



TREASURES OF THE HEART

A TRANSLATION OF KANOOZ-E DIL

A Definitive Exposition of the Stages of the Spiritual Journey

AMEER MUHAMMAD AKRAM AWAN
SHAIKH SILSILAH NAQSHBANDIAH OWAISIAH



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*'Every period of time has its specific requirements, and **Allah** Kareem can take whatever service **He**^{-swt} desires from whosoever **He**^{-swt} wills. Perhaps this service was destined for me.'*

- Ameer Muhammad Akram Awan

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Preface

These words are penned to serve as an exposition and commentary, to a certain extent, of my document Ramooz-e Dil. Here, the argument is not whether Tasawwuf stands proved or not, or whether it is necessary or not, or what are its basis; all that has been adequately addressed and dealt with by our predecessors. A short list of books on Tasawwuf has also been included in Ramooz-e Dil, and Hazrat^{rua}'s unique book 'Dalael us-Sulook' is ranked as the last word on the subject. Yes, I have endeavoured to elucidate further on the Maraqbaat (Meditations), Maqamaat (Stations) and Lata'if mentioned in Ramooz-e Dil.

So, this book has been written neither for the contentious nor for the obstinate detractors; rather it is for the seekers of knowledge. Time and readers themselves will be able to judge whether any benefit or guidance was derived from it.

In any case, I have made this effort in all sincerity by the Grace of **Allah**, as this treasure is becoming exceedingly rare. People are engaged in self-destruction by sinking themselves in material pleasures. Perhaps some fortunate ones may get an indication of this treasure and turn towards it and illumine their breasts through the Grace of **Allah** and the Beneficence of the Holy Prophet^{saws}.

Faqeer Muhammad Akram Awan

Dar ul Irfan

21st January 2010.

Foreword

Beginning with the Name of **Allah**, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful
All Praise is due to **Allah**^{-swt}, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Universe.
Peace and Salutations be on His Beloved Muhammad^{-saws} and his Family and
Companions, all.

After this, I seek refuge with **Allah**, from Shaitan the outcast.

Beginning with the Name of **Allah**, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

I had penned a few lines titled 'Ramooz-e Dil' for the seekers' guidance; the aim being that, Tasawwuf and Sulook is a limitless ocean in which one word or one sentence can have several interpretations, so there should remain uniformity in interpreting the Shaikh's instructions or Tawajjuh and Maraqbaat, and everyone should not draw a different interpretation. Although the fundamental principle remains the same and the difference insignificant, yet some difference may arise due to one's personal understanding, knowledge and capacity. However, even this difference is not altogether safe, because Shaitan may whisper anything to try to create problems. So, if the instructions are also (*clearly*) understood, then **Allah**^{-swt} provides a way of protection against this danger. Therefore this concise booklet has been written. But just consider the irony of circumstances that, nowadays, an outright denial of Zikr, Tasawwuf and Sulook, and the effort to prove it false by the might of the pen, is being considered the height of knowledge! Although, if one reads the accounts of the Ulama of the subcontinent of only half a century ago, one finds that, after completing their education from a certain Madrasah (religious school), they remained in the company of such and such Man of God for so much of time and obtained a Robe of Succession, and only then did these scholars enter the field of practical life. But, today, the entire pen-might is being utilised for the negation of Zikr (Tasawwuf), and many attractive guises are being employed for this purpose! For example, yesterday I read an article in which a learned writer used the power of his pen only to prove that wherever the word Zikr is mentioned in the Holy Quran, it refers to the 'Quran' itself, and there is no Zikr other than this. That is well said. The Holy Quran is Zikr, but it would be unreasonable to say that only the Holy Quran is Zikr. Is the Hadees Sharif not Zikr? Are the Tasbihaat and the Darood Shareef not Zikr? Is Tableegh not Zikr? Are Worship, Salah, Saum, Hajj and Zakat not Zikr?

At every instance in the Holy Quran where Zikr has been enjoined, can it be taken to mean only the Recitation of Quran? For example, it has been commanded that in a battle:

*Remain steadfast and do the Zikr of **Allah** much and often.* (Al Anfaal: 45)

Is it possible to keep fighting as well as keep reciting the Quran simultaneously during the thick of a battle?

*Those who remember **Allah**, sitting, standing and lying down on their sides.* (Aal-i Imran: 191)

Is it possible to recite the Quran while standing, sitting and lying down? Or:

*And when Salah is finished, then you may disperse through the land, and seek the Bounty of **Allah** and celebrate the Zikr of **Allah** with great frequency.* (Al Jum'ah: 10)

It is stated in the Surah Jum'ah: after completing Salah go about your business, undertake labour, earn a Halaal livelihood and at the same time keep on doing **Allah**'s Zikr abundantly. If Zikr is taken to mean the 'Holy Quran', is this activity possible?

Yes, it is true that the Holy Quran is Zikr; it is the most excellent form of Zikr. However, here while the phrase that 'the Quran is *also* Zikr' is correct, the phrase that 'the Quran is the *only* Zikr' is incorrect. Many other things, from beliefs to faith and deeds are also included in Zikr.

Forms of Zikr

1. Acceptance of the Faith is an act. Remembrance of **Allah**^{-swt} is present in it, hence it is Zikr.
2. Acquisition of knowledge about the Deen is an excellent act and it contains the Remembrance of **Allah**, hence it is Zikr.
3. (a). Every action whether it is a Farz (Obligatory), Wajib (Necessary), Sunnah, or Mubah (proper/permissible), includes the Remembrance of **Allah**, and is therefore Zikr. This covers everything from worship to worldly affairs, and is known as Zikr-e Amlī (Practical Zikr). It also includes Zikr-e Lisani (Oral Zikr), as recitation during Salah and Tasbihaat are Zikr-e Lisani. Similarly, studying and teaching Deen, Tableegh (preaching) are all included in Zikr, because Remembrance of **Allah**^{-swt} is present in all of them.
- (b). The next form is Zikr-e Lisani; Tasbihaat, Darood Sharif and Recitation of the Quran are all included in Zikr-e Lisani.

- (c). Further, the third form is Zikr-e Qalbi.

Qalb is a subtle body placed within the lump of flesh about which the Holy Prophet^{-saws} reportedly said, ‘There is a lump of flesh in the body; if that is healthy the whole body is healthy, and if that is sick the whole body is sick. Know that it is the heart (*Qalb*)’, (or as said by the Messenger^{-saws} of **Allah**^{-swt}).

Divine Injunctions about this (Zikr-e Qalbi) are also present, so much so that the author of Tafseer-e Mazhari has written that acquisition of Zikr-e Qalbi is mandatory for every Muslim man and woman, and he has presented just two references of Divine Commands:

- 1) The command of **Allah**^{-swt}, when dispatching Hazrat Musa^{-as} and Hazrat Haroon^{-as} to Fir‘aun (Pharaoh): *And slacken not in keeping Me in Remembrance.* (Ta Ha: 42)...meaning My Zikr should not become secondary in your attention.

Now, every cell of a Prophet’s body is not only a Zakir (engaged in **Allah**^{-swt}’s constant Zikr) in itself, but it is a Zakir-maker, as anything that touches him also becomes a Zakir. Therefore, it is not possible for a Prophet’s greatness to be ever unmindful of Zikr. However, to invite Fir‘aun, a cruel despotic ruler and a self-proclaimed god, possessor of pomp and splendour, and grandeur and might, to accept the Unity of **Allah**^{-swt} - that too, from a position of want and poverty; this task could only be undertaken by a Prophet of **Allah**^{-swt}.

It was emphasised (*by Allah Kareem*) that even in that situation, the primary attention should be focussed towards His Zikr, and the conversation with Fir‘aun be consigned a secondary status. This state can be none other than Zikr-e Qalbi.

- 2) The other reference is found in Surah Muzzammil: the Holy Prophet^{-saws} is addressed:

Remember the Name of your Rabb and devote yourself to Him wholeheartedly. (Al Muzzammil: 8)

That is, keep on doing the Zikr of your **Rabb**’s Name, keep repeating ‘**Allah Allah Allah**’ to such an extent that there remains no other awareness except that of **Allah**^{-swt}. Here, the Command to recite the Quran has already been given separately. Therefore, this reference is

only to the Zikr of the Personal Name and to Zikr-e Qalbi. Yes, it is with **Allah**^{-swt}, to grant the capacity to understand this.

Revocation of a Common Misconception

Before mentioning the Qalb or Zikr-e Qalbi, it is necessary to remove a common misconception that: Tasawwuf was acquired from Hindu yogis or from the asceticism invented by Jews and Christians and in this way a hodgepodge came into being, which not only corrupted religious belief but also made people indifferent to (*religious*) practice. I also found this statement in the writings of fairly intellectual people; rather, Tasawwuf has been included among the reasons for this Ummah's downfall. In fact, this happened for not knowing Tasawwuf, that our intellectuals, without any study and understanding, have given this decision.

What is (*the place of*) Tasawwuf in Islam? It is important to understand this. In my view, Tasawwuf is a translation of the word 'Tazkiyah', which means the cleansing of the heart. The primary result of this cleansing is that the religious beliefs get distilled and purified. An unshakeable faith in the Divine Greatness, in the Prophethood, and in the articles of Deen is established, as is evident from the sequence mentioned in the Holy Quran:

Recites unto them His Ayah and purifies them. (Aal-e Imran: 164).

It means that the foremost action after invitation (*to Islam*) is the purification of the one who accepts, and then is the teaching of the Book and Wisdom. Therefore, it is clear that without Tazkiyah, a person does not develop the ability to benefit from the Book and Wisdom, and cannot possess the degree of certitude that compels him to submission and obedience and prevents him from disobedience, which is the desired objective. How is it possible to get this blessing from the teachings of Hindus? Yes severe 'Chilla Kashi' (40 days of hard living, strenuous routine, stringent abstinence and strict self-denial) is also found among the Hindus. However, it should be kept in mind that even if some degree of concentration of attention is achieved by foregoing food and sleep, yet neither Faith is not attained by this, nor is granted the Kashf of Divine Realities, that Barzakh is revealed or the Higher Realm is observed. All this is impossible! Yes, it is possible to see those things that can be observed through material instruments, just as it is possible to see far off (distant) events on the television. Rather, it is mentioned in books that a tribe was discovered in Africa, whose members used to communicate with each other from a distance. If one of them went away, he would concentrate at an agreed time and so would the one at home, and they would communicate with each other. The Russian government had started a project to develop a similar technique for military purposes. **Allah**^{-swt}

knows better whether they were successful or not. Similarly, a Hindu yogi came to Hazrat Ustad al Mukarram^{-rua} and said that after extensive effort he had acquired a skill that, when he concentrated, he could see a figure that transported him to any place he directed. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} asked him whether he felt familiarity or fear from this apparition. He replied that he felt fear, but it was obedient to him. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} told him that it was Shaitan, and as he is the enemy of human beings even if he be a Kafir, so it is natural to feel afraid of the enemy.

So, all this has nothing to do with Islamic Tasawwuf, as there is no concept of this type of Chilla Kashi in Islamic Tasawwuf, which is an effort of an entire lifetime denoting adherence to the Shari'ah in every action, and 'this' Chilla is neither easy nor does it have any substitute.

During the lifetime of Holy Prophet^{-saws}, whoever after acceptance of the Faith was graced by one look from the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, was purified. Whoever looked at the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, or whosoever received a look from the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, achieved the status of a Sahabi (Companion), which is the highest title after Prophethood. Keep in mind that the command of doing Zikr of **Allah**^{-swt}'s Name was also as binding on them, as it is on every Muslim man and woman, today.

Secondly, any Chilla Kashi that is opposed to Islam whether it is in the form of Hindu or Greek philosophy makes a man useless from the worldly angle, and he loses the capacity for work; whereas Tazkiyah, while according perfect faith also increases the work capacity and a person is able to surpass the accomplishments of many people during his lifetime.

If you look from the Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} (the Companions) to the true Sufis and righteous religious scholars of the fourteen centuries, this fact will become evident and no further evidence is required after it. What to speak of a Sufi, even a common Muslim has a greater capacity for worldly work than a Kafir. These personalities are not idle, they are silent workers, and keep working throughout their lives, as their aim in life is to work and that too, only in accordance with the tenets of the Shari'ah. Another amazing quality found in these personalities is that they work simultaneously in many fields, and are successful in all. This quality is found only in the Sufis and in no one else. Many great people earn a name for themselves in one and only one field, whereas the Sufis provide guidance to people in every field of life. Then, how unfair it is to proclaim that these people do not work! People use their brain for work, which is dependent on the faculties of sight and sound and is influenced by circumstances and events; but the Sufis work with the heart, which decides solely on emotions that arise within it. The heart is beyond external

influences and when Zikr **Allah**^{-swt} resides within it, its every decision accords with **Allah**^{-swt}'s obedience. Further, as per its ability it never remains idle, rather the mind becomes subordinate to the heart, and the limbs become subordinate to the mind, and thus its total energy remains channelled towards positive work.

Yes, those people who could not find an accomplished Shaikh, and instead of (*striving for*) the Hereafter, read Wazaif (incantations) and did Chilla Kashi for worldly excellence or fame and wealth, they are a different class altogether. Such a verdict, of being impressed by Hinduism or something similar, can be passed against them, and it is wrong to consider or call them Sufis.

As far as Sufis or Ahl **Allah** (Men of **Allah**) are concerned, they strive solely for the Pleasure of **Allah**^{-swt}. Zikr **Allah** grants the capacity for (*good*) deeds and also the strength to keep away from sins. The only means of achieving the Pleasure of **Allah**^{-swt} is adherence to the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and abstinence from sins. Sufis also have Kashf (spiritual visions) and Mushahidah (spiritual observations), and it is important to keep in mind the following:

- One. Kashf or Mushahidah is not the objective. Yes, if it occurs, it is a grant from **Allah**^{-swt}.
- Two. Kashf further strengthens the belief in the Omnipotence of **Allah**^{-swt} and the basis (*underlying wisdom*) of (Divine) Injunctions is understood, their details are also manifested.
- Three. It is not for the affairs of the world, or to gain recognition by people. On the contrary, it augments one's realization of one's humility.
- Four. If Kashf is according to the Shari'ah, it is correct. If not, then the person having Kashf has been mistaken; it (*the Kashf*) is not worth following.
- Five. If something is revealed by Kashf or there is an indication for some action, then only the person who has the Kashf should act on it; no one else is bound by his Kashf or to act on it. Consequently, there remains no reason for the requirement of Kashf for worldly matters.

Types of Kashf and Mushahidah

The first type is that **Allah**^{-swt} removes the veil, and something can be clearly seen and understood; but it all depends on **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grant. He^{-swt} may like to make clear anything that He^{-swt} desires, whenever He^{-swt} desires, that is His favour. The example of this is Hazrat Yaqoob^{-as}, who could not come to know when Hazrat Yusuf^{-as} got separated from him. However, when **Allah**^{-swt} wanted to inform him^{-as} and Hazrat Yusuf^{-as} met his brothers after many years, and sent his blessed shirt to pass over his

father's eyes for his sight to be restored; then as soon as the caravan left Egypt, Hazrat Yaqoob^{-as}, who was in Can'aan said 'Today I am smelling the scent of Yousuf^{-as}. Although both personalities were the Prophets of **Allah**^{-swt}'; then what is the worth of any Wali?

The second type is Ilham and Ilqa, that is, an inspiration settles in the heart and develops an unshakeable belief; like the mother of Hazrat Musa^{-as} was commanded to put the child in the river.

And We spoke to the mother of Musa. (Al Qasas: 7)

This means, that the inspiration settled in her heart and she believed it so strongly that she floated her child in the river. But this was only for her, specifically. Had the other women of Bani Isra'eel acted on her Wajdan and floated their children in the river, they would have drowned. This type is called Ilham, Ilqa or Wajdan. There are minor differences between these three, which can only be experienced, but perhaps cannot be expressed in writing.

The third type is when an Angel appears and speaks, as in the case of Hazrat Maryam^{-rau}, when Jibreel^{-as} appeared before her in human form and gave her the message. These two honoured ladies were not Prophets. So, the Mushahidaat of a Sufi, Kashf or Ilham, Ilqa or Wajdan reinforce faith in the Deen, facilitate the understanding of the Book and Sunnah, and grant the capacity of (*doing*) good deeds.

Hence, to say that the Sufis are useless people is a gross misconception. These people always work a great deal, as they are divinely blessed with this ability. Yes, mimics are a different issue. But, our so called intellectuals, by writing stories about the mimics, and defaming this important element of Deen are causing to deprive the Muslims (*of this blessing*). **Allah**'s Refuge!

There is another form of Kashf and Mushahidah in which things or words are not clear, but require interpretation. When a student presents such observation to the Shaikh, he apprises him of its interpretation. Again, this is a branch of the Miracle of a Prophet. Just as a Prophet is granted miracles as proof and confirmation of Prophethood, likewise, for adherence to Prophethood, a Wali is granted Karamaat, which are manifested for the upholding of the Deen and confirming the Truth. Just as the miracle of a Prophet is a confirmation of Prophethood, similarly the Karamaat of a Wali also manifest themselves as evidence of the Truth of the Deen. They are not for demonstrating the greatness of any person: Karamah is also an act of **Allah**^{-swt} manifested through the hand of a Wali. A similar Act of **Allah**^{-swt}, manifested through the hand of a Prophet is called a M'ujezah (miracle).

As Karamah is a branch of M'ujezah, therefore obedience to the Prophet is essential, otherwise it will not be granted. Further, Kashf and Karamaat belong to the category of rewards and fruits, and rewards are always 'Bestowals', because they are granted by **Allah**^{-swt}; hence they are not the results of a person's desire, that he may display the Karamah at his will. They are manifested only when **Allah**^{-swt} so desires, and as they are from the category of fruits (*rewards*), so they represent the rewards of the Akhirah. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say that those who had displayed Karamah in this world would wish on the Day of Gathering that if it (*the display of Karamah*) had not happened, their reward would have been even greater. Yes, some people do demonstrate wondrous acts to gain the world or to display their greatness. Firstly, it is only an artifice, a sleight of the hand; secondly, it is Istidraj (an abnormal phenomenon) performed with reliance on satanic power. But, it is not related to the matters of the Higher Realm or of Barzakh. It is confined to the affairs of this world and that too only up to the extent which can also be accessed through material appliances. However, it requires the ability, wisdom and insight granted by **Allah**^{-swt} to understand all these phenomena. Like the miracle of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, that when Abu Jahal heard the pebbles he held in his fist reciting the Kalimah, the wretched soul blurted that it was magic. Now, it has been stated that the miracle was the recitation of the Kalimah by the pebbles. However, the reality is much above this. Pebbles, stones, animate and inanimate matter, so much so that every particle recites the Praise of **Allah**^{-swt}, as has been declared by Him:

There is not a thing but celebrates His praise. (Al Isra': 44).

Everything in the universe praises and glorifies **Allah**^{-swt}. So the stones, pebbles, mountains, rivers remain busy in the Zikr of **Allah**^{-swt}, only that we do not comprehend it. The Holy Prophet^{-saws} granted such subtlety to the hearing faculty of men at the time that they started hearing the Zikr by the pebbles, the height of excellence being that even the worst of the Kuffaar also heard it, as hearing by the believers is not such a great matter. Even today, the Sufis are made to do a Maraqbah in which one is taught to converse with organic and inorganic matter. Once, in my presence, an elderly Sathi (companion, member of this Silsilah) was recounting to Hazrat Ji^{-rua}, that in the sitting room of someone where he had to stay, the wooden beams (in the ceiling) addressed him, 'Qazi Sahib, lucky are the beams that have been used in the roof of a Masjid and hear the Zikr of **Allah**^{-swt}, morning and night; and here are we who have to witness scenes of adultery.' Hazrat Ji^{-rua} replied, 'But he (the owner of the sitting room) is a pious man'. He was told, 'His sons and nephews have such characters.'

Foreword

This is the beneficence of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} that, even 14 centuries later, a believer can converse with non-living objects. The miracle is that even the worst of Kuffaar was made to hear, for once, the praise by inorganic matter. This is the glowing aspect of the miracle of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} which perhaps nobody takes note of today.

It is the same with the Karamah of the Aulia; the (*real*) Karamah is how many people have been reformed, their beliefs rectified or their conduct improved. This is the marvel of the Ahl **Allah** that they accomplish the mission of the establishment of the Deen. They silently accomplish a mission that cannot be achieved by speeches, dissertations, and large assemblies. They illuminate the hearts by making them Zakir, due to which the practical life is reformed. During my quarter century's close companionship with Hazrat Ji^{-rua}, I noted that he never ticked off anyone who came to him, nor did he question whether he was a Deobandi, Barailvi or Ahl-e Hadees, but from the very next day that person all by himself, became concerned about the reformation of his beliefs and conduct. This excellence also belongs to the blessings of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, which are received through the Ahl **Allah**.

Zikr-e Qalbi

The Holy Prophet^{-saws} has stated that there is a lump of flesh inside the body, if that is sound and healthy the whole body is healthy; if it is infected the whole body gets infected. By 'Qalb' is meant that Divine Subtlety from the Realm of Command which is housed inside the lump of flesh, the heart (a blood pumping machine).

Lata'if

Just as the body has its vital organs, similarly the Rooh too has its vital organs. The body is made up of physical matter, and its organs are likewise material, but the Rooh comes from the Realm of Command therefore its vital organs are also from the Realm of Command and are called Lata'if.

Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani^{-rua} writes in his Maktoobat that the human being is not formed from five but from ten elements: five of them are the components of the body and five are the Lata'if of the Rooh. The components of the body are clay, fire, air and water, and the Nafs which is formed by their combination, making a total of five, whereas the Rooh has five Lata'if: Qalb, Rooh, Sirri, Khaffi and Akhfa. All these five Lata'if are present in every Rooh and only they have the ability to accept and perceive the Divine Lights and to obtain the (*spiritual*) states.

These five Lata'if are the foundation. Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani^{-rua} has even mentioned and described the colour of the Lights that descend on them. Likewise, the other Salasil (pl. of Silsilah) consider these five as the base. Some, basing on their (*spiritual*) discernment, have mentioned additional Lata'if that they are seven, and with some they are eleven also. These are just the interpretations of their perceptions, based on their personal spiritual observations. However, the foundation of all (*Lata'if*) are these five, and the core of even these five is just one, the Latifah Qalb - as the ultimate achievement of all Azkaar (plural of Zikr) is its illumination and polish.

In our Silsilah Naqshbandiah Owaisiah, Zikr is done on seven Lata'if, in which the sixth Latifah is Nafs and the seventh is Sultan al-Azkaar. Furthermore different Salasil have identified their locations at different points, and this difference is based on personal discernment and observation, otherwise the object of all is the same; and remaining within the boundaries of Shari'ah, such difference of opinion becomes a source of blessing. Al Hamdo Lillah! Everyone has his own temperament and inclination. Some profit by one method, while others by another. For this reason, some Shuyookh (plural of Shaikh) referred the seekers to some other Shaikh, (*saying*) 'Your share is there'. It would be incorrect to understand by this that Wilayah is some fiefdom and is distributed among different people. Instead, noticing

the student's inclination, they deduced that he would benefit from there. Otherwise every believer is a Wali **Allah**.

Allah is the Wali of the believers. (Al Baqarah: 257)

This is a certificate of the fact that **Allah**^{-swt} is the Friend of every Momin (believer) and he possesses a degree of Wilayah. Yes, the Masha'ikh polish it and he is blessed with greater Divine Nearness. The grant of greater capacity for (*doing righteous*) deeds blesses him with further progress towards Divine Nearness and he attains to the level of Ihsan, i.e. the comprehension of the Presence of the (*Divine*) Truth.

Such is the Grace and Bounty of Allah; He grants to whom He wills. (Al Jum'ah: 40).

Latai'f and Blessings on them

Location of Lata'if and the Blessings on them

The First Latifah, Qalb

This is located within the same lump of flesh that supplies blood to the whole body. It is a Divine Subtlety that belongs to the Realm of Command. Hazrat Adam^{-as}'s lights descend on it from the first Heaven and are yellow in colour.

Among the Prophets^{-as}, the Holy Prophet^{-saws} is the Imam al-Anbiya (the Leader of the Prophets), while the rest are either Prophets or Messengers or the Ool-ul Azm (The Exalted Ones), and they are five: Hazrat Adam^{-as}, Hazrat Nooh^{-as}, Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as}, Hazrat Musa^{-as}, and Hazrat Isa^{-as}, whose beneficence is received on the first four Lata'if. Each one of them has his individual qualities. As already mentioned, lights of Hazrat Adam^{-as} descend from the first Heaven on the first Latifah, are yellow in colour and are the bearers of specific attributes. Firstly, as soon as he^{-as} erred, he turned immediately to **Allah**^{-swt} and was granted Divine Nearness. The illumination of this Latifah transfers the same realization, and one is granted sincere repentance and he supplicates in the Presence of (Divine) Truth for the forgiveness of every sin and for the grant of the capacity for obedience. Secondly, he^{-as} received knowledge from Divine Presence. *He taught Adam the names of all things.* (Al Baqarah: 31). Hazrat Adam^{-as} was taught the names of everything in the world: the names, properties, method of use, benefits and adverse effects of all things. Similarly a seeker receives competency or capacity to acquire knowledge, and he attains to a high status in whichever religious or worldly departments he strives in. Remember that no non-Muslim can compete with him in the intellectual or worldly sciences, while Deen, in any case, is the lot of the believer only. For this reason the basis of all modern knowledge is indebted to the research of Muslim scholars who were all Zakireen and Wali **Allah**. Today since we have relinquished this blessing, we have become subservient to the Kuffaar.

It was Hazrat Adam^{-as}, who began to cultivate the land and commence the use of herbs and metal (ore). Similarly, a seeker is blessed with proficiency in all these matters.

Thirdly, he^{-as} landed, in this world on a mountain in Sri Lanka, while Mother Hawwa was in Arabia. For three hundred years he strove, journeyed and cried in supplication to **Allah** Kareem. How great a physical exertion, mental strain and headache it must have involved! Eventually they were reunited at Arafat on the Jabl-e Rahmah (where a column exists even today) and this (*union*) initiated the procreation of the human race. Similar feelings are granted to the seeker also, in accordance with the capacity and sincerity of his quest, and he begins to exert effort in worship, becomes knowledgeable about worldly affairs and finds the courage to

undertake the most cumbersome of tasks, all the while maintaining a strong bond with **Allah**^{-swt}. He prays for help and guidance and asks forgiveness for all omissions and weaknesses as man's character is indeed strange: when he tastes the success of his effort, he becomes arrogant and says, 'This achievement is mine!' But a person whose Qalb is Zakir and attentive towards **Allah** Kareem remains safe from this malady and attributes his success to the blessing of **Allah** Kareem and is grateful to Him. He regards not only his success but also the courage and ability for the effort as grants from **Allah** Kareem, and this induces greater humility and a realization of his own inadequacy.

Likewise, if man meets failure, then coupled with the displeasure in his reaction he also tries to blame fate, and thus in the guise of fate, he actually casts a blame on **Allah**^{-swt}. In contrast, if the Qalb is Zakir, the effect is different: he is content with his personal effort but assumes that some of his weakness may have caused the failure, and even if his effort was complete, the result would certainly not have been favourable for him, because of which it was averted by his Master. He is convinced that he will be rewarded for his effort and hard work by **Allah** Kareem; so, even in failure he sees a degree of success and therefore never falls in despair nor loses hope. He regards his effort and labour as well as the peace and comfort, as grants from **Allah**^{-swt}. Consequently, his life becomes serene and comfortable.

It has been stated that no one will experience any grief in Jannah; a faint reflection of this (*blessing*) is also found in the worldly lives of the Zakireen. The life in this world become enjoyable and the Hereafter is also ameliorated.

When only the Qalb becomes Zakir, it is as if the gates of these countless blessings have been thrown opened to him, and he has reached a Grand Court where all around, every type of blessing awaits him. It is to be seen what he acquires from them.

These are not mere words for speaking, but are deeds worth doing. How (*great*) this fistful of dust (*man*) can become, when those Divine Lights that descend on the Quloob of the Exalted Messengers, start affecting him. There may be other innumerable benefits, all of which I do not know, nor is it possible to write them here.

The Second Latifah, Rooh

It is called Latifah Rooh and is located opposite the Qalb on the right side and it is the recipient of lights from two Ool-ul Azm Messengers. These lights descend from the second Heaven and are golden red in colour. This is also the place from where the Angel of Death retracts the Rooh. If the Maraqbah 'Mootu' is conducted, a seeker can observe the state of the taking out of Rooh. The first of the two Messengers whose lights descend on this Latifah is Hazrat Nooh^{-as} and the second is Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as}. The accounts of both these personalities are almost similar. Hazrat Nooh^{-as} preached for 950 years, in an environment where his people had become very rebellious and despite such a long and arduous toil, the number of believing men and women was only about eighty (80). How difficult and exemplary was his endeavour, and how determined was he in his preaching! One of the reasons for the waywardness of his people was their material progress; they had invented such things during that time which have not been invented even today, despite such material progress. For example, they had prepared a liquid which if poured on a hard stone like marble, would soften it like wax. It was then poured into moulds of various shapes and it re-hardened, but it developed the property of absorbing the sun's rays during the day and emitting light throughout the night. So these moulds were erected along the houses, streets and roads, and they remained lit during the entire night. During excavations, western archaeologists had found a bottle of the solvent with which they did verify the phenomenon, but the bottle fell and broke, therefore the contents could not be determined. From this it can be deduced how advanced must have been their way of life, how developed their means of irrigation, and how fruitful their orchards and abundant their crops.

However similar to our present times, they neglected Divine Greatness and declared the teachings of their Prophet impractical. Resultantly, a storm broke out which drowned all except the believers. Hazrat Nooh^{-as}'s real son was also among those drowned. The reference in Surah Hood: *'O earth! Swallow up your water, and O sky withhold your rain'...* (Hood: 44) In my opinion the Bermuda Triangle is the very spot where the water was swallowed. Even today, whatever gets caught in it is sucked into its vortex without leaving a trace, whether it be a ship or an airplane.

Hazrat Nooh^{-as}'s ship came to land on Mount Judi and he re-inhabited the land with the same vigour and motivation and was called Adam the Second for his steadfastness, belief and conduct, and he re-founded the human race on these principles.

Therefore, when a reflection of these blessings descends onto the seeker, the attributes of sound beliefs, steadfastness, adherence to the truth and resoluteness in its propagation are developed in him. He receives Divine Support in his effort to propagate the truth and his supplication against the forces of falsehood is accepted and answered in the form of Unseen (Divine) Help.

The other lights on the second Latifah, i.e. Latifah Rooh are of Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as} Khalil **Allah**. As mentioned earlier the lights of these two personalities mingle to appear golden red. Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as} is also an Ool-ul Azm Messenger. During childhood, starting from his home, he developed differences with his father who carved idols for the royal temple. Generally, people follow in the footsteps of their elders, but the Prophets^{-as} obey the Command of **Allah**^{-swt} only, that they receive through Divine Revelation. Further, he clashed with his community when he smashed their idols, and the matter reached the king. He was summoned for questioning, but he rendered the king speechless. In frustration, the king ordered him to be thrown into the fire. But **Allah**^{-swt} ordered the fire, 'Indeed you are fire; your property is to burn. But, while remaining as fire, turn into cool and fresh breeze for My Friend.' It is commonly stated that the flames converted into a garden; however, this (interpretation) is not supported by the words of the Quran, as there is no command for the flames to convert into flowers. Instead He^{-swt} commanded *O Fire be cool and safety for Ibraheem*. (Al-Anbiya: 69). That is, 'O fire, stop burning and become a means of coolness and peace for My Friend.' Consequently the fire kept burning the logs, but remained cool and pleasant for Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as}.

He^{-as} then migrated from his homeland and faced innumerable difficulties with steadfastness. In his old age he was bestowed a son like Hazrat Isma'eel^{-as} and he was ordered to leave his lady wife and child at the site of K'abah, subsequently the patience displayed by his wife and child, the search for water and the gushing forth of the spring of Zamzam, the sacrifice of Hazrat Isma'eel^{-as} is a chronicle of constant effort, sacrifice, patience and determination, in which Divine Mercy leapt up to hold his hand at every step. It is a strange saga, which can be viewed only through the eyes of love; otherwise physical eyes cannot discern those emotions and feelings.

Consequently the seeker also receives a reflection of these excellences and he partakes of them according to his capacity. It must be remembered though that purity of heart, sincerity of intention and effort are its prerequisites, and these blessings can only be known by those who possess knowledge. Up to now they have not been reduced to writing in this manner. I do not know how this humble soul (me) picked up the courage to do so. Perhaps people have become lost in the (*glitter of*) material fineness and **Allah** Kareem willed to let the common man know what

real human excellences are and how they can be achieved. For this He^{-swt} bestowed courage on this humble soul, and Insha **Allah** this will certainly spread throughout the world and will definitely provide guidance for the seekers of Truth. Yes, the point to be observed is what change takes place in the person who receives it. For that, he himself is the best judge, as every individual has his own particular circumstances and exigencies; hence the results are also manifested accordingly. However, one thing is certain, that everyone benefits, because these blessings and lights cannot remain fruitless. And how can they! After all **Allah**^{-swt}'s Name and the blessings emanating from the sacred Qalb of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} can never remain without results. Yes, every individual has a different capacity to accept beneficence. Hence, the results are manifested according to the capability of the individuals. The belief in Akhirah is strengthened to a level called 'Istihzaar' by the Ulama, meaning: as if the realities of the Akhirah are being plainly observed. This blessing becomes the most effective and the best cause to reform human life.

The Third Latifah, Sirri

The third Latifah Sirri is located above the First Latifah. It receives spiritual beneficence from Hazrat Musa^{-as}, which descends from the third Heaven and the colour of its lights is white; at times like a continuous band of white light, at times a rain of white flakes, and at times like an accumulation of white clouds; that is, everyone observes it according to his personal capacity.

Looking at the events of Hazrat Musa^{-as}'s blessed life, we see that soon after birth he was floated away in the river and a colossal trial commenced. However, a point to be observed here is that, because of him, his mother was also blessed with the honour of Divine Communication.

We sent this inspiration to the mother of Musa. (Al- Qasas: 7). That is, We spoke to the mother of Musa.

Subhan **Allah!** **Allah** be praised for whatever the seeker receives here, however these blessings also reach his associates because of him. Then, from the river he reached the royal palace where he remained with Fir'aun throughout his childhood, adolescence and adulthood. It is commonly believed that the society and environment change a person, but Fir'aun's royal palace and its environment could not affect Hazrat Musa^{-as} in any way. These blessings are reflected on the seeker too, and consequently, instead of being influenced by his environment, he is blessed with the ability to change it.

During his youth, his accidental killing of an Egyptian in support of justice, Fir'aun's intentions to kill him, his migration and reaching Madyan, his meeting with the daughters of Hazrat Sho'aib^{-as} and then his marriage there, is a series of extraordinary events. He arrived at a well and saw some shepherds watering their herd and two damsels standing to one side. When he inquired, they told him that their father was very old and there was no one else to bring their flock, and that they would water their herd after the others had left. Hazrat Musa^{-as} advanced, drew water from the well and watered their flock for them, and after they left, sat under a shade and prayed:

My Rabb, I am truly in need of any good You send my way. (Al Qasas: 24)

'O **Allah!** I have no home, nor any acquaintance here; I am in a state of utter desperation and need. Please grant me goodness.' Then, one of the two girls, shyness and demureness dominating her gait walked up to summon him. It was as though the woman was the answer to all his prayers. He received relatives, home

and also the means of income; indeed, a modest woman brings with her all blessings!

Then, his departure from there, observation of the Divine Refulgence on the Mount Toor and the Divine Conversation, then the Command to invite Fir'aun to the Truth - an invitation towards **Allah**^{-swt}, to a rebellious and arrogant king who claimed to be a god himself; then, the competition with the magicians and the display of exemplary trust in **Allah**^{-swt}, in both these situations. Then, his years long clash with Fir'aun and the Egyptians, migration along with the Bani Isra'eel, finding the path through the sea, attendance at the Mount Toor, Conversation with **Allah**^{-swt} and the Grant of the Book, then further effort. In short, it is a chronicle of one continuous struggle. Apparently, each event begins with difficulties and concludes with a Grant from **Allah**^{-swt}. His life is a long tale of extraordinary events, which is not possible to cover here.

When spiritual lights from Hazrat Musa^{-as} descend on the seeker's Latifah, they carry all these blessings and the seeker benefits from them according to his ability and capacity. He develops trust in **Allah** Kareem, gains the courage to speak the truth before the worst of tyrants, becomes steadfast on Truth and till his last breath continues to strive for the triumph of Truth. It is another matter that pseudo Sufis are totally useless people, otherwise those who receive with this blessing turn into revolutionary personalities. Perhaps I have already written this many times, that every seeker gets his share according to his capacity; not everyone gets the same share. Everyone's sincerity and effort has its own value, and he receives his share of blessings accordingly in that proportion.

The Fourth Latifah, Khaffi

This is located in the chest above the second Latifah; Hazrat Isa^{-as}'s lights descend on it from the fourth Heaven and are dark blue in colour. **Allah** Kareem has said that the likeness of Hazrat Isa^{-as} is as that of Hazrat Adam^{-as}. *The similitude of Isa before Allah is as that of Adam.* (Aal-e Imran: 59). The reason is that there are many similarities between them not just in their creation but also in their excellences, as well as in their blessings.

Just as Hazrat Isa^{-as}'s birth was by an Act of **Allah**^{-swt} and there was no other apparent factor; similarly many affairs of a seeker keep getting resolved naturally, by themselves. Just as Hazrat Isa^{-as} declared as an infant, the Oneness of **Allah**^{-swt} (Divine Unity), his Prophethood, and the affairs of this world and of the Hereafter, similarly the seeker is granted with special knowledge from **Allah** Kareem, without any apparent means. There are countless miracles associated with Hazrat Isa^{-as} that are also mentioned in the Holy Quran. The seeker too gets a share of these feelings and he receives the courage to propagate the Truth. He is granted Divine protection from the enemies of Truth and bestowed the ability to perform worship and Zikr. The greatest blessing is that he is granted the courage and strength to support Truth and remove falsehood, because the system of the universe has been established on justice. It is the law of nature that a balance is necessary for every act and for everything. Take something as simple as a dish of dhal and bread; a slight imbalance in the spices will make the dish unpalatable. Any increase or decrease in the constituents of a medicine will cause harm rather than benefit to the patient. Similarly, a balance is maintained between (the forces of) light and darkness in the affairs of the world. If only forces of darkness prevail, the entire system of the universe would collapse. For example, if the night continued forever, no work would get done. Like the day and night, a balance exists everywhere and in everything. So, while millions of people commit evil, **Allah**^{-swt} also raises such people, each of whom possesses such high level of character and blessings, that the (Divine) Lights descending on him counter the gloom of the people's evil. After the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, his Sahabah, the Taba'een, the Taba Taba'een, the Aulia **Allah** and the Ulama-e Rabbani (the Righteous Religious Scholars) have been endowed with this blessing. In short, this is how the system is running. However, what is amazing is that Hazrat Isa^{-as} was raised alive to the Heavens and will descend once again to the world in its last days and serve as the cause of domination of Truth.

One aspect of its wisdom understood by this humble soul is that, an era will dawn in the world in which the darkness of evil will increase to a level that the lights of

Wilayah will not be able to dispel it, and for this (purpose) the light of Prophethood will be required. But, Prophethood has been completed and there is to be no new Prophet. However, **Allah** Kareem is the **Rabb**; He^{-swt} is aware of all requirements and also fulfils them. Therefore, by His Grace He^{-swt} raised Hazrat Isa^{-as} to the Heavens; he^{-as} will return to the earth at that time of need and will re-establish the Shari'ah of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. His strength and the intensity of his lights will be of Prophetic status that will defeat the forces of darkness.

By doing Zikr on the fourth Latifah, these blessings also descend on the seeker and he stands forth like a tower of light against the dark forces of Kufr, Shirk and sin. And this is such a great blessing which cannot even be imagined. However, the prerequisites for its attainment are: Halal earnings and food, speaking the truth, sincerity of intention and effort, and thereafter one can observe the spectacle of Divine Grant!

My friend, one can write aplenty, but the object is not to increase the volume of the book, but to make you understand; and I think that, by the Grace of **Allah**^{-swt}, enough has been written for the purpose of understanding.

The Fifth Latifah, Akhfa

This is located in the centre of the chest where the sternum (breast bone) meets the stomach; that is, in the centre of the first four Lata'if. The lights and beneficence on this Latifah come from our Illustrious Master, Hazrat Muhammad^{-saws}. These descend from the fifth Heaven and are green in colour. Subhan **Allah!** How much can anyone ever calculate, as all the favours, blessings, knowledge, miracles received by all Prophets, from the first to the last, were received through the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, because he^{-saws} is the Prophet of the Prophets and is their Leader!

*The scattered pearls of Yousuf's beauty
Isa's breath and Musa's bright hand
In a lone necklace are strung together
Around You^{-saws} like a lustrous band*

Therefore the blessings received from the Holy Prophet^{-saws} cover all these excellences. However, every man has a specific natural potential and he progresses more in that line, but he does not remain deprived of the other virtues also.

The first and the most valuable point: All Prophets possess the same beliefs. They have the same singular belief in Divine Unity, Messengership, the Books, the Hereafter, the Angels, Accountability, and Heaven and Hell. So, an excellent reformation of the seeker's belief most certainly takes place. I spent twenty five years in the company of my Shaikh; Hazrat Ji^{-tua} not only possessed unbounded knowledge, but he was also a debater of high calibre. Debaters usually have an investigative and critical disposition, but Hazrat Ji^{-tua} never asked anyone who came to him about his tenets, or about his adherence to (*religious*) deeds or about his environment. He^{-tua} (*just*) gave his Lata'if Tawajjuh and instructed him to be regular. It is my personal observation that thereafter a quest would be born within him and he would embark on self-reformation. He would start fulfilling his religious obligations regularly and would even start offering Tahajjad; and walking out of clubs and dancing halls he would become part of a Masjid's congregation. These blessings are of the Tawajjuh and Prophetic lights of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}.

The Holy Prophet^{-saws} is the Leader and Messenger for the whole of mankind, for all times, and in all matters. The impression of his blessed footprints can be traced upon all worldly affairs and in every aspect of life, and they not only guide us but also facilitate our lives and guarantee us one hundred percent success. In addition, the success in Akhirah is granted as the reward for such worldly affairs. Therefore, a person gains great success in whichever department of life he may be associated

with, because he acquires the proficiency to do the job well and also does it with full sincerity. One thing more, he is not only granted acumen and wisdom but also due competence and capacity to do the job. Meaning that;

*This Garden of Life also enhances
The fruit basket you may carry
For you to pluck and relish
Its harvest, forever, endlessly*

Allah Kareem grants a seeker the proficiency and ability to work, and these people are the most successful in this world and the next.

It is impossible to enumerate the blessings of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and it is also impossible to count the grants of **Allah**^{-swt}, yet what is so amazing is that the claimants of these blessing have also been seen to go astray. The reason is that the attainment of all beneficence has been linked to sincerity, and this blessing has been left to the decision of one's heart.

He guides to Himself those who turn to Him. (Ash-Shura: 13)

It means that, **Allah** Kareem guides the one who seeks with the sincerity of heart. This sincerity is a wealth higher in greatness than a lofty mountain, yet more delicate than fine crystal; if pure, it develops the quest for truth, and **Allah** Kareem guides the person to those of His slaves where hearts are illuminated through attainment of Prophetic lights, and this Noor keeps on increasing. But man is human after all, and his own Nafs and Shaitan are also lying in wait. They had, until now, been working to keep him away from this blessing and to keep him engaged in worldly pleasures, but when man realises, changes his direction and is blessed with this wealth, they also modify their strategy. Now, they try to make him believe, 'You have turned very pious and have attained a high status; not only is your D'ua accepted, but every word that you utter also stands fulfilled'. The rest is made up by the fawning public's obsequious behaviour. They kiss his hands, bend to touch his knees and at the same time request his prayers, for which they shower him with money.

However, this is a very delicate matter and demands the acknowledgement of the Greatness of **Allah**^{-swt} only, and is based on the belief of self-negation. Now, when man wants to swing from self-negation to self-promotion due to the promptings from Shaitan, Nafs and the public, a hairline crack develops in this relationship which is loftier than the mountains yet more delicate than crystal, and then his path

sways towards the abyss of ignominy. May **Allah** Kareem preserve us from this! Ameen!

Therefore, its wealth and stock is conviction and sincerity, which according to me are two names of the same feeling. What happens when one receives this wealth? This can only be felt but cannot be verbalised nor inscribed. Anyone with a longing can try it for himself. But one thing can be categorically stated without any fear of contradiction, that the seeker who has all five Lata'if illuminated, achieves success in all affairs of this world and the next. This is the greatness of **Allah's** Messenger^{-saws}, the reflection of whose blessings convert base metal into pure gold.

Just reflect on the blessed life of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. Orphaned in early childhood, he^{-saws} remained without parental or apparent material support, then in adolescence the death of his^{-saws} grandfather Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, he^{-saws} then came under the guardianship of his^{-saws} uncle Abu Talib, who was himself in such straitened circumstances that the Holy Prophet^{-saws} herded sheep and gave the income to him. Upon his^{-saws} marriage to Hazrat Khadija-tul Kubra^{-rau}, for sharing his uncle's burden, he^{-saws} asked his uncle to give him one of his sons, to bring up. Then, on the proclamation of his^{-saws} Prophethood, equipped solely with Divine Help, he^{-saws} stood firm against the unbelief, polytheism, oppression and tyranny existing in the whole world; and finally, his^{-saws} Migration. The Quran states,

The Messenger's duty is only to preach the clear Message. (Al-Noor: 54)

But as the Message began to find acceptance, he^{-saws} gave people further guidance. Finally, when the need arose for a free piece of land and an independent state for the multitude ennobled by Islam, he^{-saws} migrated to Madinah Munawwarah. Leaving behind their homes, friends, relatives, property and wealth, the Migrants sacrificed everything and went to settle in Madinah Munawwarah, and a free and new state was founded. The ten years of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}'s life in Madinah Munawwarah entailed constant and on-going endeavour, commensurate only with the greatness of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, for in these ten years, the number of just the Ghazwaat and Sarayah totalled over eighty. Then came all the affairs of the State: formulating and implementing laws and procedures that should occupy the status of the final reference and authority not just for this small state, but for all humans inhabiting the earth until the Day of Qiyamah. Then the entire Arabian Peninsula being absorbed into the Islamic State and taking head-on the forces of Caesar and Persia, and the implementation of a system of justice and equality against all systems of tyranny and injustice prevalent throughout the world.

This effort and endeavour cannot be comprehended by a Peer who lives off his devotees, neither by a politician; for how will he change the present system, when he cannot even adopt an Islamic appearance for the fear of non-Muslims?

The Holy Prophet^{-saws} committed this duty into the charge of those self-sacrificing devotees, whom he^{-saws} had personally prepared, and in just a quarter century they not only spread the Message of Truth throughout the world, but also established an Islamic republic that stretched from Spain to West India and China and from Russia to Africa, and was a shining example of the Islamic system of governance. Sall **Allah**-o Alaihi Wa Sallam!

When this Latifah is illuminated, the seeker no longer depends upon any worldly support; he keeps striving constantly, day and night, for the practical interpretation and implementation of the Deen and assumes a revolutionary personality. Not only does he follow the Deen himself, but also a great multitude receive blessings through him and are inspired to follow the religion practically.

Such is the Bounty of Allah, which He bestows on whom He wills. (Al-Jum‘ah: 4)

The grant of these five Lata’if is a great Divine Favour and a blessing beyond expectation. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to tell us, ‘I was called to Laiti village to arbitrate on an issue of Nikah. To get the version of the woman concerned, it was necessary to speak to her in private, so I asked them to send an elderly and pious person with me so I may get to know the facts in his presence. They made Qazi Sahib to sit by me. The matter was discussed and the verdict given. When I departed from there, Qazi Sahib accompanied me to the Bus terminal. On the way he told me, ‘Hazrat I do **Allah Allah** (*Zikr*), Hazrat Sahib of Dandah Shah Bilawal^{-rua}, who is from the progeny of Hazrat Shah Bilawal^{-rua}, started teaching me Lata’if. He would teach a Latifah in approximately two years. So I took ten years to complete my five Lata’if, and al-Hamdo Lillah, all my five Lata’if are illuminated and I am continuing my effort on them. The issue is that I reside on my lands outside the village, but whenever I visit the village and view it from the high ground, it appears that the village is inhabited by beasts, snakes and pythons.’

Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say ‘I understood that this was the ‘Maraqbah Rooyat-e Ashkal’ - (the Meditation in which the Rooh is seen in its real form) which is taught only formally, but his Lata’if were so luminous that occasionally he could get a glimpse of it.’

A human being keeps sinning to such an extent that the Rooh gets disfigured into the form of a beast. If some Iman (faith) is retained, it looks like a Halal animal, but if by continuous sin the Iman is also lost, then it assumes the form of a harmful animal

and beast. Usually, it is disfigured into the form of a beast that has similar habits. Outwardly, he remains a human being but his conduct becomes beastly.

Hazrat Ji^{-rua} would say, ‘When I explained the matter to him (and found the student exceptionally diligent), Qazi Sahib said, ‘My Hazrat has passed away and he used to tell me that there were seven Lata’if. If only there was a Man of **Allah** who could teach me the seven Lata’if.’ Hazrat Ji^{-rua} replied, ‘Qazi Sahib, what if I become that man for you?’

Hazrat Ji^{-rua} was highly famed as a religious scholar, a legist and a debater. Whither a debater and whence Tasawwuf! So Qazi Sahib was greatly surprised, but he immediately caught hold of his mantle. The (*spiritual*) stations of Qazi Sahib’s Shaikh were at Salik-ul Majzoobi, beyond Fana Baqa, which are very high stations, but through the Spring of Beneficence that Qazi Ji^{-rua} became associated with, by **Allah**^{-swt}’s Grace, (*he attained to*) Fana Baqa, Salik-ul Majzoobi, the ‘Arsh, the nine ‘Arsh and beyond, covering many Circles of ‘Aalam-e Amr, he had reached very high stations at the time of his passing away, which are attained by a counted few in centuries.

The students of today shouldn’t think that although all their Lata’if have been illumined in just one sitting, they are not similarly blessed (*as Qazi Sahib^{-rua}*). It is stated that these states depend on effort; firstly Halal food, secondly speaking the truth, thirdly constant Zikr. Let someone try and he will see for himself. We do not spare even 24 minutes for Zikr out of (*our*) 24 hours, what Kaifiyaat (spiritual states) can we achieve? Yes, it is a matter of thanks that at least our Belief remains sound and our Faith remains solid. However, effort must be made for it, because the time we are expending only to gain the world, is also the time to gain the Hereafter. May **Allah** Kareem make it easy for us! Ameen!

The miracles of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} cannot be enumerated nor can be his^{-saws} blessings! But the point that I would like to emphasise is that there is only one sentiment likeable and laudable with **Allah** Kareem and that is love. Ordinarily, love is a very common word and is much overused, but in reality this emotion is very scarce. People give the name ‘love’ to the relationships they forge for their personal interest, for example, parents love their children but if the children fail to provide for their parents then this ‘love’ vanishes. Now, if this be the state of love between parents and their children then it is useless to discuss other forms of love. Yes, if there exists really some spark of love, then the lover thinks not of himself but only of his beloved, and ever remains desirous of the beloved’s pleasure under all conditions. ‘The lover becomes the slave of the beloved’, and sacrifices his hopes

and desires at the altar of his beloved's approval. Although Faith and submission are sufficient for attaining salvation, but for attaining Divine Nearness love is the necessary requirement; and again, submission is the only way leading to it.

If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you. (Aal-e Imran: 31). This statement from the Quran is enough to assert that sincere obedience to the Holy Prophet^{-saws} develops the love for Allah^{-swt}.

Love is a feeling, and feelings are born by seeing, hearing and knowing. But Allah^{-swt} is beyond the horizon of a man's knowledge, so when human knowledge (*perception*) cannot reach (*encompass*) Him, how can He^{-swt} be loved? The answer was supplied by the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, he stated: 'Follow me, then Allah^{-swt} will start loving you, and in answer to His love, your heart too will brim over with love for Him, and this is the objective.'

Those of Faith are overflowing in their love for Allah. (Al Baqarah: 165).

That is, a believer loves Allah^{-swt} with boundless intensity'. This is one way. The other way is a heart-felt love for the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, which is born through an association or a relationship. A relationship with the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, based purely on sincerity of heart, not tainted by any personal desire, arouses a storm of love. Man is human after all and possesses a heart; but a pillar of Masjid-e Nabvi, against which the Holy Prophet^{-saws} used to lean during his Khutbah (address, sermon): its relationship with the Holy Prophet^{-saws} was confined solely to being in contact with the blessed body, yet that contact filled the piece of wood with such intense love that when a pulpit was constructed for the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and he^{-saws} sat over it (*for delivering his Khutbah*), the pillar could not bear the separation of only a few feet and started crying loudly.

*Oh, the wailing of Hananah
On separation from the Messenger^{-saws}
A dry wooden pillar's sobbing grief
Like the lamentation of perceptive men*

The wooden pillar, called Hananah, on separation from the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, wept loudly as if it were alive! The Holy Prophet^{-saws} went up to it and comforted it, caressing it with his hand to console it. The Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} (the Companions) state that the pillar did not quieten down instantly, but rather like a crying child, kept up with sobs and sighs before finally quietening down. It was only a piece of dried wood and ever remained as wood, but became overwhelmed by the emotion of love. Whereas man is an accountable creature and possesses the capacity of emotion, if he

The Fifth Latifah Akhfa

were to become truly associated with this Holy Mantle, how intense would his love be?

The seeker gets a share of all these blessings on the Fifth Latifah, the only condition is that the Shaikh should be accomplished who can give Tawajjuh, and the seeker accepts the Tawajjuh with a pure and sincere heart. He then becomes a symbol of unshakeable belief, continuous endeavour, and love that can conquer the world. And this is a great favour of **Allah**^{-swt}.

The Sixth Latifah, Nafs

This Latifah is located in the forehead that is placed on the ground when performing Sajdah (prostration). The human body has been created from clay, fire, water and air. Nafs comes into being out of these four elements. Since it is created through the combination of material elements, therefore, it is basically inclined towards material pleasures. However, if one is blessed with Faith, his Rooh becomes alive, and as the Rooh grows stronger, the condition of the Nafs also undergoes a corresponding change. (*Good*) Deeds are necessary for (*maintaining*) Iman (Faith), and sincerity and obedience to the Holy Prophet^{-saws} are necessary for (*acceptance of*) deeds. This strengthens Iman, and as Iman continues to become stronger, the condition of the Nafs also improves. The Quran has mentioned its three degrees:

First: Nafs-e Ammarah. It is indifferent to the concept of Deen and Iman, goodness and sin and remains lost in worldly pleasures. Without caring about the legal or illegal (permitted and prohibited) aspects, it sets up the attainment of pleasure and wealth as its sole objective. This usually happens while in a state of Kufr.

Second: Nafs-e Lawwamah. When blessed with Faith, one also receives the ability to distinguish between good and bad, and the Nafs tries to do good but due to its intrinsic nature it also indulges in evil, but after doing wrong it realises the mistake and reproaches itself and repents.

Now, it could be argued here that some Kuffaar also do good deeds, like constructing hospitals or water reservoirs or helping people, but here it is important to remember that they neither believe in Allah^{-swt} nor in the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and nor in the Hereafter. So the object of whatever apparent good they do, is to acquire the world (*worldly benefits*), whether it be wealth or fame. Sometimes they believe that their good acts will repel some worldly affliction. Thus they do not deliberately do good per se because their Nafs is Ammarah. However, if a person possesses Faith, and is not a Muslim simply for demographic purposes, he can certainly distinguish between right and wrong. He considers the doing of good as obeying the Command of Allah^{-swt} and the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and for (*his future benefit in*) the Hereafter. If he falters, he reproaches (*scolds*) himself and regrets his action. This regret is called Taubah (Repentance), which prevents him from further evil.

Third: Nafs-e Mutma'innah. Faith, obedience and adherence inculcate sincerity and the Nafs advances to become Nafs-e Mutma'innah, meaning that a man feels afraid of sinning and inclines more and more towards doing good. His worship and recitation (*of the Holy Quran*) increase, and with great enthusiasm and zeal he conducts his affairs in practical life. He not only does good himself, but because of

him, thousands of lost and wayward people find guidance, they repent and turn towards righteousness. And that is the (*real*) purpose of life.

There is a misconception that the Aulia **Allah** renounce the world, live in seclusion in jungles and do no work at all. This is incorrect. Actually, having noticed some very special and highly elevated Aulia **Allah** surrounded by the multitude, the rulers of the day banished them from cities and prohibited all meetings with them. Some very great names like Bayazid Bustami^{-rua} are also included in these. But people started considering every useless lunatic as a Wali **Allah**, otherwise the amount of work the Aulia and Sufis do in their lifetime cannot be achieved by others, as blessings pervade their courage and work potential and these blessings emanate from the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and are reflected down through the breasts of the Sahabah^{-rau}, the Taba'een, the Tab'a Taba'een and arrive at the Masha'ikh, from where they reach the hearts of the sincere seekers of truth.

Divine Lights descend on this Latifah, which sometimes illuminate both worlds and sometimes nothing can be perceived. It is impossible to describe, verbalise, or pen their character (*essence*) and associated feelings. These can be perceived by only those who have been granted this blessing. Yes, their effect in practical life is that disobedience starts tasting bitter, and if due to human nature, some mistake is made the regret is enormous; and righteousness becomes the desired goal. Owing to a great Divine Favour, man is not a slave of his habits like animals, but possesses the ability to effect changes in his habits and character according to the likes and dislikes of his Qalb. When his Qalb receives Divine Lights and is acquainted with the everlasting pleasure of Divine Nearness, then his personal preferences become subservient to the preferences of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and this change in personal preferences initiates a very beautiful transformation in his character and habits. Although he does not become an angel, for he is after all only a human being, nor becomes innocent (*free*) from making any mistakes, because innocence is the attributes of Prophets only; yet, these blessings protect him from making mistakes as he is granted Divine Protection from sin, and he is constantly turning to **Allah**^{-swt} and remains concerned about the betterment of his Akhirah. Thus he is blessed with success in this world and the next, and this is a very great favour of **Allah** Kareem. Keep in mind that all knowledge granted to man, whether pertaining to this world or to the Hereafter has been received through the Prophets^{-as}. Therefore, the beneficence bestows not only the aptitude for knowledge, but its treasure troves are also laid open for him. In fact, success in the Hereafter is related to Iman and fulfilling all worldly affairs in accordance with the Sunnah of Holy Prophet^{-saws} and in the manner advised by him, and the Nafs-e Lawwamah proceeds in this direction,

and if by Divine Grace it acquires the status of Nafs-e Mutma'innah, then Subhan **Allah**, (*his lives in*) both worlds are ameliorated. Fortunate indeed are such people, in this world as well as in the next. May **Allah** Kareem Grant this wealth to all Muslims! Ameen! It is a strange concept: it is believed that the Aulia **Allah** are some 'different' type of human beings. According to the Book of **Allah** every believer possesses a degree of Wilayah, and so basically, every believer is a Wali **Allah**.

Allah is the Friend of the Believers. (Al Baqarah: 257). **Allah** is the Wali of every believer.

Now, effort and righteousness polish this Wilayah even more. Some people achieve such greatness that they become the means of illuminating thousands of other souls. Without doubt, their status is very great; however, basically every believer does receive a part of this wealth. Then some unfortunate ones lose it by their bad deeds, but remember that when this virtue is lost then Iman does not remain safe either, and such people join some erring sect and lose their Faith. May **Allah**^{-swt} keep us under His Protection from such situation! Ameen! Since this Latifah receives Refulgence from **Allah** Kareem, neither their colour nor their state (*condition*) can be determined. It is but a Noor (Light) that sometimes illuminates everything and every side, while sometimes nothing is perceived at all; yes, the light and warmth can surely be felt.

*The shining light of guidance
Also the heat of activity
The vigour and the dynamism
With men true, you will ever see
But, the mean, the lowly, the inactive
Will coin excuses, shamelessly*

Meaning, if the Shaikh is real and accomplished, then one receives light and warmth, but if the Shaikh is not accomplished, then there will be no feelings: all he will do is fob off with shameless excuses.

The Seventh Latifah, Sultan al-Azkaar

In this the entire body becomes Zakir. This Latifah also receives direct Divine Lights, which are colourless and their condition cannot be determined. The seeker can feel (*spiritually perceive*) them, but these cannot be described, as the feelings are indescribable. Yes one thing is certain, that every particle of the body becomes saturated with light and becomes Zakir. According to modern science the human body is made up of ten trillion cells, as though a world millions times greater than this world exists within a human body, and the life span of each cell is not more than six months. Each cell reproduces its exact replica and dies. Therefore, a human being sheds his dead cells everywhere; in his clothes, the bed he sleeps in, the places that he visits, the routes that he takes, and in six months his entire body is renewed. This cycle continues till his death, and there are millions of deaths and millions of rebirths within him during a twenty-four hour span. If there is any deformity in any of the new cells it is automatically corrected by an impulse from the brain. The scientist states that each cell contains a 'book' (*DNA*) within it which details every information pertaining to the individual, even to the extent that, when his first hair will grey or when his tooth will decay. All this can be read. Subhan **Allah**, behold the Power of the All Powerful, the Eternal! He^{-swt} has indeed stated the Truth:

We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein. (Qaf: 16).

Even the jugular vein is composed of cells, and the Omnipotent, Who is giving life and death to millions of cells in every individual at every instant, that Being is much closer to him than his jugular vein!

Therefore, when Zikr is done on this Latifah, every cell of the body becomes Zakir, and when such a person says '**Allah**' once, every cell of his body chants '**Allah**' with him, in this way a beam of Noor gets attached to each cell. Imagine! No matter how fine they may be, but ten trillion strands of Noor or ten thousand billion strands light up between the human body and the Divine Arsh (Throne). Perhaps it is such people who are being referred to in the Book of **Allah**^{-swt}:

Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands. (At Tahreem: 8)

That: when they walk towards the Siraat Bridge, they will be surrounded by light from all sides. At that time, those bereft of the blessing will beg for some of their light but they will reply, 'It cannot be procured here, because there is no such store here. Yes, if you can, then go back to the world as it could only be obtained from there.' But alas, the world would have been destroyed by then and they would not be

able to receive anything except bitter regrets. Fortunate indeed are those who find someone in this world who can illuminate their Lata'if. This is a very great Divine Favour!

So in this manner, with the Seventh Latifah - Sultan al-Azkaar, the entire being, every particle of the body becomes Zakir and emits the chant of **Allah Allah**. This has a tremendous influence on one's practical life.

Firstly. It strongly reinforces one's faith and belief.

Secondly. The work potential is greatly enhanced, and such a person is able to do the work that cannot be accomplished by many people working together.

In addition, comprehension is refined and work proficiency is also endowed. By Divine Grace, one is granted the strength to keep away from disobedience of **Allah**^{-swt}, and if by chance a mistake is made the Lights diminish, and that directs one towards repentance. The matter is redressed by more effort and the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh.

The Tawajjuh of the Shaikh is, in reality, a reflection of the Prophetic Lights and can accomplish so much, which cannot perhaps be achieved by centuries of individual effort.

In this manner, these seven Lata'if become an immense treasure trove. Previously the Masha'ikh would make the seeker work on them for over fourteen years. It was Hazrat Ji^{-rua}, who made it easy, that in one Tawajjuh he would illumine all seven Lata'if, and that is truly amazing. However, one thing must be remembered, that the importance of effort and endeavour remains established as ever, because nothing can be achieved without due effort. Those fortunate ones, who realize its value, utilize their whole effort with full sincerity (*to achieve it*). These Azkaar (plural of Zikr) cause to develop sound beliefs and righteous conduct. And this is the objective that, the belief be corrected and the conduct be reformed. It is indeed a very great Favour from **Allah**^{-swt}.

The Method of Zikr

The Method of Zikr Silsilah Naqshbandiah Owaisiah

This sequence of the Lata'if has been described, as endorsed by the Silsilah Naqshbandiah Owaisiah, as there is difference in the number of Lata'if in other Salasil (plural of Silsilah) and even the location of the Lata'if can also vary. This is nothing strange; it's a matter of one's personal preference. Besides, there is no difference of opinion anywhere, regarding the five basic Lata'if, while the remaining are, in any case, their explanation and interpretation, as such there is no harm in minor differences. However, at this point, it is intended to explain the method of Zikr.

The acceptance of Islam (Belief) is an act in itself, and since it is connected with the remembrance of **Allah**^{-swt}, therefore it also is Zikr. The majority of the Doctors of Fiqh declare the (*doing of good*) deeds as (*an expression of*) Iman. In the Holy Quran too, every mention of Iman is invariably followed by the reference to 'righteous deeds'. Therefore, the majority of the Doctors of Fiqh opine that the Iman of a non-adherent is doubtful. For example, the funeral prayer of a person who forsakes Salah should not be offered or he should not be buried in a Muslim graveyard. Initially, he should be imprisoned and if even after motivation and advice, he does not offer Salah, he should then be beheaded. However, Imam Abu Hanifah^{-rua} opines that he should be imprisoned but not killed, because taking the Shahadah and the accepting of Faith is also a righteous act. Yes, if he dies without offering Salah then, without doubt, no funeral prayer be said over him nor should he be buried in a Muslim graveyard.

Therefore, this acceptance of Iman is also Zikr. Moreover, every such act that accords with the Quran and the Sunnah is Zikr in practice, indeed you may term it as 'Practical Zikr'. Then, there is Zikr-e Lisani or Oral Zikr. This includes every virtuous sentence or word uttered by the tongue. Further, Recitations and Tasbihaat (glorifications) etc. are all included in Zikr **Allah**, and although they are a source of reward, yet they cannot develop the warmth and evolution that is essential for the life of the Qalb. Therefore everyone has to eventually turn towards Zikr-e Qalbi. In many Salasil Zikr is often commenced audibly, first with 'La Ilaha Ill **Allah**', after a while the chant is reduced to 'Ill **Allah**', which then becomes '**Allah Allah**', but after sometime concentration is directed towards the Qalb and '**Allah Allah**' is repeated silently (*within it*); because, the sole objective is to revive the Qalb. But remember, its real cause is the blessings of the Holy Prophet, upon whom be Peace and Salutations. The Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} (the Companions) were granted and blessed with these through one look of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, yet despite receiving them in this manner, there is evidence of a Zikr Circle established by the Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} in the Masjid-e Nabvi. In fact, when this verse of the Holy Quran was

revealed: *And keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Rabb...* (Al Kahf: 28) and the Holy Prophet^{-saws} entered the Masjid, there were two groups of his Companions: one busy in Zikr and the other in discussing matters of Fiqh. He^{-saws} went and sat with those who were doing Zikr and said, ‘Thanks be to Allah^{-swt}, that He^{-swt} granted me the people He^{-swt} ordered me to remain with.’

Similarly, the Taba’een received the Prophetic Blessings through the company of the Sahabah^{-raa}, but they too made effort and performed Zikr. The Tab’a Taba’een received the blessings from the Taba’een. Thereafter, the ability or strength to receive the blessings through company alone diminished. That is why it became indispensable for the Masha’ikh to give Tawajjuh and for the seeker to do Zikr attentively and purify his Qalb to receive the beneficence. Just as other departments came into existence for the Tafseer (Commentary), Hadees and Fiqh (Law), similarly the department instituted for the transference of blessings was called Silsilah. Although, many Salasil have been mentioned, but it is not necessary to discuss the details here. What needs to be explained is that prolonged Zikr sessions were introduced for the concentration and focusing of attention, i.e. keeping the attention focussed at one point, because the seeker would receive the blessings only when (*he is*) fully attentive, however, (*the presence of*) an accomplished Shaikh is the basic requirement, as his Tawajjuh enables a Qalb to absorb the blessings. Therefore, the Salasil of Sulook came into being and the Commentators, the Compliers of the Hadees and the Promulgators of Fiqh all benefitted from them, as all of them were Zakireen with illuminated Quloob. Although often these lengthy methods of Zikr are found in many Salasil, but the Owaisiah Way is a separate Nisbat. Hazrat Owais Qarni^{-raa} is not one of the Masha’ikh of this Silsilah; only the method (transfer of beneficence) is the same that he had been blessed with, meaning that the Rooh can receive beneficence despite physical distances. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-raa} was the first possessor of this excellence and was blessed with spiritual connection all the time (*under all conditions*). For that reason, this Nisbat originates from him^{-raa}, and is the only Nisbat that is distributed through him^{-raa}.

All other Salasil commence from Hazrat Ali^{-raa}, as the Prophetic Blessings, having been received by all the Rightly Guided Caliphs^{-raa} were distributed onwards through Hazrat Ali^{-raa}, who was the last of the Four Caliphs. Although, this Nisbat (the Owaisiah Nisbat) was possessed by all the Righteous Caliphs, but its distribution begins through Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-raa}, and in this (Nisbat) physical presence (*before the Shaikh*) is not necessary; the Rooh can derive beneficence from the other Rooh. In all other Salasil, physical attendance before the Masha’ikh is mandatory and every Maraqbah or station can only be attained by receiving

Tawajjuh in their presence. However, in the Nisbat Owaisiah, once a connection with the Shaikh has been established and the flow of blessing commences, then the seeker keeps receiving spiritual blessings wherever he may be; of course, the blessings received during a direct audience carry their own special significance.

The method of Zikr in this Grand Silsilah is also special. The Pious Elders have described various methods of Zikr, which can be read in their books. One among them is called ‘Pas Anfas’, meaning to be aware of every breath, to guard each breath.

The Method: it is preferable that a person should be in Wuzu, in a peaceful environment free of noise, and should sit facing the Qiblah. He should close the eyes and mouth, and concentrating fully towards **Allah**^{-swt}, he should commence the Zikr by the Pas Anfas method. He should imagine that the word ‘**Allah**’ is going in with each inhaled breath and the word ‘Hoo’ comes out with every exhaled breath. Not only should Hoo be exhaled with the breath, but also it should strike the Qalb, that is the first Latifah. Initially it will be done with the Shaikh’s permission and under his Tawajjuh. As much as conveniently possible, it should be done at a quick pace and with vigour, and the Latifah will begin to illumine. Essentially it is the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh, which in reality are the Prophetic blessings, travelling from bosom to bosom and arriving at the Shaikh’s Qalb, which are saturating the seeker’s Qalb. The illumination of the Qalb is no ordinary achievement; it requires time as well as effort. As already stated, Religious Elders and Masha’ikh made a seeker work on it for over two years and then only was the effect manifested. Even if its effects are not observed through Kashf, they start manifesting themselves in daily practical life and the journey towards righteousness begins, as it is stated:

He brings them out of darkness into the Light. (Al Baqarah: 257)

Now a word about Kashf and Mushahidah. Firstly, Kashf belongs to the category of ‘fruits’ (*rewards*), and ‘fruits’ are Bestowals, which **Allah**^{-swt} grants according to His^{-swt} Will, and are not necessarily granted (*to all*). However, as they are considered a fruit of the effort, they certainly occupy the status of remunerations and rewards, therefore, as much reward (*as granted here in the form of Kashf*) will be deducted from the Reward in the Hereafter. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say that (*many*) great people blessed with Kashf, will exclaim with sorrow, on the Day of Resurrection that had they not been granted Kashf in the world, they would have received (*greater*) reward on that Day. In any case, if it is granted, it is a Grace from **Allah**^{-swt}. Yes, it is the effects that should be produced in practical life which are necessary and sought after. A brief account of the attributes of Hazrat Adam^{-as} has already been given;

these qualities should enter into the practical code of a seeker in accordance with his condition, intellect, ability, and effort. The seeker must reflect upon and review his accomplishment, as this will give him the capacity to turn to **Allah**^{-swt}, repentance, forbearance and endeavour. He should spend as much time as he can on this Latifah and then move on to the next Latifah. This division of time depends on the total time he wants to devote to the Lata'if and so how much time will he give to each Latifah. It is a Grace granted by **Allah**^{-swt}. When I was learning the Lata'if, I would devote hours for this (lesson). During winters, I completed the seven Lata'if usually from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. The Maghrib Zikr was in addition, and it is all a question of Divine Grace. If He^{-swt} shows Kindness, then maximum possible time should be devoted.

Breathing should continue in the same manner on the Second Latifah. The word '**Allah**' should reach the depths of Qalb and the Hoo should strike the Second Latifah, and likewise the inhaling and exhaling of the breath and its guard should be maintained. If Lights can be observed, it is fine, but not necessarily. However, it is essential to preserve the blessings received out of the blessings mentioned with reference to this Latifah and also to keep a watch on one's practical life. Blessings on this Latifah emanate from Hazrat Nooh^{-as} and Hazrat Ibraheem^{-as}, and the manifestation of their effects in one's character is a Divine Favour. The effects cannot be the same for every individual. Everyone has his own temperament, depth of Faith and Belief, and a different standard of relationship and connection with **Allah**^{-swt}. For this reason, there may be a variance in the effects but it is not possible that there are no results, whatsoever.

Likewise, move the Tawajjuh on to the third Latifah, without a break in breathing. '**Allah**' should enter deep in the Qalb and the word Hoo should strike the third Latifah as the breath comes out. As stated earlier, beneficence of Hazrat Musa^{-as} descend on it. The Lights are white in colour and the effect of Prophet Musa's^{-as} blessings, received in accordance with **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace and one's own effort and capacity, is manifested in character and conduct. The fact is that it requires great effort. No doubt the Shaikh's Tawajjuh is its foundation, however, the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh is like the sun's rays, which fall uniformly on the tree, on the ground, on the rock and on a mirror, but their results are varied and diverse. The effect is felt only if the heart is polished like a mirror. If the belief and conduct are sound, an accomplished Shaikh is accessible and the seeker is blessed with the capacity for hard work, only then can the immensity of these blessings be realised.

After the third, is the fourth Latifah. Continue (*doing*) Zikr, without any break in the breathing, only shift your attention to the fourth Latifah. '**Allah**' should enter deep into the Qalb and the 'Hoo' should strike the fourth Latifah. Here, the beneficence

from Hazrat Isa^{-as} is received, the Lights are of a dark blue colour and the effect of the lights and blessings is reflected in one's character and temperament. The eventual result of the whole endeavour and effort is reinforcement of the belief, reformation of character and moulding of one's whole life according to the Shari'ah; and it is necessary to keep a watch over it. These blessings facilitate the acquisition of knowledge as virtue becomes part of the character, so every righteous word is felt settling in the heart and interest is totally lost in unwarranted activities. It is a natural principle that a person likes to hear and also retains the discourse that suits his disposition. This retention affects his character and reforms it, which is the real objective.

The next Latifah is the Fifth- here the beneficence comes from the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. The colour is green and although the Hoo is struck on the Fifth Latifah, but it illuminates the other four Lata'if, as all Prophets^{-as} too receive beneficence through the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. He^{-saws} is the Prophet of the Prophets as well. Therefore, when the Fifth Latifah is illuminated, the entire breast is radiant and luminous and all the Lata'if acquire an amazing strength. Any weakness (*existing or remaining*) in the other four Lata'if is also removed. This Latifah requires to be worked upon very assiduously. Effort and endeavour are just mere words, in real fact it is the opportunity to gather the blessings, as many as can possibly be gathered, and to attain **Allah**^{-swt}'s Favours. This is the one Court where those with worn out mantles are granted new mantles, and where no one is ever prohibited from gathering as many blessings as he possibly can, because all the Prophets^{-as} received all the blessings and favours through the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. It means this is that Ocean of Grace, which is the source of every Spring of kindness and grace. Beyond doubt, all blessings, whether of this world or the next, are distributed here, at this Court. This world and the Akhirah cannot be separated, because the blessings of Akhirah are granted as rewards for the deed done in this world. Therefore, those people who do not measure up in the affairs of this world but think that their Hereafter is being ameliorated are under the greatest of misconceptions. What needs to be observed is whether due to Prophetic blessings, one's belief has been reformed and his conduct reflects the colour of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}'s Sunnah. If that is so, then it will be known that the Latifah is really being illuminated, as its rays are reflected in one's conduct. Furthermore, a state of such sureness is developed in Iman and Aqeedah (Belief and Faith) which cannot even be imagined without Zikr **Allah** and the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh.

Yes, a strange concept! The concept that there is no requirement of a Shaikh in the Owaisiah Nisbat, is a proof of one's utter ignorance of this Path. Someone posed this

question to Hazrat Sultan Bahu^{-rua} and he replied, ‘Those women who do not marry, cannot become mothers.’ Yes, in other Salasil, it is necessary (*for the seeker*) to present himself before the Shaikh for advancement to the next meditation, whereas in the Owaisiah Nisbat, it is the same during the initial stages, but after reaching a certain station, that is Salik ul-Majzoobi, he keeps deriving benefit from the Shaikh’s attention and keeps progressing to higher stations, wheresoever he may be in the world. Another special distinction of the Order is that a seeker is accorded the honour of Roohani Bai‘at (Spiritual Pledge) in the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}; however, it is only the Shaikh who can take him there. Some incompetent people read the books of our earlier scholars and wrongly assume that all this happens by itself and the amusing fact is that they express their ignorance openly and publically and do so even on television. This is ignorance in extreme. May **Allah** Kareem protect us from self-delusion and ignorance!

When this blessing arrives, it brings along an ocean of peace and satisfaction, the extent of which can only be assessed by a Sahib-e Haal (a seeker who can discern spiritual states), and it enhances the capacity of adherence to the Prophet’s Way. The heart-perceived feelings, events, and spiritual delight are bestowed in addition.

*Those who covet Caesar’s throne
Or Alexander’s kingdom and might
In tears of regret would soon drown
For considering these Blessings slight*

The next Latifah is the Sixth - Latifah-e Nafs. As already stated, its location is the forehead. The method of Zikr is as before, the word ‘**Allah**’ should descend into the depths of the Qalb with every breath inhaled, and the word ‘Hoo’ should come out with every exhaled breath, in the form of a flash from the forehead. The result of this is that Nafs-e Ammarah (*the Nafs that exhorts towards evil*) undergoes reformation and begins to transform into Nafs-e Lawwamah (*the Accusing Nafs*) and a positive change starts to take place. Remorse over mistakes and sin becomes an instrument for repentance, and inclination towards goodness the vehicle to act righteously. The more effort the seeker continues to make, the more he absorbs the spiritual attention, as the Shaikh’s Tawajjuh cascades down like the rays of the sun. The seeker’s effort polishes his Qalb like a mirror. This ability has been placed by **Allah** Kareem in every human being, provided that the person himself does not waste it. The criterion whether the seeker is accruing benefit is determined by the degree of his heart’s certitude; has the state of, ‘*It increases their Faith*’ (Al-Anfaal: 2) been achieved and is the faith getting stronger? This can be further assessed by the seeker’s conduct

and deeds and their underlying sincerity. It is, as if, everyone himself is his own judge.

There is one subtle point that is imperative to keep in mind: hopefully a notion of self-admiration is not beginning to develop, meaning: he has not started considering himself pious. **Allah** forbid, if this happens he should understand that instead of accruing benefit it is causing him great harm, because vanity and self-admiration are born only when the realisation of Divine Greatness begins to fade, and this is such great misfortune that it even blocks the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh.

A serious misunderstanding develops at the time, when such a person thinks he is spiritually progressing, while in actual fact, for being with the Shaikh, he is only 'seeing' himself high up in his (*Shaikh's*) lights. Such a person is recognized by the sign that he uses his virtue to acquire the world (*worldly benefits*) and asks people for worldly items and wealth. In such a situation, people should also understand that a person who is blessed with Divine Union or attendance at the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, would he be tempted by anything as worthless as this world? This is not possible! Yes, such a person himself is in danger and can also destroy us, therefore avoid him as much possible. However, if a person is industrious, earns his living as per the Shari'ah, illuminates his Lata'if, and is blessed with enhanced faith and a beautiful conduct, then that is something laudable!

Maulana Rumi^{-rua} says:

*If such a man you ever find,
Become as dust under his pace
Tying yourself with him forever
Like the ring of his shoelace*

And save yourself from the half-baked, self-designated Sufis.

*Never befriend a Sufi half,
Immature you shall also be
If, with the immature, you tarry:
Void of conduct wise, sagacious
Plucking unripe fruit from gardens bay
To never ripen once plucked
Even till the Qiyamah Day*

'These useless people pick unripe fruit, which can then never ripen'...meaning the company of such people leads to the loss of the total wealth of one's lifetime.

Therefore, remaining mindful of all these factors, the seeker keeps advancing towards his destination. As far as the Lights are concerned, Divine Refulgence descend on both the sixth and the seventh Lata'if, neither their colour nor their condition cannot be determined. At times like the flash of lightning it illuminates everything everywhere, and at times nothing can be discerned. But it has its own particular feeling, elation and heat, and results in the reformation of the Nafs, as this is the path that guides a Nafs to progress from Ammarah to Lawwamah to Mutma'innah. In reality, these things are sensations, and sensations can of course be felt, but cannot be confined or shackled by words. The essential result of the reformation of the Nafs is the improvement of deeds and conduct, and that too, can only be known to **Allah** Kareem or be assessed by the person himself. How can anyone else ascertain the intention or sincerity behind any act, even though it may be in accordance with the Shari'ah? May it be that instead of judging others, we would only look at ourselves and reckon how much we are obeying and with how much sincerity, or reflect on our daily mistakes and ponder over the ways to correct them, repent to **Allah** Kareem and ask for the capacity to do good.

The Seventh Latifah - Sultan al Azkaar. When breathing in, the word **Allah** is taken to the depths of the heart, but when the breath is taken out the 'Hoo' will come out from every hair and every particle of the body, making every cell of the body a Zakir. As **Allah**^{-swt} states in the Quran:

*Their skins and their hearts do soften to **Allah**'s Zikr. (Az-Zumar: 23)*

Meaning that from their skins to the depth of their heart every cell becomes a Zakir.

As stated earlier, the human body is composed of two and a half trillion cells, and every cell, when it becomes a Zakir, is illuminated by Divine Lights, and a very strong, deep-rooted, heartfelt relationship is established with **Allah** Kareem, which may not be possible without Zikr. It is only the greatness of the Prophets, who are specially created as Prophets, that each cell of theirs is a Zakir by creation. Before their deputation as Prophets, they enjoy a special Divine Nearness, which is called Wilayat-e Anbiya, which is a characteristic of Prophethood, and a very chosen few Ahl **Allah**, who have attained very high stations, have access here. But this does not become their personal station and their position is like that of a royal servant in a royal palace; they have the privilege of living there, but only as servants. The palace cannot become their home or station. Besides the Prophets, everyone else, that is their followers, receive this blessing through the Noor of their Prophet's Qalb. It is another matter that the Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} benefit directly, and then through the Taba'een, and likewise, this process continues for as long as that Ummah (*followers*)

remains. When a new Prophet arrives, this system gets connected with him. Finally, when the Holy Prophet^{-saws} was deputed (*as the Prophet*), his Prophethood was extended to cover the whole humanity for all times, and that completed the Message, meaning that with it the series of Prophethood was concluded. This is what is meant by Khatm-e Nabuvat (Conclusion of Prophethood), which is slightly misunderstood as: ‘probably Prophethood has ended’. This was neither a commodity nor an item on sale at a shop that has finished. No, what it means is that, Prophethood has been completed, leaving no requirement for (*the advent of*) a new Prophet. Therefore, till the end of the world all the blessings will continue to emanate from the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. Insha **Allah** al Azeez! These all are the blessings of his Prophethood, and as his Prophethood is eternal, therefore the blessings are also eternal.

Therefore if there is any deficiency in any of the Lata’if, it is made up on this Latifah and the seeker becomes fully attentive towards **Allah**^{-swt}, and each and every particle of his body is engaged in Zikr. The state of Divine Refulgence on this Latifah is similar to that on the Sixth Latifah, as the seventh Latifah is also showered by Divine Refulgence.

*Flashed for a moment
Veiled in the next*

Each and every body cell becomes a Zakir. Now, had it been spoken orally, by the tongue i.e. had it been Zikr-e Lisani, it would have chanted ‘**Allah**’ once, but an amazing accomplishment displayed by Zikr-e Qalbi, is that every moment ‘**Allah**’ is chanted for ten trillion times, because each and every cell of the body performs the Zikr. Subhan **Allah**! This blessing is a Divine Bestowal and is received through Prophetic beneficence; otherwise, even to contemplate it, is impossible.

The topic most written about in every book on Sulook, in prose as well as in poetry, deals with the Shaikh’s greatness and love for the Shaikh, recounting his great favours and stressing the importance of extreme respect and abounding love for him. The reason is understood when just by the Lata’if getting illuminated, all the body particles become Zakir and every cell is heard to chant ‘**Allah**’ ‘**Allah**’. Only then the realization dawns, with what love and kindness this person has given us this treasure, and then every fibre of the body prays for the Shaikh. Not everyone can become a Shaikh. How many children study but not all reach the highest ranks; in the same way many fortunate ones gain from Zikr-e Qalbi but not all become a Shaikh. Because firstly, to acquire this requires extreme effort and is dependent on the natural ability of the person, and the extent of his capability for absorbing the Prophetic Lights; it works only if he possesses enormous capacity. Secondly it is one

thing to receive them, but quite another to distribute them. This ability too is a Divine Bestowal, granted to whosoever He^{-swt} wills. If, alongwith both these attributes, the capacity to make effort is many times greater than that of the others, the depth of sincerity unfathomable and the belief unshakeable, then from among such persons are selected those who are granted the office of Shaikh. They are like a train engine that not only works for itself but become the means of taking countless others to their destination. Who then can assess the greatness of such people?

This was an important point, although it came up by the way. On this subject, one can study the book 'Tareeq-us Sulook fi Adaab-al Shuyookh', where the instructions of earlier scholars have been collected and put together.

When the Seventh Latifah becomes illuminated, the entire effort is concentrated back on the First Latifah, that is the Qalb, and after doing Zikr on it, for a while, with all the force that has been garnered up till now, one proceeds to the (*meditation*) Rabitah.

Maraqbaat

Rabitah

Rabitah (connection) is, in fact, from **Allah** Kareem. He^{-swt} confers it when He^{-swt} wills, on whom He^{-swt} wills. All that a slave can do is to focus his entire attention towards it. This is a very great blessing that one can receive from **Allah**^{-swt}. As it is stated in the Quran:

We gave strength to their hearts: Behold, they stood up and said, "Our Rabb is the Rabb of the heavens and of the earth". (Al Kahf: 14)

‘We connected with the hearts of the Dwellers of the Cave, when they said, ‘Our Rabb is He Who is the Rabb of the heavens and the earth.’ It was due to this Divine connection that they stood resolutely in their belief of Divine Unity, against the king and their community. Likewise, it is stated about the mother of Hazrat Musa^{-as}:

She was almost going to disclose his (case), had We not strengthened her heart so that she might remain a (firm) believer. (Al Qasas: 10)

Meaning that, had We not connected with the Qalb of Musa^{-as}’s mother to remain firm in her belief and faith, she would not have been able to maintain the secret after she had floated him in the river. Similarly, it is stated about the Sahabah Kubbaar^{-tau} (The Companions).

‘To strengthen your hearts, and to plant your feet firmly therewith’. (Al Anfaal: 11)

We connected with your hearts so you could fight steadfastly.

There are many such statements besides these, in the Quran. The quintessence of all is the same throughout; that a special relationship is established with **Allah** Kareem, which bestows steadfastness and strength of conviction which cannot be shaken by any power. Like the Dwellers of the Cave who did not give any consideration to the joint forces of the community and the ruler of their time; or as the mother of Hazrat Musa^{-as}, who found such conviction in her Ilham (intuition) that she floated her child in the river and kept it a secret. In other words, a certain tranquillity or calm descends.

Similarly, when the seeker brings the Tawajjuh and the Lights of all Lata’if onto his Qalb and concentrates towards **Allah**^{-swt}, he is blessed with Rabitah, and the Lights rise from the Qalb and reach the Arsh-e Azeem (the Divine Throne). The Zikr is also done in a way that the word **Allah** should enter the Qalb but on breathing out the word Hoo should strike the Arsh-e Azeem. In this manner, a very bright path of light is established between the Qalb of the seeker and the Arsh, which becomes the

means for the Rooh to travel to the Higher Realm. A lot of concentration and effort is devoted to it because it is the strength of the Rabitah that affords the Rooh the strength to fly. The actual abode of the Rooh is the Aalam-e Amr (the Realm of Command), which is above the nine Arsh; as such it returns towards its original (*home*). And this is the (*real*) success that it should rise above worldly pollution and safely reaching its actual abode it should advance towards Divine Union. Therefore, Rabitah is the first connection which is established with the Arsh-e Azeem, although, this too, is bestowed by **Allah**^{-swt}. Like it has been stated:

He loves them; they love Him. (Al Maida: 54)

That is, **Allah** Kareem loves them and they love **Allah** Kareem: How can a lowly slave possibly love **Allah**^{-swt}, unless the All Independent^{-swt} loves him first? However there is a certain etiquette to achieve this:

'Follow me: Allah will love you'. (Aal-e 'Imran: 31)

That is; if you follow me (the Holy Prophet^{-saws}), **Allah** will love you.

This (*verse*) underscores 'obedience' to the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, and as Zikr-e Qalbi is so greatly emphasised and highlighted at numerous instances, thereafter, when a person becomes attentive towards **Allah**^{-swt}, that is (*what is known as*) 'following' the Sunnah.

The Method is to let the breathing be restored to its normal pace, which previous to now is practiced quickly and vigorously on all the seven Lata'if, and after spending some time on the Qalb in order to concentrate all the heat, light, and beneficence there, one should concentrate towards **Allah**^{-swt}. Now with the breathing restored naturally, the word **Allah** should descend with every breath into the Qalb, whilst every outward breath should carry the word Hoo to strike the Arsh-e Azeem (the Divine Throne), these lights then grant a connection with **Allah** Kareem and a road, or call it a broad, strong and luminous Path, is formed from the Qalb to the Divine Throne, and thus a lowly earthling gets connected with the Divine Throne. After it grows strong, and the Lata'if are illuminated to provide it with power, the Maraqbah Ahadiyyat is conducted.

Maraqbah Ahadiyyat

What is the Maraqbah Ahadiyyat? It is the contemplation and reflection upon the following Ayah, and to benefit and gain from its feelings and Lights:

Your Ilaha is the only Ilaha. (Al Baqarah: 163)

In actual fact this is the gate to the Divine Throne. It could be termed as the first station on the Path or Sulook. The seeker finds his Rooh in front of him. Then, the Shaikh, guiding him with his Tawajjuh, conducts him to the station of Ahadiyyat. It is not possible at all to reach here by oneself as the distance from the earth to Ahadiyyat is very great, approximately 50,000 years, and that too in Rooh Years [the distance covered in one year by a Rooh, which has attained the ability to travel (*traverse*) such distances without the help or Tawajjuh of a Shaikh]. However much someone may try on his own; he will lose himself in the vastness of the path and never reach his destination. However, the Tawajjuh of the Shaikh becomes the means of instant access, and it is a special Divine Grace. Hazrat Ustad ul Mukarram^{-rua} used to say that if a Shaikh can take his student to Ahadiyyat, then it is absurd to await any greater Karamah from him, as this in itself, is a very great Karamah.

This is a white luminous station, a colossal building. The Rooh goes and stands at its entrance. Seen in front is the door built on high lofty columns and corridors. White radiant lights are to be seen everywhere and are especially noticeable coming from the front. If one is blessed with Mushahidah and enters the building, after going a little further the corridor turns to the right, and a huge stadium of sorts is seen, which is packed with people, the elderly far outnumber the young. All these are Arwah (plural of Rooh) of the blessed people who died while they were at the station of Ahadiyyat. Their lessons were up to this station when they left the world and their Rooh was stationed here. Turning right from here then further ahead on the right, is a very beautiful and decorated room. Entering this, one finds there seated the Shaikh of the Time; whoever is the greatest Shaikh of that time, is seated here in resplendent glory. This too is an amazing Divine phenomenon that a Shaikh can be seen simultaneously at many places. Ustad ul Mukarram^{-rua} used to say that this is known as 'T'adad-e Amsaal', meaning that a figure is seen simultaneously at several places. It is as if a room is lined with mirrors and a person entering it will be reflected in every mirror. This Path is common to all Salasil, and although the methods of Zikr may vary, but the destination of all is the same. If one is blessed with a real Nisbat of a Silsilah and is not lost in the quagmire of rituals, then these are the stations, and people (*students*) from all Salasil arrive first at Ahadiyyat, and

if they are blessed with Mushahidah, they find there the Shaikh of the Time; who may belong to any Silsilah, but is the personality who possesses the highest of Stations and degrees of Divine Union, during his time. However, the real marvel and the fruit of all these endeavours is the adherence to the Shari'ah and the depth of its sincerity. Once someone came and stayed with Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani^{-rua}, and after staying for three months in the Khanqah asked for permission to depart. Hazrat asked him, 'You came and stayed here for so long, but never disclosed the reason of your coming and now you want to leave.' He answered, 'I came with the intent of learning Sulook and kept waiting for some Karamah (*marvel*). However during my three months stay, I did not witness any Karamah. So, I did not disclose the reason of my coming, and now duly disappointed I ask leave to depart.' Hazrat Alif Sani^{-rau} said, 'Three months is a long time. While you lived at this Khanqah (Sufi School) did you witness any act that was against the Shari'ah?' He replied, 'I am an Alim and I know the Shari'ah. No, I did not observe anything against it, here.' Hazrat replied, 'What can be a greater marvel than the fact that a person's practical life complies with the Shari'ah?' The person realized his mistake, asked forgiveness and started learning Sulook.

The outcome of this Maraqbah is the strengthening of one's belief in Divine Unity to such a high degree that his practical conduct reflects his obedience to **Allah**^{-swt} in all his actions and all his hopes are severed from others and reposed in the Divine Being alone. A man's conduct revolves around his hopes; he obeys others either in the hope of some gain or for fear of some loss; but when he reposes all his hopes in **Allah** the One, without any partner; then his total obedience gets reserved solely for **Allah**^{-swt}, and these are (*the effects of*) the Prophetic blessings, because when a Prophet educates someone, his teachings do not comprise mere words or theory, but similar feelings also transmitted by the Prophet's Qalb, motivate the person to undertake that effort. The perfect compliance evidenced in the Companions^{-rau} was a result of these very Prophetic blessings.

The Masha'ikh, in succession, are the custodians of these blessings which are transmitted from bosom to bosom, and the same blessings are distributed among the seekers; this is the real objective of the Peeri Mureedi institution. Although it is correct to make Bai'at for Reformation with someone who is cognizant (*knowledgeable*) about everyday matters so that one could model one's life according to the Shari'ah under his guidance, but if one is seeking the states (*feelings*) of the Qalb and (*the realization*) of Divine Presence, then it is necessary that the Shaikh should possess the ability to conduct the student to Fana fir Rasool^{-saws}. Therefore, this Maraqbah makes **Allah**^{-swt}, the focus of all his hopes and

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desires. A strong feeling of love develops and wonderful changes occur in one's practical life, as the real objective is to follow the Holy Prophet^{-saws} with utmost sincerity.

The Tasbeeh of this Maraqbah has probably been penned in Ramooz-e Dil; in any case, its essence is this Ayah, which has been explained here.

The seeker is initiated in a way that he recites: Fa IzUllah Munazzah, bay Choon-o Chagoon

Wa Ilah-o kum Ilahun Wahid (Al Baqarah: 123)

Wahdahu la Shareeka laka Ya **Allah**.

Therefore, standing at the Maqam-e Ahadiyyat (Station of Ahadiyyat) the Rooh keeps repeating this Tasbeeh. It is alright if it is repeated by the tongue, but the Rooh must keep up the repetition. After the Lata'if, a lot of time should be expended on the Maraqbaat, and these should not be taken lightly. In fact one should take time from one's daily routine to devote to Zikr and Maraqbaat, so that they become firmly established, and their results become apparent in one's everyday conduct. This is the desired purpose of life - the adherence to the Holy Prophet^{-saws} with heart-felt sincerity, and this is exactly what is known as the 'depth of sincerity'.

Maraqbah M'aiyyat

This is the second Maraqbah which is in accordance with the following blessed Ayah:

Wa Hova M'akum ainama Kuntum. (Al Hadeed: 4)

That: Wherever and in whatever condition you are, **Allah**^{-swt} is with you.

When the Maraqbah Ahadiyyat becomes strong and established, the seeker is advanced further, and saying 'Allah Hoo', the Rooh rises and reaches the Station of M'aiyyat. This station is similar to Ahadiyyat only that there is a slight variation in its columns and design. The colour of the Lights here is green, and the entire building is also green coloured. It is in fact structured by Lights and is not a conventional building of bricks and cement. It is the lights that assume various forms. The whole layout is the same, similar corridors, open space, the apartment of the Shaikh of the Time, a multitude of fortunate Arwah, the majority being elderly, who spent their lives attaining this station and found their abode here at their death. The connection of the Rooh with the grave or the place of burial notwithstanding, they usually reside here.

I have already stated about T'addad-e Amsaal. For better understanding, it can be compared to the innumerable rays of the sun that spread over the four corners of the globe, yet each ray is connected to the sun and vice versa. Nature accomplishes many tasks through each ray or sunbeam, which affects living beings, plant-life and minerals in its own specific way, but the strange fact is that neither the sun nor the rays are aware of the tasks that are being accomplished through them. Similarly, the Arwah of the Aulia transform into T'addad-e Amsaal' (several forms), but each form is related to its original and is one of its rays, through which the beneficence and blessings are carried. The Aulia may or may not be aware of this and it is not necessary that they should, unless of course, **Allah** Kareem Himself discloses something.

Here, another point should also be understood. Some modern scholars refute the Reward and Retribution in the Grave by stating that the retribution (*recompense*) is meted to a Jism-e Misali (a replicate body), not in the grave but in Sijjeen or somewhere else. This is incorrect. A replicate body simply does not exist. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to refute this (*concept*) sternly, saying, 'Subhan **Allah**, what a (*preposterous*) thing to state! A replicate body never came to the world, neither was it obliged (*ordered*) to follow the Shari'ah, nor did it commit any virtue or vice, and they designate it as the recipient of reward and retribution! This is absolutely wrong.

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Yes, the 'replications' of the Rooh however, are its rays or beams; hence the observation of Rooh in more than one place at the same time is called T'adad-e Amsaal, and this blessing is received by the seeker in the highest Circles of the Realm of Command, but not by everyone; only those who **Allah**^{-swt} wills, can see the Rooh at multiple places, simultaneously.

In any case, the seeker sees the Rooh standing at the grand gate of a majestic structure, which radiates beams of green lights from its walls, and also through the gate. The Tasbeeh here is:

Allah-o Haziree, **Allah**-o Naziree, **Allah**-o M'ae.

Wa Hova M'akum ainama Kuntum (Al Hadeed: 4).

He reads the complete Tasbeeh once and thereafter keeps repeating only the Ayah. The intensity of feelings increases on each repetition. The Rooh must keep repeating it, for which the seeker needs to remain attentive. It is desirable that the body (*tongue*) also keeps reciting it.

The effect this Maraqbah casts on one's life, conduct and character, is the sought-after goal of human life. It reinforces the realization that my **Allah**^{-swt}, the One I worship, my Master, my Cherisher is always with me, and that He^{-swt} is observing what I am doing and is also aware of what is in my heart. As this realization gains strength, the capacity for obedience and adherence to the Shari'ah enhances correspondingly, and one obeys with complete sincerity and devotion. Then all fear, other than that of **Allah**^{-swt}, is expelled and all hopes in Ghair **Allah** (anyone other than **Allah**) are severed. A person realizes that when **Allah** Kareem is the only Bestower, why should he become servile or sycophant to anyone, against His desire. The audacity to commit sin departs, as his hitherto hearsay belief that, **Allah**^{-swt} is present everywhere and aware of everything, is now augmented by his Mushahidah of the Lights of M'aiyyat (Companionship). If he doesn't observe the Lights, he can still feel them through intuition, which is surer than observation and becomes the cause of protecting him from wrong acts. If he falters due to ignorance, being a human after all, he is overwhelmed by remorse. This deep sense of remorse is repentance, rather true repentance, which reforms his conduct and also frees him from all superstitions. He no longer cares about the common misbelief of society that someone has cast a spell on him or used an amulet against his children, because such superstitions have no significance when **Allah**^{-swt} is with him. An amazing sense of tranquillity and peace descends. He tries his best to perform all his worldly affairs according to the Shari'ah, so they get blessed and also graded as worship. **Allah**^{-swt} protects him from senseless and useless speech and he weighs every word

before speaking. Thus his worldly life becomes serene, beautiful and enjoyable. He is never found to be bored like the majority who keep grumbling about their luck all the time and remain dissatisfied, although it is mostly the recompense of their own actions, which they don't realize. The seeker is freed from all that. By **Allah** Kareem's Grace his character is reformed and the results of his actions are also blessed. He lives in this world with such comfort and peace as if he is living in Paradise. Even hard dry bread tastes delicious because his whole life is otherwise blessed with peace. This is the one treasure that is hankered after by the rich and rulers, except of course those who, by **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace, follow the Shari'ah. Take a look at the West; every person is afflicted by an unknown fear and his life is a living hell. Hence, along with the feelings, heart's joy, peace and satisfaction blessed by this Maraqbah, one's practical life is also firmly moulded in adherence to the Holy Prophet^{-saw}'s Sunnah.

It must be remembered that the whole of Tasawwuf, all Sulook, is solely aimed at acquiring the ability to follow the Shari'ah with deep-rooted heart-felt sincerity. It is not a spectacle or show where one shuts his eyes and starts observing some lights or colours. Absolutely not! This is not some game of sorts; it is the game of life and is won only after losing everything. After one truly realizes one's nothingness and starts to discern the Greatness of **Allah**^{-swt} in accordance with his capacity, it is only then, that he is granted the blessed opportunity to take steps towards this Path. This is the boundless Divine Grace that is disbursed from the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. If only the critics and questioners expend the same effort trying to learn and understand it, they would not only find their answers, but also be blessed with Divine Mercy.

Maraqbah Aqrabiyyat

This is the Third Maraqbah; collectively, the three are known as the Maraqbaat-e Salasah, i.e. the first three Maraqbaat. This Maraqbah is done under the Ayah:

Nahno Aqrabo elaih-e min Hablil Wareed. (Qaf: 16)

It means that: 'We are closer to man than his jugular vein'.

It is obvious that the Creator who creates and eliminates each cell and grants life and death, is definitely nearer to man than his jugular vein, as the vein and the blood flowing through it are themselves composed of the same very cells. The Omnipotent, Who creates the cells and then forms them into blood, flesh and bones is definitely the Nearest of all, and He^{-swt} is creating each cell and eliminating each cell.

The Lights of this station are bright red; the gates and walls are red. Yes, the construction of verandas and arches is slightly different than that of Ahadiyyat and M'aiyyat. The seeker finds himself in front of a magnificent gate through which red light is being emitted, and it is exactly similar to what has already been mentioned. If he goes in, he will find that the corridor to the right takes him to a grand stadium where countless Arwah are honourably seated. These are those pious souls who passed away while they were at this station and they have access here while abiding in Barzakh. It must be kept in mind that only that Rooh receives the power of flight in Barzakh, which receives Prophetic blessings in the world and attains to spiritual stations; and is granted only as much power as it had attained during its worldly life. Otherwise all other pious and noble people, scholars and ascetics who have attained salvation or have gained any high status in Barzakh, have a specific place apportioned to them (*in Barzakh*), which is connected to the grave. Their Rooh can remain there; but apart from this it has no power to fly. The importance of Prophetic blessings can be realized from this, and also the greatness of the personalities known as Masha'ikh who acquire the Prophetic Lights and become the custodians of this treasure through a lifetime of endeavour, and then for Divine Pleasure, distribute them among others. The great Masha'ikh used to tell only a very few people about this treasure, although a large number of people visited them and were reformed, taught oral Zikr and given Wazaif (plural of Wazifah) to recite; but only a select few were taught Zikr-e Qalbi. The value of this treasure can also be ascertained by the fact that, they did not consider all and sundry competent enough to receive it. In our times, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori^{-rua} was a very great personality. According to my knowledge, he passed away in the higher stations of the 'Arsh and he was the Qutb-e Irshad of his time. There are four or, at times, three Qutb; so he was one of the four

or five most eminent personalities in the world, but after his death not a single person was found to be doing (*Zikr on*) the Lata'if. I have read his statement in their monthly journal, 'Khuddam ud Deen'. He wrote: 'I gained this treasure after investing 45 years of my life. If someone spends four years with me, I will conduct him to Fana Fir Rasool^{-saws}, take him spiritually to the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, but on the condition that he should leave his family with four years' worth of provisions and bring four years' of his personal expenses with him.'

Sometimes I reflect that the poor do not have the capacity for this, and when have the rich been the seekers of this treasure? Yes, Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani^{-rua} delivered this blessing to many Ulama but he had to suffer a lot of distress as well. Some of his unfortunate students went astray and, instead of repenting, even passed verdicts of Kufr against him - although, in the era of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} these spiritual blessings were not only distributed, they were rained upon! Every man, woman, old, young, scholar or unlettered, rich or poor, who looked at the Holy Prophet^{-saws} with Iman (Faith) or the Holy Prophet^{-saws}'s blessed glance fell on him, was elevated to the illustrious office of Companionship. Even if all the Wilayah of the world were to be collated, it would not attain to the status of even the dust of the footprints of the Companions. This Sunnah remained intact during the era of the Sahabah (Companions) and anyone who gained their company became a Tabi'i, and those who gained the company of the Taba'een were called Tab'a Taba'een. These three blessed periods are called 'Khair ul-Quroon', meaning the best period of all times. Thereafter, this blessing was lifted from this world. It was only granted to those personalities who after making great effort and receiving Tawajjuh, acquired the Lights from their predecessors and after illuminating their Lata'if, received the blessings of the Maraqbaat; and thus the Salasil of Tasawwuf came into being. The names of some very great men of **Allah** Kareem are included in these Salasil, all of whom were able to attain to Wilayah, which is a very great honour. During the earlier times, most of the Ulama also acquired it, and all of them whether they were scholars of Tafseer (Commentary), or Hadith or Fiqh (Law) were Sufis. Later, this blessing began to decrease.

Basically, these days, very few fortunate ones acquire (*proper*) knowledge, the majority claim themselves to be Maulvis (*religious scholars*) on the basis of memorising only a few speeches, and then instead of making the effort to acquire this wealth, they become intent on denying it altogether. May **Allah**^{-swt} protect us from this! Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlvi^{-rua} has written that once he had to go to the court of the King of the Jinns about some matter. He explained the issue, and an elderly Jinn was also present there who was so old that he could not lift up his drooping

eyelids. He lifted his eyelids with his fingers and looked at me and said, ‘Today, while listening to you I remembered that I was present when this issue was explained by the Holy Prophet^{-saws}’. Shah Sahib goes on to claim, ‘I am a Tabi‘i as I have seen a Sahabi (Companion) Jinn’. Two years ago, in connection with an issue related to Jinns, I found a very elderly Jinn, from the period of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, living in a habitation of Jinns in the mountainous regions of Kashmir. He was so old that he could hardly move and was resting on a stretcher or bed, and he was a Sahabi (Companion). I requested him to visit Dar ul Irfan. About six months later, he accepted my second request, and one evening his servants brought him to Dar ul Irfan on a stretcher. I, with his permission, got a dish of egg halva prepared for him. He drank two sips of tea from my cup and ate about six or seven spoons of halva; then after staying for a while, he left. I mixed the remaining halva from his plate with more halva and offered it to the many Ahbab. Now many months have passed since he died. There was another Sahabi Jinn, who I only heard about, but could not meet, and he too has left for his last abode. In my view there are no more Muslim Jinns from that era, still alive. Now, according to this principle, I am also a Tabi‘i, but remember that assimilation of the Qalbi feelings through company of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} is a human attribute alone. The Jinns do not have such capacity, and since they cannot attain them, the question of distributing to others does not arise. However, in any case there is certainly a ‘connection’ or relationship, which is granted to the slaves of **Allah**^{-swt}.

So, all these are the ways of attaining the blessings. In this Maraqbah, an amazing feeling of Divine Nearness is experienced. Feelings cannot be penned, they can only be felt; no words have been designed to describe them. How aptly it has been said by someone:

*I know full well that numbers and weights
To measure pain are never sought
Seemab, tis only on a whim that we too
Are carrying the load without a thought*

So these can only be felt and their effects are cast on one’s practical life. After the ‘Best of Times’ the Sunnah of freely distributing Qalbi feelings had been abandoned, but after 1400 years, Hazrat al ‘Allaam **Allah** Yar Khan^{-rua} was granted the distinction to revive this Sunnah once again. Whosoever came into his presence was blessed with Zikr-e Khaffi Qalbi, and people from all walks of life profited from it. Men, women, young, old, scholar, illiterate, everyone left his assembly with their breasts illuminated. In our villages, usually some poor man of the village is employed for supplying water and for cleaning the Masjid, and it is often seen that

these people themselves do not offer Salah, but even the server of Hazrat Ji^{-rua}'s Masjid had attained to Fana Fir Rasool^{-saws}! Such attainment, which requires years of hard effort, was also seen to have been achieved there within days! Although I took years for my Lata'if, but it was also observed that a person came, stayed for a week or so in attendance, and left attaining Lata'if, Maraqbaat, Fana Baqa, and even the station of Salik-ul Majzoobi.

Subhan Allah-e wa bi-Hamdi-hee. Subhan Allah il Azeem.

Zikr-e Qalbi bestows inner feelings, which influence one's practical life. All the body parts function under the direction of the brain, but the brain itself is controlled by the heart. If the heart is dark and murky, the brain thinks evil, commands evil and the body parts indulge in evil. But, if the heart is illuminated and has been blessed a connection with **Allah**^{-swt}, then it commands righteousness; the brain thinks of virtue and the body parts perform noble deeds. However, it is correct that every person has a different capacity and is affected accordingly - and the greater the effect the more positive the change. Yes, it is certain that, by the Grace of **Allah**^{-swt}, every Zakir undergoes a positive change which keeps progressing and its positive effects are reflected in his character.

It is also a fundamental fact that complete submission is just not possible unless there is firm belief in **Allah**^{-swt} and in His Attributes. The only way is the faith in the Messengership, and complete obedience and adherence to the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. These feelings and blessings establish a special relationship with the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, which is otherwise not possible (*to establish*), and therefore they occupy the position of a life-force for Faith and conviction. But, only those, blessed by Divine Grace can discern this.

The three Maraqbaat, Ahadiyyat, M'aiyyat and Aqrabiyyat, are called the Maraqbaat-e Salasah. It is the beginning of the stations of Sulook, and can be attained only if granted by **Allah** Kareem. The purpose of life is to develop the strength of Faith of a level that accords obedience and the drive to do good deeds. These Maraqbaat are the strongest means of achieving this.

In reality, every blessing is contingent upon action and endeavour, while most people tend to talk more and act less. They find it easy to deny the blessings they cannot attain and not stopping there, they resort to criticizing the Men of **Allah** and causing them harm, which is a vile act. In principle, if you have not set foot in a domain, know nothing about it, and have never bothered to find out about it, then who has given you the right to pass a verdict about it or criticize it? In my humble opinion that is the height of ignorance. May **Allah** Kareem preserve us from this!

Dawa'ir-e Muhabbat **(The Circles of Love)**

The Dawa'ir-e Salasah follow after the Maraqbaat-e Salasah, and are called the Dawa'ir-e Muhabbat. The Tasbeeh is: *Yuhibbo hum wa Yuhibboona-hoo* (Al Ma'idah: 54), that is **Allah** loves them and they love **Allah**.

Love is an exceptional emotion in which one longs to sacrifice everything for the beloved. Love is not taking or demanding anything, rather it is the longing to shower all one has on the beloved. If the element of give and take enters a relationship, then it will not be love, but it would be apt to term it as business. Love means to give and offer everything. Like a poet has said:

'The lover becomes a bonded slave of the beloved.'

And, if that love is for **Allah**^{-swt} and His Messenger^{-saws}! The love for the Prophet^{-saws} is the prelude to the love for **Allah**^{-swt}. The love of **Allah**^{-swt} is the greatest of all treasures, while the most precious wealth and asset granted to man is his limited free will or freedom of choice, and the love for **Allah** demands that man sacrifices this most valued possession for it. Man's personal likes and dislikes should submit totally to Divine Will. His practical conduct aside, even his thoughts, desires, wishes and wants should mould themselves according to **Allah**'s Will. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say that, one should become as pliant before Shari'ah, as a corpse in the hands of a Ghusaal : it moves only when he moves it.

Here, a question arises. Man can love the things or persons that are within the orbit of his knowledge, he can only love when he can see or know. But **Allah** the Creator, is beyond the bounds of knowledge of Creation, so how can man fall in love with Him? The answer is supplied in the Holy Quran:

*If you do love **Allah**, follow me: **Allah** will love you.* (Aal-i-'Imran: 31)

That is, if you are a seeker of **Allah**'s Love, then follow me (the Holy Prophet^{-saws}), **Allah**^{-swt} will start loving you. Once **Allah**^{-swt} starts loving you, it will certainly sow, in response, the seeds of His love in your hearts; rather, the resulting situation will become as:

*Those of Faith are overflowing in their love for **Allah**.* (Al Baqarah: 165)

That is, those who have attained Faith love **Allah**^{-swt} the most, in the whole universe. Meaning that those who immerse themselves in the Love of **Allah**^{-swt}, nothing

remains of themselves, they remain completely immersed in His Love, under all conditions and at all times.

Love follows a strange principle; even human love is not without impact. If you love someone it will produce (*your*) love in his heart, and if you dislike someone, then despite an apparent show of affection, he too will hate you from within. Some people think, 'I love this person, but he doesn't love me back'. In fact, these people don't have any love at all, only interests that they term as 'love', and naturally such interests will only beget interests from the other side; meaning that a person who has some interest with you will display his love. This is a trade of self-interests and it is not right to term this as love. Love is an emotion that is always pure and selfless, and as already stated it is very potent and effective and always elicits a response. If human love is so potent, how strong would be the effect of **Allah**^{-swt}'s Love! For this reason it is stated that **Allah**^{-swt} loves them and they start loving **Allah**^{-swt}. How great would be the people who are loved by **Allah**^{-swt}, and how pure would be the emotion with which they love **Allah**^{-swt}! A poet has aptly put it:

*Advisor, to you about love, I say:
If you wish to feel it, fall in love,
The tempest's force you can never know,
From safety of the shore above,*

It is an exotic intoxication:

*Alienating the heart to both the worlds
The lasting bliss of Cognition Divine;
Filling the heart with brimming joy
With delight enduring and sublime*

Allah Allah! This excellence needs to be experienced practically, not just talked about verbally. Yes, if **Allah**^{-swt} grants even an iota of it, then the purpose is achieved!

Da'irah-e Muhabbat Awwal

Da'irah-e Muhabbat Awwal

The First Circle of Love

The following Ayah is recited at this station:

Yuhibbo hum wa Yuhibboona-hoo. (Al Ma'idah: 54)

The seeker sees himself standing at Aqrabiyyat and a circle of amazing colours surrounds his forehead. It is an enormous circle; its centre is the forehead but also showers its rays on the Rooh, which engulf it in immense pleasure.

The seeker recites once: 'Asal Da'irah Asma-e Sifaat mein say oopar Nafs meiray kay', and then keeps reciting '*Yuhibbo hum wa Yuhibboona-hoo*', both in his heart and also with his Rooh. The more time and effort he expends on this, the stronger the Maraqbah will become.

Da'irah-e Muhabbat Doam

The Second Circle of Love

The seeker sees a Second circle surrounding his forehead, which is bigger and brighter than the First circle. The seeker should once say: 'Asal, Asal Da'irah Asma-e Sifaat mein say oopar Nafs meiray kay', and then keep repeating: *Yuhibbo hum wa Yuhibboona-hoo* within his heart and also with his Rooh. A Hadees Sharif states that the entire universe in all its vastness, when compared to the vastness of Arsh, is like a finger ring lying in an endless expanse of a desert. Therefore, if the vastness of these Circles is considered by this scale, one is left astonished. Moreover, they have their own specific colours, lights and glow. Each ray, fleck of light and colour drips with love and saturating the Rooh it enters deep into the Qalb of the seeker, making him devoutly obedient to **Allah**^{-swt} and the Holy Prophet^{-saws}.

I have mentioned earlier, that people suffer from a misconception that the Sufis are unproductive people. Yes, pseudo Sufis may certainly be an unproductive lot, but those blessed with real Tasawwuf and Sulook work much more than a non-Sufi. In practical life, no non-Sufi can match them; because they not only work much more, they also strive to base all their actions on the Sunnah. For this reason, Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say that every Sufi is an Alim, if he is not himself an Alim then he attaches himself to an Alim, or he is granted Ilm-e Ladunni from **Allah**^{-swt} (Knowledge from His Presence), because knowledge is essentially required for practice; how can he practice (*religion*), unless he has the knowledge. Hence, these people are knowledgeable about the Deen, its devotees, and practicing men of admirable character. If **Allah**^{-swt} grants the company of such people, then it is one of His very great Favours. Only then does one realize the worth of such people. My personal experience is that these people can converse about every subject in the world, I don't know how they have the knowledge of these things; and their opinion, in all matters, is the most sound. Their talk does not stop at invitation and reformation, but they are seen to be foremost in their practice as well.

Although these Circles are only the initial and founding stations of Sulook, but it is always the foundation that guarantees the strength of building, and it is again the foundation that determines the height of the building.

The Lights of these Circles bestow such feelings, that a fistful of clay (*i.e. Man*) is filled with **Allah**'s Love.

Subhan Allah-e wa bi-Hamdi-hee, Subhan Allah il Azeem!

Da'irah-e Muhabbat Soam

The Third Circle of Love

The Second Circle is surrounded by the Third Circle. This is as brilliant as the sun and very grand. The effect produced from the emotions and feelings of Divine love from this (*Circle*), is akin to the effect the rays of the sun have on the earth's flora: Love of **Allah** pours forth from every pore of the body.

*What is love, what is it?
How deep is its imprint?
When to your will, I render,
And become pliant to surrender.*

Every cell of the body pours out this emotion, drowning the person from head to toe in obedience.

A quote of Hazrat Zun Noon^{-rua} from the Hulyat-ul Aulia, when he was asked about the sign of a person who loved **Allah**^{-swt}, replied: 'He loves that which **Allah**^{-swt} loves, dislikes that which **Allah**^{-swt} dislikes, is not affected by anyone's praise, nor moved by anyone's propaganda. This person loves **Allah**^{-swt}.'

Hazrat Bassar Bin Assri^{-rua} is quoted in the same book as: 'The Love of **Allah**^{-swt} is demonstrated by the love of His obedience and by loving the Zikr of **Allah**^{-swt}.'

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi^{-rua} writes without quoting a reference this time, as it was his wont to always quote a reference, 'I do not remember who I heard it from: Qais was a contemporary and friend of Hazrat Hassan^{-rau}. He fell in love with Laila. When Hazrat Hassan^{-rau} delivered the reins of power to Hazrat Ameer Mu'awiyah^{-rau}, and thus the Muslim Ummah was saved from discord, the Muslim conquests commenced once again and the Message of **Allah**^{-swt} began spreading throughout the world, and he^{-rau} set out for Makkah Mukarramah, Qais was one of his travelling companions. On the way, while conversing, Hazrat Hassan^{-rau} said, 'Qais, by relinquishing my government I have saved the Ummah from discord and dissension'. Qais replied, 'That right does not belong to you in the first place, nor does it suit Hazrat Ameer Mu'awiyah^{-rau}.' Surprised by this statement Hazrat Hassan^{-rau} asked, 'In your opinion whom should the Power have been handed over to?' He replied, 'To Laila! It suits her only'. To this Hazrat Hassan^{-rau} exclaimed, 'You are Majnoon!' meaning 'you are mad'. Since then, Majnoon became his name.

Now see; when a person loves someone, he sees only his beloved everywhere; but if someone were blessed with the love for **Allah**^{-swt}, then what would be his condition! These are extraordinary people, significantly distinct! If **Allah**^{-swt} grants access and attachment to such people, it causes to reform both the worlds (*lives*) of a person. It is a great favour of **Allah**^{-swt} that one finds an accomplished Shaikh, and **Allah** Kareem grants purity in one's relationship with him, only then can one discern these realities.

The Tasbeeh of this Circle is the same, (*the seeker*) should say once: 'Asal, Asal, Asal, Da'irah Asma-e Sifaat mei say oopar Nafs meiray kay', and then keep reciting the Ayah: 'Yuhibbo hum wa Yuhibboona-hoo (Al Ma'idah: 54). This should be rendered both in the heart and by the Rooh, and then see and savour Divine Favour: how strong his Faith grows and how easy it becomes for him to follow the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. If one possesses Kashf and Mushahidah, it's a great blessing indeed; but in any case, it can be certainly felt through Wajdan (intuition). Even if one has neither, the real test is the increase in strength of Iman and the ability to act righteously. As this emotion of love gains strength, the desire for Divine Nearness takes hold, and as this desire strengthens, one's deeds and conduct start adhering to the Sunnah, and the depth and profundity of the heart's sincerity keeps increasing.

The fact is that, there is no limit to Sulook as it is the attainment of Divine Nearness. This earthly life has no significance at all, even in Barzakh and also in the Hereafter which is a life eternal, the dwellers of Jannah will keep progressing, and there will never be an end to this progress.

Yes, man can know about the Maraqbaat up to a certain extent. It is possible that the Gracious Rabb has placed a limit on (*acquiring*) their knowledge in this world. Even then, their distances are much beyond human computation and their locations are far beyond the bounds of human knowledge.

The fundamental strength to access them is derived from initial Maraqbaat. Therefore, they require full attention and a lot of effort. The moments (of Zikr) spent in the Shaikh's company are extremely precious indeed; and if Zikr is performed along with other Ahbab, that too would be for a limited period only; therefore, in addition to these, substantial time should be devoted on one's own, so that these (Maraqbaat) take strong root and bear fruit, which as already mentioned, is that one should crave for following the Sunnah, and the attachment to the Sunnah should become even stronger than his life's attachment to food and water.

Maraqbah Ism-e Zahir wal Batin

The next Maraqbah is that of Ism-e Zahir wal Batin. This Maraqbah is done under the following Ayah:

Howal Awwal-o wal Aakhir-o waz-Zahir-o wal Batin. (Al Hadeed: 3).

It is an amazing meditation. Hazrat Ji^{rua} used to say, 'Here the Rooh is granted wings for its flight,' meaning that it derives its power of flight from this Maraqbah.

The feeling of this Maraqbah is that, when the seeker focuses his attention towards it and recites the Ayah in his heart and his Rooh recites it at this station, then all the Lights that were raining from these Circles begin to permeate the Rooh and start getting absorbed, in the same way as fire enters (*a piece of*) iron and also turns it into fire. The Lights so pervade the Rooh from all directions: front, behind, above, below, inside and out, that you find only Lights in whichever direction you look. Every aspect of the Rooh itself is illuminated by it. A state of elation overwhelms the Rooh and gains such strength that the material body too starts feeling the effect, and the feeling begins to seep into every organ.

Allah^{-swt} existed when nothing existed. Whatever **Allah**^{-swt} has fashioned is all created and mortal. **Allah**^{-swt}'s Being will continue to exist even when everything ceases to be. If anyone possesses some apparent beauty or charm it has been endowed by **Allah**^{-swt} and is His Magnificence, and similarly all inner or hidden excellence is also His Endowment. Despite knowing all this, yet it is extremely difficult to practically perceive this reality. This is because firstly the majority is not aware of these Truths. They attribute every excellence to themselves, and every failure, weakness, and fault towards **Allah** Kareem.

*Sweet Success is the fruit
Of our efforts own, when
Failure is the word that is
Writ from the Scribe's Pen*

These are those people who are unaware of the Truths. The second category is of those who have read all this in books, and are in the know theoretically, but cannot discern these realities as they are prisoners of their desires in their practical conduct, exactly like the ones who do not know. The Ahl **Allah** (Men of **Allah**) who are endowed this gift feel these realities and thus their practical lives, desires and longings become subservient to Divine Will. Human beings are all alike and all have similar feelings. The Ahl **Allah** also feel pain and happiness, perhaps more than

others. However the difference is that whereas ordinary humans harbour grievances, expressed or unexpressed and they keep thinking: ‘why did it happen, it should not have happened’, the Men of **Allah** never have any complaints. They know that whatever **Allah** decides, is correct and this is exactly how it should have happened, because the functioning of the enormous universe is intricately intertwined and no single change can occur by itself unless many co-related changes take place simultaneously. We may be able to discern some of these changes, but most we cannot. He^{-swt}, Who is the Omnipotent and Supreme Master and Creator of everything, knows best what is to be placed where. Man arrives in this vast universe for a short period, and often even before becoming fully conscious of his own needs, is consumed by death. Therefore, what advice can he give in the affairs of the universe? But he desires that everything should happen according to his will and thus he keeps his short life restless, uneasy and anxious. However when this treasure trove opens up and the Lights of these stations descend on the Quloob, man’s personal desire is swept aside, and he learns to live contently by Divine Will and hence spends his life peacefully, and this peace can be seen on his face even after death. Of this Universal System, man’s character also is a component. Fate is of two types:

First - Inevitable Fate - which is immutable, and constitutes the in-avertable and inevitable Decrees of **Allah**^{-swt}.

Second - Suspended Fate - which is related to human conduct: If he acts righteously he will receive good reward and if he disobeys he will face its results.

In the Holy Quran it is mentioned in the story of Hazrat Musa^{-as} and Hazrat Khizar^{-rua}, that he (Hazrat Khizar^{-rua}) killed a youth and Hazrat Musa^{-as} objected strongly. Later Hazrat Khizar^{-rua} explained that, by disposition, the boy was inclined towards evil and would only have been a source of anguish for his parents, as they were pious people. So, **Allah** Kareem took him away; ‘I did not act of my own accord, but it was **Allah**^{-swt}’s Command’. The righteous scholars write that thereafter the couple had a daughter and her progeny included 70 Prophets, and that was ‘Suspended Fate’. Had the couple not turned towards piety, that very son would have kept them unhappy in the world and their afterlife too would have been ruined. But they returned to **Allah**^{-swt}, so the result decreed according to their conduct, brought them immense rewards. Thus, it is difficult to even understand the events in this world, let alone give an opinion or to desire that they accord to one’s will. The only path to peace lies in thanking **Allah** Kareem for His Decisions. While it is easy to understand this phenomenon, it is not as easy to practically adopt and act upon it. This is not possible except through the Prophetic blessings, and the acquisition of

these blessings is not possible except through Sulook. This bounty thus adorns not only the present life but the afterlife as well. Sulook and Tasawwuf is an invaluable treasure, and if **Allah** Kareem grants it, then that is sure success! Hazrat Ji^{rua} would often recite the verse:

*Those who covet Caesar's throne
Or Alexander's kingdom and might
In tears of regret would soon drown
For considering these Blessings slight*

Nevertheless the value of these blessings can only be realized, according to their capacity, by those who spend their lives on this Path. How can the majority who reject Sulook altogether understand this? What I am explaining presently is only the beginning of the ABC of Tasawwuf, while there are limitless oceans beyond. But, this is a field only of the resolute, and the affair of those who stake their lives for it.

Maraqbah ‘Abudiyyat

The next lesson is Maraqbah ‘Abudiyyat. Its Tasbeeh is:

An Najm-o wa-Shajar-o Yasjudaan. (Ar Rahman: 6)

The meaning is that every star and all vegetation prostrate (*bow low*) before **Allah**^{-swt}. That is, everything acknowledges His Greatness and admits its nothingness and lowliness. Observed apparently, if the stars and planets rise, they also set, bowing down. When the earth completes its 24-hour cycle, compulsorily everything on it bows in prostration. This much is understood even by ordinary intellect.

In this Maraqbah, the seeker finds himself at a place where he sees the earth and sky and all within them: sun, moon, stars, rivers, plains, trees, bushes, every twig and even every grass blade in prostration. In this context, an educative incident occurred in front of this Faqeer. Perhaps it was in the sixties, that Hazrat Ji^{-tua} had come to Chakwal and was staying behind the bazaar with Hakeem Fazal Kareem Sahib, when a suggestion was put forward, ‘In this Maraqbah, an Ayah of the Quran is recited due to which a ‘Sajdah-e Tilawat’ (Prostration of Recitation) becomes compulsory, and not all the Ahbab are aware of this. Those who do not know miss out on the Prostration, and those who are aware often forget, or miss it due to lethargy. Therefore, this Ayah be replaced by some other Ayah with the same meaning.’ Hazrat Ji^{-tua} held the position of a Mujaddid (a Revivalist) in Tasawwuf, but despite this he said, ‘This is possible only after obtaining permission from the Masha’ikh. We cannot change anything by ourselves, because blessings are associated with the words that emanate from the Masha’ikh; otherwise although all Muslims read through the whole Quran and yet do not experience any feelings.’ So a young Sathi, who belonged to a practising Ahl-e Hadees family, although his station was up to Fana Baqa only, but his spiritual visions were very clear, and he was not a Hafiz-e Quran, (although many Hafiz-e Quran were present there), was commanded to petition Hazrat **Allah** Deen Madni^{-tua} on Hazrat Ji^{-tua}’s behalf and seek his opinion. It was Hazrat Ji^{-tua}’s noble habit that whenever it was required to consult the Masha’ikh, he would assign this duty to one of his students with spiritual vision. He would say, ‘Sit beside me; I will give you Tawajjuh and Insha **Allah** you will not err’. But, he himself, out of respect, never dared to speak directly to them. Once someone submitted, ‘Hazrat your stations are now very high. **Allah**^{-swt} has graced you to reach the Highest Realm; now, you should speak yourself to the Masha’ikh.’ He smiled and replied, ‘Mian, even when the son becomes a general, his father becomes the father of a general; his greatness remains intact and his respect keeps

increasing correspondingly.' The young Sathi stated that Sultan ul Arifeen Hazrat **Allah** Deen Madni^{-rua} had advised that in future the following Ayah be recited instead: *An Najm-o wa-Shajar-o Yasjudaan*. No Sajdah is required for it.' Regretfully that Sathi could not sustain himself on this Path. Actually, it was in his temperament to object to everything. Perhaps it was a family trait, and under its influence he left the Silsilah. Later, it was seen that his conduct became faulty. He has passed away now and his case rests with **Allah**^{-swt}. I pray that **Allah**^{-swt} be Gracious to all Muslims. Ameen.

Similarly, after doing the Maraqbaat with me, a Sathi from Lahore objected to the use of the word 'Asal' once in the First Circle of Love, twice in the Second and thrice in the Third. I told him that is how Hazrat Ji^{-rua} taught us and we memorized it; no question crossed our minds. At that time I had a feeling that probably this person may not stay on this Path, and that's what happened. After some time he stopped doing Zikr.

It should not be thought that asking questions is prohibited. Certainly not! Question are asked to know and understand, they must be asked and the matter understood, but keep in mind that basically an objection is at variance to a query, and it embeds the notion: 'I know better, this person has not even been able to understand what I am saying.' Therefore there is a wide difference between a query and an objection. This is a Path based on trust and there is no room for any objection here.

The effect of this Maraqbah on the practical life is so amazing that the seeker observes everything in the Universe, including his own Rooh prostrating itself, extolling:

'Subhana Rabbiyal A'ala'

And so the Lights infiltrate every fibre of the body and arouse the desire to prostrate before **Allah**^{-swt} and everyone partakes of this precious treasure, according to his capacity. Once Hazrat Zain al Abideen was offering Nawafil (*Pl. of Nafal: supplementary worship*) in a Masjid when the Masjid caught fire. People ran about fetching water to douse the fire. When he finally finished his Salah, he inquired what all the commotion was about. He was told that there had been a fire, which had been doused. He stated, 'I was unaware of this'. And how could he come to know, when, from his thoughts to every fibre of his body all had been in prostration!

In reality, Tasawwuf and Sulook denote that one should not only accept Islam orally and intellectually, or express faith and adopt religious practices only outwardly, but should also acquire true faith and realise the real significance of the deeds. (Good) deeds are not discarded, rather their significance is enhanced in terms of depth and

profundity. The true pleasure of this special grace can be savoured by those to whom it is granted, or those who try to attain it by **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace, as this treasure trove is open to all Muslims but its doors are closed to the Kuffaar. It is not correct to say that only a few persons or families can attain this. This treasure is not hereditary; it is 'earned', which means one has to make effort to acquire it, and an acquired asset is under no one's monopoly. Anyone who strives for it can attain it; of course its quantity depends on **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace as well as on one's capacity, but basically it is for all Muslims. I pray, and my prayer comes from the depth of my heart that the Gracious Rabb confers it on all Muslims.

I do not know why I am penning all this. Perhaps because this treasure is obscured by the dust of fakery, and the ignorant are running after the counterfeit, whereas the educated class is caught in its total denial. But remember that the presence of the counterfeit in itself is a proof of the existence of the Real, being the reason for the creation of the counterfeit. The only way to counter fakery is to bring out the genuine, and when the genuine is obtainable why would anyone go for the counterfeit.

After repeating the Holy Ayah once in this Maraqbah, when the Rooh places its head in prostration, it keeps on reciting the Tasbeeh (of prostration) till the end of the Maraqbah. It is better if it is repeated within the heart as well.

Maraqbah Fana Fillah

This Maraqbah is commenced by reciting the following Ayah:

Kullo mann alaiha Faan’ (Ar Rahman: 26)

When the seeker lifts his head from the meditation of ‘Abudiyat and concentrates towards this station reciting the above Ayah, he finds himself at the station of Fana, where he senses everything in the universe vanishing, one after the other. He sees the sun, moon, stars, sky, mountains, jungles, trees, rivers, all living and non-living objects sliding into extinction; even to the extent that his own existence also starts to fade. Even the lights begin to disappear, darkness starts to engulf everything which along with pitch darkness also ushers in dead silence, and then nothing remains. The scene observed is that of Qiyamah, and the events as described by the Holy Quran start unfolding one by one, destroying everything in its wake; and one becomes oblivious of one’s own existence as well. The reality of all creation is duly realised, and in this manner the seeker finds the path to steer clear of the love of the world.

Remember! If one has to live in this world, one has to make use of it. To earn, to feed and to clothe oneself is not disallowed; but what is incorrect is to lose oneself in the vanities of this world. In fact, all affairs conducted according to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, become classified as Deen. To eat well, to dress well or to build a nice house is not forbidden; and if it is executed through lawful resources and Halal means, then all of this is considered a form of ‘Thanksgiving’. Once, a person came to the Holy Prophet^{-saws} in an unkempt condition, with dishevelled hair and ragged clothes. The Holy Prophet^{-saws} asked, ‘Do you not possess anything?’ He replied, ‘O Messenger^{-saws} of **Allah**, I have everything by **Allah**’s Grace.’ The Holy Prophet^{-saws} advised him, ‘Then dress your hair, wear good clothes, keep yourself clean, as this is also thanksgiving.’ The Holy Prophet^{-saws} also said, ‘Whatever a believer spends on feeding his family is considered as ‘Sadqah’ (Alms, charity), even to the extent that what he himself eats is also considered Sadqah as he does this in obedience of **Allah**^{-swt}’s Commands’. However, it would not be correct if he forgets **Allah**^{-swt} in his love for food, clothes, house or car, and busies himself in collecting wealth through unfair means.

In Maraqbah Fana the reality of the world and its chattels comes to light. After all, why would he show disobedience to the True Master for the sake of something whose very existence is transitory and fleeting...and, that is the real objective! A saying of a pious elder goes: Live in the water but like a duck; its body doesn’t get wet, the water remains confined to its feathers only. Or another example given is that of a boat; it has to remain in water, however its own existence depends on the

condition that water does not enter it, else it will sink. The same example applies to this world. We have to live in the world and have to earn our Afterlife from here, but we must not allow the love of the world to enter our heart else it will destroy us. So, this is the sum total of Sulook and Tasawwuf, that each subsequent Maraqbah becomes the means of further increasing our sincerity in every action. Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani^{rua} owned an import-export business, and its cargo was transported on ships. One day he received the news that one of his cargo-laden ships had sunk. He very calmly answered, 'Al-Hamd-o Lillah!' In a little while, he was informed that the report was incorrect and it was not his ship but someone else's that had sunk, and his ship was safely heading towards the port. Again he calmly said, 'Al-Hamd-o Lillah!' Someone who had been present with him when the two contradictory reports had reached him asked, 'Hazrat, when you heard about the sinking of the ship and said Al-Hamd-o Lillah, I thought that perhaps the cargo was 'doubtful' and you expressed thanks on its sinking, but again you said Al-Hamd-o Lillah on the news of its safe arrival. I did not understand this.' He^{rua} replied 'I did not say Al-Hamd-o Lillah on the news of the sinking or the safety of the ship. Rather, on receiving the bad news I looked into my heart and saw that the news had not made it sad and it was still busy in remembrance of **Allah**^{-swt}. I said Al-Hamd-o Lillah in thanks for its peace. Similarly, when the news of its safety reached me, I looked into my heart and noted that it was unaffected, hence I offered thanks to **Allah** Kareem that the heart was busy with **Allah**^{-swt} and above the considerations of worldly loss and gain.'

These are the blessings derived from these Maraqbaat, and when the reality of this world and of its goods and chattels is understood, then their glitter no longer dazzles the eye. We read all this in books and also hear it from our scholars, but the reality does not sink in. However, when these feelings descend on the Qalb, their effect is indeed amazing. Hearsay advice is like a medicine taken orally, which enters the digestive system and gradually begins affecting the body organs. On the other hand, if an injection is given, it goes straight into the blood and its effect is immediate. In the same manner, these feelings go straight to the heart without being filtered by wisdom or intellect, and incline the heart towards obedience of **Allah**^{-swt} with complete sincerity.

Maraqbah Baqa Billah

The Tasbeeh for this Maraqbah is:

Wa Yabqa Wajho Rabbika Zul Jalal-e wal Ikraam. (Ar Rahman: 27).

This Maraqbah is done under this Ayah and this is also its Tasbeeh. When one enters this station one sees that Lights have started to come in, until gradually the Universe gets filled with the Lights and once again everything can be observed at its place, but the amazing reality is that everything exists solely due to the Lights of Baqa that are reaching to it, that is nothing can sustain itself on its own. **Allah**^{-swt} sustains it for the period He^{-swt} wills, and when He^{-swt} withdraws His Support, i.e. the Lights of Baqa, it ceases to exist.

It is at this station, that Shaikh Ibn-e Arabi^{-rua} expounded his theory of ‘Wahdat al Wajood’ that: the Real Existence is only that of **Allah**^{-swt}; the existence of everything else is dependent on His Power or on His Will to sustain it.

This was the meaning of ‘Wahdat al Wajood’, but later this term was subjected to incorrect interpretations and a completely opposite meaning was derived that: everything is **Allah**. *La Haula Wa La Quwata...* It is astounding to note, how far away the interpretation was carried from its correct meaning. Then **Allah**^{-swt} granted the honour to Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani^{-rua} who corrected it and said, ‘This should be called ‘Wahdat as Shahood’, that is everything testifies to the Greatness of The One and the Only Being, subject to Whose Will, it is retaining its existence as well as its attributes, and if denied His Support, it can retain neither its existence nor its attributes. This is an excellent description. What is more amazing is that many people (*scholars*) dwelt on this topic in their numerous writings, books were compiled, discussions took place, but instead of being resolved, the issue became more complicated and always remained above the comprehension of ordinary people. The fact is that those who expounded it were Sufis, it needs a Sufi to explain it, and it similarly requires a proper connection with Tasawwuf to understand it. Otherwise, a non-Sufi has only words to play with and he fabricates various interpretations with them; it is difficult to access the essence and meaning. Those who wrote its exposition were of course great Sufis, but the majority of those who later read or tried to understand these writings were not acquainted with this branch (Tasawwuf), therefore despite assiduous study, they were unable to comprehend it themselves, so what could they teach others? For this reason even today this topic is subject to debate, although it is a very simple reality expressed by Hazrat Ibn-e Arabi^{-rua}. But those who followed did not have any knowledge of Tasawwuf and

assigned it a different interpretation. Then Hazrat Mujaddid^{-rua} substituted the term ‘Wahdat al Wajood’ with ‘Wahdat as Shahood’ and removed all misconception.

These are the deeds of those blessed with great fortitude.

This i.e. Fana Baqa is the Station, where people became so absorbed that they lost their senses; some raised strange slogans and some received harsh punishments as well. If a seeker remains at this Station for a long time and is a hard worker, its effects can take away his senses. This condition is known as ‘Halat-e Jazb’ (state of Absorption) and the affected is called a ‘Majzoob’. There is exemption under the Shari‘ah for such people: if a person is not in his senses, he does not remain bound by the rules of Shari‘ah. Therefore, silence is to be observed in such cases and their affair is to be left to **Allah**^{-swt}. It is incorrect to even think that these people can benefit anyone. Those, who cannot distinguish between the good or bad for themselves, what can they do for others? The Masha’ikh would forbid their novice students from even approaching such people, because if a person of a lesser spiritual status goes near them, his Lights are consumed by their stronger Lights. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} would say that, if a river ran over a small streamlet, would the streamlet survive? Once a similar incident took place with Hazrat Ji^{-rua}, when a person came to learn Zikr from him and after doing Zikr stated, ‘Hazrat I could see Lights before, but instead of giving me some more, you have even taken away my previous ones.’ Hazrat Ji^{-rua} replied, ‘Why did you not mention this earlier, I would have taken care. Your Lights were the result of your own effort only, and had not been firmly established by the Tawajjuh of a Shaikh. So, they have been washed away. Now make effort again and once you acquire them, then you can challenge anyone to try and wrest them away.’ However, it is worth remembering that every insane person is not a ‘Majzoob’. But here, with us, even congenitally insane people are also taken as a Majzoob! This is incorrect; Majzoob are those people who are travellers of the Path and usually lose their senses and become Majzoob by remaining for too long on Fana Baqa. Once, in Hazrat Ji^{-rua}’s company, a mention was made of Mansoor Hallaaj^{-rua}. He^{-rua} said, ‘Had he been present during my time I would have given him Tawajjuh and taken him onwards from Fana Baqa and he would not have become Majzoob.’ Yes, it is possible for all Sufis to experience temporary absorption and to be momentarily overwhelmed by Majzoobiyat (*raptness*).

Remember! Being a Majzoob is not an excellence; rather it is an indication of a defect. For this reason no Prophet had ever been a Majzoob, and neither did they ever undergo temporary or momentary absorption. However, their followers do not possess such a strong endurance threshold. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} is the only one among the whole Ummah who never experienced absorption. Otherwise, even

the most distinguished person in the Ummah after him, Hazrat Umar Farooq^{-rau} was also temporarily affected by absorption. When the Holy Prophet^{-saws} passed away, he pulled out his sword and said, 'I shall behead anyone who says that the Holy Prophet^{-saws} has passed away!' But when Hazrat Abu Bakr^{-rau} arrived and read the following Ayah from the Quran: *Muhammad is no more than a Messenger: many were the Messengers that passed away before him*, (Al Baqarah: 144) he regained his senses and sheathed his sword. What then could be the status of anyone else (*as compared to him*)? In any case, the ruling stands, that Jazb (absorption) is not an excellence; had it been an excellence, it would have been granted to the Prophets. Hence, experiencing momentary absorption is quite different from permanently becoming a Majzoob; and it must be specifically kept in mind that no benefit can be derived from a Majzoob nor should he be followed.

As these Maraqbaat are very strong, the capacity to bear them is also granted by **Allah**^{-swt}. Their effect on practical life is quite amazing, that the heart becomes indifferent to the desire of the ephemeral and is captivated by the love of the Eternal. Hence, compliance to the Shari'ah in worship and conduct doesn't seem a burden, rather it becomes a pleasure, and one feels restless unless one follows the Truth. All these matters relate to knowing and experiencing. If one asks for the capacity and ability from **Allah**^{-swt} and makes effort, then further on, there is another part of this Maraqbah, Fana al Fana, in which the extent and depth of feelings is greatly enhanced. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} perhaps conducted only a few Ahbab to it; it is not necessary for everyone. I, too, do not make the Ahbab do this Maraqbah except for one or two. Therefore, it is not appropriate to write about it. By **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace, following this, the Maraqbah Sair-e K'abah, Fana fir Rasool^{-saws} and Maraqbah Masjid-e Nabvi^{-saws} are conducted, which will certainly be written about. However, the other Maraqbaat (Maraqbaat Fana, Baqa) can also be conducted after conducting Maraqbaat-e Salasah, i.e. up to Aqrabiyyat. If I had only intended to write up to the Maraqbaat-e Salasah, I would have written about Sair-e K'abah, Rauza-e Athar and Masjid-e Nabvi^{-saws} along with them; but by the Grace of **Allah**^{-swt}, my intention was to write up to Fana Baqa as these had been indicated in Ramooz-e Dil, hence I continued writing.

One point more! Many people have considered Fana Baqa as the culmination of Sulook, and in other Salasil it is really very difficult even to reach up to here, except that which **Allah** wills. However, in Nisbat-e Owaisiah, the Stations up to Fana Baqa are known as the ABC of Sulook and Tasawwuf. Just as every language has its initial letters of the alphabet (ABC), which are few in number, but then the masters of the language attain to high excellence of expression, it is the same with these

Stations. According to the Nisbat-e Owaisiah, anyone attaining the Stations of Fana Baqa is considered to have just learnt the ABC of Tasawwuf and can now be further inducted in study. Hence, his further lessons commence, and perhaps I might not have the courage to write about them, so I leave this field to those who are blessed with the capacity to undertake the effort.

The concept that the whole Sulook has been covered is fundamentally incorrect. Sulook denotes the feelings of Divine Nearness, which were attained during the era of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, by just one glance. All those who were blessed with his^{-saws}'s company (Suhbat) were called Sahabi (Companion). A non-Sahabi can never estimate the greatness of a Sahabi. If every single person in the world attains the highest stations of Wilayah, even then their collective worth would not be able to match the dust under the feet of a Sahabi. And when it is stated in the Holy Quran even about the Sahabah:

Their Faith is furthered. (Al Anfaal: 2)

That is, their Faith and Belief is increased and strengthened further. Then, how can a Wali attain to the climax of Sulook? On the contrary, it is a continuous process and a Grace from **Allah**^{-swt}, which has neither any limit nor any end. This progress continues during the worldly life; however, in Barzakh as the performance of deeds concludes, therefore progress in stations is halted, but the depth of feelings continues to increase. These are two separate things: progress in stations and increase in feelings, which means increase in feelings while remaining at the same station. This increase continues in Barzakh, it will continue for the Men of **Allah** on the Day of Qiyamah, and it would keep increasing with each successive moment in Jannah. A saying of Hazrat Abu Yazeed^{-rua} has been quoted in 'Hulyah tul Aulia' that some of **Allah**^{-swt}'s chosen slaves will be so blessed that if, in Jannah, they are ever veiled (*from viewing Allah*^{-swt}) their wailing will be similar to the wailing of the dwellers of Hell, crying to be taken out of there. Therefore, they will never encounter any veil, nor will they be able to withstand it, and they will forever gaze upon Him^{-swt}: *Every day He shines in (greater) Splendour.* (Ar Rahman: 29). It implies that even in Jannah the progress will be continuous and forever. Then, how can anyone claim that Sulook has concluded? Nonetheless, this is a Grant of **Allah**^{-swt}: how much capacity, consciousness and depth of knowledge He^{-swt} bestows, and to whom!

The feelings of the meditations of Fana and Baqa so reform the life of a seeker, that although he lives in the world, the world (*worldly desire*) does not reside within him. His inner self becomes the repository of Divine Refulgence, his aspiration is the communion with **Allah**^{-swt}, and his love is directed only towards **Allah**^{-swt} and His Rasool^{-saws}.

During my employment days, our Headmaster, Shahid Sahib had composed this verse:

Don't heal me medic, stay away!

Let me go, let me be!

Who knows, in the grave, some day

He might come to embrace me.

Even to this day, I derive pleasure from this verse. Perhaps the meaning that I derive from this verse, may not be even known to the poet himself. How amazing it is that the Creator has placed the day after the night, to follow it necessarily, in the same way He^{-swt} has placed Baqa after Fana. Let someone lose himself (Fana) in the longing for Him, and see how he attains to Baqa. These are wonderful feelings that are really worthy of being tried and experienced. Hazrat Ji^{-rua} used to say that the devisor has not devised adequate words and phrases to express feelings, so in what way can these be described?

Yes, the attainment of the Maraqbaat Fana Baqa provides a plot of land to lay the foundations of a building, al Hamdo Lillah! If **Allah** Kareem shows Grace, further construction can also be accomplished. But, each brick here is obtained at the cost of one's life, its cement is made from the suppression of millions of wishes and desires; and this is possible only by **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace and requires a repentant heart, which **Allah**^{-swt} may grant to whoever He^{-swt} desires. Its wonders are countless! I have perhaps written much within a possible limit; it remains to be seen how much of it is understood or whether this writing also is a waste of paper and ink. The basis of this knowledge is found in the Holy Quran. Our illustrious commentators have shed light on it, and then in every age the venerable and revered elders wrote about it in great detail. Although the Lata'if and the colour of the Lights have been mentioned in various books, yet I have not come across any mention of their feelings, conditions and their relationship with a person's practical life; not at least to my knowledge. Every period of time has its specific requirements, and **Allah** Kareem can take whatever service He^{-swt} desires from whosoever He^{-swt} wills. Perhaps this service was destined for me. I haven't been able to achieve much in life, perhaps these words may become the cause for my salvation, because the ocean of **Allah**^{-swt}'s Grace is boundless and His Forgiveness is unlimited. It is **Allah** Kareem's Favour that this humble soul not only can pen or speak about all this but can also teach it to those who want to learn, as **Allah** Kareem has granted this blessing, and the Grand Masha'ikh and Hazrat Ustad al Mukarram^{-rua} have granted its permission.

This is the Grace of Allah, He grants it to whom He wills. (Al Jum'ah: 4)

Maraqbah Sair-e K'abah

As stated earlier, this Maraqbah is conducted after the Maraqbaat-e Salasah. In this (*meditation*) the seeker's Rooh finds itself standing in front of Bait **Allah**, reciting the Talbihaat. Although the Bait **Allah** is visible but surrounding it, as far as the eye can see, is a throng of Arwah. Countless Arwah, who have left the world but had attained to this station, are busy in Tawaaf (circumambulation). The current city and buildings are not discernible, and wherever you look all you see are these Arwah.

In reality, Bait **Allah** is the Centre of the universe and the focal point of Personal Divine Lights. Its Lights descend from the Aalam-e Amr (Realm of Command), which is even above the Aalam-e Khalq, meaning the nine Arsh, and (*passing through the K'abah*) these Lights cross back to the heavens, Arsh and return to Aalam-e Amr on the other side. These are Personal Divine Lights, but each individual has a different ability for assimilation; how much light a person absorbs, depends upon his personal capacity.

This phenomenon has also been perceived physically. In the United States, I met an Egyptian pilot who had taken part in the famous Six Day war between Egypt and Israel (in which Egypt routed Israel). He told me that during their flying training they are instructed not to, under any circumstances, fly directly over the Holy K'abah, because if the plane comes directly above the K'abah, its electronic gadgets malfunction and the pilot retains no idea of his location and direction. It is obvious that the reason for this is the energy of the Divine Lights that descend on to Bait **Allah**. Every individual, who presents himself there, benefits from them, as it is stated in the Hadees Sharif: 'A person, who performs Hajj is cleansed of his sins as if he is born today.' But this applies to those who have correct beliefs and perform the Tawaaf with Faith and conviction. The forgiveness of one's sins reforms the character; he feels an aversion to sin and an inclination towards goodness, and returns as a new person after Hajj.

Similarly, the temperaments of those individuals, whose Arwah are granted admission in Sair-e K'abah, undergo a change. And this positive change affects the whole character. In this station the Rooh stands in front of Bait **Allah** and recites Talbihaat. I have written earlier that it is better if the seeker also keeps repeating it within the heart, but most of the time the attention is so focused towards the Maraqbah that people remain silent, and only their Rooh keeps up the recitation.

Sair-e Salah

Sair-e Salah is also conducted at this Maraqbah. In Sair-e Salah, Takbeer is called and the Arwah start forming rows which can be observed as far as the eye can see. The Shaikh of the Time leads them in a two cycle (*Nawafil*) Salah. Usually, the Salah is led by the Shaikh of the Time, but once in a while, one of the Grand Masha'ikh may lead the Salah. It is all a matter of one's luck. In the past half a century, maybe even longer, only once did this humble soul have the honour of offering a two-cycle Salah led by the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. It is not often that even one of the great Masha'ikh leads the Salah; it is the Shaikh of the Time with the highest spiritual stations who leads the prayer. From this it can be evaluated that for a Rooh to be taken from this world to stand among such chosen people, under the Rain of Personal Refulgence, or to perform bowing and prostration, how much luminosity and blessings it should gather and because of it, how beautiful changes should take place in his practical life! This is an excellent standard for the seekers to measure themselves with. Hence, it is important for the seekers to pay special attention to these aspects, because the purpose of all this (effort) is to induce a positive change in one's character and to abide by **Allah**^{-swt}'s obedience. What does a person gain from the attendance (*of that blessed place*), each Tasbeeh, and bowing and prostration performed there? This can only be assessed from one's practical life, otherwise how many stones keep lying in sweet water streams yet nothing grows on them. In the same manner, how many unmotivated beings go there with their bodies and Arwah, and return with no noticeable change in their characters.

It is a special Favour of **Allah** Kareem that one finds a personality, who can transport the Rooh from this material world to the Higher Realm and take it from there to Bait **Allah**. Subhan **Allah**! What else could one wish for, after this!

Sair-e Quran

After Sair-e Salah, the Maraqbah of Sair-e Quran, which is also its part, is conducted. When the Shaikh enjoins 'Sair-e Quran', everyone (*spiritually present*) partakes of the blessing of reciting a few verses of his choice from the Holy Quran. In this the Lights of the Holy Quran start descending and influencing to the depth of the Rooh and the Qalb. It is an amazing scene, immensely pleasurable.

Thereafter, a call for D'ua is given; everyone lifts up his hands in prayer and beseeches **Allah**^{-swt}'s Mercy for himself, his loved ones, country and nation, the exaltation of his religion, success in this world and the Next. The seeker may petition **Allah**^{-swt} for anything he likes. But remember, a supplication is, after all, only a petition, a request; it is not an Order that must be fulfilled according to the

desire of the supplicant. Yes, the greatness of D‘ua is that it grants the honour to place our requests before **Allah** Kareem. The words of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} should also be kept in mind that sometimes a petition gets answered (*immediately*) exactly as asked for, and at other occasions it is fulfilled exactly as requested, but after some delay, that is after some time. At times, it may happen that whatever the supplicant is requesting is not suitable for him and thus it is substituted for something better. Sometimes, **Allah** Kareem retains the petition with Him^{-swt}. When the deeds (good and bad) are weighed in the Balance on the Day of Qiyamah, it will be commanded, ‘Wait! Some of his deeds are with Me, place them with his good deeds’; then those of his unanswered petitions that were retained by **Allah** Kareem will be placed there and they will tip the Balance heavily. At that time, even the greatest of ‘Maqbool ud-D‘awaat’ (*those whose supplications are normally granted*) will wish that none of their prayers had been answered in the world, so as to benefit (*them*) on that Day! It is a great Divine Favour, that this blessing is granted. This Maraqbah thus concludes with the supplication, and from here the Rooh is granted the honour of being admitted at the Rauza-e Athar in ‘Fana fir Rasool’. The Shaikh gives Tawajjuh and announces ‘Rauza-e Athar’ and the Arwah of the seekers fly along with the Rooh of the Shaikh to the Rauza-e Athar.

Maraqbah Rauza-e Athar

From Sair-e K‘abah, the Shaikh directs his Tawajjuh towards the Rauza-e Athar and the seeker’s Rooh gains admission into Rauza-e Athar, as by now it has attained access into Barzakh. Here, the Holy Prophet^{-saws} is present in his splendid majesty. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-raui} and Hazrat Umar Farooq^{-raui} are also seated honourably. The magnificence of the setting accords perfectly with the exalted greatness and dignity of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. On the left side of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} is seated Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-raui} and on his left is seated Hazrat Umar Farooq^{-raui}. There is green luminosity, and the Lights are green in colour. These Lights start to descend into the Rooh of the seeker, and a stage is reached when his body also starts to feel them and the Rooh gets overwhelmingly empowered.

It is a common principle that, if only the body is nourished the Rooh becomes weak and debilitated. Just as the body’s nourishment is derived from material sources, the nourishment of the Rooh comes from Zikr-e **Allah** and Prophetic blessings. Just as the body requires food and medicine to remain healthy, similarly the Rooh needs its nutrition and cure. Those people who keep nourishing only their bodies the whole life, their Arwah become devitalized and at times die; the death of Rooh denotes it being emptied of Iman (Faith). These days, it is common that people born in religious and decent families are going astray. Some become the target of false factions and some deny everything, altogether. The reason for this is that no attention was paid to the life and nourishment of the Rooh, and thus it starved to death. Some people do retain some Iman, but it is so feeble that it cannot prevent them from erroneous conduct; as if their Rooh is so weak that it cannot restrain the body from fulfilment of its wrongful desires. This can be observed in many people who apparently not only offer Salah and observe Fast, but also perform Hajj and Umrah. However, they are not fair in their dealings to the extent that they keep devouring usury. Now the person who can devour usury can also usurp other’s rights, and such examples are very common in our society today. But if the Rooh’s life and health is to be maintained, then its primary requirement is correct belief and the blessings of Zikr **Allah**, which are granted by the Tawajjuh of a Shaikh, as the Tawajjuh of a Shaikh is a conveyer of Prophetic blessings. Consequently the Rooh is not only quickened but also gains vitality and strength, and developing the power to fly, gains access to the Higher Realm, and thus passing through the Sair-e K‘abah it gains admission into the Hallowed Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}.

Every Maraqbah serves to revitalize and strengthen the Rooh and acts as a particular tonic for the Rooh. As the Rooh gains strength, the body too becomes less and less

subjugated by the desires of the Nafs and instead starts to obey **Allah**'s Commands, and this indeed, is the desired objective.

Therefore, when the Rooh reaches the Rauza-e Athar and the blessed Presence of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, it is as if it has arrived at the Fountain of Perpetual Life. There is no greater remedy, nourishment and treasure than this in the world. After being saturated here, it is restored to its real self, for it had originated from the Realm of Command, and had been infused pure and pristine into the material body, but when the body ignored Divine Obedience in pursuit of its carnal desires, the effects not only kept staining the Rooh but also continued to weaken it. At times it happened that the Rooh died, and the persons turned apostate and lost the way. But those fortunate ones who were accorded the opportunity to do Zikr **Allah** and also had the guidance of an expert guide, undertook the return journey and thus gradually, having been blessed with Fana fi Rasool^{-saws}, found a place for themselves at the Fountain of Perpetual Life. Their spiritual life became so enhanced that from their intellect and wisdom to their heartbeat, and from their sensory organs to their limbs, all became subservient to Divine Obedience. If sometimes, due to being human, they erred, they repented with such earnestness and sincerity that it expiated the mistake.

It must be kept in mind that as long as a person stays in this world, he is under constant trial and should remain perpetually and scrupulously vigilant. As the poet said:

No gain can the luckless derive

Even from a perfect guide

Khizar, too, brought Sikandar back

Thirsty from the Spring of Life

Some people are so unfortunate that a Shaikh, just like Khizar, takes them to the Fountain of Perpetual Life, yet they return without drinking. So, as long as one lives in the world, there will be trials. If at any point or even for a moment his sincerity wavers, or greed for worldly wealth or fame enters his heart, then he is expelled, rather driven out of here. And if this misfortune befalls someone, he becomes an even worse human being than before, because it is a principle that the greater the fall, the greater the injury and the graver the wounds, and even death at times. May **Allah** Kareem forgive us! I have seen people falling and also seen them dying, as the trials of this life continue till death. To become overwhelmed by one's ego and to think that one is very virtuous or has become a great saint, and to look down on

others or to involve oneself in collecting worldly gain: such actions are not befitting there, hence the blessings are retracted and the person falls flat on his face. May **Allah**^{-swt} keep us under His Protection! However, by the Grace of **Allah**^{-swt}, the majority remains safe and blessed with Divine Protection. They assign obedience to **Allah**^{-swt} as the goal of their life; they live for this and also give their life for this. They are extraordinary people, that they are honoured by admission to this Exalted Court morning and evening and assimilate its blessings. Still, even so, the secrets of that realm are phenomenal and cannot be revealed. May **Allah** Kareem never grant anyone the audacity to do so! However I do indicate that some (seekers) are aware of their presence, some are only aware of the lights there, some have the understanding of the seating of the exalted personalities there, some are blessed with occasional vision, while some fortunate ones are also honoured with exalted conversation, but that is very rare. Yes, the one common achievement is that everyone develops liking for and inclination towards virtue, and also tries to abstain from sin according to his personal ability. **Allah** Kareem even helps them in this.

One of the greatest trials in Tasawwuf is that some people do not develop the required capability in themselves; or it would be more appropriate to state that they do not arouse their **Allah**-gifted ability and still observe their Rooh at these stations through the Lights of the Shaikh. Usually such people then stumble and lose their way. If one makes effort with sincerity, then **Allah**^{-swt} protects such people. If a person offers the Nawafil at Tahajjad, does the Zikr, and going over his Maraqbaat, proceeds to pay his respects at the Exalted Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, and repeats all this again in the evening, would he not develop a realization of what he should or should not do? He can even give his life for obedience and adherence to the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. Furthermore, the blessings and Lights received during presence and attendance at the Holy Court also cause to build up the Rooh. Such people are very lucky and extremely fortunate.

The worst of mankind are those who lose these blessings after having acquired them, and fall from these stations and destroy themselves in the pursuit of self-fame or worldly greed. They symbolize the meaning of the Quranic verse: *They lose both this world and the Hereafter* (Al Hajj: 11).

This is such an exalted place where one does not even gather the courage to breathe. Silently, with bowed head and utmost respect, the Rooh keeps reciting the Darood Sharif only.

*Under the canopy of this sky,
A place here, in respect high,*

*Delicate, exquisite than the Arsh
Where, Junaid and Bayazeed's souls, blessed
Of saints in calibre even high
Are lost in its awe and majesty*

This is such an Exalted Place of Honour, where even the greatest (*of saints*) tremble (*with awe*). Even today, the respect and reverence of Holy Grave and the Blessed Rauza is exactly the same, as it was during the time of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, and increases billions of times during one's (*spiritual*) attendance there in Barzakh.

I have had a wondrous observation and experience. Once, when I was granted an attendance, the extension work all around the Masjid-e Nabvi was in progress, and the foundation and pillars of the new building were being constructed. Iron pipes about 70 feet long were being driven into the ground by huge machines, probably the columns were to be built upon them. There were numerous such pipes and equally enormous were the machines that were simultaneously hammering them with blocks of iron each weighing about a ton. The noise was thunderous and the pounding was non-stop and continuous. This noise remained audible till the door of Masjid-e Nabvi, but as soon as one stepped into the Masjid through the blessed door, sudden silence descended. Not even the slightest of noise was audible inside the Holy Masjid. This was not a one-time experience; I stayed there for several days, and I was honoured with an audience several times in a day, and each time the experience was the same; rather even the remotest thought of any work being carried on outside disappeared, but as soon as one came out, the noise from the machines announced the on-going construction work. Subhan **Allah** wa be Hamdi-hi!

The Holy Place, whose decorum and dignity is so respected that Nature Itself maintains them, then wither and wherefore the courage of man? Therefore, the Arwah of the Salikeen too, peacefully, with bowed heads, keep absorbing the Lights and blessings, and this state prevails as long as the audience lasts. The reality is that all these matters are worth doing practically; what can be written or read about them! There was a time, the Ulama spent their lives scouring the world for these blessings and once they found the gem of their desire they settled there and returned only after their acquisition. Gradually, this desire started to wane and the present-day trend is to reject this blessing altogether. In fact, it has surpassed even rejection, people plainly negate and repudiate it. May **Allah** Kareem forgive them and again revive the hearts of Muslims, as this is the real wealth which is earned in this world to become an asset of the Akhirah.

In reality, Tasawwuf denotes the feelings of the Qalb which, in the form of deep sincerity, accompany every worldly activity. All worldly affairs are carried out in compliance with **Allah**'s Commands in such a sincere manner that they are graded as worship, Ruku (bowing) and Sujood (prostration). Just as the Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} engaged in every worldly activity: cultivation and farming, trading, Jihad, wedding festivity, bringing up children, building homes, but the Holy Quran states that:

You will see them bowing and prostrating themselves. (Al-Fatah: 29). 'O Reader, whenever you look at them you will find them in the postures of bowing and prostrations'; meaning that all their worldly actions were classified as 'Ruku and Sujood', because, firstly they were in accordance with the Ordinances of **Allah**^{-swt} and secondly they contained a level of sincerity which is required for following the Sunnah.

The fruit of all this effort is to attain adherence to the Sunnah, and that too with total sincerity, because, on this depends the eternal and infinite life of the Akhirah. If **Allah**^{-swt} grants us the wisdom to comprehend these realities, only then does one realize the value of this treasure and also acknowledges the greatness of those personalities, who spent their lives in obtaining this treasure and then passed it onwards. Today's era is in severe grip of material interests, and mankind is touching the extreme limits of materialism; even to the extent that when the Ahl **Allah** are mentioned, they (*such materialistic people*) think that the prayers of these accomplished saints will grant them worldly benefits: employment, riches and wealth, power and promotions. Nobody or else very few people think that, here is a Man of **Allah**, and our Afterlife will be ameliorated by being associated with him. Thinking in terms of Fana fi **Allah**^{-swt} and Fana Fir Rasool^{-saws} is a far cry! May **Allah**^{-swt} reawaken this realization in the Islamic world and may Spring visit this Garden once again.

As far as the outward and practical aspect of worship is concerned, it is abundant in this otherwise (*spiritually*) impoverished era also. As soon as the Azan is called, the Masajid fill up, people give Zakat and also Fast, remain set to perform Hajj and Umrah, do Tableegh, but when it comes to mutual dealings or affairs, one is totally taken aback. Why is it that their (*mutual*) affairs and dealings are not being reformed? This is because the society, as a whole, is bereft of the Prophetic blessings and of the illumination of hearts. The outward form (*body*) of worship and good deeds does exist, but it is without a Rooh that could influence the conduct to comply with the Sunnah; that Rooh are these Prophetic blessings, lights of the Qalb and feelings, which are acquired through Tasawwuf and Sulook. Once someone mentioned to a saint that so and so can fly in the air. He replied that birds that feed

on Haraam and dead meat also fly in the air, what sort of a marvel is that? The human marvel is in moulding one's conduct according to the Sunnah and proving through one's character to be a true slave of **Allah**^{-swt} and a servant of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. Yes the tranquillity and Qalbi pleasure, and the delight that arrives at every cell of the body, can only be experienced but not described. Further, each person has his own capacity and accordingly his feelings are also different. Hence, no single person can comprehend these feelings in totality. Yes, my prayer is: May **Allah**^{-swt} bestow this invaluable treasure on every Muslim; nothing is beyond Him

Maraqbah Masjid-e Nabvi

The next Maraqbah of Fana Fir Rasool^{-saws} is that of Masjid-e Nabvi. The Arwah come out of the Rauza-e Athar and present themselves at the Masjid-e Nabvi, where the Best in the Universe, the Holy Prophet^{-saws} himself resplendently graces the occasion. Seated on his^{-saws} left are the Khulafa'a-e Rashideen^{-rau} (the Rightly Guided Caliphs^{-rau}) in order of their Caliphate. In addition, next to Hazrat Ali Karram **Allah** Wajhahu, are arranged, like an arc, the chairs for usually the Masha'ikh of Salasil, and mostly for the titled Aulia, with titles of Ghaus or above. Behind them, a multitude of the fortunate Arwah who are granted admission in this illustrious Court, sit very respectfully and silently in their respective places. There is constant coming and going among them, but so silently that it is not felt in the assembly. Directly behind the Khulafa'a-e Rashideen there are four chairs which are reserved for the four most exalted and favoured slaves of **Allah**^{-swt}, among the whole Ummah. They, too, will be seated there in the order of their ranks. The first chair is already graced by its occupant, leaving the second chair empty, the third is also occupied by a saint and the fourth chair is also unoccupied. Hazrat Ustad al Mukarram^{-rua} used to say that the fourth chair is reserved for Imam Mahdi^{-rua}. After he leaves the world, he will grace that seat; meaning two chairs are still unoccupied, the second, and the fourth.

When the Shaikh orders 'Maraqbah Masjid-e Nabvi', all the Arwah of the Salikeen that are present with him gain admission there, where a separate place, to one side is allocated for them. The men stand in rows at their allocated place and recite the Darood Sharif, and the women separately at their own place. But everyone recites the Darood Sharif with their heads bowed and eyes downcast, and saturates his/ her Qalb with the Lights. The Roohani Bai'at (the Spiritual Pledge) is conducted here. One by one, the Shaikh orders each seeker to advance, and his Rooh presents itself before the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. As the Holy Prophet^{-saws} extends his holy and blessed hand, the seeker holds it in both his hands, kisses it and passes the blessed hand over his entire face. Yes, this is how it happens and absolutely! Perhaps someone may read this and might think that I am overstating, but **Allah** Kareem is a Witness that I am relating the truth. I am not concerned about anyone believing me or not, and the Truth is always above such considerations. Then the seeker is taken for Bai'at with Sayyedena Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau}. He, too, extends his blessed hand and the seeker holds it in both his hands and kisses it, and then advances further and is blessed with a Bai'at with Hazrat Ali^{-rau}, who extends his blessed hand, the seeker holds it in both his hand and kisses it. Then he again presents himself before the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, where everyone is always honoured with a gift. Some are awarded a Holy Quran,

some a Tasbeeh, some a pen, some a prayer mat, some a flag and some a sword. Most certainly the gift is in keeping with the personality of the person or indicative of the duty that **Allah** Kareem requires of him. The fact is that when **Allah**^{-swt} wants someone to accomplish a task, He^{-swt} grants him the ability as well as the opportunity. The System of the Gracious Rabb is such that whenever He^{-swt} desires any of His slaves to accomplish a task, He^{-swt} grants him the capacity as well as the opportunity; the only option given to a person is to make a decision; whether he wants to become an obedient slave of **Allah**^{-swt} or a minion of his own desires. Then, who would be more blessed than the fortunate persons for whom He^{-swt} contracts the time span of centuries and takes them into the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, (if they also realize how great a favour this is!). Often, it happens that due to the blessings of the Shaikh, some people do attain to Maraqbaat and Spiritual Stations, but they do not realize their value and the result is never good for them.

Similarly, this blessing is granted to the women also. They have a separate place reserved for them on the side. If any of them is to be blessed with the Bai'at, then her Rooh is also conducted in the same manner in the Prophetic Presence. The Holy Prophet^{-saws} extends a corner of his Holy Mantle which is held in both the hands and kissed and placed over the eyes, then she advances to Sayyedena Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} and Hazrat Ali^{-rau} and then she is again brought back before the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. The women, too, are necessarily awarded some gift. Mostly, a chaddar (*mantle or shawl*), a prayer mat or Tasbeeh is granted. Men and women may be granted one or several items. After Roohani Bai'at, the seeker returns on back steps to his respective place, all the while keeping the eyes downcast and reciting the Darood Sharif.

All this is not as easy (as it seems from my writing); rather, entire lives are spent in its attainment, and that too, if one is fortunate enough to find the company of an accomplished Shaikh, because this is not within everyone's capability. Even reaching such a personality (*an accomplished Shaikh*) is purely the Grace of **Allah** Kareem. Firstly, it is the decision of the individual and the degree of quest it induces in him, then is the search and finally the arrival at the destination. In my opinion the first and the most important stage is the finding of an accomplished Shaikh; because, then only does the onward journey begin. And the knowledgeable know, how great a blessing that is.

It is imperative to explain a very important point here, that after taking the Bai'at with the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, Bai'at is taken with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} and then with Hazrat Ali^{-rau}, but not with Hazrat Umar Farooq^{-rau} and Hazrat Usman^{-rau} (*seated*) in the middle. The reason for this is that Bai'at with Sayyedena Hazrat Abu

Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} is taken exclusively by the devotees of the Owaisiah Order. This is the only Nisbat that issues directly from Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau}, whereas all the other Salasil and Nisbat originate from Hazrat Ali^{-rau}. The manner, in which Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} acquired Prophetic blessings, is unique and shared by none else. Just take the journey of the Hijrah (Emigration). All the Sahabah Karaam^{-rau} were granted leave to emigrate but the Holy Prophet^{-saws} held him^{-rau} back, and when the Holy Prophet^{-saws} was given permission to depart, it was under the most extraordinary circumstances. **Allah** Kareem granted permission to emigrate when a selected group from all tribes of the Mushrikeen of Makkah had, at night, surrounded the blessed house of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}. The Holy Prophet^{-saws} bade Hazrat Ali^{-rau} to sleep on his bed and he^{-saws} set out from his house with the intention of Hijrah (Emigration), and the Mushrikeen (polytheists) couldn't even see him. There is a book in Persian, written in metrical form (versified) by Allama Bazil Irani, on the History of Islam. Allama Bazil Irani is a Shia scholar and the book is titled 'Hamla-e Haideri'. He describes in verse when the Holy Prophet^{-saws} set out on his Hijrah, he^{-saws} went towards the house of Abu Bakr^{-rau} and granted him^{-rau} the honour to accompany him^{-saws}. His^{-rau} daughter, Hazrat Asma^{-rau} packed some provisions for the journey. He (Allama Bazil) illustrates the scene, as they went towards the Saur Mountain: "When they walked some distance in the wilderness, the blessed feet of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} became wounded and blistered, then Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} hoisted the Holy Prophet^{-saws} on to his shoulders". He goes on further to say, "It is greatly astonishing for any man to muster such strength as to be able to carry the weight of Prophethood on him."

What I want to put across is that this moment too, was granted to Sayyedena Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau}. His shoulders were carrying the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and his feet were the only contact with the terrestrial universe, meaning that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} was the only connection between the terrestrial universe and the Prophet^{-saws} of Mercy.

Then, the Quran states about the (events in the) Cave of Saur:

The Second of two; when they two were in the Cave. (At Taubah: 40)

Meaning that: the second of the two was the Companion in the Cave. That is, two personalities are unique in the entire universe: the Holy Prophet^{-saws} among the Prophets^{-as} and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} among the non-Prophets. The Aulia **Allah** and the Righteous people are also blessed with Divine Companionship, but it is related to their (particular) human attributes, as it is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

Indeed, Allah is with those who patiently persevere'. (Al Baqarah: 153)

Allah^{-swt} is with those who are patient. The meaning here is that if the attribute of patience is abandoned, the Divine Companionship would also be lost. Now the Prophets^{-as} are, always and at all times blessed with Divine Companionship. There is no danger of their losing it, however this Companionship is *Attributive*, as Hazrat Musa^{-as} stated,

My Rabb is with me. (Al Shu'araa: 62).

'Rabb' is **Allah**^{-swt}'s Attributive Name. But, there are just two Personalities in the world, who are blessed with *Personal* Divine Companionship. It is stated:

Verily, Allah is with us. (At Taubah: 40)

Assuredly **Allah**^{-swt} is with *us*. Here, there is no mention of an attribute, neither on part of mankind, nor on part of the Divine; rather the person of the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and the person of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} are blessed with the Personal Nearness of **Allah**^{-swt}. In the entire mankind these are the only two personalities: One among the Prophets^{-as}, the Holy Prophet^{-saws} himself, and the other from among the non-Prophets, and he is Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau}. Therefore, whatever favours, bounties and blessings are distributed from the Illustrious Prophetic Court, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{-rau} is the connector between the Holy Prophet^{-saws} and the rest of the Ummah, and the Nisbat Owaisiah initiates from him; for that reason the Bai'at is taken with him. Then, all blessings from him were received by Hazrat Umar^{-rau}, and after him by Hazrat Usman^{-rau} and then from him by Hazrat Ali^{-rau}. However, they began being dispersed after Hazrat Ali^{-rau}. Thereafter, no single personality could be the recipient of the total blessings; instead various personalities received them in different ways. After him, there could be no personality with comprehensive attributes like him^{-rau}. Therefore, all the Salasil of Tasawwuf converge on Hazrat Ali^{-rau} except for the Nisbat Owaisiah. Hence, after Hazrat Abu Bakr^{-rau}, the Bai'at is taken with Hazrat Ali^{-rau}.

In the illustrious Prophetic Court, a register is placed in front of Hazrat Ali^{-rau}, which contains the details about all Aulia of the Ummah. It is in this illustrious Court that all great matters are presented and decisions taken. It is a spectacular sight: the concerned personalities are present, consultation is allowed, rather it is sought, and then the judgment is delivered by the President of the assembly, meaning the Holy Prophet^{-saws} himself.

It is not necessary that these things be told, but normally the Ghaus and higher titleholders are consulted. Often these titleholders who have passed from this world are also present and included in the consultation. I want to present an example: A Ruler was imprisoned after dismissal and was charged with murder, and his case

was being decided. I was then in Mardan and Hazrat Ji^{-rua} was also staying there. We went to sleep after Zikr at night, and I saw that the Illustrious Court was in session, and consultations were being made regarding the deposed Ruler. I was also standing to one side, with hands folded (*with respect*). Various personalities submitted their deliberations, the summary of which was that his authority had already been withdrawn, and he should not be given any authority in future, and he should be set free; he would face the consequences of his own actions. Finally, it was indicated to me to express my opinion. I submitted, ‘Ya Rasool^{-saws} **Allah**, these personalities have since passed from the world, but we are the ones who are facing these circumstances. He is the person about whom a belief of supernatural personality has begun to form, and he is the standard bearer of his particular ‘ism’ against the Deen. He should be hanged, and his hands and feet should be tied up before hanging just like ordinary criminals, so that it is realized that he was just an ordinary man, not some superior being.’ The matter concluded there. In the morning after Zikr and Salah, I related my dream before Hazrat Ji^{-rua}. He replied, ‘It was not a dream, it was a Mushahidah. In any case, if you are ever called again, remain firm on this submission.’ Of course the decision, as desired by the Holy Prophet^{-saws} will be approved by **Allah** Kareem.’ Thereafter, his trial went on for a long time, and many governments of the world intervened, but it was that decision which was effected, and he was hanged exactly in the same manner. These matters are really astounding, but if anyone wants, he can try and see for himself.

The people who attend this Court are very fortunate. In fact, the death of a person who is Fana fi Rasool^{-saws}, occurs in a manner that his Rooh is present in the Illustrious Prophetic Court and the Angel of Death disconnects its link with the body and the world. Subhan **Allah**! How wonderful these people are, they live among us in this very world, but how fortunate that they are endowed with such blessings!

The death of Hazrat Ji^{-rua} is also an event belonging to the same category. I have already written that, the evening that Hazrat Ji^{-rua} passed away, he was in Islamabad. I had returned from there and intended to go back the next morning. In the evening a condition of ‘Istighraaq’ (deep absorption) descended on me. This is a condition in which one can hear everything but is unable to make any movement and appears motionless. I was sitting on my bed then I lay down. I saw that there was some extra activity in the Court of the Holy Prophet^{-saws}, some special event. Then I saw that Hazrat Ji^{-rua} arrived and was being accorded great respect; he was granted a special dress and was being presented in the Illustrious Prophetic Court, and being accorded great honour. By then someone came running to our house and started informing my family about Hazrat Ji^{-rua}’s passing away. I could hear him and also my family, but I

was spiritually in the Illustrious Court and could not move. When that state passed, I got up and left for Islamabad.

These wondrous occurrences pertain to those people who have been granted these blessings from **Allah** Kareem. Here (in this Maraqbah), another Maraqbah Fana dar Fana is also conducted, but there is no need to write about it, as it is not conducted generally but specifically to a select few. Similarly, there is the Maraqbah of conversing with inorganic matter and vegetation, but again not everybody but a very few people are conducted in it. Yes these are the stations and meditations up to Fana Baqa, which most people have written as the end of Sulook. The reality is that that this is just the beginning and the ABC of Sulook. Those who attain these blessings are then taken along the Path of Tasawwuf, which, as I have already stated, is limitless. It is up to **Allah** Kareem, to take whom He^{-swt} wills to where and what stations, and to bestow upon him the rank and status that He^{-swt} wills.

And the conclusion of our speech is: All Praise is for **Allah**, the Rabb of the Universe

May **Allah**^{-swt} shower His choicest Favours on the Best of His Creation, Muhammad^{-saws}, his family and his Companions, all!

Glossary

Aalam-e Amr	The Realm of Command
Ahbab	Friends, loved ones, also used for members of a Silsilah
Ahl Allah	Men of Allah , saints
Ahl-e Hadees	A sect of Muslims, who strictly follow the Hadees
Aqeedah	Belief
Arsh-e Azeem	The Grand Throne, the Divine Throne
Ayah	A verse of the Holy Quran
Bai'at	Oath of Allegiance, the rite of initiation, the Spiritual Pledge
Bait Allah	House of Allah ^{-swt} , the K'abah in Makkah Mukarramah
Barzakh	Lit. Barrier. The abode for spirits during the period between death and the Resurrection
Darood Sharif	Invocation, by Muslims, of Allah 's choicest favours and blessings on Prophet Muhammad ^{-saws}
Dawa'ir-e Salasah	The Three Circles (of Love) - a spiritual meditation
Deen	The Religion, representing the complete Code of Life
Fana Baqa	Passing away from self (Fana) into the consciousness of survival in Allah ^{-swt} (Baqa).
Fana fir Rasool	Passing away from self (Fana) before (in the presence of) the Holy Prophet ^{-saws}
Faqeer	Lit.: destitute, used as an expression of humbleness. A Sufi title.
Farz	Compulsory, obligatory act(s) of worship
Fiqh	The Islamic jurisprudence, the religious law

Ghusaal	The person who bathes a dead body
Hadees Sharif	Anything attributed to the Holy Prophet ^{-saws} , which may be a saying or an action, his appearance, behaviour, state, or anything said or done in his august presence, to which he consented
Hafiz-e Quran	A Muslim who memorizes the Holy Quran by heart
Halaal	Permitted, allowed
Halat-e Jazb	State of absorption
Ilham	A direct Divine inspiration flashing into an enlightened heart; intuition
Ilqa	The focusing of Divine lights by a Sufi Master from his spiritual stations onto a seeker, absorbed according to the latter's capacity
Imam-al Anbiya	The Leader of the Prophets, a title of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ^{-saws} .
Iman	Faith
Jannah	Paradise
Jazb	Absorption
Karamah/ Karamaat	A marvel. A supernatural/ wondrous act emanating from a Wali as distinct from M'ujazah (miracle), which is particular to the Prophets.
Kareem	Kind, generous, munificent
Kashf	The perceptive insight leading to spiritual manifestations
Khilafat	Robe of Succession
Khulafa'a-e Rashideen	The first four righteous Caliphs: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Usman and 'Ali ^{-rau}
Kuffaar	The disbelievers, infidels

Glossary

Latifah/ Lata'if	The Subtleties, the spiritual organs of the Rooh through which it absorbs Divine Lights; these are: 1) Qalb, 2) Rooh, 3) Sirri, 4) Khaffi, 5) Akhfa, 6) Nafs and 7) Sultan al Azkaar.
M'ujezah	Miracle, a supernatural act/ occurrence/ event taking place at the hands of a Prophet
Majnoon	Mad, lunatic, lacking wisdom
Majzoob	Absorbed, the rapt spiritual seeker
Maqbool ud-D'awaat	Those noble personalities whose prayers are normally accepted and answered
Maraqbah/ Maraqbaat	Meditation(s)
Masjid-e Nabvi	Masjid of the Holy Prophet ^{-saws} in Madinah Munawwarah
Mubah	Permitted
Mujaddid	Reviver
Mushahidah/ Mushahidaat	Spiritual vision(s)
Mushrikeen	Polytheists
Nisbat	Association, connection
Noor	Light
Ool-ul Azm	Exalted
Peeri Mureedi	The Shaikh-Salik (spiritual teacher-student) relationship
Qalb	Heart
Qutb/ Qutb-e Irshad	The title of one of the senior Aulia Allah
Rabb	Lord, Sustainer
Rabitah	Connection
Rauza-e Athar	The Final Resting Place of the Holy Prophet ^{-saws} in Masjid-e Nabvi at Madinah Munawwarah
Ruku	The act/ position of Bending down during Salah

Sahabi/ Sahabah Karaam	The Illustrious Companion(s) of the Holy Prophet ^{-saws}
Sajdah	The act/ position of Prostration during Salah
Sajdah-e Tilawat	A Sajdah performed when reciting an Ayah of the Holy Quran that mentions a Sajdah. There are fifteen such Ayaat in the Holy Quran.
Salah	A compulsory worship performed five times daily by Muslims
Salik	A seeker
Sathi	A companion, friend
Saum	The Muslim Fast
Sayyedena	Our leader/ respectable senior
Shaikh/ Masha'ikh	Spiritual guide(s)/ teacher(s)
Shaitan	Satan
Shari'ah	The Revealed Law
Silsilah/ Salasil	The Sufi Order(s)
Suhbat	Company
Sulook	The Way, the Spiritual Path
Sunnah	The Prophet's practice or code of conduct
Tab'a Taba'een	The Righteous Group of Muslims who followed the Taba'een
Taba'een	The Righteous Group of Muslims who followed the Sahabah Karaam
Tableegh	(Islamic) Preaching
Tahajjad	The Pre-dawn Salah
Takbeer	The shout of Allah-o Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)
Talbeeh/ Talbihaat	The recitation of 'Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik' during performance of Hajj

Glossary

Tasawwuf	Lit. Purification. The Sufi way of self-reformation/ attaining Divine Gnosis
Tasbeeh/ Tasbihaat	Lit. Glorification. An act of oral recitation/ counting of sacred verses/ words
Taubah	Repentance
Tawajjuh	Attention, spiritual attention
Tazkiyah	Purification
Ulama	Scholars, learned people, usually used for religious scholars
Ulama-e Rabbani	The Righteous Religious Scholars
Umrah	The Short Pilgrimage
Ustad al Mukarram	The Honourable Teacher, a title used for Maulana Allah Yar Khan ^{-rua}
Wajdan	Intuition
Wajib	Obligatory. However, it is considered second to Farz in obligation.
Wajood	Existence
Wali/ Aulia	Allah's chosen friend(s)
Wazaif	Recitations/ incantations
Wilayah	Being in Allah's guidance, sainthood
Zakat	A Muslim, in possession of a certain amount of wealth or more for one complete year, is required by the Religion to spend its one fortieth at the end of year, on the poor, the needy, the wayfarer and on such other acts of charity and good doings as are prescribed for it by Allah.
Zakir	A Muslim who performs Zikr
Zikr Allah	Remembrance of Allah ^{-swt} , the repeated invocation of His Name, by word of mouth or by the heart

Zikr-e Amlī	Remembrance of Allah by noble acts/ deeds/ practical conduct
Zikr-e Lisānī	Remembrance of Allah by word of mouth
Zikr-e Qalbī	It is a method of Zikr, within the heart, which cannot be discerned even by the Recording Angels. It is also termed as Zikr-e Khaffī



"Every period of time has its specific requirements, and Allah Kareem can take whatever service He-swt desires from whosoever He-swt Wills. Perhaps this service was destined for me".

- Ameer Muhammad Akram Awan

Ameer Muhammad Akram Awan is the present Shaikh of the Silsilah Naqshbandiah Owaisiah. He is the spiritually-gifted illustrious successor of Hazrat Allah Yar Khan-rua, one of the greatest Sufi Masters of the Muslim Ummah.

To enlighten the earnest seekers of the ultimate Truth, the Shaikh has penned Kanooz-e Dil, which elaborates further upon the rare spiritual knowledge contained in his previous treatise Ramooz-e Dil. This collection of profound understanding represents an invaluable direction to the Stages of the Spiritual Path and the guidance to achieve them. Thus far no one has elucidated upon this spiritually veiled knowledge with such lucidity and openness.

It is the Shaikh's wish to reveal and share these priceless treasures of the heart with all Muslims to awaken in them the urge to seek the ultimate truth and enlighten both their worlds through the Grace of Allah-swt and by the Blessings emanating from the Holy Prophet-saws.