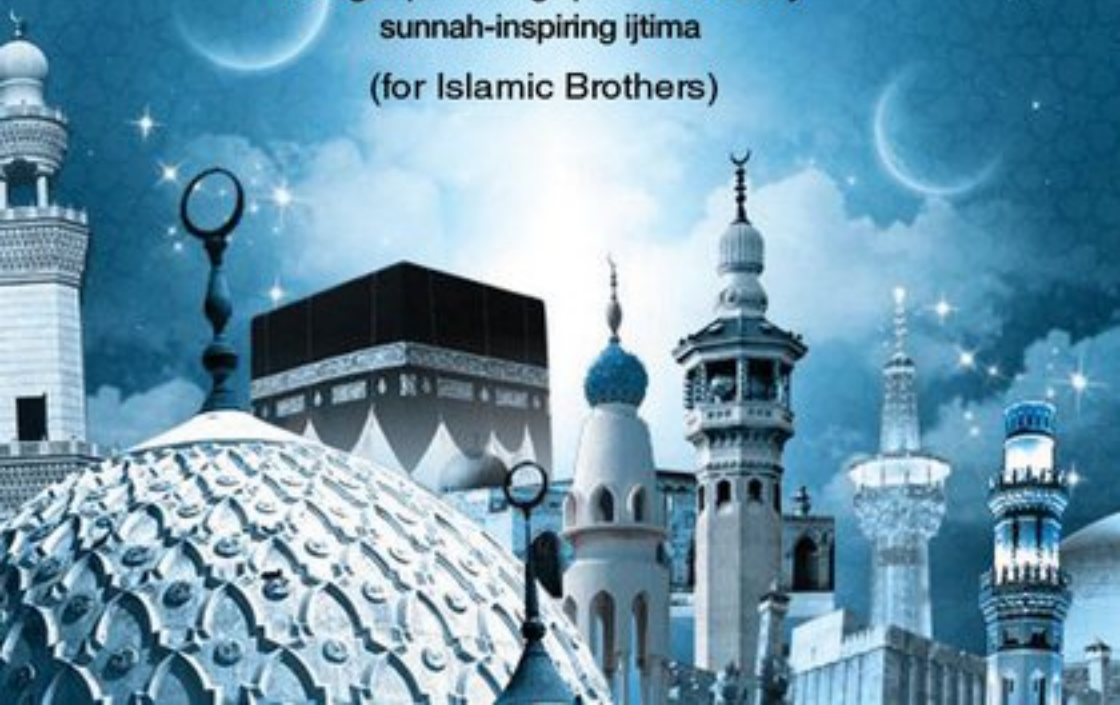


Focusing on Allah

07-March-2024

Thought-provoking speech of weekly
sunnah-inspiring ijtima
(for Islamic Brothers)



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

Focusing on Allah

وَعَلَى إِلِكْ وَأَصْحِيكَ يَا حَبِيبَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

وَعَلَى إِلِكْ وَأَصْحِيكَ يَا نُورَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَشِيرَ اللَّهِ

نَوَيْتُ سُنَّتَ الْإِعْتِكَافِ

Translation: I have made the intention of Sunnah I'tikaf.

Dear Islamic brothers! Whenever you enter a masjid, make the intention of *i'tikāf*, for you shall continuously gain the reward of *i'tikāf* for as long as you stay inside. Normally, when we are in a masjid, shar'iah does not give permission for us to eat, drink, sleep, have suḥūr or ifṭār, and not even to drink Zamzam water or the water on which *dam* has been made. Yet, if the intention of *i'tikāf* is made, all these actions will become permissible. One should not make this intention of *i'tikāf* only to eat, drink or sleep. This intention should instead be made to please Allah.

It is stated in *Fatāwā Shāmī*:

If someone wants to eat, drink or sleep in a masjid, he should make the intention to observe *i'tikāf* and perform the dhikr of Allah for some time. Then he may proceed as he wishes (i.e. now if he wants to eat, drink or sleep, he can do so).

The excellences of reciting ṣalawāt upon the Prophet

The final Prophet of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated:

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ فِي يَوْمٍ مِائَةً مَرَّةً قَضَى اللَّهُ لَهُ مِائَةَ حَاجَةٍ سَعِيْنٍ مِنْهَا لِآخِرَتِهِ وَثَلَاثِيْنَ مِنْهَا لِلدُّنْيَا

“Whoever recites 100 ṣalawāt upon me daily shall have 100 of their needs fulfilled by Allah, 70 of the Hereafter and 30 of the world.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The final Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated, أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّادِقَةُ – “The greatest deed is a truthful intention.”² O those who love Allah’s Messenger! Make good intentions before every action, as this can be a means of entering Paradise. Before listening to this speech, make good intentions. For example:

- You will listen to the entire speech to gain knowledge of Islam.
- You will sit in a respectful manner.
- You will not be lazy or inattentive during the speech.
- You will listen to the speech to reform yourself.
- Whatever you hear and learn, you will try to convey it to others.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ Kanz al-‘Ummāl, Kitāb al-Adhkār, al-bāb al-sādis fī al-ṣalāt ‘alayhi wa ‘alā ālihi, vol. 1, p. 255, hadith 2,229

² Al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaghīr, p. 81, hadith 1284

The context behind the revelation Sūrat al-Mujādilah

Dear Islamic brothers, let us look at an issue of fiqh known as *ḡihār*. Books of fiqh contain an entire chapter on *ḡihār*. Those who are married should definitely learn about this. In simple terms, *ḡihār* is where a man equates his wife with his mother or sister. For example, a husband may say to his wife, “To me you’re like my mother”, which is *ḡihār*. In Islam’s early days, *ḡihār* carried the same ruling as divorce. Meaning, if somebody said his wife was like his mother or sister to him, his wife would become haram for him.

Khawlah bint Tha’labah رضي الله عنها was a female Companion. One day, her husband said to her, “You’re like my mother to me.” He said what he did, but then regretted his words. Now there was extreme worry, as one’s *nikah* ended because of this and a wife became haram for her husband.

In this state of worry, *Sayyidatunā* Khawlah bint Tha’labah رضي الله عنها went to see the Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم and explained the entire situation. She exclaimed:

O Messenger of Allah! I have no wealth left, my parents have passed away, I have aged, and my children are young. If I leave them with their father, how will these small children be brought up without their mother? Yet, if I keep them with me, they will die of hunger. Is there any way my husband and I can stay together?

After listening to all of what she had to say, the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم declared, “I have not yet received an order regarding your matter.”

What this meant was that a new ruling regarding *ḡihār* was not yet revealed by Allah, and due to this, the rule of *ḡihār* resulting in divorce was still in effect.

Khawlah bint Tha'labah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was extremely worried; her heart filled with grief. Preying on her mind was the thought of her small children. She said over and over, "O Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ! My husband did not utter the word 'divorce.' He is the father of my children!" In other words, she was asking for a way she and her husband could remain together lawfully.

However, he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ responded each time by saying, "A new ruling has not yet been revealed regarding your matter."

After not receiving the answer she was hoping for, Khawlah bint Tha'labah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا eventually raised her hands and supplicated: "Dear Allah! Have mercy on my neediness, helplessness and grief. Reveal a ruling to Your Prophet which will remove my problems!" Whilst she was still presenting her plea to the Almighty, her tearful and heartfelt prayer was instantly accepted, and Angel Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام brought revelation to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ from Allah.¹ On this occasion, the first verses of Sūrat al-Mujādilah were revealed, in which Allah declares:

الَّذِينَ يَظْهَرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ نَسَاءِهِمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ أُمَّهَاتِهِمْ إِلَّا أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ
لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٤١﴾

Those amongst you who address their wives as their mothers (i.e. do *ḡihār*). They are not (in reality) their mothers; their mothers are only those from whom

¹ Tafsīr Khazā'in al-'Irfān, part 28, Sūrat al-Mujādilah, verse 1, p. 1,001, with minor changes

they are born. And undoubtedly, they utter evil and blatant lie; and Allah is indeed definitely pardoning, and most forgiving.¹

Other verses were also revealed in relation to this event. To summarise, by virtue of Khawlah bint Tha'labah's prayer, the previous ruling of *zihār* was abrogated and a new one was revealed. Now, until the Day of Judgement, *zihār* does not amount to divorce, but it is still something very much disliked and considered a lie. Avoiding this is a must. If somebody deliberately or accidentally does *zihār*, by saying his wife is like his mother to him, for example, he cannot go near his wife now. He must expiate and make up for this by freeing a slave. If he cannot do this, he must fast consecutively for two months. If he cannot do this, he must feed 60 poor people (*masākīn*) twice to their fill.²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, let us focus on this amazing incident which contains a lesson. Think about how much worry and pain Khawlah bint Tha'labah رضي الله عنها was in at that time. Her parents had passed away. She herself had aged. Her children were very young. In such circumstances the issue of separating from her husband arose. Think of the sadness and worry in her heart.

It was in this state that she raised her hands and prayed to Allah Almighty. Due to her wholehearted request and sincere plea, Allah Almighty brought ease upon all Muslims until the Day of Judgement in the form of *zihār* no longer amounting to divorce. This shows us that a sincere plea can lead to accomplishing that which cannot be achieved any other way.

¹ Al-Quran, part 28, Mujādilah, verses 2-4; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

² Al-Fatāwā al-Raḍawīyyah, vol. 13, p. 269 Seltive or Selected

What is *ibtihāl*?

Some people can be seen complaining saying, “We make lots and lots of du‘ā’s, but they’re not accepted.” First of all, remember that every du‘ā’ is definitely accepted. However, this does not mean that we will always get what we ask for. Sometimes, our du‘ā’s repel calamities. Sometimes, we are given something better than what we asked for. And sometimes, the du‘ā’ we make is saved for us in the Hereafter. So, remember, every du‘ā’ you make is accepted.

We also need to look at how we make du‘ā’. There are many people in our communities who don’t even know how to ask from Allah Almighty and make du‘ā’. It is from the manners of du‘ā’ to supplicate after forming a sense of sorrow within. To make du‘ā’ by imploring Allah Almighty with complete focus and raising the hands is called *ibtihāl*. This is a sunnah of our beloved master: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Let us all make a habit of making du‘ā’ by imploring Allah Almighty with full concentration. If we do this, we shall receive blessings *إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ*.

The practice of the Prophets ﷺ

There is a chapter in the Holy Quran named *Sūrat al-Ambiyā’*, which contains mention of many Prophets ﷺ. In particular, there is mention of how the Prophets ﷺ would make du‘ā’ to Allah Almighty. Whenever a difficulty or problem arose, their centre of attention would be Allah Almighty. They would call upon Him and make du‘ā’.

Prophet Nūḥ عليه السلام preached to his nation for around 950 years. Despite this, those wretched people did not accept faith. Instead, they caused him great difficulty and even physical harm. Prophet Nūḥ عليه السلام eventually made du‘ā’ to Allah Almighty. The Almighty states:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَجَآئِنُهُ وَآهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

We henceforth answered his supplication, and rescued him and his household from the extreme calamity.¹

As a result of this du‘ā' of Prophet Nūḥ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, the disbelievers were punished with a huge flood, which wiped them out.²

Similarly, Prophet Ayyūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was tested. He also made du‘ā'.

أَئِنِّي مُسْنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ

that distress has afflicted me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.³

His du‘ā' was accepted. Allah Almighty announced:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَ

ذُكْرَى لِلْعَابِدِينَ

We henceforth answered his supplication; so, We removed the adversity that had afflicted him, and We gave him his family, and in addition, bestowed along with them more of a similar number by mercy from Ourselves, and advice for the people who worship.⁴

¹ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Ambiyā', verse 76; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

² Tafṣīr al-Ṭabarī, part 17, al-Ambiyā', verses 76-77, vol. 9, pp. 48-49

³ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Ambiyā', verse 83; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

⁴ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Ambiyā', verses 84; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

Prophet Yūnus عليه السلام also faced a trial: he was swallowed by a whale and was inside its belly. From there, he called out to Allah Almighty. The Almighty states:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ^١ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ^٢ وَكَذَلِكَ نُجِّي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ^(٢٨)

We henceforth heard his call and rescued him from grief, and We shall similarly rescue the Muslims.¹

Prophet Zakariyyā عليه السلام did not have any children for a long time. He had reached old age, and his wife was also infertile. In this state, he made du‘ā¹ to Allah Almighty by asking:

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ

O my Lord, do not leave me alone (i.e. childless), and You are the best inheritor (i.e. eternal).²

Allah Almighty declared:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ^١ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَاهُ زَوْجَهُ

We henceforth accepted his supplication, and bestowed upon him Yaḥyā, and improved the condition of his wife for him³

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ Dear attendees, these are the noble Prophets عليههم السلام we just spoke about, people of the highest standing. They prayed to Allah Almighty, the most generous, whenever they were worried or

¹ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Anbiyā', verse 88; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

² Al-Quran, part 17, al-Anbiyā', verse 89; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

³ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Anbiyā', verse 90; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

experienced difficulty. They turned to Him and pleaded before Him. In which manner, you may ask? Allah Almighty states:

وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ۗ وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَشِيعِينَ

and they proclaimed to Us with hope and fear, and are humble in Our majestic court.¹

This is the very foundation that is missing from our community: we do not focus on Allah Almighty. Neither do we call out to Him, nor do we make du‘ā' to Him the way we should. It is a sunnah of the prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ to humbly make du‘ā' to Allah Almighty with full concentration whilst being fearful of His might and hopeful of His mercy.

May we too make du‘ā' to Allah Almighty in this way.

أَمِينٌ بِجَاهِ خَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

We have limited resources

Dear Islamic brothers, in reality, we are all human, and although it may seem we have many ways to live life and resolve our issues, our resources are actually very limited. There are many times in life where we lose all hope. Every door closes on us. At times our financial circumstances may make us feel hopeless. Some people may hope to receive a loan from their brother or someone wealthy but are unsuccessful in doing so. Even friends and family may not be able to make such arrangements. In these times, there seem to be no options open to us, rendering us to feel hopeless, dejected, and demoralized.

But never forget, when all hopes seem to end, there is still one hope. When all doors are closed, one door will stay open, and that is the

¹ Al-Quran, part 17, al-Anbiyā', verse 90; translation from Kanz al-'Irfān

door to our Merciful Allah Almighty. Kings of this world will turn you away, but Allah Almighty, the King of kings, will never turn you away. People may abandon you, your friends and family may look the other way, your own brother may not offer a helping hand, but Allah Almighty never leaves His people hopeless. Be it someone pious or sinful, He does not turn them away empty-handed.

Why couldn't the boss sleep?

There is a story of a very rich person. He owned a luxury car, a nice house, and successful business. Allah Almighty had given him everything. One day, he came home in the evening, spent time with his children, had dinner, dealt with some important tasks, and then lay down to sleep on his comfortable bed at night. However, he just could not get to sleep.

Sleep is also a blessing from Allah Almighty and is only given to whomever He wills. This wealthy man was continuously tossing and turning, but he just could not sleep. After quite some time, he thought to himself that I am doing nothing but lying here, so why not get some fresh air outside. Hence, he got into his car and drove around from here to there, without any direction. Eventually, he came across a masjid.

Now he thought to himself, instead of wandering around, why don't I just go to the masjid? So, he parked his car, went inside, made wudu, and entered the main hall of the masjid. He suddenly stopped in his tracks. Nobody was inside, but he could hear a faint sound of somebody crying coming from one of the corners. There, in the corner, was a poor person making du'ā' with tears falling from his eyes and his hands raised in supplication.

“O Allah Almighty!”, the poor person proclaimed, “My daughter is ill. Doctors say she requires surgery. I am poor and have no money to pay for this. O Allah Almighty, You are the creator of all means. Shower

Your mercy on me!” Observing this, the wealthy man realised why he couldn’t sleep. Approaching the poor person, this rich individual put his hand into his pocket, took out whatever he had and gave it to the poor man. He also gave him his business card with his address and said, “This is all I have with me now. If you need more, come to this address.”

Although the poor man had no money, his heart was free from greed. He gave the card back to the wealthy individual and said, “My brother, I already have someone to go to.”

Puzzled, the rich man asked, “Who do you have to go to? And why didn’t you just go there?”

The poor person replied, “I am sat at the door of the One Who sent you to me at this time. Today, my need has been fulfilled. In future, if I need anything else, I will come to this door again.”

Dear Islamic brothers, as you can see, we have limited resources. Our hopes fall apart, every door shuts close in our face, and our minds shut down when worries and difficulties come. All our strength, determination, and the people we know may be of no help. In such circumstances, there is only one source of support, which is from Allah Almighty. Nobody is left empty-handed after they ask from Him. He fulfils our needs. He makes things happen in ways we could never even have imagined.

Test yourself

In this world, we take all kinds of exams and tests. Let’s test ourselves for just a moment. Let’s all carry out a task by asking ourselves this: when a difficulty arises, who do we think of first?

Normally, when we’re ill, the first person we think of is a doctor. If we have a legal issue, the first person we think of is a lawyer. If we need money, we think of our friends or family. Everyone should ask

themselves, is this not true? A lot of us will say yes. Whenever something happens, we turn our attention to worldly means. Although this is not a sin, as Muslims, whenever we are worried, in difficulty, unwell, facing any issue, and even during times of happiness, our first thought should be to think of Allah Almighty. Pursuing the avenues open to us has its own importance. For example, if you're ill, you should take medicine. If you need help, there's nothing wrong with asking your friends or family. But these are all secondary things. As Muslims, our connection with Allah Almighty should be such that whenever anything happens, regardless of the situation, we think of Allah Almighty first.

Prophetic character

In the year 3 AH, the Expedition of Ghatafan took place. The Prophet ﷺ was travelling with his Companions رضى الله عنهم and camped at a particular place. The Prophet ﷺ rested underneath a tree, whilst the Companions رضى الله عنهم were some distance away.

The disbelievers made all sorts of evil plans to try and hurt the Prophet ﷺ. At the time, one of them appeared out of nowhere with a sword in his hand. He waved his unsheathed sword as he approached the Prophet ﷺ, and with great pride and arrogance, he proclaimed, "Tell me, Muhammad, who will save you from me now?"

In a state of complete calm, the Prophet ﷺ simply replied, "Allah."

In the very next moment, the disbeliever fell to the floor. The sword was now in the hand of the Prophet ﷺ, who asked, "Tell me, who will save you from me now?"

The disbeliever exclaimed in a state of despair, "I have nobody to save me!"

Seeing his helplessness, the Prophet ﷺ felt sympathy for him and forgave him. When that disbeliever saw this beautiful and unmatched display of good character, he was deeply inspired, recited the shahadah and became Muslim.¹

Dear Islamic brothers, reflect on how our Prophet ﷺ was alone at the time. The disbeliever suddenly appeared with an unsheathed sword to attack him. But what did our Prophet ﷺ say at that moment? Who did he think of first? He ﷺ said my Allah Almighty will save me.

This was the conduct of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. This is something we don't see nowadays. If we go back in the past, even just 50 to 60 years ago, people had a good environment at home. Mothers used to practically teach their children how to make dhikr and remember Allah Almighty. They used to instinctively say **حَسْبِيَ اللهُ** if their child stumbled or fell. If children got scared at night, mothers would hold them against their chests and make dhikr of Allah Almighty. If anything distressing happened, the first thing they would say was the name of Allah Almighty or some other righteous words.

But now, people have become so-called modern. We see less of what we saw in the past. Now, people say all sorts instead. Although not everything they say is a sin, if only we always remembered Allah Almighty instead of saying other unbeneficial things. Our thoughts should revolve around thinking about Allah Almighty whenever we face any problems, worries, illnesses, financial issues, or anything else.

Let's ask ourselves, who will resolve our problems? Who will cure our illnesses? Who will resolve our financial issues? Who will take our poverty away? It is Allah Almighty. Hence, instead of relying on the means, let us rely on the One Who creates the means.

¹ Sharḥ Zurqānī 'alā al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah, vol. 2, p. 381, summarised

Let us try our best to make a habit of always remembering Allah Almighty and focusing on Him. May the love of Allah Almighty become deep-rooted in our hearts, and may we only focus on Him no matter what.

How our pious elders focused on Allah Almighty

Once, the saint Abū al-Ḥasan Sirrī Saqaṭī رحمه الله عليه was approached by his neighbour. “My son was kidnapped by a soldier last night”, she sighed, “They might hurt him. Please, help me get my son back.” The saint stood up as he heard this and began offering salah with utmost concentration and humility.

After quite some time passed, the woman exclaimed, “O Abū Ḥasan, please hurry! I’m worried the king will throw my son in jail!” The saint continued his salah, and after finishing, he turned to the woman and said, “O servant of Allah! Your very problem is what I am resolving!”

As this conversation was taking place, the woman’s maid came and said, “My lady, come home! Your son has returned!”¹

Dear Islamic brothers, this is what it means to focus on Allah Almighty. But what is our state? As soon as we hear anything that makes us sad, we hold our heads in our hands. If a problem comes our way, we run around here and there, and our minds are all over the place. Some may even cause havoc and break a glass or other item upon coming to hear of some sad news.

As for the righteous servants of Allah Almighty, they had a beautiful manner whereby they turned to Allah Almighty, made du‘ā’ to Him, and called out to Him. It is Allah Almighty Who listens to our calls. It is Allah Almighty Who showers mercy upon us. It is by turning to Allah Almighty that difficulties are averted.

¹ ‘Uyūn al-Ḥikāyāt, translated edition in Urdu, vol. 1 p. 266

May Allah Almighty, for the sake of His pious servants, allow us to always focus on Him!

اٰمِيْنُ بِجَاةِ خَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّنَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيْبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Run to Allah Almighty

Allah Almighty says in the 50th verse of Sūrat Dhāriyāt, **فَقُرُّوْا اِلَى اللّٰهِ** – “So, run towards Allah”¹

In this, Allah Almighty instructs His beloved Prophet **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** to say, “O people! Run to Allah!” Commenting on this verse, Sayyidunā Sahl Tustarī **رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ** writes, “O people, leave everything besides Allah Almighty and run to Him.”²

Waking others for fajr: one of Dawat-e-Islami’s 12 religious activities

Dear Islamic brothers, to please Allah Almighty and become pious, I encourage you to attach yourself to the Islamic environment of Dawat-e-Islami. Take part in its 12 religious activities. One of these is to wake up others for fajr salah.

Waking people up for fajr salah is a sunnah of Allah’s final Messenger **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ**. To act upon this, Islamic brothers call each other on their mobiles at fajr time and awaken their family members. You too should participate in this. Wake up early, offer tahajjud salah, do dhikr, recite ṣalawāt, and call your fellow Islamic brothers after fajr time according

¹ Al-Quran, part 27, Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt, verse 50; translation from Kanz al-Īmān

² Rūh al-Bayān, part 27, al-Dhāriyāt, verse 50, vol. 9, p. 171

to Dawat-e-Islami's given procedure. By doing this, you will earn immense reward **رَبِّكَ وَاللَّهِ**.

The Food Preservation Department

Dear Islamic brothers, **اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ** Dawat-e-Islami has over 80 departments, all of which operate to spread Islamic knowledge and the sunnah. One of these is the Food Preservation Department, which collects leftover food from various events and homes, which would otherwise be wasted. This food is then given to the poor and needy.

According to research, of all the food made across the world, one-third of it goes to waste. From the seven billion people on Earth, 9% go to sleep hungry. If all the food that is wasted was given to these people instead, nobody in the world would go hungry.

This department not only works to provide food to the poor and needy, but it also helps others build the habit of not wasting food in the first place. Furthermore, it also helps the poor and needy become financially independent people who make a positive contribution to the community. But this department's main priority is to identify through local reliable sources the poor who need food and then have it delivered to them.

Through the teachings of Mawlana Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri and the mindset given by Dawat-e-Islami's Central Executive Committee, this department does everything in its power to better the ummah of the Prophet **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** and enhance its success and welfare. You too are asked to assist Dawat-e-Islami in this cause and earn many good deeds.

May Allah Almighty grant further success to Dawat-e-Islami and all its departments.

اٰمِيْنُ بِجَاةِ خَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّنَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

Sunnahs and manners of shaking hands

Dear Islamic brothers, let us now listen to some sunnahs and manners of shaking hands taken from Mawlana Ilyas Attar al-Qadiri's book, *101 Madani Pearls*.

First, let's listen to two hadith of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

1. Allah (Almighty) showers 100 mercies between two Muslims when they shake hands as they meet and enquire about each other's wellbeing. From them, 99 are for the one who met the other more warmly and who asked about his brother's wellbeing in a better way.¹
2. When two friends meet, shake hands, and recite ṣalāt upon the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, their past and future sins are forgiven before they part ways.²
 - When two Muslims meet one another, it is sunnah to say salaam and then use both hands for shaking hands.
 - Say salaam when departing too. Hands can also be shaken.
 - When shaking hands, recite ṣalawāt, and if possible, recite the following du'ā' too: **يَغْفِرُ اللهُ لَنَا وَلكُمْ** (May Allah forgive us and you.)

Announcement

The remaining sunnahs and manners related to shaking hands will be covered in the study circles. Please do participate in them to learn more.

¹ Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ, vol. 5, p. 380, number 7672

² Shu'ab al-Īmān, vol. 6, p. 471, number 8944

صَلِّ اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

The 6 ṣalāt upon the Prophet and 2 duas recited in Dawat-e-Islami's weekly sunnah-inspired gatherings

1. The ṣalāt for the night preceding Friday

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الْحَبِيبِ الْعَالِي الْقَدْرِ الْعَظِيمِ الْجَاهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ

Saints of Islam have quoted that whoever recites this ṣalāt upon the Prophet at least once on the night between Thursday and Friday on a regular basis, then as they are passing away, they will be blessed with the vision of Allah's beloved Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

They will even see him when they are being buried, to the extent they will see him lowering them into the grave with his own merciful hands.¹

2. All sins forgiven

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلِّمْ

The Companion Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates; Allah's Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated, "Whoever recites this ṣalāt upon me whilst standing, then prior to him sitting; and if he recites it whilst sitting, then before he stands, his sins will be forgiven."²

¹ Afḍal al- Ṣalawāt 'alā Sayyid al-Sādāt, p. 151

² Afḍal al- Ṣalawāt 'alā Sayyid al-Sādāt, p. 65

3. 70 doors of mercy

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

70 doors of mercy are opened for whoever recites this.¹

4. The reward of 600,000

اللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ عَدَدَ
مَا فِي عِلْمِ اللّٰهِ صَلَاةً دَائِمَةً بِدَوَامِ مُلْكِ اللّٰهِ

Shaykh Aḥmad Ṣāwī رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ reports from some saints of Islam, that by reciting this ṣalāt once, a person attains the reward of reciting ṣalāt 600,000 times.²

5. Being close to the Prophet ﷺ

اللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى لَهُ

Once, a person came to the Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Amazingly, the Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ made this person sit between himself and Sayyiduna Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ.

The Companions رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ were surprised as to who this honoured person was. When he left, the Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ explained, “When he recites ṣalāt upon me, he does so in these words.”¹

¹ Al-Qawl al-Badī, p. 277

² Afḍal al- Ṣalawāt ‘alā Sayyid al-Sādāt, p. 149

6. The ṣalāt of intercession

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَنْزِلْهُ الْمَقْعَدَ الْمُقَرَّبَ عِنْدَكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

The final Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated: “My intercession becomes wājib for whoever recites ṣalāt like this.”²

1. Good deeds for 1000 days

جَزَى اللَّهُ عَنَّا مُحَمَّدًا مَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ

The Companion ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates; the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated, “Seventy angels write good deeds for whoever recites this for a thousand days.”³

2. An easy way to spend every night in worship

The final Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever recites this dua three times; it is as if he attained Laylat al-Qadr.”

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْكَرِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

Study circle schedules - 7th March 2024

Sunnahs and manners – 5 minutes

Dua memorisation – 5 minutes

¹ Al-Qawl al-Badī, p. 125

² Al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb, vol. 2, p. 329, hadith 31

³ Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id, p. 254, vol. 10, hadith 17305

Summary – 5 minutes

15 minutes in total

The remaining sunnahs and manners of shaking hands

- When two Muslims shake hands, whatever du‘ā’ they make will be accepted **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ**. They are also forgiven before their hands separate.¹
- By shaking hands, hatred and enmity will go away.
- You can shake hands with somebody every time you meet.
- The sunnah is to shake hands with two hands, not one.
- Some people just use their fingers when shaking hands; this is also not sunnah.
- It is disliked to kiss your own hand after shaking hands.² Any Islamic brothers who kiss their own palms after shaking hands should refrain from this.
- If one feels lust due to shaking hands with a young attractive boy, it is impermissible to shake hands with him. And if one experiences lust by just looking at him, even looking becomes impermissible.³
- When shaking hands, it is sunnah to have nothing in your hands, such as a handkerchief, for example. Both hands should be empty, with one’s palms touching the palms of the other person.⁴

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

¹ Musnad Aḥmad, vol. 4, p. 286, hadith 12,454

² Bahār-e-Sharī‘at, vol. 3, part 16, p. 472

³ Durr Mukhtār, vol. 2, p. 98

⁴ Bahār-e-Sharī‘at, vol. 3, part 16, p. 471

Two du'ā's for eating

In accordance with the schedule of Dawat-e-Islami's weekly gatherings, we will now learn a du'ā'. This week we will learn two: the du'ā' to be read before eating, and the du'ā' to be recited before eating each morsel.

The du'ā' for before eating: يَا وَاسِعَ الْغُفْرَةِ

“O the one Who forgives a lot [forgive me too by virtue of Your mercy].”

The du'ā' for before eating each morsel: يَا وَاجِدٌ

“O the most independent.”¹

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

Collective accountability - 72 Pious Deeds

The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “A moment of contemplation ‘over the Hereafter’ is better than sixty years of worship.”²

Let us make good intentions before filling in the Pious Deeds booklet.

1. To please Allah, I will take account of myself through the Pious Deeds booklet and encourage others to do the same.
2. I will praise and thank Allah for all the Pious Deeds I was able to perform.
3. I will regret the Pious Deeds I could not perform and try my best to do them in future.

¹ Khazāna-e-Rehmat, p. 103

² Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr, p. 365, hadith 5897

4. If I was not able to act upon any Pious Deed which stops one from sinning, I shall repent to Allah and make firm intention to not repeat the sin.
5. I will not reveal my good deeds without reason.
6. I will perform any Pious Deed I can make up for later (for example, I will make up for the 313 ṣalāt upon the Prophet I missed yesterday by reciting them today).
7. I will try to achieve the actual aim of filling in the Pious Deeds booklet, which is to attain fear of Allah, piety, good character, and to spread Islam.
8. I will fill the Pious Deeds booklet in tomorrow.
9. I will not fill the Pious Deeds booklet out of formality. I will take true account of my deeds and fill it in.

For all the Pious Deeds you acted upon, fill in the box next to them with an inverted tick. For all the ones you missed, put a O in the box next to them.

Only look at your Pious Deeds booklet when taking accountability. Do not look at others.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

How to do collective accountability - 72 Pious Deeds The 56 daily Pious Deeds

1. Have you made good intentions?
2. Did you offer the five daily salah in congregation?
3. Wherever you were in the day, did you invite others to offer salah?

4. Did you read or listen to Sūrat al-Mulk at night?
5. Did you recite at least Āyat al-Kursi, Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ, and Tasbīḥ-i-Fāṭima after the five salah?
6. Have you read or listened to at least three verses of the Quran, with translation and commentary from Kanz al-Īmān, Khazā'in al-'Irfān, or Nūr al-'Irfān? Or have you read or listened to at least two pages from Tafsīr Ṣirāṭ al-Jinān?
7. Have you recited some invocations from the Shajarah?
8. Have you recited ṣalāt upon the Prophet 313 times?
9. Have you protected your eyes from sin, by not looking at indecent things, not watching indecent videos on your phone, and not looking at women etc?
10. Have you protected your ears from sin, by not listening to backbiting, music, or bad language etc?
11. Did you keep your gaze lowered today, and refrained from looking here and there without need?
12. Did you read a book written by Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān, a book/booklet of Maktabat al-Madina, or Monthly Magazine Faizan-i-Madina for at least 12 minutes today?
13. Did you reply to azan and iqama today, whilst putting a stop to your conversations or what you were doing?
14. If something happened inside or outside the home that made you angry, did you stay quiet and control your anger, or speak instead?
15. Did you fill in the Pious Deeds booklet whilst taking account of your actions?

16. Did you listen to your Nigran, in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the Central Executive Committee?
17. Did you speak respectfully with everybody you met, be they young or old?
18. Did you study or teach in Madrassat al-Madina for adults?
19. Did you try to sleep within two hours after the 'ishā' salah congregation?
20. Did you spend at least two hours performing the Islamic Activities of Dawat-e-Islami?
21. Did you awaken others for fajr salah?
22. Did you stop yourself from looking into other people's homes, through their doors or windows?
23. Did a dars (short lecture) occur in your home? In your absence, did somebody else carry this out?
24. Did you listen to or deliver at least one Madani dars in the masjid, workplace, or wherever else possible?
25. Did you dress according to the sunnah? These clothes must be a colour allowed by Islamic law and not egregiously bright or sparkling.
26. Are you following the sunnah of having long hair?
27. Do you have a fist-length beard?
28. Did you repent immediately after sinning?
29. Did you eat according to the sunnah and recited the duas before and after eating?

30. Did you give salam to the Muslims you met at home, in the workplace, on buses, trains, and other places?
31. Did you act upon at least some sunnahs related to miswāk, exiting and entering the home, sleeping and awakening, and sitting facing qibla etc?
32. Before the obligatory units of ḡuhr salah, did you offer four units of sunnah?
33. Did you offer tahajjud salah at night? If you did not sleep, did you offer ṣalāt al-layl?
34. Did you offer the voluntary prayers of ishrāq, chasht, and awwābīn?
35. Did you offer the four units of sunnah that come before the obligatory units of ‘aṣr or ‘ishā’?
36. Did you encourage someone else to take part in at least one of the 12 Islamic Activities?
37. Did you avoid asking others for their things or using them?
38. Did you lie, backbite, or slanders others? Did you listen to this from others?
39. Did you watch Madani Channel for some time?
40. Did you make friends with someone just for worldly gain?
41. Did you delay paying a debt back in time, despite being able to do so and without the permission of the lender? Did you give something you borrowed to the original owner within the time period you both agreed?
42. Did you refrain from speaking humble words in front of others, despite the fact your heart does not agree with them? For example

saying, "I am a bad person", when you do not believe yourself to be so?

43. Did you keep yourself clean and pure?
44. If a Muslim's shortcoming became visible, did you conceal it or show it to others (without a reason legislated by Islamic law)?
45. Did you deliver or take part in a tafsīr study circle?
46. Did you recite **بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ** before permissible actions?
47. Did you deliver or listen to an outdoors dars?
48. Did you pray for the forgiveness of your parents and murshid, and convey the reward of some good deeds to them?
49. Did you avoid wasting of any kind at home, in the masjid, or at work etc?
50. Did you abide by traffic laws?
51. If an issue arises with any Islamic brother (especially a head) and the situation must be resolved; did you do so via a well-worded and kind text, or did you speak to him directly (alone or with others) with love and kindness? Did you instead reveal their issue to others and commit the sin of backbiting?
52. Did you protect yourself from sinning with your tongue, by not using it for slander, hurting others, or swearing etc?
53. To build the habit of avoiding trivial speech which carries no benefit for one's worldly or religious matters, did you speak with gestures, if even a little?
54. Did you try to avoid teasing, criticism, hurting others with your words, and laughing aloud?

55. Did you wear an 'imāma?

56. Did you show respect and manners to your parents?

Record of Qufi-i-Madina

- Communicating through writing - 12 times
- Communicating through gestures - 12 times
- Conversing without looking into the other's eyes - 12 times

Weekly 10 Pious Deeds

57. Did you send at least one Islamic sister from your home to the weekly sisters gathering?

58. Did you watch or listen to the weekly Madani Muzakara?

59. Did you attend the weekly gathering from beginning to end?

60. Did you conduct i'tikāf on the weekend?

61. This week, did you visit the home of someone in distress, offered condolences upon a death, or visited the unwell in accordance with the sunnah?

62. Did you fast on Monday, or any other day if you missed Monday?

63. Did you read or listen to the weekly booklet?

64. Performed the Area Visit at least once?

65. This week, did you reach out to an Islamic brother who was once involved with Dawat-e-Islami but is no longer currently? Did you encourage them to come back?

66. Did you take part in the weekly study circle?

Monthly 3 Pious Deeds

67. Did you fill last Islamic month's Pious Deeds booklet and submit it to your Nigran?
68. Did you travel in a Madani Qafila for at least three days this month?
69. Did you financially help a Sunni scholar, imam, muezzin, or worker in the masjid?

Yearly 1 Pious Deed

70. Did you travel in a month-long Madani Qafila, as per stipulated timings?

Lifelong 2 Pious Deeds

71. Have you read the lifetime syllabus?
72. Did you travel in an uninterrupted 12 month Madani Qafila? Did you complete various educational courses?

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The Amir of Ahl al-Sunnah's prayer

O Allah Almighty! Whoever sincerely acts upon the Pious Deeds booklet, fills it in everyday whilst taking account of himself, and submits it on the first of every Islamic month to the relevant Islamic brother/sister; do not give them death until they recite the *kalima*.

أَمِيرُنْ بِجَاهِ خَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّنْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ