only fasting to keep yourself away from eating and drinking, it is helpful, it is the way to reach thought control; without taking the first step, you can't reach the top step. Therefore, the one who wants to make himself in safety from satanic control must be careful about his fasting.

If you do not control your thoughts, your thoughts will push you or pull you into falsehood. They are not going to remain only as thoughts; thoughts turn into actions, yes? And then we are going to be the servants or helpers of falsehood, to build Satan's kingdom; without knowing or without thinking, we are working for Satan and his kingdom. Therefore it is so important to take control of our thoughts.

⁴² For fasting people, "breakfast" is actually iftar, the breaking of the fast at sunset

Among tariqats we have some methods; if a person wants to keep his heart clean, Satan no longer controlling him, we have a method in our tariqat. One grandsheikh was ordering his murids, when they were thinking bad thoughts related to this life, to take a shower bath: if, a person thinks about haram, he is ordered to take a shower, ghusl⁴³; every time that haram thought comes and repeats in your heart, you are going to take a shower and then pray two rak'ats. Then Satan says, "It is useless if I give bad thoughts to this person because each time, he gets up to take a shower and pray two rak'ats. It is not a good thing to make a person take a shower and pray; no benefit for me. He is gaining!" And if you continue with that method for forty days, then he will never come to you to take control of your thoughts, running away, because he will say, "We are gaining nothing, but he is gaining."

And even for beginners, they are asked to do wudu⁴⁴: if you are thinking some bad things, Satan putting into your mind some bad thoughts or harams, then you may renew your wudu and make Shahadah and istighfar⁴⁵." Then Satan will say, "Every time, that person makes wudu, makes istighfar, renews his Shahadah. What am I doing? I am giving him benefit! I must leave him."

Yes, for everything there is something against it to protect believers from satanic ideas. Therefore, it is good manners to make wudu for every prayer or to take a shower, ghusl, once every twenty-four hours; it takes away bad thoughts from you, and day by day they are going to finish. If a person does not leave those bad thoughts which are in his heart, his name is written in the book of Satan; famous names are with Satan. And in our time, most people are doing things without thinking about controlling their minds,

⁴³ A shower-bath which includes all the parts of wudu (see footnote 44)

⁴⁴ The ablution or cleansing prescribed in Islam for prayers, reading the Qur'an, and other acts of worship

⁴⁵ Shahadah: the Declaration of Faith, "I bear witness that there is no deity except God Almighty, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger." Istighfar: asking forgiveness

controlling their actions; but those uncontrolled minds and hearts are in the hands of Satan, and they are building on one side and destroying from the other side.

Allah Almighty likes good actions, but they must be clean actions. Clean actions are only going to be with clean thoughts; otherwise, if you haven't clean thoughts, you are not going to do good actions or good activities. And in our days, Satan and his armies are claiming that they are taking everyone from mankind, in the East and the West, in their hands, Satan saying, "In my hands! One hand of mine is in the East, one hand in the West, and I am commander over the Children of Adam and controller of their thoughts."

Therefore we are seeing that day by day satanic methods are increasing among people, satanic inventions are growing. If you sit down to think, you can't think, such things people are inventing! Originally everything may be useful for beliefs, for goodness, for charity; but Satan never lets people use such new inventions for charity or for the benefit of the Children of Adam, and they are preparing themselves to use every opportunity for the East to take away the West and for the West to take away the East. Nothing is useful for the Children of Adam without there quickly coming another thing to harm the Sons of Adam.

Therefore we must be very careful in our steps and we must try to take control of ourselves. And if you are able to take control of your body, then, when Allah Almighty gives you an opportunity for your heart, and your heart becomes stronger and able to keep your limbs and organs on a good path, at that time you will be an obedient servant.

Now we are hearing that a new disease is spreading, and also that no one may be able to take it away. No cure for so many illnesses; it is not only one or two or three - also that cancer; everywhere, with everyone. That disease is only going to appear in uncontrolled bodies; if a body is controlled, it is

impossible for such an incurable disease to grow. Therefore, to take control of yourself gives you benefit physically and spiritually.

And we have an opportunity during Holy Ramadan more than at any other time. The one who is able to control himself during this Ramadan is going to be able, by Allah Almighty's support, to take control of himself for the other eleven months. Everything begins small and grows, good things and bad things, good habits and bad habits; for each one we have a beginning. And the beginning is difficult, but you must be patient and continue; if you know that something is right, you must continue to keep that way, even though it may be so difficult. Difficulties may be overcome by a strong faith, and strong faith must always be with those people who are able to control themselves.

Allah Almighty gave us His messages through His prophets, and the summary of those messages is only to make people be able to take control of themselves. Therefore Allah Almighty orders prayers five times a day, plus sunnah worshipping, also. There are the five times of prayer which Allah Almighty makes obligatory on His servants, but the Prophet, p.b.u.h., did sunnah prayers in the daytime and nighttime, also, so that those times of praying are always making a control on our limbs and on our hearts.

The Prophet, p.b.u.h., did so many sunnah prayers that if you keep them day and night, there is going to be perfect control on your ego; because as long as you leave your ego free, it escapes, running away, and if your ego runs away, no more control on it. Some people are objecting, "Why five times a day?" but they are ignorant people. They do not understand what are the divine wisdoms in making a lot of worshipping in a day, when so much worshipping always makes a strong control on ourselves, on our organs and on our limbs, and then on our thoughts.

It is a good opportunity for everyone to look after his nafs, after his ego, what it is doing and what it is ordering, particularly during this holy month. And at

every time we are asking forgiveness from Allah Almighty for our bad thoughts, and asking to make our hearts clean from dirty thoughts.

When they are going to be clean, then you will go to the station of awliya, who are still living everywhere on earth, although mostly they are hidden in our time; they may meet with us but we do not know who they are. And they are following the ways of the prophets by controlling every action of their limbs and organs, and controlling their thoughts. Therefore, more than anything tariqats teach people to look after their hearts, because hearts are the sources of goodness and badness. And we are asking from our Lord to guard our hearts and to help us control our thoughts and actions.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Everyone must ask how we can make our Lord, Allah Almighty, pleased with us; everyone must ask about that point: how I may be able to make my Lord pleased with me. The one who can make his Lord pleased with him, he has reached the main goal here and Hereafter.

If you can't make your Lord pleased with you, what are you doing? Why are you alive, what is the meaning of your life? It is nonsense! Therefore, for so many people, to be inside the earth is better for them than to be on the face of it. And everyone must see for himself whether to be inside this earth is better for him or whether to be on it is better; everyone must ask this question and must look for an answer from himself to himself.

Each day, each morning, we are awakening. Each night Allah Almighty takes our souls temporarily, and our souls are returning to their homeland, to the Heavens, Allah Almighty permitting them to be free from this prison. Our bodies are prisons for our souls; when we sleep, they get their freedom and return to their homelands. And, according to traditions, if a person sleeps

taher⁴⁶, clean, then his soul reaches up to the Throne, the Divine Throne, making sajdah⁴⁷, worshipping till that person awakes. If he does not sleep taher, it also gets to Heaven but it is imprisoned in a dark place till that person awakes and it comes back to him. Therefore, when the one who sleeps clean awakens, he feels lightness; if not, he feels a heavy burden on himself. Then, each night you must look after yourself.

And each morning when you awaken, you begin a journey, traveling on earth. So many steps - going, coming, going, coming; you are going a long way each day. If you put your steps in a straight line, perhaps you would reach ten miles', twenty miles', distance, or more.

We are running, every day, but no one is asking to understand for what we are running, to where we are running, or which thing we are intending to reach. It is a long journey, every day. Everyone runs and tires, works and tires; but if you ask for what that is, people may say, "This is only for my provision, to eat and drink." And the pubs are waiting for them: the whole day working like robots, and every night, after finishing, those pubs are waiting for them, to go there and be there up to midnight. And they are living without asking what is the meaning of this life.

Each one of us must think at nighttime whether today I did something that made my Lord pleased with me. If he can say within his conscience that I did some good things or that I did my best with my Lord and with His servants, then he may know that to be on the earth is better for him than to be under the earth; otherwise, to be under the earth is better for him than to be on it because every day he is carrying more responsibility and a heavier burden on himself. If he is not making his Lord pleased with him, his life, to be in this life, is nonsense for him. And if we do not reach that point during our life, it is difficult to make our Lord pleased with us after death.

⁴⁶ The Holy Prophet, p.b.u.h., recommended sleeping in a clean state; that is, after making wudu, ablution, or, if necessary, ghusl, taking a shower

⁴⁷ Prostrating oneself in worship

A grandsheikh sent his murid to a cemetery and ordered him, "Go and stand in the middle of it. Go to the middle of the cemetery and call, 'O people lying in this cemetery, listen to me!'"

They can hear but they can't answer. Sometimes they may look and see; but at any time, if a person goes to a cemetery and says, "As-salamu 'alaikum, ya ahla-l-qubur - peace be on you, o people of the graveyard," they hear him. The one who is of the people of Paradise answers, receiving our salam, our greeting; the one who isn't, doesn't reply but he hears it.

Now it is the holy month, and each day they may look at their visitors, also; during Ramadan, each day, each night, they may hear and see anyone who comes to visit them. After Ramadan, only each Thursday and Friday until Saturday morning's sunrise, for two complete days, they may see their visitors and hear their salams and their prayers for them, but during Holy Ramadan it is always open. Therefore, it is important for living people to visit cemeteries from time to time; Allah Almighty permits them.

You may pass through cemeteries in Europe, also. As I have been ordered, when I pass through cemeteries, I say, "La ilaha illa-Allah," three times, saying, "Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah, sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam"⁴⁸," and calling: "O people who are lying in this graveyard, you who accepted, even at the last moment of your lives, and said 'La ilaha illa-Llah' and passed away on that holy word - as-salamu 'alaikum"⁴⁹, Then you may recite a Fatehah for those who may be in that graveyard of those people who said the holy word, "La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r rasul-Allah," sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, even at the last moment; and if none of them is there, it may go to another cemetery in which there may be one or two or more⁵⁰. At

⁴⁸ Allah's peace and blessings be upon him

⁴⁹ Peace be upon you

⁵⁰ Fatehah is recited for the believers in "La ilaha illa-Llah, Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," i.e., the Muslims, while the greeting of peace, "As-salamu 'alaikum," is for all the believers in "La ilaha illa-Llah," Almighty God's existence and oneness

the least, at the least, you say "La ilaha illa-Llah" when you pass through that cemetery. That is a holy word which all the prophets said, from the beginning up to the end, and it is written on the Divine Throne, "La ilaha illa-Llah," there is no God but Allah; and after "La ilaha illa-Llan," as we are looking and seeing and knowing, there is written "Muhammadu-r-rasul-Allah," sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam - Muhammad is His messenger, the Seal of the Prophets. In every cemetery that saying gives refreshment; yes.

Then, that sheikh ordered his murid to go and stand in the middle of that cemetery, and ordered him to ask, "O people who are lying in this cemetery, what do you want? What is your wish?" And as he commanded, that murid went and asked it.

Allah Almighty can do anything; you must believe that the Lord of the Heavens can do anything - yes. The people lying in that graveyard, they were listening. Then Allah Almighty gave them permission to answer that murid's question.

The one who makes his Lord pleased with him, Allah Almighty grants him miracles, giving them to His servant; if you are a sincere and obedient servant, He grants to you miracles from His endless favors. And that sheikh was from those beloved people and an obedient servant to his Lord; and he was teaching his murid, and teaching ourselves and teaching all mankind.

Then Allah Almighty permitted those people in that graveyard to answer. They were answering there, saying, "O our Lord's servant, o 'abd-Allah⁵¹! Our only wish, our only desire, is that we are asking from our Lord to give us one hour, or even one minute, from your life."

Why were they asking for a part of his life? To teach him what is the value of his life, to teach him that he was spending it as we are spending our lives,

⁵¹ servant of God

leaving them without value. Yes. "Our desire is only to be given one hour from your life to make our Lord, during that hour, pleased with us.

"Because we are lying here, we can never think of making our Lord pleased with ourselves. We spent our lives uselessly, and now we understand what is the value of the life on earth. Therefore, all of us, our Lord's servants, we are asking from our Lord to give us one hour from your life, and we hope to make our Lord pleased with us during that hour." That was their desire.

All people in cemeteries would say this, if they could speak and we could hear. We are doing israf, wasting; we are wasting our precious, precious lives. If people who are lying in cemeteries had all the treasures, all the gold on earth, and under the earth, also, they would be ready to give it all if the Lord, Almighty Allah, were to ask payment for that minute or that hour; if they had all treasures, they would be ready to pay them all for one moment of life. But we do not know; we are heedless still. We never know what is the value of this moment's breaths, of even one breath. They would give all treasures to say only once "La ilaha illa-Llah"; but finished - breath finished, everything finished.

Therefore it is a very, very great opportunity for ourselves to know the value of our breaths. People know something, but they have no certainty and then they can do nothing. So many people read books and know about religion or about Paradise and Hell, about the Day of Resurrection, but no praying, no worshipping, doing nothing for their Lord. A person may know, but the important knowledge is the knowledge of certainty which pushes you to worship, which gives you power to worship, to be an obedient servant of your Lord. Therefore, the important thing is to know and to obtain certainty for our knowledge. And from where can you obtain that certainty?

Once the Prophet, p.b.u.h.; asked a Sahabi, one of his Companions, "Kaifa asbaht - how did you awaken today?".

He said, "O Rasul-Allah, o Messenger of God, Allah Almighty, I awoke and came to this day muminan, as a believer."

Then the Prophet asked him, "What is the sign of your faith?"

And he said, "O Messenger of God, Almighty Allah, I was in the position of seeing the Day of Resurrection, the place of Judgment Day, which will be in Damascus. I saw it. People were gathering, a huge crowd of people from the beginning up to the end, crowded on that Plain of Mahshar⁵². And I saw at my right hand Paradise and at my left hand Hell, and I put my foot on the Bridge that everyone must pass over" - if passing, entering Paradise. "I saw the Scales, also, for weighing peoples' actions, worshipping and goodness."

Then the Prophet said, "That is correct, the true sign of your faith. It is right. Keep yourself on it."

That is certainty - to know something exactly. Otherwise, anyone can read but he does not reach that certainty; it is not enough for him to say it himself. And now we are also asking certainty from Allah Almighty concerning the value of our lives.

The people of the graveyard, they had reached that certainty because the veils had been taken away from their hearts' eyes. Then they were able to look and see what is unseen to us now, and they knew, asking for one hour's time from that murid's life to be given to them so that they could make their Lord pleased with them. That was their only aim; they were not asking to come to this life to do business. Finished; all business had been put aside. Yes, nothing; their only desire was to make their Lord pleased with them. .

Now we have that opportunity, everyone. We must try at every time to make our Lord pleased with us. And the way, the only way, is that you must think

⁵² The gathering place of the Last Judgment, which, according to hadiths, will take place on the Plain of Damascus

before every action - think whether it is something that makes my Lord pleased with me or not. Only this we must ask ourselves.

I am sitting here; I am speaking and you are listening. If this activity of ours makes our Lord pleased with us, if our conscience says "Yes, it is all right; it is something that makes your Lord pleased with you," then you must do that.

This is only an example, but for everything that you want to do think about it a little bit. If your conscience signals that it is all right - now your Lord is looking at you and He is going to be pleased with you - you may do it. And if you are in doubt about it, there is another method you may use:

- For every, action that you want to do, you must say "Bismillahi-r Rahmani-r-Rahim⁵³"; it means, "O my Lord, I am doing this for Your divine pleasure." If you can say "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim" for that action, it is all right; you may do it. It makes your Lord pleased with you and makes you pleased, also, here and Hereafter.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Grandsheikh was saying that every way is now closed, locked; but one way, to say for every action, "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim, " opens every locked door. You may use it as much as you wish. As much as you may say it, it is all right; it is not going to be too much. Say, always, "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim."

When a servant says "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim," he makes himself non-existent, considering himself nothing. "Wa khuliqa-l-insanu dha'ifa⁵⁴" - Allah Almighty says that I created man weak, and if He says he is weak, he

⁵³ Literally, "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving," or, in Sheikh Nazim's own translation, "By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent

⁵⁴ And man was created weak. (IV:28)

is weak; he can't be powerful. Yes, weak, and we are in need of help. And every time the one who thinks or knows that he is weak says "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim," it means, "O my Lord, I am nothing. I can't do anything if you are not going to support me or help me; I can't do anything. And I am saying, "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim. By Your power I may do; by Your power I may live; by Your power I may do everything, every difficult thing." All difficulties are going to be made easy by saying "Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim."

A good tiding for fasting people: Grandsheikh was saying that when a person gets to be hungry, Allah likes him. Allah Almighty never likes someone to be full of food, but when he has an empty stomach He likes him because He never eats, never drinks. If He didn't like that being hungry, He wouldn't have allowed His Prophet to be hungry and to put a stone on his stomach⁵⁵.

One day some Sahabah, the Prophet's Companions, were saying to him, "O Rasul-Allah, we are tying stones onto our stomachs from hunger." Then the Prophet did like this and showed them the two stones he had put.

If it wasn't useful for building personalities, Allah Almighty would never have let them be hungry. From hunger no harm comes, but from eating harm comes to people. When a person is hungry his heart opens, and when it opens, blood runs everywhere easily. No pressure on the heart from hunger; rather, it makes the heart to open. Its outward part opens and also it opens within itself. When you are hungry, wisdom's sources open in your heart; when you are full that closes.

Therefore Allah Almighty made the Sahabah, the Companions of the Holy Prophet, to be hungry from time to time, and the Prophet, p.b.u.h., was also hungry, because hunger makes a good personality. Everything affects the

⁵⁵ The Holy Prophet and his Companions used to tie stones onto their stomachs to stifle the pangs of hunger during periods of extreme want

personality but hunger has the most effect on our personalities. Therefore, mostly the Sahabah were hungry, or, if they were fasting, they might find only dates, one or three⁵⁶, eating very little. But that hunger established Islam in their hearts, establishing iman, faith, also; and they were such strong people both physically and spiritually, because to the extent that you eat less, the physical body takes more power. People who eat too much become weaker and weaker, and carriers of flesh.

Now, one most important point on which Grandsheikh was speaking: We are in need of faith, iman, yes? Faith may be imitation or it may be real, and we are in need of real faith, not imitation, only saying it with our lips. Everyone is in need of real faith; if we haven't real faith, at the last moment Satan may carry it away and leave a person without faith. We are in need of faith that controls our whole body, its inner side and its outer. That is important, and that is what Allah Almighty is asking from His servants - real faith. And our Grandsheikh, may Allah bless him, was giving a description of how real faith is going to enter into our hearts, and it is very important to know.

We have been ordered, as believers, to believe in what is real. "Ya-ayyuh-ladhina amanu, aminu bil-Lahi wa rasulihi wal-kitabi-l-ladhi nazzala ala rasulihi⁵⁷" - Allah Almighty is saying "Ya-ayyuha-l-ladhina amanu," addressing the believers and commanding them to believe. That means, "O believers by imitation, you must really believe in God or in the Lord, Allah Almighty, and you must believe in His Prophet and you must believe in His Book." And the important point is how we can believe or how we can obtain real faith.

That is an important point. You may ask this, but how can you find an answer? You may find the answer through people who have reached real faith. They know the way; others can't know that way. And Grandsheikh was

⁵⁶ For breaking their fast or for the evening meal

⁵⁷ O you who believe, believe in God and His Prophet and the Book which He sent down upon His Prophet. (IV:136)

saying, "If Allah Almighty wants to put real faith in the heart of a servant, He looks at his heart. For what reason? Because the dwelling-place or station of faith is the heart. And He looks there. If the conditions which Allah Almighty wants are right in your heart, He gives that real faith to your heart."

What are those conditions, what is Allah Almighty looking for in our hearts? Grandsheikh was saying that when every enjoyment of this world is taken away from your heart, then it is ready to be the station of real faith. If He sees that in your heart you are still putting somewhere enjoyment of this life, of dunya, hubb ad-dunya, love of this life, of this world - if He looks and sees a little bit, even from one side, He never gives, because it is dirtiness to put the love of this life, of this world, into a heart that belongs to the Lord, Allah Almighty. It is dirty, dirtiness.

You know (ladies more than gentlemen know) that if you put milk in a pot in which there is a little bit of dirtiness, it is going to be sour. Therefore, don't say, "What does it matter if there is a little bit of enjoyment of this life in our hearts? If we keep it there, what does it matter?"

No. During the Night Journey⁵⁸, the Angel Gabriel brought to the Prophet, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., wine in one pot and milk in another pot, saying, "You may choose one of these." He chose milk, and Gabriel said, "you have chosen the one of fitrah, nature."

That means that milk makes the physical body grow; that is nature, suitable for nature. And milk also represents fitrat al-Islam, the nature of Islam. Wine, no; wine destroys. Therefore he chose milk. And as milk is destroyed, soured, by a small amount of dirtiness in a pot, so our hearts are a pot for faith, and a little bit of dirtiness from this world makes our faith sour.

⁵⁸ The Holy Prophet's miraculous Night Journey (al-Isra) and Ascension (al-Me'raj) to Jerusalem and to the Seven Heavens during the tenth year of his prophethood

Therefore, Allah Almighty is looking. When you are going to be finished with this world's enjoyment, then it may be put in there, Allah Almighty giving you real faith. Don't be foolish and say, "How can I leave the enjoyment of this life?". Do you know, when real faith gets into your heart, what kind of enjoyment you will feel? - do you know that? If you do not know, don't say, "How can I leave my enjoyment? I am enjoying a little bit during this life; I am still looking around and enjoying." But what are you going to enjoy in prison?

You are in prison. What is enjoyment in prison? But real faith takes you out of prison, taking you from darkness to the lighted Heavens. Such a person may put one foot on earth and the other he may put in the Heavens, being free for everything. Now you are in prison, but when that real faith enters, you will not be in need to ask enjoyment from this dirty world. It was the "toilet" for the other, that great world; yes. What enjoyment can you have in the toilet? Nothing!

Awliya, they know the hidden wisdoms, secret wisdoms, for everything. I am not saying that a person may reach that level in one step; that may be only for awliya. But it is possible to take away from your heart, little by little, the enjoyment of this life.

You may speak and address your ego or yourself directly: "We are in this world but we are not here for playing. Playing is for little boys. But you, O Thomas, or Nicholas; or 'Ali," you must say to yourself, "up to where are you going to play? No limit for you for that playing? When are you going to return to Reality?"

And little by little you will take your foot away from those enjoyments, moving it to Enjoyment Oceans through real faith. A little bit at a time; each time you may put it less, less, less. Then you are going to be a person who may eat, may drink, but for living; you are not going to be a person who lives only for eating and drinking.

You must understand these two ways. Most people are living for eating and drinking only. Then what is the difference between themselves and animals? They live for eating and drinking only, and if a person lives for eating and drinking, no difference between himself and animals. Therefore we are saying that the Prophet and his companions were taking less to eat and drink because they were only in need of it to live.

You can understand in which class you may be of the two classes. Are you living for eating and drinking only? Then you must put yourself in the zoo. But if you are eating and drinking to live, you can be a distinguished one among people, and you can balance yourself, also. Then you are with the Prophet and his Companions, and that makes you, step by step, to come into the station of real faith and opens your heart to real faith.

And we are asking forgiveness. This is an important lecture that we are in need of: that in tariqats we are making a limit for enjoyment, even of halal, so that the followers of tariqats, and particularly the followers of the Naqshbandi Tariqat, may step into the area of real faith.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. For real faith, we are in need to know about Akhirah, the Hereafter. We must know, because as long as our hearts are occupied with this world, it is difficult for real faith to make room in our hearts.

The Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., was saying, "La burika li fi samihatin lam azdat fihi ilma - if a day comes in which I do not increase in knowledge, it is not a blessed day for me." Yes, when the Prophet, p.b.u.h., says that each day must be more than the day before it in divine knowledge, it is an important rule for everyone.

If we increase in something for this life, that is nothing; rather we must increase each day in ma'rifat, divine knowledge. And it is a part of divine

knowledge, perhaps an obligatory part, for every believer to know about the Hereafter, as a person who wants to go to Hajj, to pilgrimage, asks about Jiddah, Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah⁵⁹ because he intends to make Hajj and is in need to know; as much as he can know about Hijaz, he tries to learn.

Then what about if we believe in Eternal Life, the Life Hereafter, and each day we are coming closer to the Life Hereafter or to Eternal Life - is it not necessary to ask about that Life and about the Hereafter? It is a part of divine knowledge to learn and to know, day by day increasing in knowledge.

What is the benefit of increasing in that knowledge? We may mention two kinds of benefits when you increase in that knowledge about that life in the Hereafter. The first of them is that our hearts, little by little, get to be in contact with the Eternal Life and its conditions. We are taking our heart from this temporary life's conditions and enjoyments, taking it to the Eternal Life's conditions and enjoyments. And that is important, because the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said that the most dangerous thing or thought for a believer is to have in his heart the love of this life.

The love of this life is the source of every sin. "Hubba-d-dunya rasu kulli khatayah, every evil has its source in the love of this life," and through that love devils may be able to control our thoughts and to put their hands into our hearts and take us toward evils. Therefore the Prophet said that it is the most dangerous thing for believers to have their hearts attached to this life's pleasures and its love.

Yes. We have been ordered to take from this life only what is enough for ourselves, because if it is more and more, it is going to be more of a burden on ourselves, preventing us from moving toward Allah Almighty, like a person putting big iron balls-and-chains on his feet; then he can move only

⁵⁹ Makkah the Blessed, Madinah the Radiant, Islam's two holiest cities, located in the western sector of Saudi Arabia known as the Hijaz

with too much difficulty. It begins with little balls. Then, as much as our property, our dunya, increases, that ball is also going to be bigger and bigger and bigger, and then you are going to be like an ant beside that huge iron ball: if it comes on you, it flattens you out.

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Therefore the advice of all the prophets is that you must take only that thing which you may be in need of. Leave more for everyone else so that you may be free for walking toward Allah Almighty, because He is waiting for you.

That knowledge is the most necessary knowledge for everyone to know about the life of the Hereafter. It makes us free from this heavily-burdened life's conditions and makes our hearts also free for the love of Allah Almighty, for divine love. You must be only of your Lord, Allah Almighty! Don't put a partner with Him - no partner, because Allah Almighty never likes to have a partner with Himself, and this life, the world, dunya, becomes a partner for the love, the divine love, of your Lord Almighty.

When you increase in the love of the permanent life, the Eternal Life, then Allah Almighty gives to your heart from His divine lights and darkness goes away; because the more the love of this life gets into your heart, the more darkness gets in, also. In darkness all bad thoughts and fears grow, and dissatisfaction and unhappiness grow in your heart because darkness makes them grow; but if darkness goes away from your heart, then it is lighted everywhere. No more troubles or unhappiness can be in your heart;

lights, divine lights, give you satisfaction and peace, and as much as those lights grow in your heart, so much peace and happiness and satisfaction will grow in your heart, and hope will grow each day. That is the aim of the hadith of the Prophet, p.b.u.h., when he asked to increase each day in divine knowledge about the Eternal Life and about the Lord, Allah Almighty. That gives more lights to your heart, and each day more satisfaction, each day more peace, come into your heart, and each day more pleasure.

Prophets and their followers, saints, awliya, each day are more joyful; they find in themselves more pleasure each day for the reason that they know that now they are approaching the Divine Presence of their Lord. Each one of the Prophet's Companions knew, and also every wali, saint, knows when he is going to leave this life; when they are going to die, they know, and every person of real faith also knows the day of his death.

Bilal, may Allah bless him, a Sahabi, companion of the Holy Prophet, p.b.u.h., knew that he was going to die on the next day; and the day before that, and the week before, also, he was so happy. People around him were crying but he was very happy, very pleased and joyful, saying, "Oh-h! Tomorrow I will meet with my beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., and with his beloved Companions."

And all saints are asking for the day when they are going to meet their Lord, their Prophet, and his beloved Companions. One king-sized wali, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi, may Allah bless him, ordered that the night he died should be like a wedding night for him, and he ordered that no one should cry or be sad. Have you seen a wedding at which the person who is going to his wedding night, and the people around him, cry? No; very happy on that night. For what? "Because I am going to meet my beloved Lord, Allah Almighty, whom I love, for whose divine love my life has been lived; I am going to meet Him. Why are you sad? I am so happy and joyful. Then why are you crying? I don't like this," he was saying. And every one of those

whose hearts are for their Lord and whose hearts are full-up with their Lord's love, they never look at this life and its enjoyments; no taste for anything from this life. Their physical bodies have needs for eating and drinking and procreation, but they do not taste that. They know what is the reality of this life, and they know about the life of the Hereafter in Paradise, and they know what is the Divine Presence.

If you say that there is beauty on earth, it is only that one drop which, if you put a needle in an ocean, the needle takes from that ocean - a little drop: all the beauty that this world and people have been given, it is only that drop, that little drop, from the endless Beauty Oceans of our Lord. They know about absolute Divine Oceans, about Mercy Oceans, about Beauty Oceans, about Power Oceans, about Wisdom Oceans, about endless Knowledge Oceans; they know. What thirsty person can take anything from one drop? They are asking to sink into those Oceans, and Allah Almighty is calling them, "O people, come to Me! Give your love to Me, not to anyone else. Nothing is suitable for your love except Me. Give it to Me!".

Therefore, we are in need of more knowledge every day so that we may increase in the knowledge of the Eternal Life; and when this life's pleasures go away, then Allah Almighty gives instead those pleasures from among His divine pleasures. Don't suppose that if you do not look at this world's pleasures He leaves you without pleasures, no; He gives another kind of pleasure, real pleasure. This is an imitation life, it is not real life; and those who understand this, they are running after real life, real pleasure, real Beauty Oceans, to be there.

This is one benefit for the one who understands the real life and its pleasures, so that he begins to ask for more and to run after it. And the second benefit is that then you will leave every badness, you will leave devils' ways and their advice; you will see them as dirty and you will say to yourself, "Don't touch them! Leave them alone."

If you have been asked to leave halal enjoyment little by little to be with divine enjoyment, then what about for haram enjoyments, for which all devils are doing advertising? Yes, advertising; now all devils are advertising for haram, for every forbidden thing, as Satan advertised the Forbidden Tree to Adam in Paradise. He said, "Oh, this is very good; you must eat. If you eat from this, you will never go out of Paradise."

He was the first advertiser, Satan, and he cheated Adam and Eve. (The first to believe in that advertisement was a woman; they quickly accepted that. Hawwa, Eve, was saying that this must be a very good thing because the Advertiser is saying such a thing about this Tree.) And now Satan and his armies from ins wal-jinn, from among mankind and jinn, are all advertisers for haram, for forbidden things. How can you be in safety now in our time?

It is so difficult, and the Prophet said that there will come a time on my nation, on my ummah, when to keep their faith will be more difficult than keeping fire in their hands; yes. Every place you go is full-up with advertisers for forbidden things, and if you are not supported by divine knowledge that makes clear to you the Eternal Life and its pleasures, it is too difficult to save yourself from these advertisers, from Satan and his volunteers.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. We must try to know about our Lord, ma'rifat Allah⁶⁰, and the way passes through knowing yourself. Then you may find a way to the knowledge of Allah Almighty, divine knowledge.

As long as you are interested in this world and everything about it, you are going to be heedless of yourself; and people now are just occupied with everything that is around themselves. We must cut, little by little, step by step, our interest in what is around us, to turn our interest to ourselves.

⁶⁰ Spiritual knowledge of God Most High

We know about this life, adh-dhahir al-hayāt ad-dunya⁶¹, outward knowledge; we know about this world. But we do not know what is the wisdom for this planet - why, amidst a huge universe, this is the only living planet. To the One who made it and gave our life-conditions on this planet, there must be not only one but perhaps so many wisdoms for this planet's being a living planet. But we always use material eyeglasses to look at it and never use our hearts to understand what is the wisdom or wisdoms for this planet, which is for the Children of Adam.

It is only a very small part of this universe, and the universe is of two kinds of materials. One, as we see, is this world and the skies. But there is another universe which is not of the same kind as this universe, and it is impossible for the Children of Adam to look at that universe with their physical bodies.

But we have been given an authority by the Creator, by Allah Almighty, to look at everything in existence which He has created. And we have, in Islamic mysticism, tasawwuf, a rule: It is impossible to know the Creator or to find a way to divine knowledge without knowing His creatures. If you do not know about this [tape recorder], how can you claim to find a way to its inventor?

Therefore, whoever wants to find a way to divine knowledge of the Lord, Allah Almighty, first he must know His creatures - every kind of creature in existence. Then he may find a way; otherwise, it is impossible to leave something unknown from among His creatures and to ask to know about the Creator. And mankind or the Children of Adam have been created and granted an authority and capability or ability to know every thing in existence, to make everyone surrounding or encircling them under their authority.

Yes, we have been given that, because, among all creatures, Allah Almighty only made mankind to be deputies for Himself. When a person is going to be a deputy for the Lord, Allah Almighty, he is granted such spiritual or divine

⁶¹ The outward things of the life of this world

powers which give an authority to him to look at everything in existence; otherwise he is not a deputy. But we are still candidates for that, as 'Abdur-Rahim is a candidate to be an adult - yes to be a father, but not now; he is a candidate. And we, also, all mankind, all the Children of Adam, are candidates to be deputies, real deputies, if we leave off imitation and walk into the reality of being a deputy.

Allah Almighty sent prophets, peace be upon them, and He addressed one of those prophets, saying, "O My prophet, be enemy to your nafs. You must be against your ego because it is that one which is against Me. Be against your ego because it is the one, the single one among all creatures, which goes against Me." That is what does not let us reach that real deputy's station, always staying on earth, not reaching our heavenly, real deputies' stations in the Divine Presence.

Allah Almighty was addressing one prophet, and if He addresses one, it means it is for all. And if all the prophets have been ordered to be against their egos, then what about ourselves?

Whoever is in agreement with his ego goes against his Lord; and whoever goes against his ego, he is going to be with his Lord, always agreeing. And it is impossible for a person to take all authority in existence as a real deputy until he is going to be absolutely against his ego. If he sometimes goes with his ego - even if he is mostly against it but sometimes with his ego - it is impossible for him to reach that real deputy's station. And every message that has come from Allah Almighty to His servants is: "O My servants, if you claim to be My servants, you must be against your egos. If you are not against your ego, you can't be My servant. It will pull you to itself."

Therefore we may summarize all the messages of the messengers of Allah Almighty, which are saying to people, "O people, you must be against your egos." The first sin was done for our ego; our ego went against the order, the holy command, of Allah Almighty, and then Adam and Eve came down from

Paradise onto the earth. The one who goes against the Lord's will must be punished; and there is no punishment for you or for anyone until he goes against his Lord, nor any happiness or peace or success or honor for a person until he is going to be against his ego.

When Adam went against his Lord's command, quickly punishment came to him and made him come on earth. He cried for three hundred years in Serendib, Ceylon⁶²;" all his tears flowed down, becoming precious stones (it is precious when these tears come for the sake of Allah; that is precious, not for anything else). He was so angry with his ego and stood against it, and when he turned to be against his ego, Allah Almighty opened Paradise to him: "To you and your followers, those who are against their egos - this Paradise is open to them. They are still in prison. I am imprisoning you and your descendants on this planet, but you may get out of that prison by My divine authority."

One prophet, Sayyidina Yusuf, Joseph, was in prison in Egypt, and that prison was the worst prison on earth. No one entered it and came out alive or without losing his mind; but he entered and for more than forty years he lived there and came out safe in his mind and body. Nothing was lacking; perfect. Why? He was in prison, but he had been given divine authority by his Lord, Almighty Allah, and he was free throughout the whole universe and was permitted to be in the Divine Presence, not in prison.

Therefore, if anyone may be able to imprison his ego, Allah Almighty gives to him an authority through his soul, and he is free to be in East and West, or on earth or in the Heavens; to be one, to be one hundred, to be one thousand - yes, to be 124,000. He may be even more than that, 700,000; if there may appear now in our time a person who is able to be against his ego and to put it in prison, he may be given 700,000. As we are taking from this

⁶² According to Islamic tradition, when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise for disobeying God, they came to this earth in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

one physical body, it may be in 700,000 forms, its source coming from our spiritual power, looking and listening and speaking and able to do everything.

That is a dress of Paradise. Therefore you must know about the life of the Hereafter so that this life becomes small and pleasure in this life is going to be, in front of that huge light, a small thing. The more this life becomes small in your eyes, the more the life in Paradise becomes bigger.

That is a dress in which Allah Almighty clothes His sincere servants. It begins by being seven, up to 700,000 now in our time, that dressing of Paradise, and in Paradise you can't say how many there are going to be for you. The real deputies are clothed in this way from Paradise, a divine dress.

When I say a "divine dress," it means that Allah Almighty clothes them in His divine attributes, and no one can give a limit for the divine attributes; everyone who is His real deputy, Allah Almighty clothes him in His divine attributes. At that time you are going to be a real deputy; when you are clothed in them, finished. "Wa sakhkhara lakum ma fis-samawati wa ma fil-ardi jami'an⁶³": that is the verse which indicates that status for ourselves. We have been given that power, that authority, to be in all the universe.

And the way on which we are marching to reach that authority is only one, as Allah Almighty advised His prophet, saying, "Be against your ego," and no need for anything else, "When you are going to be against your ego, it will be all right; you may come to Me. Because your ego is against Me, I am asking from My servants, if they want my pleasure with themselves, that they must be against their egos."

You may fill whole world with worshipping; it is easy. But to be against your ego once - it is more important. And during this holy month, Allah Almighty is

⁶³ And He has subjected to you whatever is in the Heavens and whatever is on the earth altogether (XLV:13)

teaching His servants how they can be successful in being against their egos.

Fasting teaches us to be against our egos. Therefore it is the most important worship that Allah Almighty has ordered for all nations through His prophets. And we must ask forgiveness from Allah Almighty because for so long we have been going along with our egos, not against them, and because for so long they have been going against our Lord and not going with Him. And we are saying, "Astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah⁶⁴"

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. May Allah bless you. Allah Almighty blesses those people who declare war against their egos. Everything, every help that they may ask, Allah promises to give them, and difficulties are going to be made very easy and unsolved problems are going to be solved by divine help.

We must know which things bring divine help to ourselves and which things make divine help go away from us; if you know, that is a key, opening to you. Not only from one side will come to you divine help; from the Heavens, from the earth, from the East, from the West, from every direction, divine help will flow to you, as Allah Almighty is mentioning in the Holy Qur'an that, o people, if you keep your Lord's commands and advice, at each one foot's distance you may eat from the earth and from the Heavens.

If you can keep His divine advice to you, He promises to give you everything. Wherever you may step, everything will come to you from the earth, reaching you, or from the Heavens, coming on you. And it is so important a thing; to keep His divine advice opens to you everything from every direction. And the contrary, also. It means that if you do not listen to His divine advice, from every direction every open door becomes locked.

⁶⁴ I ask God's forgiveness

Therefore you must be very careful. So many times people accuse Almighty Allah of not opening the way for them, but that is a meaningless accusation because He gave us one key which opens and another one which locks. We are using the key which locks, not which opens. Through every prophet He has given those keys to His servants. But we are using them in the opposite way, and if you want to open but instead you close or you lock it, it is impossible for it to be opened to you.

Allah Almighty wants a very easy life for His servants; He does not want to make our life a heavy burden on our shoulders. And therefore He guarantees the riza, the provision, of His servants by His divine promises, saying, "O My servants, don't be worried about your provision. I am that one who is going to give you your provision. You must believe in Me and you must trust in Me. Am I not a trustworthy one for you?⁶⁵"

What is your answer? We may say "Yes" with our lips but not with our hearts. We are quickly running, quickly working; then how is it true? It can be true only if you believe and trust, saying, "You are the Trustworthy' One," and then you run. And Allah Almighty never, never forgets you; He does not forget even an ant. And I see that in the morning time, from dawn, birds are flying. They do not plant, they do not grow, they do not do anything but go and come back full.

To us, the children of Adam, Allah Almighty gives so many promises in His holy books, in the Holy Qur'an, but yet we have a doubt. We are not able to say, "O my Lord, You are the Trustworthy One; the Most Trustworthy One is You." We aren't able to say that; perhaps we may say it with our lips but not with our hearts. And the most dangerous method that Satan uses to destroy our faith is to make us not to believe that Allah Almighty is the Trustworthy One in promising us our provisions, making us to be in doubt: "If I don't work, how can I live? If I haven't any money, how can I live?" A person means to

⁶⁵ See, for example, XXII:58, XXIII:72, LXII:II and other verses of similar meaning

say that with money I can buy provisions, his ego saying to him, "O my good fellow, don't be foolish - without money you can't live!" That is the advice of our egos to ourselves: "You must have money for living. If not, you can't live."

Once Abū Yazid, Sultan al-'Arifin⁶⁶, was traveling, and he came to a town and entered a big mosque. He prayed behind the imam, and then the imam turned around like this to look at the people - who was coming, who was going.

He saw a strange person; it was clear that he was not from that country. And he asked, "Who are you? From where are you coming? What do you do?"

Bayazid Bistami Hazretleri, may Allah bless him, said, "Nothing."

"No work?"

"No work."

"No profession?"

"No profession."

"Then from where do you eat?"

Then Abu Yazid said, "Let me pray my prayer again. I thought that you were a Muslim but you are not yet Muslim, and I must repeat my prayer. How are you the imam here? What are you asking? I thought that you knew that my provision is with my Lord, and yet you are asking, 'From what are you living?'"

And he was saying, "Subhanallān, glory to Allah Almighty! You do not trust in Allah Almighty. Why do you not catch cats or dogs and ask them from what they are living?" he asked that imam. "You have a dog or a cat? Cats, they have jobs? Dogs - a job, a profession, learned ones? Why are you not

⁶⁶ Bayazid al-Bistami, the King of the Knowers of God

asking them but are catching hold of me to ask me from what I am living? Dogs and cats - from what they are living, I am living, also!" he said, very angry.

Particularly in European countries, I don't think that any cat or any dog thinks about its provision. Do you think so? Yes, fat ones here, they can carry their owners, even, carrying them away. I don't think that they have any worry within themselves about their provisions. But we human beings - we are not like them.

Its owner is a person and he is trustworthy; his dog or cat never think about tomorrow. But we are thinking, although the whole world is for ourselves. And Allah Almighty says, "I am your Provider; do you not believe in Me? Am I not a Trustworthy One for you?" But Satan always comes from that direction, making a doubt in our hearts and beginning to destroy our beliefs.

We must believe that even if Allah Almighty made the whole sky to be covered with iron plates and the whole face of the earth to be rock, so that nothing could fall down from the sky or nothing could come up from that rock - even if they were to be like that, sky and earth, you wouldn't have any right to be in doubt about your provision as long as He says, "I am promising you. I may give bis-sabab or bi-la sabab, through means or without means. I am saying that I shall give. To give you your provision, I am not in need of using means."

Once, at the time of Moses, p.b.u.h., there was a drought; no water, no rain, and people came to Moses and asked him to go out and make du'a, to pray for rain.

And all the people went out. They brought their animals, and then they took away the lambs to one side and the sheep to another side so that the lambs began to cry; and they took the little children, also, with their mothers, so that Allah Almighty might look at them with mercy.

Moses, p.b.u.h., took all the Children of Israel and went to a high hill (it was an old custom of prophets to make du'a on a place which had no sins on it, clean). They went, and Moses prayed and prayed, but no answer to his du'a. And then he asked, "O my Lord, what is the reason?" because if a prophet asks, rain must come, it must rain.

And then Allah' Almighty addressed him: "O Moses, among your people there is a nammam." A nammam is someone who runs to a husband to talk to him against his wife, or to neighbors, from one door to the next, to make mischief, to give harm - a slanderer. And Allah Almighty was saying that there was one person among that huge crowd, one man who was a slanderer.

Then Moses said, "O my Lord, please tell us who that one is so that we may take him away."

"O Moses, I have prohibited people to do that, and now you are asking Me to show you who that one is. But if I were to show you, I would be nammam Myself; if I were to say, 'That person,' then I would be that."

Then that person, the nammam, trembled too much, fearing Allah Almighty and saying within himself, "O my Lord, tubtu wa raj'atu ilaihi - I repent and I am sorry. O my Lord, forgive me!"

Allah Almighty forgave that person, and then heavy clouds came, and rain. The rains increased, increased, so much that if a person on horseback had gone into the water, it would have covered him. But at the end, no grains. There was nothing in the ears.

And then Moses was too angry: "O my Lord, what happened? This has come like bamboo - no grains."

Then Allah Almighty said, "O Moses, I shall show you My wisdom and My power. Make a fire in a tannur."

A tannur is an oven like a big jar, with fire inside. Moses, p.b.u.h., made a fire, and then Allah Almighty ordered: "Take a handful of grain and throw it into the fire." And Moses did that.

Quickly those grains grew, grew, grew, becoming ears; although the fire was burning, in the midst of the fire those grains did not burn but quickly became ears. And then Allah Almighty said, "O Moses, I am the Powerful One who can do everything; you must believe that I am able to do everything. You asked from Me rain and I sent you rain, as much as you asked for. Ask from Me your provisions and I can give. Without rain I can give; even in fire I can give. I am your Lord. You must believe in your Lord!"

Yes, we are afraid for tomorrow, but Allah Almighty, the Lord, is saying: "O My servant, I am not asking today for tomorrow's worshipping. When you come to tomorrow, then I will ask for your prayers for that day. Prayers are at their proper times; before their time I am not asking for them. Then why are you asking today about tomorrow, about next week, next month, next year? Why are you asking? If you want to keep it, you may keep it, but it may be that you have kept something that is not for you but for someone else."

Therefore Allah Almighty wants to take more heavy burdens from ourselves so that we may be lighter, we may be more at ease in this life. He wants an easy life for us but we are making it heavier, a heavy burden that we can't carry. If we believe with certainty, then our life is so easy. We have only been ordered to be in the time which we are in; we haven't been ordered to look after one hour later, one day, one week, one month, one year later. That is making troubles and difficulties for the life of mankind.

All creatures have itm'inan, confidence, within themselves. Why not for the Children of Adam, for mankind? What is the reason? No other one among creatures has been given a mind, no, and without minds they are living in confidence, in tranquility. But we have minds and we are not in confidence.

Therefore we must believe in our Lord, that He is able to do everything to make everything, to give everything, both which we can imagine or beyond our imagination, also; He is muqtadir, all-powerful to do everything. And every time Satan works on that point, particularly in our times; in our times he causes too much harm to people, to believers, beliefs, causing the destruction of their beliefs.

In this country there are so many foreigners; I must tell them, also. So many millions of foreigners are escaping from their countries and coming to England. I wonder if they are finding another provider in London. Do you think so, or the Same One? The Same One, the Only One - the Same One who gives to us here or in our homelands.

We are making our life difficult. That provision was apportioned before the creation of this universe, a long, long time ago; and it is like our shadow, following us, or like our ajal, our term of life, following ourselves for the limit of our life.

Our life is within limits, and our provision is within limits, also. You can't escape from death and you can't escape from your provision. You can't eat from his provision, he can't eat from your provision; everyone must eat from his own appointed provisions and finish and then go. No fear; if you know that, even if you are in your homeland, those provisions must come to you, because no one else can eat from them - they must come to you.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent.

Each time, we say, "Most Beneficent, Most Munificent." Allah Almighty is asking His servants to be merciful to His creatures, always mentioning and proclaiming His attributes of mercy.

You must also be merciful to each other because Allah Almighty, with His Mercy Oceans, gives to His creatures, and all creatures in existence take their shares from the Mercy Oceans which belong to His Holy Name, ar-Rahman. It is impossible to finish those Mercy Oceans which belong to His Holy Name ar-Rahman because everything that belongs to Allah Almighty is endless. And then, He is also ar-Rahim. There are Mercy Oceans which belong to the Holy Name ar-Rahim, signalling to His servants to be merciful to all other people and to everyone in existence.

We as human beings, the Children of Adam, must be people of much understanding, as Allah Almighty teaches us through His prophets and holy books. All of us were in the same universe before coming to this life; everyone's soul comes from the spiritual world or from the Heavens, and it is in this form during this life. All of us, we were in the spiritual world, all our souls, but I don't think that we were quarreling or fighting there. Do you suppose such a thing? Who remembers? Almost no one remembers. Only certain exceptions we have, when Allah Almighty opens the veil to His servant. Then he knows.

Our Grandsheikh, may Allah bless him, was speaking, and he asked a question: "What is the benefit of all shari'ats and tariqats⁶⁷? What is the aim of the prophets and of their messages? From the beginning up to the end, for what does Allah Almighty send His prophets and His messages, and what is He going to teach people through His shari'ats, and through tariqats, also?"

Tariqat and shari'at are from the same source, no difference; but now people have changed their understanding and are getting a wrong meaning of tariqat. Tariqat is mysticism in every religion, and it must be. As we are not

⁶⁷ While shari'at is the divinely-revealed Law, tariqat (literally, "way" or "path") is a path of discipline and devotion at the hands of a sheikh of an Islamic Sufi order whose spiritual descent may be traced to the Holy Prophet either through Abu Bakr Siddiq (the Naqhsbandiyah) or through 'Ali ibn Talib (all aother tariqats)

going to be without hearts - you can't be only a form, an external appearance; there is something inside, also - so every religion has some external functions or actions, and some others, also, which are inner, internal; must be. Do you think that oceans or seas are only what we see, blue water, with nothing inside it? So many creatures that covers.

Therefore you can't find any religion without mysticism; must be - yes. And our Grandsheikh was speaking and asking that question: "What is the purpose of every shari'at and of tariqats? For what do they make people to act, to work, to worship, to fast, to do charities, to believe, or to do anything else?" And he was giving that question's answer: That all the wisdom of shari'ats and their orders and actions, in every religion, is because we are, all of us, in prison during this life.

In the womb of your mother you were looking at Heaven, and also when it comes to this life, for one day, two days, three, four, five, six, seven days mostly, that new baby looks at Heaven; no veil on its heart's eyes. After that they are going to be veiled; the veil comes and no more looking. There are only certain exceptions among mankind who are not veiled, ever, not covered. And Grandsheikh said, concerning those exceptions, "I am one of them." Not I, but Grandsheikh was, and when he opened it to me, I was looking; no worry. From the time of his birth up to the end, he was saying, "O Nazim Efendi, I never veiled my heart." And the main purpose and divine wisdoms of shari'ats and tariqats is only to take away that veil that comes on your heart's eyes; it is only for that opening.

Therefore the Holy Qur'an begins with the surah of Opening, al Fatehah; that surah opens to you. If a person looks to al-Fatehah for the meanings which every scholar can know, he may be able to acquire all the meanings of the life of men through those seven verses of the Surah of Opening, and those

are the actions of the Shari'ah in Islam. But when you keep to that surah by way of tariqat, it brings you an opening through your heart⁶⁸.

When you reach that station, when the veils are taken from your heart's eyes, you will find yourself in the same universe that you were in before. We are still there, just as the sun is in the sky while it is on earth; we say, "The sun is here," while the sun is in the skies. It is just the same situation for your soul. Everyone's soul is like a shining sun and it has a station in Heaven, in the Divine Presence, never leaving its worshipping, never leaving its glorifying its Lord, Allah Almighty.

Don't suppose that our souls are sitting in silence, like this. All of them, in the Divine Presence, were glorifying and praising their Lord, Allah Almighty, and they are continuing the same thing. But we are here, and from that shining sun of our soul, only one ray comes and commands this body. If the whole of one soul's power were to appear in this world, it would quickly melt, going away; it would not be able to bear it. Therefore Allah Almighty only sends one ray representing your personality, which is in the Divine Presence, to come into this world.

And we are trying to be in contact with our realities, with our real existence in Heaven and in the Divine Presence. Therefore, prophets, messengers, came from Allah Almighty to make a connection through our hearts to those heavenly stations.

That is the meaning of all the practices in every religion; and finally the aim of every practice or worship in Islam is to make a connection from yourself to your real personality in the Divine Presence. The one who can reach his divine position is a real deputy of his Lord, Allah Almighty. That is the meaning of the Prophet's saying, "Mutu qabla an tamutu, die before you die,"

⁶⁸ That is, the meanings of Surat al-Fatehah which are commonly understood by Islamic scholars relate to the external observances of the Shari'ah, the Divine Law sent down for mankind through the Holy Prophet, while the meanings understood through tariqats relate to inner aspects and the spiritual life

so that you may reach real life in the Divine Presence. Whoever "dies before dying" reaches peace, absolute peace and absolute happiness; he reaches his universe that Allah Almighty gives to him and makes him sultan, majestic, in his territory in the Divine Presence. They do not sit like this, all together, but in an endless divine territory, each one taking what Allah Almighty gives to him, and no one knows his muhimmah, importance, in the Divine Presence.

Therefore, the more you improve in divine knowledge which passes through yourself, self-knowledge, the more you may feel refreshment in your heart. You may feel that you are in an endless world, never inside a narrow space; and as much as you improve in divine knowledge, you will want more, because you will receive more pleasure and ask for more. Perhaps you may send a little boy to school by force because he has not yet tasted anything of knowledge, but when he reaches a position of tasting what he reads and understanding it, he is going to be pleased with learning and to ask for more and more.

To the extent that you have more divine knowledge, it will give you more pleasure, more peace more happiness, more satisfaction; and we are also in need to know or to ask for more divine knowledge in order to reach peace during our lives. And the way to divine knowledge passes through ourselves. When you are sitting in your station in the Divine Presence - I mean to say, when there is a connection from your heart to your real personality in the Divine Presence - there will always flow from it to you, to your heart, more divine knowledge through yourself; because divine knowledge comes to your real personality in the Divine Presence, and you may take from there to your heart, and your pleasure will grow, never ending. Therefore we must try to practice the spiritual ways of Islam because it is important and necessary for our lives, in order to reach real life and to reach real deputies' stations while we are in this life.

Three times each day Allah Almighty gives His servants more favors; you must be musta'id, ready, to receive more divine favors. Those who find their Lord's divine favors find them during these three times:

During the twenty-four hours, from 'Asr up to Maghrib⁶⁹ is one of the most precious times when the divine manifestations come on people, and you must be ready to receive that with your heart. Then, from Maghrib up to 'Isha⁷⁰. And when night passes and there remains the last one-third of the night, that is the most precious time; the one who wants spiritual improvement, he must look after that time. Those first two times are also such precious times, but the most precious of all is during the third and last part of the night before dawn; it may be three hours, may be four hours or five hours or more, according to the length of the night. You must be ready at that time to accept the spiritual and heavenly rays that touch your heart.

No one reaches his divine station without awakening at least as long as the time of praying two rak'ats before dawn every night. That is a limited time, but at least you must be there, ready, even if only for two rak'ats. You may take a shower, ghusl -, that is best; either a shower or wudu, and then standing facing qiblah⁷¹, praying two rak'ats and then sitting, seeing to it that no one is with you except One - not your wife or your children or your parents or your friends; no one may be with you.

Only One is going to be with you, and you must think that at this time I am here alone; everyone has gone from me and only One is with me. My Lord is with me. From every direction, inside, outside, He is with me, and, O my Lord, I am with you. Then there rain upon you from Heaven rays of lights,

⁶⁹ That is, between the time of 'Asr, the late afternoon prayer, up to Maghrib, sunset time, when the fourth of the five daily prayers is observed

⁷⁰ From sunset up to the time of complete darkness, when 'Isha, the fifth prayer of the day, is observed

⁷¹ The direction which faces the Sacred House of God in Makkah, the Holy K'abah

divine lights, preparing your heart, taking it away from this life's preoccupations and making you in the Divine Presence.

One, two, three, four, five nights; ten nights, twelve, twenty, thirty nights. If you are keeping that with your Lord, then it should be for you; He should grant to you some lights in your heart, and it is the beginning of an opening for you. And then, when you feel that opening, you must continue, because the most important miracle is to continue on your way without turning back. And every forty nights a new light comes to gather in your heart until that light cuts the veil in your heart, making an operation, taking it away, and you are looking at your universe that Allah Almighty granted to you.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. "Innama yuwaffa-s-sabiruna ajrahum bi-ghairi hisab⁷²." We are in need of patience, everyone. Yes; the most important thing is to be patient throughout this life. Allah Almighty gives to shakirin, the people who are thankful for His favors, numbered rewards. But for sabirin, people who can be patient, the angels put down their pens; they are unable to write the amount of reward, and Allah Almighty Himself writes and gives rewards for those people who are patient.

Now, there are three kinds of patience. First, this world is not a place for being in pleasure always; So many times it is a very heavy burden, this life, and you must be patient. There may be illness; every kind of trouble may come on people. It is outside our wills. We are not able to take it away; by itself it comes on us. Therefore you must be patient, because everything in this life is within limits, and even if you are not patient, that trouble will never go away till its time is finished. Nothing continues; there must be a limit - for

⁷² Verily, those who are patient will be given their reward without measure. (XXXIX:10)

pleasure or for sadness, for troubles, for every kind of a thing. And Allah Almighty gives rewards to those who are patient.

And second, we must be patient for worshipping. To make wudu, to do ghusl, washing; to do prayers, for fasting or for pilgrimage - for all of them we are in need to be patient because without patience you can't do them. Your nafs never likes them, and you are forcing yourself to pray, to make wudu, to get up for night prayers, to do mid-day prayers⁷³; and for fasting and for Hajj, pilgrimage, we are also in need to be patient because our nafs, our ego, never likes them. More than for the first one, Allah Almighty rewards His servants because they are praying and worshipping.

And the third thing that is important for being patient is that you must keep your ego from prohibited actions, because your ego rushes at them. Most important of the three is to be patient when your nafs or ego rushes toward its desires, and you put on reins and control it. "Inna-n-nafs la-ammaratun bis-sou⁷⁴"; no doubt that our ego always orders us the worst things, not only ordering bad but worse and worst, and if you do not keep its orders, it gets to be very angry with you. Therefore, most people are afraid of their ego, of their nafs; so that it should not be angry with them, they look after their nafs very well, excellently. And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said, "O my Companions, do you know someone who, if you respect him and give him everything, in the face of your favors and respects to him he puts you down, and, on the contrary, if you put him down, he gives you too much respect?"

The Companions were very surprised, asking, "What kind of a fellow is that? We respect him and he puts us down, but if we put him down then he gives too much respect to us - what kind of a fellow or friend is that?"

⁷³ Refers to the voluntary (nafil, following the Holy Prophet's practice) prayers during the last one-third of the night, and to Duha, the nafil prayers of mid-morning

⁷⁴ Truly, the nafs commands to evil. (XII:53)

And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., answered, saying, "That is your nafs, your ego." As much as you give it respect, it puts you down; and as much as you are able to be strict with it, it is so respectful to you, saying, "O my Lord, as you like." As long as you say to it, "O my Lord, as you like," it puts you down.

We are respecting our egos too much and saying, "As you like," and we are working for their refreshment and happiness and pleasure. If for one day we would do for our Lord as we do for our nafs, we would be able to fly without wings; we would be able to blink our eyes and then open them in Makkah, or, like this, open them in America. But the whole day, the whole night, we are only thinking about how we can make our ego pleased, how we can give pleasure to our nafs. Is it not true? Who says that it is not like this?

You must not give that chance to your nafs; but we do give it. Therefore we are in need to be patient when our nafs rushes toward its desires. It is impossible to keep yourself if you do not think of your Lord's pleasure. Nafs is the one which is against its Lord; if it is against your Lord, how can it be with you? And it is the most difficult patience that we can practice: to stop our nafs' desires,

We have, in every religion and particularly in Islam, methods by which we may be able to keep our egos from their desires and to make them under our control, but it needs patience. We are taking some power, a little bit, from fasting, but it is not enough during Ramadan only. After Ramadan also we must practice keeping our nafs far away from its desires.

On some days, for controlling our nafs, our ego, we may fast - but not fasting from eating and drinking. You may fast with your eyes; some days you may fast with your tongue; some days you may fast with your hands; some days you may fast with your feet. If you can't do it the whole day, you may do it for some hours, even for one hour; you may say, "For one hour I am going to fast with my eyes, with my tongue, with my hands, with my feet." And most important, also, is to be able to fast through your thoughts, not allowing any

false thoughts to come to your heart; every tariqat, all forty-one tariqats, teach their followers to finally make a control on their hearts through their thoughts. If your heart is not clean from bad thoughts, it is impossible for the power and lights of real faith to enter into your heart.

You must know how your heart is going to be clean. If at any time a bad or false thought comes into your heart, it means that you are not guarding the doors of your heart, you are not controlling it. Satan is always looking around to find a way to enter your heart. When he enters, he puts bad thoughts into your heart, and those bad thoughts become bad intentions, and bad intentions go through your veins.

When they go through your veins, then your eyes start to look and your hands want to touch and your feet want to run after prohibited things. Therefore it is impossible for someone to claim that his heart is all right; if he does, I am asking, "You never think bad thoughts? They never come to your heart when you go outside, when you are not in the mosque?" Outside - yes! If he is able to say "No," then I am asking, "You are telling the truth, or lying?" And Allah knows who is true and who is a liar; and whoever tells a lie, "La'natu-Llahi 'ala-i-kadhibin⁷⁵". Allah curses liars.

Once a grandsheikh, 'Abdul-Khaliq al-Ghudjdavani, may Allah bless him, ordered a murid of his to keep his thoughts under control; if anything came to his heart of this world, this life's pleasures, he was to make ghusl, complete washing. And that grandsheikh also said the same about thoughts concerning Akhirah, the Hereafter. He meant to say that if a person thinks about rewards for his worshipping, such as, "I am fasting and I am expecting rewards from Allah Almighty because I fasted," or, "I am praying and I am expecting the rewards of Paradise because I am worshipping," that thought is falsehood.

⁷⁵ The curse of God is upon those who lie. (III:61)

You must not expect a reward from Allah Almighty for your worshipping because, firstly, it is not suitable to be presented in the Divine Presence, our worshipping. You must not look at it as something good to present to Allah Almighty's Divine Presence; rather, you must be ashamed.

What are we doing? As He ordered us, we are praying. Then what is the reason that the Prophet advised to make istighfar, to ask forgiveness, after praying, ordering that, when you finish salat, prayers, you must say, "Astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah, ya Rabbana. Ya Rabbi, aghfir wa arham, wa anta Khairu-l-Rahimin⁷⁶"? Because you must be ashamed of that prayer. It is not suitable to be presented to Allah Almighty; then how can you say that you are proud of your worshipping or your praying, and ask for a reward, also? Instead, you must be ashamed; you must say, "O my Lord, it is not suitable for You."

Once a good-hearted person came to pray; after all the others had come to the masjid, he was the last one, coming and praying at the door. He was afraid and said to himself, "If people look at me, they may beat me and throw me out as a person not necessary to come to this masjid, saying, "Go away!" He saw himself as the last one, as the dirtiest, one, as the most false one, so that he was the last to enter the jama'at⁷⁷ and the first one to quickly run away.

That is a very good characteristic, humbleness, and it is right; everyone must look at himself in such a way in order to be humble. If Allah Almighty did not cover our bad actions, it would be difficult for anyone to walk in the streets, but Allah Almighty covers with His mercy our 'ayub, bad deeds. And in the orders of tariqats, if anyone asks a reward for his praying and worshipping, that is a bad thought he must take it away and renew his wudu because of that bad thought.

⁷⁶ Forgiveness, forgiveness, o our Lord. O my Lord, forgive and have mercy, and you are the Best of Those Who Show Mercy

⁷⁷ Congregation of worshippers

We are praying and fasting only because He ordered it and because He is that one whom we must worship or who is to be worshipped - that One. As Rabi'at al-Adawiyah, may Allah bless her, said, "O my Lord, I am not praying to you for the sake of Paradise and I am not praying to You for the fear of Your Fire. But You are that one who must be praised, must be worshipped; You are the Lord. Even if you had not ordered it, still we would have to worship You because You are that one who must be worshipped and praised and glorified."

Then that murid of Ghudjdavani, may Allah bless him and forgive that murid and ourselves with him - so many thoughts came to that murid one after the other, one after the other, thoughts about dunya, about this life; and he had been ordered to make a new ghusl each time. That day he couldn't find time to pray five times because of ghushi, washing.

That is an important practice to take away bad thoughts. They do not go quickly; Satan does not go quickly or easily - never! You stop him from this side and then he comes from that side, saying, "Come with me, come with me! With me you may find pleasure." And our ego says that, also; our ego is also too much pleased with him, running after him.

Allah gives us a chance every Ramadan but we lose it after Ramadan. Up to the end we are trying to make a control but each day we are only guarding our stomachs. And our thoughts - thoughts are more difficult; we do not even guard our eyes, our tongues, our feet. Thoughts are more important than that because thoughts are thrown into your heart; if you do not control your heart, thoughts are thrown into it.

There is a kind of fly which goes on meat, a black fly. (Your country is too improved; you don't see it here, but in our country we have too many. If you need some, we may send them to you for exhibiting; you can make money, too much money, if exhibiting!) That kind of a fly goes on flesh in the butchery, quickly putting its eggs there, and quickly they grow. After a week

with no frigidaire, they multiply too much - multimillionaire! That opens the way.

Like this, if a person is heedless of his heart, quickly Satan puts eggs there. While you turn from this side to that side, those eggs, bad thoughts' eggs, open and become intentions: thoughts are thrown into your heart as the eggs of Satan; then satanic intentions open, and then, if you do not control your thoughts first, for intentions it is impossible. You must run after them - by looking, by speaking, by running; yes. That is terrible. Intention is in connection with thoughts. Therefore you must be very careful of your heart, controlling it.

In airports there is strict control of people so that useless people do not come into the country, making it bad. Yes, the English government keeps security, saying, "This person is no good; we don't accept him." But our hearts are open; everything comes and goes - doesn't matter, like a pub. In a pub, is any person forbidden? Everyone goes, comes, goes, comes - putting money, drinking, going. And on your heart, no control! If there is no control on your heart, Satan throws in false thoughts and bad intentions, and then endless troubles and problems come, and you say, "How can we solve it?"

No solution! If we do not look after our hearts, this world's, this life's complexities are never going to be solved; no solution. You must clean yourself from bad thoughts, you must look after your heart. People always are looking outward; even Muslim people, the Muslim world, also, have been cheated by external things. They are neglecting their hearts, saying, "No function for the heart. Islam is only outward things: tahārah⁷⁸, wudū, ghusl,

⁷⁸ The Islamic rules of cleanliness and hygiene

praying," and praying for half-an-hour like this, half-an-hour like this, half-an-hour like this⁷⁹.

That is not praying; you must pray with your heart. It is not to show that you are so long in praying; instead, you must pray with your heart. Allah Almighty looks at your heart and says, "My servant is praying now, but his heart is with whom?" And when your heart is with your Lord Almighty in salat, that is real prayer.

Once a scholar came to a sheikh; he had heard that he was a great grandsheikh came to visit him. When he arrived, that sheikh was the imam in the Maghrib prayer. Then the scholar, that 'alim, prayed behind him and heard him reciting too incorrectly, with too many mistakes. Then he said to himself, "Oh, I must pray alone. It is no good to pray with that person."

He prayed, and then he was in need to go out to repeat his wudu. When he went out, suddenly a lion rushed out, attacking him, and he ran - oh-h-h! And the sheikh was looking. "Go! I am saying that you must not disturb my guest. Go away!" the sheikh said, and the big lion ran away.

That 'alim was very surprised, saying, "O my Lord, how can it be?"

"O my brother," the grandsheikh said, "you are trying to make your outward appearance perfect, ornamented. Therefore you are afraid of the lion. But we are trying to make our hearts perfect with our Lord, and that lion is afraid of ourselves."

You understand? May Allah forgive us. We are in need to listen too much so that perhaps some good thoughts may be in our hearts, opening during this holy month. That is our hope from our Lord, Allah Almighty.

⁷⁹ That is, praloning the prayer, as if the length of time spent in recitation or in the various postures made it more valuable

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Who is a prophet? Prophets must be well-known because we are living in a time when people are fighting against prophets and going with devils. And from the beginning, devils have been coming to people to cheat them and deceive them, beginning by deceiving Adam, p.b.u.h., the first man, who was created in Paradise. Allah Almighty gave him the honor of being His deputy, but then jealousy and envy made everything worse, and then worst.

If a person is not a sincere servant to his Lord, envy destroys his faith, and it destroys every good action of people. The worst and most dangerous and terrible bad characteristic is envy; you can't find anything worse than envy. And envy is in hearts; its maqar, abode, is the heart. Where envy is settled in a heart, it burns every good deed that we do.

Satan was a worshipper. He did not leave even one square-foot on the earth or in the Heavens without putting his forehead on it in sajdah, prostration, to his Lord, Allah Almighty. And Allah Almighty also gave him from knowledge; as much as he asked He gave, and Allah Almighty made him also a teacher for the angels. He had a special station, a high station, among creatures; everything was excellent. But, as our Grandsheikh was always saying, if anyone wants a reward in return for his actions, his worshipping, that person is on the same level as the one who goes and worships the Cross, no difference. It is so terrible, because Allah Almighty is asking, "Ala lil-Lahi-d-dinu-l-khalis⁸⁰?" asking worshipping to be for the sake of His Divine Face only.

If He did not promise His servants to give them Paradise for their worshipping or if He did not threaten them with Hell, it would be enough of a favor for us, as His servants whom He brought from nothing into existence, to give our glorifying and praise, our endless thanks, to Him, even if there

⁸⁰ Is not the sincere faith for God (alone)? (XXXIX: 3)

was nothing else. And, o believers, everything in existence is glorifying its Lord, and saying "Subhanallah⁸¹!" glorifying Him with so many kinds of tasbih⁸². Even ants or creatures which are less than ants are saying it and glorifying their Lord.

For what? Because He created them and is looking after them, creating and giving them a position in existence. That is an ant, that is another insect among millions of kinds of insects or other creatures: but we are saying that even the smallest one is so happy because it is an honor to come into existence. And what is that honor? Because the Creator created them, giving them a personality in existence: they are something in existence, and they are glorifying their Lord.

But what about you, o Children of Adam, when the whole universe was created for you? Allah Almighty just created it for the honor of His deputy; and you are that deputy, you are candidates to be deputies. If you are walking on the same steps as those who reached the real stations of deputies, you will arrive; you must reach, also.

But we are not walking on that path. We are in need of qadam as-sidq. What is that? Qadam as-sidq means true steps, not "Thumma amanu, thumma kafaru; thumma amanu, thumma kafaru⁸³," as Allah Almighty says: "Sometimes, o people, o servants, you are coming to Me, worshipping Me, glorifying Me, but sometimes I see you running after Iblis, after Satan, after devils. You are respecting and listening to and working for devils. What is this? Your footsteps are not correct!"

Qadam as-sidq is that, if you put your foot on the right path, with the right step, you must be firm, not taking it back. But we are living in a time when it

⁸¹ Glory be to God

⁸² Litanies of glorification

⁸³ A paraphrase of IV:137, meaning: "Then they believe (amanu), then [kafaru]; then they believe, then they disbelieve (again)

is so difficult: if anyone intends or puts his foot on the right path, one thousand devils rush on him, attacking him and trying to take that foot back from that right step, some of them crying, some of them saying, "Oh-h! You must not do this because we are too young. We are still young people, we must live some of our lives." Yes, for ladies, for young men; don't they cry to you? Yes, crying and saying: "It is not the time to be on truth or on the true way - not time yet. We are young! When you are going to be like that sheikh, it won't matter."

Yes, they are saying this. Too many advisors, devils, giving advice; not millions - billions of advisors you may find for yourself: "Don't put this foot there; take it back. You must live!" Therefore the most miraculous thing for a servant is to continue, because it is not easy to put your foot on the right path, on the true way, and to continue; because you must move it forward for stepping on the next step, and one thousand devils are all catching at you. You must be strong enough, powerful enough, to carry all of them, to move to the second and third and fourth step. When it is "Thumma amanu, thumma amanu, thumma amanu⁸⁴," you must reach; but when you listen to those devils and their armies, then you must take your foot back: "Thumma amanu, thumma kafaru." The Prophet, p.b.u.h., says that Paradise is going to be so close to a person that after just one step he may be in Paradise, but then he takes back his steps and goes to the way of Hell.

Therefore it is so difficult to be firm on the right steps, and Allah Almighty is asking right steps from you, not with Him here (in the mosque) but outside with devils, with Satan. Therefore, if a person can worship as if with the worshipping of all people, it is not important. Important is to fix your feet or your steps on the true way - on truth, toward Allah. Don't turn your face away from qiblah.

⁸⁴ Then they believe; then they believe; then they believe

And you are putting this face toward qiblah, but what about your heart? To where is your heart looking? You must know; you must control your heart, the direction of your heart's face. That is the meaning of "Ala lil-Lahi-d-dinu-l-khālis?"

You are saying, "Mustaqbil al-qiblah; o our Lord, we are turning our face toward qiblah," but what about your heart? Qiblah is the K'abah but where is your heart? Your face is toward that K'abah and the K'abah is the House of the Lord; you are entering it but not looking for the Lord?

Therefore, it is a difficult time, or the most difficult time, that we are living in in our days. One century or fifty or sixty years ago you could find most people asking for faith, for religions, for the ways of the prophets, but now you can't find people to help you on the ways of the prophets. Most people are becoming advertisers for devils, cheating each other, deceiving each other, saying, "Come - leave that. It is superstition." Super-foolish people; and making the prophets to be of no value in our time but making devils too important!

The Seal of the Prophets, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., told about this, and just as he said, it is appearing. What is prophethood, and who is a prophet? The one who informs people about the future, about what will come on them, that is a prophet; because no one can know by ordinary means what is coming tomorrow or after tomorrow - even after one hour, let alone the future. Who can know what is coming after centuries or after thousands of years? Only prophets; and those are miracles for the prophets, to tell about something which will come after centuries. And as much as all the other prophets informed people about the last days and about the Last Day, and what are the signs and what will come on people, the Seal of the Prophets, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., informed us about what is going to happen day by day, and it is correct. If you look at his life and at his

sayings, you can find everything among his hadith, among his holy sayings, that is now appearing.

And we are saying now, today, that he informed and warned his nation, his ummah, about dajjal, anti-Christ; so many. Dajjal⁸⁵, the Anti-Christ, is the one who is well-known, but the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said that thirty anti-Christ would come, but not "king-sized" ones; the king-sized one is one, so big, but thirty little ones will come to make people ready or to prepare them for his acceptance, for his reception. And thirty dirty dajjals have already been among people on earth, living or passed away; you can see. I am not saying their dirty names - it is not an honor - but everyone knows who they are, these dirty people who are calling people to deny the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah.

They are speaking in the name of "knowledge," but they are liars and they are deputies for the big Dajjal. Now, throughout East and West. and even in the Muslim world, they are working. Their bad ideas are planted among the hearts of Muslim people as well; there are so many followers for them there, also. Therefore, it is a terrible time. Tuba, good tidings and honor and happiness for the one who can put his feet in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h..

You must be very careful, because their followers are not millions but billions on earth. Therefore there is coming a punishment from Allah Almighty - the greatest war, which will kill six out of every seven. During the big wars only millions were going; but now, because most people are followers, millions following the ways of the Dajjal, the Anti-Christ, for that reason that punishment is coming, and out of seven, six will die.

⁸⁵ Ad-Dajjal (meaning "Arch-deceiver") is the title of the fearsome imposter, foretold in many hadiths, who will appear during the end-time of this world to deceive and lure people to the path of Satan, prior to the return of Jesus Christ to this world

Don't be sorry about what is happening on earth; all awliya are saying this. Don't be sorry, even if they are from your friends, from your family. Allah Almighty will ask them: "Wasn't there anything that proved My existence? Didn't you ever see anything that might be a proof or might be a witness for My existence in the universe? What was in your head - straw, or a brain? What was in your head? How could you say that no Lord is in existence?" Yes. Therefore, don't be sorry that those who are denying the existence of Allah Almighty should be punished by the death penalty which is coming.

You must look after yourself, and Allah Almighty likes your steps to be toward Him. As your face is turned to qiblah, your heart must be turned to Allah, not to dunya, to this world. Allah Almighty created this world without looking; and dunya is the enemy of Allah because it takes people to itself, taking peoples' hearts to itself, taking the love of people to itself, not leaving peoples' love to be for their Lord.

Therefore dunya is the enemy of Allah, the enemy of prophets, the enemy of mumins, believers, and the enemy of all people. Yes, if Allah Almighty had been looking when He created it, it would have been Paradise. But it is not Paradise. People are quarreling, fighting, saying, "This is for me"; and you are saying, "It is not, it is for me," while it is not for me or for you but it is for Him only, under His command. And you are coming as customers come to a hotel and fight: "This is for me! This belongs to me!" Yahu⁸⁶, not for you! There is an Owner, a Proprietor - yes? And people are claiming that they are such clever ones, but still they are fighting for this world, for this life.

Therefore, o believers, Allah Almighty gives to everyone a throne, a throne in his heart, and says, "Let Me be there! Don't let anyone else come in; only let me be there. For that throne which is in your heart, don't let anyone else come there." And we are opening it - free country, free territory, everyone going, coming. I have a key which I brought from from Cyprus in my pocket

⁸⁶ Turkish colloquial expression, meaning "Good gracious!" or its equivalent

because I closed my house so that no one can enter it except me. Yes; you, also? But for our heart, we are not thinking to make it under control. We are leaving it; anyone may come and go - free house.

Yes, you must think about it. This life is not really a life. We are created for real life, and real life cannot be obtained until you give your heart to its Owner and put its Owner there. Otherwise you may be with the Anti-Christ and his followers. Everyone has been given enough mind to understand, and Allah Almighty is asking from ourselves at least the minimum of understanding. If we don't have that, we are not mukallif, without responsibility; if we can't understand, no responsibility, but I think that Allah Almighty gives everyone enough mind for understanding about this life and the Creator.

May Allah Almighty forgive us. We are in need to ask forgiveness from Allah Almighty, and the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said, "O my nation, I am asking forgiveness from my Lord seventy times every day."

If he asked seventy times, seventy million is too little for ourselves. We must ask forgiveness. Asking forgiveness, istighfar, makes our wrong steps to be correct steps and turns our hearts' toward His Divine Face. And we are asking and saying, "Astaghfirullah..."

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. People are coming into Islam, alhamdulillah⁸⁷. That is a good tidings, good news, for believers. And most are coming into Islam in Western countries. Alhamdulillah, it is a proof that the active power of Islam is like the day it came.

Here there are so many brothers and sisters, and all of them except me are young people; I am not seeing any old ones. All of you are young,

⁸⁷ Praise be to God.

subhanallah al-'Aliu-l-'Adhim⁸⁸! If Islam acts on young people it is right; it is perfect, also, because you can run out, and this is London - everything that your egos are asking for, you can easily find. Which thing is keeping you here? That is a spiritual power that affects your hearts and that is going to be so victorious on devils and evils.

Now, there is an important question about something which is a problem for new Muslims coming into Islam in Western countries: What they should do for learning and practicing Islam.

Now in our time, a lot of people are coming to Western countries to call people into Islam, but, as I see, they are the most fanatical people in their countries and they are also such hard people. Islam is the most tolerant religion which Allah Almighty has sent to His servants, but they never understand about tolerance in Islam. They want Muslims to be as they were in the time of the Prophet, p.b.u.h.; they say that anyone who believes and accepts Islam must keep all the rules in Islam.

That is perfection, but they do not consider that all the rules in Islam did not come at once, on the first day. Allah Almighty could have sent all the rules and all the Qur'an in one day, in one hour; Angel Gabriel could have brought it all, saying, "This is your Book; all the words in it, you may use." But Allah Almighty did not do that. Instead He sent all the rules of Islam over a period of twenty-three years. Is it not true? In twenty-three years the rules of Islam came to be complete.

We are not saying that the rules of Islam are not to be with people in our time; we believe that all its rules are suitable for the nature of man, but we are not prepared for those rules at once. When we make Shahadah, saying, "We bear witness to the unity and existence of God and the prophethood and the Message of Prophet Muhammad, p.b.u.h.," saying that we are witnesses, that we accept it, it doesn't mean that we are ready to carry all

⁸⁸ Glory be to God, the Most High, the Almighty

the rules of Islam at that moment. If you say that it does, it means that you do not understand any of the wisdoms for the coming of the Holy Qur'an over twenty-three years. Then, if you say this, you must make an operation on the heads of people, to cut them open and bring the Book, putting it inside. Otherwise, it is impossible.

Therefore, when the Prophet, p.b.u.h., informed us about the signs of the last days, he said that when the Last Day approaches, there would be in Islam people without wisdom; and wisdoms are more precious than knowledge. Allah Almighty says, "Wa man yu'ta-l-hikmata fa-qad utia khairan kathira"⁸⁹, the one who has been given wisdoms has been given all treasures." Therefore a little bit of wisdom is more precious than all knowledge without wisdoms, as a diamond is more precious than a great amount of coal.

In our time we have knowledge. But we are not in need of knowledge; rather, we are in need of wisdoms. We have thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of scholars, but they have only knowledge, without wisdoms.

They may be unhappy with my words, but I must say them. We are in need of wisdoms, and Allah Almighty says that wisdoms are not given to everyone. Wisdoms do not come from outside; the sources of wisdoms come through hearts. You are getting wisdoms by reading books? No. Rather it is something that you have been given through your heart. Therefore the Prophet, p.b.u.h., says, "Man akhlasa arba'ina sabaha, la-fajarat yanadiu-l-hikmah min qalbihi 'ala lisanihi"⁹⁰. He is saying that if anyone can be a sincere worshipper for forty days - and ikhlas, sincerity,

⁸⁹ Literally, "And the one who has been given wisdom has indeed been given great good." (II:269)

⁹⁰ For the one who is sincere (to his Lord] for forty days, springs of wisdom will gush forth from his heart upon his tongue." (Hadith)

means never letting anything of his ego's desires to be involved or to interfere with his worship for forty days - then Allah Almighty opens in his heart the sources of wisdoms.

But it is not easy. We are following the way of the mind and that means that we are never given any wisdoms. Yes, the most knowledge that anyone had been given was given to Satan. No one among all scholars could compete with Satan; he would be victorious. But nothing of wisdoms does he have.

If he had only minimum wisdom, he would have been the first to make sajdah, prostration, to Adam, respecting his Lord's command; before anyone else, he would have made sajdah when Allah Almighty ordered the angels to make sajdah to Adam. But he hasn't any wisdom. Therefore, he fell and was cast out.

Therefore, we are not in need of knowledge. But I am seeing that each one of the new Muslim people, here or in America or England or France or Germany, quickly wants to learn Arabic - to go to Egypt, to go to Azhar, to go to Hijaz; even to Pakistan, also, they go to learn. They want to learn Arabic or to learn Qur'an, to learn Hadith, to be scholars.

Yes, we know that there is a hadith from the Prophet, p.b.u.h, saying, "Talaba-l-'ilma faridatun 'ala kulli Muslim wa Muslimah⁹¹ - Allah Almighty makes it obligatory on every believer, man or woman, to acquire knowledge, 'ilm." But what are its limits? Because for everything there is a secret desire, shahwat al-khafiyah; for everyone, there are secret desires of their egos which make people to be on false ways, to think that Islam is only something to know, and a person begins on the way of seeking knowledge - more, more, more, more, more, more knowledge, running, running, running, and it is impossible to find an end for knowledge. And he gets to be tired and finally comes to forget, also, because of so much taking; then he can't carry it and begins to fall down until, at the end, if he can keep even Kalimat ash-

⁹¹ Acquiring knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim male and female. (Hadith)

Shahadah⁹²," it is all right. Yes; I am seeing our Western Muslim brothers and sisters. They are mostly interested in learning, learning, learning and knowing, and without knowing where they should stop.

Imam A'dham, the greatest Imam, Abu Hanifah, whose madhhab⁹³, way, millions of people follow, was explaining the meaning of that hadith that makes it obligatory on believers to learn or to know, and he was saying: "Afdal al-'ilm, the most precious knowledge that you may have, is only that which is regarding or which concerns yourself," or, as we can say, about what is for you and what is against you: to know everything that may be for you, giving you benefit here and Hereafter, and which thing harms you or gives you trouble here and punishment here and Hereafter.

Only that is important to know. It doesn't mean that you are going to learn all the Holy Qur'an and all the hadiths of the Prophet, p.b.u.h., and all books that are written or every kind of knowledge that Islam brought; it doesn't have such a meaning. But Western people have a deep desire to read, to learn, and they are not changing this characteristic of theirs. Therefore, when they become Muslims - like our brother here; he is asking for a teacher to teach him Arabic and then the meanings of the Holy Qur'an, the meanings of hadith, and it is going to be a heavy burden on him. And I am saying to him: "Stop; no need. Only what you may meet with during your life, you must learn and you must practice."

That is important: to know or to learn in order to practice, not simply to know, to possess knowledge - no. We are in need of more knowledge only to practice it and to use it in our fight with our egos. You are acquiring knowledge in order to reach wisdoms, because without wisdoms it is impossible to stop your ego's attacking and fighting you.

⁹² " The Shahadah or Declaration of Faith

⁹³ school of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh)

Wisdoms are like atomic bombs on your ego, but other knowledges are only simple weapons and in our time they are not going to work; simple weapons are nothing now. As the last days approach, the weapons of devils, the weapons of Satan, are improving, also, to take people away from faith and beliefs. But, as Satan is improving in his attacks and the methods that he uses to make people beliefless and without faith, so awliya are using wisdoms to defeat Satan and his assistants and helpers.

Therefore, this is from those tricks, satanic tricks. If Satan is not able to prevent someone from coming into Islam or from believing, then he uses another method, to make him be tired. When a person is tired, finished; no more can he follow the way or the rules of Islam. And Satan uses his new methods on new believers, saying: "Oh, now you are Muslim, you must keep all the rules. Otherwise it is impossible; you are not Muslim."

Five times a day prayer? One time is enough for you as a new Muslim, and Allah Almighty accepts even only one sajdah a day. So many Muslims do not make even that one sajdah, although they are Muslims; they do not say that we are kafir, unbeliever - no, they are Muslims. I can show you here in London Turks who are Muslims; they are not making even one sajdah each day. Then why are you saying "five times" for new Muslims? Five times worshipping is perfection. You may say, "It is enough for you to make one sajdah daily."

He wasn't doing anything before but now you are saying, "No. You must learn the Holy Qur'an, all of it, and you must pray five times, and you must fast all of Ramadan, and you must be ready to go to Hajj." That is completion, that is the height, but he must reach that completion step by step. But quickly Satan comes, saying, "No - you are not Muslim if you don't do it all"; and Satan has representatives, also, among people, to bring down their beliefs or to destroy them.

Therefore Allah Almighty, in His divine wisdom, at first ordered the Sahabah to pray only two rak'ats in the morning, and then came two rak'ats also at Maghrib, sunset time. Then, years later, came the order for five times.

We can use the same way, using wisdoms, and we can say to people: "If the Sahabah, the Companions of Muhammad, p.b.u.h., could pray only two rak'ats in the beginning, what is wrong if we say for new Muslims, 'Make one sajdah each day; enough?'" We are using that wisdom in that way, and then when I am coming the following year, I am seeing those people praying all the prayers. I did not say to them to pray five times but they are saying, "We can do it now." I advised them only to pray two rak'ats, but they are happy now with five times; they are asking for more.

Therefore, we are in need of wisdoms, and wisdoms are coming through your heart. And you may keep forty days. I am not saying to keep forty days and each day for twenty-four hours to be occupied with worship, no; but I may say to you: Only once a day you may do a worship, at midnight or before Fajr time, before dawn, so that no one is with you except your Lord. If you can't take a shower, ghusl, you may do wudu. Then you may pray two rak'ats standing facing qiblah, and you are saying, no one is in existence except You, and I am nothing. And I am with You and You are with me." Nothing to say.

Do it, repeat it, for forty nights. Then wisdoms will open a little bit in your heart. Through wisdom comes a light which makes clear this darkness in your world, and you may find a way to go on.

That is for forty days, the easiest method. It may be for five minutes; enough for you, but if you continue with that for forty days, you should find a big benefit. You should find yourself closer to your Lord and that is important: to feel that you are closer to your Lord.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Islam as a religion has rules from Allah Almighty, and Islam teaches people what are the perfect conditions for them during this life and Hereafter. And in Islam Allah Almighty does not force people: He only asks servants to obey by their good will and to keep rules. Divine wisdom never makes people to do anything by force or to serve or to worship by force.

Now, we are speaking on the Islamic rules and how we can practice them. Allah Almighty, from the beginning up to the end, when He sent His holy message to the Last Prophet, p.b.u.h.; used His wisdoms, divine wisdoms, to teach people and to train them step by step; and Islam came into perfection, from its beginning up to its end, over a period of twenty-three years.

Now we are living fifteen centuries after Islam came, and Islam is clear; nothing is secret in Islam concerning its rules. It is clear; it can be well-known and well-understood. And we are thanking Allah Almighty that in our time Islam is becoming more clear.

In our time, ideas or thoughts are so differing and opposing and specialized, and for each school of thought there is so much advertising; people are spending millions or billions for advertising their ideas. But Islam - no one is spending anything on it, nor on its ideas and principles, and yet Islam is going to be more clear. Anyone who looks at Islam can understand that, as a person looking at an artificial stone and at a genuine one.

Now it is going to be understood that Islam brought conscious principles which it is impossible for a person who has a perfect view of them to reject, or for a person who has a perfect thought or idea when he looks at the Islamic rules. Therefore we are not in need of advertising; Islam presents itself by itself to all people who have 'aql salim, sound minds⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ That is, a correct view, undistorted by prejudice or stereotyping

Therefore, in our days, only Islam is becoming more clear to everyone, and it is going to be more and more clear up to the time when Mahdi comes, may Allah bless him⁹⁵. Then Jesus Christ will come, and Islam and its principles and rules will become clear to perfect view. People now are interested, not a lot of people but even a few; and till those days come, we must see which rules or principles of Islam we must keep first.

I am seeing and hearing that so many Western people, learned people, also, are interested in Islam, but they are afraid of the Islamic rules, to put themselves under Islamic discipline. They are afraid because they see Islam as a perfect system of rules, and they say, "It is difficult for us to keep all the rules in Islam and to be a Muslim." And also our scholars, or Muslims who are doing Islamic d'awah, Islamic missionary works which is spreading throughout Western countries, are using a difficult method for everyone, and that makes people wonder about it; and most people are afraid to come under that Islamic discipline.

Therefore, as Allah Almighty says, "La yukallif-ullahu nafsan illa wus'aha"⁹⁶, Allah Almighty never loads on His servants more than they have capability or capacity to bear." Then, when a person comes and wants to be Muslim, he asks, "How can I be Muslim? What is the entrance to Islam?" we say: "The entrance is to say that I am witness to the existence and unity of Allah Almighty, and then I am witness that beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., is our Lord's servant and His messenger."

That is the main door by which we enter Islam. When a person says this, you must accept him as a Muslim. We can't take him out of Islam till he turns back and says, "I take back my words, I do not proclaim my witness to that";

⁹⁵ The divinely-empowered leader who will come near the end of this world to fight and destroy the Dajjal and his satanic works, as foretold in numerous hadiths

⁹⁶ Literally, "God does not burden any soul except with what it can bear." (II:286)

then he takes himself out of Islam, apostasizes, and then we can say, "Now you are out of Islam." But for the main entrance, we ask, "Do you accept the existence of Allah Almighty as your Lord?" and he says, "Yes." "Do you accept and do you witness that beloved Muhammad is His servant and His messenger?" and he says, "Yes." Then we say, "Come in." Then, if that person lives by it, keeping that Shahadah, that Witness, with himself, he is a Muslim, and if he dies, we wash his body and pray over it and bury it in a Muslim cemetery. Even if he does not keep any rule of Islam except this one, he is Muslim.

Then, he may use that, the first principle among the pillars of Islam; the most important pillar is that one. Allah Almighty asks from everyone to proclaim that He is in existence and that He is one, and all the prophets are witnesses that they brought that first principle of Islam, that first pillar, to people. They came originally to make people proclaim the existence and unity of our Lord, and when we believe in their prophethood, we affirm our Shahadah, our Witness.

Yes, if you make that Shahadah with your tongue, it is going to be in your heart. If this whole building is full-up with coal and you put a burning coal into it, what do you think? That one burning coal can make the whole burn. Therefore, if a person accepts and says that Islam is my religion, and I am witness to the unity and existence of my Lord, Allah Almighty, and to beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., as His prophet and messenger and His servant, that is like a fire, burning the darkness, lighting the darkness in our hearts and burning the bad characteristics of our egos.

First the Prophet, p.b.u.h., called people to proclaim the unity of Allah Almighty, and he said that I have been ordered not to put my sword in its sheath till people proclaim the unity of their Lord. This means that the main purpose of the message of the Last Prophet is to make people proclaim the unity of their Lord and His existence: calling people, and when they accept,

that acceptance makes some feelings to grow in their hearts, so that that person feels that I must respect that One who is in existence and who is my Lord, the Lord of the Heavens, the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the Children of Adam.

When that feeling opens in a person's heart, then we can say to him, "If you would like to worship and to give your respects, most high respects to your Lord, clean yourself." And even if he does not know the Islamic rules for cleaning, everyone knows to clean himself; everyone knows to wash his hands and his face and his mouth. But in Islam there is a rule concerning intention: you must intend, when you are going to do something, that I am doing this action to make my Lord pleased with me, or I intend to do this action as a respect to my Lord. Intention is the difference between ordinary actions and Islamic actions. When you make such an intention, that is going to be an Islamic action; without such an intention, it is an ordinary action.

And so you may clean yourself; it is a rule, an Islamic rule. If you do it once a day, it is correct, and if you want to do more, that is correct. And there are also rules for giving your most high respects to your Lord.

You may give your respect to a person by doing like this, doing like that, and those are customs for people. But we are leaving customs and practicing rules because Islam is a religion and it has rules. Therefore, if you are asking how I can give my respect to my Lord, I may say that you can turn your face in the direction of your Lord's House in Makkah⁹⁷, and you can stand and can say, "Allahu akbar, my Lord is the Greatest⁹⁸."

⁹⁷ The Sacred K'abah in Makkah

⁹⁸ These are the words of consecration which begin the Islamic prayer, salat, and they are repeated during the salat before every change of posture. What is being detailed here are the steps of salat, in which a worshipper first prepares himself for standing in his Lord's Divine Presence by cleaning himself, and then performs the prayer by standing facing Makkah, then bowing and prostrating

If you say this, it is correct. And if you bow yourself out of respect to your Lord, it is correct, also. And if you put your forehead on the ground, that is the most humble action that a person can do toward anyone, and it is not for anyone except One: you put your forehead on the ground once in highest respect to your Lord.

If you do that once a day, it is all right, and Allah Almighty is going to be pleased with you, also. The more you work or worship by means of your sincerity, the more Allah Almighty calls you to His Divine Presence.

Therefore, inspirations come to your heart: "O My servant, come to Me again." It is good fortune for a person to be invited once more to his Lord's Divine Presence. If he has such an inspiration, he may do it again and yet again; as long as his Lord accepts his worship and calls him, he may do it. Then it is the best.

But the most important point, more than rules of worship, for every new Muslim, is that Allah Almighty is saying to him, "O My servant, I am accepting you now as a Muslim. You may do, out of respect for Me, as much as you can; but I am only asking from you to leave alone everything that is no good for yourself or for others."

That is important; Allah is asking that. And, alhamdulillah, I am seeing that every brother or sister who comes into Islam quickly leaves his or her past life's activities and quickly comes into the Islamic atmosphere. That is important, and it is the best action for any new Muslim brother or sister: to leave every no-good or bad action that he or she was accustomed to before coming into Islam; as Allah Almighty said through His Prophet, "Tarku dharratin min maharam-illah afdhalu 'ind-Allahi min ibadati-th-thakalain⁹⁹," to leave one unliked characteristic, or unliked or prohibited action, is more lovely to Allah Almighty than the worshipping of all nations."

⁹⁹ Literally, "To leave off the smallest bit of what God has prohibited is better in the sight of God than the worshipping of both species (mankind and jinn)." (Hadith)

You can't do that worshipping; yet if you could put all the ummah's, all nations', all peoples' worshipping on one side of the scale and on the other side of it you put one bad thing that you are leaving of the bad characteristics or bad actions that you were accustomed to before coming into Islam, leaving that one bad thing is more lovely to our Lord than all the worshipping that all nations can do. It is sufficient as a proof that Allah Almighty likes that His servant should leave bad characteristics. Those bad characteristics are only our egos' characteristics, and Allah Almighty orders us to fight our egos so that we may leave every bad characteristic.

Therefore, if anyone wants to come into Islam, we have so many easy ways. And the Prophet said, also: "Iman, faith, has seventy-three branches." If a person says "La ilaha illa-Llah," accepting the existence and unity of the Lord, Allah Almighty, it is the highest form of faith to proclaim that, and the lowest degree, he said, is "Imatata-l-adha mina-t-tariq¹⁰⁰," to remove anything that harms people in their path, like nails or thorns or banana skins or glass. Sign of faith in the heart of that person. You can't say that the one who keeps such ways is an unbeliever; the Prophet says that he is a believer. Therefore, we may give rules to people or we may advise people to take what is easier for them from the rules of Islam, and it is correct. And "Ajalla-l-karamat dawama-t-taufiq¹⁰¹" - the most important miraculous action for a person is to keep something that he knows is best, not leaving it.

If you know that something is best or is the best way, you must keepit, not leaving it; even though in our time it is so difficult to keep the best thing that we know, maybe more difficult than holding fire in your hand, still you must be patient in keeping it. And we are asking Forgiveness from Allah Almighty for everything in which we are guiding people into difficult conditions and

¹⁰⁰ Paraphrase of a hadith stating that iman, faith, has over seventy-three branches, the highest of which is to witness to the truth of God Almighty's existence and Oneness, while such a simple act of human concern as removing anything harmful from peoples' path qualifies as the lowest

¹⁰¹ The highest of miracles is to be constant in following right guidance

making them run away from Islam, although Islam is the easiest and most tolerant religion.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. We must know for which thing Allah Almighty is going to be angry and which thing makes Him pleased with us, because it has an effect on our personalities. Every employee is too pleased when nothing comes on his record - too much, because if there is something on his record, it prevents him from rising. Everyone knows this. Then, what about when we are servants? Why are you not asking which thing makes a bad record for ourselves in the Divine Presence? We must know.

Allah Almighty sent all the prophets, and through every shari'ah - I mean to say the ways that Allah Almighty established for His servants to walk on and to reach His Divine Presence - Allah Almighty made one prohibited thing common. There is one haram thing, a common haram, that is prohibited by Allah Almighty in every shari'ah, through every message of His messengers. It is only one thing, never changing, and that makes Allah Almighty angry with His servants. We must know.

"Inni haramtu dhulma 'ala Nafsi¹⁰²" - Allah Almighty has made dhulm, cruelty, forbidden for Himself. Then what about for creatures? On Judgment Day, if even the horn of a sheep has pierced another sheep, Allah Almighty will take vengeance for it from that one, even for animals. Never is a person who does cruelty going to be left alone: Allah Almighty must ask from him and will avenge that person who has been wronged.

¹⁰² Truly, I have forbidden dhulm to Myself (Hadith Qudsi). The noun dhulm and its derivative, dhalim. (oppressor wrong-doer, cruel or un just one; plural, dhalimin), as well as the verb forms which are derived from it, are used again and again in the Qur'an to denote wrongdoing, physical and mental cruelty, injustice, oppression and tyranny in their many forms, including the dhulm which a person who commits sins does against his own self. It is in this sense that Sheikh Nazim's use of the word "cruelty" is to be understood.

That is the first and most important point that makes Allah Almighty angry with His servants: to be cruel. And what is cruelty? Everyone has a description of his own for cruelty. Maybe you have a description, and Allah Almighty says to His servant, "O My servant, you know what dhulm, cruelty, is. According to what you know, you must keep yourself from that cruelty." Anyone can tell what cruelty is, and He is asking that, if you know what cruelty is, you must leave it, you must keep your ego from being cruel. That

If you are going to give a complete description of dhulm, there is too wide an area for oppression, for cruelty. But it is not so important. Important is that, as you understand it, you must observe it; if you know that this is cruelty, you must keep yourself from that thing. For dhulm, cruelty, we are giving a wide meaning, and it is, in short, to put something in a place that is not suitable for

Yes. If you have a donkey and you put the donkey on your shoulders and go, it is dhulm because you must be on it, not it on you; you have put something in a place which is not suitable for it. You can put this carpet under your feet; you can't put it on your head - not suitable. You can be on this chair; you can't put this chair on your back. You must look after everything: if something is not in its right and suitable place, you are doing dhulm, cruelty.

You are putting women in the place of men. It is cruelty; to put a man in the place of women, that is cruelty. To throw iman, faith, out of the heart and to put kufr, unbelief, in the heart - that is cruelty. To look after yourself more than others, to think about yourself more than others - that is cruelty. So many things you can find that make you dhalim, cruel, and those things are dhulm, cruelty:

We are in need of divine protection, here and Hereafter; we are in need of a shelter here and Hereafter. And through every prophet, in every message which Allah Almighty sent for His servants to be shelters for them, the first principle is to believe. Beliefs are shelters; to believe firstly in your Lord,

Almighty Allah, is the greatest one, the greatest belief, which keeps people here and Hereafter.

But Allah Almighty makes a condition for believers' faith to be shelters for them: if you are a believer, don't clothe your beliefs in cruelty, because a person may believe but at the same time he may use cruelty as a garment, dressing in cruelty. That cruelty prevents that person from being sheltered under divine protection.

If you do not take care of what may harm other people, you may do so many bad things; and it makes you open to divine vengeance, because all the skies are full of the arms of vengeance. Don't think that if you do something, nothing will come on you; no. For everyone, and for every action, there must be an effect in the Heavens; quickly it may be well-known which action is right and which must be punished. And the arms of divine vengeance are looking over peoples' actions; every action is under the eyes of those guardians in the Heavens who are keeping the whole world under their gaze, and quickly vengeance comes upon those people.

Therefore, for every action you must be very careful. You must think about which thing you are intending to do, as sometimes those arms of vengeance reach your minds, coming from your thoughts, also. In everything, we are in need of intention - an intention to accustom, to train ourselves, an intention that keeps us away from troubles and from suffering, here and Hereafter. Therefore, in Islam, for every believer there must be good intentions.

Some people are coming to me and saying, "We have met with you and have listened, and we have seen that what you are saying is right." Then they are asking me if it is possible for us to follow you without coming into Islam; most of them are asking this. And I am surprised at people, why they are asking that. What wrong thing do they see in Islam that they are asking that?

Islam is one thing and Muslims are something else, because, if you speak truly, Islam remains in the Heavens, no longer on earth. It was a huma¹⁰³, a precious bird which flew from our hands, and we are looking after it, like this. No more is Islam on earth; Allah Almighty has taken up that Shari'ah. So many nations of the Muslim world are saying now that the Shari'ah is no longer our Law, and Allah Almighty is punishing them, taking the Shari'ah up. And so many times I am listening to our Muslim brothers here: they are saying that we must ask the British government to give us an opportunity or authority to bring the Shari'ah among ourselves. But you can't bring that: Allah Almighty has taken it away because we are not worthy of that Shari'ah.

Therefore, when people look at the Muslims living now they are afraid to come into Islam or to be called Muslims, while to be Muslim is an honor in the Divine Presence; if it has not a good name among people in our day, still it is the most honorable name or most honorable title for servants in the Divine Presence. But nevertheless, they must see that Islam orders to people only good actions and good intentions. If no good actions, a person is a cruel one, even though he may be Muslim; if no good intentions, he is a cruel one, even though his name may be Muslim.

Western people like to be realists; they are so proud of it. But they are not realists. If they were realists, they would realize what Islam is and what it means to be called a Muslim. "Realist" is only a word they say, not real realists; yes.

What is Islam? Good actions and good intentions, and we do not accept bad actions for Islam, for Muslims, nor bad intentions, either. Therefore Allah Almighty orders, firstly, to make your intention when you come into Islam.

¹⁰³ A mythical bird, Bird of Paradise

"La yuminu ahadukun hatta yuhibbu li-nafsihi na yuhibbu li akhihi¹⁰⁴": that is an intention. You must correct your intention, because a person who is not concerned or interested in others is a cruel person; an egotist is a cruel one, perhaps the most cruel one, like Pharoah. Pharoah represents all egotism in himself, and he was the worst cruel one, tyrant. Therefore Islam orders that, as the first step, you must clean your intentions and you must be clear.

If we had good intentions for others, we would not agree for anyone to be in kufr, in the way of falsehood. Therefore, if Muslims fought, from the beginning, their fighting was because they did not accept cruelty or did not agree with the cruelty of people in saying that the Lord is not in existence or to say that we believe in idols¹⁰⁵.

Why did Muhammad, p.b.u.h., fight with those people? Was he a sadist? Hasha, God forbid! But they were dhalimin, cruel people, because they did not worship the Lord of the Heavens and the Worlds: they gave their praises and respects to stone, to wooden idols. Therefore he killed them to take them away from that wrongdoing, that cruelty, not simply to kill - hasha, God forbid! But you are putting your ego in the place of your Lord and saying to it, "O my Lord, as you like! What is your command?" and therefore we are cruel within ourselves.

Therefore Islam is the best because, as the first step, if anyone bears witness and says, "I am witness to the existence of the Lord, Almighty Allah, and His unity," then he accepts and intends to give every right to everyone, as he gives to himself. Therefore good intentions begin at the first step; if not, the Prophet says, a person may be a believer, a Muslim, a mumin, by name, but he has not yet reached, has not really put his foot in the true area

¹⁰⁴ None of you has believed until he likes for himself what he likes for his brother. (Hadith)

¹⁰⁵ That is, the ultimate dhulm, wrongdoing and injustice, is denial of God's existence and sovereignty and/or ascribing it to anyone or anything other than God. For this reason God prescribed fighting for Muslims in the Qur'an to oppose the vested institutions of and paganism which held Arabian society in a strange-hold grip.

of being in Islam. "Islam" is a most honorable title; tuba, highest good tidings, for those who can carry that title with honor. Allah gives honor to His servants by Islam; but Muslims - they should be punished now because they are making the name of Islam bad, while the name of Islam is in the Heavens.

That is our dhulm, our cruelty. Therefore, no more support for the Islamic world from Allah Almighty; no more divine support is coming for Muslims because they are bringing down the name of Islam. We are the cruel ones. I am not ashamed of non-Muslims, no; ashamed of our nation, the Muslim world.

Therefore, when dhulm, cruelty is going to reach the topmost point, Allah will send a Red Wind from East to West, from North to South, to take away everything. It is mentioned in Hadith; I am not speaking from myself about that Red Wind.

In Arabic "red wind" also indicates hegemony; Red rulers, Red hegemony, Red Wind is coming from East to West, from North to South, covering the whole world. "Wa tadhhaba rihukum¹⁰⁶": rihukum means hegemony, power; rihun hamran, Red Wind, that power which is seizing the whole world. That is a punishment for dhulm, for cruelty. When people are cruel individually, then collectively they should be put under Red hegemony, a Red Wind, and punished here.

Therefore everyone must think about himself, particularly in our days. We must clean our thoughts. That reactor (Chernobyl) burned, exploding, and people are trying to clean every place from that radiation. But look at the radiation in your head, in your thoughts. Red reactors' radiation is coming on

¹⁰⁶ "...And your power departs..." (VIII:46)

thoughts, for all people; even in the Islamic world, where people are saying that they are all right, that Red Wind is coming - through thoughts.

Make your thoughts clean from Red radiation; if even a litt bit, you must be punished. That is important. Everywhere, in every country, people are coming to be in two groups. Most peoples' thoughts are affected by Red Winds. That is dhulm, cruelty, and that must in punished. Allah Almighty will never leave it.

Therefore we must know which thing makes Allah Almighty angry with us: that Red radiation makes our Lord angry. That is the first one; that kills. You may understand; we are not going to make it more than this. Those people may be angry but Allah's anger is on them. I am only saying this through my "Headquarters¹⁰⁷". You may believe, you may keep it in your heart.

And we are asking forgiveness for every bad thought and for every bad action which makes our names to be written on the cruelty-list. Be careful, every day. Every night you must say, "Astaghfirullah, o my Lord. If my name is put on the list of cruelty, take it away." Otherwise it is dangerous.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent, the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the Children of Adam; the Lord of Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ and beloved Muhammad, peace be upon them.

You must try to obey your Lord and you must try to give your love to your Lord. If a person does not give his obedience to his Lord, he is dhālim, cruel; if a person does not give his love to his Lord, Allah Almighty, he is also cruel.

¹⁰⁷ Sheikh Nazim's customary way of referring to his sources of inspiration through the the heart of his sheikh, Grandsheikh 'Abdullah ad-Daghistani.

Therefore we must try to give our love to our Lord and to give our obedience to our Lord, Allah Almighty.

Why are we sitting here? We are here for one hour, or less or more. We want to keep people here as long as we can keep them in this assembly because I am someone who has been authorized to address people and to call them to be obedient servants to their Lord and to give their love to their Lord; that is the purpose for which I have been authorized. Therefore, as long as I can keep you here, according to that authority, mercy is raining on you, and it is important to be under those Mercy Rains.

We know that practicing is difficult for everyone in our time because mostly people, and our egos, also, are calling us to be obedient to our egos, and our egos are also calling us to be obedient to devils. It is too difficult in our days to be obedient to the holy orders of our Lord, Almighty Allah, and now, as much as we can be far away from the outside world, we are sitting under a divine shelter and Mercy Rain is raining on people.

That is our gain because, when we go out, seventy devils are waiting for each one, to catch us and to take from us what we are carrying with ourselves; but we hope that we are gaining and taking from this assembly, from Mercy Rain. And we are giving them as an amanat, a trust, to our Lord, Allah Almighty to keep them, and it is well-protected in our hearts, Allah Almighty protecting it.

Now, as we said, we are in need of practicing to be obedient servants and it is difficult, but we must bear difficulties because nothing can be obtained without bearing difficulties. First, we must be patient, and we must try to learn how we can be patient. This holy month teaches servants how they can be patient, and you must try. Fasting is a holy order from our Lord, Allah Almighty, for everyone.

The beginning of goodness and the beginning of good actions is intentions, and we must begin to be obedient servants through intentions. You must intend. And everyone has a tongue to say to his Lord, to address His holy Divine Presence, saying, "O my Lord, I intend to be Your obedient servant. Help me!" Then it is a good beginning. I don't think that Allah Almighty will refuse that from you; no.

Repeat it a second time: "O my Lord!" If a servant calls to his Lord, saying, "Ya Rabb - O my Lord!" He promises to reply to His servant's addressing Him and He says, "Labbayk" What is "labbayk"? "Here I am," says our Lord to you.

Say it; you can talk. So much talking every day; two angels are writing, each day filling so many books with your speech. You can say this. And all history begins from that addressing: "O my Lord! I am asking to be an obedient servant to You.. Help me! I am asking to correct my intentions. O my Lord, help me! And I am asking to save myself from dhulm, from cruelty. Save me!"

And He says, "I am here. I will," "He says, "I will." ("I will" - what does it mean? "Muhaqqaq, definitely!") "I am reaching to you," He says.

"Reach to me, o my Lord, with Your endless Mercy Oceans."

"I will. I am reaching to you."

When a ship is in danger, it sends an S.O.S. If you are asking for najdah, S.O.S., from your Lord, quickly, quickly, as much as you may be in need, His divine help reaches you. You may try.

But no need to try: you must believe; you must believe. And that is the key: only say, only ask; it is impossible for there not to be a reply. He must reply, He does, reply, our Lord. Say, "O my Lord, save me from the hands of devils," and He can save, He is able to save you from everything.

That is a good beginning. Then say, "I want, I intend, to fast," and He will send His divine support for fasting. So many little boys or girls here, also, among our assembly, are fasting; they are able to fast because they are intending, and their Lord gives them divine support for fasting. We have been asked to be obedient servants, and we must ask for divine support.

Allah Almighty is asking from His servants to be respectful to Himself, and a part of being respectful to our Lord, Allah Almighty, is to be respectful to His servants. That is important. The twentieth century's people are very proud of the civilization of the twentieth century in which they have shares; every nation, particularly proud Western nations, is are proud enough of saying that it has a share in the twentieth century's civilization. But they have civilized themselves by technical means only. I do not see that they have civilized themselves by respecting nations or by respecting mankind; and we are saying this because every time a technological improvement occurs, I see that we are losing something of our humanity, and the more we look to technological improvements and means, the more we are going to be like those improved machines and to be robots: only moving, working machines we are going to be, without hearts. Therefore that is a danger, or the most dangerous sign, for the future of mankind on earth, on this planet, on this living planet, and we must return to the beginning of our humanity. We must return to that point from where it began and we must begin our movement toward the horizon of humanity.

And when is it going to begin? What is the beginning? The beginning is going to take place when you respect everyone who is one of the members of the great family of mankind. But we have lost that now, or we are going to lose it soon. Therefore we are in need of a heavenly mudakhalah, intervention, to make people stop and to take away those technological improvements, because, for the sake of these technological means, we have lost our humanity. Therefore, when Mahdi comes, may Allah bless him and make us with him, he will say, "Allahu akbar! God is greater than your

technology, even. Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar!"¹⁰⁸ and he will throw away all these technologies which are supporting the twentieth century's civilization. And we will say, "Alhamdulillah!" No more noisy sounds of cars or planes or trains or factories; yes, finished. "Oh, so restful," people will say. No more running; rest..

We are speaking about dhulm, cruelty. That cruelty is because of our intentions and our actions, causing people to be cruel. All human beings can now be put under the title of cruel mankind; believers and unbelievers, Muslims and non-Muslims, can now be called cruel.

What is the reason? Because people in the Muslim world say, "We are Muslims, we are believers in Islam, in our Lord's Holy Book, the Qur'an," but no one is practicing. Therefore they are doing dhulm, cruelty. And non-Muslims, because they are fanatical people or too proud to look into the Holy Qur'an, the Last Message of our Lord, not looking at what it is but saying "No" to it, therefore they are cruel.

Therefore Allah Almighty has opened to them a way through technology. They are not afraid of their Lord, but Allah Almighty is making them to fear from the technology which they have invented, trembling. They have built that reactor¹⁰⁹, and now the whole world is trembling, using that machine, the Geiger counter; Allah Almighty is frightening all the world's people. No more control over that (nuclear reactor): if it goes up, finished; impossible to be controlled because we can't order the wind, we can't order the rain, and wind and rain are taking radiation everywhere.

Therefore we must turn back. We are walking too much on the wrong way; all humanity, all mankind, is on the wrong way. "Don't enter!" There is a sign, "Prohibited Way," but all are running to it, till we must turn back.

¹⁰⁸ It is mentioned in Hadith that when the Mahdi, p.b.u.h., appears, he will announce himself himself and his divinely-appointed mission with a threefold utterance of "Allahu akbar!"

¹⁰⁹ Chernobyl

Out of respect for our Lord, Almighty Allah, we must respect each other. When we go on that way, no one respecting the other, we are going to share in what comes to them - no more humanity. And that is endless suffering for mankind in our time, even though we have everything and our life should be the happiest life among all centuries. But it is going in the opposite way: the most suffering people are in our century, and if it continues to run at that speed and no heavenly intervention, then by the beginning of the twenty-first century, all people are going to be crazy. No more time; only fourteen years. If there does not come a divine intervention, then all people, in East and West, from North to South, are going to be majanin, crazy ones. That is terrible!

Therefore we are asking from everyone that, in our own capacity, we must learn to give respect to ourselves, beginning with our families, in our homes. We must do it; we must try to give respect to parents, to give respect to old people, to give respect to small ones, to big ones, in the family; we must practice it, and that is a sign of being obedient and respectful to our Lord. In the community, we must keep honorable people, and if you want to be honorable, you must give honor to everyone, because Allah Almighty has given us an honor that He never gave to any other creature. He honored us, dressing us in honored deputies' garments and crowning us, also, with takrim, divine generosity, divine favors - everyone. But we are not keeping this.

We must keep it. And you must put an end to envy because envy takes away the respect of people for each other. The most dangerous illness for humanity is envy, and you must try to take it away.

It is a strange time now. Within in the family, you can see envy between husband and wife, envy even in a huge way between male and female groups. All males are envious of females; females, also, have so much envy for males among themselves. Those people say, "You men have more

rights," claiming that men do not give them their rights, while Allah Almighty gives rights to them and to you; always they are crying that they are madhlum, oppressed.

Envy - that is envy. The husband is envious of his wife, the wife envies her husband; among children, brothers and sisters envy each other, neighbors to neighbors and employees to employees, the lower ones to the higher, wanting to reach that point and looking at the other with envy. It is the most dangerous illness, destroying humanity, and you must try to leave that. If you do not try, you will destroy yourself plus all other people, because it is a fire.

Therefore we have been ordered to respect each other, and that respect takes away envy from ourselves. And we are asking forgiveness from Allah Almighty for everything, and particularly for being envious. It is not a good title for you, for a believer, to be envious; no, never. You must take it away, throw it out.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. We have just arrived at the last day of Holy Ramadan, and we are sorry because the divine manifestations that belong to Holy Ramadan are going away; but a new month, a new moon, is coming, with a new mercy from Allah Almighty. And we are asking from our Lord, Almighty Allah, to let us reach many holy months like Ramadan during our lives, and to take more lights and more honor each time.

We know and believe that Islam is the best for everyone, individually and collectively, because Islam is perfect individually and collectively, and its rules are suitable for the nature of people. It is also perfect for the life of mankind on earth, and it is perfect, also, for our spiritual lives and for our spiritual development. It is excellent, so that no one can even imagine

anything more perfect than Islam for developing people, individually and collectively, in their spiritual lives.

No one can bring any statement to that effect; anyone who can use his clean mind must recognize this. I must say "clean mind" because the twentieth century makes most peoples' minds dirty. They are saying "brainwashing," but it makes brains not washed but dirty about Reality, so that most peoples' minds are dirty, and therefore they can't understand the correct and true rules in Islam.

They are looking with black eyeglasses and seeing everything as black, and they use them most of all for Islam and its rules: when they want to look at Islam, they always put on dirty eyeglasses, painted with black paint, so that anything at which a person may look after that, he must see as a bad thing or with crooked lines on it. Therefore we are saying that people with clean minds, clean brains, who have not put up anything that prevents them from seeing the color and purity of Islam and its rules, may see that in Islam nothing is 'awaj, crooked. Everything is straight.

And in our time, people are objecting or trying to accuse Islam most for its rules concerning ladies, and Western women are trying to accuse the rules in Islam about women most of all. But, as we said, they are always fanatical people and they are always against Islam; they always put on dark eyeglasses painted with black coloring, which never show them what are the real rules and what the rules in Islam give to women.

In reality, Islam brought rules and rights for two kinds of people, rights for men and rights for women; and the Creator put those rules and rights for men and women, no one else. And you must know that men are created as men and women are created as women, male and female. It is impossible to say that men are equal to women or women are equal to men. Each kind of nature is just created as male or female, created in a

special form. People must understand this.

It is impossible for men to wholly understand women's structure, and women also never understand what is the structure of a man. Men may be mistaken in the matter of giving rights to women and men may also be mistaken in proclaiming the rights of men, but Allah Almighty as Creator knows what is perfect for men and perfect for women.

Some people are running after every evil, every bad thing, to make both sides, men and women, fall into sufferings or miseries. Therefore those people are saying to women that men are taking away your rights, are not giving you your rights. I am hearing these things in Europe, not in our countries in the Islamic world, although that is coming little by little to our countries, also; bad weather is coming. But here I am surprised at how European women, Western women, are still not satisfied and they are saying that men are always cheating us, taking away our rights.

And I am with them, with women in Western countries. They have rights to complain and to accuse men because in Western countries the rules never keep the rights of women; that is true. Therefore, I am with women in Western countries because the rules are so bad in keeping the rights of women.

It is the biggest dhulm, cruelty or injustice, that has happened on earth to the rights of women to take women out of their homes and to put them among men and force or obligate them to work as men work. That is cruelty. Those rules, all of them, are cruel because women were never created for outside work, but rather to be mothers, excellent mothers, excellent wives, excellent for their homes; and every crisis that is appearing on earth is for this reason, because of this point, only.

Until women are going to be in their homes like queens, it will not change. Does Her Majesty the Queen go out and work anywhere, or only in her

palace? And every women must be in her house like a queen in her palace but we men are not looking after them. The Islamic rules never say to leave women in chicken coops; never does Islam tell people to come and live on top of each other, to live our lives in such houses¹¹⁰.

Yes, ardu-llahi wasi'ah¹¹¹." Allah Almighty gives us a wide world for ourselves, such wide lands, wide countryside, and yet people are coming, one riding on the other in flats. They are making their lives in Hell here; yes. Why are they coming all together? There can be so many towns, so many large spaces for building houses, big meadows or gardens, so that that queen may be like Her Majesty the Queen. She will never be without satisfaction - yes, such big gardens, such big houses; she would be happy there. But we are making such matchbox rooms, matchbox houses, and then ladies are saying, "We must go out; we must be pleased and enjoy ourselves by getting out."

And therefore, when Islam says something or gives a rule, if we practice it fully, everything is going to be on its right path. No one can say that a little girl growing up thinks of being a doctor or engineer or scientist or chemist or solicitor or officer or clerk or policeman. When a young girl grows up, it only goes through her mind to have a baby - a baby here, a baby there; always dreaming, also - Allah knows well that they dream of being good mothers, of having good husbands, of having good homes, and that is their happiness, that is their habit in general. If they are saying anything else, they are lying; Allah knows well.

Yes, they grow up with that. Look! - a little girl always takes dolls in her hand, doing like this, like that; Allah has put this among their characteristics. But we are fighting to change their characteristics, and we, men, are cruel. In particular, every rule that men have put in Western countries in the name of

¹¹⁰ Referring to life in a cramped flat in London or any other city

¹¹¹ Allah's earth is spacious

democracy, all of them are against the rights of women. And Islam just brings the true rights of women and says, "You are like queens, and men are servants to you."

You must be servants to your wives. And the Shari'ah, Allah Almighty's rule, says that you must take care of your lady well, for eating, drinking and dressing, and she should look after you, because she is the only barrier between a man and Hell. If he has no wife, a person will fall into Hell; she is the barrier, and you must look after your wives as you look after your eyes. And she has been asked to keep your honor and to keep your descendants honorable, to look after their training, because every time it is the mother who trains the children. But now devils are taking the child from his mother and putting him in a nursery, fighting against natural rules; and Islam brings natural rules.

A mother must keep her babies close to her, like this. But it is coming to our countries, also. Ladies are working. In the morningtime, they are quickly awakening these little children, and they may be crying, crying; taking them out, bringing them to a crèche, putting them there the whole day, and in the eveningtime coming and bringing them home, while that baby cries.

That is civilization? Even animals do not agree to have their young ones taken from them. Then how do human beings, how mothers? And they are saying that we are civilized people - all our rules are safeguarding women and their rights. And Islam says that you must keep your baby at your breast; that gives life to them, not throwing them into a crèche like lambs in a sheep-pen. There are such places where they put ten, twelve, twenty of them, putting up a fence and they are running around like this, like this, crying, doing everything on themselves. And what should that nurse do? She says, "Leave them alone; they can die. The ones who had those children aren't looking after them. Then for what are we looking after them?"

Yes. Animals do not agree to leave their young ones. Look at cats, look at dogs, look at horses, look at donkeys, look at wolves, look at lions; which of them leave their babies? If anyone comes there, they rush at them, attacking. And we are human beings, yet we are saying that because this is the twentieth century's civilization, a mother must work.

Any woman who works gets no barakah, blessings from the Lord, for her money. Allah Almighty orders men to take care of the house, the family. We must not leave a woman, even if she has no husband, no parents, to work; the government must pay them to keep them in their homes. Maybe they can do something in their homes, but not among men, in factories or at any workplaces. And if a woman leaves, not looking after the home her husband provides, Allah Almighty takes away the barakah.

If only the man works and brings everything to his house, Allah gives more barakah and it is all right. We are seeing that if anyone makes his wife work, forcing her, and that woman brings something, all the barakah goes away; no blessings on them. Yes; if you don't have any need, why do you let her go and work? Islam never accepts that, keeping a lady like a queen, and her husband to be servant to her and to her home.

This bad atmosphere is now coming to the Islamic world, and devils are saying that if women do not work, it is impossible to live; only one person's wages are not enough and women must work, also. It is a very wrong view. They may try to manage on one salary; they may try. But they are not trying. For everything we are saying, they are putting on black eyeglasses and saying, "No, it is not true," and they are getting tired, and making women also to be more tired. If a man gets tired outside, he comes and sits in his home after work; but a woman must work outside and must work in her house, too, and that is cruelty. Therefore, no blessings on those people.

Allah Almighty is the Creator and He has put everything in its suitable place. Therefore men cannot be women and women cannot be men. Women may

be policemen in your countries (and in our countries they are beginning to do that, also), but sometimes I am saying, "Since they say, 'We are policemen, you are policemen,' let the lady police look after London for one night while we are sleeping in our houses, if they are able to take care of this city!".

Yes, we must take care of them. Allah therefore made each kind, male and female, in their specialized positions. This was just created for this purpose, that was created for that purpose. Yes. Men were created to be fathers and the servants of their homes. :

We are saying "servants," but devils are saying that man is the chief of the family, sayyid, and that women are second; and that is a big lie. Allah Almighty made man the servant and protector of ladies - not the chief but the protector and the servant to the family; but devils are changing that, saying, "No, you women are down and men are up."

That is a big lie, making every family upset, and then wife and husband are becoming like two roosters: "I am the rooster!" "No, I am the rooster!" - like this, everywhere in Western countries; and in eastern countries that illness is also coming little by little. In our countries women are still saying, "We are hens; it doesn't matter if you are the rooster," and then they are happy, satisfied, no more quarreling. But the illness of the twentieth century's civilization is running into the Islamic world, and I am sorry.

Each time that we are leaving the correct rules, the natural rules that Allah Almighty has put for mankind, we are falling into miseries and sufferings. Allah Almighty is saying, I do not want My servants to be in miseries or to suffer," but we are saying, "No, we like to suffer." And then Allah Almighty says, "You are free; as you like, do." If you do not say to your Lord, "O my Lord, as you like," He says to you, "O My servant, as you like you, may live, but don't complain." And the whole world now is complaining: rich countries, poor countries, industrial countries and farming countries - all are complaining.

The reason is that we want to live as we like, not as He likes. All people want to live as they like. Yes, you know when a young person escapes from his or her parents, saying, "I must live my life; no more control from you on me." Isn't it so? Every young person is saying this and escaping from parents, in flats, in rooms. They are saying, "I must live my life."

Yes, you may live your life, but it is so dangerous and terrible, finally. It is a new fashion, the Devil's rules, to make people unhappy, to make them in sufferings. A young kid comes out and looks, and Satan puts eyeglasses on him which make everything look pink - a pink world, rose-colored glasses, which make kids run away: "You are big now; enough control from your parents. You must live your life and run!" Satan puts those glasses on them, but then so many come crying - to me, also; every day so many come, my "customers," so many, so many, complaining about their kids, about youth. What can you do? Nothing! Finished.

Therefore Islam just brings every rule suitable for nature: you can't find any rule in it against nature. It is suitable because the Creator of nature and the Creator of the natures of people is our Lord. He knows what is the best. But we are saying, "I know; I must live my life."

Yes, you may but you are living against nature; and whoever lives against nature, nature punishes him by the order, by the command, of Allah Almighty. No mercy on those people from nature; no, not at all. They must be punished. Physicians are saying, "No, we can't do anything. Because you are being punished by nature, we can't do anything - finished." You like it? Then, if you like it, you may live as you like. If you don't like that, you must say, "O my Lord, as you like, I am intending to live a clean life, an honorable life, a happy life, with pleasure."

And that is all. We must understand Islam and its rules. You must look at the rules of Islam: whatever thing is not suitable for nature, bring it to me. But the one who puts on black eyeglasses. he can't see it.

Then take your eyeglasses away; don't be fanatical. From London I am addressing all nations from East to West, from all mankind, to look at the rules in Islam. If they want to save themselves here and Hereafter, if they want to live an enjoyable and happy life here and Hereafter, they must look at the rules in Islam, both men and women, and not be fanatical.

We have arrived at the last part of Holy Ramadan, and it is the most precious part of Holy Ramadan because the Night of Power is in it. And we have been ordered to look for that precious night, the most valuable night for Muslims during the whole year.

Allah Almighty hides His Greatest Name, and He hides, the Night of Power¹¹², and He also hides Khidr, p.b.u.h., the "Green Man"¹¹³; these three things are hidden. Allah Almighty wants His servants to be respectful to everyone so that some time you may find that Green Man, Khidr, p.b.u.h., because he has the power to give you happiness and peace here and Hereafter; he has the most powerful spiritual dress, and he can give it to anyone who can meet him.

But it is not easy to find him. Anyone who is asking truly one day must find him, must meet him, but he may come through any figure, may appear in any form of a man: sometimes as an old man, sometimes as a young man; sometimes with a beard, a long-bearded one, sometimes without beard; sometimes as a poor man, sometimes as a rich man - you never know.

¹¹²The Night of Power, Lailat al-Qadr, is the night during which the first revelation of the Holy Qur'an came to the Holy Prophet, p.b.u.h., in the Cave of Hira. It is commemorated each year by Muslims during the last ten odd-numbered nights of Ramadan, usually a the night preceding the twenty-seventh day of the month

¹¹³ A reference to that one of our servants on whom We had bestowed mercy from Ourselves and whom We had taught knowledge from our own Presence," Sayyidina Khidr, who is mentioned in connection with the Prophet Moses in Surah Kahf, XVIII:65-82. He is traditionally associated with the color green

Allah Almighty honored the Children of Adam and He is asking from you that you give honor to each other, also. But people in our time are only looking to see if a person has a good outward appearance, giving greetings and respect. That is the twentieth century's "civilization," not real civilization; those who look only at our outward appearance, they are not civilized people.

Civilized people must really see a person as a member of mankind and must give their respect. Don't say that that is a black one, that is a colored one, that is a Turkish one, that is a Pakistani one, that is an English one, that is a Russian one - no, because all of us, we are members of a huge family. Allah Almighty made mankind as a family, a big family, and we must respect and we must support each other.

Therefore the most precious one, who is able to live throughout centuries, at the time of Moses and before and after, he is living: Sayyidina Khidr lives, and if a person meets him, he must reach happiness and peace here and Hereafter. But Allah Almighty has made him to be secret so that we may give everyone respect. That person may be Khidr, peace be upon him, or this one, or that one. When you keep that respect, one day you must meet him.

And second, Allah Almighty has hidden the Greatest Name, 'Ism als Ā'dham. He has ninety-nine Holy Names; one of them is 'Ism al-Adham. Whoever makes du'a, supplication, with that greatest Holy Name, Allah Almighty quickly gives him what he asks. If a person were to know it, he would quickly make du'a; but Allah Almighty hides that Name so that you may give respect for every Holy Name, because that divine manifestation burns all other ninety-nine Holy Names. And sometimes the greatest Holy Name may be with another Holy Name - for example, Allahu-r-Rahman, Allahu-l-Ghafur,

Allahu-l-Karim¹¹⁴, coming with that one and hiding it to create a respect for every Holy Name of our Lord, Allah Almighty.

And thirdly, Allah Almighty hides the greatest night, the holiest night in Islam, the Night of Power. Whoever wants to take power over his ego, over his enemies dahir wa batin, outward or inner enemies¹¹⁵ - whoever wants that power, to be a real deputy of Allah Almighty not only on earth but also throughout the universe, he must take care to reach that Night, the Night of Power. And Allah Almighty hides it, also, so that you may not depend that it is going to be fixed like Lailat al-Bara'at or Lailat al-Me'raj or Lailat al-Maulid of the Prophet, p.b.u.h.¹¹⁶

You may find it amongst all the nights of the whole year, but mostly Allah Almighty puts it in Ramadan, also making it during the last ten nights of the last one-third of Ramadan, from His endless mercy making us find it easily in the last third. And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., also indicated that there may be another easy way to find it, saying that you may find it among the last ten odd-numbered nights of Ramadan, like the twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fifth, twenty-seventh, twenty ninth; and then, to make it still easier, saying that it mostly comes on the twenty-seventh.

Be ready, be careful. Perhaps for that opening you may be there, to see that power coming on you, dressing you in that nur, light, for that Night, giving

¹¹⁴ Allah the Most Merciful, Allah the Forgiving, Allah the Most Generous, and so on.

¹¹⁵ Inner enemies" refers to nafs, Satan, dunya (the world and its attractions), and hawa (the base desires of the nafs), as explained in many other of Sheikh Nazim's talks.

¹¹⁶ Other holy nights of the Islamic year. Lailat al-Bara'at, the fifteenth night of the month of Sha'ban is the occasion when one year's accounting of a person's life and his sustenance is taken by Allah, and those who deserve it are blessed with divine forgiveness. lailat al-Isra' wal.-Mer'aj is the blessed night of the twenty-seventh of Rajab during which the Holy Prophet was miraculously transported to Jerusalem (al-Isra' and to the Seven Heavens into the Divine Presence (al-Mer'aj). Lailat al-Maulid, the night preceding the twelfth of Rab'i al-Awwal, is the birthnight of the Holy Prophet, p.b.u.h.

you an endless power. And we are asking forgiveness for you, for me, for all Muslims, and for all the children of Adam.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. May Allah give us His divine help and make us speak truth and follow true ways.

We are the Children of Adam, from the beginning up to the end, and we have activities actions - yes? And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said, "A'malukum 'ummalukum." ¹¹⁷

What the Seal of the Prophets, p.b.u.h., said is true; he was speaking the truth, the absolute truth. How could a person who said, "An-najatu fi-s-sidq, the salvation of mankind is in truthfulness," say anything else?

"An-najatu fi-s-sidq" - safety or salvation is in being truthful. No one harms himself by being truthful or being a true one, but whoever leaves truth must be harmed here and Hereafter. And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., the most truthful one who ever lived, said, "A'malukum ummalukum."

We have activities or actions, a'mal; everyone has activities for every day. When we die, no more activities, but as long as we are living we are in activity, and everyone must look after his activities or actions. There are satanic actions or activities and rahmani, divine or heavenly or holy activities. And everyone must be either with these or with those activities or actions.

Now we are in an activity here. Each day in Holy Ramadan we have activities. We are trying to make our activities or actions during this holy month heavenly activities, good activities, so that our Lord, Almighty Allah, is pleased with us, and we see that such good activities are filling our days;

¹¹⁷ Your works (actions, activities) are your workers (which work for you)." (Hadith)

during this month we are giving only a short time for other activities and mostly we are coming to do heavenly activities. And when we do heavenly activities, quickly we can find positive results on our hearts and on our minds and on our physical bodies; these three kinds of reactions may be seen from our heavenly activities during this holy month - benefits, yes?

And Allah Almighty, from the first messenger up to the last, gave orders to His servants and prohibitions, also, ordering them to do some things and to leave some other things. In every religion, through every prophet, it comes: good activities or actions that He orders and bad activities or actions that He prohibits, nothing else. And Allah Almighty speaks divine wisdoms in ordering some actions, and for some others which He orders us to leave, He speaks wisdoms, also.

I am saying two words in Arabic; perhaps they may be translated into two words in English, also. Allah Almighty ordered worshipping to His servants, saying, "O Children of Adam, I have ordered for you good actions and worshipping li-karamatika, to make you more honorable. When I order you to do something for worshipping, I am asking to give you more honor, more lights - li-karamatika."

Is it correct? When we pray, Allah Almighty takes away every evil from ourselves. There are angels; if a servant comes to worship his Lord, angels take those no-good things from him, and, when he is going to stand in the Divine Presence, from the Divine Presence come garments of nur, garments of honor, because we have been invited to be in the Divine Presence, and that is honor.

People in our time are running away; they are saying, "It is too much to pray every day." But, if every day Her Majesty the Queen invited you, would you say that it is too much, or would you run like a horse to accept that invitation? Yes. And for Allah Almighty, when He asks worshipping from us, He wants to give more honor to us by His orders, because to keep your

Lord's orders gives you more honor and more respect in the Divine Presence; and as long as you are a worshipper and as long as you are respectful to your Lord, Allah Almighty, then Allah Almighty makes respect for you. You are going to be respected among creatures; from everything, from everyone, may come to you respect because Allah Almighty is clothing you in respect from His Divine Presence.

Therefore, for all activities or actions which are heavenly activities, the purpose, the aim, is to give us more honor, and you are going to be designated among all creatures as an honorable servant and their dealings with you are going to be with respect. To the extent that you give more respect, you receive in the face of it more respect.

Therefore, "A'malukum 'ummalukum. Everyone who deals with you," the Prophet says, "deals with you according to your actions, whether bad or good." If your activities or actions are respectful to your Lord, then everyone's dealings with you must be respectful; and if in your dealings with your Lord your activities are bad, then everyone's dealings with you must be bad, with no respect for you.

And Allah Almighty also prevents or prohibits His servants from some activities, and He says to the Children of Adam, with divine wisdom: "Ya Bani Adam, nahaitukum an ashya bi-salamatika. Ta'at bi-karamatika wa anni nahaitukum 'anhum bi-salamatika"¹¹⁸, I am prohibiting to you things for your safety." Bi-salamatika means to keep you away from harm. "Everything that harms you, I am making that prohibited."

Look at everything, if you have a mind. If it is empty you can't think, but if you have something in it, you can understand that the thing which Allah Almighty

¹¹⁸ O Children of Adam, I have prohibited (certain things) to you for your safety. Obedience is for your honor and to prohibit you from them is for your safety." (Hadith Qudsi)

prohibits must be something that harms you. And every bad activity or action harms you, either in your body or in your mind or in your heart; must be. If nothing comes to your body from it but your heart is in trouble, you must suffer after that prohibited activity. Therefore the hadith of the Prophet, p.b.u.h., "Amālukum 'ummalukum," says: "O people, according to your activities or actions you are attaining some results, either harming you or making you pleased. Therefore you must look after your actions always."

If they are satanic, those satanic actions are not easy to leave because our nafs likes them. That is the trouble: our nafs never likes heavenly actions or activities, always wanting to be in satanic activities, and every time your ego calls you to a bad activity, it is very happy with that; but afterwards you are going to think about it because something, some punishment, will come to you, whether you are thinking about it when you are in it or you are thinking about it in the future. So many people, for some bad activities, are crying throughout their whole lives. No science can take it away from that one, nor riches nor ranks nor knowledge; nothing can take from him the reaction to the bad action that he did. And it may be only for some minutes or for some seconds, but because of that bad action he or she should cry for a whole lifetime.

You can understand, you can know, what bad activities people are running after, males and females running after those bad activities that Allah Almighty has prohibited, and no one asking if it is good or not; they are only running without thinking, without using their minds, running into that current, and whoever falls into it, it carries him or her away. It is now called "freedom," freedom in everything, freedom without limits.

Those are satanic activities in our time, which people later regret too much,, but it is useless, gone by. Therefore, Allan Almighty says: "O people, I do not want you to fall into sufferings. I am pulling you away from troubles, but My servants are running into the fire as a moth to a flame." A moth flies into the

fire and fire burns, and people are running into the fire but they can't see the flames. Our world is now burning with fire, with flames, and we are seeing it, from East to West, from North to South. Every place is amidst fires.

Muhyuddin ibn al-'Arabi, may Allah bless him, was saying: "Day by day, when the Last Days approach, a fire is going to blaze on earth, everywhere, little by little, because everyone will take a match to kindle that fire - everyone." Satan was created from a flame of fire; therefore he likes fire so much, and he also likes to burn people by his fire. Therefore, he teaches people everything that has to do with fire.

Before there were no firearms, but he taught them to make weapons which work with fire, and the whole world now, all nations, are racing with each other, arms race, to make them more and more. Satan is very happy, giving everyone a match. A match is a small thing, but there is a chain reaction, putting the nuclear match everywhere and saying, advising people, "You must do more and more." Even one is enough to make the whole world in flames but he says, "No, not enough yet! They must all be there." And Muhyuddin, a king-sized wali, saint, was given telescopic eyes to look into the future, telescopic eyes for looking into the Holy Qur'an, for looking into Holy Hadith. The one who looks into them may see what is coming in the future, but blind people, even if you put a telescope or microscope in front of them, never see anything. And awliya, saints, are looking and seeing what is coming; and Muhyuddin was saying that this is approaching: when the Last Days come near, a fire is going to burn over all the world, even blazing on the seas.

Now awliya are seeing that everywhere people are running into fire, men and women. Every prohibited action makes another flame, and people are running into it. Then how can you stop suffering? Money can stop sufferings? No. We have everything but sufferings are mounting because everyone is adding another flame to this fire.

Nimrod ordered his nation to bring more and more wood to burn Abraham, p.b.u.h. ¹¹⁹For what? Nimrod wanted to burn not Abraham, p.b.u.h., because only one match is enough to burn a person; but his intention, his aim, was to burn tauhid¹²⁰, faith - to take it off the earth. Therefore he commanded his people, saying that whoever wants the highest rank in my presence must bring more wood to burn. It was a huge hill of wood which the people brought; from Basra in Iraq, when it was burning, the flames could be seen in Damascus. And now Satan is making people gather to build a big fire; everyone is working for Satan to make a flame, also, and he is asking them, "Burn faith, burn beliefs," so that no one is going to be a believer on earth. That is his aim now. .

The Prophet, p.b.u.h., says, "There is a jowhar, jewel, but there is something which makes that jowhar worthless." And religion og beliefs, they are jewels. What makes them worthless is fornication¹²¹; that makes beliefs worthless. And everywhere now Satan and his workers are doing advertising for every kind of fornication, and everyone is striking this match, making a fire from East to West.

That is dangerous. No more karamah, no more honor, remains with people; that burns it. That is the meaning of what Muhiyuddin ibn al 'Arabi, may Allah bless him, was saying; day by day, it is going to cover the whole world with flames. At the least, these eyes are doing fornication - at the least, and that burns faith and beliefs. If a nail comes into the tire of a car, puncturing the tire, then quickly that car will stop; it can't go on. Even one - one glance does the same thing to faith, to beliefs. When you approach the Divine Presence, that glance makes you stop, immediately; you must come down, you must see whether you have a spare or not. If you have one spare, you can

¹¹⁹ The story of Prophet Abraham and the tyrant Nimrod is mentioned in II:258 and XXI:68-73

¹²⁰ The Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah Almighty

¹²¹ This should be understood to refer to adultery as well

remove that punctured one, putting the spare, but after a little bit comes another, and no more spare. Sometimes it comes for all four tires at once, and then - going down; yes!

Therefore, in our times, improvement, spiritual improvement, is so difficult; everything that we can gain from spiritual practices quickly runs out through our eyes and we remain behind. Therefore it is impossible, without locking the doors of fornication by every means, to take away suffering from people or to give spiritual improvement; it is too difficult. You must take along too many spare tires; for one second's looking, it puts you on the ground. Then what if you go up in a plane and one engine becomes destroyed? It is so terrible; if you move from the earth, it is so terrible if you have something wrong - yes. We are still on earth; doesn't matter, falling, getting up. But we are asking for the Heavens; we do not want to be always on earth.

We have been invited, and the time is approaching, and flames are covering the whole world. Bad activities are covering from East to West, and you must look after yourself, to take some precautions for yourself. You must be able to understand which activities satanic deception is coming through; you must be very careful.

I am asking forgiveness for my sisters, for my brothers, for everyone; and asking from our Lord, Almighty Allah, His divine help in sending us someone to lock up every door that is open to fornication and that takes away honor from mankind. They are using the terms "girl friend" or "boyfriend," and I am asking, "This is a friend, or your wife? This is your friend, or your husband?"

Why are you not going to make it legal but are always going on illegally? What is the reason? You are accepting that girl, you are accepting that boy; then, after accepting, what is the meaning of doing that illegally? But - bad activities, Satan advising them, "Keep this one for some days and then leave her, leave him, and go to another one."

That is not honor for mankind; it is not written in any of our holy books, from the beginning up to today. These bad activities are the harvest or the product of our times, the product of the twentieth century's civilization - badness, dishonorable things. A father sees his daughter bringing a man: "Who is this one?" "My boyfriend." Or his son brings someone: "Who is that one?" "Girlfriend, my girlfriend." "My son's girlfriend!" And then they say, "All right, all right." That is not honor for parents but finishes honor!

We are asking forgiveness from Allah Almighty, and we are asking Him to send someone from His Divine Presence with divine powers to stop that. Therefore, our "Headquarters" is advising, we are advising, our brothers and sisters not to be single, not to be unmarried; must be married. That is a safety and honor for ourselves in our time, and it is the beginning of spiritual improvement. Without marriage it is too difficult.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. You can't find anyone who may be more merciful to mankind than their Lord. We may be sinners but yet our Lord is merciful to ourselves; we may be disobedient people but yet He sends from His endless favors to ourselves - yes. And He is asking from His servants to say, "Thank You, o our Lord"; but we are too greedy to say, "Thank you, o our Lord."

If you say "Thank You," He will not leave you without giving you anything; as long as you say "Thank You," He will pour on you more and more.

Therefore, "Wa-shkuru Li. La'in shakartum, la-azidannakum"¹²². My servants, if you thank Me, then I will give more and more to you. But you are forgetting Me. When you are forgetting, I am leaving you as forgotten. I do not forget

¹²² A combination of the verses, "And be thankful to Me" (II:152) and "If you are thankful, I will increase (My favors] to you." (XIV:7)

anyone, but as a punishment to you when you forget Me, I am leaving you as someone forgotten."

He gave us the key of happiness but we are not using it. Our Lord just gave us it, and that is the key: "La'in shakartun, la-azidannakum. If you thank Me, I am going to give you more and more."

For which thing are we giving thanks? If you receive a favor from someone, you say "Thank you" because you are pleased, and that is happiness; when you are happy, you must say "Thank you." And Allah says, "If you feel happiness, you must say, 'O my Lord, thank You because you are making me happy and making me pleased'; and then he is going to increase His favors on you more and more.

You may say, "What about the difficult conditions which people or society or all mankind have fallen into, such bad and difficult conditions - how can I be happy or in peace?" But Allah Almighty has endless ways to make His servants happy and pleased with Him. When you choose the way of thankfulness, it leads you to an area of pleasure, to an area of happiness, and anything may happen but that never changes your happiness.

The Prophet Joseph, the son of Jacob, peace be upon them both, was thrown into a well. It was a terrible well, but Allah Almighty sent the angel Gabriel to Joseph to give his Lord's greetings to him and bring him good tidings about his future, saying, "O My servant, I am pleased with you. Are you pleased with Me?"

And Joseph said: "O my Lord, if You are pleased with me, what must be my pleasure? I may be in a well, but in reality I am in Paradise when You say 'I am pleased with you.'"

That well might be full-up with snakes, lizards, scorpions and spiders all around. No worry for him; he was pleased with his Lord.

Nothing could harm him because he was pleased with his Lord, and his Lord asked if you are pleased with Me, because I am pleased with you. Joseph was pleased with his Lord; and then Allah Almighty sent around a group of people to take him out, quickly taking him from the well and arriving in Egypt, the country of Pharaoh. And he was pleased; anywhere he might go he would be pleased.

That is one key that makes you happy throughout your life. Allah Almighty, every day, every morning and evening and at every time, is asking you, "O My servant, are you pleased with Me?" But our ears - people are putting cotton inside; only that, listening to nothing.

Allah Almighty is looking at His servant: "O My servant, are you happy with Me, are you pleased with Me?" What do you say? Yes; He is asking His servants and He is seeing whether they are pleased with Him. But mostly, if He is asking and we are hearing, so many people would reply, "How am I going to be pleased with You? No money," they would say. "So many people are poor. So that we can have more money, let this rain rain down silver coins. Then we will be happy!".

A person was complaining that he hadn't any shoes. But one day he saw a man with no legs, and he said, "O my Lord, I am very happy, O my Lord; very peaceful, my life. I am so happy, so pleased with You, O my Lord." When he saw that no-legged person, he understood what he had, which thing he had been given. Yes, no more asking or complaining about shoes; that doesn't matter because I have legs, but that person - no legs. Do you not see blind people? Who would give up his two eyes? If I give this whole place full-up with gold, will anyone give even one eye? Yes, what rich people we are! If I give you the whole world, to be king of it but without eyes, will you accept? If these eyes are closed, what is the taste of life without seeing? You will be a blind king. Alhamdulillah, we have eyes. We are rich ones, yes!

Therefore, when we look at our Lord's favors, we must be happy. But we are asking something from our Lord, Almighty Allah, which is too cheap; the cheapest things we are asking. We must ask from our Lord, from His endless favors, something that will be ours forever.

Each thing that you are asking of this world and of this life, it is temporary. Nothing is going to be permanent except the heavenly grants that Allah Almighty grants to you. You must ask. Heavenly grants are going to be with you forever, and He likes His servants to ask for something that is valuable.

The Holy Qur'an teaches people through many tales; Allah Almighty gives examples from passed-away nations and their life conditions, and teaches us. Don't be like the Children of Israel:

Allah Almighty put them in the Desert of Sinai. Then, when they were imprisoned there, each day Allah Almighty sent them from the heavens mann wa salwa¹²³. That is very beautiful, too-delicious food; people look upon kebab as delicious. Each day He sent those birds, very tasty, delicious, and halwah, that sweet - each day:

Then they said to Moses, "What about this kebab and that sweet every day? Every day, in the morning this sweet, at nighttime kebab; or at morning kebab, in the evening the sweet. We are fed-up! Ask from your Lord something like onions, garlic and cucumbers - something like that. We are fed-up with this, every day kebab and sweet!"

Look what they were asking from Allah Almighty; and we are like those people, also, the same characteristics. We are asking, "Give us more of this life's pleasures." And you know that from the time of maturity, from that day, your pleasures are making a path from maximum to minimum, coming down;

¹²³ Manna and quails, which were roasted as kebab. Manna is a sweet, sticky substance coming from trees, found to this day in Iraq, Iran and other areas. See II:57, VII:160 and XX:80

no one is going to have the same taste from the beginning of maturity to the end of his life. As much as you are asking you are given, but its taste is going to be less day by day, day by day, day by day.

Why are you asking that? You must ask something valuable in the Divine Presence for yourself! He gives; He is not stingy. Generosity is His attribute, the divine attribute of your Lord, Allah Almighty. He gives. Ask; He can give. And say, "O my Lord, I am asking from You that I may be pleased with everything that you are giving to me."

One day a black fellow was walking with his boss in a garden. Those colored people, Allah gives them more barakah, blessings. We don't have that, but to any house that a colored person is in, Allah Almighty sends so much barakah; therefore, in earlier times everyone had colored people in their houses, in their farms, and Allah sent more barakah The Prophet said it; we must like them - yes.

They were going through fields that were planted, and his sayyid, his master, cut a cucumber. It was so bitter that he made a face at his servant. But his servant ate it, all of it. "Isn't it bitter?" his master asked.

He said, "O my master, so many times I have eaten sweet things from your hand. Why does it matter if once you give me something bitter? I am ashamed to throw it away because it is coming from your hand to me." .

This is a big lesson for those people who have minds or have hearts: our Lord sends us endless favors; we are receiving them, but if sometimes something comes upon ourselves, we complain about our Lord. He never likes complaining, and no happiness or pleasure for the one who opens the door of complaining.

Believers must not complain. Then, that is the key of happiness. There are some people whose habit is always to complain; look - you may find such people, and you never find them any day without complaining. Therefore, all

the prophets advised their companions, their people, not to complain. And our Prophet, p.b.u.h., lived in the desert; he was born in Makkah amidst huge deserts, hot weather and no water, no trees, no plants. And his Companions always suffered because of little food, but no one complained. They would fast, and mostly they would make their break-fast with two or three dates. (When we sit, before eating dinner¹²⁴, thirty dates, like a machine. Yahu! While I am eating one, other people are eating ten!) Yes. They were getting one or two dates, or even a half, but they were not complaining.

Therefore Islam has a strong base. The Companions of Muhammad, p.b.u.h., they were strong enough to bear every difficult condition, particularly being hungry. Many times they would show that they were putting stones on their stomachs to keep away the pain of hunger, and the Prophet showed that he sometimes had two stones. And we have been given everything but still we are complaining. Therefore, no pleasure for the one who complains.

Therefore Islam and its Holy Book begin by saying "Alhamdulillah." O people, you must always say "Alhamdulillah"; it means, "All praise and all thanks to You, o our Lord," when you say it. If a person does nothing except to say "Alhamdulillah, alhamdulillah, alhamdulillah..." from the beginning up to the end of his life, it is enough. If he says, "O my Lord, I can never find time, I can't do anything except to say 'Alhamdulillah, alhamdulillah. I am never going to be unoccupied with it, so that I can't do anything of worshipping except saying 'Alhamdulillah, alhamdulillah, alhamdulillah...'," it is enough.

For every condition you must make ready "Alhamdulillah," and then every difficulty goes away; it brings solutions for every difficult problem. Just only

¹²⁴ According to the Holy Prophet's tradition, the fast is broken at sunset with one or three dates, if available. The Maghrib, sunset, prayer is then performed, followed by dinner

one way; try it - I am advising you. Leave off complaining and say, "Thanks and glory to Allah Almighty," because He sends us endless favors, and if sometimes something difficult comes on us, it is no good to complain. When you complain, Allah Almighty says, "Look at My servant, complaining about Me to My other servants," and it is no good to let your Lord say this; it is no good.

Therefore the keys of happiness are in our hands; He gave them. This is the tradition from the first prophet up to the last one. Don't suppose that this is only the Last Prophet's advice; but from the beginning up to the end, through their traditions (and we have been sent 124,000 prophets), all the prophets were calling to people: "O people, be pleased with your Lord. Be happy with Him, be respectful to Him, and He will make you pleased, here and Hereafter."

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Islam means truth, haqq. And if we would like to be with haqq, we must follow and we must accept Islam.

We have not come to this life to play. It is a serious thing that we are here, and we have been ordered to know what is truth and we have been ordered to know what is falsehood, and to choose between them.

We must keep truth, but truth is bitter for our egos and they like falsehood; it is lovely to our nafs, so that it is difficult for a person to choose between them. But if you use your mind, it should say to you, "Keep the safe way; choose the truth," and if we listen to our feelings, our feelings will choose what our ego shows to be falsehood.

The prophets and awliya are the leaders of this caravan which is going toward Allah Almighty; they are moving from this life and their direction is toward Allah. They are those people who never look at or are interested in

this life's cheap pleasures. They know what is valuable, and they are joined to that caravan that has been moving since the first man and the first prophet, Adam, p.b.u.h.

He began when he was sent on earth. He was longing for his homeland, Paradise, but Paradise without your Lord is like a prison; he was longing to return to his homeland, to his Lord's Divine Presence, and that is Paradise, the real Paradise. And he began, as the first one in the caravan moving toward Allah Almighty, and he called his sons, his children, to follow him.

The ones who accepted followed him from the time that that caravan moved, and when his children left off following the caravan, Allah Almighty sent another prophet, another beloved one from among His servants, to call people to follow the caravan. And those who accepted the prophets were following it. But there is another caravan, led by Satan, and he is also calling people to his caravan.

Those who follow the prophets are coming with them toward Allah Almighty and His Divine Presence. The Seal of the Prophets, Sayyidina Muhammad, p.b.u.h., was the last one who was sent to call people to his caravan, which was the biggest and most important caravan which has moved toward the Divine Presence. And his invitation was international; through every century and among every kind of people who were gathered under the banner of mankind, he was calling to people.

Now, I am saying these words because one of our brothers said to me that some people had asked him to give a talk in a church, and he was asking if he could take the Holy Qur'an in his hand for speaking to people in a church, or could bring Holy Hadiths of the Prophet and make a speech for them. Then I said to him, "See if after a little bit something comes through our assembly, and then you may keep it, you may use it."

Anyone may be invited to give a talk about Islam in a church. A church is also built to be a place for worshipping the Lord, Almighty Allah, and Allah Almighty rewards those people according to their intentions. It is impossible for a person not to be rewarded if he has sincere and good intentions; he must be rewarded by the Lord, Almighty Allah - don't suppose anything else. A person may be Christian, may be Jewish, may be from another religion, and Allah Almighty looks at his intentions and rewards him.

I heard a tale about a Majusi, a fire-worshipper who lived in Baghdad. After his death, a grandsheikh looked into Paradise and saw that one there. And he was surprised and asked, "How can you be in Paradise when you were a fire-worshipper?"

Saints have been given divine lights; to the true and real believers, Allah Almighty gives through the lights of real faith, and they are from divine lights. But they have been given only to those people who really believe. Therefore, if a person has been given real faith's lights, no distance or darkness or huge mountains can hold him back; his lights reach everywhere, reaching into your hearts, also. Nothing holds back those lights.

Therefore, that grandsheikh could look into Paradise; such people can see Paradise. They have come to be out of time and space; they may look and may see. And that grandsheikh saw that person, the Majusi, in Paradise and asked, "How can you be here?"

That is in order to give people something of real knowledge and of divine knowledge, so that servants may know something about their Lord's attributes, and in order that no one should be hopeless. Every one may hope; everyone has a right to be hopeful of his Lord's Mercy Oceans. When Allah Almighty wants to save His servants from the hands of devils, He has endless, countless ways to save them. Therefore we have rights to be hopeful, fully hopeful.

And when that grandsheikh asked him, the fire-worshipper said, "O my Lord's servant, the reason that I am here in Paradise is a simple, very simple thing. I wasn't taking any care about it, but it happened:

"One day I saw that my child, a little boy, had a piece of bread in his hand, eating it, and I took him by his ear and said: 'Do you not know that this is the holy month for Muslims? They are fasting. Then how are you carrying a piece of bread in your hand and, eating it, while people are respecting that this is the holy month? What are you doing?' And I slapped him and took him inside," the Majusi said.

Zoroastrian. Even among non-Muslims living in Muslim areas, eating in public during the daytime in Ramadan was considered a mark of disrespect for the sanctity of the holy month and toward

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That was the reason why he was in Paradise: first, because he was a Majusi, a fire-worshipper - he had no responsibility for fasting because he wasn't Muslim; and secondly, although that was a small boy and no fasting

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for him, even then his father respected Holy Ramadan and taught adab, good manners, to his child. Then Allah Almighty was pleased with that servant. When he was ready to leave this life, He sent divine lights, coming on him, and the seed of faith that was planted by Allah Almighty opened, and he said Shahadah and entered Paradise.

Therefore, a person may be sincere in his beliefs and have good intentions. And Allah Almighty looks at your heart. If it is correct, all right; don't be hopeless. And, also, don't be fearless. Hopeless, without hope; fearless, without fear. Yes, you must be fear-full, not fear-less - fearful of Allah Almighty.

Pharoah brought more than 250,000 magicians to have a contest with Moses, p.b.u.h. Moses came singly, alone, but they were a very big crowd, and you wouldn't have been able to look at them because they were clothed in such strange and horrible shapes, filling that big plain. And Moses came with a big stick, wearing simple clothes and so long a beard.

Then the chief of the magicians came toward Moses, standing there, and Moses looked at him while he was coming. Prophets' eyes look with divine lights. And when that chief magician came, he came surrendered; and he said to Moses, "Are you going to begin, or shall we begin the contest?"¹²⁷ And it was enough for that person and for that whole huge crowd of magicians to come into Islam, to come into iman - only that word.

Allah Almighty was looking at them; what was going to happen, He knew. That chief magician, when he came to Moses, came humbly and keeping his respect, because he was someone who had understanding: when he looked at Moses and saw him alone, he knew with exact knowledge that if that person, Moses, were the same as ourselves, he would never find the courage to come and compete with our huge crowd here. So Moses'

¹²⁷ Refers to VII:115 and XX:65. The complete narratives concerning Moses and the magicians are found in VII:113–126; X:79-82; XX:57-73; and XXVI:34-52

authority cannot be coming from the earth; it must be heavenly and therefore I must ask permission. And he came, asking, "Are you going to begin, or do you give us permission to begin?"

That asking permission from Moses, p.b.u.h., made Allah Almighty pleased with all those magicians. A magician's work is kufr¹²⁸, strongly prohibited. That is the worst job, the worst activity: Allah Almighty never likes it. But when the chief came and asked Moses' permission, that adab made Allah Almighty pleased with the whole assembly.

Then Moses said, "You may begin." And lights, divine lights, came into their hearts, and that seed of belief, the seed of faith, that was planted on the Day of Promises¹²⁹ began to grow up, quickly growing. And when Moses threw down his stick, a huge snake appeared; when it opened its mouth, between its two jaws there was one mile's distance. Pharoah was sitting in his palace, and after finishing everything that the magicians had put there, their sticks and ropes, that gigantic snake rushed at Pharoah, opening its mouth to swallow the whole palace, Allah Almighty bringing him down.

When they saw that happening, all the magicians quickly ran to make sajdah, prostrating themselves, and in that sajdah Allah Almighty showed each one of them his station in Paradise. And Pharoah, so angry, said, "What are you doing? You are all partners with this one; Moses is your chief! I shall cut off your hands and feet, and then I shall hang you on the trunks of palm trees!"

And they said, "It doesn't matter; no worry. You can cut, you can do anything to our physical bodies, but our souls are free. We are with our Lord."

¹²⁸ Unbelief, denial of God

¹²⁹ A reference to that occasion in pre-eternity. mentioned in VII:72, when Allah Almighty assembled the souls of all human beings-to-come and asked then, "Am I not your Lord?" whereupon they replied, "Yes, truly," thereby affirming their witness to their Lord's existence and unity throughout all times and under all conditions

Therefore, adab, good manners and good behavior, is the fruit of good intentions, always. But good intentions come from sincerity, and sincerity does not come without deep beliefs. And we are asking forgiveness for our bad behavior, bad intentions and bad actions.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Every building needs a base; every structure stands upon a base, yes? This building, without a base, a foundation, would never stand up, and a strong building must have a strong foundation.

There is a big mosque in Istanbul, one of the biggest mosques in the Islamic world, Sülemaniye. This night it is going to be full, about 50,000 people entering it for the Night of Power (tonight we are observing it). And this famous mosque has a story: .

Suleyman, Sultan Sulaiman the Magnificent, ordered his architect to build for him a mosque, a big mosque, to be magnificent. As the sultan was magnificent, so must his mosque also be magnificent.

And, as he had been ordered, the architect made foundations; and a foundation means digging with pickaxe and shovel, not these machines, coming and doing it quickly, no. They went down to the distance where water comes; down to there they dug. When the water came, it was enough digging, and he filled up the whole foundation

Then he disappeared. And the sultan was very angry and ordered - all the people of the empire to try to find that person: "Quickly bring him to me!"

One year, two years, three years, four years - where is this person? I am going to die and this person has disappeared! If he is not going to build it, we must look for another one; but he was the magnificent one, also, in his architecture.

Yes. Then, when it was going to be seven years and the sultan was too angry, that architect appeared. The sultan was too much angry: "Where were you?!!!"

"O Sultan, you are the sultan! You know what you are going to do. But you are not an architect. The architect I am. You understand about governing this empire, but this building I understand; you do not understand. If I had not disappeared and had built as you ordered, quickly, then perhaps after one year or ten years this would have fallen down.

"Now I will build a building and will put on it such a dome that, if, on the Last Day, there is an earthquake throughout the whole world, this dome will fall down and roll like a helmet on the ground, not breaking. I am that architect; you are the sultan. This building I have responsibility for."

We are saying this for understanding that every important building must be built on strong foundations. Then, what about Islam, which we know from the Prophet, p.b.u.h.?

Our teachers have taught us that Islam has how many "pillars"? Five pillars. But these pillars must be raised on a strong foundation. And what is that foundation?

The Prophet, p.b.u.h., said, "Ututu jawami'-l-kalam¹³⁰. I have been given authority to speak, and if I say a few words, they may contain an ocean of knowledge." And his inheritors, awliya, also have such an authority to speak or to give an understanding, to give wisdoms, in brief words. Grandsheikh was one of those inheritors, no doubt, and he was saying:

"O Nazim Efendi, the foundation that Islam is raised on is one thing. It is also so for every religion, because Islam is the universal, original religion from the beginning, from the time of Adam up to the end; and Islam is just built on one

¹³⁰ I have been given conciseness (or comprehensiveness) of speech. (Hadith)

thing, and that is tahammul: to be able to carry or to bear everything that may come to the Children of Adam."

In this life everything is just loaded upon the Children of Adam. This life is a heavy burden on everyone, and you have been ordered to carry that heavy burden. Therefore Islam and its pillars are trusts from Allah Almighty, and you have been ordered to carry those trusts on your shoulders.

When Allah Almighty called the mountains and all the seven worlds and the Seven Heavens, and ordered them to carry His divine trust, amanat, they said, "O our Lord, are you ordering us to carry that, or giving a choice to us? We are saying, "We can't. Forgive us; we can't carry that.' ¹³¹Then Allah Almighty made it like a piece of stone and Adam lifted it a little bit, and - like this, like this, like this - lifted it higher and higher. When he had raised it to his middle, Allah Almighty said, "It is going to be on your shoulders, My divine trust. You should carry it."

"Innahu kana dhaluman jahula¹³²": Man is too dhalim, unjust and cruel, in not looking after that divine trust, to keep it; Allah knows that they are unjust and ignorant about their Lord's rights. And we are carrying it; all the Children of Adam, we are carrying that divine trust, or we have been asked to carry it. And you can't carry it if you haven't any belief in your Lord; if you are not a believer you can't carry that divine trust.

Every divine command that has come through prophets to ourselves is a heavy burden; but without being able to carry that heavy burden, it is impossible to keep those divine commands. Therefore, our religion, Islam,

¹³¹ See XXXIII:72

¹³² truly, he (man) was unjust and ignorant. (XXXIII:72)

and all the religions which are Islam, also¹³³, are just built on being able to carry everything. In other words, when the Prophet was asked, "Ma al-iman? What is iman, what is faith?" he replied only with one word, saying, "As-sabr, to be patient."

"To be patient" means to be able to carry every heavy burden on your shoulders; that is being patient. Now, we are saying this, and our grandsheikh, Abu Yazid¹³⁴, was also saying: "The meaning of tariqat, in our view, is to be able to carry, to bear, every unliked thing during your life; that is the meaning of tariqat that I am giving to you. If anyone is asking what is the meaning of tariqat, I am saying to him: 'To be able to carry every burden during this life.'" And it means to be sufficiently powerful in one's faith, because if a person is not powerful enough in his beliefs, he can't carry those difficult burdens.

Who can carry heavy burdens? Only those people who believe in their Lord's rewards and prizes, because He says, "Innama yuwaffa-s-sabiruna ajrahum bi-ghairi hisab¹³⁵": Allah Almighty promises that those people who are carrying every heavy burden during this life should be given prizes and rewarded with endless divine favors and endless mercies. Whoever believes in that may bear, may be patient. If not, it is as if you are asking a person to do a heavy piece of work and he says, "I can't do it." You say, "I shall give you ten pounds." He says, "No." "I will give you twenty"; he says, "No." "I will give you fifty pounds"; he says, "No." "I will give you one hundred pounds"; he says, "I can't." "I will give you one thousand." Then he is going to shake and tremble: "You are really going to give me one thousand?" I say: "Yes, I shall give it to you." I give it to him, and then he can do that difficult work.

¹³³ That is, Islam, the path of surrender and submission to God Almighty, is the original, incorrupted divinely-revealed faith brought by every prophet, including Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them all

¹³⁴ Bayazid Bistani, a great Naqshbandi wali

¹³⁵ "Truly He bestows upon the patient their reward without measure." (XXXIX:10)

Yes; as much as servants are carrying heavy burdens, they will be given more rewards. Therefore you must believe in your Lord's, Allah Almighty's, saying, "I will pay you endlessly. There will be eternal, never-ending favors for you if you are patient." Whoever believes in that can be patient.

Therefore you can see believers being patient; but unbelievers can't be patient - never. If people were patient, there would be no more hospitals, no more prisons, no more courts. But when beliefs go down, people become impatient.

One of our sisters was asking and expressing a kind of complaint that from every side are coming thorns: from children, from husband, from neighbors, from our community, also, and she was becoming upset.

And there is no cure except to believe in our Lord, Allah Almighty. He never leaves His servants during this life without a trial, and He is asking His servants only to be patient.

Yes, you must be patient, everyone, as much as you can. And that grandsheikh, Sultan al-Arifin Abu Yazid, was saying and was practicing, also, his words. He was saying: "I kept myself among my family in my house, and I tested myself to see if I was patient with my family, most of all with my wife."

That is important for a man - to be able to carry his wife. First you must be with her, carrying her, and then you must carry children, little ones - crying, shouting, breaking. For everything you see you must be patient.

He was testing himself: one day, two days, one week, two weeks. And then he was saying: "Now I am all right with my family. I know that they are parts of myself and I am carrying them. But it is not enough. I must also carry other people." And he was going out, going through the markets, among people, and testing himself to see whether he could carry people, also.

Yes, it is important, also, to carry people, to bear them. All the prophets carried them. For some of them, there were so many people harming them, and then finally the prophets made du'a against them. Noah for nine-hundred-and-fifty years carried his nation. Every day he went out and called people to his Lord's worship, and they threw on him stones and sticks, making him fall down and then leaving him; they would say, "He is dead now," and go.

For nine-hundred-and-fifty years he bore it. Then he said, "Rabbi, la tadhar 'ala-l-ardi mina-l-kafirina dayyara¹³⁶," and Allah Almighty sent the Flood. But our Prophet, p.b.u.h., was saying, "I was the one who bore peoples' adha, harm, the most. No one bore as much as I bore." Allah Almighty's order is to bear and the sunnah of our Prophet, for his nation, is to carry, to bear.

et, pub.. dayyara, en ander said,

We are gathered and living here for this holy month, and we must be patient for carrying each other, and also we must be careful that we do not harm anyone. Trials from Allah Almighty are going on; sometimes without our will comes some unliked thing. We must be patient, we must carry it. As much as you can carry trials, you are going to develop your faith and you should find more spiritual improvement.

Whoever is able to be more patient, he is improving in his spiritual development. Therefore Abu Yazid was going around his town, his city to see if he was able to carry people. He tested himself for a while and then he said, "O my ego, you are a well-known person in your city. Everyone knows you and respects you. You must go to some foreign countries where they do not know you and may harm you with their actions, with their words. You must go. I do not trust that you are carrying everyone."

¹³⁶ My Lord, do not leave upon this earth a single one of the unbelievers (LXXI:26)

And he went and traveled around various countries and saw whether he could carry people or not. Then he gave a sign that it was all right: I can trust you, O my ego, that you are carrying everyone. And that is the top point of faith, to be patient enough to carry people, because every prophet carried them, and our beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., just bore every hard from people. Therefore you can't find anyone who has improved in his faith without bearing people and their harm.

And we are in need of this, particularly in our time when people are getting to be more egotistical, when they only like their egos and are less respectful to one another because they are weaker day by day in their beliefs; and if no belief, then no respect among people. People are becoming like robots, only sharing in benefits; they are looking and coming together for the purpose of investment only, nothing else - to get some advantage. If that goes on among them, no one will bring them together, and their love also does not come from heart to heart; finished. No more real love among people now because they are not giving heart love; they are giving another kind of "love," not heart love.

I saw a couple and they were saying, "We have been together for fifty years," an English family. But everyone whom I ask, "Are you married?" says, "Once I was..." - everyone! Those people are very few now; to continue for fifty years means that they are giving their love from heart to heart. But others are not giving their love; it is "love" as cats in March give "love" to each other - you know? - and afterwards, no more love among cats.

Now civilization is like cats' civilization, cats' love - for three days, three months or six months; then finished. That is love? Therefore it has no reality; neither one can carry the other. Real faith makes people carry each other, and if a wife is not able to carry or to bear her husband, or if a husband is not able to carry his wife, who can carry another person? No one. And that is the cause of illness, those crises which are increasing in our time in every

branch of our life. And the way is only to believe with real faith and to be sincere with your Lord, and your Lord will support you for every burden and will support you to carry His divine trust.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. Association with a sheikh gives more power to our faith, and then it gives familiarity to everyone who attends such an assembly and meeting. But the characteristic of our egos is never to be familiar with anyone; every ego wants to be independent, by itself. It should be the first and only one among people, as a king is never going to agree to let someone sit on the same throne with himself.

That is the characteristic of our egos, always wanting to be the only one in its stage or in its station. The people of Pharaoh, the Egyptian ruler, were a nation worshipping idols; so many idols, so many gods or goddesses, they worshipped. And Pharaoh didn't agree to be one among all these; he wanted to be the chief, the head one. "Fa-qala, 'Ana Rabbukumu-l-a'la¹³⁷"; he claimed, "O people, I am your most famous, most honored Lord. The most important one, that is I."

And everyone among mankind has an ego; you can't find anyone without an ego. Everyone has been given an ego, and ego has the same attribute from beginning to end; its characteristic never changes.

On the Night Journey, Allah Almighty addressed His Holy Prophet, beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h., and said, "O My servant, beloved Muhammad! If I were to give such an opportunity or chance as I gave to Pharaoh, each one of My servants would be just like Pharaoh; they would say to people, 'I am your greatest Lord.' If they find the same conditions and same power and authority that I gave to Pharaoh, they are going to be like him."

¹³⁷ Then he (Pharaoh) said, 'I am your Lord Most High.' (LXXIX:24)

Therefore you must be careful about your ego, and you must not blame anyone, even Pharoah. Don't say that Pharoah was such a bad one. You can't believe in your ego, either, because Allah Almighty is saying, "If I leave you free and no one is commanding you, you are going to be like Pharoah. You will also say, 'I am your Lord,' to people. But I am not giving that chance to you." Therefore you must look at your own ego, and don't blame anyone because he does not worship or he is not a good charactered person. If we are left in the hands of our ego, our ways will also go in that direction.

Therefore this assembly gives familiarity to the attenders, because if any group comes to meet for the sake of Allah, for the love of our Lord, then the Lord, Almighty Allah, sends upon the attenders from His divine Mercy Oceans, covering them. It is such an effective mercy that if even one drop comes on a person - even if he is an unbeliever, only coming to see what those people are, what they are doing; out of curiosity coming and looking from the door to see who is there, those people sitting, and little by little coming and sitting down, curious - if that drop from divine Mercy Oceans falls on him, coming on his soul, even if he leaves this meeting and never returns, that is going to affect that person's inner life.

As an example, I may say that there is a bad illness now, very bad and dangerous; no one can be saved if that comes to a person. From very simple things it may come to people, and it is impossible to be saved from it., I am using an example from that bad thing, and also from Allah Almighty¹³⁸, because we are sitting here for the sake of our Lord and we are sitting in His love.

We are not sitting here for the enjoyment of this life. Whoever wants enjoyment and pleasure for this life, outside there is too much; he may go. No one is coming here asking for his physical body's pleasure, but our souls

¹³⁸ That is, as a tiny microbe can cause a fatal illness, so the smallest drop of God's infinite mercy can ultimately result in salvation

are thirsty for those Mercy Oceans and then we are attending here; and most people are coming from the far East, from the far West, from far countries. They are not coming here for eating or drinking; they may find eating and drinking in their own countries, also. But the thing which is gathering people in this place is only the love that Allah Almighty puts into every heart. But most people are imprisoning that love in a deep part of their hearts; they are not opening the door for it to come out.

And therefore we are here in the love of our Lord, attending, and that Mercy Ocean comes, and if even one drop comes on a person, it is a sign that that person is going to be a happy one. Finally he should come to the caravan that is moving toward Allah Almighty's Divine Presence.

Yes. Two caravans are moving, and everyone must join one of these two caravans. One caravan is the prophets' caravan and saints' caravan and believers' caravan, and the other one, the second caravan, is the Devil's caravan, Satan's caravan, the Anti-Christ's caravan. Everyone may chose one of these two for himself. The prophets' caravan is calling to people: "O people! We are moving to our Lord's Divine Presence. You have an invitation from your Lord. Come along and join us."

At first perhaps it is difficult for your egos, because we are passing through huge deserts, difficult mountains and terrible valleys, but at the end we will reach a plain where you may enjoy yourself up to eternity. But the second caravan has too many advertisers, calling people - too many: "O people! Come and join our caravan. It is a free caravan. Come and join and enjoy yourselves, people!"

And people are dancing, running - yes! But, as at first a student, if he can be patient and bear so much studying, keeps himself from everything else and sits and learns, at the end he is going to be so pleased and enjoying himself. But the one who always plays, running from this way, from that way, at the end of the year he must cry - yes!

Therefore, we are living in a world in which all things are going to be a test for everyone. The prophets are saying, "If you join our caravan, at the end you will take your rest, you will find peace, you will find every enjoyment. Don't be cheated or deceived by devils. They are saying, 'Come and drink! Come and eat! Come and enjoy yourself!' But at the end, finally, too much crying, too much regret."

But your egos, like little boys, may run and ask for everything, whether harmful or harmless, running after it; and they are mostly listening to the caravan of devils and Satan, and asking to follow them. But every time our ego follows them, there comes regret - must be.

Yes. We are living in a life which we are able to keep for only the moment we are in. Every breath which we leave behind ourselves and everything which is ahead of us, after a second it is also going to be behind us; as a car runs speedily and swallows the road, quickly for us, also, every breath is just finishing our lives. We can't keep past time with ourselves; past time is finished. And we are waiting for the future, but the future also quickly comes and runs from our hands. Therefore every enjoyment in this life is like a dream, and from a dream no one can take anything. You may see, you may dream, that you are sitting on a throne with a crown on your head and with treasures, but you can't keep that. When you open your eyes - nothing; and you say, "Where did they go? They were with me just now."

Yes. Therefore our egos are always cheating us, and we must be serious about our temporary life. We must look after it seriously because during our temporary life we can take only spiritual development and improvement, and no one can improve or develop without joining the caravan of prophets and saints. That must be.

Now, there is an important point to say to you. In Western countries I am seeing or I am meeting a lot of people, and they are claiming that they have wisdoms - from this, from that, they are reading books or listening and

learning and keeping with themselves wisdoms from the East, from oriental countries. Oriental countries are a dream for European people particularly, as oriental people are also always dreaming of these Western countries - yes, too happy to come to London, to England, to live in Germany; dreaming people. And whoever dreams of Western countries, ghusl, showering, is wajib, necessary, for him¹³⁹.

Whenever European, Western, people think about oriental countries, countries of the sunrise, refreshment comes into their hearts, spiritual refreshment and light; but whenever oriental countries' people think about the countries of the sunset, Western countries, darkness comes into their hearts. That is a bad thing, because their hearts are looking to that Eastward direction; no good. And whoever comes here, if they feel light in their own countries, when they come here, darkness comes - if not the darkness of night, at least the darkness of a cloudy sky. (Therefore, if the Government heard me, it would give me a medal because I am saying, "Oriental people, leave these countries and go back to your own countries"; but no one is saying to Mrs. Thatcher or to Her Majesty the Queen that I am such a person, advising your foreigners here to go back to their sunshining, oriental countries' that you are dreaming about - yes!)

And you are asking for wisdoms from Eastern countries because all prophets and all prophethood has come from the Middle East, from oriental countries, and wisdoms have come from those countries, also. Even old Greek wisdoms have taken their lights from the East; they never looked to the West but always to the East. Now, I mean to say that so many Western people want wisdoms and are suffering to reach some wisdoms, even on the plains

¹³⁹ In Islam ghusl is the means of cleansing from gross impurity. The meaning here is that an equal degree of impurity is incurred inwardly when people from the spiritually-luminous East dream about the spiritually-dark Western world. The order to do ghusl on such occasions is given in tariqah as a means of purification of the heart.

of India or in Tibet, and they have brought some wisdoms. Then, what is the difficulty for them?

The difficulty is that they are bringing wisdoms like beads; so many, like beads, they are carrying and bringing. But if a lady has a pearl necklace, does she carry the pearls in her hand, or put them on a silk thread?

She puts them on a strong thread, to keep them; otherwise they are going to be lost. Therefore, although people are taking so many wisdoms, and they are sufficiently proud of their wisdoms, finally they are losing them because there is not a strong thread keeping them.

What is that thread? I must say it now. What is this thread for those pearls? Wisdom's pearls should be kept, but with which thing may you keep them?

With a strong belief; strong belief keeps wisdoms. Without believing in any religion, finished; they are going to be lost. Therefore, as a person likes, he must follow either Christianity or Judaism or Islam; he must keep one belief, or everything that he has obtained is going to be useless. And that is something that people who are asking for wisdoms from the East, from the West, are forgetting, and it is the most important thing. If you can have this, then one after the other you may take pearls; but if you haven't got this, then everything that you are taking of wisdoms is going to be lost.

Therefore you must believe in a religion. I am not saying to you that you must believe in this one or in that one or in that one, but you must not do it by taking something from Christianity, something from Judaism, something from Islam. It is nonsense, without meaning - without meaning, because beliefs need to be pure. If beliefs are not pure, they are going to be mixed up and are going to be useless.

Therefore you may try to believe in some belief and you must not be cheated by titles: you must look at meanings and at purposes and at principles. If the principles are correct, you may keep it; and when you accept the principles

of a belief, you must try to keep to your belief, because, if you have a pearl necklace, you must look after it carefully because thieves may steal it. Therefore, beliefs must also be protected, and you must know which things protect your belief. If not protecting it, you will not be able to find it, also; it will be stolen. And if anyone makes up something, makes up a religion by himself, it is going to be wrong.

Therefore we must follow heavenly religions and heavenly beliefs; and we are believing as our Lord is asking us to believe. Every heavenly religion - Christianity, also, and Islam and Judaism - is calling people to believe in the existence of the Lord, Almighty God, and in His unity, and then calling people to believe in the Last Day, Judgment Day. Without believing in Judgment Day there is no religion; it is useless, because religion gives responsibility to mankind.

We are human beings, we are not animals. Animals do not carry responsibility; but we are from mankind. You have been honored, and, as you have been honored, you have been loaded with responsibility. Therefore, that is among the most important pillars of religion.

The most, most important, is to believe in the existence of the Lord, the Creator, and His unity, and second, to believe that He has a judgment day for His servants. You must understand that you have responsibility for the Day of Resurrection and that you shall be judged that Day, and you must believe in the Eternal Life either in Paradise or in Hell. That is a never-changing belief.

If anyone believes in these, the wisdom-pearls that he takes will give him benefit, because wisdoms make or keep people in humanity, keeping people honored, keeping people honorable. The one who has wisdoms is never going to be a dishonorable person: if a person has wisdoms he can't be a liar; if a person has been given wisdoms he is not going to be cruel; and so on. Wisdoms give people honor, and those wisdoms, when you believe in

Judgment Day, give you more power during your life, giving you a direction toward your destination - your true destination, not the wrong destination, never leaving you to follow devils or to fall into evils; no.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. What is honor for a person? Honor and being honorable is to accept truth; that is honor for people, for everyone. Whoever accepts truth, he has been honored by accepting it. And which thing makes a person dishonorable? To reject truth, while truth at every time is like the sun in the skies.

Truth is not hidden; always it is clear. And do you think that Abu Jah¹⁴⁰, the biggest enemy to the Prophet, didn't know the truth? His conscience proclaimed the truth, proclaimed that Muhammad, p.b.u.h., had brought the truth, the absolute truth, the unquestionable truth; but his ego came and prevented him.

In his conscience everyone knows what is truth, but his ego rejects it. Therefore ego is accursed, because it prevents people from accepting truth. It is only our ego, nafs, which makes people dishonorable, and therefore Allah Almighty orders His servants to fight their egos. And the Prophet was saying, "Umirtu an uqatila-n-nas hatta yaqulu 'La ilaha illa-Llah¹⁴¹".

You must understand what is the main or the last message through beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h.; you must look at what he brought, for what he fought, for which thing he gave his life, his whole life. You must not be fanatical or egotistical, and fanatical people are egotistical people. You must accept what is truth. And he, the Prophet, p.b.u.h., was summarizing his

¹⁴⁰ Literally, "the Father of Ignorance," the greatest enemy of Islam and its Prophet among the Makkan pagans

¹⁴¹ I have been commanded to fight people until they say "There is no deity except God." (Hadith)

prophethood and saying, "I have been ordered to fight people until they accept to say 'La ilaha illa-Llah, there is no God but Allah."

We are saying, claiming that we are the followers of the Sunnah of the Prophet, Ahli Sunnah¹⁴². And so many people in our time are claiming that they are keeping only the Sunnah, but their egos are raising themselves over them and putting reins in their mouths, making them like donkeys.

What is the reason? The main sunnah, the most famous sunnah, is the Prophet's saying, "I have been ordered to fight people until they accept to say that there is no God but Allah." And you, each one, as a follower of our beloved Prophet, p.b.u.h., you must keep a sword for fighting: you must keep a sword in your hand to fight until your ego says, "There is no God but Allah," because your ego, or every ego, says, "There is no God but Me, only Me." (Therefore Sheikh Hasan says in his song, "Me-Me-Me, Me-Me-Me..."; you must listen to that song.) Your ego says to you, "You must not accept any God except Me, and I am your Lord," because it will never be able to command anyone except you. You must be an obedient servant to Me only, and I am your Lord. You must accept Me as your Lord!" And you are saying, "O my Lord, yes-sir! Whatever you order, I am ready."

Everyone! That is our characteristic. Therefore you must accept truth. If you say, "My ego is an angel," you are a liar. Your ego is not an angel and it is never going to be at the level of an angel; rather you can say, "It is a devil, a real devil." More than Satan it is a devil, our ego; you must be very careful. Therefore, the Prophet said, "Ada-l-'adu nafsuka-l-lati baina jambain¹⁴³, the most terrible and dangerous devil is in the middle of your chest, here."

¹⁴² The People of the Prophet's Practice ar Tradition

¹⁴³ the worst of enemies is your nafs which is between the two sides (of your body)."
(Hadith)

All prophets came with truth, but the whole truth is in the wisdoms of Muhammad, and you must accept this. If you do not accept it, you will never reach the level of humanity and you are not going to be an honorable person in the Divine Presence. Therefore, we must fight our ego and say, "Get away! I am now with truth."

Your ego makes one thousand or one hundred thousand traps or tricks for you, for changing your mind and for changing your heart, also. Don't suppose that it is an easy one to fight - no! Rather, it is so difficult. You may fight every army on earth and they may be easy in comparison to your ego, it is so difficult.

How is it not going to be difficult when the Prophet says that it is the biggest enemy, the biggest devil? Yet you are looking after it so carefully; you are using every means to make your ego pleased, to give it pleasure. Who can say, "I am not trying to make my ego at rest and in pleasure and enjoyment?" Everyone does! And every problem and every crisis and war, all fighting, every bad thing, grows from that point: that everyone wants to make his ego in the most excellent condition and best enjoyment, to give it everything that it may ask.

This world is not enough for the ego of a person; if anyone is given this world, he will ask for another one. But leave aside the whole world - if you give him this London, taking all the people out of it and giving it to him, by nighttime he will go to the mental hospital; he will be crazy because he will go around, like this, like that - no one in an empty city, a dead city, a ghost town. Yes, he will go, he will run, among the streets and roads, and from here up to there, looking to see if someone is there.

Now we have given you this London. Take it, we will go away to another London. But he does not want to be alone: he wants the whole of London to be for himself and also for all the people to be under his command. Ego is

not happy by itself only, no. But if I were able, I would imprison it in an empty town, a ghost town, to have ghosts looking at it from every side, also.

Devils, our egos! Therefore it is so difficult a one to fight. But until you are going to be victorious over it, you can't be a person who accepts truth, no; it makes you dishonorable, always. When your ego says, "Now I am surrendering; as you say, I am proclaiming that there is no God but Allah," then you will be honored here and Hereafter.

In our time a lot of people are claiming that they are asking for truth, that they are looking for truth. But what is the benefit if truth shines like a sun but still you are denying it, you are not proclaiming it? And do you think that as long as you are under your ego's control you will accept truth? No!

And we have now in our time, also, truth. Islam just brought truth, absolute truth; you can't find anything in Islam except truth. Never can anyone object to the principles that Islam brought as beliefs, as worships, as attributes of character; no one can make any objection.

And if people are making objections about what Islam fought against, Islam just fought against devils. For what did prophets come if people, all of them, accepted truth? The Last Prophet, p.b.u.h., was sent as a prophet when his nation was in the midst of the darkness of ignorance - in too heavy darkness they were; they were in the worst condition through dhulm, cruelty. Who, can imagine a tribe of people who buried innocent girls under the sun¹⁴⁴? Which community has done such cruelty? It means their hearts were like rocks; and yet some no-mind people are defending them!

For what did Muhammad, p.b.u.h., fight? He had to fight those people; they were devils, representing and practicing the rules of devils. If you did not fight them, you would have to give them your neck, to cut it off. But so many

¹⁴⁴ In the Arabian society of the Prophet's time, it was common practice to bury girls alive during infancy or childhood

foolish and fanatical people - in our time, also, so many - are making objections about why Islam fought.

How was he not going to fight? He was coming as a prophet, with truth, and they were objecting and refusing truth, insisting that they could do anything they liked of cruelty and that no one should say "No" to them. Why do these governments make prisons and punish people? Leave them, in their freedom; they can do anything, if that is true! But anyone who fights the government, the government must fight him. That is a rule, never changing.

Therefore, Islam is perfect in every direction; no one can make any objection to Islam, can say that there is anything imperfect in Islam. That is truth. You may hate the name of Islam or Muslims but you must not hate truth. Anyone who wants to be honored here and Hereafter must proclaim truth, and truth is equal to Islam and Islam is equal to truth. People are asking for some way to practice, but I have never seen a way better than Islam for practicing, for beliefs and worships and character. You must accept!

Therefore we have been ordered to fight our egos until they say that Islam is the perfect religion from every direction. In beliefs and worships and dealing with people, they can never find anything better than the Shari'ah's rules for governing people. Every day people are making a new rule, the next day saying, "This is not good; we must change it." Every government is like this, full-up with rules, and each parliament is coming and making new ones. "This is no good; bring something else," writing new ones. "Who is accepting this?"

Allah sent His rule which is suitable for individuals and collectively. Why are you are rejecting it? I am shouting this because Allah, the Almighty Lord, is pleased with me when I am shouting at people. (Laughter.) I am the defender of the holy rules. If anyone is objecting, I will send to him one ghost, entering at nighttime!

Yes. So many secret powers have not yet appeared. Don't think that you know everything or that every power is under your control. There are some ones controlling all the power that you are so proud of, and, only with a switch, a key, turning it back, finishing off every thing. And you will see what is the power of faith; it is soon coming, because this world is soon going to be uncontrolled by anyone. Yet there are certain ones controlling everything. Don't think that those reactors or clouds (Chernobyl) are going like this, coming like that, without control. There are commanders for the winds, also; yes.

Truth is sweet but some people, ill people, when you give them sweet things, say, "Bitter, bitter, bitter!" I am giving this sweet thing and he is saying, "Bitter"; giving this bitter one and he says, "Sweet." It means, finished; no more life for that person. Therefore haqq, truth, is sweet and beautiful, and we must accept it.

We have just arrived at the last Friday of this holy month, and it has passed so quickly. And everything that is numbered must be finished; if it is not just one month but may be one year, it is still going to finish quickly.

Everything that is temporary one day is going to be finished. What is permanent, that is important; and we are coming to this life to gain permanent life, permanent pleasure, and to make our Lord pleased with ourselves. When we make our Lord pleased with ourselves, then that is going to be pleasure, here and Hereafter.

We are believers. This is a holy month. The Prophet, p.b.u.h., gave good tidings about this holy month. The first one-third of this Holy Ramadan is the days of mercy, coming on all people, ten days, and the second ten days are the days of forgiveness of our Lord, Almighty Allah. And the last one-third, which we are going to finish now, also, is freedom from Hell for believers,

Allah Almighty making them free, keeping them away from Hell. Therefore, believers who try to keep our Lord's orders during the days of Holy Ramadan by fasting and during the night by praying Tarawih¹⁴⁵ and other prayers, may be rewarded by our Lord, Almighty Allah, giving them barat, immunity, safety, from Hell, and they have been given good tidings of Paradise.

And we are the nation of the Last Prophet. One hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets and their nations have passed away. And the Seal of the Prophets, who was the last - no more prophethood or no more prophets after beloved Muhammad, p.b.u.h. - was saying, signing with his two fingers, the middle finger and the Shahadah, first, finger, and informing people that when I am sent with the last message from my Lord, between me and the Last Day, the Day of Judgment, there is only these two fingers' distance, it is so near.

And now, from that time up to today, fifteen centuries have passed away, and for everything that we are seeing - because he informed us of every event or every sign before the Last Day comes - he has spoken about those signs. He informed us about the conditions that would come and that people would be in when the Last Day approaches; he informed us about difficulties, general difficulties for all people but particularly for believers.

The Prophet was saying that when the Last Day approaches, there will be difficult conditions, and the hearts of believers are going to be melted as salt melts in water because they will see so many bad things, and the whole world will be full-up with evils. There will be the sovereignty of devils on all the world, and believers will see that but they will never be able to change those bad conditions.

No one among believers can accept or agree with such conditions that people now are living in, but you can't do anything: you can't do, you can't say, anything for your children; you can't do anything for your neighbors, you

¹⁴⁵ The special nightly prayers observed throughout Ramadan

can't do anything for your nation. A day ago a newspaper wrote that in a Muslim country, one person only said the word "Shari'ah" and the government took that the person to prison - a person only mentioning Shari'ah, when that country carried the flag of the Prophet for six hundred years! Yes, how changed - changed, because the time is approaching, and believers' hearts are melting; but we, you, can't do anything.

And then the Sahabah, the Prophet's Companions, were asking him, "O Prophet, how can believers live among such difficult conditions? How will their lives be? Is it possible to live under such conditions?"

And the Prophet said, "As bacteria live in vinegar, so they will live." And you must be patient, and you must ask from your Lord, Allah Almighty.

The Children of Israel were asking their Lord to send them a holy man who was supported by divine powers to fight against unbelievers. But we are heedless people, the whole Islamic world; we are not asking that.

Even though the Prophet gave good tidings about that one, that holy one who will be supported by divine powers and divine attributes, giving good tidings for the nation of Muhammad, p.b.u.h., yet so many scholars are denying him and making discussions: "Is such a person coming or not coming?"¹⁴⁶ But even if he were not mentioned in hadiths, so many hadiths, still we must ask for him; because Allah Almighty can do anything, and we can ask Him to give us such a holy man, holy person, supported by divine powers, to stop every evil and to defeat every devil.

And you must ask; it is obligatory for every believer to ask from Allah Almighty: "O my Lord! O Allah, ya Rabb! Send us someone to save the nation of Muhammad, p.b.u.h." And it is enough for everyone to look after himself and to ask from his Lord divine support, individually and generally,

¹⁴⁶ Referring to the Mahdi, p.b.u.h.

for all people. We are not asking only for believers but we are asking for all nations to be safe from the hands of devils.

By the name of Allah, All-mighty, All-merciful, Most Beneficent and Most Munificent. As He likes, everything is going to happen, and we are slaves. Our Lord's will is going on, and, for servants, to accept what their Lord chooses for them is the best.

Our Lord, Allah Almighty, chose Islam for His servants, and we agreed¹⁴⁷; we agreed with our Lord's choice. Islam therefore is the greatest, no doubt. If anyone comes to stand up beside Islam, he may come; people may see what is the greatness of Islam and what they have. Anyone may claim that his way, his belief, is the best, but it is only a claim: if they come to compare with Islam, they can see which one is the best. But they do not come, because their egos do not give them permission to come all together.

At the time of the Last Prophet, p.b.u.h., the whole world was informed about the Last Prophet and his Message. He wrote letters in every direction and sent his messages. And as most people were informed about the coming of a prophet at that time, so many of the Ahl al-Kitab, the People of the Book¹⁴⁸, came and asked about that prophet because they knew that finally a prophet must come.

One must come; they knew it through their holy books. If they hadn't known about a prophet, they would not have been interested in looking for him and asking about him. If today I look at a newspaper and it is written there that a lady is saying, "I am a prophet," must we go to look at her - who that one is, if she is true or not? No, because no prophet is expected.

¹⁴⁷ See III:19, 85; V:4 (V:3 in Pickthall's translation); VI:125; IX:33; XLVIII:38; LXI:9

¹⁴⁸ The "Book" refers to the Divine Scripture, revealed over the ages through the prophets, beginning with the first prophet, Adam, and ending with Muhammad, peace be upon them and upon him. The People of the Book therefore include Jews, Christians and Muslims

Allah sent His Last Message and informed all people that this is My Last Message with My Last Messenger. And the People of the Book, they were informed that there should come a prophet; he is going to be the last one, the Seal of the Prophets, and we must look for him. Yes. Therefore they came in groups, in delegations, to look at that one, to see if he was the right one or not.

When they found that he was that one about whom they had been informed, only a few of them came into Islam. And the Prophet, p.b.u.h., said, "If ten scholars of the Jewish people came and proclaimed that I am that prophet, all their people would come into Islam¹⁴⁹." But even ten of their men did not come; only two or three came into Islam, accepting it.

'Abdullah ibn Salam was one of them; before he came into Islam, Ishmawil ibn Salam was his name. The greatest rabbi he was, the chief; and his father, his grandfather, his grandfather - all of them in that line, they were chief rabbis, knowing the Taurat, Torah.

He came and witnessed that Muhammad was that prophet, that he was that one mentioned in every holy book. And then he said to the Prophet: "O Rasul-Allah, I am humbly saying that I am the chief and most knowledgeable person about the Taurat among the Jewish people. If I speak about myself, perhaps it may not be an accurate report about me because it is not so good for a person to speak well about himself. But now, call the Jewish rabbis to you and, without saying that I have accepted Islam, ask from them who I am. Yes, they know who I am. You must ask them first because if they know that I have come into Islam, they will say everything that is not true. Therefore you must ask about me first and then tell them that I have come into Islam."

¹⁴⁹ In the Prophet's time, communities of Jews lived in Madinah, nearby Khaibar, and other towns in Arabia. Through their traditions, as well as through prophecies contained in the Torah, they were awaiting the coming of the Last Prophet. But they were expecting him to come from among their own community, the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, rather than through Ishmael, peace be upon them all

Then the Prophet, p.b.u.h., called the rabbis, the most famous rabbis among the Jewish people in Madinah, and asked 'Abdullah ibn Salam to come in front of them. And he asked, "What is your opinion about this person, Ishmawil ibn Salam?"

They stood up and gave their testimony: "Ashhadu bil-lah, I swear by Allah that he is our most famous rabbi. No one can know about the Taurat as he knows"; standing up, witnessing in his favor. "He is from our best family through his father, his grandfather - they are in that line. The most noble people, the most generous people, the most intelligent people" - everything.

Then the Prophet said, "And what if he testifies that I am that prophet?"

"A'udhu bil-lah, a'udhu bil-Lah¹⁵⁰! May Allah save him from coming and saying that," they said, trembling, all of them, from hearing that.

"O 'Abdullah ibn Salam, come. Come here."

Then 'Abdullah ibn Salam came forward and said, "I am witness that there is no God but Allah and that you, O Muhammad, peace be upon you, are that prophet about whom Allah Almighty, the Lord of the Heavens, has informed us in our books. That prophet is yourself, and I am witness that you are Rasul-Allah, the Messenger of Allah."

Then all of them were going to be like crazy, some of them cursing, swearing: "It is known that he is a bad one and that his father, also, and his grandfather - all of them were bad people, accursed ones! All of them are always making trouble for the Children of Israel and they are kha'in, traitors," saying anything you can think of; they never left anything unsaid.

And 'Abdullah ibn Salām said, "O Rasul-Allah, just as I told you - those people are liars, quickly changing their report about me. Look at them!"

¹⁵⁰ I take refuge with God

Then the Prophet said, "If only ten of them come into Islam, all the Children of Israel will come into Islam." But divine wisdoms kept them in that line¹⁵¹, and they must follow it up to the time of Mahdi, p.b.u.h., and up to the time of the Anti-Christ and up to the time of Jesus Christ, p.b.u.h.¹⁵²

Yes, we are from mankind, and we have been honored by our Lord, as He has mentioned in every holy book that we have been honored. But the Children of Israel say that that honor is only for themselves. They say that they are a chosen race, while Allah says that honor has been given to all mankind; because He mentioned in the Old Testament and the New Testament, in the Taurat and the Injil¹⁵³, as he also mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, that Adam and his descendants, mankind, were created to be the deputies of their Lord on earth.

That is clear, that is truth; that is well-known among all scholars. Rabbis know, priests know, bishops know, the Pope knows, and the Patriarch in Istanbul, he knows it well, also. In Damascus there is a patriarch; he knows well, also, that mankind are created to be the deputies of their Lord on earth.

But every time they have forgotten that they are deputies, that they have been honored, they have run into lies, they have run into cruelty, they have run into mercilessness, and they have ran into ignorance. Because we have been honored (and we have also been given a nafs, an ego, to be a horse or Buraq¹⁵⁴ for ourselves to return from this earth to the Divine Presence in the

¹⁵¹ As Jews

¹⁵² A reference to the return of Jesus, p.b.u.h., to this world following the coming of the Mahdi, p.b.u.h., and the Dajjal (Anti-Christ). According to Muslim belief, Jesus was not crucified but was taken up by God without experiencing death, to return to the word during the critical period preceding the Last Day (see III:155 and IV:157-158).

¹⁵³ The Taurat is the original, divinely-revealed scripture given to Moses, while the Injil is divine scripture given to the prophet Jesus, peace be upon them both

¹⁵⁴ A heavenly steed; specifically, the heavenly mount sent to the Prophet, p.b.u.h., for his miraculous Night Journey. According to traditions on the Last Day those who were always thankful to their Lord will be given heavenly mounts to convey them into Paradise

Heavens), when mankind, individually or collectively, are following the desires of their horses - I mean to say, the desires of their ego or nafs - they are cruel, are ignorant and unjust and merciless to each other, making fasad, corruption, and fighting, giving miseries to people, and making each other suffer.

Therefore, when people left the way most honored by their Lord, their Lord sent them, from His Divine Presence, a servant of His as His messenger, to bring people into the right, the honored, path. That is the divine wisdom in sending messengers to people. And you must look, o Christians: the whole Christian world must look at the condition of the world after Jesus Christ, when time was running and five or six hundred year's had passed away.

They may tell me. I know, but I am saying that they must look at what was the view, the general picture of mankind living on earth after Jesus Christ. If it was excellent, no need for a prophet. What was the general picture at the time before the Prophet came?

Is it possible for them to say that the message of Jesus Christ was enough for the whole world? Is it possible for them to claim that Christianity was sufficient for all mankind - no need for a renewal on earth - and that every part of this world, all people, were in excellent condition and that Jesus Christ's message was enough for them, while Christians were only in a limited area and they were living under difficult conditions, without unity among themselves but so many parties or groups? No, they can't say this.

If they can say - as scholars, as knowledgeable people, learned people - that there was no need for a new Message for mankind, I am going to kiss their hands and feet. But they know that all that grew up of science and knowledge was only after the coming of Prophet Muhammad, p.b.u.h., with his Book. They are saying so themselves; all scholars are saying that this was by the favor of Islam. If any of those learned people among the People of the Book can say that no benefit came to people from Islam, they are

either liars or there must be something wrong, some fanaticism, among them; they are following their egos pleasure. Yes, that is something that they are not stating.

Once Abu Yazid Bistami, may Allah bless him, was in seclusion. And an inspiration came to his heart, saying to him: "O Abu Yazid, o My servant, this is the Christians' Easter Day, and you must dress as a priest. There is a famous monastery here and you must be present at their gathering."

"A'udhu bil-lah!" said Abu Yazid, fearing them. Then he lay down for a little bit, sleeping, and in his dream someone came and said to him, "O Abu Yazid, go! Get up and quickly take clothes like a priest, put a priest's hat on your head, and go and be present with the priests in their monastery for Easter."

"A'udhu bil-Lahi min ash-Shaytani-r-Rajim!"¹⁵⁵, Abu Yazid said. Awliya have hatif¹⁵⁶, "telephone," hearing but not seeing. Then a third time that voice said to him, "O Abu Yazid, quickly dress as priests dress and put a priest's hat on your head and go, and no worry for you. I am the Commander over you. Go!"

When that command came to Abu Yazid, he was one of those people to whom iradah, will, has been given; if they ask for something, it is ready for them. And according to the holy command, those clothes were ready

Quickly changing, putting on his head the hat of a priest; then, only doing like this, and he was among a huge crowd of black beards and also black clothes, all black - he was among them. Then, after not too long a time, a very splendid throne was made ready for the chief one. And he came, with golden clothes and a golden hat.

¹⁵⁵ I seek refuge with God from Satan the Rejected

¹⁵⁶ A heavenly voice or communication

So many people caught at him, from this side, from that side, and he sat down, looking around like this, like that, but he didn't speak. Silence; waiting. And those hundreds of of priests and bishops waited.

Then they asked: "O our lord, what has happened to you today? What is the matter? We have come from the East, from the West, gathering here, to listen to your lecture, to attend your ceremony. What is the matter? What has happened to you?"

Then he said: "There is nothing the matter with me. But there is a Muhammadan present among you."

They looked around. When he said, "Muhammadan," they were expecting him to be among themselves like me, with my turban; looking, looking. "We are all of us priests here. We do not see any Muhammedan. Show him to us so that we can kill him. How has he come here, upsetting our meeting?"

"No!" He was a white-bearded bishop, sitting there; all of them had black beards except him. "No! We are People of the Book. I can't order you to kill a person without bringing evidence. With evidence, I may order the killing of that one who has come into our assembly. Now you, all of you, sit down and listen to me," he said. "Now, O Muhammadan, are you going to appear to us?"

Abu Yazid said, "Subhanallah wal-hamdulillah wa la ilaha illa-Llah, wal-Llahu akbar wa lil-Lahi-l-hamd,"¹⁵⁷ and stood up. Immediately it appeared to him that those were not Christians, and he stood up among them, glorifying his Lord, Almighty Allah. No one could touch him.

"O Muhammadan! I am going to ask you one hundred-and-one questions, and I will listen to your answers. If you can give correct answers, according to your belief, you will be saved. Otherwise we are going to kill you."

¹⁵⁷ Glory be to God; praise be to God; there is no God but Allah; God is the Most Great and to Him be the praise.

"No one can kill me," Abu Yazid said. "If my Lord does not permit you, you can't touch me," because if they tried to take him, there would be nothing there; they wouldn't be able to touch him. He would have been solid but then afterwards would have been nothing.

Then that bishop, so learned a one, began his questions, saying: "First tell me about that One for whom it is impossible to find a second, and about those two for whom there is no third; about the three for whom there is no fourth, and about the fourth for whom there is no fifth."

Such strange questions he asked, one after the other, one hundred-and-one altogether. And when he stopped, Abu Yazid said to that chief priest, "It is all right now. Anything else?"

"No. I am waiting for your answers."

Then Abu Yazid began from the first, one, answering; the second one, answering; the third one, answering¹⁵⁸. Like a tape recorder, recording and saying one after the other; he had that power. That bishop knew the answers and he was saying, "Yes, all right; yes, all right; yes, all right; yes, all right; yes, all ri-igh-t..." For all of them, "Yes, all right," finishing one hundred-and-one. :

It is a long story, but it is enough to mention only one of those questions: _ "Who is that one for whom there can never be found a second?" And Abu Yazid replied, "Allah."

"That is right," the bishop said. Said. He did not say "Three," but he said, "Yes, that is our Lord, that One."

¹⁵⁸ Sheikh Nazim adds parenthetically: "This information has not come to Western countries yet from our books. Western Muslims have learned only how to make some books about taharah, cleanliness about prayers, about fasting, about Hajj - only that, but such information they are not looking for. They are too serious about "knowledge" in Islam, but it is only information about outward matters, while so many thousands and thousands of events in Islam would make our hearts to open

And when all the questions were answered, Abu Yazid said, "Is there anything else you want to ask me?"

"Not at all," the bishop said. "You are all right, and you are free to be among ourselves here."

Then Abu Yazid said, "But, o Chief Bishop, I have a question. I have one question to ask Your Holiness, if you give permission."

"Yes. Merhaba - Welcome, welcome! We are listening," His Holiness said. That answer awakened all the priests there. "Yes. What is that question?"

"What is the key to Heaven?"

The chief bishop bowed his head like this and did not speak. And all the people began murmuring to each other: "He asked him one hundred-and-one questions and he, like a machine, a machine gun, gave the answers, but for one question our boss, our chief, His Holiness, is not going to answer. O Our Holiness, what about the answer?" they murmured among themselves.

And he raised his head and said, "O my sons, I am not stopped from speaking because I do not know, but I am only afraid you are not going to agree with me about that key."

"Oh, what has happened? Are we going to leave the key to the Muhammedan and we will go to Hell? You must say it! We will quickly agree. What is that key?"

"I am saying, 'Ashshadu an la ilaha illa-Llah, wa ashshadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasulihu' - I am witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad, peace be upon him, is His servant and His messenger."

And they said, "Oh-h! Why are you going to leave that key in the hands of the Muhammadans only? We must have it! And we are saying it, also."

Then they cut their girdles, throwing them away, taking the crosses outside, and they changed that huge church into a mosque and went to pray behind Abu Yazid. And hatif, the Divine Voice, came to him, saying, "O Abu Yazid, you put on the girdle for Me, for My pleasure, and I have cut three hundred and more priests' girdles for your pleasure." Alhamdulillah!

We have that authority to be with everything; if they are claiming that they have power through their religions, we have authority, also, to show people that Islam is the best and Islam is the first. And we are asking forgiveness and saying, "Astaghfirullah..." And we are thankful to our Lord, who makes our hearts to be in peace and satisfaction with such holy words; and His wali, Abu Yazid, is looking and smiling at me, by his spiritual power coming to our meeting and saying, "Yes, it is all right." , And we are saying, "Alhamdulillah, al hamdulillah, wa shukru lil-Lah..." ¹⁵⁹

The holy month has quickly passed away, taking something from ourselves, also, like a plane coming from the Heavens, landing on earth, and then taking away something. Whoever has given something, it is put there and taken to the Divine Presence. And we hope that Allah Almighty forgives us and gives to us from His endless Mercy Oceans.

O believers, we believe in the life here and Hereafter. And whoever believes in the Life Hereafter, the Eternal Life, he must know about his position during this life and he must have an aim for his life.

The Prophet p.b.u.h. said, "Al-hikmata-d-dallatu-l-mumin. 'Indama wajadaha an takhadhaha."¹⁶⁰ Wisdoms are all the property of Muslims, but it is lost

¹⁵⁹ Glory be to God; praise be to God; there is no God but Allah; God is the Most Great and to Him be the praise.

¹⁶⁰ Wisdom is the lost property of the believer. Wherever he finds it, he may take the (Hadith)

property. Therefore, anywhere they can find a wisdom, they may take it and say, "This belongs to us. I had lost it but now I have found it."

No fanaticism in Islam, particularly no fanaticism for knowledge¹⁶¹; that hadith, that saying from the Prophet, p.b.u.h., gives a wide horizon to believers. If they can find a wisdom in India, they may take it, as the Prophet said: "Utlubu-l-'ilma wa lau bis-Sin"¹⁶². If you can find a wisdom in China (at that time it was known as the farthest country), you may go and take it."

If a person brings you wisdoms, you may take them. But now in our time, even among ourselves, we are making so much trouble about taking some wisdoms from Muslims, even who are well-known as good persons, great people in Islam, making so much criticism.

Now I will say one word about such wisdoms. Islam just came among an ignorant tribe, the Quraish, the people of Jahiliyyah,¹⁶³ and the Prophet, p.b.u.h., by the holy command of his Lord, Allah Almighty, brought the Last Message. He had 124,000 Sahabah, Companions, taking them from asfala safilin¹⁶⁴, the lowest degree - perhaps lower than the level of animals, because you can't see an animal which will kill its child, and at that time they were killing their children, burying them alive - and changing them from asfal, the lowest, to the highest horizon of humanity.

This point must be well-known, how the Prophet and how Islam affect people. And Islam is so walud¹⁶⁵, giving more and more at every time. We are not like 'a religion in which only a few people appear as scholars, 'ulama, or as awliya, no; at every time you can find thousands and thousands of people who are reaching the horizon of humanity. No objection; we can be happy and peaceful that there are such people as in Islam at every time.

¹⁶¹ That is, limiting the scope of useful knowledge to purely "religious" content

¹⁶² "Seek knowledge, even though it be in China." (Hadith)

¹⁶³ Ignorance, specifically of the divine guidance

¹⁶⁴ The lowest of the low. (XCV:5)

¹⁶⁵ Prolific, productive, giving

We are now speaking about a wisdom, and it is going to give us an understanding of our goal. Ibrahim Adham was one of the famous personalities of Islam, well-known in the East and in the West, also. He was sultan in his time, and Allah Almighty gave everything to him and he had every means to enjoy with his ego.

One of his enjoyments was hunting. Hunting is also something useful; for jihad, warfare, and for our bodies, it is good. He was hunting one day, chasing a deer. Then from his saddle a voice came to him, hatif, saying, "Ya Ibrahim, a-li hadha khuliqta au li hadha umirt?"¹⁶⁶

He listened. What was the meaning? "O Sultan Ibrahim, do you think that you have been created for this purpose? Do you suppose that you have been created and ordered to do this?" And he was shocked, not seeing anyone speaking to him but hearing that voice.

That is suitable for the holy command of Allah, showing people for what purpose they have been created, asking him, "Were you created for hunting, for enjoying yourself always, or is this the holy command for everyone - to enjoy themselves in this life with hunting, with playing?" And no answer.

That question is for all of us, for everyone; everyone will be asked it in the Divine Presence when he looks at his life-story. In a second's time you may look at your life-story, the Prophet saying that seventy "cassettes," tapes, are recording our lives; seventy records, each one going up to the horizon, extending as far as your vision can reach - seventy for everyone, to see his own life-story.

Now some people are putting on television a half-hour for that person, for this person - their life-stories. But that is nothing. You will see seventy there, but in one second's time you can look at all of them, not seeing them one by one; everything will happen in one second, in a moment, quickly. And then

¹⁶⁶ O Abraham, have you been created for this or have you been ordered to do this?"

Allah Almighty will ask, "O My servant, did I create you for such a life? Did I order you to live such a life?" Yes, you must look after your answer.

I am saying this to my nafs, to myself, also. If you are listening, everyone must ask himself, "What is my aim?" Yes. People are coming, running to London, running to France, to Germany, to every European country; running - for what? What is the purpose? For what are you coming? You must know.

You may say, "I am coming to this country because I am a strong believer and I am showing Islam to these unbelievers, so that they may see the light of Islam on my forehead, so that they may be affected by my faith." Are you saying this, or have you come here to take the rubbish of dunya, of this world's life?

For all of us, He knows what is in our hearts. You may say something with your lips but He knows what is in our hearts, what is our intention. If we are coming here for the sake of Islam, it is all right. Otherwise, it is difficult; then these countries' darkness is coming on you - darkness, dark clouds, coming and making the sun of your faith under a cloud, and you can't taste the sweetness, the freshness, of faith.

Therefore everyone must be very careful; yes: Here or there, everyone must know for what we are created, and we must give more time for worshipping our Lord, Almighty Allah. And also you must be like shining stars in the skies, not on earth. People should find in you the stars of Islam, not saying, "From where have those people come? They can go away," writing on walls, "Go away! Go! Go!"

One more Ramadan has just passed away, and we are on our way toward Allah Almighty. Be ready to face His Judgment Day, His Glorious Throne. There you are going to be asked about everything. And we are asking forgiveness - for you, for me, for everyone...