

Appreciate Blessings

27-October-2022



Thought-provoking speech of weekly
sunnah-inspiring ijtima

(For Islamic Brothers)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
 أَمَا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Appreciate Blessings

وَعَلَى إِلِكْ وَأَصْحِبِكْ يَا حَبِيبَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

وَعَلَى إِلِكْ وَأَصْحِبِكْ يَا نُورَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ

نَوَيْتُ سُنَّتَ الْإِعْتِكَافِ

Translation: “I have made the intention of Sunnah *i'tikaf*.”

Dear Islamic brothers, whenever you enter a masjid, upon remembering, make the intention of *i'tikaf*, because as long as you stay in the masjid, you will keep getting the reward of *i'tikaf*. Remember, inside a masjid, there is no *shar'i* permission to eat and drink, sleep or have suhoor and iftar, and not even to drink Zamzam water and the water on which *dam* has been made. However, if the intention of *i'tikaf* is made, all these acts will become permissible. One should not make intention to observe *i'tikaf* only to eat, drink or sleep, but rather he should do it for pleasing Allah Almighty.

It is stated in *Fatawa Shaami*: “If someone wants to eat, drink or sleep in a masjid, he should make intention to observe *i'tikaf* and do dhikr of Allah Almighty for some time. Then, whatever he wants, he can do (i.e. now if he wants to eat, drink or sleep, he can do so).”

Excellence of sending *salat* upon the Prophet ﷺ

The final Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَشْرًا بِهَا مَلَكَ مُوَكَّلٌ بِهَا حَتَّى يُبَلِّغَنِيهَا

Translation: “Allah sends 10 mercies upon the one who recites *salat* upon me once, and an angel is appointed to convey that *salat* to me.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated: أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ الْبَيِّنَةُ الصَّادِقَةُ,² meaning, a truthful intention is the best action.² O devotees of the Prophet, get into the habit of making good intentions before every action, because a good intention can be the cause of entering Paradise. Before listening to the *bayan*, make good intentions. For example,

- you will listen to the entire *bayan* to gain the knowledge of Islam.
- you will sit in a respectful manner.
- you will refrain from laziness during the *bayan*.
- you will listen to the *bayan* to reform yourself.
- whatever you hear and learn, you will attempt to pass onto others.

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

Listen to an admonitory account from page 269 of Makataba-tul-Madinah’s ‘Uyun al-Hikayat’ (Part 1) and try to infuse your heart with the aroma of its fragrant Madani pearls.

¹ Al-Mu’jam al-Kabir, vol. 8, p. 134, raqm 7611

² Jami’ al-Saghir, p. 81, hadith 1,284

Unique supplication for protection against sins

Sayyiduna Malik ibn Anas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ relates:

Sayyiduna Yunus ibn Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was one of the famous, noble awliya of his age. He used to spend most of his time in the Masjid, engaged in the worship of his Lord. He was in his youth, and he had dedicated it to the worship of Allah. Once he was coming out of the Masjid, when suddenly, his gaze fell on a young woman in the path, and his heart inclined towards her for a short while. However, he immediately regretted this act and raised his hands for supplication in the Court of Allah, supplicating with the words, "O my Lord! No doubt, you have blessed me with eyes, which are a great blessing, but I fear lest I suffer punishment due to these eyes, and they become a cause of my destruction. O my Lord! Take away my sight."

As soon as he completed his supplication, he had lost his sight and became blind. Thereafter, he used to keep his nephew with him, who would take him to the masjid at prayer times and would help him with his other needs. Sayyiduna Yunus ibn Yusuf's nephew would leave him at the masjid, and then he would go to play with the children himself. When he would have any need, he would call his nephew.

Once, Sayyiduna Yunus Bin Yusuf was in the Masjid when he felt something crawling on his body. He called his nephew, but he was so engrossed in playing with the children that he did not come to him. He was afraid lest some creature cause him harm. Therefore, he supplicated, pleading in the court of Allah Almighty with these words, "O my merciful, generous Lord! You blessed me with eyes, which were a great blessing, but I feared lest their incorrect use become a cause of me being afflicted with punishment. Therefore, I supplicated, asking you to remove my

sight. O my Lord! Now I fear that if I do not gain my sight back, it may become a cause of tribulation and disgrace for me. As I am not able to see anything, a dangerous animal may harm me, and I am constantly in need of turning to others to fulfil my needs, which is a cause of anguish for me. O my Lord! Restore my sight, so that I am saved from disgrace and dependence on others.”

Sayyiduna Malik ibn Anas رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states:

That pious man had not yet completed his supplication that he regained his sight, and without anyone’s help, returned to his home. I have seen him in both states, in the state of blindness, and then through the blessing of supplication, the state in which his eyesight was restored. He would then go to the masjid by himself and worship his Lord.

Dear Islamic brothers, you have heard how our pious predecessors were fearful of Allah Almighty, modest, punctual in prayers, grateful and mustajab al-da’wat (those whose supplications are accepted). They understood the real meaning and value of the blessings bestowed by Allah Almighty. If their eyes unintentionally fell upon an ajnabi (non-mahram) woman, rather than succumbing to the temptation of Shaytan and losing themselves in her beauty, wandering after her and have indecent thoughts about her, like immodest people, they would feel very ashamed because they were aware of the reality of the eyes being a great blessing.

They knew that using these eyes in permissible acts was gratitude for this blessing and using them for impermissible acts, alongside being foolishness and ungrateful, would make them deserving of Hell. When they saw themselves unable to fulfil the right of this blessing, they would supplicate in the court of Allah Almighty for its removal, so that their eyesight would not fall upon a non-mahram woman again.

Here, this ruling should also be borne in mind that if one's gaze unintentionally falls upon a non-mahram woman, it is wajib to look away immediately, and to look again is impermissible. The beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to Sayyiduna 'Ali al-Murtada كَرَّمَ اللهُ تَعَالَى وَجْهَهُ الْكَرِيمَ, "O 'Ali! Do not follow the first glance with a second (i.e. if your eyesight falls upon a woman, unintentionally, then avert your gaze immediately and do not look again), because the first glance is permissible and the second is not."¹

Mufti Ahmad Yar Khan Na'imi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ states that the meaning of the first glance is that which unintentionally falls on a non-mahram woman, and the second glance is that which is intentional. If one persists in the first glance, it will also be in the ruling of the second; therefore, one will be sinful for this first glance.²

Another Madani pearl we gain from this account is that despite being deprived of the blessing of sight, the pious servants of Allah Almighty would still go to the masjid and offer prayer in congregation. They would have the mindset that even if we do not have the blessing of sight, we still have the blessing of other limbs, such as hands, feet etc. Therefore, these noble personalities would take the support of someone in reaching the masjid to attain the blessings of offering prayer in congregation.

If only we gain true appreciation for blessings, protection of our eyes, the blessing of attending the masjid and a passion for offering prayers in congregation for the sake of these pious predecessors.

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ Inspiring Muslims with the mindset of being punctual in attending the masjid and offering prayer in congregation, the renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas

¹ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhi*, vol. 4, p. 356, hadith 2786

² *Mirāt al-Manājīh*, vol. 5, p. 17

Attar Qadiri **دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ**, mentions as point 2 in the *Pious Deeds* booklet:

“Today, have you offered the five daily salahs with jama’at (congregation)?”

Regarding this pious deed, the leader of Ahl al-Sunnah **دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ** states in his booklet ‘Method of Becoming Pious’:

“If someone is consistent in just this one deed, in its true meaning, he will gain salvation.”

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, there is no doubt that the field of science and technology is in a state of development and advancement. New research and new inventions are coming out daily. Through the latest technology, the computation of thousands, millions, billions, in fact trillions of things can be performed with ease. However, despite such advancements, to this day, no technology has been produced that is able to enumerate the blessings of Allah Almighty. The bounties of Allah Almighty are countless. To this day, no one has been able to enumerate them, nor will anybody be able to do so in the future.

In part 14 of the noble Qur’an, Surah al-Nahl, verse 18, Allah Almighty states about His blessings:

وَإِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصَوْهَا^ط

“And if you count the Favours of Allah, you will therefore never be able to count them.”¹

¹ [Kanz-ul-Iman (translation of Quran)] (Part 14, Surah Al-Nahl, verse 18)

It is written in Tafsir 'Sirat al-Jinan' in the commentary of this noble verse that the blessings in the creation of a human being are so vast that it is impossible to enumerate them. For example, a healthy form, a body free from ailments, healthy eyes, sound intellect, hearing which aids in understanding, hands that can grasp, feet that can walk, and all the blessings that have been showered on a person, such as the things created for the fulfilment of a human's worldly and religious needs. If someone attempted to comprehend the smallest blessing of Allah Almighty, he would not be able to. So, what can be said of those blessings that all of creation, together, cannot enumerate? For this reason, Allah Almighty mentioned that if you attempt to enumerate the blessings of Allah Almighty, expending your entire lives in this, you will not be able to do so.¹

Dear Islamic brothers, we learn that many lifetimes may cease, but we will never be able to enumerate the blessings of Allah Almighty, nor will we be able to fulfil the right of a single blessing from amongst them. Intelligence necessitates that just as we consider wealth, health, happiness, youth, well-being, etc. as blessings and only express appreciation for Allah's blessings in these states and show gratitude to Him, we should also avoid complaining before people and mentioning our sorrows in the state of poverty, bankruptcy, illness, disability, old age, weakness, pains and calamities. Instead, we should remember His other blessings, be patient and grateful, thanking Him profusely for all these blessings, because we unappreciative people are not even worthy of receiving any blessing.

It was incumbent upon us that having been bestowed with blessings, out of gratitude, we should have performed acts that are pleasing to Allah Almighty and avoided those acts that earn His displeasure. However, it is unfortunate that by following in the footsteps of others,

¹ *Tafsīr al-Khāzin, Surah Al-Nahl, verse 3, vol. 18, p. 117*

many Muslims upon receiving blessings and on occasions of happiness, such as ‘aqiqah, engagement, wedding, Independence Day, etc., instead of expressing gratitude in these functions, **مَعَادَ اللَّهِ** earn the displeasure of Allah Almighty, destroying their afterlife through openly engaging in Satanic acts, such as music, bizarre antics and customs that oppose the shari’ah.

Remember! This is never the way to show gratitude for blessings. On the contrary, this is total ingratitude, because playing and listening to music are haram acts that lead to Hell, and doing such things upon receiving a blessing is particularly bad.

Let us listen to three narrations that mention the destructions of music, and take admonition:

1. Two sounds are cursed in this world and the hereafter: 1) the sound of musical instruments upon a blessing, 2) wailing at the time of calamity.¹
2. Whoever sits with a songstress and listens attentively, Allah Almighty will pour molten lead into his ears on the Day of Judgement.²
3. ‘Allamah Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ** narrates, “Save yourself from music and instruments as they incite desire, destroy your sense of shame, are equivalent to alcohol and cause intoxication like it.”³

Dear Islamic brothers, how deep-rooted was the passion for displaying gratitude for blessings in our pious predecessors! This can be appreciated from the way these noble personalities would refrain from expressing their anxieties before others and falling into ingratitude,

¹ *Al-Kamil fi Du’afaa al-Rijaal*, vol. 7, p. 299

² *Ibn ‘Asakir*, vol. 15, p. 263

³ *Shu’ab al-‘Imān*, vol. 4, p. 280, hadith 5,108

despite being surrounded by different trials and tribulations. When someone would express amazement at the completely tranquil manner in which they would conduct their lives, remaining patient and grateful in spite of their ordeals, they would mention the other favours of their Lord Almighty in such a beautiful manner that the listener would be left feeling as though they were experiencing every ease.

Let us listen to an account of one such patient, grateful, pious predecessor and attempt to adorn our hearts with the Madani pearls gleaned from it.

Gratitude in adversity

Sayyiduna Imam al-Awza'i رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states that a pious predecessor related the following account to him:

I was always anxiously in search of the noble awliya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِم and in search of them, I would wander the deserts, mountains, and jungles so that I could avail the blessings of their company. Once, for this very purpose I headed towards Egypt. Nearing Egypt, I saw a tent in a deserted area in which there was a man who had lost his hands, feet and eyes to leprosy. However, even in this state, that great individual was praising and expressing gratitude to his Lord in these words, "O my Lord! I praise you with a praise equal to the praise of all Your creation. O my Lord! Indeed, You are the Creator of all creation, and You are superior to all. I express gratitude to You upon You blessing me by favouring me over many people amongst Your creation."

The pious predecessor رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned that upon seeing this state of that person, he said, "By Allah Almighty! I will indeed ask this person if he has been taught these pure words of praise or he has been inspired with them." Therefore, he went towards

him with this intention and greeted him with salam and he replied.

He said to him, “O pious man! I want to ask you something; will you answer me?”

He replied, “If I know the answer, **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ** I will most certainly reply.”

He asked him, “Which blessing is it that you are praising Allah Almighty upon, and which favour is it that you are expressing gratitude for?” (Despite having lost your hands, feet, and eyes etc., you are still mentioning praise).

That person said, “Do you not see how my Lord has dealt with me?”

He replied, “Why not? I have seen everything.”

Then he said, “Look! If Allah Almighty willed, He could send down fire from the sky that would burn me, turning me into ashes. If Allah Almighty willed, He could command the mountains to destroy me or order the ocean to drown me and then instruct the Earth to swallow me. However, do you not see that Allah Almighty protected me from all these calamities? So, why should I not express gratitude to my Lord? Why should I not praise and love Him?”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! Dear Islamic brothers, did you hear how the pious servants of Allah Almighty, despite being deprived of some blessings, remained patient and grateful as though those blessings had never been

¹ 'Uyoon al-Hikayat, vol. 1, p. 146

removed? Therefore, following the example of these pious personalities, we should adopt a habit of being patient upon adversities and showing gratitude upon blessings, because these are two such lofty practices that through their blessings a person attains the elevated (saintly) rank of siddiqiyah.

The rank of the patient

Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا states that the first thing Allah Almighty recorded in the Lawh al-Mahfuz was:

No one is worthy of worship except Me! The Prophet Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ is My messenger. Whoever accepted my decree, was patient on the difficulty I sent down and expressed gratitude for My blessings, I have written him as a ‘siddiq’ (veracious), and I will raise him with the siddiqin. Whoever did not accept My decree, was not patient on the difficulty I sent down and did not express gratitude for My blessings, let him worship whoever he wishes besides Me.¹

Sayyiduna ‘Allamah ‘Abd al-Ra’uf al-Munawi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ mentions regarding this hadith:

Every affair of the believer is amazing. This is because there is goodness in all his affairs, whereas the disbelievers and hypocrites have not attained this virtue at all. If a believer is granted health and well-being, he expresses gratitude to Allah Almighty. This is good for him as he is recorded amongst the shakirin (grateful). When a difficulty befalls him, he is patient and is recorded amongst the sabirin (patient), whose virtues have been extolled in the noble Qur’an. When he remains afflicted by that distress, the doors of mercy remain open for him, so this is

¹ *Tafsīr al-Qurtubi, Para 30, Surah Al-Burooj, verse 22, vol. 10, p. 210*

also better for him. Therefore, every believer should express gratitude to Allah Almighty—the bestower of blessings—upon receiving a blessing, be patient when afflicted by distress, fulfil the commands and avoid the prohibitions.¹

Dear Islamic Brothers, if we contemplate upon our bodies, it dawns on us that our entire body is the centre of countless blessings of Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty has bestowed upon us many blessings, such as breathing for the continuation of life, feet for walking, hands for grasping, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, a nose for smelling, a tongue for speaking, and a stomach for digesting food. Apart from these, there are countless other unique blessings that we are enjoying day and night.

However, the question arises, have we ever shown gratitude for these blessings and attempted to fulfil their right? Alternatively, (مَعَادَةَ اللَّهِ), have we used these blessings in acts of disobedience and become deserving of Allah Almighty's anger? Those nations that became embroiled in indulgence and engaged in sins fell into the pit of destruction.

Hence, in volume 4, page 27 of 'Sirat al-Jinan', it is mentioned:

Divine law governing the rise and fall of nations

It is the divine Law that when a nation is granted a blessing, it is not exchanged for a punishment until that nation does not make itself unworthy of that blessing through its own evil deeds. This is the unwavering principle governing the rise and fall of bygone and present-day nations; a blessing increases upon expressing gratitude for it and fulfilling its right, and punishment descends upon ingratitude. Here, this

¹ *Fayd al-Qadeer, vol. 4, p. 399, hadith 5,382*

matter should be kept in mind that this principle is not specific to the disbelieving nations.

If the Muslims proceed on this same path, Allah Almighty removes the blessings He bestowed upon them, and they are left to face humiliation. Those who have knowledge of the causes of the rise and decline of the Muslims know well that as long as the Muslims expressed gratitude and fulfilled the right of the blessings bestowed upon them, they attained ranks of ascendancy.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Gratitude of the bodily limbs

Sayyiduna Muhammad ibn Hani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ relates from a friend of his that a man asked Sayyiduna Abu Hazim رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, “O Abu Hazim! What is the gratitude of the eyes?”

He replied, “Whatever good thing you see with them, you should publicise it, and whatever wrong thing you see through them, you should conceal it.”

The man enquired, “What is the gratitude of the ears?”

He answered, “If you hear a good matter through them, remember it, and if you hear something bad, conceal it.”

The man questioned, “What is the gratitude of the hands?”

He declared, “Do not acquire with them such a thing (for example, haram wealth, etc.) which is impermissible for you, and whatever right of Allah Almighty is linked to them (such as obligatory charity), do not withhold it.”

¹ *Sirat al-Jinan*, vol. 4, p. 27

The man asked, “What is the gratitude of the stomach?”

He said, “The gratitude of the stomach is that food be in its lower portion whereas its upper portion be replete with knowledge.”

The man enquired, “What is the gratitude of the private parts?”

In reply, he recited a noble verse of the holy Qur’an:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ يُفْرُوهُمْ حَافِظُونَ ۗ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ۗ

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ۗ

And those who protect their private parts. Except from their wives or the lawful handmaids whom they possess; that there is no blame upon them. So, whoever desires anything more than these two, only they are the transgressors.¹

The man asked, “What is the gratitude of the feet?”

He answered, “If you see such a living person whom you long to be like, use your feet in acting like him (i.e. do pious deeds), and if you see such a deceased person that you are repulsed by, then prevent your feet from acts like his (i.e. do not raise your feet towards acts of evil). In this way, you will become a person who expresses gratitude to Allah Almighty. The similitude of a person who merely expresses gratitude on his tongue without the rest of his limbs is like that of a person who has a garment; he holds one corner of it but does not wear it; that garment will not benefit as a protection against heat, cold, snow and rain.”²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ [Kanz-ul-Iman (translation of Quran)] (Part 18, Surah Al-Mu'minoon, verses 5 - 7)

² Hilyat al-Awliya, vol. 3, p. 279, raqm 3,963

Dear Islamic brothers, without a doubt, the pure lives of our pious predecessors are a beacon of light for us. It is as though the words of ingratitude were not even in their vocabularies as they were the true appreciators of blessings. They were never heedless of remembering and expressing gratitude for the blessings of Allah Almighty. Their manner of gratitude was so beautiful that when they ate, wore clothes, or performed any act, they would mention the blessings of Allah Almighty. At times, their nights would be expended enumerating the bounties of Allah Almighty such that this would continue into the morning.

Let us observe the manner of gratitude of some pious predecessors by way of encouragement and develop a habit of showing gratitude for the blessings of Allah Almighty.

Reason for calling Sayyiduna Nuh عَبْدًا شَكُورًا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام ‘a grateful bondsman’

Sayyiduna Sa’d ibn Mas’ud al-Thaqafi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states that Sayyiduna Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was called عَبْدًا شَكُورًا ‘a grateful bondsman’ in the noble Qur’an, because whenever he عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام would wear new clothes or eat, he عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام would express gratitude to Allah Almighty.¹

Sayyiduna ibn Nabatah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentions that when Sayyiduna Amir al-Mu’minin, ‘Ali al-Murtada كَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَجْهَهُ أَكْرَمَ would go to answer the call of nature, he would say, بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْخَافِظِ الْبُودِي. e. “In the name of Allah Almighty, the Protector, the One that brings things to their completion.” Afterwards, he would place his hand on his stomach, saying, يَا لَهَا مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ لَوْ

¹ *Shukr Kay Fazaail*, p. 26

رَيْعَلَمُ الْعِبَادِ شُكْرَهَا, i.e. “What a great blessing it is. If only people knew how to be grateful for it.”¹

The gratitude of Sayyiduna Hasan al-Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ

Imam Hasan al-Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ would begin his conversation in this manner:

All praise belongs to Allah Almighty. O Allah Almighty! O our Lord! Praise belongs to You that You created us. You granted us provision, guided us, gave us knowledge, granted us salvation and removed difficulty from us. Praise belongs to You for the blessings of Islam and the noble Qur’an, and for the blessings of family, children, wealth, health and well-being. You have abased our enemies, expanded our provision, granted this Ummah supremacy, gathered us when we were divided and conferred upon us health and well-being. O our Lord! You granted us whatever we asked. Upon this is our endless gratitude and upon every blessing of Yours, new or old, hidden or apparent, specific or general, that which remains or has ceased, is present or absent. Praise be to You until You are pleased, and praise be to You even after You are pleased.”²

Nightlong mention of blessings

Sayyiduna ibn Abi Hawari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ relates that Sayyiduna Fudayl ibn ‘Iyad and Sayyiduna Sufyan ibn ‘Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا spent an entire night mentioning the blessings of Allah Almighty to one another. Sayyiduna Sufyan ibn ‘Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said, “Allah Almighty granted these

¹ *Shu’ab al-Īmān, vol. 4, p. 113, hadith 4,468*

² *Shukr Kay Fazaail, p. 24*

blessings, those blessings, conferred these favours upon us and those favours.” (In this manner, this discussion continued until the morning.)¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

One of the 12 Madani Activites: ‘Tafsir Halaqah’

Dear Islamic brothers, the way to express gratitude for Allah Almighty’s blessings is that we carry out acts of obedience and avoid His disobedience. This is why Dawat-e-Islami’s religious environment is a great platform; you should also become attached to it. In the religious environment of Dawat-e-Islami, encouragement is given to avoid sins, adopt pious actions and act upon the shari’ah. Similarly, a mindset is given about how we can improve our lives in accordance with the requirements of the sharia’h, and how we can prepare for Paradise.

The company of the devotees of the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ in Madani qafilahs, the speeches in the Sunnah-inspired ijtimas, study circles and the post-Fajr ‘tafsir halaqah’, are all parts of this endeavour. The ‘tafsir halaqah’, after Fajr, is one of the 12 religious activities of Dawat-e-Islami. In this activity, the following are recited, on a daily basis: three verses of the noble Qur’an, with translation from Kanz-ul-Iman and tafsir (exegesis) from ‘Khaza’in-ul-Irfan’/’Nur-ul-‘Irfan’/’Sirat-ul-Jinan’; a 4-page dars from ‘Faizan-e-Sunnat’; and couplets from the Shajarah Qadiriyyah, Ridawiyyah, Diya’iyyah, ‘Attariyyah.

Through the blessings of this ‘tafsir halaqah’, the masjid is populated, there is an opportunity to listen to the recital of the noble Qur’an and glean various Madani pearls of knowledge. What can be said about the virtue of reciting, teaching, listening to, explaining and understanding the noble Qur’an!

¹ *Shu’ab al-Īmān, vol. 4, p. 110, hadith 4,452*

It is related in Sahih al-Bukhari that the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated, **خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ** “The best from among you is the one who learned the Qur’an and taught it to others.”¹

Dear Islamic brothers, how blessed a start to one’s day it will be to attend the post-Fajr tafsir halaqah, gaining the blessings of hearing the recital of the noble Qur’an, its translation, its tafsir; a 4-page dars from Faizan-e-Sunnat; litanies; and the Shajarah filled with the remembrance of the noble awliya.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, in order to save ourselves from the habit of ingratitude, let us listen to some warnings against ingratitude in light of the statements of the pious predecessors.

Warnings against ingratitude

The fourth Caliph of Islam, Sayyiduna ‘Ali bin Abi Talib كَرَّمَ اللهُ تَعَالَى وَجْهَهُ الْكَرِيمِ states, “Save yourselves from the removal of blessings because that which is lost is not gained once more.” He further mentions, “When you begin receiving blessings from here and there, do not sever yourself from their continuity by becoming ungrateful.”²

Sayyiduna Mughirah bin Shu’bah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says, “Whoever confers a blessing on you, show gratitude to him, and whoever expresses gratitude to you, confer a blessing on him, because a blessing does not remain with ingratitude and is not removed due to being thankful.”³

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 3, p. 410, hadith 5,027

² *Deen Aur Dunya Ki Anokhi Baatayn*, p. 515

³ *Deen Aur Dunya Ki Anokhi Baatayn*, p. 514

Sayyiduna ibn A'ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ expressed, "It is related that when Allah Almighty bestows a blessing on a person and that person acts oppressively in relation to it, Allah Almighty definitely removes that blessing."¹

Sayyiduna Ka'b رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ states;

Whoever is conferred a blessing by Allah Almighty in this world and he expresses gratitude and humbles himself before Allah Almighty due to it, Allah Almighty grants him benefit through it in the world and raises his rank in the hereafter due to it. Whosoever Allah Almighty grants a blessing in this world and he does not express gratitude nor humble himself before Allah Almighty, then Allah Almighty prevents its benefit from him in the world and opens a level of Hell for him. If Allah Almighty wills, He will punish him (in the hereafter) or pardon him.²

Department of Pious Deeds

الْحَيِّدُ لِيْهِ! The 'Department of Pious Deeds' is one department from over 80 departments of Dawat-e-Islami. This department was established, according to the wish of the Leader of Ahl al-Sunnah دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ, in order to make Islamic brothers, Islamic sisters and the students and teachers of Jami'at al-Madinah and Madaris al-Madinah practising individuals and encourage them to act upon the "Pious Deeds" booklet.

The Leader of Ahl al-Sunnah دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ states,

"If only alongside offering the other obligations and Sunnahs, Islamic brothers and sisters would adopt these pious deeds as a guide for actions in their lives, and the responsible individuals of Dawat-e-Islami would make the Pious Deeds booklet widespread

¹ Deen Aur Dunya Ki Anokhi Baatayn, p. 516

² Rasaail Ibn Abi al-Dunya, vol. 3, p. 555, raqm 93

in their circles. If only every Muslim would adopt them with sincerity for the betterment of their grave and afterlife, and, by the grace and mercy of Allah Almighty, gain the great reward of proximity to the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ in Jannat al-Firdaws.”

Let us also participate wholeheartedly in pious works, and not only act upon them ourselves, but also encourage other Islamic brothers to do the same, thereby earning tremendous reward.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Dear Islamic brothers, we heard about the blessings of gratitude and the warnings against ingratitude. It is hoped that the mindset of appreciating blessings, expressing gratitude for them and avoiding ingratitude has settled in our minds. However, remember that in order for us to act according to this righteous thinking and remain steadfast upon it, it is necessary for us to know some ways of expressing gratitude for blessings. Let us listen to some methods of expressing gratitude for the favours of Allah Almighty. Through their blessings, we will become grateful servants of our Lord.

Study gratitude

1) Whenever you are able, study the books of the renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ, and the other books of Maktaba-tul-Madinah. إِنَّ شَاءَ اللهُ Through the blessings of this, you will acquire a treasure of information; alongside this, you will gain the mindset of being grateful. For information about gratitude, study Maktaba-tul-Madinah’s, ‘Shukr kay Fazail’. Volume 4 of Imam Muhammad al-Ghazali’s ‘Ihya al-‘Ulum’, p. 239, is also very beneficial in this regard.

Look at those below you in status

2) In order to inculcate a habit of gratitude, always observe those that are below you in status. Develop a mindset that I have so many blessings and favours bestowed upon me by Allah Almighty, whereas so-and-so is disabled, afflicted by illnesses, subject to anxieties and so-and-so does not own his own home, or car, or nice clothes and is even in need of others for two meals a day.

Reflect on blessings

3) In order to instil the practice of gratitude, reflect on the multitude of Allah Almighty's bounties. He made us the most honoured of creation, made us from the Ummah of the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, granted us affiliation to the Sahabah and the Ahl al-Bayt عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ, the pious predecessors, the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah and our noble murshid, and for their sake, blessed us with this religious environment.

He granted us great blessings, such as the noble Qur'an, iman, blessed days and nights, blessed cities (such as Makkah al-Mukarramah and Madinah al-Munawwarah), masjids and religious seminaries and universities. He also gave us parents, brothers, sisters, limbs, intelligence, senses, air, water, soil, light, homes, work, cold, heat, seasons, the mountains, the Earth, the sky, the moon, the sun, sleep, health, crops, animals, plants, rain, day, night, etc. If we do not receive a particular blessing, we forget all of these; we should never do this.

Express gratitude through your limbs

4) Apart from the tongue, we should also express gratitude through our other limbs, such as hands, feet, eyes, etc., by only carrying out permissible, rewardable acts through them. We should protect our limbs from impermissible, sinful, in fact, even frivolous actions. It is transmitted from Sayyiduna Ziyad رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, "One of the rights of Allah

Almighty upon the one who has gained a blessing is that he does not commit a sin through that blessing.”¹

Be patient in adversity

5) One should adopt the habit of expressing gratitude even in adversity. For example, gratitude is due to Allah Almighty that He did not send a major calamity or illness to me. Our pious predecessors would express happiness in adversity, just as it is reported that:

Sayyiduna Fath Mawsili رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once experienced a headache, so he happily said, “Allah Almighty has granted me that illness which used to come to the noble Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ so I should offer 400 rak’ats of nawafil in gratitude.”²

6) Make a habit of travelling in Madani qafilahs for three days, every month, and taking account of pious deeds on a daily basis, complete the Pious Deeds booklet and hand it in to the local responsible brother on the first of every month. Also make a habit of attending the weekly ijtima’ and participating in the weekly Madani Muzakarah so that you acquire good company and through it become a grateful servant of Allah Almighty.

7) Adopt the habit of watching programmes on Madani Channel. إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ You will develop the habit of being grateful to Allah Almighty for His blessings.

Dear Islamic brothers, drawing the speech to a close, I will gain the blessings of mentioning the excellence of the Sunnah and relating some etiquettes. The beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever loved my Sunnah loved me, and he who loved me will be with me in Jannah.”³

¹ Tareekh Madina Dimashq Ibn ‘Asakir, vol. 19, p. 191

² Rahmat Bari Hikayat, p. 171

³ Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh, vol. 1, p. 97, hadith 1798

Sunnahs and etiquettes of musafahah (shaking hands) and mu'anaqah (embracing)

Dear Islamic brothers, let us gain the blessings of hearing some points about shaking hands and embracing. Firstly, note two sayings of the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

1. "Shake hands with each other; hatred leaves the heart due to this. Exchange gifts with one another, there will be love between you and enmity will dissipate."¹
2. When two friends meet each other, then shake hands and send salat upon the blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, their previous and future sins are forgiven before they separate.²
 - Shake hands using both hands.³
 - However many times you meet, it is mustahabb to shake hands each time.⁴
 - Shake hands when you depart also. Mufti Muhammad Amjad 'Ali al-A'zami رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ states, "I have not found a clear statement expressing this to be a Sunnah, but the original permissibility of shaking hands is established from Hadith, so this will also be deemed permissible."⁵
 - Merely touching the fingers is not shaking hands. The Sunnah is that both hands should be used in shaking hands.⁶

¹ *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh*, vol. 2, p. 171, hadith 4,693

² *Shu'ab al-Īmān*, vol. 6, p. 471, hadith 8,944

³ *Bahar-i-Shari'at*, vol. 16, p. 98

⁴ *Bahar-i-Shari'at*, vol. 16, p. 97

⁵ *Bahar-i-Shari'at*, vol. 16, p. 98

⁶ *Bahar-i-Shari'at*, vol. 16, p. 97

Announcement:

The remaining Sunnahs and etiquettes of shaking hands and embracing will be explained in the Madani study circles, so please participate in them to learn more.

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ