

The Six Points of Tabligh

Bilal Malik

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

[*Ye are the best people that hath been brought forth (as a pattern) for mankind.
Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah.*]

(Qur'an, 3:110)*

* For verses of the Qur'an, in addition to Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought's brilliant, *The Holy Qur'an: A new English translation of its Meanings* [altafsir.com] and *The Holy Qur'an: Translations of Selected Verses* by Dr. Martin Lings (Shaykh Abu Bakr Siraj-ad-Din) [altafsir.com], Pickthall's *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* has been relied on. For the Hadith [Prophetic Traditions] literature, the English translation of *Muntakhab Ahadith* by Mawlana Muhammad Yusuf Kandhlavi has mainly been used.

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. May He send His peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, the Truthful and Trustworthy, and upon his Family, Companions, and all those who excel in following them until the Day of Reckoning.

In this short treatise, I will try to expound - with some detail - the six qualities [widely known as the *Six Points*] on which the teachings and practices of the *Jama'ah Tabligh* [or *Tablighi Jamat*] are based. To enumerate, they are: i) the *Kalima* [Phrase], *La ilaha illa'llah, Muhammadur Rasulullah*; ii) *Salat* [the Prayer]; iii) *'Ilm & Dhikr* [Knowledge and Remembrance]; (iv) *Ikram al-Muslim* [Honoring Muslims]; (v) *Ekhlas* [Sincerity]; and (vi) *Dawah & Tabligh*^A [Invitation and Conveyance]. **It is said that in addition to learning them, acting in accordance with the *Six Points* facilitates the following of the entire *Deen*^B of Islam.**

A basic pattern has been followed throughout this work which looks into the aims and objectives, followed by the virtues or merits of each of the *Six Points*. Also, an outline has been made to help achieve the aims and objectives mentioned at the beginning of each *Point*.

I believe justice cannot be done to the subject without looking, at least briefly - in addition to the history- into the lives and works of the *Akabar* [Elders] of the *Jama'ah Tabligh*. The following words concerning the *Jama'ah* and its founder [Mawlana Ilyas, رحمت الله عليه^C] are by one of the foremost contemporary western Islamic scholars, Imam Suhaib Webb^D:

“Tablighi Jamat represents one of the great efforts to revive the faith of Islam in the hearts of Muslims. Their founder, Mawlana Ilyas (may Allah have mercy on him) was a man of great piety and concern for the Umma.

The Mawlana memorized the entire Qur'an at a young age and continued his studies of different Islamic sciences. He was known for having an intense presence about him. One day his teacher said to him, “When I see Muhammad Ilyas, I am reminded of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).” He was known for a strong intellect and excelled his peers in all of his studies. He had a number of great teachers and was blessed to study the works of Bukhari and Tirmithi; however, he was struck by an illness which led to his increase in studies and spiritual devotion.

^A In Arabic, the word *tabligh* is the verbal noun (*masdar*) of the word *ballagha* بلغ which comes from the root baa'-laam ghayn [ب ل غ]. It can be used in the phrase *ballagha al-risalah* بلغ الرسالة to mean *he conveyed/delivered the message*. Thus, the word *tabligh* has connotations which mean *to cause to reach or attain, to convey, or to deliver*.

^B When translated into English, the word *Deen* is lost in translation. However, the most common translation is *Religion*.

^C رحمت الله عليه (*Rahmatullah 'Alaihi*) is mentioned after the names of the deceased and is translated as “may Allah have mercy on him”.

^D For a brief biography of Imam Suhaib Webb, please see Appendix I.

In 1910 he assumed a teaching position at a famous school. After the death of his two brothers, and almost his own, the Mawlana moved to Delhi and began to teach. There he witnessed the horrible conditions of the Muslim Umma. In fact, it is well known that the Muslims there had adopted Hindu names, forgot their prayers and observed Hindu rights and festivals over their own. Under these conditions the heart of this saint pushed him to act. It was not sufficient for the Mawlana to focus solely on himself, but his true devotion to Allah and the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) led him to openly address the ills of the society. Thus, like the famous scholars before him, he not only focused on the purification of his soul, but the purification of his society and the Muslims around him. Thus, he was led to open a number of schools and educational institutions that focused on reviving the core Islamic teachings amongst the people. It was through this effort that Tablighi Jamat was born.

...Let me state that I felt it was an obligation to give a small glimpse into the life of one of the greatest reformers our Muslim nation has seen in the last 200 years.

Summary of Tablighi Jamat:

Tablighi Jamat is a movement designed to bring faith back into the lives of the Muslims. They focus on five major duties [the sixth being dawah & tabligh itself]^E and travel to different locations in order to spread the message of faith and dawa (calling to Allah) to other Muslims. They serve as one of the important alarm clocks whose job is to awaken a sleeping Umma, and remind it of its noble position and tasks. Members are encouraged to go for 3 days in a month, 40 days in a year and, if possible, 4 months in a lifetime.”^F

In the limits of my inadequacies, and the sheer depth of the subject at hand, if I have been – with any degree of success – able to explain the *Six Points*, it is solely through the grace of Allah, the Generous. If I have erred, I hope not to be deprived of the recompense, for making an attempt.

Keeping in mind the Prophetic Statement, which says that, “*The one who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allah*”, I conclude this introduction by expressing my deepest sense of gratitude to all those who have assisted in anyway in composing this short treatise. I wish to thank especially my teachers and *emirs*, who have been, and continue to be, a wellspring of knowledge and guidance for me; as well as my family, friends, and fellow *Tablighis*, without whom this work would have proved highly difficult. May Allah reward them all greatly in this world and the next.

We ask Allah to grant us the [*tawfiq*] ability to follow and understand the ocean that is the *Six Points of Tabligh*.

Bilal Malik

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[Rabi` al-Awwal 12, 1428 AH^F]

^E “[the sixth being dawah & tabligh itself]”: brackets and content are of the author.

^F The Islamic (Hijri) Calendar is usually abbreviated AH in Western languages from the Latinized *Anno Hejirae* "In the year of the Hijra". (1 AH corresponds to 622 CE.)

1. The Kalima [Phrase], *La ilaha illa'llah, Muhammadur Rasulallah*

Allah the Exalted has said:

Surely I am Allah, there is no god but I, therefore serve Me... (Qur'an, 20:14);

Allah! There is no deity save Him, the Alive, the Eternal... (Qur'an, 2:255);

And We sent no messenger before thee but We inspired him, (saying): There is no god save Me (Allah), so worship Me. (Qur'an, 21:25);

Obeys Allah and obeys His messenger; but if ye turn away, then the duty of Our messenger is only to convey (the message) plainly. (Qur'an, 64:12);

Whoso obeyeth the Apostle obeyeth God... (Qur'an, 4:80);

and: *...whatsoever the Messenger giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain (from it). And keep your duty to Allah...* (Qur'an, 59:7).

The words of this blessed Kalima and its translation

The Kalima consists of two parts, the first being *La ilaha illa'llah* and the second, *Muhammadur Rasulallah*. The translation of the Kalima: *There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the Messenger of Allah.*

The Kalima is a sacred pledge between man and his Creator, in which man acknowledges that Allah is He "who is possessed of all the attributes of perfection and majesty, is beyond contingency, beyond having associates or peers, beyond resembling anything, and beyond any attribute or state which does not befit His Glory and Magnitude. For He is the Unique Divinity, the One, the Self-Sufficient, who neither begets nor is begotten, who has no likeness. There is no god but Him, Transcendent is He. Nothing shares in His Essence, Attributes, or actions; to Him belong Sovereignty and all praise, and He has power over all things."¹ "Through sound belief and certainty in its [the Kalima's] meaning, and by submission to it, one attains to faith or *iman*."² In addition to acting in accordance with it, when one affirms with sincerity that *there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the Messenger of Allah*, Islam results. "By joining sound belief with submission to its authority there dawns in the heart the reality of excellence or *ihsan*."³ To further elucidate, by affirming both parts of the Kalima, one admits before Allah that one is His sincere and faithful slave. That one will live every aspect of his or her life, from the most sacred to the most

^G صلى الله عليه وسلم (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) translated as "Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him" is said by Muslims when the Prophet Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم name is heard or uttered, out of love and reverence for him.

mundane, in accordance with the Blessed Way [*Sunna*] of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم which is a clarification and explanation of the Commandments of Allah, i.e. the *Shari'a* [Islamic Sacred Law].

Objective

Allah the Exalted has said:

Know that there is no god save Allah... (Qur'an, 47:19).

The purpose of this *Kalima* is twofold. (i) That one achieves *yaqin* [certainty] of the fact that whatever happens, happens with the Will of Allah; that Allah is capable of doing – without any help whatsoever from creation – anything and everything. Thereby achieving certainty that the *ghayr* of Allah, that is creation, cannot do anything without Allah's Will. To become consciously aware of the fact that Allah is *al-Musabbib al-asbab* [the Cause of causes]. To be certain that whatever is happening through a "cause" is not in reality originating from it, but rather, is happening *only* because Allah has willed it. For example, water is dependant on the *hukm* [command] of Allah to quench thirst. Also, to cure, medication is contingent on Allah's *hukm*. Likewise, the human heart depends on the *hukm* of Allah to pulsate and nourish cells throughout the body. Similarly, without Allah commanding it to, the universe is devoid of any power or ability to exist.

This part of the purpose of the *Kalima* is known as "*yaqinon ki tabdili*" or the *transformation of certainties* [from *al-khalq* (the creation) to *al-Khaliq* (the Creator)].

And (ii) to bring about certainty in one's heart that success – in both temporal and eternal worlds – is completely contingent on following the Blessed Way [*Sunna*] of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, for Allah has said "Say" [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, to mankind]: "*If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you...*"⁴ This certainty must be supported by the *yaqin* that any way *other* than the *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, is, and leads to, failure. Allah the Exalted has said, "*Truly, you have in the Messenger of Allah a most beautiful example for whoever seeks Allah and the Last Day...*"⁵ This second part of the purpose of the *Kalima* is called "*tariqon ki tabdili*" or the *transformation of ways*.

Some of the merits or virtues of the blessed Kalima:

Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who accepts from me the Kalima, which I presented to my uncle (Abu Talib at the time of his death) and he rejected it, this (acceptance) will be a means for his salvation.*⁶

Talha ibne 'Ubaidullah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, I know a Kalima which if recited by a dying man, will be a means of solace for his departing soul and will be a light for him on the Day of Resurrection (this Kalima is La ilaha illa'llah).*⁷

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated (in a long narration) that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Each and every such person will be liberated from the Fire, who had said La ilaha illa'llah, and in his heart, there was goodness (iman) equal to the weight of a grain of barley. After them, every such person will be liberated from the Fire who had said La ilaha illa'llah, and in his heart, there was goodness (iman) equal to the weight of a grain of wheat. After that, everyone will be liberated from the Fire who had said La ilaha illa'llah, and in his heart, there was goodness (iman) equal to the weight of a particle of dust.*⁸

Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه narrates from his father that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who bears witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the Messenger of Allah, and his tongue frequently recites it while his heart is contented with it, the Fire shall not burn him.*⁹

Mu'adh ibne Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Anyone who dies, bearing witness with certainty of his heart that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and that I am His Messenger, will be forgiven by Allah.*¹⁰

The following words are from *Key to the Garden* by Habib Ahmad Mashhur al-Haddad:

“We shall now point some of the merits of this noble phrase [of Tawhid], and the subtleties and exalted secrets contained in its invocation. One of these was referred to by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he said, “He whose last words in the world are *La ilaha illa'llah* shall enter the Garden.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The people of *La ilaha illa'llah* shall suffer no desolation in their graves. It is as though I can see them coming out of their graves, shaking the dust off their heads, saying, *Praise be to God, who has removed sadness from us; our Lord is indeed Forgiving, Thankful*’ (Qur’an 35:34).” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The best invocation is *La ilaha illa'llah*.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The best thing that I and the Prophets before me ever said is *La ilaha illa'llah*.” And [the Prophet] صلى الله عليه وسلم said that his Lord declared, “Truly, I am God; There is no god but Me. Whosoever affirms My Oneness enters My fortress, and whosoever enters My fortress shall be safe from My chastisement.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said “Renew your faith.” “How should we renew our faith?” he was asked. He said: “Say *La ilaha illa'llah* many times.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “*Subhan' Allah* is half the balance; *al-Hamdulillah* fills it; and there is no veil between *La ilaha illa'llah* and God until it reaches Him.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “The one who testifies that there is no god but God, that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, that Jesus was the servant of God and was His word cast into Mary, and a spirit from Him, that the Garden is real and the Fire is real, shall enter the Garden according to his deeds.” And in Imam Muslim’s version: “God renders the Fire forbidden for a person who affirms that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Anyone who says *La ilaha illa'llah* with sincere single-heartedness shall enter the Garden.” He was asked, “O Messenger of God, what does sincere single-heartedness consist of?” And he answered, “It restrains him from the things which God has forbidden.” And he said, “Make those of you who are dying repeat *La ilaha illa'llah*, for it wipes away all preceding

sins.” And he said to Mu’adh [ibn Jabal], “O Mu’adh, no one affirms single-heartedly that ‘there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His Messenger’ but that God renders the Fire forbidden to him.” And he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “God has forbidden to the Fire anyone who says La ilaha illa’llah for His sake.” And he said to Abu Hurayra (may God be pleased with him), “Go, and whoever you find on the other side of this wall who affirms La ilaha illa’llah with certainty in his heart, give him glad tidings that he shall enter the Garden.”

A bedouin once came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said, “O Messenger of God! What are the two inevitable things?” And he replied, “Whoever dies without having associated anything with God shall enter the Garden, and whoever dies associating something with God shall enter the Fire.” It is said that Moses عليه السلام said, “O Lord, teach me something with which I can remember and pray to You.” And He said, “O Moses, say La ilaha illa’llah.” “Lord!” he replied, “All Your servants say that.” [God] said, “O Moses! If the seven heavens and their inhabitants, and the seven earths were in one hand of a balance, and La ilaha illa’llah was in the other, La ilaha illa’llah would outweigh them all.” And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked Mu’adh ibn Jabal, “Do you know what is God’s right over His servants, and what right His servants have over God?” And he replied, “God and His Messenger know best.” “God’s right over His servants,” he told him, “is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him. And the right of His servants over Him is that He will not torment anyone who does not associate anything with Him.” “O Messenger of God! Mu’adh said, “Shall I not give people the good news?” And he told him, “Do not, for they would rely on it.”

And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Gabriel once came to me and said, ‘Give your nation the good news that he who dies not having associated anything with God shall enter the Garden.’ I then said, ‘O Gabriel! Even if one had committed theft and adultery?’ ‘Yes!’ he said. And I asked, ‘Even if he had committed theft and adultery?’ ‘Yes!’ he said. And I asked, ‘Even if he had committed theft and adultery?’ And he replied, ‘Yes, even if he used to drink wine.’”¹¹

Achievement of objective

Allah the Exalted has said:

...Help one another to righteousness and piety; do not help one another to sin and enmity...
(Qur’an, 5:2).

In this age of materialism and nihilism: religion, faith, spirituality and the unseen have become, in the minds of most, “invented ideas of pre-modern man”. The majority of Muslims, although not nearly as affected by the post-modern condition as concerns *Aqidah* [Creed], are not in any way immune to the continuous onslaught of materialism they are faced with each day. In light of this, for one to achieve the abovementioned objective of engendering the certainty that our individual and collective success lies in following the blessed Sunna, has increasingly become an uphill task. Keeping this in view, one must endeavor to perform *tadhkira* [reminders] of Allah with all his attributes, His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, his life and struggles, the Companions, their lives and sacrifices, the brevity of one’s temporal existence, the imminence of death, the grave, the Day of Reckoning, the Garden, the Fire, and the eternal expanse of the Final Abode, consistently and continually, for Allah, Almighty and Glorious is He, has said, “...remind for reminding truly benefits believers.”¹²

2. Salat [The Prayer]

Allah the Exalted has said:

...and maintain prayer; truly prayer prohibits lewd acts and indecency. (Qur'an, 29:45);

and: *...establish prayer, and pay the alms, and bow with those that bow.* (Qur'an, 2:43);

Objective:

The objective of *Salat* is [also] twofold: (i) that one prays in both the inward and outward manners that the Sahaba [Companions] learnt from the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, for the hadith states, "Pray as you have observed me pray" (ii) to become direct recipients from the Treasuries of Allah.

Some of the great merits or virtues of salat:

Jabir ibne 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The key to Paradise is Salat and the key to Salat is Wudu*^{H,1}

Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The comfort and delight of my eyes has been placed in Salat.*²

'Ali رضى الله عنه narrates that the last words of Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم were: *As-Salat, as-Salat; fear Allah about those whom your right hand possesses.*³

'Ubada ibne Samit رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Five times Salat has been made mandatory by Allah 'Azza wa Jall. He who performs his Wudu' well, and offers Salat at their appointed time, performing complete Ruku' ¹, and with fear and devotion, for such there is a covenant from Allah, that He will forgive him; and the one who does not do so, no covenant for him is with Allah. If He wills, He may forgive him and if He wills, he may punish him.*⁴

Hanzala al-Usaidi رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The person who guards the five times Salat, its Wudu, its prescribed time, its proper Ruku' and Sujud^J, while perceiving it to be the Right of Allah on him, he is forbidden upon the Fire^{K,5}*

Abu Qatadah ibne-Rib'i رضى الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم narrates in a *Hadith Qudsi* [Sacred Hadith] that Allah 'Azza wa Jall has said: *Verily, I have enjoined upon your Ummah five times Salat, and I have taken upon myself an oath that anyone who observes them at their appointed time, I shall admit him into Paradise; if anyone does not offer them regularly, there is no such guarantee from Me for him.*⁶

^H Wudu': Ritual Ablution.

^I Ruku' is the act of bowing before Allah in Salat.

^J Sujud is the act of prostrating before Allah in Salat.

^K Fire [نار], in the Islamic Tradition means Hellfire.

'Uthman ibn 'Affan رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He, who believes that Salat is the obligatory right (of Allah) will enter Paradise.*⁷

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The five times Salat and the prayer of Friday to Friday, and the fasting of Ramadan to Ramadan, are atonements for sins that have been committed between them, provided the sinner avoids major sins.*⁸

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who guards the obligatory Salat will not be written amongst the neglectful.*⁹

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked: *O Messenger of Allah! At what time is Du'a [supplication] the most readily listened to and accepted?* He replied: *The one made during the course of the latter part of the night, and after the obligatory Salat.*¹⁰

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who recites Ayat al-Kursi [Verse of the Throne^L] after every obligatory Salat, nothing but death restrains him from entering Paradise.*¹¹

Ibne 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *There is no (perfect) Iman^M for the one who has no trustworthiness, and there is no Salat for the one who has no Wudu', and there is no Deen^N for one who has no Salat. The status of Salat in Deen is like the status of the head in a body.*¹²

Jabir ibne Abdullah رضى الله عنهما narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Between man and (his entering into) polytheism and unbelief is the abandonment of Salat.*¹³

Note: *Scholars of Islam have offered several explanations to this hadith. One is that a person who abandons Salat becomes increasingly arrogant and bold in committing sins, which may endanger his faith. Another explanation is that the one who abandons Salat runs the risk of an evil end.*¹⁴

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who abandons Salat shall meet Allah in a state that Allah will be very angry with him.*¹⁵

Naufal Ibn Mu'awiya رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The person who missed even one Salat is as though he has been deprived of his entire family and wealth.*¹⁶

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Whoever amongst you performs Wudu' well, and completes it to perfection, then goes to the masjid with the sole intention to offer Salat, then Allah is overjoyed with him, as the family of an absent relative is overjoyed by his sudden appearance.*¹⁷

Salman رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who performs Wudu' in his house and performs it well, then comes to the masjid, he is the guest of Allah, and it is obligatory upon the Host to extend hospitality to his guest.*¹⁸

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Those who frequent the masjid [pl. of masjid] in darkness are, undoubtedly, the people who are immersed in Allah's Mercy.*¹⁹

^L The Verse of the Throne (Ayat al-Kursi) is in the second Qur'anic surah [chapter], *al-Baqarah [the Cow]*.

^M Iman is most commonly translated as Faith.

^N Masjid: Mosque.

Anas Ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A person who offers Salat for forty days in congregation, purely to please Allah, starting with the Imam right from the first Takbir^O, receives two exemptions; one from Hellfire, and the other from hypocrisy.*²⁰

Achievement of Objective

Allah the Exalted has said:

Successful indeed are the believers; Who are humble in their prayers... (Qur'an, 23:1-2).

The abovementioned objective of *salat* is achieved by sincere effort. One must endeavor to pray with presence of mind and heart, *khushu`* [reverence], awe, humility, fear and hope, thereby making it [*salat*] one's *mi'raj*^P. This can be achieved – in addition to the five daily prayers – by practicing in the late hours of the night with lengthy *rakaats* [cycles of prayer] in *Tahajjud* [Night Vigil].

^O *Takbir*: when the *Imam* [the individual leading the congregational prayer] says *Allahu Akbar* [God is the Greatest].

^P Generally, the prayer is described as the 'ascent of the believer' (*mi'raj al-mu'min*).

3. 'Ilm [Knowledge] & Dhikr [Remembrance]

3(a) 'Ilm [Knowledge]

Allah the Exalted has said:

As also We have sent among you, of yourselves, a messenger, to recite Our verses to you and to purify you, and to teach you the Book, and wisdom, and to teach you what you knew not. (Qur'an, 2:151);

And such similitudes, We strike them for [the sake of] mankind; but none understands them, except those who know. (Qur'an, 29:43);

...Indeed only those of God's servants who have knowledge fear Him. Truly God is Mighty, Forgiving. (Qur'an, 35:28);

...Say (unto them, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): Are those who know equal with those who know not? But only men of understanding will pay heed. (Qur'an, 39:9);

and: ...say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge'. (Qur'an, 20:114).

Objective

The purpose of 'ilm is [also] twofold: (i) that one becomes able to differentiate between *halal* [the permissible] and *haram* [the impermissible], [ritual] purity and [ritual] impurity, legitimacy and illegitimacy, pertaining to all aspects of one's life.

And (ii) to know at any given moment – in one's twenty-four hour existence – what Allah wants of him or her. This is known as *hal ka 'amr pehchan-na* [recognizing the command relating to the present].

Some of the great merits or virtues of 'ilm

'Uthman ibne 'Affan رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The best among you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it.*¹

Buraidah al-Aslami رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who recites the Qur'an and learns it, and then acts upon it, he will be made to wear on the Day of Resurrection a crown of Nur [light], which will be as radiant as the sun. And his parents will be dressed with two suits, which the whole world cannot match. So they will ask: For what have we been dressed like this? It will be said: This is the reward of your son's acquiring Qur'an.*²

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Knowledge is of two types: 1. Knowledge that penetrates into the heart; this knowledge is beneficial. 2. Knowledge that is merely on the tongue; this will be Allah's evidence against the son of Adam.*³

Note: *Knowledge on the tongue refers to the knowledge without practice and sincerity.*

Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *The one for whom Allah intends good, He guides him towards the understanding of Deen. Indeed I am only a distributor and Allah is the One Who grants.*⁴

Note: *The second sentence of the hadith means that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم came as a distributor of knowledge and Allah is the Bestower of understanding of this knowledge and helps in acting upon it.*⁵

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A believer's thirst for knowledge is never quenched. He continues to hear and learn until he enters Paradise.*⁶

Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم told me: *O Abu Dharr! If you go in the morning and learn a verse from the Book of Allah, it is better for you than performing one hundred Rak'at of Salat. And if you go in the morning and learn a chapter of knowledge, which may or may not be applicable at that time (for example learning the method of Tayyammum^Q), it is better for you than performing a thousand Rak'at of Nafil [Supererogatory] Salat.*⁷

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard Abul Qasim^R صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *The best amongst you are those who are best in conduct provided they have an understanding of Deen.*⁸

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who goes to the masjid, not desiring anything other than learning or teaching something good, his reward is like that of a Hajji [Pilgrim] who performs a complete Hajj [Islamic Pilgrimage].*⁹

Safwan ibne 'Assal al-Muradi رضى الله عنه narrates: *I went to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was in the masjid, reclining on his red striped sheet. I said: O Messenger of Allah! I have come to seek knowledge. He said: Welcome to the seeker of knowledge. Indeed, the angels cover the seeker of knowledge by their wings and they start gathering one upon another till they reach the sky, for the love of the knowledge which is being sought.*¹⁰

Tha'laba ibn al-Hakam al-Sahabi رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Allah 'Azza wa Jall, when seated on His Throne to judge His slaves on the Day of Resurrection, will say to the 'Ulema [Islamic Scholars]: I blessed you with My knowledge and My kind forbearance in order to pardon you despite your faults, and I care not, as to the magnitude of your sins, as forgiving you is of no consequence to Me.*¹¹

Abu Darda' رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Whoever travels on a path in search of knowledge, Allah will enable him to travel on one of the paths to Paradise. And verily, the angels spread their wings with pleasure for one who seeks knowledge. Indeed the inhabitants of the skies and the earth and the fish in the depths of the water, all supplicate forgiveness for the 'Alim [Islamic Scholar]. Verily, the eminence of an 'Alim over a devout worshipper is that of the full moon over the stars. And indeed, the 'Ulema are heirs of the prophets. And verily, the prophets did not leave behind as inheritance any Dinar or Dirham, rather they leave 'Ilm as inheritance. So, whoever acquired this, received an abundant portion.*¹²

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, the example of the 'Ulema is like that of stars in the sky, by which guidance is obtained in the darkness of the land and water; when stars lose their radiance, it is likely that travelers will go astray.*¹³

^Q Tayyammum: (Arabic: تيمم) refers to the dry ablution in Islam using sand or dust, which may be performed in place of Wudu' [Ritual Ablution] only if no clean water is readily available.

^R Abul Qasim is the kunya, and is one of the many blessed names of the Prophet Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Note: This refers to the absence of 'Ulema which invariably leads to the straying of mankind from the straight path.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *One Faqih (learned man) has more power over Shaitan [Satan] than a thousand devout worshippers.*¹⁴

Note: This means that it is easier for *Shaitan* to deceive a thousand 'Abid [devout worshiper] than to deceive an 'Alim who has a thorough knowledge of Deen.

Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه narrates that two men were mentioned to the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, one of them learned and the other devout worshiper. The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The superiority of an 'Alim over an 'Abid is like that of mine over the least amongst you.* Then the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, Allah, His angels, the inhabitants of the skies and the earths, even the ants in their holes and even fish invoke mercy, grace and honor on him who teaches people good deeds.*¹⁵

Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *You should become either (1) an 'Alim or (2) a seeker of knowledge of Deen, or (3) an attentive listener to the knowledge of Deen, or (4) a lover of knowledge of Deen and 'Ulema. Do not be of the fifth kind, otherwise you will be ruined. The fifth kind is that you bear malice towards knowledge of Deen and those who possess it.*¹⁶

Ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *There are only two people worthy of envy: A person whom Allah has given wealth, and empowers him to spend it in righteous causes; and the other, whom Allah has given knowledge by means of which he makes sound judgments, and teaches it to others.*¹⁷

Jundub ibn 'Abdullah al-Azdi رضى الله عنه a Companion of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The example of the person who teaches people good and neglects himself (does not practice himself), is like a lamp which is a source of illumination for people and burns itself.*¹⁸

Achievement of Objective

Allah the Exalted has said:

...Ask the people of remembrance if you know not. (Qur'an, 16:43)

The abovementioned purpose of 'ilm can be fulfilled by learning the obligatory portion of knowledge, and by investigating into Islamic rulings pertaining to all aspects of one's life. And finally, by honoring and keeping the company of the 'Ulema [Scholars].

3(b) Dhikr [Remembrance]

Allah, the Exalted has said:

So remember Me, I will remember you... (Qur'an, 2:152);

So remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself with a complete devotion. (Qur'an, 73:8);

...Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest! (Qur'an, 13:28);

Those who remember God, standing and sitting and on their sides... (Qur'an, 3:191);

And whoever withdraws from the Remembrance of the Compassionate One, We assign for him a devil and he becomes his companion. (Qur'an, 43:36);

and: *Verily God and His angels overwhelm in blessings the prophet. O ye who believe invoke blessings upon him and give him greetings of Peace.* (Qur'an, 33:56).

Objective

The objective of *dhikr* is to achieve – at each moment in one's earthly existence – a conscious awareness, nearness, a *ta'aluq* [relationship] and *marifa* [knowledge] of Allah.

Some of the many merits or virtues of *dhikr*

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a *Hadith Qudsi* [Sacred Hadith] narrated that Allah Ta'ala says: *I treat My slave according to his expectations from Me. I am with him when he remembers Me; and if he remembers Me in his heart, I remember him in My heart; and if he remembers Me in a gathering, I remember him in a better and nobler gathering (of angels). If he comes closer to Me by one span, I go closer to him an arm's length; if he comes towards Me an arm's length, I go towards him two-arm's length; and if he comes to Me walking, I run to him.*¹

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a *Hadith Qudsi* [Sacred Hadith] narrated that Allah the Almighty and Majestic says: *I am with My slave when he remembers Me and till his lips move while remembering Me.*²

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *There are four characteristics of such nature that one who has been blessed with them has been blessed with what is the best in this world and the Hereafter: 1) A thankful heart, 2) A tongue which remembers Allah, 3) A body which endures hardships and 4) A wife who does not desire to breach the trust of her husband or squander his wealth.*³

Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The dwellers of Paradise will not regret anything except the moment spent by them (in the worldly life) without the remembrance of Allah 'Aẓẓa wa Jall.*⁴

Abu Musa رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The example of one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord is like the example of the living and the dead. It is also mentioned in another narration: The example of a house in which Allah is remembered and of a house in which Allah is not remembered is like the example of the living and the dead.*⁵

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *One who remembers Allah excessively is freed from hypocrisy.*⁶

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that, indeed, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Verily, there are many a people who remember Allah on their soft beddings and for this they will enter the highest positions of Paradise.*⁷

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم in a Hadith Qudsi [Sacred Hadith] said: *Verily, Allah has such angels who move on paths, seeking those who remember Allah. And when they find such a people engaged in remembering Allah, they call one another: Come to what you are looking for! Then they surround them with their wings up to the sky of the world. Lord 'Azza wa Jall asks them, though He knows better than them: What are My slaves saying? The angels submit: They are glorifying and magnifying and praising and exalting You. Allah asks: Have they seen Me? The angels reply: No! By Allah, they have not seen You. Allah asks: What if they had seen Me? He angels submit: Had they seen You, they would have worshipped You more devotedly and would have engaged more earnestly in glorifying and praising You. Then Allah says: What were they asking for? The angels reply: They were asking for Paradise. Allah asks: Have they seen it? The angels reply: No! By Allah. O Lord! They have not seen it. Allah asks them: What if they had seen it? The angels reply: Had they seen it, they would have been more eager, and more desiring for it, and more longing for it! Then Allah asks: What were they seeking refuge from? The angels submit: They were seeking refuge from the Fire. He asks: Have they seen it? The angels reply: No! By Allah. O Lord! They have not seen it. Allah then asks: What if they had seen it? The angels reply: Had they seen it, they would have been more earnest in fleeing from it, and more intense in fearing it. Allah then says: I call you to witness that I have, indeed, forgiven them. One of the angels says: Among them was such a person who was not one of them but had come there only for some need. Allah says: They are such people that whoever sits with them is not deprived of (My Mercy).*⁸

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *When some people who gather and engage in remembering Allah 'Azza wa Jall, not intending anything except Allah's pleasure, an angel calls them from the heavens: Get up duly forgiven! As indeed your sins have been replaced with virtues.*⁹

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A person who remembers Allah and his eyes overflow due to the fear of Allah, such that a few tears fall on the ground, Allah Ta'ala will not punish him on the Day of Resurrection.*¹⁰

Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that we were with the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and he asked: *Is anyone of you unable to earn a thousand virtues daily? One of those sitting with him asked: How can one earn a thousand virtues in a day? He replied: If one glorifies Allah one hundred times (for example, SubhanAllah [Transcendent is Allah] one hundred times), a thousand virtues are recorded for him and a thousand sins are removed from him.*¹¹

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Whoever (sincerely) says:*

Subhan Allah, wal Hamdu lillah, wa La ilaha illa'llah, wAllahu Akbar, wa la Hawla, wa la Quwwata, illa billa [Transcendent is Allah, and All Praise belongs to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the greatest, and there is no strength nor power, save with Allah].

*On this Allah says: My slave has become obedient, and has surrendered himself to Me.*¹²

Achievement of Objective

Allah, the Exalted has said:

O ye who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. (Qur'an, 33:41).

The objective of *dhikr* outlined above, can only be achieved by constant remembrance of Allah. This *dhikr* should be done with presence of heart and mind, concentrating on the words being uttered. The three *tasbihat* [litanies] that are highly recommended to help achieve this are: (a) *Subhan Allah, wal Hamdu lillah, wa La ilaha illa'llah, wAllahu Akbar, wa la Hawla, wa la Quwwata, illa billa* [Transcendent is Allah, and All Praise belongs to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the greatest, and there is no strength nor power, save with Allah]; (b) *Salat 'Alan Nabi* صلى الله عليه وسلم [Salutations upon the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], in any of the various accepted forms; and (c) *Istighfar* [Seeking Forgiveness], in any of the various accepted forms. The abovementioned *adhkar* [pl. of *dhikr*] are prescribed one hundred times each, morning and evening.

4. *Ikram al-Muslim* [Honoring Muslims]

Allah, the Exalted has said:

Is he who is a believer like him who is a transgressor? They are not equal. (Qur'an, 32:18);

...and lower thy wing (in tenderness) for the believers. (Qur'an, 15:88);

And the [true] servants of the Compassionate One are those who walk upon the earth modestly, and who, when the ignorant address them, say [words of] peace... (Qur'an, 25:63);

For the requital of an evil deed is an evil deed like it. But whoever pardons and reconciles, his reward will be with God. Truly He does not like wrongdoers (Qur'an, 42:40);

And do not turn your cheek disdainfully from people and do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Truly God does not like any swaggering braggart.

And be modest in your bearing and lower your voice; indeed the most hideous of voices is the donkey's voice. (Qur'an, 31:18-19);

and: *...your Lord has decreed that you worship none save Him, and kindness to parents. If they should reach old age with you, one of them or both then do not say to them 'Fie' nor repulse them, but speak to them gracious words.*

And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: 'My Lord, have mercy on them, just as they reared me when I was little' (Qur'an, 17:23-24).

Objective

The purpose of *ikram al-Muslim* is that one's dealings – with all the rest of the *Ummah* (and by extension, all of creation) – be based on love, compassion, honor, generosity and respect. Instead of demanding them, one should not only forgo his or her rights, but become deeply concerned with giving others *at least* their due (rights stipulated by the Sacred Law).

Some of the virtues pertaining to *ikram al-Muslim*

Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم looked at the Ka'ba and said: *La ilaha illa'llah, how pure you are, and how sweet your fragrance, and how great your honor! However the honor of a Mu'min [believer] is greater than yours. Indeed, Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala has made you respectable; (likewise) the wealth, the blood, and the honor of a Mu'min has been made respectable; and Allah has forbidden us to suspect him of wrongdoing.*¹

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Anyone with these three qualities shall be under the shade of Allah's Mercy (on the Day of Resurrection) and will be admitted into Paradise: 1) Courtesy towards the weak, 2) Compassion to parents 3) Kindness to slaves (subordinates).*²

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A believing man or a believing woman continues to remain under trials and afflictions on his own self, on his children, and his wealth, until he meets Allah in such a condition that not a single sin remains on him.*³

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *The most perfect amongst the believers in faith is one who has the best manners; and best of you are those who are best to their wives.*⁴

'A'isha رضى الله عنها narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, the most perfect believer in faith is one who has the best manners and is the kindest to his family.*⁵

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *I guarantee an abode on the boundary of Paradise for him who gives up a quarrel, even if he is right; and an abode in the center of Paradise for him who abandons lying, even if it is for the sake of fun; and an abode in the highest grade of Paradise for him who excels in good conduct.*⁶

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who meets his Muslim brother in a manner pleasing to Allah (for instance cordially) so as to make him happy, Allah will make him happy on the Day of Resurrection.*⁷

Abu Darda' رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *There will be nothing heavier on the Scale than good conduct.*⁸

Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates that the parting advice of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم to me, when I had put my foot in the stirrup, was: *Beautify your conduct for people O Mu'adh ibn Jabal!*⁹

Malik Rahimahullah says that the following saying of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم has been conveyed to me: *I have been sent for the perfection of good conduct.*¹⁰

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Undoubtedly, amongst you the most beloved and nearest to me on the Day of Resurrection, will be those having the most excellent conduct.*¹¹

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Shall I not inform you about the person who is forbidden from the Fire and for whom the Fire is forbidden? Anyone who is close to people, soft and lenient.*¹²

Note: *The hadith implies that such a person freely mixes with people, is soft spoken and because of his qualities, people also meet him with love and without reservations.*¹³

'Umar رضى الله عنه narrates: *I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: Whoever humbles himself for the sake of Allah, Allah will exalt him; as a result of that he considers himself small, yet in the eyes of people he becomes great. But he who is arrogant, Allah abases him; and he becomes small in the eyes of people, although he considers himself great to the extent that people consider him to be worse than a dog or a pig.*¹⁴

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He will not enter Paradise who has the smallest particle of arrogance in his heart.*¹⁵

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Musa ibn Imran عليه السلام^S said: O my Lord! Who is the most respectable slave to you? Allah the Almighty and Majestic replied: He who forgives, despite having the power to avenge.*¹⁶

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Teach religion to people, give them good tidings, do not make things difficult for them; and when anyone of you gets angry, he should remain silent.*¹⁷

Mu'adh رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who restrains his anger, while in a position to give effect to it, Allah will call him on the Day of Resurrection in front of all His creations, and let him choose any of the beautiful large eyed maidens of Paradise he desires.*¹⁸

Jarir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Whoever is deprived of kindness is deprived of all good.*¹⁹

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who forgives the faults of a Muslim, Allah will forgive his faults on the Day of Resurrection.*²⁰

Bara' رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Two Muslims will not meet and shake hands but will have their sins forgiven before they separate.*²¹

'Ali رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *No Muslim visits a sick Muslim in the morning except that seventy thousand angels invoke blessings on him till the evening; and if he visits him in the evening then seventy thousand angels invoke blessings on him till the morning and for him there is a garden of the fruits of Paradise.*²²

'A'isha رضى الله عنها narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *If the company of Muslims reaches hundred in number and they pray over a dead person, all of them interceding for him, their intercession for him will be accepted.*²³

Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn Hazm رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *No believer comforts his brother in distress, except that Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala clothes him with a dress of nobility on the Day of Reckoning.*²⁴

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *May he be humiliated. May he be humiliated. May he be humiliated. It was said: Who, O Messenger of Allah? He replied: The, who has one or both parents live to old age and yet does not enter Paradise (by serving them and pleasing their hearts).*²⁵

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Deeds are presented to Allah on every Thursday and Monday. Then Allah 'Azza wa Jall forgives every slave who did not associate anything with Allah except he who has an enmity against his Muslim brother, Allah then says: Hold both of them, until they reconcile! Hold both of them, until they reconcile!*²⁶

^S عليه السلام ('alaih salam) translated as "peace be upon him" is said by Muslims, out of love and reverence, when the name of a prophet or angel is heard or uttered.

Achievement of Objective

Allah, the Exalted, has said:

O you who believe, do not let any people deride another people: who may be better than they are; nor let any women deride [other] women who may be better than they are. And do not defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. Evil is the name of immorality after faith! And whoever does not repent, those — they are the evildoers.

O you who believe, shun much suspicion. Indeed some suspicions are sins. And do not spy, nor backbite one another. Would any of you love to eat the flesh of his brother dead? You would abhor it. And fear God; assuredly God is Relenting, Merciful.

O mankind! We have indeed created you from a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes that you may come to know one another. Truly the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing among you. Truly God is Knower, Aware (Qur'an, 49:11-13).

This objective can be achieved by respecting one's elders, showing kindness to the young, and honoring the 'Ulema. Whether one is dealing with one's spouse, family, relatives, friends or acquaintances, to always put *the other* ahead of oneself. To, at all times, be ready to sacrifice one's own desires for another.

5. Ekhlas [Sincerity]

Allah the Exalted has said:

Surely to God belongs pure religion... (Qur'an, 39:3);

Nay, but, whoever submits his purpose to God, being virtuous, his reward is with his Lord, and no fear shall befall them, neither shall they grieve. (Qur'an, 2:112);

...And whatever good you expend is for yourselves; for then you are expending, desiring only God's Face, and whatever good you expend, shall be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged. (Qur'an, 2:272);

Say: My Lord enjoineth justice. And set your faces upright (toward Him) at every place of worship and call upon Him, making religion pure for Him (only). As He brought you into being, so return ye (unto Him). (Qur'an, 7:29);

and: Neither their flesh nor their blood shall reach God, rather it is your piety that shall reach Him...^T (Qur'an, 22:37).

Objective

The objective of *ekhlas* – whether it be in one's *'ibadat* [dealings with one's Lord] or *mu'amalat*^U [dealings with creation] – is that each and every act that one does, does so, *solely* for the Pleasure of Allah.

Some of the merits or virtues of *ekhlas*

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed Allah does not look at your faces and possessions, but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.*¹

Note: It means the decision of Allah's pleasure will not be based upon your faces and possessions, but upon your hearts and deeds as to how much sincerity was in your heart.

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه narrated: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Verily the reward of deeds depend upon intentions; and indeed every man shall receive what he intended for. Thus, he whose migration was for Allah and His Messenger, so his migration will be considered for Allah and His Messenger. He whose migration was towards the world or to be married to some woman, his migration will be considered to be for what he migrated for.*²

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Undoubtedly upon resurrection, people will be treated according to their intentions.*³

^T The Companion of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "It means that your intentions reach Him."

^U Since by following the *Sunna*, every act, even the most mundane, becomes *sacred*, one's aim [behind the act] must be *only* to seek the Divine Pleasure.

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *You have indeed left behind in Madina people who will have an equal reward in on matter whatsoever path you travel or whatever you spend and whatever valley you cross. The Sababa asked: O Messenger of Allah! How can they be with us when they are in Madina? He said: They intended to go out with you but were detained by a valid reason.*⁴

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates from among those sayings which the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم has related from his Lord 'Azza wa Jall: *Allah has spelled out good deeds and bad ones (to the appointed angels over you). He then explained it. If any one intends to do a good deed but does not do it, Allah enters for him in His record as a complete good deed; and if he intends to do a good deed and does it, Allah enters for him in His record as ten to seven hundred and many more times as much. If any one intends to do a bad deed and does not do it (because of fear of Allah), Allah enters it for him in His record as a complete good deed; but if he intends to do it and does it, Allah records it for him as one bad deed.*⁵

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A man said indeed I will give Sadaqah [Charity] (quietly)! He came out with his Sadaqah and placed it in the hands of a thief. In the morning people began to talk and say: Sadaqah was given to a thief. The man said: O Allah! All praise is for You, I will indeed give Sadaqah. And he came out with Sadaqah and placed it in the hands of an adulteress. In the morning people began to talk and say Sadaqah was given to an adulteress last night. The man said: O Allah! All praise is for You, in giving Sadaqah to an adulteress. I will surely give Sadaqah. He came out with Sadaqah and placed it in the hands of a rich man. In the morning people began to talk and say: Sadaqah was given to a rich man. The man said: O Allah! All praise is for You in giving Sadaqah to a thief, an adulteress and a rich man. He then had a dream in which he was told that his Sadaqah which was made to be given to a thief, may perhaps result in his refraining from stealing, to the adulteress, so that she may perhaps refrain from adultery, and to the rich man so that he may perhaps pay heed and spend from what Allah had given him.*⁶

Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Verily, Allah does not accept any deed, except that done sincerely for Him and to obtain His pleasure.*⁷

Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Undoubtedly Allah helps this Ummah (not because of their abilities and talents but) because of its weak, by their supplication, Salat, and Ekhlās.*⁸

Abu Darda' رضى الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who goes to his bed with the intention to get up during the night to offer his Salat but is overcome by sleep and wakes up in the morning; the reward is written down for him what he intended, and his sleep is a gift for him from his Lord 'Azza wa Jall.*⁹

Zaid ibn Thabit رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *He whose objective is the world, Allah scatters his affairs (he faces worries and anxieties in every aspect) and places the fear of poverty before his eyes; and he receives only that which has been preordained for him. And he whose intention (objective) is the Hereafter, Allah makes all his affairs easy, and enriches his heart, and the world comes to him humiliated.*¹⁰

Thawban رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Glad tidings to the sincere (people). They are an illumination in the darkness, because of whom all severe evils are driven away.*¹¹

Abu Firas Rahimahullah of the tribe of Aslam narrated that a person loudly asked: O Messenger of Allah! What is Iman! He replied: *Ekhlās (Sincerity).*¹²

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates in a *Hadith Qudsi* [Sacred Hadith] : I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying that Allah, Transcendent is He, says: *O son of Adam! If (on losing something or hearing some grievous news) from the beginning you have*

*patience and hope for My pleasure and My reward then I will not be pleased for you with anything less than Paradise.*¹³

Achievement of Objective

Allah the Exalted has said:

And they have been commanded only to serve God, making the religion His sincerely as men of pure faith... (Qur'an, 98:5).

The achievement of the abovementioned objective can be strongly helped by checking one's intention before, during and after every act. If one finds any motive *other* than seeking Divine pleasure, one must immediately repent and correct one's intention. By constantly repenting and removing any ulterior motives, one's intentions will become progressively more sincere, *InshAllah* [God-willing].

6. *Dawah* [Invitation] & *Tabligh* [Conveyance]

Allah the Exalted has said:

Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way... (Qur'an, 16:125);

Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, "I am of those who bow in Islam"? (Qur'an, 41:33);

Say thou: "This is my way: I do invite unto Allah, - on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes, - I and whoever follows me..." (Qur'an, 12:108);

And remind for reminding truly benefits believers. (Qur'an, 51:55);

And those who believed and emigrated and strove for the way of God, and those who provided refuge and assisted - those are the true believers, and for them is forgiveness and a generous provision. (Qur'an, 8:74);

Those who believe, and have emigrated, and have struggled in the way of God with their possessions and their lives are greater in degree with God; and those, they are the triumphant.

Their Lord gives them good tidings of mercy from Him and beatitude; for them shall be gardens wherein is enduring bliss, therein they shall abide forever. Surely with God is a tremendous reward. (Qur'an, 9:20-22);

But as for those who struggle for Our sake, We shall assuredly guide them in Our ways, and truly God is with the virtuous. (Qur'an, 29:69);

The [true] believers are only those who believe in God and His Messenger, and then have not doubted, and who strive with their wealth and their souls for the cause of God. It is they who are sincere. (Qur'an, 49:15);

and: *O you who believe, shall I show you a commerce that will deliver you from a painful chastisement?*

You should believe in God and His Messenger and struggle for the cause of God with your possessions and your lives. That is better for you, should you know.

He will [then] forgive you your sins and admit you into gardens underneath which rivers flow and pleasant dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph.

(Qur'an, 61:10-12).

Objective

The objective of *dawah* and *tabligh* is [also] twofold: (i) that in addition to oneself, all of humanity until the Day Reckoning embodies the first five of the *Six Points*.

And (ii) that all of humanity attains salvation, that it [humanity] is saved from the torment of the Fire, and enters the Garden [Paradise]. All of the prophets (upon them be peace) were given a task. That is to call humanity to their Creator. Each prophet was sent to a specific people, calling them to the worship of the one God, for the Qur'an declares: "...We sent no messenger before thee but We inspired him, (saying): *There is no god save Me (Allah), so worship Me.*"^v Those who accepted the call of *La ilaha illa'llah*, attained success; and those who rejected it, failed.

The merits or virtues of Dawah & Tabligh

Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed I am only a Messenger, and Allah alone guides. And I am only a distributor, and Allah alone bestows (knowledge).*¹

Munib al-Azdi رضى الله عنه narrates that during my days of ignorance (before accepting Islam), I saw the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, who said: *O people! Say La ilaha illa'llah and be successful.* Some of them spat on his face and someone threw dust at him and some abused him till mid-day. Then a girl brought a bowl of water with which he washed his face and hands. He said: *O my little daughter! Do not fear for your father's sudden murder, nor disgrace.* I enquired: Who is this girl? People said: She is Zainab, daughter of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. She was a beautiful girl.²

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Anybody amongst you who sees an evil should change it with his hands; if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue; if he is unable to do this (even), then by his heart and this is the weakest form of Iman.*³

Note: To change it by his heart means that one should at least consider it a vice in his heart and should supplicate for its change.

'Urs ibn 'Umairah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, Allah does not punish everyone for the faults of a few disobedient people, until these disobedient people continue to disobey and those who are obedient, despite being able to stop them, do not stop them – at this Allah orders for the destruction of all, the obedient and the disobedient.*⁴

Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه narrates that (at the conclusion of the sermon of Hajj, on 10 Dhu l-Hijjah, at Mina) the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Have I conveyed to you the commandments of Allah? We all said: Yes. He said: O Allah! Be witness to this, then he said: Let him who is present here convey to him who is absent; for verily it so happens that one to whom a message is conveyed will preserve it (that is understand and remember it will all its implications including Dawah) more than he who conveys it.*⁵

Note: This hadith clearly stresses that whoever hears (knows) a command of Allah and His Messenger, he should not withhold this to himself, but he must convey it to others. Perhaps, the people who are conveyed will fulfill the obligation of the message better than the person who has conveyed it to them.⁶

Sahl ibn Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Indeed, this 'Khair' (the Deen of Islam) is treasures, and these treasures have keys. Glad tidings for a*

^v Qur'an, 21:25.

*slave (of Allah) whom Allah has made a key for good and a lock for evil; and woe to a slave (of Allah) whom Allah has made a key for evil and a lock for good.*⁷

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He is not one of us who does not show kindness to our youngsters, does not show respect to our elders, and does not enjoin unto good and does not forbid from evil.*⁸

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Allah 'Azza wa Jall commanded Jibril to overturn such and such city with its inhabitants. Jibril عليه السلام submitted: O my Lord! Amongst them is your slave who has never disobeyed You, even to the blinking of an eye. The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala commanded Jibril: Overturn the city on him and on all the inhabitants; for his face did not ever change color for a while on My disobediences.*⁹

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *My example and yours is like that of a person who ignites a fire and moths and other insects start falling into it. He tries to prevent them from falling in the fire. Similarly, I am grasping your waists and holding you back from the fire, and you are trying to escape from my hands.*¹⁰

Note: This hadith reflects the intense desire in the heart of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم to save the Ummah from the Hellfire.

'A'isha رضى الله عنها narrates that once I saw the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم delighted, I said: *O Messenger of Allah! Supplicate to Allah for me. He supplicated: "O Allah! Forgive 'A'isha, all her past sins and future sins, and her secret sins and her open sins."* Hearing this 'A'isha رضى الله عنها laughed so much in pleasure that her head touched her lap. The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *Are you happy with my du'a [supplication]?* She replied: *Why should I not be happy with your du'a for me!* He said: *I swear by Allah! This is my du'a for my Ummah in every Salat.*¹¹

'A'isha رضى الله عنها narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *When the dust of the Path of Allah enters the body of a Muslim, Allah prohibits Hellfire on him.*¹²

'Uthman ibn 'Affan رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *A day spent in the Path of Allah is better than a thousand other days.*¹³

Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *A morning spent in the Path of Allah is better than the world and all that it contains.*¹⁴

Note: It means that if the world and all that it contains is spent in the Path of Allah, the reward of one morning or an evening in the Path of Allah will be much more.¹⁵

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrates that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: *He who suffers a headache in the Path of Allah, and hopes for a reward, then all his past sins are forgiven.*¹⁶

Suhayl رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *Your striving in the Path of Allah for a short while, is far better than your good deeds of the whole life staying with your family.*¹⁷

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم ordered a contingent to go in the Path of Allah. They asked: *O Messenger of Allah! Should we leave tonight, or stay till the morning?* He said: *Would you not like to spend this night in one of the gardens of Paradise.*¹⁸

Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: *To be in the Path of Allah, for a short while, is better than worshipping on the night of al-Qadr^W in from of Hajar al-Aswad (the Black Stone).*¹⁹

Achievement of Objective

A Muslim's faith is incomplete without the knowledge, belief and conviction that no prophet shall come after the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. A highly pertinent question arises, who then will carry out the responsibility of *'amr bi l-ma'ruf wa nahi anil munkar* [commanding good and forbidding evil]? The answer is quite simple, *every Muslim*. We as an *Ummah* [brotherhood] have been given this responsibility as an honor, for Allah the Exalted has called this *Ummah*: "...*the best people that hath been brought forth...*" "Allah then showed how they were the best community that has been raised for mankind saying: (*Ye enjoin right conduct*) you enjoin the divine Oneness of Allah and the following of Muhammad (*and forbid indecency*) you forbid disbelief, idolatry and the opposition of the Messenger; (*and ye believe in Allah*) as well as in all revealed scriptures and messengers."^X

"O Muslims you are the best of all Nations. In the knowledge of Allah this was destined for you from eternity. This knowledge had also been conveyed to some of the previous Prophets. Just as the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم is the last, and most distinguished of all Prophets, so also his Ummah will be the most distinguished Ummah, surpassing all other Umam (followers of other Prophets) because of its having the most honored of all Prophets, and because of being given an everlasting and most perfect Shari'a (Islamic Law) never to be abrogated. All doors of knowledge and wisdom will be opened upon it. By its struggle and sacrifice all branches of Iman, righteous actions and piety will be brought to life. This Ummah will not be limited to any particular tribe, nation, country or continent but its field of action will encompass the whole world and all aspects of human life. As though, its very existence will be for the benefit of others and as far as is humanly possible to bring the whole of mankind to the doors of Paradise."²⁰

So that each Muslim may realize his or her potential, the *Akabar* have devised a plan: to spend four months in the *path of Allah* – in one's lifetime – to acquire the necessary skills to carry out the work of *Dawah* and *Tabligh*; to spend forty days each year; three days every month; on Thursday nights to visit the local *Markaz* for the *Shab-e-Jumu'ah* [Eve of Friday] gathering; to take part in two [one, for one's own neighborhood, and the other, for the adjacent neighborhood] of the *gasht* gatherings [i.e. to perform *tadhkira* [reminders] to fellow Muslims by visiting their houses]; and to conduct two daily *halaqahs* [circles] of *t'aleem*^Y [education] – one each, in one's local mosque, and home.

^W Note: Worshipping on the Night of *al-Qadr* is more virtuous than worshipping for a thousand months as mentioned in *Surah al-Qadr*, in the Qur'an.

^X *Tanwîr al-Miqbâs min Tafsîr Ibn 'Abbâs* [altafsir.com].

^Y By the great scholar of Hadith, Shaykh Zakariyya Kandhlawi, *Fadail-e-'Aamal* is the book that is used around the world for *t'aleem halaqahs*. For a full biography of Shaykh Zakariyya Kandhlawi, see Appendix II.

Notes to Introduction

¹ *The Translators*, Imam Suhaib Webb [<http://thetranslators.wordpress.com/2007/03/01/my-wife-is-pushing-me-to-go-with-tabligh-who-are-they-and-what-to-do-answered-by-imam-suhaib-webb/>].

Notes to Point 1, the *Kalima* [Phrase]

¹ Al-Haddad, Habib Ahmad Mashhur, *Key to the Garden*, STARLATCH, USA (Page 4).

² *Ibid.* (Page 3).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Qur'an, 3:31.

⁵ Qur'an, 33:21.

⁶ *Musnad Ahmad*; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, *Muntakhab Ahadith*, ANNAYYAR, Karachi (2, Page 3).

⁷ *Abu Ya'la*; *Majma'-uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (11, Page 8).

⁸ *Bukhari*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (12, Page 8).

⁹ *Bayhaqi*; *Ibid.* (49, Page 23).

¹⁰ *Musnad Ahmad*; *Ibid.* (50, Page 23).

¹¹ Al-Haddad, Habib Ahmad Mashhur, *Key to the Garden*, STARLATCH, USA (Page 45-47).

¹² Qur'an, 51:55.

Notes to Point 2, *Salat* [the Prayer]

¹ *Musnad Ahmad*; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, *Muntakhab Ahadith*, ANNAYYAR, Karachi (5, Page 125).

² *Nasai*; *Ibid.* (6, Page 125).

³ *Abu Dawud*; *Ibid.* (8, Page 126).

⁴ *Ibid*; *Ibid.* (10, Page 126).

- ⁵ *Musnad Ahmad*; Ibid. (11, Page 127).
- ⁶ *Abu Dawud*; Ibid. (12, Page 127).
- ⁷ *Musnad Ahmad*; *Abu Ya'la*; *Bazzar*; *Majma'uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (13, Page 127).
- ⁸ *Muslim*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (17, Page 129).
- ⁹ *Ibn Khuzaimah*; Ibid. (18, Page 129).
- ¹⁰ *Tirmidhi*; Ibid. (21, Page 130).
- ¹¹ *'Amalul Yaumi wal Lailah by Nasai*; *Tabarani*; *Majma'uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (31, Page 137).
- ¹² *Tabarani*; *Targhib*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (43, Page 141).
- ¹³ *Muslim*; Ibid. (44, Page 141).
- ¹⁴ *Mirqat al-Mafatih*; Ibid. (Page 142).
- ¹⁵ *Bazzar*; *Tabarani*; *Majma'uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (45, Page 142).
- ¹⁶ *Ibn Hibban*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (46, Page 142).
- ¹⁷ *Ibn Khuzaimah*; Ibid. (75, Page 154).
- ¹⁸ *Tabarani*; *Majma'uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (76, Page 154).
- ¹⁹ *Ibn Majah*; *Targhib*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (81, Page 156).
- ²⁰ *Tirmidhi*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (117, Page 167).

Notes to Point 3.1, 'Ilm [Knowledge]

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- ¹ *Bukhari*; *Kandhlavi*, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, *Muntakhab Ahadith*, ANNAYYAR, Karachi (2, Page 245).
- ² *Mustadrak Hakim*; Ibid. (3, Page 245).
- ³ *Targhib*; Ibid. (6, Page 246).
- ⁴ *Bukhari*; Ibid. (8, Page 247).
- ⁵ *Mirqat*.
- ⁶ *Tirmidhi*; Ibid. (12, Page 247).
- ⁷ *Ibn Majah*; Ibid. (13, Page 248).

- ⁸ *Ibn Hibban; Ibid.* (15, Page 249).
- ⁹ *Tabarani; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (17, Page 250).
- ¹⁰ *Ibid; Ibid; Ibid.* (24, Page 252, 253).
- ¹¹ *Tabarani; Targhib; Ibid.* (25, Page 253).
- ¹² *Abu Dawud; Muntakhab Ahadith* (26, Page 253, 254).
- ¹³ *Musnad Ahmad; Ibid.* (28, Page 254).
- ¹⁴ *Tirmidhi; Ibid.* (29, Page 254).
- ¹⁵ *Ibid; Ibid.* (30, Page 255).
- ¹⁶ *Tabarani; Bazzar; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (32, Page 255).
- ¹⁷ *Bukhari; Muntakhab Ahadith* (33, Page 256).
- ¹⁸ *Tabarani; Targhib; Muntakhab Ahadith* (48, Page 262).

Notes to Point 3.2, *Dhikr* [Remembrance]

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- ¹ *Bukhari; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, Muntakhab Ahadith, ANNAYYAR, Karachi* (73, Page 304,305).
- ² *Ibn Majah; Ibid.* (74, Page 305).
- ³ *Tabarani; Ibid.* (78, Page 306).
- ⁴ *Ibid.; Bayhaqi; Jami 'us-Saghir; Muntakhab Ahadith* (81, Page 307).
- ⁵ *Bukhari; Muslim; Muntakhab Ahadith* (84, Page 308).
- ⁶ *Tabarani; Jami 'us-Saghir; Ibid.* (88, Page 310).
- ⁷ *Abu Ya'la; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Ibid.* (89, Page 310).
- ⁸ *Bukhari; Muntakhab Ahadith* (92, Page 311, 312).
- ⁹ *Musnad Ahmad; Tabarani; Abu Ya'la; Bazzar; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (94, Page 313).
- ¹⁰ *Mustadrak Hakim; Muntakhab Ahadith* (105, Page 317).
- ¹¹ *Muslim; Ibid.* (112, Page 319, 320).
- ¹² *Mustadrak Hakim; Ibid.* (145, Page 335).

Notes to Point 4, *Ikram al-Muslim* [Honoring Muslims]

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- ¹ *Tabarani; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, Muntakhab Ahadith, ANNAYYAR, Karachi, (2, Page 397).*
- ² *Tirmidhi; Muntakhab Ahadith, (18, Page 403).*
- ³ *Ibid; Ibid. (24, Page 404).*
- ⁴ *Musnad Ahmad; Ibid. (42, Page 412).*
- ⁵ *Tirmidhi; Ibid. (43, Page 412).*
- ⁶ *Abu Dawud; Ibid. (45, Page 413).*
- ⁷ *Tabarani; Majma'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith, (46, Page 413).*
- ⁸ *Abu Dawud; Muntakhab Ahadith, (48, Page 413).*
- ⁹ *Muwatta Imam Malik; Ibid. (49, Page 414).*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid; Ibid. (50, Page 414).*
- ¹¹ *Tirmidhi; Ibid. (51, Page 414).*
- ¹² *Ibid; Ibid. (54, Page 415).*
- ¹³ *Muarif-ul-Hadith.*
- ¹⁴ *Bayhaqi; Muntakhab Ahadith, (56, Page 415).*
- ¹⁵ *Muslim; Ibid. (57, Page 416).*
- ¹⁶ *Bayhaqi; Ibid. (62, Page 417).*
- ¹⁷ *Musnad Ahmad; Ibid. (70, Page 419).*
- ¹⁸ *Abu Dawud; Ibid. (73, Page 420).*
- ¹⁹ *Muslim; Ibid. (77, Page 421).*
- ²⁰ *Ibn Hibban; Ibid. (86, Page 423).*
- ²¹ *Abu Dawud; Ibid. (104, Page 431).*
- ²² *Tirmidhi; Ibid. (125, Page 437).*
- ²³ *Muslim; Ibid. (133, Page 440).*
- ²⁴ *Ibn Majah; Ibid. (135, Page 441).*

²⁵ *Muslim*; Ibid. (86, Page 423).

²⁶ Ibid; Ibid. (361, Page 515).

Notes to Point 5, *Ekhlas* [Sincerity]

¹ *Muslim*; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, *Muntakhab Ahadith*, ANNAYYAR, Karachi (1, Page 529).

² *Bukhari*; Ibid. (2, Page 529).

³ *Ibn Majah*; Ibid. (3, Page 529).

⁴ *Abu Dawud*; Ibid. (5, Page 530).

⁵ *Bukhari*; Ibid. (6, Page 530, 531).

⁶ Ibid.; Ibid. (7, Page 531).

⁷ *Nasai*; Ibid. (11, Page 535).

⁸ Ibid.; Ibid. (12, Page 535).

⁹ Ibid.; Ibid. (13, Page 536).

¹⁰ *Ibn Majah*; Ibid. (14, Page 536).

¹¹ *Bayhaqi*; Ibid. (16, Page 537).

¹² Ibid.; Ibid. (17, Page 537).

¹³ *Ibn Majah*; Ibid. (28, Page 541, 542).

Notes to Point 6, *Dawah* [Invitation] & *Tabligh* [Conveyance]

¹ *Tabarani*; Kandhlavi, Mawlana Muhammad Yousuf, *Muntakhab Ahadith*, ANNAYYAR, Karachi (1, Page 571).

² Ibid; *Majma-uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (6, Page 574).

³ *Muslim*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (8, Page 575).

⁴ *Tabarani*; *Majma-uz-Zawaid*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (10, Page 575, 576).

⁵ *Bukhari*; *Muntakhab Ahadith* (11, Page 576).

⁶ *Fath al-Bari*.

⁷ *Ibn Majah; Muntakhab Ahadith* (15, Page 577).

⁸ *Tirmidhi; Ibid.* (23, Page 582).

⁹ *Miskhat al-Masabih; Ibid.* (25, Page 583).

¹⁰ *Muslim; Ibid.* (29, Page 584).

¹¹ *Bazzar; Majma-'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (34, Page 587).

¹² *Musnad Ahmad; Tabarani; Majma-'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (53, Page 598).

¹³ *Nasai; Muntakhab Ahadith* (58, Page 599).

¹⁴ *Bukhari; Ibid.* (59, Page 599).

¹⁵ *Mirqat*.

¹⁶ *Tabarani; Majma-'uz-Zawaid; Muntakhab Ahadith* (62, Page 600).

¹⁷ *Mustadrak Hakim; Muntakhab Ahadith* (67, Page 602).

¹⁸ *Sunan Kubra; Ibid.* (69, Page 603).

¹⁹ *Ibn Hibban; Ibid.* (78, Page 606).

²¹ *Tafsir 'Uthmani*.

APPENDIX I

A Brief Biography of Imam Suhaib Webb

Imam Suhaib Webb was born in 1972 and raised in Oklahoma, USA. Feeling spiritually bankrupt, Imam Suhaib Webb set out on a path of spirituality ultimately leading up to the acceptance of Islam at the age of twenty. He graduated with honors in Education from the Central Oklahoma University and has studied Arabic and Islamic sciences under many notable scholars. He has served as a lecturer at the Islamic American University (IAU) in Santa Clara, California. *Subaib Webb, Translations, Articles, and Musings** – a blog currently being run under the supervision of the Imam – represents a group of students of knowledge, many who accepted Islam in the early 90's, presenting scholarly articles, *fatwas* [religious edicts] and books.

He currently serves as a Board Member at MeccaOne Media and resides in Egypt while studying at Al-Azhar University.

* <http://www.suhaibwebb.com/blog/>

APPENDIX II

Biography of Shaykh al-Hadith, Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi*

In the last century, India has undoubtedly become an important center for the study of hadith, and the scholars of India have become well-known for their passion for religious knowledge. Upon them ended the era of leadership in teaching hadiths, codification of the special fields [*funun*] of hadith, and commentary upon its texts [*mutun*]. Such was their mastery of this science that Muhammad Rashid Rida mentions in the introduction of his book *Miftah Kunuz al-Sunnah*, “Were it not for the superb attention to detail in the science of hadith displayed by our brothers, the scholars of India in the present era, this science would have withered away in the eastern cities. And, indeed, mastery of this science has been waning in Egypt and Syria since the tenth century AH.” There is no doubt that Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya was among the most distinguished hadith scholars of India and a great contributor in the service of the Sunnah. He was given the honorary title of *Shaykh al-Hadith*, or “Great Scholar of Hadith,” by his teacher, Shaykh Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri, who recognized his deep insight, clear-sightedness, and extensive knowledge of hadith and related sciences.

Lineage and Upbringing

He was born in the village of Kandhla (in Uttar Pradesh, India) on Ramadan 10, 1315 AH (February 12, 1898 CE). His full name was Muhammad Zakariyya ibn Muhammad Yahya ibn Muhammad Ismail, and his lineage continues all the way back to Abu Bakr, the great Companion of the Messenger (Sallallahu alaihi Wasallam).

Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Nadwi said about him, “Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya was born into a household rooted in knowledge and passion for Islam. His immediate family and his predecessors were distinguished by firm resolve, perseverance, steadfastness, and adherence to religion.... His family included many notable scholars... and his grandmother memorized the entire Qur’an while nursing her son [Shaykh Zakariyya’s father].”

His father, Shaykh Muhammad Yahya, was among the great scholars of India, whose primary teacher in hadith was Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi. Under him he studied *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Jami al-Tirmidhi*, and others of the six famous authentic books of hadith [*sihah sitta*]. Shaykh Yahya went on to teach at Madrasa Mazahir Ulum, in the district of Saharanpur, but did not accept any payment for his services. He instead made his living through his own book-publishing business.

As a young boy, Shaykh Zakariyya moved with his father to the village of Gangoh, in the district of Saharanpur. Since his father and Shaykh Gangohi had a close relationship, Shaykh Zakariyya quickly earned the affection of his father’s teacher.

Growing up in this virtuous environment, he began learning how to read with Hakim Abd al-Rahman of Muzaffarnagar. He memorized the Qur’an with his father and also studied books in Persian and the introductory Arabic books with his uncle Shaykh Muhammad Ilyas (founder of the Tabligh movement). He stayed with his father in the company of Shaykh Gangohi until age eight, when the shaykh passed away.

* Excerpted from *The Differences of the Imams* by Shaykh al-Hadith Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi, White Thread Press.

At the age of twelve, Shaykh Zakariyya traveled with his father to Mazahir Ulum, There, under his father, he advanced his study of Arabic, tackling many classical texts on Arabic morphology, grammar, literature and also logic. But by the time he was seventeen, hadith became the main focus of his life. He studied five of the six authentic books of hadith with his father, and then he studied *Sabih al-Bukhari* and *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* (for a second time) with honorable Shaykh Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri. Out of his immense respect for hadith, Shaykh Zakariyya was extremely particular about always studying the hadith narrations with *wudu*.

On Dhu 'l-Qa'da 10, 1334 AH, when Shaykh Zakariyya was just nineteen, his dear father passed away. This event was extremely traumatic for Shaykh Zakariyya, as he lost not only a father but also a teacher and mentor. His deep sorrow remained with him for the rest of his life.

Teachers

Shaykh Zakariyya was blessed to live and learn in an era considered by many to be one of great achievements in Islamic knowledge by scholars in the Indian subcontinent. He studied with few but select teachers who reached the highest levels of learning, research, authorship, and piety. In addition to his father (Shaykh Muhammad Yahya) and uncle (Shaykh Muhammad Ilyas), he studied under the hadith scholar Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri, author of the *Badhl al-Majbud*, a commentary of *Sunan Abi Dawud*. Shaykh Zakariyya acquired a hadith authorization from him and remained his student until Shaykh Khalil's death in Madina Munawwara in 1346 AH.

Before his death, Shaykh Khalil Ahmad expressed his desire to write *Badhl al-Majbud*, and he sought Shaykh Zakariyya's assistance as his right-hand man. This experience revealed Shaykh Zakariyya's gift of penmanship and, furthermore, expanded his insight in the science of hadith. He worked hard on the project, attained the pleasure and trust of his shaykh, and was even mentioned by name in the commentary. This indeed opened the door to Shaykh Zakariyya's authoring many literary works and treatises over the course of his life.

Teaching Career

In Muharram 1335 AH he was appointed as a teacher at Madrasa Mazahir Ulum, where he was assigned to teach books on Arabic grammar, morphology, and literature, as well as a number of primary texts of Islamic jurisprudence. In 1341 AH he was assigned to teach three sections of *Sabih al-Bukhari* upon the insistence of Shaykh Khalil Ahmad. He also taught *Mishkat al-Masabih* until 1344 AH. Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Nadwi said, "Although he was one of the youngest teachers at the school, he was selected to teach works generally not assigned to those of his age, nor to anyone in the early stages of his teaching career. Nevertheless, he showed that he was not only able, but an exceptional teacher."

In 1345 AH he traveled to Madina Munawwara, the city of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, where he resided for one year. There he taught *Sunan Abi Dawud* at Madrasa al-Ulum al-Shar'iyya. While in Madina, he began working on *Anjaz al-Masalik ila Muwatta Imam Malik*, a commentary on Imam Malik's *Muwatta*. He was twenty-nine at the time.

When he returned to India, he resumed teaching at Mazahir Ulum. He began teaching *Sunan Abi Dawud*, *Sunan al-Nasai*, the *Muwatta* of Imam Muhammad, and the second half of *Sabih al-Bukhari*. The school's principle taught the first half of *Sabih al-Bukhari*, and after his death, Shaykh Zakariyya was given the honor of teaching the entire work.

In all, he taught the first half of *Sabih al-Bukhari* twenty-five times, the complete *Sabih al-Bukhari* sixteen times, and *Sunan Abi Dawud* thirty times. He did not just teach hadith as a

matter of routine; the work of hadith had become his passion, and he put his heart and soul into it. Shaykh Zakariyya taught until 1388 AH, when he was forced to give up teaching after developing eye cataracts.

Travels to the Two Holy Cities

Allah blessed him with the opportunity to visit the two holy cities of Makka and Madina. He performed *hajj* several times, and his multiple trips had a profound personal effect on him, both spiritually and educationally. He made the blessed journey with Shaykh Khalil Ahmad in 1338 AH and with him again in 1344. It was during the second trip that Shaykh Khalil completed *Badhl al-Majhud*; he died shortly thereafter and was buried in the Baqi' graveyard in Madina. May Allah have mercy on him and put light in his grave.

Sincere Love for Allah and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya inherited piety, honesty, and good character from his father (may Allah be pleased with him). He aspired to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah in all matters, big and small, with a passion not found in many scholars. He had extreme love for the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the blessed city of Madina. His students have related that whenever the death of the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم was mentioned during a lecture on *Sunan Abi Dawud* or *Sabih al-Bukhari*, his eyes would well up with tears, his voice would choke up, and he would be overcome with crying. So evocative were his tears that his students could do nothing but weep with raised voices.

He was often tested with regard to his sincerity. He was offered many teaching jobs at two or three times the salary that was customarily given at Mazahir 'Ulum, but he always graciously declined the offers. For most of his teaching career, Shaykh Zakariyya never accepted any money for his services at Mazahir 'Ulum; he did the work voluntarily, seeking Allah's pleasure. Although he did accept a small salary at the beginning of his career, he later totaled up the amount and paid it back in its entirety.

Household

Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya was married twice. He first married the daughter of Shaykh Ra'uf al-Hasan in Kandhla. She passed away on Dhu 'l-Hijja 5 1355 AH. He then married the daughter of Shaykh Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi in 1356 AH. Allah blessed him with five daughters and three sons from his first wife, and two daughters and one son from his second marriage.

Daily Routine

Shaykh Zakariyya organized his time meticulously. He would rise an hour before dawn and occupy himself in *tabajjud* and recitation of Qur'an before performing the Fajr prayer in the *masjid*. After Fajr, he would read his morning supplications and litany until sunrise. Thereafter he would go to meet with some people and drink tea (but never ate anything with it). He would then return to his quarters to read. During this time he would also research and compile his literary works, and, with few exceptions, no one was allowed to visit him at this time. When it was time for lunch he would come out and sit with his guests, who were from all walks of life; he would respect and treat them well, irrespective of who they were. After Zuhr prayer, he would take a siesta and then spent some time listening to his correspondence (which amounted to around forty or fifty letters daily from different places) and dictating replies. He also taught for two hours before 'Asr. After 'Asr, he would sit with a

large group of people, offering them tea. After performing Maghrib, he would remain devoted in solitude to optional prayer and to supplication. He did not take an evening meal except to entertain an important guest.

Personality

Shaykh Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali Nadwi says about his characteristics, "He was extremely vibrant, never lazy; light-hearted, smiling, cheerful, friendly; and he often jested with his close friends and acquaintances. We saw in him good character and forbearance with people, as well as a rare humility; and above all, his personal qualities were always governed by his deep faith and sense of contentment."

Death

He had always hoped to meet Allah while in the city of the Messenger (SallAllahu alaihi Wasallam); Allah granted his wish. He died there on Monday Sha'ban 1, 1402 AH (May 24, 1982 CE) and was buried in Jannat al-Baqi', in the company of the Companions and the noble family members of the Messenger (SallAllahu alaihi Wasallam). His funeral procession was followed by a large number of people and he was buried in the Baqi' graveyard next to his teacher Shaykh Khaliq Ahmad Saharanpuri. May Allah forgive him, grant mercy, and elevate his status. *Amin*.

Scholars' Praise of Him

Many scholars, both Arab and non-Arab, have praised him and recognized his knowledge and excellence. 'Allama Muhammad Yusuf Binnori relates,

Indeed there are some remnants of the scholars of past generations living today among the scholars of today's generation. They have been guided to praiseworthy efforts in multiple religious sciences, such as jurisprudence; they are on par with the previous generations in their knowledge, excellence, fear of Allah, and piety; they stir up memories of the blessed golden age of scholarship. Among these scholars is a unique figure envied for his excellence in knowledge and action, the author of outstanding, beneficial works and of beautiful, superb commentaries: Shaykh Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi Saharanpuri.

Shaykh Sa'id Ahmad, the head of Islamic studies at the University of Aligarh, UP, relates,

It is evident to one who take a look at his works that he had a brilliancy, both in knowledge and with the pen, like that of Ibn al-Jawzi and Imam Ghazali. Of the scholars of his era I know of no one comparable to him in this regard, except Imam 'Abd al-Hayy al-Farangi Mahalli (of Lucknow).

Shaykh Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali Nadwi relates that Shaykh 'Alawi al-Maliki said,

When he reports the ruling and evidences of the Maliki school [in his writings], we Malikis are astonished at the accuracy and integrity of the report.... If the author had not mentioned in the introduction of [his] book that he was a Hanafi, I would not have known that he was Hanafi, but would have definitely concluded that he was a Maliki, since in his *Awjaz* he cites by-laws and derivatives of the Maliki school from there books that even we have a hard time obtaining.

Students

Shaykh Zakariyya had numerous students who spread around the world and continue, to this day, to serve Islam, particularly establishing traditional Islamic schools in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, England, Canada, America, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and other countries. Some of his more prominent students in the field of hadith were Muhaddith Muhammad Yusuf Kandhlawi (d. 1384 AH), author of *Amani 'l-Abbar Sharh Ma'ani 'l-Atbar*, Shaykh 'Abd al-Jabbar A'zami, author of *Imdad al-Bari* (Urdu commentary on *Sahib al-Bukhari*), and Mufti Mahmud Hasan Gangohi (d. 1417 AH). Many other scholars and students also acquired authorizations in hadith from him, including Dr. Mustafa' al-Siba'i, Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghudda, Dr. Muhammad 'Alawi al-Maliki and Shaykh Muhammad Taha al-Barakati.

Written Works

Shaykh Zakariyya wrote many works both in Arabic and Urdu. A number of them treat specialized subjects intended for scholars, and the rest have been written for the general public. His works demonstrate his deep knowledge and intelligence; his ability to understand the issue at hand, research it thoroughly, and present a complete, clear and comprehensive discussion; his moderation, humility, patience, and attention to detail. His respect and awe for the pious predecessors are evident in his works, even when he disagrees with their opinions on any particular aspect.

His first written work was a three volume commentary of the *Alfiyya ibn Malik* (on arabic grammar), which he wrote as a student when he was only thirteen. His written works amount to over one hundred. He did not withhold any rights to his works and made it publicly known that he only published his works for the sake of Allah's pleasure. Whoever wished to publish them was permitted to, on the condition that they were left unaltered and their accuracy maintained.

Hence, his books have gained overwhelming acceptance throughout the world, so much so that his work *Fada'il al-Qur'an* [Virtues of the Qur'an] has been translated into eleven languages, *Fada'il Ramadan* [Virtues of Ramadan] into twelve languages, and *Fada'il al-Salat* [Virtues of Prayer] into fifteen languages. He wrote four books on Qur'an commentary [*tafsir*] and proper recitation [*tajwid*], forty-four books on hadith and its related sciences, six books on jurisprudence [*fiqh*] and its related sciences, twenty-four historical and biographical books, four books on Islam creed [*aqida*], twelve books on abstinence [*zuhd*] and heart-softening accounts [*riqah*], three books in Arabic grammar and logic, and six books on modern-day groups and movements.

Some of His Hadith Works

One can find a complete list and description of his books in the various biographies written on him. Here is a brief description of a few of his more popular works on hadith:

Anjaz al-Masalik ila Muwatta' Imam Malik: One of the most comprehensive commentaries on the *Muwatta* of Imam Malik in terms of the science of hadith, jurisprudence, and hadith explication. Shaykh Zakariyya provides the summaries of many other commentaries in a clear, intellectual, and scholarly way, dealing with the various opinions on each issue, mentioning the differences of opinions among the various scholars, and comparing their evidences. This commentary, written in Arabic, has won great acclaim from a number of Maliki scholars.

Lami' al-Dirari 'ala Jami' al-Bukhari: Written in Arabic, a collection of the unique remarks and observations on *Sahib al-Bukhari* presented by Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi. These life-long acquired wisdoms were recorded by his student Shaykh Yahya Kandhlawi (Shaykh Zakariyya's father) during their lessons. Shaykh Zakariyya edited, arranged, and commented

on his father's compilation, clarifying the text and adding a comprehensive introduction at the beginning.

Al-Abwab wa 'l-Tarajim li 'l-Bukhari: An explanation of the chapter headings of Imam Bukhari's *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Assigning chapter headings in a hadith collection is a science in itself, known among the scholars as *al-abwab wa 'l-tarajim* [chapters and explanations]. In it, the compiler explains the reasons for the chapter heading and the connections between the chapter headings and the hadiths quoted therein. It is well known that the commentators of *Sahih al-Bukhari* have paid special attention to the titles therein, in tune with the Arabic saying: "The *fiqh* of Bukhari is in his chapter headings" [*fiqh al-Bukhari fi tarajimih*]. Shaykh Zakariyya not only quotes and compiles what has been mentioned by other scholars like Shah Wali Allah al-Dehlawi and Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, but also correlates and clarifies these opinions and presents findings from his own research in many instances.

Juz' Hajjat al-Wida' wa 'Umrat al-Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم: A comprehensive Arabic commentary on the detailed accounts of the pilgrimage [*hajj*] of Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. It includes the details of any juridical discussions on the various aspects of pilgrimage, giving the locations, modern-day names, and other details of the places the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by or stayed at.

Khasa'il Nabawi Sharh Shama'il al-Tirmidhi: Composed in urdu, a commentary on Imam Tirmidhi's renowned work *al-Shama'il al-Muhammadiyah*, a collection of hadiths detailing the characteristics of the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. This commentary explains the various aspects related to the different characteristics and practices of Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم. It has been translated into English and is widely available.