

Habib Umar

Monthly Meetings

2012 – Present

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

**Jumada al-Akhirah 1441**

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 14<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Akhirah 1441 / 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2020. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **The only time I find to read my adhkar is at work. Can I do this?**

If that is the only available time then this is fine. If you need to speak to someone in the middle of a certain dhikr or invocation then when you are finished speaking to them you return to the beginning of that dhikr or invocation.

- **What can I do to maintain tranquillity and remain strong during times of tribulation?**

This is manifested in the stillness of the body and presence of the heart. What also assists in this is remembering the ultimate return and Allah's reward and reflecting upon the patience and perseverance of the Beloved ﷺ .

- **Should I be praying sunnah prayers if I have prayers to make up?**

Someone who has obligatory prayers to make up should give those prayers priority over sunnah prayers. They may, however, perform prayers like tarawih which are prayed in congregation and witr, which the Hanafi school holds to be an obligation.

- **We have just moved into a new house. What are the important etiquettes we should abide by?**

You should: recite the sunnah duas of entering and leaving the house; recite the whole of Surat al-Baqarah; you should pray some prayers in each room of the house and you should gather people together to recite the mawlid.

See also: <https://muwasala.org/2017/03/26/on-moving-into-a-new-house/>

- **What should someone do if they feel they are affected by black magic (sihr)?**

Use the protection that the Prophet ﷺ used by reciting the three Surahs: al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nas 30 or 70 times every morning and evening.

- **Does reciting the adhkar strengthen a person's connection to the Shaykh?**

Yes, the purpose of connections with Shuyukh is connection with Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and dhikr is the foundation of that.

- **I am not sure whether I should I recite the Wird al-Latif, Ratib al-Haddad or Ratib al-Attas.**

You can choose to recite any one of the three in the morning and evening. They are equal in status. If you are unable to write the whole thing you can recite part of it.

- **What do we say to people who are affected by certain trends which encourage them to be less modest?**

They should be reminded that these things affect the Ummah from time to time. They should be resolute in remaining true to principles of modesty and they should realise that those who follow these trends will soon regret it and lose more than they gained.

- **What should a Quran teacher focus on in their teaching?**

They should emphasise veneration of Allah, His Messenger ﷺ and His speech. They should focus on perfecting the students' recitation and encouraging them to understand the meaning and then acting upon it. At the same time the students should be gaining basic knowledge of the din and good character.

- **Do we need special permission to teach the books of great imams such as Imam al-Haddad, al-Ghazali, al-Sha'rani Ibn Ataillah?**

Anyone who understands their content can teach them but if the teacher has permission to teach them there will be more benefit in that.

- **African Americans generally have a love for music. Can we use music for the purpose of dawah?**

Yes, as long as you avoid instruments which are prohibited such as the flute.

- **If a person has been harmed by someone else should they take action or surrender their affair to Allah?**

If the harm is limited to the individual in their worldly affairs and not their religious affairs then forgiving the person is better in Allah's sight. If however, other people besides the individual are being harmed in terms of their religious or worldly affairs then this harm must be removed in ways which the Sacred Law permits. If the person who is causing the harm will be affected with a warning or reminder then this act will be rewarded. In all cases the person affected must entrust their affairs to Allah but this does not negate taking action when necessary.

- **How can we strengthen our intellectual capacity in order to attain beneficial knowledge?**

This goes back to abandoning acts of disobedience, pure reflection, keeping the company of people of great intellect and reading their works.

- **What should I do if I experience weakness or fatigue while making dhikr?**

The remedy is in continuing in the dhikr and not abandoning it. You should set for yourself a minimum portion which you can be consistent in. You can then do more when you have more time or energy but you should not leave that minimum amount out of laziness.

- **What is meant by mahwu (erasing) and ithbat (affirming) relating to what is written on the lawh al-mahfuz (the preserved tablet)?**

This is one of the amazing things that the knowers of Allah mention. Of course, no one can fully comprehend what is contained in Allah's knowledge except by His leave.

Some affairs may appear in the scrolls of the angels which are conditional upon other hidden things (in Allah's pre-eternal knowledge) occurring, things which the angels have no knowledge of. They may then receive a command to remove, replace, bring forward or delay these affairs. This is alluded to in Allah's statement: **Allah erases and confirms what He wills..**(al-Ra'd, 13:39).

We can observe this phenomenon in human affairs when conflicting thoughts come into the mind which prompt an individual to either do something or not to. Allah then erases one or the other and the person acts accordingly.

- **Should we invite a teacher to our institute who has some opinions which are outside the Ahl al-Sunnah?**

Ideally teachers should be from Ahl al-Sunnah and have taqwa and scrupulousness. Those who go against Ahl al-Sunnah in some principles but are generally moderate may teach if there is benefit and no harm to the students and there is supervision. Otherwise preventing harm takes precedence over attaining benefit.

- **What is the difference between a shaykh you take knowledge from and one you take as a spiritual guide?**

The first is the one from whom one obtains knowledge of the rulings of the Sacred Law. He must have the ability to teach possess a sound chain of connection in the sciences of the Sacred Law. He is known as *shaykh al-ta`lim*. The second type is the shaykh who oversees the seeker's spiritual progress, known as *shaykh al-tarbiyah* or *shaykh al-tahdhib*. He must be upright and your heart must be attached to him such that your connection to him is built loyalty, love and veneration.

See also: <https://muwasala.org/2013/04/29/on-the-meaning-of-a-spiritual-opening-fath-and-different-types-of-shuyukh/>

- **What are the benefits of khalwah (spiritual isolation)?**

The main benefits are: removing and uprooting blameworthy qualities from the heart; defeating the forces of heedlessness and falsehood and giving victory to the forces of truth and gaining complete presence with Allah. This is a means of attaining experiential knowledge of Allah and reaching Him.

See also: <https://muwasala.org/2013/01/15/on-the-method-of-seclusion-khalwah/>

- **What state should I be in when bestowing salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ ?**

You should do so witnessing the exalted nature of the Prophet ﷺ and longing to be with him in the next life. Be conscious that it is not you who is bestowing salawat upon him but Allah and also that the Prophet does not need your salawat but rather you need the benefits that it contains.

See also: <https://muwasala.org/2011/12/15/insights-into-bestowing-prayers-upon-the-prophet-s/>

### **Further points of guidance**

- There is no harm in going to a Muslim psychologist or anyone else who Allah has permitted people to go to for assistance.
- All high stations are reached through patiently persevering through difficulty seeking the pleasure of Allah. Were it not for that difficulty everyone would reach those stations. One of the pious said: “it was only when we experienced severe difficulty that we attained what we were seeking.”

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> Sha'ban 1441 / 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

There will inshallah be an opportunity to take the covenant (`ahd) of the Tariqah in this meeting.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Thani 1441

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jumada al-Ula 1441 / 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **At what point could it be said that someone is resembling a group of people in a blameworthy sense?**

The Prophet ﷺ said that: “Someone who resembles a people is one of them.” This would be blameworthy in a situation where a certain type of clothing or behaviour is known to be adopted by a certain group and someone intentionally adopts that thing in order to resemble them. Those who have a connection to the pious strive to resemble the Prophet ﷺ and they are of varying degrees in this regard. Likewise their womenfolk strive to resemble the women of the Prophetic Household.

- **Which adhkar should someone on the path recite?**

**We have mentioned this a number of times.** People are of different levels but what is required is presence of heart while reciting. The least the seeker should recite is the al-Wird al-Latif, the Wird of Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim and the Wird al-Sakran (Imam Abu Bakr bin Abd al-Rahman al-Saqqaf) morning and evening. The seeker should also have a wird of reciting the Quran every day even if it is a small amount. Those who have more time and energy should do more. It is best to complete what is in the Khulasah, then the adhkar which are given at different times (such as Rabi al-Awwal) and then other adhkar narrated in the books of hadith. The first form of remembrance that the heart should be engaged in is *la ilaha ill'Allah*. It is for those at the beginning of the path and those at the end alike. If someone is intending to spend large amounts of time in dhikr they should consult the Shaykh about what to recite.

- **How should the Fatihah be recited after the dhikr of Aydarus which is after every prayer?<sup>1</sup>**

Any fatihah which is dedicated to Imam al-Aydarus is good. This is what is recited in Dar al-Mustafa:

الى ارواح أهل الكساء و الإمام العيدروس و ال أبي علوي و أهل بيت النبوة و الصالحين من عباد الله تعالى مع رجال دارالمصطفى و حراسه و جميع الصالحين أن الله ينفعنا بهم في الدارين و يجعلنا من أهل حقيقة التوحيد في عافية

We recite al-Fatihah for the souls of Ahl al-Kisa, Imam al-Aydarus and the folk of Ba Alawi, the people of the Prophetic Household, the pious servants of Allah, the men and protectors of Dar al-Mustafa and all the pious with the intention that Allah benefits us by them in this life and the next and makes us (in a state of wellbeing) among those who truly witness divine oneness.

- **How do we attain presence of heart in the prayer?**

**We have mentioned this many times.** This is attained though struggling to have complete and wholehearted focus on Allah and by returning one's thoughts to the prayer whenever they wander. With sincerity and effort that person will gain presence. The foundational principle here is to bring to mind the fact that Allah is completely aware of everything that you do. Repeating Allah's name aloud or in the heart is also beneficial.

See also:

<https://muwasala.org/2013/05/01/on-attaining-concentration-in-prayer/>

- **What adhkar can be recited to rectify the heart?**

These surahs can be recited three times each in the morning and the evening: al-Asr, Quraysh and al-Falaq.

It is said about these surahs that none of them contain the letter 'kaf' and what is contained in them is sufficient:

ليس فيهن كاف و ما فيهن كاف

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<sup>1</sup> *La ilaha ill'Allah* 12 times; *Allah, Allah* 12 times and *Hu, Hu* 12 times

- **On sleeping in a state of purity**

The seeker should always remain in a state of purity as far as possible and also go to sleep in a state of purity. According to the Shafi'i school, touching the skin of your spouse breaks your wudu but our teacher Habib Abd al-Qadir al-Saqqaf advised taking the position that doing so does not break your wudu. You can thus make wudu and touch your spouse before sleeping and still sleep in a state of wudu. If someone is unable to make wudu, they should make tayammum (dry ablution) instead using a stone or earth.

- **When I visit the Prophet ﷺ I do not have enough time to greet him and make dua because the officials quickly tell you to move on. What should I do in this situation?**

Those who prevent people from standing at length at the grave of the Prophet ﷺ should not affect the lovers of the Prophet. They should just give their greetings in the time they have at that place and then they can go anywhere in the Haram or outside and address the Prophet and recite as much as they wish and the Prophet is closer to them (after Allah) than anything in existence. Our teacher Habib `Attas al-Habashi would sit at a distance, away from the commotion in a place where the Prophet received revelation, a place where there is now a door called Bab al-Baqi`. He would say that true proximity is not physical but rather it is the proximity of the soul. Many of the pious would sit in the 'Haswah', the open courtyard<sup>2</sup> behind the old limits of the Mosque. They would face the blessed resting place of the Prophet ﷺ and receive great spiritual gifts.

See also:

<https://muwasala.org/2015/09/06/advice-for-umrah-and-ziyarah-2/>

- **How do I control my anger?**

This question has already been answered:

<https://muwasala.org/2013/04/25/on-overcoming-anger-2/>

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<sup>2</sup> Which now has 'umbrellas' that open and close

- **I sometimes attend the gathering of another tariqah and occasionally I am asked to lead their dhikr. Should I do so?**

Firstly it is fine to attend these gatherings as long as what takes place in them is in accordance with the shariah and the ways of the pious. You can attend with the intention of seeking blessings and encouraging them to continue the good they are doing. As for leading their dhikr, there is no harm in doing this as long as: there is nothing in it which goes against the principles of your tariqah (such as certain movements during the dhikr); there is a need (such as the absence of anyone else who could lead); that there will be benefit in it and that you are safe from *riya'* (ostentation). Otherwise it is preferable to decline on the basis that you have come seeking spiritual assistance and blessings. One of the principles of the spiritual path is to avoid positions of prominence.

- **A shaykh who is well respected mentioned some strange names in his invocations and explained that they were the names of jinn. How should we understand this in the light of what Allah says in Surat al-Jinn: “men have sought refuge with the jinn in the past, but they only misguided them further (72:6)”?**

There are two things to consider here. The first is that this verse refers to people who sought refuge with the jinn in the belief that they had the power to harm and benefit independently of Allah. The second is that seeking refuge can take the meaning of asking for protection by virtue of a person's station in the sight of Allah, which is a type of *tawassul*. There is well known hadith which mentions that the Companion Abu Mas'ud was beating a slave of his. In some narrations of the hadith, the slave cried out: “I seek refuge with Allah” and “I seek refuge with the Messenger of Allah”. The Prophet did not rebuke him for saying this. He did not tell him that he could not seek refuge with him.<sup>3</sup> Seeking refuge with any created being believing that it has the power to harm or benefit independently of Allah is impermissible. But seeking refuge with something by virtue of its station is permissible. We find this in the *Hizb al-Nasr* of Imam al-Haddad: “I fortify myself with Allah, and with the names of Allah, and with the verses of Allah, and with the Angels of Allah, and with the Prophets of Allah, and with the Messengers of Allah, and with the righteous servants of Allah.”

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<sup>3</sup> He then warned Abu Mas'ud that Allah has more power over him than he had over his slave. Abu Masud then stopped beating the slave and set him free. The Prophet said that had he not done this, the Hell Fire would have touched him. (narrated by Muslim, Ahmad, al-Tirmidhi and al-Tabarani)

- **What are the etiquettes of a husband and wife in the bedroom?**

The Prophet ﷺ taught us the correct etiquette for every situation and believers strive to abide by these etiquettes.

Before intercourse they should both recite the Prophetic dua:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا

*Bismillah. Allahumma jannibna'shaytan wa jannib ashaytan ma razaqtana*

“In the name of Allah. O Allah, distance us from Satan and distance Satan from what You grant us”

Although the Shariah tells us that between husband and wife there is no part of the body which the other party is forbidden from seeing, they should avoid looking at the other's private parts. Sayyidah Aishah said: “I never saw the Prophet's private parts and he did not see mine”. They should both be covered by a sheet. They should speak pleasantly to each other. When the man feels that he is reaching climax he should recite in his heart and not with his tongue:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا

It is He who creates human beings from fluid, then makes them kin by blood and marriage: your Lord is all powerful! (al-Furqan, 25:54)

One partner must never disclose any secrets about the other (especially with regard to the bedroom) to anyone. The Prophet ﷺ described this as a form of betrayal or disloyalty.

One of the most important inner etiquettes is that they both have in their hearts and minds only that which is pure and lawful. They should also have good intentions and be in a state of tranquillity and remembrance of Allah with their hearts. Imam al-Sha'rani: “My spiritual state when I am with my wife is the same as the state in which I enter the prayer”. This is the state of someone who has absolute presence with Allah. If that is the state of the Siddiqun (the people of absolute truthfulness) what does that tell us about the state of the Prophets and what does that tell us about the state of the Master of the Prophets ﷺ, the one who had the greatest knowledge of Allah and the most awareness and reverential fear of Him?

- **Further advice**

The more someone is concerned with Allah, His religion, calling to it and following His Beloved, the more Allah will raise their station and remove their worries concerning this life and the next.

Those who took the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah should recite Dhikr al-Aydarus:

***La ilaha illa Allah 12,000 times***

***Allah, Allah 12,000 times***

***Hu, Hu 12,000 times***

(reading *Allah, Allah* and *Hu, Hu* counts as one)

After this, you continue to say each of them twelve times after each obligatory prayer.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Ula 1441 / 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Awwal 1441

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1441 / 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What adhkar should someone recite after becoming consistent in reciting the adhkar in the Khulasah?**

The dhikr *la ilaha ill'Allah* is the most important dhikr thereafter. A variation of this is the dhikr which Habib Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad al Mashhur received directly from the Prophet

ﷺ :

*La ilaha ill'Allah Muhammad Rasulullah sal' Allahu alayhi wa alihi sabbihi wa sallam*

It should be recited 300 times daily.

My grandfather Habib Salim took ijazah in it from Habib Abd al-Rahman and we received it from him via my father and Habib Muhammad bin Alawi bin Shihab and we give this ijazah to you.

Secondly istighfar (seeking Allah's forgiveness) and prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. The number is according to your free time and aspiration. It could be 300, 700, 1000 or 3000 times.

Finally we must not neglect reciting the Quran in abundance with reflection. This is the strongest means of connection and ascension. The best way of conversing with your Lord is with His own words.

- **Should we add the mention of the Companions in certain adhkar and salawat?**

It is best to stick to adhkar as they are narrated but there is no harm in adding mention of the Companions if you wish. Generally salawat have been narrated with the mention of the 'āl' only but some scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah took to adding the Companions (*ṣaḥb*). Some scholars interpret the word 'āl' to include all the followers of the Prophet so the Companions would be at the forefront of them. When you intend the whole Ummah blessings would go first to the Prophet's family, then his Companions and then the rest of the Ummah.

- **If you are making dhikr in a group but you miss reciting some of the adhkar due to fatigue or the speed of the recital does the recital of the group make up for what you have missed?**

You will receive the blessing of those reciting but if you are able to make up what you have missed this is better.

- **If I am not able to recite the adhkar before fajr at that time can I recite them before I sleep?**

Generally speaking, the adhkar of the night can be recited at any time during the night but the time just before fajr should be a time of istighfar since Allah specifically mentions this in the Quran.

- **To what level should we mention our teachers in gatherings?**

The rule is moderation especially in public gatherings. In private gatherings we can mention more about their special qualities but this should still be in moderation.

- **What adhkar should be recited for people who are in a state of confusion and experiencing waswasah?**

Rabbi'shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri 100 times

Surat al-Nas 30-100 times

The name 'Allah' 66 times at least lengthening the 'a' (Allaaah)

Ayat al-Kursi and Surat al-Inshirah after every prayer

- **How do we gain praiseworthy traits and rid ourselves of blameworthy traits?**

We do this with a combination of knowledge and action. Regarding praiseworthy traits knowledge is to know their virtue, effect and reward while action is to gradually strive to attain them in spite of difficulty, to keep the company of people who have attained them and to study the lives of those who attained them in the past. Regarding blameworthy traits knowledge is to know their danger, harm, and punishment and action is striving to avoid those traits and the people who possess them.

### **On displaying human photographs**

Some scholars use the hadith “unless it is an image on a cloth” as evidence for the permissibility of displaying human photographs. They should be photographs of pious believers and not corrupt people and they should not be photographs of women if non mahram men will see them. If you feel uneasy with this then it is better to avoid it and likewise if people are going to enter the room who believe it is impermissible. In that case it is better to have pictures which have no human life in them such as the Ka’bah or the Rawdah.

### **Istikharah and istisharah**

Istisharah (consultation) is similar to istikharah in that it depends on purity of the heart.

The method of istikharah is to pray the istikharah prayer and then recite the dua after it.

One method of istisharah is as follows:

1. Perform two units or more of nafl prayer
2. Say ‘alhamdulillah’ 10 times
3. Say ‘astaghfirullah’ 10 times
4. Recite the following surahs 3 times each: al-Inshirah, al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq, al-Nas
5. Recite the prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ ‘Nurik al-Sari’ 40 times

Thereafter observe what indications arise whether they be thoughts, dreams or words that you hear or read.

- **What does someone do if they see their shaykh in a dream and the shaykh is not happy with them?**

This is a sign of the concern of the shaykh for that person. They should not be dismayed but instead it should be a call to action and elevation. Instead of being lazy they should increase their efforts. Goodness will come thereafter.

- **How should men wear rings?**

Men may wear a silver on the little finger or the ring finger of the right hand. They should not wear it on any other finger or on the left hand. Gold jewellery is also forbidden for men. Woman may wear gold or silver rings on any finger. Habib then said with a smile: “Men cannot ask for equality with women in this regard.”

It is noticeable that more and more people are attending mawlid gatherings around the world. An increase in veneration for the Prophet is a sign that Allah wants good for the Ummah

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1441 / 21<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Inshallah in the meeting there will be an opportunity for people to take the covenant (`ahd) of the Tariqah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Muharram 1441

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 14<sup>th</sup> Muharram 1441 / 14<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Is it permissible to take a fee for teaching Islamic studies?**

The vast majority of scholars say it is permissible to take a fee for teaching. What is important is the intention. If you are teaching merely to earn a living and not intending to spread goodness and guidance this will have a detrimental effect on your state with Allah. If you remain sincere and use the money for your own needs or for others then this is fine. The highest level of sincerity is not to stipulate a fee, not to be concerned with the fee and to accept whatever comes your way regardless of how much it is and then spend it in a way which is pleasing to Allah.

The sign of the teacher's truthfulness is that he does not differentiate in the way he teaches and cares for his students between those that pay him and those that do not and those that pay him a little and those that pay him a lot. Rather he treats them all equally with sincerity.

See also:

<https://muwasala.org/2014/08/08/on-taking-a-wage-for-teaching-the-islamic-sciences-and-the-quran/>

- **Thoughts of disbelief sometimes come into my mind. Does this take me out of the fold of Islam?**

No this does not take you out of the fold of Islam. We are only taken to account for the thoughts which we are content with and agree with. We will not be taken to account for the thoughts which you dislike and ignore. This is a manifestation of Allah's bounty. The Prophet said ﷺ : "Allah has overlooked for my sake my nation's mistakes, forgetfulness and thoughts as long as they do not talk about it or act upon it."

One way of driving these thoughts away is to repeat Allah's name lengthening the 'a' (Allaaaah) and raising the head upwards towards the sky.

There is nothing better than imploring Allah for His assistance and remembering Him constantly. Anyone who feels that they are unable to purify themselves should turn to Allah and say (as Imam al-Haddad says):

يَا رَبِّ قَدْ غَلَبْتَنِي وَبِالْأَمَانِي سَبْتَنِي  
وَفِي الْخَطُوطِ كَبْتَنِي وَقَيَّدْتَنِي بِالْأَكْبَالِ

قَدْ اسْتَعْنْتُكَ رَبِّي عَلَى مُدَاوَاةِ قَلْبِي  
وَحَلَّ عُقْدَةً كَرْبِي فَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعَمِّ يَنْجَالِ

My Lord, my lower self has overpowered me  
And deluded me with false hopes,  
It subdues me with worldly pleasures,  
and shackles me in chains.

I seek Your support, my Lord,  
in curing my heart.  
Release me from distress and look  
(kindly) on my sorrow and dispel it.

- **How do we address our brothers and sisters who have been affected by atheist ideas?**

It should be impressed upon them that these ideas are a rejection of the truth and are illogical and irrational. Rational arguments should be used to show that these arguments are illogical and contrary to the fitrah (the primordial state of man). How can a person who does not believe that a simple thing like a pen came about on its own believe that the whole cosmos came about on its own? These are some of the arguments which can be used.

Different people need to different treatment: some people require gentle words and others require a strong rebuke. Others just need good company and to attend gatherings of goodness.

- **How do we strengthen our connection to the people of Allah?**

Connection to the people of Allah and to the believers in general is strengthened by: sincerely seeking Allah and loving Him and venerating Him, following the Prophet ﷺ, obeying the command of Allah and sacrificing for the sake of Allah.

The person who has these qualities will have the strongest connection regardless of how far away they are physically.

- **May a woman recite the Quran while she is breastfeeding?**

There is no problem with this. She is permitted to uncover her breast in the presence of her mahram and other women.

- **What should I do if I find myself over-concerned with my appearance?**

We are taught to wear beautiful attire for prayer and other good deeds and we are told to adorn ourselves in order to manifest Allah's bounty. If, however, while doing this we find ourselves showing off to others, we should reduce the extent to which we adorn ourselves until our intention is sound.

The hadith states that if someone wears a garment seeking fame and attention, Allah will abase them in front of the entire creation on the Day of Judgement. Clothes do not elevate anyone. The only thing that benefits is a person's intention and Allah accepting that intention.

- **How do I improve my memory?**

You do this by consuming halal food, focusing your mind and not allowing it to wander.

Also recite the following salat in abundance between maghrib and isha:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ كَمَا لَا نِهْيَاةَ لِكَمَالِكَ وَعَدَدَ كَمَالِهِ

Allāhumma salli wa sallim wa bārik `alā Sayyidinā Muhammad wa `alā ālihi kamā lā nihāyata li kamālika wa `adada kamālih

O Allah, bestow Your prayers, peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and his Family to the degree of Your limitless perfection and to the amount of his perfection.

- **How do we deal with children who have suicidal thoughts?**

It is very strange for children to have these thoughts and it is the result of media they have been exposed to or people they have kept company with. They must be protected from being exposed to these things and people. They need to be reminded of the purpose of life and the need to prepare for the next life. They need to be told that the One who created them sent them a Messenger and a way of life which then leads to everlasting felicity.

- **How do we respond to those who claim that women can lead men in prayer and other similar ideas?**

We should not pay attention to these ideas. These people have no understanding of the Shariah and no authority to call people to good. What good is there in going against the Shariah? The strange thing is that the objections which non-Muslims hold regarding Islam have been taken up by Muslims. The reality is that Islam is based upon wisdoms which only the Creator knows fully. The fact that women do not lead men in prayer does not detract from their status in any way. Sayyidah Aishah would pray behind her male slave Masruq. No one suggested that he was more knowledgeable or higher in status than her. This is the deception of the Devil.

- **In some places Muslim women are at risk if they wear the hijab. What should they do?**

Muslim women should avoid places in which they may be in danger when wearing the hijab but they must not abandon the hijab due to the actions of certain individuals. If we left everything that people objected to, we would leave our entire religion for their sake. Our obedience would be to them and not to Allah, and they would be like gods that we worship besides Allah.

Rather we say what the previous Prophets said: ***We shall certainly bear steadfastly whatever harm you do to us. Let anyone who trusts, trust in God.'*** ***The disbelievers said to their messengers, 'We shall expel you from our land unless you return to our religion.'***

The result will be the same for us as it was for them: ***But their Lord inspired the messengers: 'We shall destroy the evildoers, and leave you to dwell in the land after them. This reward is for those who are in awe of meeting Me, and of My warnings.'*** (Ibrahim, 14:12-14)

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Safar 1441 / 26<sup>th</sup> October 2019

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1440

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 24th Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1440 / 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What advice do you have for people working with Muslim prisoners?**

We need to bear in mind that the purpose of prison is to transform the prisoners. We need to strengthen the prisoners' connection with Allah and give them greater hope in Allah. We need to teach them to improve their transaction with Him, to remind them that Allah loves those who turn and repent to Him and to teach them to be consistent in remembering Him. If someone is guilty of committing a crime, prison will be an expiation for the wrong they have done. If they are wrongly imprisoned it is a means for their station to be raised.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-teaching-islam-to-prisoners/>

- **Can we take a bayah of barakah with another shaykh?**

There is no harm in taking barakah from anyone but you can only have one shaykh of tariqah and the shaykh of fath is one

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/principles-regarding-taking-bayah/>

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-meaning-of-a-spiritual-opening-fath-and-different-types-of-shuyukh/>

- **The time between isha and fajr is very short in summer, making it difficult to wake up before fajr and also difficult to stay up until ishraq. What is the best course of action?**

Pray what you can of qiyam al-layl before you sleep. If it is not possible to wake up before fajr then try to remain awake and use the time after fajr in dhikr up until ishraq if possible. Performing qiyam al-layl makes up for not staying up until ishraq. Staying up until ishraq makes up for not performing qiyam al-layl.

- **How do seekers stop themselves being affected by the turbulent times in which they live?**

Seekers take advantage of whatever time and resources they have. They overcome obstacles on the path with the help of remembrance and reflection. They should follow online classes and holding gatherings locally. They should not despair or become despondent but rather continue to place their hope in Allah.

- **All my time is spent raising my children and I feel I am missing out on worship and seeking knowledge. What advice can you give me?**

For you to raise your children in the best way is an act of worship and is part of acting according to your knowledge. Try to follow a class when you have a bit of spare time. A pious woman from the Amudi tribe (in Hadramawt) wrote out Imam al-Subki's three volume fatwa collection. At the end she wrote: 'Please excuse any mistakes because I wrote this while I was breastfeeding'. The truthful person continues doing good works however little they are regardless of the situation.

- **What can be recited beyond al-Wird al-Latif and the Ratib for protection on a daily basis?**

You can recite the Wird of Imam al-Sakran (Imam Abu Bakr bin Abd al-Rahman al-Saqqaf) and the Wird of Imam al-Nawawi.

- Someone became Muslim and for the first few years did not know it was obligatory to pray. What should they do?

They are excused for their ignorance but they should still make up the prayers they missed however long it takes.

- What should be recited for the protection of our children?

The following should be recited over the children daily:

أُعِيذُكَ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ وَكُلِّ عَيْنٍ لَامَّةٍ

*U`idhuka bi kalimatillahi`tammah, min kulli shaytanin wa hammah wa kulli `aynin lammah*

I seek refuge for you in the complete words of Allah from every devil, every creature and every evil eye.

[Ibn `Abbas narrates that the Prophet ﷺ used these words to protect al-Hasan and al-Husayn and he would say, "Your father (Ibrahim) used these words to protect Isma`il and Ishaq.]

حَصَّنْتُكَ بِالْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ أَبَدًا وَدَفَعْتُ عَنْكَ السُّوءَ بِأَلْفِ أَلْفِ

لَا حَوْلَ وَ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*Hassantuka bil-Hayyi'l Qayyum, alladhi la yamutu abadan wa dafa`tu `ankassu`a bi alfi alfi alfi la hawla wa la quwwata illa billahi `Aliyyi'l `Azim*

I place you in the protection of the Living the Self-Sufficient who never dies and I drive evil away from you with "there is no strength nor might except in Allah the Sublime the Almighty" a billion times over.

Also recite Surat al-Inshirah on their chests and Surat al-Qadr on their heads

See also: <http://muwasala.org/words-of-protection-for-children/>

- **How do we maintain a good opinion of someone who says things which go against the way of Ahl al-Sunnah or commits acts which all scholars agree are acts of disobedience?**

You do this by giving him sincere advice (nasihah) if he is likely to accept it and to believe that he will make tawbah before he dies. It does not mean we accept the things he says or are content to witness acts of disobedience.

- **Do women see themselves kissing the hand of the Prophet ﷺ in dreams like men?**

They do not see themselves doing this unless they are related to the Prophet ﷺ in some way (through lineage, marriage or breastfeeding). Otherwise they will be like the female Companions who pledged allegiance to the Prophet verbally without touching his hand. Likewise men may see themselves kissing the hands of Sayyidah Fatimah, Sayyidah Khadijah and the other wives of the Prophet their hands but only if they are related to them. Otherwise they will address them from behind a veil or a screen.

- **Should we move to a Muslim country for the sake of our children?**

This may be beneficial. Otherwise protect your children from bad influences in the place you are in and make sure they have good company.

See also: <http://muwasala.org/on-moving-to-a-muslim-country/>

- **What should someone do upon moving into a new house?**

You should intend what the pious intended when they moved into a new house. Part of that is to intend that your house be a place of mercy, knowledge, remembrance of Allah and a place in which guests are received and honoured.

You should invite the pious, your relatives and those that you love for Allah's sake and recite the mawlid along with Surah Ya Sin. Surat al-Baqarah should be recited in the house, ideally every three days but if that is not possible then at least once.

See also: <http://muwasala.org/on-moving-into-a-new-house/>

- **What books on Hajj do you recommend?**

(The titles have been left in Arabic)

إسعاف أهل الإسلام بوظائف الحج إلى بيت الله الحرام للشيخ حسن المشاط

رسالة الحج المبرور للحبيب محمد الهدار

الإيضاح في مناسك الحج والعمرة للإمام النووي

كتاب زاد الناسك للحبيب عمر بن حفيظ

- **Should a seeker go deep into theology?**

He or she should only do this if there is a pressing need to refute deviant beliefs and if he or she is able to understand the fine points of theology.

- **What can I do if I find myself thinking about money too much?**

Try to think about your destination in your next life and put your hopes in Allah.

- **How should a Muslim be towards with his or her mother?**

He should be like a slave to his mother. Habib Ali al-Habashi said: "If my mother claimed that I was her slave and went to sell me in the marketplace I would have accepted it." In the Quran, Allah enjoins us to show excellence to our parents. He also says: ***Show gratitude to Me and your parents.***

A Yemeni pilgrim carried his mother on his back all the way from Yemen to Makkah to perform Hajj – a month's journey there and a month's journey back. He cleaned her, washed her, and took care of all her needs. He met Abdullah Ibn `Umar and asked him: "Do you think I have performed my duty to her?"

Ibn `Umar replied: "None of what you have done is equal to even one groan which she let out when giving birth to you!"

## **Hajj**

Those performing hajj should make the intention to be deputies for the whole Ummah.

For help attending the gatherings of Habib Umar write to [m.meetings@gmail.com](mailto:m.meetings@gmail.com)

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1440 / 24<sup>th</sup> August 2019

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramadan 1440

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1440 / 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we preserve the light of Ramadan once the month has ended?**

One of the keys to preserving what we have attained is in the intentions we make before the month ends. We should make firm intentions to do good in Shawwal and beyond. We also need to beg Allah to preserve and increase the gifts He has given us. We need to be consistent in our attendance of gatherings and classes, consistent in our recitation of the Quran while reflecting upon its meanings and consistent in our recitation of the adhkar with presence of heart. We must also choose the best company and sit in the presence of people who have been given light.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-preserving-allahs-gifts-2/>

- **When we pray salat al-tasbih can we combine more than one intention and pray other nafl prayers like witr along with it?**

Yes, because salat al-tasbih is classified as *nafl muṭlaq*, meaning an absolutely supererogatory prayer (not restricted by time or circumstance). This type of prayer may be combined with another nafl prayer such as witr or duha or any other nafl prayer.

[This is the position of the Shafi School]

- **When should the dua of Sayyiduna al-Faqih al-Muqaddam be recited?**

It does not have a fixed time and can be recited at any time. It can be recited perhaps at the end of a gathering or after the Witr prayer.

- **When should the first and last ten verses of Surat al-Kahf be recited?**

It is good to recite the first and last ten verses of Surat al-Kahf every night. With regard to the last ten verses, it is better to start from verse 98 so that the meaning is complete. If however, you were to start from verse 101 you will still attain the benefits mentioned in the hadith.

- **What intentions should we make for after Ramadan?**

We intend to be among those whose entire year is Ramadan

We intend that our connection with Allah is expressed in our actions throughout the day and the night

We intend to serve the Ummah in the best way by focusing on the Three Objectives (knowledge, devotion and service)

We intend to seek the pleasure of Allah and to make our Prophet ﷺ happy in all that we do

We intend to attain an increase in presence of heart with Allah at all times but especially during the prayer and recitation of the Quran and the adhkar

We intend to establish gatherings with our brothers and sisters who love for Allah's sake

We intend to fast the Six Days of Shawwal and other blessed days such as Tāsūā' and Ashura (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram) and the Day of Arafah and at least three days in every month

- **How does a seeker of knowledge attain openings?**

Seekers must abide by the etiquettes of seeking knowledge. They must spend time reviewing what they have studied with fellow students and write down important points which they learn.

They should call upon Allah by His names the Opener, the All-Knowing 100 times a day:

يَا فَتَّاحُ يَا عَلِيمُ

Ya Fattāḥ ya `Alīm

They should also repeat Ayat al-Kursi followed by this prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ :

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَ سَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ فِي كُلِّ لَمْحَةٍ  
وَ نَفْسٍ بَعْدَ كُلِّ مَعْلُومٍ لَكَ

*Allahumma ṣalli wa sallim 'alā sayyidinā Muḥammad wa 'alā āli sayyidina Muḥammad fi kulli lamḥatin wa nafasin bi `adadi kulli ma `lūmin lak*

O Allah, bestow prayers and peace on our master Muhammad and his Family in every instant and every breath equal to the amount of everything known to You.

- **Is it permissible to hold the mushaf while praying tarawih?**

The scholars have differed on this issue. The position of the Hanafi school is that holding it, turning its pages and placing it down are not from the movements of the prayer so thus it is impermissible. The other three schools say that as long as the person carrying it does not make three consecutive movements then it is permissible. It is better if the imam does not carry the mushaf at all but if he needs to, he may do so but he must make sure not to make three consecutive movements. The same applies if the imam needs someone to stand behind him with the mushaf in order to correct him if he makes a mistake. If the imam was to recite from a large mushaf on a stand without turning the pages then this would be permissible according to all the schools.

- **Allah says in Surat al-Hujurat: *the desert Arabs say, ‘We have faith.’ Tell them, ‘You do not have faith. What you should say instead is, “We have submitted,” for faith has not yet entered your hearts.’ How can someone have islam but not iman?***

This verse refers to the Bedouin Arabs who outwardly professed Islam because it was in their interest to do so at that time. They professed Islam with their tongues and performed the outward actions that their Islam dictated. At this stage the light of faith had not yet entered their hearts but they are told that if they persevere it would surely enter. Their Islam thus preceded their Iman.

- **How do I make my memorisation of the Quran solid?**

You do this by reciting it together with someone else who has memorised it; by reciting it while reflecting upon its meanings and by reciting it in supererogatory prayers.

- **How can you tell the origin of a dream?**

Scholars like Imam al-Ghazali teach us principles for identifying the origin of the passing thoughts (*khawāṭir*) that come to the heart. Those thoughts may be divine (directly from Allah), angelic, satanic (from the whisperings of the Devil) or from the lower self (*nafs*). The same principles may be applied to dreams. So if a dream is followed by a feeling of tranquillity and presence of heart its origin is divine or angelic. If it is followed by a feeling of unsettledness then it is from the lower self or the Devil. If you dream about something you have thought a lot about in the past then this is from the lower self. When you remember Allah, the effects of dreams that come from the Devil disappear.

If the dream contains encouragement to disobey Allah, become lazy in acts of obedience or hold a bad opinion about someone or harm them then it is from the Devil. Generally speaking, any dream which contains going against the Shariah or against good etiquette (*adab*) is from the Devil. Any dream which encourages you to do good, have a good opinion of others and increases you in humility is from Allah.

Allah says: ***Satan threatens you with the prospect of poverty and commands you to do foul deeds; Allah promises you His forgiveness and His abundance: Allah is limitless and all knowing*** (al-Baqarah, 2:268).

- **What is our obligation towards our brothers and sisters in places like Syria? Should we not fight against the injustices that are taking place?**

We must pray for them and provide aid to the needy, sick and wounded according to our ability while waiting for Allah's relief to come. This is what the stage we are now in dictates.

We await the arrival of a true struggle the purpose of which is to make Allah's word transcendent and nothing else. When this is evident based upon the signs which the Prophet ﷺ described, everyone who is able should support such a cause.

We should witness Allah's blessing upon us if our actions are in accordance with the light of the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and we should not be influenced by our emotions or by those who try to convince us to act in contravention of those teachings, regardless of the tools or rhetoric they use.

- **What do you say to those who have fallen short during Ramadan and been negligent?**

We say to those who have fallen short and those who have not, that this is the end of the month, so exert all your efforts for actions are judged by their endings.

- **What effect does black magic have on Prophets and how should we understand this?**

This comes into the category of what is conceivable for Prophets – that they can be affected by minor ailments which have no bearing on legislation or revelation. These things are regarded to be tests which occur in order to raise their rank. Certain ranks cannot be reached without experiencing tests like these. They do not negate their infallibility or detract from their status. An example of this is in the Quran is where the ropes and staffs of the sorcerers *seemed* to Musa to be moving: ***through their sorcery, their ropes and staffs seemed to him to be moving*** (Ta Ha, 20:66). We also know from the hadith that the Prophet ﷺ was affected by black magic such that he thought that he had done something when in fact he had not. 'Something' here is an ordinary action such as entering his house or having relations with his wives. It would be a miracle if black magic did not affect the Prophet at all, but a greater miracle is for it to affect him mildly in mundane affairs, but not to affect his prophethood, which is unique to him.

**Dowra Dates**

This year's Dowra begins on 26<sup>th</sup> June and finishes on 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1440 / 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019

There will inshallah be an opportunity to take the covenant of the Tariqah in this meeting.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rajab 1440

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 2<sup>nd</sup> Rajab 1440 / 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What do we say to someone who denies that the Prophet ﷺ saw his Lord on the Mi'raj?**

The authentic hadith attest to the fact that the Prophet ﷺ was gifted the vision of Allah on that night. Someone who denies this has rejected an authentic hadith narrated in singular chains of narration (as opposed to that which is *mutawatir* or mass transmitted). He does not leave the fold of Islam as a consequence.

If he thinks that the vision of Allah dictates that Allah has a body or is in physical place then we explain that this is inconceivable both in this life and the next. Rather, we say that the Prophet ﷺ saw Allah in this life in the same way that the believers will see Him in Paradise. Sayyiduna Musa requested this vision in this life but was not granted it.

Issues such as this should not be the focus of debate. Rather, we should focus on what is most beneficial. If someone is ready to listen, we explain to them what we understand regarding the issue. If someone is not prepared to listen due to arrogance or stubbornness, we avoid the issue.

- **I find that my work environment is having a negative effect on my character. What can I do to counter this?**

You need to allot a time to recitation of the Quran, remembrance of Allah, following our online classes and attending the gatherings of the pious in your locality.

- **What should be recited for the protection of our children?**

The following should be recited over the children daily:

أُعِيذُكَ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ وَكُلِّ عَيْنٍ لَامَّةٍ

*U`idhuka bi kalimatillahi'tammah, min kulli shaytanin wa hammah wa kulli 'aynin lammah*

I seek refuge for you in the complete words of Allah from every devil, every creature and every evil eye.

[Ibn `Abbas narrates that the Prophet ﷺ used these words to protect al-Hasan and al-Husayn and he would say, "Your father (Ibrahim) used these words to protect Isma'il and Ishaq.]

حَصَّنْتُكَ بِالْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ أَبَدًا وَدَفَعْتُ عَنْكَ السُّوءَ بِأَلْفِ أَلْفِ

لَا حَوْلَ وَ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*Hassantuka bil-Hayyi'l Qayyum, alladhi la yamutu abadan wa dafa'tu 'ankassu'a bi alfi alfi alfi la hawla wa la quwwata illa billahi 'Aliyyi'l `Azim*

I place you in the protection of the Living the Self-Sufficient who never dies and I drive evil away from you with "there is no strength nor might except in Allah the Sublime the Almighty" a billion times over.

Also recite Surat al-Inshirah on their chests and Surat al-Qadr on their heads

See also: <http://muwasala.org/words-of-protection-for-children/>

- **It is normal where I am teaching (religious knowledge) for people to give the teacher money. Should I accept it?**

As long as you do not request and desire that payment you can accept it. If you need it, you can keep it, and if not, you can give it to those in need or use it in the service of knowledge. The principle is not to take it out of desire for it and not to refuse it out of desire for status. Money which comes from a dubious source should also be avoided.

The Prophet ﷺ said to Sayyiduna Umar: “Whatever money you receive without you asking for it and desiring it, then take it. If you need it, then use it and if not, then give it in charity. Do not hanker after anything you do not receive.”

- **The people of Allah talk about abandoning ‘tadbīr’ which essentially means planning and managing one’s affairs. What do they mean by abandoning it?**

The tadbīr which we have been commanded to abandon is relying upon the means and our hearts being attached to them to the exclusion of our reliance upon Allah and the belief that we can only receive sustenance through those means.

We are not told to abandon tadbīr which is in accordance with the Sacred Law – taking the means without relying upon them.

- **What are the most important things to teach those who have recently embraced Islam?**

We need to explain the pillars of Islam and Iman and tell them about the lives of the Prophet, the Companions, the previous Prophets and the pious. We need to teach them about the next life and the importance of good character. Remembering Allah and His Messenger with veneration and attending gatherings of knowledge and remembrance help to make faith firm in their hearts.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-helping-to-educate-new-muslims/>

- **What should a woman recite during labour?**

She should recite abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and repeat the prayer that the Prophet ﷺ would recite at times of hardship (*du ā al-karb*):

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ  
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

La ilaha ill'Allahu'l-Azimu'l-Halim; la La ilaha ill'Allahu rabbu'l-'arshi'l-'azim; La ilaha ill'Allahu  
rabbu'ssamawati wa rabbu'l-ardi wa rabbu'l-'arshi'l-karim

'There is no deity save Allah, the Almighty, the Forbearing. There is no deity save Allah, the  
Lord of the Mighty Throne. There is no deity save Allah the Lord of the heavens and the  
earth and the Noble Throne.'

She should also recite Surat al-Fatihah and donate the reward to Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Sālim  
and his shaykh, Shaykh Ma`rūf Ba Jammāl.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/adhkar-for-pregnancy-and-labour/>

- **How do we increase our understanding of your prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ “Nurik al-Sari”?**

All the books of Shamail and Sirah explain the meaning of this.

<http://muwasala.org/nurik-al-sari/>

- **Principles relating to awrad**

You must have a minimum level of awrad which you are able to do consistently. You must maintain this level regardless of how busy you are and even if your resolve is lacking. When you have free time and extra energy and resolve you should do more.

Seeking knowledge takes precedence of reciting awrad in abundance.

- **Do we have permission to recite Dala'il al-Khayrat?**

Dalail al-Khayrat is like all other salawat – you do not need permission to recite them. The main thing is that you recite it with love, longing and veneration witnessing that the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is the means for all the good that Allah gives His servants.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-benefits-of-dalail-al-khayrat/>

## **On Tawbah**

Out of His generosity, Allah blessed us with tawbah. Sincere tawbah wipes out and removes the harm of a person's sins. According to the sincerity of a person's tawbah, those sins may also be replaced with good deeds.

Sins are to the heart what ailments are to the body. Allah created a cure for every ailment. If the medicine is correctly prescribed, the sick person is cured. Ignorance is an ailment the cure of which is study. The only cure for sins is tawbah.

Rajab is the month of istighfar and tawbah, Shaban is the month of prayers upon the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and Ramadan is the month of the Quran.

## **Visit to Cameroon and Ivory Coast**

Habib Umar's son, Sayyid Salim and Shaykh Abdurragmaan Khan recently paid a visit to Cameroon and Ivory Coast. Habib Umar said: "West Africa is a region which is in need of assistance from those who wish to serve the three objectives (knowledge, devotion and service). The people there are ready for this but where are the people who are ready to go to them? There are many parts of the world calling out to Muslims in a general sense and to the people of our methodology specifically. It is as if they are saying: 'Honour the covenant by conveying the message and plant this goodness in our hearts so that you reap the fruits of this in the next life. Do not neglect us because we will be asked about you and you will be asked about us.'"

## **Prophetic Medicine**

Learning, practising and teaching Prophetic Medicine is highly recommended. Everyone needs it. There are no side effects associated with it. Muslims have grossly neglected it and people have too much faith in pharmaceuticals and now the harmful side of this approach has become evident. Now people living in so called advanced countries where these medicines are manufactured are looking for alternatives. People have no option but to return to the teachings of the Lord who created them. They will find nothing better than the teachings of the Seal of Prophets ﷺ .

It is said that the Bani Alawi are one entity – by connecting to one, you connect to them all.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> Shaban 1440 / 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumada al-Ula 1440

## Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Ula 1440 / 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- How can we gain the contentment of Allah, His Messenger and our Shaykh?

You must have complete contentment with your Lord, His Prophet ﷺ and your Shaykh. This entails being content with Allah's rulings and His decree; being content with the Prophet's teachings and being keen to follow his Sunnah and being content with your shaykh as a shaykh in awareness that he is a representative of the Prophet ﷺ and being keen to follow his directions.

- What can be recited for shifa?

Recite The following prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ (al-Salat al-Tibbiyyah) around 300 times a day:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ

طِبِّ الْقُلُوبِ وَ دَوَائِهَا وَعَافِيَةِ الْأَبْدَانِ وَ شِفَائِهَا

و قُوَّةِ الْأَرْوَاحِ وَ غَدَائِهَا وَ نُورِ الْأَبْصَارِ وَ ضِيَائِهَا

وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَ سَلَّمَ

*Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad*

*tibbi'l-qulubi wa dawa'iha*

*Wa afiyati'l-abdani wa shifa'iha*

*Wa quti'l-arwahi wa ghidha'iha*

*Wa nuri'l-absari wa diya'iha*

*Wa ala alihi wa sahbihi wa sallim*

O Allah bestow your peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions, the source of medicine and healing for people's hearts, the source of health and well-being for people's bodies, the source of nourishment for people's souls and the source of light for people's vision.

Also repeat the following prayer 15 times in one breath. Repeat this several times a day:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الطَّاهِرِ

Allahumma salli wa sallim ala sayyidina Muhammad annabi attahir

O Allah bestow your peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad the most pure Prophet

- **What intentions should I make for coming to Tarim?**

You should intend: establishing the strongest of connections to Allah and Messenger ﷺ; going out for the sake of Allah and removing the inner obstacles between you and Allah and visiting your fellow Muslims and especially Allah's elite servants - those are alive and those who are in the Barzakh.

- **Can the Devil take the form of the shaykh in order to send the murid astray?**

This is rare but if it did take place the sign of it would be him calling you to something which is against the Shariah or the Tariqah or something which would lead to arrogance or envy.

- **What is the quickest way to reach Allah?**

By coming to Him in a state of absolute neediness, desperation and brokenness and by carefully and excellently following in the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ and his inheritors.

- **What books are recommended for raising children?**

These books are useful with their commentaries: Educating Children: Riyadatul Sibyan (Abdul Aziz Ahmed) and Bringing up Children in Islam (Ulwaan).

- **How can someone give the Prophet ﷺ his rights?**

You should expend all your efforts in following him and venerating him while constantly remembering him and reflecting on his life, bestowing prayers upon him and supporting his dawah. Do all this in the knowledge that that no one is able to truly give him the right that is due to him.

- **What intentions should we have upon moving into a new house?**

The Book of Intentions by Shaykh Ali bin Abu Bakr al-Sakran contains some useful intentions. Essentially they go back to making the house a place of benefit and a place in which the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ are followed.

- **How do I increase in sincerity (ikhlas) and truthfulness (sidq)?**

You do this by studying the lives of the people who attained these things and loving them. Also thank Allah for whatever He has given you of these traits and ask for an increase.

- **What can someone who has not been able to conceive recite?**

<http://muwasala.org/adkhar-for-someone-who-has-not-been-able-to-conceive/>

- **How can I establish a connection with the pious people of the Barzakh (those who have left this life)?**

Our aim is to be connected to Allah, Lord of this life, the Barzakh and the next life. According to your connection to Allah you will be connected to those whom He loves wherever they are - in this life or the next. Beyond that we implement what we have been taught regarding visiting them, donating rewards of good deeds to them, studying their lives and traits and adhering to their teachings and thus keeping those teachings alive. We also need to love and serve those who are connected to them whether they are their relatives, their students or those who live near them.

- **How can I decide what career path to take?**

You need to plead with Allah with sincerity for guidance in this regard. At the same time, you need to use your intellect, abilities and opportunities to find what is best.

- **What are the best prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ to recite?**

Every prayer contains goodness and blessings. Any prayer which is recited with love, yearning and veneration is of great benefit regardless of the form.

Priority should be given to the salawat that have been narrated in the Sunnah (such as al-Salat al-Ibrahimiyyah), then the salawat that have been narrated by the early generations or salawat that your Shaykh recommends.

- **If someone sees his shaykh in the dream and he instructs him to do something which is permissible. Is this sufficient or does he still need to consult the Shaykh before doing that thing?**

If the action in question will have no effect on your dawah and on personal relationships and it is not undesirable (*khilaf al-awla*) or disliked (*makruh*) the dream is sufficient. Otherwise that person needs to consult the Shaykh before proceeding.

- **How do we maintain a good opinion of scholars if their behaviour is not always befitting of their position?**

It is an obligation to have a good opinion of scholars and Muslims in general but this does not mean we accept them doing anything which is unlawful or having a bad influence on others. We do not recommend them as teachers to anyone unless we know about their level of etiquette and good character.

Having a good opinion applies in a situation where someone has done something wrong: we do not mention the thing, we assume that they have repented or that it was not as it was reported. Even if there is a small probability (even one per cent) that there was good in it, then having a good opinion dictates that you go with that.

Furthermore reminding the person in question and giving them good advice does not negate having a good opinion.

- **If we are in a gathering and an elder or a senior member of the community engages in backbiting what do we do?**

We try to change the subject as far as possible or leave the gathering.

- **What helps to gain presence in the prayer?**

What helps is focusing on the greatness of the One being worshipped and striving to be consistent in this while being conscious that you are following the Prophet ﷺ.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-attaining-concentration-in-prayer/>

- **What tafsir books do you recommend?**

A good starting point is al-Jalalayn. Many of the salaf like the tafsir of Imam al-Baghawi. Other useful ones are the works of Ibn Kathir and Ibn Ajibah.

- **Can someone benefit from a shaykh even if he is physically distant?**

Benefit is based upon the seeker's perception, love and following of the Shaykh and not whether they are near or far.

### **New Dhikr**

Habib responded to those who requested a new dhikr by saying that we should strive to be present in whatever dhikr we are engaged in.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Rajab / 9<sup>th</sup> March

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Awwal 1440

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 30<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1440 / 8<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **I am travelling to another country for a dawah trip. What intentions should I make?**

You should intend: fulfilling your covenant with Allah; obeying the command of Allah; serving the Prophet ﷺ, his Family, his Companions and the Ummah as whole and representing your teachers and the pious people of this time.

- **Can we benefit from the teachings of Habib Abu Bakr al-Mashhur?**

Anyone can benefit from his teachings and even more so those who belong to the same tariqah. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Wisdom is the lost property of the believer, so wherever he finds it, he is the most entitled to it."

- **I feel that my faith is weak and I have difficulty doing good deeds. What should I do?**

You need to plead with Allah for rectification, reflect upon the reward for good actions and keep company of the pious.

- **I am in the ninth month of my pregnancy and due to give birth soon. What can I recite to make things easy?**

Recite the following verses 10 times each morning and evening:

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ

*Thumm 'assabila yassarah*

Then He made the path easy (80:20)

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ

*W'Allah akhrajakummin butuni ummahatikum*

Allah brought you forth from your mothers' wombs (16:78)

ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لَتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ

*Thumma yukhrijukum tiflan thumma litablughu ashuddakum*

Then He brings you out as children then that you may attain your maturity (40:67)

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ

*Idhassama'unshaqqat*

*Wa adhinat li rabbiha wa huqqat*

*Wa idha'l'ardu muddat*

*Wa alqat ma fihi wa takhallat*

When the sky is rent asunder,

And obeys its Lord, and it must do so;

And when the earth is flattened out,  
And casts forth what is in it and becomes empty,  
(84:1-4)

Also bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ

Have patience and resolve and be certain that there is a reward for all the pain

Do not rush into having an operation unless the pain is unbearable

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/adhkar-for-pregnancy-and-labour/>

- **I am going to Marrakesh and hoping to visit Imam al-Jazuli and Qadi Iyad. What should I recite there?**

Recite the Quran there and some of Dala'il al-Khayra at Imam al-Jazuli's grave some of the Shifa at Qadi Iyad's grave. Ask to increase the benefit of these works and pray for the Ummah.

- **What action can I perform in order to see the Prophet ﷺ?**

Recite Ayat al-Kursi in abundance. Every time you recite it once, recite the following prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا  
مُحَمَّدٍ فِي كُلِّ لَمْحَةٍ وَنَفْسٍ بَعْدَ كُلِّ مَعْلُومٍ لَكَ

*Allahumma Şalli wa sallim 'alā sayyidina Muḥammad wa 'alā āli sayyidina Muḥammad fi kulli lamḥatin wa nafasīn bi'adadi kulli ma'lumin lak*

O Allah, bestow prayers and peace on our master Muhammad and the Family of our master Muhammad in every glance and breath the number of everything known by You.

- **What can I recite to help me memorise the Quran?**

1. Perform the prayer of memorising the Quran on Thursday night which the Prophet ﷺ taught Sayyiduna Ali. See: <http://seekershub.org/ans-blog/2012/08/20/supplication-for-those-who-want-to-memorize-the-quran/>
2. Recite verse 164 of Surah al-Baqarah whenever you sleep
3. Before memorising recite Surat al-Ala (Surah 86) up until the 6<sup>th</sup> verse and then repeat the verse 7 times
4. Repeat this salat between maghrib and isha:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ كَمَا لَا نِهَآيَةَ لَكُمْآلِكَ  
وَعَدَدَ كَمَالِهِ

*Allahumma Şalli wa sallim 'alā sayyidina Muḥammad wa 'alā ālihi kamā lā nihāyata li kamālika wa`adada kamālih*

O Allah, bestow prayers and peace on our master Muhammad and upon his Family just as there is no end to Your perfection and to the degree of his perfection.

- **What intentions should I make for attending the Dowra (or any retreat)?**

You should intend: responding to the call of Allah, honouring the covenant of Allah, following the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah, acting according to your knowledge, keeping the company of one's brethren for the sake Allah, connecting to the chain of transmission back to the Prophet ﷺ, teaching what you learnt and acted upon; pleasing the Prophet ﷺ and serving his Ummah.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2019/ 29<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1440

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Hijjah 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1439 / 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How should we end the hijri year and approach the new year?**

We need to make true repentance and to ask Allah to overlook all our shortcomings and to accept any good deeds we have been given the ability to perform. We must also make a sincere resolve to honour our covenant with Allah and to revive the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. We must take ourselves to account and strive to raise our families in the best way and to seek presence of heart in our worship.

- **How can we increase our connection to the salihin, the pious people of the Ummah?**

We can do this through mentioning them often with love and reverence and by studying their lives and exploits. We can also gift them the rewards of some of our actions and recitation of the Qur'an and the adhkar. This also applies to our connection with the Prophet ﷺ, his Family and his Companions.

- **I took bayah with a Shaykh without understanding what bayah meant. What should I do?**

You should maintain your connection with the Shaykh as long as he is upright on the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah and you are benefiting from him. At the same time, this should not prevent you from benefiting from any other shaykh or from serving the three objectives (knowledge, suluk and dawah).

- **What can be done to remove love of dunya from the heart?**

Love of dunya can be removed from the heart by reflecting upon its ephemeral and fleeting nature and upon the bad consequences of loving it and being attached to it in the next life and what has been narrated regarding its blameworthy nature. We should also reflect upon the greatness and eternity of the next life.

In terms of action, keeping the company of those who love Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and give precedence to the next life over this life is beneficial. Also any dhikr which emanates from a present heart which venerates Allah will assist in removing love of dunya from the heart.

We should also make the dua of Imam al-Haddad in abundance:

اللَّهُمَّ أَخْرِجْ مِنْ قَلْبِي كُلَّ قَدْرٍ لِلدُّنْيَا، وَكُلَّ مَحَلٍّ لِلخَلْقِ؛ يَمِيلُ بِي إِلَى مَعْصِيَتِكَ، أَوْ يُشْغِلُنِي عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ، أَوْ يَحُولُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ التَّحْقِيقِ بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ الْخَاصَّةِ، وَمَحَبَّتِكَ الْخَالِصَةِ

*Allahumma akhrij min qalbi kulla qadrin liddunya wa kulla mahallin lilkhalaq yamilu bi ila ma'siyatik aw yushghiluni `an ta'atik aw yahulu bayni wa bayna'ttahaqquq bi ma'rifatika al-khassah wa mahabbitaka'l-khalisah*

O Allah, remove from my heart any love for the material world and any status I may afford to people which cause me to disobey You or distract me from worshipping You or come between me and attaining special knowledge of You and sincere love for You.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-removing-love-of-dunya/>

- **How do we respond to those who like to portray Ahl al-Sunnah as people who are divided among themselves?**

We would say that to believe this is to respond to the callings of the Devil, your lower self and your caprice. We must look at the pious scholars who make up Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah just as we look at the Companions. We know the Companions differed among themselves but we believe that they always had the best of intentions and thus we only say good things about them and mention their merits. This is how we should talk about the pious scholars of this Ummah. We must ignore every voice which causes friction and division and do nothing to assist in spreading this message even if it takes the form of a refutation.

- **What are the most important adhkar for those on the path to Allah?**

The three most important adhkar are: *la ilaha ill'Allah*, prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and *istighfar* (seeking Allah's forgiveness).

Beyond that, priority is given to the adhkar narrated from the Prophet ﷺ and then from the pious. The following are collections of adhkar to refer to: *Kitab al-Adhkar* of Imam al-Nawawi, *Sabīl al-Muhtadīn*, *al-Maslak al-Qarīb*, *'Amal al-Yawm wa'l-Laylah* and *al-Khulasah*. The purpose of dhikr is to be focused on the One being remembered.

- **What adhkar can be recited for anxiety?**

Recite Ayat al-Kursi and Surat al-Inshirah after every prayer, before sleeping and upon entering and leaving the house.

Also recite 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَ يَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi'shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri*

"My Lord, bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair." (Ta Ha 20:25-26)

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/dhikr-to-remove-fear-and-anxiety/>

- **How should we understand tawassul?**

*Tawassul* is to use an intermediary to attain what you are seeking from Allah.

Allah says: ***O you who believe, have taqwa of Allah and seek a means (wasilah) to Him*** (Quran, 5:35)

Anything used to attain something is a wasilah or a means or intermediary. Any word or deed which pleases Allah can be used as a means. One of the greatest things to use as a means is Allah's names and attributes and then those who are beloved to Him. They include the angels, the prophets and the pious. The best intermediary in this life and the next of course is the Seal of the Prophets ﷺ.

On the Day of Judgement, when people are in great difficulty, they will go to the various prophets and each prophet will say he is unable to help them. Finally the Prophet ﷺ will come to their aid. He is the greatest intermediary. May Allah allow him to intercede for us and through his blessings may Allah gaze upon us and allow us to love him

Ustadh Abdullah Salih has recently returned to his home country, Namibia in Southern Africa with his wife and son after a period of study in Dar al-Mustafa, Tarim. Both he and his wife are converts. Muslims make up 3 % of the population of Namibia. If anyone would like to support his dawah work please write to [m.meetings@gmail.com](mailto:m.meetings@gmail.com) . We ask Allah that he is a means of light and guidance for his community and for the region.

### **Next Meeting**

The Muharram meeting is scheduled for Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2018

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1439

### Questions and Answers

***The Meeting took place in the city of the Prophet ﷺ, al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, on 29<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1439 / 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:***

- **How do we prepare to receive divine gifts at this blessed time?**

We prepare by purifying our hearts and minds, sincerely seeking and turning to Allah and following the Prophet ﷺ. This should be expressed in our actions, which include giving charity and recitation of the Qur'an. These are days of remembrance of Allah so we should make abundant *tasbih* and *tahlil* (saying *la ilaha ill'Allah*). Sayyiduna Abdullah Ibn Umar and Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah would go into the marketplace in Madinah in these days with no purpose other than to remember Allah and raise their voices with the takbir. Fasting one of these days is equal to the reward of fasting for a whole year and standing in one of these nights in prayer is equal to standing in prayer on Laylat al-Qadr. Fasting the day of Arafah (for those not on hajj) is equal to fasting 1,000 or even 10,000 days according to some narrations. We should seek to resemble the people of Arafat by gathering together at the same time as them to make dua. Those performing hajj of course should make dua for those who are close to them and for the whole Ummah and likewise those not on hajj. The believers are like one building.

- **How can I attain istiqamah?**

You can attain istiqamah or uprightness by seeking to increase your certainty (*yaqin*) and your spiritual ambition (*himmah*) and also by keeping good company and reading and reflecting upon what has been mentioned in the Quran and the Sunnah regarding doing good and doing evil. It has been said that istiqamah is the greatest miracle (*karamah*) that someone can be blessed with.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1439 / 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Shawwal 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 23<sup>rd</sup> Shawwal 1439 / 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Should I use crowdfunding to enable me to study the Islamic sciences abroad?**

It is better to work to put aside enough money to travel while at the same time benefitting from scholars locally and online than to ask people for money. If, however, Allah provides you with someone to sponsor your studies without you wanting that and actively seeking it, then that is a blessing.

We would like people in each area to set up funds to sponsor promising students and to enable dawah trips to take place. Those responsible should have good intentions and be scrupulous and very well organised.

- **I have found a suitable spouse who is religious but my parents want me to marry someone from the same ethnic background as them. What should I do?**

The most important thing to look for in a spouse is piety. Respecting your parents is also an expression of piety so you must use wisdom to try to convince your parents that you are making the right choice and also seek the help of members of the community whom your parents respect.

- **I have married a woman who became Muslim through me but now she wants to leave Islam. Should I remain with her?**

If there is a good chance that faith may become firm in her heart in the future then you should stay with her and do your best to help her. If not, it may be better to leave her before children come along and seek a pious woman to marry.

- **Can we use theatre as a means of dawah?**

Yes, theatre can be used but it is not a primary means of dawah. It can be used in specific times and situations.

- **I have given bayah to several different shuyukh and I am confused. What should I do?**

You should only give bayah to one shaykh with the intention of *sulūk* (travelling the path). There is no harm in giving bayah to several shuyukh with the intention of *tabarruk* (seeking blessings). You must realise the greatness of the bayah and not treat it as something insignificant. If you feel love and veneration in your heart for a particular shaykh then this is a sign that you should take him as a spiritual guide. You should then remain with him and not move on to another shaykh after that. You should love all the shuyukh and seek benefit and spiritual assistance from them all but you should only have one shaykh who is your point of reference in *sulūk*.

- **What should I do if I lose the desire and ambition to travel the path?**

It is human nature to have periods like this. It does not mean that you are no longer travelling the path. What cuts you off from travelling is being content with this lack of desire and ambition and not caring about it. As long as you rebuke yourself and try to renew your spiritual ambition, then there is no harm in this occurring.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-losing-spiritual-aspiration/>

- **To what degree can we work with groups which are at odds with Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah?**

We should deal with them with excellence in a way which brings them closer to our way and clarifies it to them. We must avoid encouraging or promoting the things over which we differ for fear of sending other people astray.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-working-with-salafi-groups/>

**General Advice**

The effects of Ramadan should be manifested in your intentions, action, character, dealings and increase in certainty and ambition in calling to Allah.

We love that you should always be conscious of serving the Three Objectives (knowledge, suluk and dawah). You should be conscious of this every day and whatever situation you are in.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1439 / 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramadan 1439

### Summary

***The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa with Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) on 24<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1439 / 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018.***

During the meeting we heard news from what has been happening in Ramadan in Cuba, the US, Canada, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi amongst other places.

Habib asked Allah to bless us in the days and nights that remain of Ramadan and reminded us that actions are judged by their endings. May we complete this month and truly celebrate Eid by receiving Allah's pleasure and forgiveness. We need to show the beauty of Islam to non Muslims at Eid. Allah commands us to show *birr* (goodness) and *ihsan* (excellence) to them. We also need to give our zakat al-fitr before the Eid prayer.

We should end the month with the intention of seeking to maintain the secret of Ramadan throughout the year. This is achieved through a strong connection to Allah, the Lord of Ramadan and to the Prophet ﷺ whose example we follow. These connections should remain with us throughout the year and help us to attain the Three Objectives (seeking knowledge, travelling the path and calling people to Allah).

We need to maintain the efforts we have made in Ramadan (*ijtihad*) which opens the door to struggle (*jihad*), especially against our lower selves. As the Prophet ﷺ said, the mujahid is the one who strives against his desires.

Habib was asked about charity work and what our focus and etiquettes should be.

He said that we should intend serving the religion and the Ummah, being a cause of joy to the Prophet and attaining the pleasure of Allah. Our activities should all be in accordance with the rulings of the Shariah and we must make sure any money raised goes to those most in need. Zakat should be given to the categories mentioned by Allah in the Qur'an

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> Shawwal 1439/ 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Thani 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1439 / 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Should I seek forgiveness for specific sins or generally?**

You should seek forgiveness for the specific sins which you know about and then seek forgiveness generally for those you do not know about. The greatest element of seeking forgiveness is sincere remorse in the heart and a firm resolve not to return to that sin.

- **Can I read and teach the book *Fada'il al-Amal* by al-Kandhlawi? It has been translated into different languages.**

Yes this is fine.

- **We have gatherings in which we recite the adhkar of al-Khulasah. Is it possible to recite these adhkar alone even if we have not taken the `ahd (the covenant of the Tariqah)?**

Yes there is no problem with this. The door of dhikr is open for whoever wants to remember Allah in a group or alone. The adhkar of the Khulasah are for all Muslims to recite. They are not just for those who have taken the `ahd. There are specific adhkar which are not in the Khulasah which may require permission to recite.

- **What do you say about investing in electronic currencies?**

These are one of the tricks and ploys that have been used to delude people who are hoping to make some money. They have no basis in the Sacred Law and the end result in investing in these currencies will not be good.

- **I have already invested in these currencies. What should I do?**

You should stop investing in them and you should give the money you have made to Muslims in need. If you have relatives who are in dire need then give it to them and if not send it to Muslims who are suffering from catastrophes across the world. Alternatively, you can donate it to a project which is of general benefit to society.

- **What can be recited for difficulties during pregnancy?**

You can recite the following 2 or 3 times a day:

Ya Latif 133 times

Followed by:

يَا لَطِيفًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا عَلِيمًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا خَيْرًا بِخَلْقِهِ الْطُّفَّ بِنَا يَا لَطِيفُ ، يَا عَلِيمُ ، يَا خَيْرُ

*Yā Laṭīfan bi khalqihī yā `Alīman bi khalqihī yā Khabīran bi khalqihī ulṭuf binā yā Laṭīfu yā `Alīmu yā Khabīru* (repeat 3 times)

O One Who is gentle with His creation, O One who has complete knowledge of His creation, O One who has complete awareness of His creation! Treat us with gentleness O Gentle, O All-Knowing, O All-Aware!

Repeat Surat Quraysh

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/adhkar-for-pregnancy-and-labour/>

- **Is bestowing abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ a substitute for a shaykh?**

If someone bestows abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ it helps them to overcome obstacles on the spiritual path, remove blameworthy qualities and gain noble qualities. Then through the blessing of bestowing those prayers, Allah unites that person with a shaykh who will be a means for them to reach Allah. So bestowing abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ (and also abundant istighfar) are one of the best means to prepare someone for spiritual progress and facilitate their meeting with their shaykh.

- **What can be recited to get rid of waswasah (satanic whisperings)?**

Recite 'Allah' 66 times morning and evening (or more if you wish)

Recite 3 times with hand on your chest:

سُبْحَانَ الْمَلِكِ الْخَلَّاقِ الْفَعَّالِ

*Subhān al-Malik al-Khallāq al-Fa`-āl*

*Transcendent is the Sovereign, the Creator, the true 'Doer' (of everything)*

إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ

*I'yasha' yudh-hibkum wa ya'ti bi khalqin jadid wa ma dhālik `ala Allahi bi `aziz*

If He wills, He can do away with you and produce a new creation. And that is not difficult for Allah.  
(Ibrahim, 14:19-20)

Recite Surat al-Nas 100 times a day

- **I feel like I have lost my resolve to travel the spiritual path. What should I do?**

It is part of human nature to have periods in which you become lazy or lose your resolve. As the Prophet ﷺ told us, what is required is to return to the sunnah at times of low resolve. This means to have a minimum of action that you do not leave and to constantly come back to Allah in a state of humility. The opposite of this (which much be avoided) is termed innovation which is to leave good action completely and leave the path to Allah.

Reciting the following 100 times also assists in this:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*Huw'Allāhu'lladhī lā ilāha illā hu, 'Ālimu'l ghaybi wash-shahādah, Hu arraḥmānu' raḥīm*

He is Allah, there is no deity save Him, Knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al-Hashr, 59:22)

- **What can be done to strengthen our brotherhood and social cohesion?**

The following things will help: repeatedly remembering the virtue and reward of brotherhood and the fruits of it, giving your brethren gifts with smiling faces, beginning with the greeting of salam when meeting each other, visiting each other and praying for your brothers in their absence.

- **What can be recited for protection from envy?**

You can recite Surat al-Falaq 100 times

- **How can I overcome my desire to look at forbidden images?**

Everyone is able to do this if they seek support from Allah in getting the better of their lower selves. Had it not been possible, Allah would not have asked this of us. What will assist you in this is keeping the company of those who fear Allah, and watching good programmes and being aware of the place and time in which he falls into these things and then to avoid these times and places.

- **What is the meaning of al-Haqq?**

Al-haqq is the truth, the opposite of falsehood. It is also one of Allah's names. It means the One Who is existent and Who brings everything into existence and has control over all things. With regards to the creation, anything which is existent which has a firm basis is the truth. What is other than that is falsehood – that which perishes or leads to evil.

- **I doubt if my husband's income is halal. What should I do?**

You should give sincere advice to him regarding the importance of having a halal income or get someone else to do so. You should also do what you can to earn a halal income of your own. If it becomes clear that his source of wealth is haram then you must avoid taking from it. If it is only doubtful then this is not harmful.

- **I find it more conducive to my spiritual progress to keep away from people and not to mix with them. Is this allowed?**

The hadith tells us that the one who mixes with people and patiently bears their harm is better than the one who does not mix them and does not patiently bear their harm. If he is able to bear their harm and give mixing its due right then he should mix with people according to his ability.

If this not possible, you need to abide by the etiquettes of seclusion which include striving to be in a constant state of presence with Allah, busying yourself with things that draw you closer to Him and protecting yourself from bad thoughts. You must also try to benefit people by means that do not involve contact with them, such as writing or sending books to them.

- **Have we broken our covenant ( `ahd) by committing sins?**

No if you have remorse for committing sins and return swiftly to Allah then you have not broken the `ahd. What breaks the `ahd is deliberately persisting in disobeying Allah and committing sins.

### **Advice**

Habib mentioned the book *al-Risalah al-Jami'ah* by Imam Ahmad bin Zayn al-Habashi (translated as *The Essentials of Islam* by Shaykh Abdul Aziz Ahmed). He said it is a beneficial book which should be taught whenever the opportunity arises. Some of the salihin said that when Imam al-Mahdi comes, he will command for this book to be taught.

### **New Dhikr**

Those requesting a new dhikr should recite 30,000 times:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

*Rabbighfir wa'rham wa anta khayurrāhimīn*

"My Lord, forgive and have mercy, and You are the best of the merciful." (al-Mu'minun 23:118)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Awwal 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 28<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1439 / 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **There are several hadith which mention the first thing to be created. What was in fact the first thing?**

The light of Prophet ﷺ was the first thing to be created. The other things mentioned (the Throne, the Foot-stool and the Pen) are among the first things to be created. Similar to this are the hadith which mention what the best actions are. Different hadith mention different actions and what is meant is that these actions are among the best actions and that what is best differs from person to person.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-light-of-the-prophet/>

- **What are some of the etiquettes of service (*khidmah*)?**

Any type of service, whether it be service of a shaykh or anyone else, should be conducted with the intention of purifying the soul by means of the benefit that comes about through it. Being a cause of any kind of benefit is in fact a type of service. Assisting the shaykh in implementing his objectives or assisting anyone in implementing any objective which is valid in the Shariah is a type of service. Any action which requires humility is more beneficial for the soul, such as cleaning, washing and cooking. An important etiquette is to keep the private affairs of the shaykh or anyone else being served secret. The person serving should have sincerity at all times and should believe that he benefits himself through his service and not that he is doing a favour to those he is serving.

- **What are some of the adhkar of the Ba Alawi Path?**

The Imams of this way gave preference to the adhkar narrated in the Sunnah. Then there are many adhkar attributed to the Salihin. Some are contained in the Khulasah so we should try to recite what we are able to of those adhkar. The Dhikr of Imam al-Aydarus is recited upon taking the path.

The prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ ‘Nurik al-Sari’ should then be recited 33,000 times. Once it is completed it should be recited 30 times, 50 times or 100 times a day or more.

There is also the ‘Dhikr of the seven souls’. Each dhikr corresponds to one of the seven souls as follows:

*La ilaha ill’Allah* 70,000 times which allows you to overcome *al-nafs al-ammārah*

*Allah Allah* 60,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-lawwāmah*

*Hu Hu* 50,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-mulhmah*

*Yā Ḥaqq* 40,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-muṭma’inah*

*Yā Ḥayy* 30,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-rāḍiah*

*Yā Qayyūm* 20,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-marḍiyyah*

*Yā Qahhār* 10,000 times which allows you to attain *al-nafs al-kāmilah*

The most important thing is that your heart is present with Allah while making dhikr.

- **How is *khalwah* (spiritual seclusion) performed?**

It can be done for 24 hours or 3 days or a week and the maximum is 40 days. It entails cutting off from everything and complete focus on Allah and presence with Him. The person in *khalwah* should pray their prayers in congregation at least with one other person. It is best if they are able to fast but if not, they should at least reduce their normal food intake. They should be in a constant state of brokenness and neediness in front of Allah. The most important dhikr is saying *la ilaha ill’Allah* or *Allah* in abundance. Time should also be spent bestowing prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ using any formula but specifically the ones composed by the salihin. Beyond the things mentioned there are different ways of performing the *khalwah* and you should refer to your Shaykh in this.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-method-of-seclusion-khalwah/>

- **I live in an area in which there are very few gatherings of remembrance. Should I move or establish some here?**

If you are able to establish gatherings in your area and you have support and benefit will come about due to that and you can call people to Islam then you should stay. If this is not the case, you should move to an area where there are more gatherings.

- **How should we understand the opening verses of Surat `Abasa?**

***He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him — perhaps that he might be purified or take note of something useful to him. For the self-satisfied one you go out of your way — though you are not to be blamed for his lack of spiritual growth — but from the one who has come to you full of eagerness and awe you turn away. Surely this is a great lesson for those who wish to learn, [written] on honoured, exalted, pure pages, by the hands of noble and virtuous scribes. [‘Abasa, 80:1-16]***

These verses reflect the strong desire of the Prophet ﷺ to convey the message. This led him to focus all his energy and attention on someone who opposed him and did not believe in him despite the fact that had he not done so, it would not have harmed him. In doing so he went against both what he and people in general are accustomed to do doing, namely welcoming and giving attention to those that love and support them. At the same time, he was mildly displeased with a believer (the blind man) due to the inappropriate manner of his questioning even though he was seeking to benefit. Normally the Prophet ﷺ would not find such a question burdensome especially when it was coming from someone who believed in him and loved him. He thus frowned and turned away from the believer (which was something he would not do naturally) in order to teach him the correct etiquette and to instil in him concern for saving disbelievers from the Fire. Allah then informed the Prophet that He was pleased with his actions: ***he might be purified or take note of something useful to him*** and that he and others will learn the etiquettes of asking questions.

Allah says to His Beloved ﷺ: you go against your own nature to focus on someone who is opposed to you even though had you not done so and had they not accepted Islam, it would not have been to your detriment. As for the one who came to you seeking you, you turned away from him even though it is human nature to welcome such a person. You went against human nature out of mercy for Allah’s slaves in the hope that they be guided. So what you did is a reminder for those who attempt to emulate you: ***This is a lesson from which those who wish to be taught should learn, [written] on honoured, exalted, pure pages, by the hands of noble and virtuous scribes.***

May Allah enable us to follow his example.

- **What is the method of remembrance of the heart?**

You start by bringing to mind greatness of Allah and the meaning of His names and attributes. The first stage is being conscious of Allah's complete awareness of you and what is in your heart. There are then a number of stages and the end point is annihilation in Allah (*fanā'*) and remaining in Him (*baqā'*). Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim was of the opinion that there is a reward for remembrance of the heart even if it is recitation of the Qur'an.

- **How much was Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra's dowry?**

Her dowry was 400 dirhams and this was generally the dowry that the Prophet ﷺ gave to his wives.

- **How does one tell if the meanings that someone understands from the Qur'an are valid?**

If they are in accordance with the Qur'an, the Sunnah, the Shariah and the teachings of the Salihin and the Arabic language and they increase you in humility and having a good opinion of others then this is a sign that they are valid.

- **I have been proposed to. How should I communicate with my fiancé?**

If the marriage contract has not actually been made then he is still like any other unrelated male and should be treated as such. That which is forbidden to with such a male is forbidden to do with him.

Habib was asked about taking knowledge from teachers who are connected to Dar al-Mustafa. He responded as follows:

Taking knowledge from those who have a sound connection to Dar al-Mustafa, its methodology and its teachers is a means of connecting to the source, which is the Dar itself. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Convey on my behalf, even if it is only one verse.” The people who have this connection to the Dar are conveying knowledge on his behalf and on behalf of his Dar. These noble connections do not end when someone dies and are not cut off on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet ﷺ said: “All ties of kinship and marriage will be severed on the Day of Resurrection, except mine.” These connections are a type of kinship, and thus will not be severed on the day of Judgement.

Sayyiduna Umar was keen to have every type of connection to the Prophet ﷺ and for that reason he proposed to the daughter of Sayyiduna Ali. He told Sayyiduna Ali that he was not merely doing this for the sake of marriage but rather to attain another type of relationship to the Prophet and he cited the aforementioned hadith. This was despite the fact that the Prophet had married Umar’s daughter Hafsah and he had thus already attained the honour of being related to the Prophet through marriage. He used to warn Hafsah not to be the cause of that connection being severed.

Allah out of His bounty has allowed these means of connection to remain for those who are truthful in any time. The strongest type is pure sincere love and then receiving knowledge through a sound sanad or chain of transmission to him and then through marriage. All of this is supported by the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: “Whoever does an act of goodness to the descendants of Abd al-Muttalib and is not compensated, then I will compensate him myself.”

Habib encouraged people to make the stories of the Prophets, the Companions and the pious accessible to children by simplifying them. Anyone who has worked on these can share them with others in order to help them raise their children.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1439/ 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Safar 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 29<sup>th</sup> Safar 1439 / 18<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- How is the Dhikr of Imam al-Aydarus recited?

There are two ways to recite the Dhikr of Imam al-Aydarus

**The First way is as follows**

Recite:

***Lā ilāha ill'Allāh*** 12,000 times

***Allāh, Allāh*** 12,000 times

***Hu, Hu*** 12,000 times

Then recite after every prayer:

***Lā ilāha ill'Allāh***

***Allāh, Allāh***

***Hu, Hu***

Either 12, 120 or 12,000 times

Then finish with the following three times:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

**Ashadu allā ilāha ill'Allāh waḥdahū la sharīka la wa ashadu anna Muḥammadan `abduhu wa rasūluh**

The Second Way is as follows

Recite once:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam**

While being conscious that you are receiving it from Allah directly

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam**

While being conscious that you are receiving it from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam**

While being conscious that you are receiving it from Imam al-Aydarus

Then recite **La ilaha ill'Allah** 100 times while focusing on the meaning that there is nothing worthy of worship other than Allah.

(لا معبود إلا الله)

Then recite **La ilaha ill'Allah** 100 times while focusing on the meaning that nothing is sought other than Allah.

(لا مقصود إلا الله)

Then recite **La ilaha ill'Allah** 100 times while focusing on the meaning that nothing exists other than Allah.

(لا موجود إلا الله)

Then recite **La ilaha ill'Allah** 60 times while focusing on the meaning that there is nothing to be witnessed other than Allah.

(لا مشهود إلا الله)

Then repeat once again:

لا إله إلا الله مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam**

While being conscious that you are receiving it from Allah directly

لا إله إلا الله مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam**

While being conscious that you are receiving it from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

***Lā ilāha ill'Allāh Muḥammadun rasūlullāh ṣall'Allahu `alayhi wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam***

While being conscious that you are receiving it from Imam al-Aydarus

Then remain still and silent for a time to see what thoughts enter your heart.

It is better do this in a quiet place with the lights off. It be can be repeated a second and third time.

- **What can be recited in the home as protection from black magic?**

The following things can be recited:

Surat al-Fatihah 40 times

Ayat al-Kursi 70 times

Surat Al-Ikhlās, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nas 30 times each

Wird Imam al-Sakran

Wird Imam al-Nawawi

Also Recite Surat al-Baqarah every 3 days. The Prophet informed us that the sorcerers from the Jinn are unable to approach the house for three days after it has been recited. You can also play a recording of the Surah in the house.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Rabi Awwal 1439/ 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Muharram 1439

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 17<sup>th</sup> Muharram 1439 / 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **I am currently living in a Muslim country but my father wants me to relocate with my family to a non-Muslim country. Do I have to do what he says?**

If you fear that your religion and the religion of your family will be weakened or threatened, you do not have to obey him. If this is not the case you should obey him.

- **If we have completed the memorisation of the Qur'an, how do we retain what we have memorised?**

You should recite the Qur'an in your nawafil (supererogatory) prayers. You should recite at least 3 juz a day and 5 if possible.

Habib mentioned that by visiting each other for Allah's sake we strengthen our faith, increase our knowledge of Allah and our love and more people are brought closer to Allah.

Most of the meeting was taken up with the taking of the `ahd. Those who have not done so before should recite the dhikr of Imam al-`Aydarus:

***La ilaha ill'Allah 12,000 times***

***Allah, Allah 12,000 times***

***Hu, Hu 12,000 times***

(reading *Allah, Allah* and *Hu, Hu* counts as one)

Once they have finished that they should recite this prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ 33,000 times

<http://muwasala.org/nurik-al-sari/>

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Safar 1439 / 18<sup>th</sup> November 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 20<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1438 / 12<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How can I deal with bad thoughts I have about my wife due to her past?**

The first thing to know is that Allah, Who has rights over all creatures, turns the bad deeds of those who sincerely repent into good deeds. How then can a person focus only on someone else's bad deeds and ignore the good state which they are in currently? You should be angry with yourself that you are having these thoughts and you should not believe them and even less act upon them. To do so goes against your humanity, your etiquette with Allah and His creation and the teachings of the Prophet

ﷺ

- **How can I convince my sister to wear the hijab?**

You can do this by mentioning the merits and effects of modesty. When the time is right you can discuss some of the verses which were revealed regarding the hijab and how the female Companions responded to the injunctions contained in these verses. You can also talk about how the Devil and his allies try to use women as a tool to misguide and delude people and also as a commodity so women should not allow themselves to be used in this way. We recommend reading Shaykh Muhammad Said Ramadan al-Bouti's book 'To Every Young Woman Who Believes in Allah' (*ila kulli fatatin tu'minu billah*).

- **How can I know if have sincerity when I am teaching or leading the prayer?**

If you fear ostentation, do everything you can to avoid it and plead with Allah for sincerity then these things are evidence of sincerity. A further indication is if you are happy when someone else takes your place teaching and leading the prayer and excels in it.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-sincerity-in-pious-works-and-protection-against-ostentation/>

- **What are the signs that your Shaykh is pleased with you?**

One of the main signs is your contentment with the Shaykh, with his instructions and his methodology. This is in itself a reflection of your contentment with Allah as your Lord, with Islam as your religion and with Muhammad ﷺ as your prophet and messenger.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-signs-of-a-shaykhs-good-pleasure-2/>

- **I have been denied a visa for hajj due to the regulations in place. What advice do you have for me?**

We should always remember that the Prophet ﷺ made ihram to perform umrah and reached Hdaybiyah which is very close to Makkah but then had to return with 400 of his Companions without entering Makkah.

- **In what order should the seeker study the books of the path?**

Please see PDF attachment.

- **What are the causes of depression amongst Muslims and what are the remedies?**

Some of the causes are: a lack of remembrance of Allah, venerating dunya or the ways of non Muslims and envy and resentment for fellow Muslims.

Some of the remedies are: abundant dua, consistent dhikr, striving to emulate the Prophet's character and busying oneself with the stories of the Prophets, Companions and the Pious.

- **How do we avoid taking riba?**

We do this by not taking it from its direct sources and leaving that which there is a strong suspicion that there is riba in it.

## **Multaqa**

Dar al-Mustafa's annual Multaqa will take place in Rabi' al-Awwal 1438 inshallah

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> Muharram 1439 / 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Shawwal 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 29<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1438 / 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Imam al-Haddad is known as the ‘renewer’ (*mujaddid*) of the 12<sup>th</sup> Islamic century. What form did his renewal (*tajdid*) take?**

Imam al-Haddad brought about a general renewal and a specific renewal. He brought about a general renewal by giving life to the meanings of the religion in the hearts and the lives of its adherents. This was the promised renewal which the Prophet ﷺ informed us would take place every century. He brought about a specific renewal by explaining the spiritual path of his predecessors and making it easy for those who wish to travel it. He placed everything that a wayfarer on the path needs – whether it be the Ba Alawi path specifically or any Sufi path – in two of his books: ‘Good Manners’ (*Adab Suluk al-Murid*) and ‘The Book of Assistance’ (*Risalat al-Mu`awanah*).

- **Islam is supposed to be easy but I am finding it hard to practise. How can we reconcile between this ease and hardship?**

All good things are not beyond a person’s capacity to attain but they are only attained through effort. Even in worldly affairs, effort is required to attain one’s goals. If we look at the religion from the perspective that it does not give us obligations which we are unable to fulfil, we find ease in it. In addition to this, we find that whenever we act upon the injunctions of the religion we receive great openings, gentleness and assistance from Allah. When the spirit begins to find pleasure in acts of worship and the person begins to appreciate the inner beauty of the religion, all physical hardship becomes easy to bear. In fact, the hardship which the lower self experiences - which has been likened to holding on to a hot coal – is transformed into pleasure which the spirit experiences. When Sayyiduna Bilal was asked how he bore the pain of being tortured in Makkah, he said that he caused the sweetness of faith which he was tasting to overcome the pain of torture.

The religion is easy to practise but the soul goes through difficulty in establishing it in the best way. There is no contradiction in this. What makes it seem more difficult is that the majority of people around us do not practise it. The Prophet ﷺ said: “This religion began as something strange and it will return once again as something strange, so good tidings to the strangers who bring life to the affairs of my Sunnah which people had caused to die.”

- **If women face abuse and harassment because they are wearing the niqab what should they do?**

One thing they can do is to only go out of the house when they need to. Another option is to take the opinion which allows women to uncover their faces and hands. If they choose to take this opinion, they should avoid beautifying themselves. In rare cases, people may reach a high rank in which they are unaffected by the abuse of others and actually take pleasure in what befalls them.

- **I find it difficult to establish the three foundations of this methodology (seeking knowledge, spiritual purification and calling to Allah). What should I do?**

It is not surprising that this is difficult because Paradise is surrounded by unpleasant things, as the hadith states. You should take a portion of each of the three foundations and not do anything which goes against them. You will receive assistance from Allah according to your truthfulness. You must strive and go against your lower self.

- **How do I subdue my lower self (nafs)?**

You do this by going against it – forcing it to do what it does not want to do and preventing it from doing what it wants to do. Seek assistance in this through the remembrance of Allah, seeking refuge in Allah and keeping the company of the pious.

- **Should we take permission before taking on a new wird?**

If it is from the Sunnah or one of the awrad of the pious there is no problem in taking it as a wird. However, if you have a shaykh you should consult him as he knows what is most suitable for your spiritual state.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-taking-permission-before-reciting-a-new-dhikr/>

- **How can we resolve differences between two groups of people who follow the same shaykh?**

We can do this by reminding them of what is most pleasing to Allah and what will assist in achieving the aims of the Shaykh. They should also explain the positions they are taking to the Shaykh. They should be reminded that those who fail to honour the covenant of mutual love between believers will not be entrusted with the secrets of the path (tariqah). There can be no condemnation for an action which is not regarded to be blameworthy in the Sacred Law – only actions such as backbiting, abusive language or showing contempt may be condemned.

- **There has been a spate of acid attacks recently. What can we recite to protect ourselves from these kind of attacks?**

Recite 450 times:

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

*Hasbunallāhu wa ni`ama'l-wakīl*

“Allah is sufficient for us and He is the best protector.” (3:173)

Recite 100 times:

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

*Wa ufawwiḍu amrī ila-Allāh, inna-Allāha baṣīrun bil-‘ibād*

“I surrender my affair to Allah: Allah is well aware of His servants.” (40:44)

- **When is someone excused from praying the Friday prayer?**

A man is only excused from praying the Friday prayer if by going to the prayer he would experience harm or hardship which is unbearable.

- **How does someone get over the sadness of the past?**

They can do this by reflecting upon the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them in the present.

- **How can I learn to understand Allah's wisdom in calamities and human suffering?**

Young children may not understand why their parents insist that they go to school. When they get older, they understand why they were so insistent on this. According to a person's faith and veneration of Allah, they will be able to understand something of the wisdom behind Allah's decree. However, no created being – even the angels and prophets – will completely understand this wisdom. They will merely attain levels of understanding. Every believer must at least realise that his understanding of Allah's wisdom is less than a child's understanding of the wisdom of adults. His heart should then be filled with contentment with whatever Allah decrees.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1438 / 12<sup>th</sup> August 2017

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so in this meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramadan 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 29<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1438 / 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What intentions should we make as Ramadan departs?**

We should intend to distance ourselves from all disobedience and make a strong resolve to perform acts of obedience in general and specifically to pray the five prayers in congregation making the opening takbir with the imam and to fast the six days of Shawwal. We should also be consistent in: praying the sunnah prayers before and after the obligatory prayers and the duha and witr prayers, reciting a portion of Qur'an daily while reflecting on its meanings and honouring our parents and relatives. At Eid we should be especially good to those around us, both Muslim and non Muslim.

- **What duas should be recited upon the completion of the Qur'an?**

The best duas are the duas found in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Thereafter one of the best collections of duas that has been narrated from the Salaf is the dua of Sayyiduna Ali Zayn al-Abidin bin al-Husayn which is known as '*al-Fuṣūl*'.

- **How do we understand the statement that "whenever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was given the choice between two things he chose the easier one"?**

This was generally the choice he would make for other people. When it came to himself, however, the example he set was to obey the commands of Allah to the highest degree without taking any dispensation.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-prophet-taking-the-easier-option/>

- **How do we respond when a non Muslim asks us about the hadd punishment for apostasy?**

Generally speaking, we should talk to non Muslims about the essential elements of our faith and not about legal or peripheral issues such as the hadd punishments. If someone asks about this specifically, we can explain that the implementation of punishments is the preserve of the ruler of an Islamic state. Ordinary Muslims have no say in this whatsoever, especially if they live in a land which is not under Islamic rule. When deciding whether or not to implement the hadd punishment for apostasy, the ruler must look at the individual case and take into account the interests of the people as a whole. A situation in which an individual is making a mockery of the religion and his leaving the religion will have a negative effect on society as a whole will not be the same as a situation where this is not the case.

- **What is the correct etiquette if we have pictures of the pious up in our houses?**

The correct etiquette is to treat them as though their souls are present in that place. This would dictate, for example, that if a husband and wife wish to engage in marital relations they should cover up those pictures.

- **How can we stop ourselves getting angry with our children?**

We can do this by reciting the dua which I have mentioned many times, the dua which the Prophet ﷺ taught Sayyidah Aishah. It should be recited at least ten times in the morning and ten times in the evening:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ مُحَمَّدٍ اغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي وَ اذْهَبْ غَيْظَ قَلْبِي وَ اجْرِني مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ

*Allāhumma rabba Muḥammadin ighfir lī dhanbī wa adhib ghayza qalbī wa ajirnī min mudillāti-l-fitan*

“O Allah, Lord of Muhammad, forgive my sins, remove anger from my heart and save me from tribulations which send people astray.”

- **A friend of mine wants to have a child but her husband is refusing. Is he permitted to do this?**

No he is not permitted to do this especially if they do not already have children. It would only be permissible if there is a strong possibility that getting pregnant would harm her physically or would be detrimental to her religion.

- **How should we understand some of the statements of the awliyā' which seem to suggest that they are proud or arrogant?**

It is not conceivable that one of the awliyā' of Allah be arrogant. If they talk about some of the gifts that Allah has bestowed upon them they do so with a deep humility that the person listening may not necessarily be aware of. They have inherited this humility from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He was the master of the humble and at the same time he informed people of the blessings Allah had bestowed upon him, by saying for example: "I am the master of the children of Adam and I am the most noble of all people, the first and the last of them, without boasting"; "if Musa was alive, he would have to follow me". If someone thinks that the Prophet was not humble when he said these things, then they have misunderstood, and the awliyā' follow the Prophet in every attribute.

- **I am often asked to lead the prayer but I find I make mistakes in my recitation of the Qur'an. What can I do to stop this?**

Try to recite Surat al-Inshirah and Surat al-Nas before entering the prayer. Also make a habit of reciting the Qur'an slowly while reflecting upon the meaning. This will prevent you from making mistakes.

- **Is there any time in which it is prohibited to cut your nails?**

I know of no prohibition from the salaf regarding cutting one's nails at any time of the day or night.

- **We are starting an archery club. What things should be aware of?**

You should intend following the instruction of the Prophet ﷺ to: "teach your children swimming and archery." The Prophet ﷺ also said: "Strength is archery." The purpose of archery is to defend the truth and ward of oppression and it cannot be used for any other purpose.

- **I find it hard not to be affected by whatever is around me. What can I do?**

You should focus on being affected by Muhammad ﷺ because he is the leader and focus of all good. This will then correct your approach to everything.

- **What dua can mothers who wish to be steadfast in their worship while raising their children recite?**

They can recite the following verse:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا

*Rabbanā ātinā milla dunka raḥmatan wa hayyi' lanā min amrinā rashadā*

"Our Lord, bestow on us mercy from Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way" (al-Kahf, 18:10).

- **How can I taste the sweetness of worship?**

Not tasting the sweetness of worship is mainly due to the heart not being fully focused on Allah and being preoccupied by other than Allah or due to a veil in the heart such as pride or hatred for someone. By standing at Allah's door and attempting to purify your heart, you will no doubt taste the sweetness of worship. `Utbah al-Ghulam said: "I forced myself to perform the night vigil prayer for twenty years until I tasted its sweetness."

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1438 / 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Sha`ban 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 25<sup>th</sup> Sha`ban 1438 / 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **If I read the translation of Surat al-Kahf on Thursday night or Friday do I receive the rewards narrated regarding the recitation of Surat al-Kahf at that time?**

You will have a general reward for reading the meaning of Allah's speech. However, the specific reward can only be attained by reciting it in Arabic, the language in which it was revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ .

- **I find it easy to show good character and smile at people outside the home but I find it difficult to do so with my family. Is this a sign of hypocrisy?**

No this is a sign of weakness. We should make every effort to show good character and smile at our family members. Those who are most deserving of our good treatment are our mothers, then our fathers and those who are closest to us.

- **What is the best means of attaining spiritual assistance (*madad*) from our Ba Alawi Imams?**

You attain assistance according to how truthful you are, the greatness of your perception and the degree to which you emulate them. Reading their biographies will assist you in this.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-seeking-spiritual-assistance-from-the-ba-alawi-imams/>

- **How do we best understand the Ba Alawi Way?**

You do this by reflecting on Imam al-Haddad's *Good Manners (Adāb Sulūk al-Murīd)*. The book contains a description of our way.

- **Which is better – to attend a gathering of knowledge with one of the scholars or to stay at home to teach your family?**

You should only have to make this decision in a case where there is no other time in which to teach your family. Otherwise you should attend the gathering and teach your family at some other time.

- **What are the qualities that you look for in a prospective spouse?**

The main criteria are religiosity and good character. If someone is steadfast in their faith this will insure that their character is good. The prospective couple should also look at each other's face and hands. All of this will lead to contentment and stability in their marriage.

- **How can I remove love of dunya from my heart?**

You can do this by reflecting on the reality of the dunya and its ephemerality and the fate of those who love it and by reflecting on the greatness of the next life and the fact that is our final destination. Also look what has been mentioned by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ about the dunya and akhirah. Think about the different categories of people in this life and what their fate will be.

Any type of dhikr will assist in removing love of dunya from the heart, especially the dua of Imam al-Haddad:

اللَّهُمَّ أَخْرِجْ مِنْ قَلْبِي كُلَّ قَدْرٍ لِلدُّنْيَا، وَكُلَّ مَحَلٍّ لِلْخَلْقِ؛ يَمِيلُ بِي إِلَى مَعْصِيَتِكَ، أَوْ يُشْغِلُنِي عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ، أَوْ يَجُولُ بَيْنِي وَيَبِينُ التَّحَقُّقِ بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ الْخَاصَّةِ، وَمَحَبَّتِكَ الْخَاصَّةِ

*Allāhumma akhrij min qalbī kulla qadrin liddunyā wa kulla maḥallin lilkhalaq yamīlu bī ilā ma`ṣiyatik aw yushghilunī `an ṭā`atik aw yaḥūlu baynī wa bayna`ttahaqquq bi ma`rifatika al-khāṣṣah wa maḥabbitaka`l-khāliṣah*

O Allah, remove from my heart any love for the material world and any status I may afford to people which cause me to disobey You or distract me from worshipping You or come between me and attaining special knowledge of You and sincere love for You.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-removing-love-of-dunya/>

- **If someone has forgotten some of the Qur'an that he previously memorised should he begin by revising that before he memorises new parts of the Qur'an?**

Yes this is firmly encouraged.

- **Will he be taken to account for that which he forgot?**

Yes if it is out of negligence or deliberately leaving the Qur'an. No if it is out of sickness which affected his memory or some other difficulty that was out of his hands.

- **I wish to give sadaqah every day but I do not have someone to give it to. What should I do?**

Give the money to those who may donate it every day. For example, Rafah Foundation in Tarim runs the 'Bakiru' project. You can make a donation and then they will distribute a portion every day on your behalf. For details write to: [info-eng@alrafh.org](mailto:info-eng@alrafh.org)

- **How do I honour the covenant I took when I entered the tariqah?**

You do this by sincerely trying to fulfil your obligations and avoid prohibitions.

- **Should we put photos on display in our houses?**

If they are photos of Muslims it is permissible and if they are photos of the pious it is hoped that through the blessings of images of such people harm will be deflected. If visitors are not comfortable with seeing these photos, they should not be visible in guest rooms. If you come into the guest room in our house you will not see any photos. You should not put up images of animals or corrupt people. Statues or the like are forbidden.

- **What is the ruling on organ donation?**

It is impermissible to take a dead person's organs. Some scholars allow someone to donate an organ such as a kidney if they can do without it, especially if they are donating it to someone close to them such as their father or mother and doing so would save their life. It would not be permissible to donate your eye or your hand for example because you do not in fact own your own organs but rather they belong to Allah. It would be permissible to donate blood because it replaces itself and donating it does not detract from a person's makeup.

- **What is meant by the statement that ‘the ordinary person has no madhab’?**

It means that the action of an ordinary person (not a scholar) is acceptable as long as it is valid according to any of the schools of law.

- **We want to fulfil the needs of our families but at the same time we do not want them to make them love the dunya. What should we do?**

The key is moderation – not to buy them everything they want and not to deny them everything they want. If we are generous while showing moderation they will love us.

- **What duas can be recited to improve our relationship with our parents?**

Recite in abundance:

رَبِّ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

*Rabbirrahmahum kamā rabbayānī ṣaghīrā*

My Lord, have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little.

When you hear the adhan, recite the well known dua and then say five times:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي و لِوَالِدَيَّ

*Rabbighfir lī wa li wālidayya*

My Lord, forgive me and my parents

Also recite five times after every prayer:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي و لِوَالِدَيَّ و لِمَنْ لَهُ حَقٌّ عَلَيَّ

*Rabbighfir lī wa li wālidayya wa liman lahu ḥaqqun `alayya*

My Lord, forgive me and my parents and those who have rights over me

- **If you have a good dream do you tell people about it?**

You tell those who you love and those who will keep it a secret. It is better not to tell people if you fear pride by doing so.

- **What can I do when I experience sadness?**

Return to Allah and repeat the Prayer of Difficulty [Dua al-Karb] which the Prophet ﷺ taught us:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ،

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ،

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāhul-`Aẓimul-Ḥalīm,*

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāhu rabbu'l`arshi-l`aẓīm,*

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāhu rabbu`ssamāwāti wa rabbu'l-arḍi wa rabbu'l`arshi-l-karīm*

“There is no god but Allah, the Awesome, the Forbearing, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the mighty throne, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth and the noble throne.”

Recite 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَ يَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi-shraḥ lī ṣadrī wa yassir lī amrī*

“My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair.”

Remind yourself that Allah has given you Ramadan in order for you to gain His gifts and there is no better month.

- **My lower self (nafs) has got the better of me and I feel I cannot defeat it. What should I do?**

Your lower self may have got the better of you temporarily but you can defeat it. The lower self or anything else cannot be a barrier to the one who seeks strength from the All Powerful. Imam al-Haddad said:

والنفس و الشيطان أعصيهما بقوة الله العلي العظيم

*I go against my lower self and the Devil through the power of Most High, the Most Great*

Were man not able to overcome his lower self, Allah would not have commanded him to purify it and strive against it. No matter how much it overcomes do you, do not think that it will defeat you. Rely upon Allah and you will get the better of it.

- **My parents are trying to force me to marry someone I do not want to marry. What should I do?**

You have two choices. The first choice is to refuse and say you are unable to go ahead with the marriage. It is not obligatory for you to marry someone against your will. The second choice, which is better, is to go ahead with the marriage for perhaps Allah will put good in it.

- **Should men and women be seated separately at gatherings?**

In general, it is better for women to have their own gatherings of knowledge and remembrance. If men and women are present together then the women should be in a separate place or there should be a screen or curtain between the men and women.

- **How do we understand muraqabah or vigilance in the Tariqah?**

Muraqabah is to be completely present with Allah until you become absorbed in the One Being Remembered.

- **Is there a dua to recite when you take medicine?**

You can recite the Qur'anic verse:

وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

*Wa idhā mariḍtu fa huwa yashfin*

*When I become sick, it is He who heals me*

Also recite the Prophetic dua:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ النَّاسِ، أَذْهِبِ الْبَأْسَ، وَاشْفِ وَأَنْتَ الشَّافِي؛ لَا شِفَاءَ إِلَّا شِفَاؤُكَ، شِفَاءٌ لَا يُعَادِرُ سَقَمًا

*Allāhumma rabbannās adhib'il ba's wa'shfi wa antashāfi lā shifā illā shifā'uk shifā'an lā yughādiru saqaman*

O Allah, Lord of all people, remove this harm and heal me in a way which leaves no trace of illness, for You are the one Who heals.

- **How do I go about reducing my sleep and food?**

You do so gradually so it does not affect your health.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-reducing-food-intake/>

- **How so I start preparing for hajj?**

Firstly absolve yourself from any rights people have over you and learn the rulings of hajj. Then increase your yearning for the Hosue of Allah and the Beloved of Allah by reflecting upon the words and stories of the knowers of Allah.

- **Is it possible for someone to become a murshid without knowing Arabic?**

Yes this is possible. The main thing is the light and purity of the person's heart.

- **How can I gain extra strength for worship?**

Recite the following names of Allah 130 times a day:

يَا قَوِيُّ يَا مَتِينُ

*Ya Qawwiyu ya Matīn*

O Most Powerful, O Most Firm

Also recite Imam al-Haddad's prayer for strength

<http://muwasala.org/imam-al-haddads-prayer-for-strength/>

Those who finished the dhikr given in Sha`ban can recite *lā ilāha illallāh* in abundance and any prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1438 / 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rajab 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 25<sup>th</sup> Rajab 1438 / 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Should we take bayah of barakah with a shaykh from another tariqah?**

If the shaykh requests you to do so or if a bayah happens to be taking place while you are present then do so. If not, then request dua from him and seek to benefit from his guidance. There is no need to inform the shaykh of your intention in taking the bayah.

- **What can be recited by someone suffering from exhaustion?**

They can bestow prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ – ten prayers are enough to rejuvenate them.

- **What things would constitute the seeker breaking the covenant with his shaykh?**

The following things: leaving Islam, being content to disobey Allah or leave any obligations and to continue to do so, having a bad opinion of the shaykh and deliberately going against the principles of the tariqah.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-seeker-breaking-his-covenant-with-his-shaykh/>

- **Should I recite al-Wird al-Latif in the evening or the Ratib of Imam al-Haddad?**

If it is possible to recite both, this is best. If this is not possible, then recite one or the other. One makes up for the other.

- **What can be recited to remove addiction?**

Repeat this Prophetic prayer in abundance:

اللَّهُمَّ اقْسِمْ لَنَا مِنْ حَشِيَّتِكَ مَا تَحُولُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَمَعَاصِيكَ،  
 وَمِنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا تُبَلِّغُنَا بِهِ جَنَّتِكَ،  
 وَمِنْ الْيَقِينِ مَا تُهَوِّنُ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا مَصَائِبَ الدُّنْيَا،  
 اللَّهُمَّ مَتِّعْنَا بِأَسْمَاعِنَا وَأَبْصَارِنَا وَقُوَّتِنَا مَا أَحْيَيْتَنَا وَاجْعَلْهُ الْوَارِثَ مِنَّا،  
 وَاجْعَلْ ثَأْرَنَا عَلَى مَنْ ظَلَمْنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى مَنْ عَادَانَا،  
 وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مُصِيبَتَنَا فِي دِينِنَا وَلَا تَجْعَلِ الدُّنْيَا أَكْبَرَ هَمِّنَا وَلَا مَبْلَغَ عِلْمِنَا،  
 وَلَا تُسَلِّطْ عَلَيْنَا مَنْ لَا يَخَافُكَ لَا يَرْحَمُنَا

‘O Allah, apportion to us fear of You which prevents us from disobeying You; enable us to perform acts of obedience which cause us to reach Your Garden and bless us with certainty which softens for us the calamities of this worldly life. O Allah, allow us to enjoy our hearing, sight and strength as long as You keep us alive and cause them to remain up to our death; make our revenge restricted to those who oppress us, and support us against those who are hostile to us; let no misfortune afflict our religion; let not worldly affairs be our principal concern, or the ultimate limit of our knowledge, and do not give power over us to those who do not fear You or show mercy to us.’

- **I pray and read adhkar and lower my gaze but I still have bad thoughts. What should I do?**

On one level you must be content for this is Allah’s decree and on another level you must dislike these thoughts because they are displeasing to Allah and try to ignore them. Allah will then assist you in removing them.

- **What can be recited for family problems?**

Repeat this dhikr 100-300 times a day:

رَبِّ إِيَّيَّ مَسَّنِي الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

*Rabbi inni massani addurru wa anta arhamu'rrahimin*

My Lord, affliction has seized me, but You are the Most Merciful

- **What can I do in order to avoid returning to wrongdoing having made tawbah?**

You need to make much remembrance of Allah, keep the company of the pious and avoid places of heedlessness and disobedience.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> May / 24<sup>th</sup> Sha`ban

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumada al-Akhirah 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Akhirah 1438 / 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **We are establishing an institute for Qur'an memorisation and teaching Arabic. What intentions should we make in doing so?**

You should intend: to elevate the word of Allah; to support the cause of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ according to the methodology of his pure inheritors; to be a means for the downpour of Allah's mercy, warding off evil and allowing the light of guidance reach people's hearts; to serve the Three Objectives (knowledge (*ilm*), spiritual wayfaring (*suluk*) and calling to Allah (*da`wah*); to connect to the Qur'an and its secrets and to the one to whom the Qur'an was revealed ﷺ and to open up the meanings and understanding of the Qur'an and the speech of the Prophet ﷺ through the Arabic language. You should also intend what the pious intended, what Qutb al-Zaman intended and all good intentions which are in Allah's knowledge.

If Allah blesses a single seed it becomes many seeds: ***The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-Giving, All-Knowing (al-Baqarah, 2:261).***

Habib Muhammad al-Haddar made many great intentions when he founded his Ribat (learning institute) in al-Bayda. As a result, someone saw his father in a dream who told him to tell Habib Muhammad that as soon as he built the Ribat those who were being punished in their graves in the local graveyard were no longer punished.

- **What intentions should we make upon getting married?**

We should intend: acting upon the Sunnah; seeking the love of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ by increasing the numbers of the Ummah and forming a pious family the members of which love each other for Allah's sake and are among the first to come to the Pool of the Prophet ﷺ.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-intentions-for-getting-married-and-wedding-advice/>

- I am preparing to get married. Is there something I should recite at this time?

Recite the following in abundance:

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ

*Ma sha Allah la hawl wa la quwata ila billah*

*Allahumma salli ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ali sayyidina Muhammad wa barik wa sallim*

This is what Allah willed; there is no strength or power save by Allah.

O Allah, bestow prayers, peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and his Family

Also repeat the last two verses of Surat al-Tawbah. This has the effect of bringing harmony between people.

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ  
فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

*Laqad ja'akum rasulumin anfusikum `azizun `alayhi ma `anittum harisun `alaykum bi'lmu'minin ra'ufurrahim. Fa in tawallaw faqul hasbiyallahu la ilaha illa Hu `alayhi tawakkaltu wa huwa rabbu'l-`arshi'-l-`azim.*

***There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves, grievous to whom is your burden, concerned (is he) for you; for the believers (he is) full of compassion, merciful. If they turn away say: 'Allah is sufficient for me; there is no deity save He. On Him do I rely; He is the Lord of the Awesome Throne.'*** (Al-Tawbah, 9:128-9)

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-adhkar-to-increase-harmony-between-family-members-and-between-husband-and-wife/>

- **What is the etiquette of naming a child?**

We have been commanded to choose the best names for our children because they will be addressed by those names on the Day of Judgement. Being given a good name is one of the rights that the child has over its parents. We should choose the names of the Prophets, the Companions, the Followers and the pious. The person's intention upon naming his child has such an effect on the one named that it is said that the one who names is almost like the one who creates. It is said that everyone has a portion of his or her name.

- **What can we recite to facilitate our provision (rizq)?**

Recite 100 times a day:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

*Subhanallahi wa bi hamdihi, subhanallahi-l-'Azim, astaghfirullah*

“Transcendent is Allah, and praise be to Him as He praises Himself; transcendent is Allah the Almighty; I seek the forgiveness of Allah.”

The best time to recite this is before praying the two sunnah rakats of Fajr or between the sunnah and the fard.

Also recite 100 times a day:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ

*La ilaha ill'Allahu'l-Maliku'l-Haqqu'l-Mubīn*

“There is no deity save Allah, the King, the Real, the One Who makes things manifest.”

After Zuhr is the best time for this.

Also recite 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi'shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri*

“My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair.” *Ta Ha* 20:25-26

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/adhkar-to-facilitate-provision/>

- **What should we do upon moving into a new house for blessings?**

We should recite the Qur'an and the adhkar in the house in abundance; recite the mawlid as a housewarming celebration and whenever any family member enters they should mention Allah's name and recite Ayat al-Kursi once and Surat al-Ikhlās three times. It should be a place in which the images of the pious are seen and their voices are heard and not a place where the images of the corrupt are seen and their voices are heard.

- **What should we include in our will (wasiyyah)?**

We should seek pardon from anyone we have wronged; emphasise the importance of maintaining kinship ties; request that the pious pray for us and that those close to us recite the Qur'an and give charity on our behalf; immediately pay off any debts and counsel our children and friends to have *taqwa* and to be upright.

- **At what age should boys stop attending women-only gatherings?**

When a boy approaches the age of puberty (around the age of 12) he should not attend women-only gatherings.

- **What can I do to strengthen my connection to and increase my love for the Prophet ﷺ ?**

You can do this by constantly remembering his life and bestowing abundant prayers upon him. Reading the books of Shaykh Yusuf al-Nabahani have a big effect in this regard.

- **What can I do to soften my heart?**

You should bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and seek Allah's forgiveness in abundance.

- **Do shuyukh know their students if they do not meet physically?**

Whenever the student feels a complete attachment to the shaykh it is a sign that their souls have already met in the spiritual realm. There are different levels of awareness of this connection. Sometimes the connection is purely spiritual and neither party is physically aware of it. At other times there is both a spiritual and physical awareness. In both cases, however, the effects and benefits will be felt in this life, in the Barzakh and on the Day of Judgement.

- **I have been given a cup with an image of the Prophet's sandal on it. Is it permissible to drink a hot drink in it?**

If the image is on the outside of the cup and it will not be touched by hot liquid then there is no problem. If it will be touched you should only drink cold liquids in it. All of this showing good etiquette with the Prophet ﷺ.

- **Advice on raising children**

We should connect our children to the Prophet ﷺ and the pious and habituate them to recite their adhkar and their stories. It is said that secrets are made manifest by attachment to the people who possess secrets. We should raise our voices when we recite the adhkar in the house so that our children hear them regularly.

- **Dowra 2017**

Anyone who is able to attend the Dowra is welcome to come. Those who are unable to come should make a sincere intention and then their hearts will be present regardless of where their bodies are.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> April / 25<sup>th</sup> Rajab

For those who wish to take the covenant (*`ahd*) of the Tariqah for the first time or to renew their covenant, there will be an opportunity to do so in this meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumada al-Ula 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 28<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Ula 1438 / 25<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What are the best means of being connected to the Shaykh on a daily basis?**

Reading the Shaykh's books, reciting the adhkar, attaching and focusing the heart upon the Shaykh and calling people to Allah are all means of connection. All of these means are virtuous and whatever thing focuses the heart on Allah more is best for each individual.

- **Can I ask Allah to make me the renewer (*mujaddid*) of this time?**

Allah has guaranteed that He will continue to renew the religion in people's hearts and He uses various means to realise this. There will generally be one principle figure who is like the head. He is supported by others who make up the rest of the body. We should ask Allah to be among those who are involved in this renewal.

- **What intentions should we make when visiting Sayyiduna Abu Ayyub al-Ansari in Istanbul?**

Firstly we should intend making the Prophet ﷺ happy. We should ask that just as the Prophet physically resided in the house of Abu Ayyub that the light and guidance of the Prophet reside in our hearts and then our hearts resemble that house. We should congratulate Abu Ayyub on the gifts bestowed upon him by Allah: that the Prophet stayed in his house, that he was given the ability to follow the Prophet and sacrifice everything in the path of Allah. We should thank Allah along with him for this.

- **Can I pray behind an imam who is in a different place using a livestream or radio?**

This is permissible according to some scholars, notably some of the Ghumari scholars, based on the Maliki position. However you should only pray in this way if it is an optional prayer to seek blessings and a spiritual connection. You should pray your obligatory prayers in way which is valid according to all the schools.

- **Please give us a simple prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ that it is easy to recite consistently**

You can recite this prayer which we received from Habib Muhammad bin `Alawi bin Shihab:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ بَعْدِدِ عِلْمِكَ

Allahumma salli wa sallim `ala sayyidina Muhammad annabiyyi'I ummi bi `adadi `ilmik

- **When is it no longer obligatory to pray?**

As long as someone has their senses they must still pray. The individual prays in whatever way he is able. If he is unable to make wudu, he makes tayammum. Even if he is unable to face the qiblah or remove najasah he must still pray. He may join prayers if need be.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Pray standing up. If you are not able to, then pray sitting down. If you are not able to, then pray on your side. If you are not able to, then pray lying down on your back." Furthermore if the person is unable to move his body, he must pray by moving his head. If he cannot move his head he prays in his heart.

- **I find that when I pray in congregation I do not have much presence of heart. Should I leave prayer in congregation?**

You should not leave praying in congregation because it is better to pray in congregation even if you do not have much presence of hear than to pray alone. Pray the optional prayers in private seeking to increase in presence of heart.

- **How do we deal with an imam who does not respect either the four schools or our path?**

Treat him with excellence as you would treat anyone else. Avoid contact with him when he is saying things which are disrespectful and do not allow his behaviour to cause hatred. If you are able to pray behind him in order to maintain brotherhood and unity then do so. If not pray somewhere else.

- **What should be recited for protection while travelling?**

Repeat Surat Quraysh

Recite the following ten letters - one on each finger and then point your fingers in the direction you are travelling:

كهيعص حم عسق

*Kaf ha ya ayn sad*

*Ha mim ayn sin qaf*

Then recite:

فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ،

سَتْرُ الْعَرْشِ مَسْبُورٌ عَلَيْنَا،

وَعَيْنُ اللَّهِ نَاطِرَةٌ إِلَيْنَا،

بِحَوْلِ اللَّهِ لَا يُقْدَرُ عَلَيْنَا،

*Fasayakfikahumullahu wa huwa'ssami`ul-`alim*

*Satrul`arshi masbulun `alayna*

*Wa `aynullahi naziratun ilayna*

*Bi hawlillahi la yuqdaru `alayna*

No one should allow fear of being questioned at airports to prevent them from travelling to attend the Dowra or to anywhere else.

- **Is it fine to drink water from a cup that one of the pious has drunk from?**

This is fine as long as people do not go to an excess in this regard and do not push and shove others in order to drink. There is no problem for both men and women to drink from the same cup as long as there is no mixing.

- **What dhikr can be recited to assist in seeking knowledge?**

Recite these names of Allah 100 times each:

يا مُبْدِيءُ يا خَالِقُ يا فَتَّاحُ يا عَلِيمُ

Ya Mubdi' ya Khaliq ya Fattah ya `Alim

- **What dhikr can be recited to assist in performing good deeds?**

Repeat this dua:

اللَّهُمَّ يَا مَنْ وَفَّقَ أَهْلَ الْخَيْرِ لِلْخَيْرِ وَأَعَانَهُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَفَّقَنِي لِلْخَيْرِ وَأَعِنِّي عَلَيْهِ

Allahumma ya man waffaqa ahl'al-khayr lilkhayri wa a`anahum `alayhi waffiqna lilkhayri wa a`inna `alayhi

- **Sometimes I feel that the thoughts that come to me are from my Shaykh. How can I verify this?**

If those thoughts are in accordance with the Sacred Law and in accordance with the methodology of the Shaykh and they increase you in humility, etiquette and brokenness then they may be considered as coming from the Shaykh. What is at odds with the Sacred Law and the methodology of the Shaykh and leads to arrogance, pride or hatred cannot be considered as coming from the Shaykh.

## General Advice

- Those who have completed the Dhikr al-Aydarus (12,000 la ilaha ill'Allah, Allah Allah, Hu Hu) after taking the `ahd should recite the following prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ 33,000 times:

<http://muwasala.org/nurik-al-sari/>

- If someone is physically distant from the Shaykh and feels that general guidance is not sufficient then it is advisable for them to move to be close to the Shaykh to focus on their spiritual progress.
- These questions came up during the meeting and have already been answered:

<http://muwasala.org/on-the-dhikr-hu/>

<http://muwasala.org/dua-for-marriage-facilitation/>

## Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> March / 26<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Akhirah

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so in this meeting inshallah. In the meantime they should recite what adhkar they are able to from the Khulasah and they should read Imam al-Haddad's book 'Good Manners' and then 'The Book of Assistance.'

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Awwal 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 25<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1438 / 24<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What is the ruling on cat hair?**

According to the Shafi School, hair or anything which comes off an animal takes the ruling of the animal were it to be dead. If it is permissible to eat the animal, what comes off it is pure and if it is impermissible to eat the animal, what comes off it is impure. Thus, although the cat is in itself a pure animal, its hair is impure. However, if it is difficult to avoid coming into contact with cat hair, then a hair or two on your clothing or on your place of prayer is overlooked.

- **What are the conditions and etiquettes of wearing a turban (‘imamah)?**

There are two conditions.

Firstly the material which the turban is made from must be permissible to wear and not silk for example. Secondly it must be worn with a good intention such as following the Prophet ﷺ and the person wearing it must not be doing so to show off.

There are a number of etiquettes.

It should only be worn after the age of puberty out of veneration for this sunnah. Some people put a turban on their children with a good intention but this should not be done. Some scholars even regard the turban as a garment of adornment which should only be worn after getting married.

It should be worn while attending the Friday Prayer and at other important gatherings.

It should not be excessively large or small. The longest turban which the Prophet ﷺ is recorded to have worn is 7 or 10 or 13 feet but it is only fitting for scholars and pious elders to wear a turban this length. An appropriate length for students of sacred knowledge and those who wish to follow the sunnah is 5 feet.

When tying the turban, a tail or two tails (‘adhbah) should be left at the back in accordance with the Sunnah.

- **What can be recited while carrying heavy objects?**

You can repeat: “*Ya Qadir, ya Muqtadir.*”

- **I have a small amount of money that I wish to spend in charity. How can I spend it in a way which is most pleasing to the Prophet ﷺ ?**

Firstly, if there is someone locally who is in dire need then giving the money to him or her will please the Prophet ﷺ the most. Then if there is a general need which is extremely pressing, such as building a mosque or digging a well, then priority should be given to this.

If there are a number of different causes and the need is equal, then priority should be given to supporting the spreading of knowledge and calling people to Allah.

If there are a number of different people whose need is equal then priority should be given to those who are more pious and closer to the Prophet ﷺ .

- **How should men and women be seated at gatherings?**

It is impermissible for men and women to be mixed together but rather they should be separate. It is better if the women are behind the men. This was how the Prophet ﷺ arranged the rows in the prayer in his mosque.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-establishing-complete-gender-segregation/>

<http://muwasala.org/on-removing-gender-barriers-at-gatherings/>

- **How can someone assess their progress on the path?**

You can assess your progress by assessing your hope, fear and veneration of Allah. This also helps you to increase in love. Whatever state you are in, you are likely to make mistakes but the sign of your progress is the speed at which you repent and return to Allah.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-spiritual-progress-regress-and-stagnancy/>

- **What is the sign that the Prophet ﷺ is happy with your dawah efforts?**

If your shuyukh and the pious people in the region are happy with your efforts, then this is a sign that the Prophet ﷺ is happy.

- **We have encountered some problems in calling to Allah. Is this due to not having correct etiquette with the pious?**

Not having correct etiquette with anything, even animals, could be the cause of problems such as these.

- **What is the way to act upon what is contained in Imam al-Haddad's book 'Good Manners' or 'Adab Suluk al-Murid'?**

You should read it chapter by chapter. When you start acting upon one chapter you can move on to the next. You do not have to have finished acting upon each chapter.

- **How should kohl be used?**

It is recommended to apply it before going to sleep. The best type of kohl is called *ithmid*. It should be applied three times in the right eye and three times in the left eye, similar to the way the hands and feet are washed during wudu. There is a weaker opinion that it should be applied three times to the right eye and twice to the left eye so that the total number of times that it is applied is an odd number.

- **I find it difficult to recite many of the awrad. What should I focus on?**

Do not leave reciting *la ilaha ill'Allah*, Surat al-Ikhlās and bestowing prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ.

- **What should someone do if he or she is unable to consult the shaykh on a specific issue?**

If you are unable to consult the shaykh, rely upon the principles that the shaykh has laid down previously to come to a decision.

- **What is the ruling on greeting Christians at Christmas?**

As Muslims, we honour Sayyiduna Isa and his birth and the Prophet ﷺ himself prayed in the place in which he was born on the night of the Isra and Mi`raj. There is no harm in greeting Christians as long as the greeting does not imply an affirmation of their belief in the Trinity. It is also impermissible to take part in any ceremony in which there is an affirmation of their belief in the Trinity or which there is a contravention of the Sacred Law.

- **We are home-schooling our children. What should we focus on teaching them?**

You should focus on teaching them their tenets of faith, the rulings of Islam and general etiquettes. You should teach them a lot about the Sirah and life of the Companions. You should clarify to them how to live and interact in society. This applies to boys and girls.

Fathers who are often busy with work should fix a time which they spend with their children.

### **International Programmes**

Habib Umar will be attending the Retreat in Cape Town, South Africa taking place from 2<sup>nd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> February 2017. He prayed for those who wish to attend. He mentioned that he would be teaching Imam al-Nawawi's book, *al-Maqasid*.

For more information please write to: [admin@mahabbah.co.za](mailto:admin@mahabbah.co.za)

Habib will also be attending the annual visit to the Martyrs of Mu'tah in Jordan from 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> February 2017 inshallah.

For more information please write to: [daralawwabeen@yahoo.com](mailto:daralawwabeen@yahoo.com)

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1438 / 21<sup>st</sup> January 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Safar 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Safar 1438 / 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- What are the best prayers to bestow upon the Prophet ﷺ in Rabi al-Awwal?

The best prayer is undoubtedly al-Salat al-Ibrahimiyyah and any prayers that have been narrated in the hadith are better than those that have not. There are around twenty different forms that have been narrated and all of them mention the Prophet Ibrahim. The believer, however, should also recite some of the prayers composed by the Companions and the pious. One of those is Salat al-Fatih, which is narrated on the authority of Sayyiduna Ali bin Abi Talib. It was then taken on by Shaykh Abu Hasan al-Bakri and later Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani, who both taught it to their students. It is a unique prayer. It is as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ الْفَاتِحِ لِمَا أُغْلِقَ الْخَاتِمِ لِمَا سَبَقَ نَاصِرِ  
الْحَقِّ بِالْحَقِّ وَ الْهَادِي إِلَى صِرَاطِكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ صَحْبِهِ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ  
وَ مِقْدَارِهِ الْعَظِيمِ

*Allahumma salli wa sallim wa barik `ala sayyidina Muhammad al-fatih lima ughliq al-khatim lima sabaq nasiri'l-haqqi bi'l-haqq wa'l-hadi ila siratika'l-mustaqim sall'Allahu `alayhi wa alihi wa sahbihi haqqa qadrihi wa miqdarihi'l-`azim*

O Allah, bestow Your prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad, the one who opens that which is closed, the seal of those that came before, the defender of truth with truth and the guide to Your straight path (and upon his Family and Companions), in accordance with the greatness of his rank.

We should take a portion of this salat as well as some of the other salawat that Allah inspired the pious to compose.

**Habib recommends reciting this 10,000 times in the month of Rabi al-Awwal.**

- **What Pleases the Prophet ﷺ most in Rabi al-Awwal?**

One of the things that pleases him most is calling people to Allah. We should spend some time doing this in Rabi al-Awwal. We should organise mawlid gatherings for Muslims and non-Muslims in places where it is easy for them to attend and we should give out presents to children specifically and to people generally. We hope to see these gatherings spreading everywhere and the use of different techniques. Our friends in America should do this in abundance.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/a-gift-for-the-messenger-of-allah-in-rabi-al-awwal/>

- **How should we react to recent political events in the US?**

You should not be concerned whether one president comes or one goes. Your Lord is Allah and your intermediary is His Messenger ﷺ. Everyone is in His dominion. None of the events which take place on the earth should shake our belief in the information we have received from the heavens. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Know that victory comes with perseverance, relief comes after affliction and ease comes after hardship.” You should not be worried and you should not fall short in fulfilling your religious obligations. There is no doubt that Islam will spread to the different corners of the earth.

- **Is it permissible for Muslims to remain in non-Muslim lands? Do you advise Muslims living in non-Muslim lands to emigrate to Muslim lands?**

It is permissible for them to remain on two conditions:

1. That they are able to openly establish the main rituals of Islam, such as the prayer, including the Eid prayer and the Friday prayer, zakat and fasting.
2. That their religion is not under threat, meaning that they are not forced to do something which is forbidden or prevented from doing fulfilling any of their religious obligations and they do not fear that their children’s faith will be corrupted or lost.

It is better for them to remain in non-Muslim lands on three conditions:

1. That they are able to openly practise their religion
2. That their religion is not under threat
3. That they are able to show people around them the true teachings of Islam and be of benefit to others.

If these three conditions are not fulfilled they should move to Muslim lands.

- **Is it permissible to take a student loan which accrues interest?**

Both the person who takes interest and pays it are cursed. This is not permissible because it is not a necessity (darurah). If someone was going to die of hunger this would be a necessity. He could then take a loan which accrues interest in order to buy enough food to survive. If someone is sincere and is patient Allah will make it possible for him to study in university this year either in the short term or the long term.

- **My wife and family are trying to stop me following the path of tasawwuf and the Ba Alawi Way. What should I do?**

You must embody the teachings of this path by smiling at them, treating them well and serving them as far as you are able while remaining firm on the path inwardly and outwardly. You should not do something in front of them which will offend them and lead to a confrontation but rather you should choose the appropriate times to do what is required.

- **At the moment I recite *Dala'il al-Khayrat* in English. Is it better that I recite it in Arabic?**

If your heart is present and you feel connected to the Prophet ﷺ when you read it in Arabic then this is better. If, however, you only feel present and connected when you recite it in English and understand the meaning, then this is better.

- **What are the benefits of reciting *Dala'il al-Khayrat*?**

*Dala'il al-Khayrat* contains prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ composed by many of the knowers of Allah. Reciting it makes it easier to travel the path, removes obstacles and increases one's love and faith. Someone who bestows abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ with truthfulness will be guided to his shaykh.

- **What is the sign that Allah is content with His slave?**

There are two signs of this:

1. That he is content with Allah's commands and does his best to obey them
2. That he is content with whatever Allah decrees and surrenders to that

- **How do I overcome laziness and a lack of aspiration?**

You do this by:

1. Reminding your lower self of its mission and driving it forward with hope and fear
2. Reading about the great people of the past who exerted great effort (ijtihad) in worship
3. Keeping the company of people who have high aspirations

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-losing-spiritual-aspiration/>

<http://muwasala.org/on-increasing-our-aspiration/>

- **Many sisters fear being harassed if they wear the hijab in public in the current climate. What should they do?**

They should recite the following whenever they leave the house:

1. The Prophetic prayer:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ آمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*Bismillah, amantu billah, tawakkaltu al'Allah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa billahi'l-'aliyyi'l-'azim*

In the name of Allah, I place my trust and reliance in Allah. There is no strength or power save by Allah

2. Ayat al-Kursi
3. Wird al-Sakran (if they know it)<sup>1</sup>

They must strive to show good character, be dignified and set the best example to those around them. They should not be affected by those who say unpleasant things to them and they should show kindness to those who mistreat them. This is a trial and its evil will soon pass.

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<sup>1</sup> Wird al-Sakran can be found in al-Khulasah, after Surah Ya Sin. It is a short and powerful wird read for protection from all types of evil. It was composed by Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Sakran the son of Shaykh Abd al-Rahman al-Saqqaf.

- **Is it a good thing to know the gender of your unborn child?**

This is not something you should go out of your way to find out but if it becomes apparent during an examination then this is fine. You should then avoid telling people that you are expecting a boy or a girl but rather you should inform them once the baby has been born.

- **My wife has had a miscarriage. What should we do?**

You should wash the foetus, shroud it and bury it. You do not pray over it unless it has reached six months. You should also name it and perform the `aqiqah for it. The unborn child will intercede for its parents on the Day of Judgement. It has been narrated that it will pull its mother into Paradise.

The next meeting is scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1438 / 24<sup>th</sup> December 2016

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so in this meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Muharram 1438

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 7<sup>th</sup> Muharram 1438 / 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What advice do you have for someone involved in reconciling between conflicting parties?**

This is a great thing and there is a great reward therein. Someone engaged in this should humbly plead with Allah for success and then he should surrender the affair to Allah. He should take people's personalities and understandings into consideration so that what he says will be accepted by them.

- **Should we vote in elections such as the upcoming US presidential election?**

You have the choice to take part or not to take part. Both are acceptable. If you believe that voting for a particular candidate will most likely protect people in general and Muslims specifically from evil and be a source of good then you can do so. If you are unsure as to what is the best choice to make then there is no harm in not voting, except in a rare situation in which scholars and intellectuals, based on their assessment of current affairs, are in agreement that if Muslims do not vote then this will have a serious negative consequences. In this situation it would be an obligation to vote to prevent harm taking place.

- **Is it permissible to vote for a female candidate considering the statement of the Prophet ﷺ that: "A people who put a woman in charge of their affairs will never succeed"?**

The same principle applies: if it most likely that by electing a woman president good will be attained and evil will be avoided then it is permissible to vote for her. If this is not the case, it is better to avoid doing so.

- **What is the difference between a 'hizb' and a 'ratib'?**

They are essentially the same thing. Linguistically a 'ratib' is a fixed thing which is recited consistently and a 'hizb' is a section or an amount of Qur'an or adhkar which is recited.

- **When is remaining single better than getting married?**

If when you got married you would fall into acts of disobedience and fail to fulfil the rights of your spouse then it would be better to remain single.

- **I feel pain and constriction in my heart when reciting adhkar. What should I do?**

This is due to two things. The first is the effects of darkness in the soul due to sins and heedlessness. The way to combat this is to persevere with the adhkar until the darkness is removed and the light is manifested. The second is the presence of devils (due to black magic, the evil eye or other things) that attempt to dominate a person's heart. Again the person should persevere in reciting the adhkar because this is a means of treatment.

- **There are brothers and sisters who have attended the Dowra or have studied for a short time. They then return to their communities to teach what they learn as they have been encouraged by their teachers to do so but they encounter people (some of whom are connected to this path) who do not support them and even discourage others from taking knowledge from them on the grounds they have not studied enough. What is the best way of dealing with this?**

They should persevere in their dawah and not be affected by what these people say. They should show these people respect, maintain good relations with them and not treat them in the same way as they are treating them. They should emphasise the well known principle that anyone who has even one piece of Islamic knowledge is an *`ālim* (literally someone who knows) and he must act upon it and teach it. They must teach what they know and learn that which they do not know. If the people who are opposing them are aware of Imam al-Haddad then they can tell them what Imam al-Haddad says in the introduction of al-Dawah al-Tammah.

- **What is meant by the statement that the Ba`Alawi path is inwardly Shadhili and outwardly Ghazalian?**

Both the Ghazali and Shadhili paths are founded upon spiritual striving (*mujahadah*) but the Ghazalian method begins by focusing on the external aspect and then works towards the internal whereas the Shadhili method begins internally. Both methods agree that obligatory actions must be performed, prohibited actions must be avoided and supererogatory actions should be performed in abundance, but the Shadhili method does not place great emphasis on outward actions. Mujahadah

according to the Shadhili method focuses on attaining constant presence of heart with Allah, awareness of His bounty and showing gratitude to Him. The Ghazalian method emphasises seeking knowledge, acting upon it thereby attaining constant presence and the station of gratitude.

It is possible to combine the two methodologies. This is achieved by being aware of Allah's blessings, showing gratitude to Him and seeking to be present with Him from the outset while at the same time seeking knowledge and performing outward actions.

Thus the outward aspect of the Ba Alawi path is to seek knowledge and act upon it and striving outwardly which then has an impact upon the inward. At the same time the inner aspect of the path is from the outset is based upon witnessing Allah's blessings, being present with Him and showing gratitude to Him.

The various spiritual paths return to a foundation that is either Shadhili or Ghazalian. Since the Ba Alawi masters combined the principles of both paths, their path was described as being inwardly Shadhili and outwardly Ghazalian.

- **Is it permissible for a male teacher to teach a woman the Qur'an?**

This is permissible if the male teacher teaches from behind a veil and as long as the two are not alone together. It has been narrated that: "A man must never be alone with a woman even if he is teaching her the Qur'an and even if she is Maryam bint 'Imran." The Companions would take knowledge from the wives of the Prophet, the Mothers of the Believers from behind a veil.

- **Since having children I have been unable to perform the same acts of worship that I used to perform. What should I do?**

You should realise that raising your children is a type of worship so you should make a good intention in raising them and intend to follow the Prophet ﷺ in doing so. Make most of your worship dhikr.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-maintaining-awrad-after-giving-birth/>

<http://muwasala.org/on-balancing-awrad-and-household-duties/>

- **I have limited time. Should I give precedence to reciting the Qur'an or the adhkar?**

Precedence should be given to reciting the Qur'an and this is one of the greatest adhkar. However, one of the Qur'an's injunctions is to engage in dhikr. Engaging in dhikr is thus acting upon the Qur'an. You should not allow the Devil to trick you in to leaving the adhkar because he may then trick you into leaving the Qur'an too.

- **I sometimes commit an act of disobedience and then cry to Allah, make tawbah and feel close to Him. However, if I stop committing that act completely I no longer cry to Him and I do not feel as close to Him as I did before. What should I do?**

Leaving that sin and not crying is better than committing the sin and crying. You should cry from awareness of Allah's greatness and from love and longing for Him. You should remember the crying of the Prophets and the pious. You cannot make yourself cry by doing something which is disliked let alone something which is forbidden.

- **When is the best time to come to Tarim?**

Any time of the year is good and if it coincides with some annual event than this is better (such as the beginning of Muharram, the end of Rabi al-Awwal, the visit of Nabi Allah Hud in Shaban, Ramadan or the Dowra).

- **What is the ruling on organ donation?**

It is impermissible to take a dead person's organs. Some scholars allow someone to donate an organ such as a kidney if they can do without it especially if they are donating it to someone close to them such as their father or mother and doing so would save their life. It would not be permissible to donate your eye or your hand for example because you do not in fact own your own organs but rather they belong to Allah. It would be permissible to donate blood because it replaces itself and donating it does not detract from a person's makeup.

- **Should I recite awrad if I have prayers to make up?**

There is a difference of opinion regarding this but the best course of action is to gradually make them up and to take the position that it is permissible to recite the awrad and pray supererogatory prayers.

- **What should we mention when we talk about Sayyiduna al-Husayn at the time of Ashura?**

We should talk about his upbringing and his character - his mercy, compassion and generosity. We should refer to the biographies of respected scholars from Ahl al-Sunnah. As for his martyrdom we can mention the fact that he requested one of three things from his killers: that he be allowed to return to al-Madinah or that he be allowed to go to fight jihad on the frontiers or that he be allowed to meet with Yazid ibn Muawiya. However, they rejected his request. He tried to save the lives of his relatives by telling them to leave but they insisted on staying with him.

## New Dhikr

Anyone requesting a new dhikr should recite the following 10,000 times:

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

*Rabbana'ghfir lanā dhunūbanā wa isrāfanā fī amrinā wa thabbit aqdāmanā wa'n surnā `ala'l-qawmi'l-kāfirīn*

'Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our transgressions, make our feet firm and assist us aga inst those who reject faith.' (3:147)

## Making Spiritual Hijrah

The new year always reminds us of the Hijrah. The physical hijrah is an obligation for those who are unable to freely practise their religion in the place they are in. They must find a place in which they can practise their religion. The angels say to those who fail to make this hijrah: ***'Was Allah's earth not expansive enough for you to emigrate therein?'***<sup>1</sup>

We can also make a spiritual hijrah which is to leave everything which Allah has forbidden, as the Prophet ﷺ told us. This is one of the loftiest types of hijrah. We must check our hearts and bodies at the beginning of this year in order to remove everything which Allah dislikes.

If someone is blessed to leave that which is forbidden he should then seek to leave that which is disliked and dubious. If someone is blessed to leave that which is disliked and dubious he should then seek to leave that which is frivolous and of no benefit. If someone is blessed to leave that which is frivolous he should then seek to leave everything other than Allah.

A person may be leaving that which is forbidden in one aspect of his life, that which is disliked in another aspect, that which is frivolous in another aspect and so on. If he perseveres he will eventually attain the greatest type of hijrah. Sayyiduna Ibrahim said regarding this: ***I am going to my Lord.***<sup>2</sup> Allah also said: ***So flee to Allah.***<sup>3</sup> The Prophet ﷺ said: "The most truthful word spoken by a poet is the saying of Labid: 'Indeed everything save Allah is false.'"<sup>4</sup>

Jihad, like hijrah, has many manifestations but one of the greatest is the one mentioned in the hadith that: "the mujahid is the one who strives against his own caprice."

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Nisa'*, 4:97

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Saffat*, 37:99

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Dharyyat*, 51:50

<sup>4</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> Safar 1438 / 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

### End of Ramadan 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1437 / 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we deal with those that claim that Sayyiduna Muawiyah is not one of the Companions and that we should not say ‘may Allah be pleased with him’?**

Both hajj and fasting teach us to distance ourselves from argumentation, so the best response is to continue to say ‘may Allah be pleased with him,’ and to avoid any argumentation. This is just one of a number of issues that certain people bring up today to cause friction, disunity, to waste Muslim resources, to stop them from having an influence on others and to show them as being divided. So we should focus on that which is of benefit and not allow them to achieve these base goals.

- **How do I maintain a good opinion of others?**

You do this by ignoring their faults and focusing on their praiseworthy qualities and by remembering that Allah may forgive anyone and give them a good ending. Be certain that the smallest of your sins is far more grave than the sins of all other people. Remember that your Creator has commanded you to have a good opinion of others and to have a heart full of love and respect for them.

- **Can we take lessons in tasawwuf from other shuyukh?**

This is fine if there is benefit in those lessons whether they are in tasawwuf or in any other science then unless your shaykh has specifically forbidden you from doing so.

- **How do we understand the statement of Shaykh Abu Madyan that someone who is not on the same path as you is like a child even if he is seventy years old?**

This refers to someone who is not trying to travel to Allah by acting upon the Sacred Law, someone who does not help you to obey Allah and avoid disobeying Him. You should avoid keeping the company of such a person, just as you would avoid keeping the company of a small child.

It does not mean that you should avoid keeping the company of someone who does not belong to the same spiritual path or order (*tariqah*) as you. Shaykh Abu Madyan himself kept the company of people from different spiritual paths and many people from different spiritual paths kept his company.

- **How do we combine between forbidding evil, having a good opinion of others and leaving that which does not concern us?**

When we forbid someone from doing something wrong we do not believe that they will have a bad ending or that they will be punished. Rather we believe that Allah will forgive them and replace their bad deeds with good deeds and perhaps they will intercede for us on the Day of Judgement. At the same time we do not spy on them or pry into their private affairs. If we do this we have left that which does not concern us. If we do see someone committing an act of disobedience then it concerns us to stop them from them doing it as far as we are able. The Prophet ﷺ said that if someone falls into an act of disobedience they should seek Allah's concealment but if they expose themselves we carry out the hadd punishment.

- **What do you say about watching football matches?**

It depends on the individual and his or her state with regard to travelling the path to Allah. If it is a waste of time for you then use your time wisely. If it is a means of relaxation and it allows you to recharge then it is like any other permissible means of recreation and it is fine as long as it does not cause you to neglect your obligations.

- **My parents are constantly arguing. What should I do?**

You should not enter into the argument and you should not take sides but rather you should respect both your parents and treat them well. If you see that one of them has made a mistake and you are able to give them sincere advice then you do so with complete etiquette.

- **I want to follow the Sunnah but I feel pride and ostentation in my heart when I do so. What should I do?**

You should try to remove those blameworthy qualities while continuing to follow the Sunnah. The Devil may try to make you leave the Sunnah by making you fear falling into pride and ostentation. If he succeeds in doing that, he may then succeed in making you leave the prayer.

### **Bidding Farewell to Ramadan**

We should end Ramadan with pure hearts. Allah should see sadness in our hearts at the departure of Ramadan and the longing that it continues forever. We should make great intentions for that which we wish to be firm in after Ramadan, starting with fasting the six days of Shawwal for those who are able. We should focus on giving our parents and relatives their rights.

The next meeting is scheduled for **25<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1437 / 30<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Shawwal 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 25<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1437 / 30<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Is it better to fast Monday and Thursday or the White Days?**

If you are able to do so, it is better to fast every Monday and Thursday because if you do so you will fast eight days in every month, as opposed to only three days if you fast the White Days. One of those Mondays or Thursdays is also likely to coincide with the White Days. If you are able to fast the White Days and another five days in addition to this, this would also be good. We cannot say categorically that one type of fasting is better than other. If someone finds that a certain type of fasting has more effect on his heart and helps him on his path to Allah then this is the best fast for that person.

- **Can the `ahd (covenant) be taken though a recording?**

This can only be done with the Shaykh's permission or for the purpose of seeking blessings (*tabarruk*).

- **Am I obliged to give my mother financial support?**

Children must support their mother and also their father if they are able to do so. They are only obliged to provide them with the things they need and they must not give them things which are impermissible.

- **Which comes first: certainty (*yaqin*) or knowledge of Allah (*ma`rifah*)?**

*`Ilm al-yaqin* (certainty based upon knowledge) opens the door to *ma`rifah*. *`Ayn al-yaqin* (certainty based upon witnessing) is part of *ma`rifah*.

- **Should we take part in protests which condemn things like police brutality or the oppression of the Palestinian people?**

Oppression must be condemned whatever form it takes as long as this does not lead to greater oppression or some other kind of evil. Ordinary people are free to get involved in such protests if they wish, but the role of those involved in dawah is to clarify the Islamic position on such matters. They should not be directly involved in protests because this may have political and social implications and may lead them to neglect aspects of their dawah.

- **What is the best way of memorising the Qur'an?**

You should take between five and ten verses (depending on their length) at a time and repeat them until you have memorised them. Depending on the page size of the *mushaf* it may be possible to take one page at a time.<sup>1</sup>

- **When can someone be said to be an *`ālim* (scholar)?**

Linguistically anyone who has even one piece of Islamic knowledge is an *`ālim* (literally someone who knows). Technically speaking there is consensus that an *`ālim* is someone who is qualified to make *ijtihād* (independent legal reasoning) and issue *fatwā* (formal legal opinion). Someone who has attained a large amount of knowledge but has not reached this level may also be called an *`ālim*, but there is not consensus on this.

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning that each page has between five and ten verses on it

- **Can we work with ‘Salafi’ groups?**

If these groups truly follow the Salaf (the Pious Predecessors) in the realm of tenets of faith then we are in agreement with them. If however, they claim to follow the Salaf but in reality go against their methodology then we should avoid mixing with them so that confusion does not arise regarding how we call people to Allah. It may be possible to work with the moderate elements among them on things on which there is scholarly consensus and which benefit society. We may also work with them on projects which are run in the name all Muslims in the region, not in the name of a specific group.

- **What intentions should someone involved in sport make?**

You should intend gaining strength to worship Allah and obey His commands and to use it to gently call people to Allah. You should remember Allah while taking part.

- **What is the best day of the year to get married upon?**

There is no specific day but the best month in which to contract the marriage is Shawwal, because it was in this month that the Prophet ﷺ married Sayyidatuna `Aishah and then later consummated the marriage in the same month. The next best month is Safar, in which Sayyidatuna Fatimah married Sayyiduna `Ali.

- **Should we ask Allah for *ṣabr* (patience), or is it better to ask Allah for *‘āfiyah* (wellbeing)?**

*Ṣabr* (patience) and *shukr* (gratitude) are two of the stations of certainty and it is narrated in a sahih hadith that the Prophet would ask for patient acceptance of Allah’s decree. We should ask for *ṣabr* accompanied by *‘āfiyah* because if we ask for *ṣabr* unaccompanied by *‘āfiyah* it as if we are claiming that we have the strength to bear any hardships. Allah may then test us with something which we are unable to bear.

- **What is the best dua to make upon completing the Qur'an?**

The best duas at this time and in general are the duas mentioned in the Qur'an, then in the Sunnah and then the duas of the pious, among which is the dua of Sayyiduna `Ali Zayn al-`Abidin.

- **How should we deal with those who claim that the blessed parents of the Prophet are destined for the Fire ﷺ ?**

The first thing to mention is that we should avoid pointless debate with these types of people. They should be ignored unless it is hoped that they will return to the truth, in which case the correct position should be clarified to them. It is enough to say that the evidence of the Qur'an is given precedence over solitary hadith reports (*ahād*). The Qur'an clearly says that: ***We do not punish until We send a messenger.***<sup>2</sup> If this is not sufficient proof for such people then there is no hope that they will be guided so they should be left.

We should remind people that verbally abusing a person's parents hurts their children. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Do not verbally abuse the dead so that you harm those who are alive."<sup>3</sup> These people should ask themselves: who is the son of the people they are abusing? We should also remember the Prophet's etiquette when `Ikrimah, the son of Abu Jahl came to accept Islam. The Prophet told his Companions not to mention anything unpleasant about his father, in spite of the fact that Abu Jahl was the Fir`awn of this nation, a disbeliever destined for the Fire.

- **I am being forced to marry one of my relatives even though he is incompatible in religious terms. What should I do?**

You should do your best to obey Allah in the marriage and give your husband his rights. If you are forced to leave any of your obligations or to do something which is forbidden you should seek a way out. You should try to help your husband to return to the religion as far as you are able. Allah will assist you in all your states.

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<sup>2</sup> *Al-Isra'*, 17:15. At the very least, the parents of the Prophet would be considered to be Ahl al-Fatrah, meaning people living in a time and among a people to whom no messenger had been sent.

<sup>3</sup> Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and al-Tabarani

Habib mentioned classes in Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim's book 'Miftah al-Sara'ir' which he conducted in Canada.

Audio recordings can be found here:

[https://soundcloud.com/muwasala\\_audio/tracks](https://soundcloud.com/muwasala_audio/tracks)

Habib also recently began another commentary on the book. Recordings and summaries can be found here:

<http://muwasala.org/category/classes/key-to-the-inner-secrets/>

### **Multaqa**

Dar al-Mustafa's Multaqa or Dawah Conference will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October inshallah immediately after the Dar's anniversary celebrations.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for **2<sup>nd</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1437 / 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2016**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

### Preparation for Ramadan 1437

#### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 28<sup>th</sup> Sha`ban 1437 / 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we receive Allah's gaze on the first night of Ramadan?**

We do this by striving to purify our hearts, being in a state of brokenness in front of Allah and having a sincere desire to receive it. Anyone who sincerely seeks to receive it will not be disappointed.

- **How do we help someone who is not practising to benefit from Ramadan?**

We mention to them the virtues of Ramadan and invite them to attend congregational prayers or gatherings of remembrance.

- **The days are very long in Northern Europe making fasting very difficult for children close to the age of puberty. What should they do?**

They should not be burdened with more than they can bear. They should be encouraged to fast half the day or most of the day. Although their fast will not be legally valid, they will become accustomed to fasting and their hearts will become attached to it so that when they are older it is easier for them.

- **I find it difficult to recite the Qur'an so during Ramadan I read a translation of the Qur'an. Will I be rewarded for this?**

You will receive the reward of seeking knowledge and the reward for this is great. You should continue this but also recite even a small portion of the Qur'an. In addition to this you can repeat Surat al-Ikhlās, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nas. You should also say *'la ilaha ill'Allah'* in abundance and intend by doing so reciting the Qur'an.

- **How can we make our children love Ramadan?**

We do this by mentioning the mercy, bounty and kindness that Allah shows in Ramadan.

- **I understand the meaning of love of Allah in my mind but it has not yet entered my heart. What can I do?**

You should read and reflect upon the lives of the lovers of Allah. You should spend time alone with Allah. You should spend an hour at least mentioning Allah's name by saying "Allah" and an hour at least bestowing prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and you should do this with yearning preferably during Ramadan.

- **How can we serve the Ahl al-Bayt and Ahl al-Kisa in these times?**

We must love them from the sake of Allah, which is something Allah has made incumbent in the Qur'an. We should support and honour those who are related to them or connected to them. We should follow their way and emulate them.

- **When should someone take a dispensation from another madhab?**

When there is a need or a necessity to do so. The need relates to what is recommended whereas the necessity relates to what is which is compulsory or prohibited.

- **What is the ruling on men wearing a bracelet made of leather or rope?**

It is permissible in the Shafi School as long as it is not made from an impure substance and as long as it does not resemble bracelets worn by women.

Habib Umar emphasised the importance of arranging courses to teach people personally obligatory knowledge (*fard `ayn*). Acting upon this knowledge is the foundation of a person's religion and connection to Allah.

May Allah bless all those who took the `ahd in the Meeting. Habib Umar mentioned that doing so was one of the best ways to prepare for Ramadan. Those who have not previously done so should recite the Dhikr of Imam al-`Aydarus which is as follows:

***La ilaha illa Allah*** 12,000 times

***Allah, Allah*** 12,000 times

***Hu, Hu*** 12,000 times

(reading *Allah, Allah* and *Hu, Hu* counts as one)

Habib Umar gave the following adhkar for Ramadan:

Firstly recite the following 1000 times:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ نَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ نَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

*Ashadu alla ilaha illallah, nastaghfirullah, nas'aluk'l-jannata wa na'audhu bika min an-nar*

'I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship other than Allah and we seek the forgiveness of Allah. We ask You for Paradise and take refuge in You from the Fire.'

Secondly recite the following 3,000 times:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَاَرْحَمْ وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

*Rabbi'ghfir wa'rham wa anta khayrur'rahimin*

'My Lord, forgive and show mercy for You are the best of the merciful (23:118).'

The next meeting is scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1437 / 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Sha`ban 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 30<sup>th</sup> Rajab 1437 / 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Sayyidi Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What is the best dua that the seeker can make for his shaykh?**

The seeker should ask:

that his shaykh be a source of pleasure for the Prophet ﷺ

that his shaykh be pleased by what the Prophet ﷺ gives him, his companions, the people of his time and the Ummah

that his shaykh be raised to the highest station of *khilafah* (representation) of the Prophet ﷺ

that his shaykh be engaged in that which is most beloved to the Prophet ﷺ – ***it is more fitting that they please Allah and His Messenger if they are truly believers.***<sup>1</sup>

- **How do we help someone who has left the prayer out of laziness or negligence?**

We must remind him, make dua for him, take him by the hand and use different means to enable him to save himself. We continue doing this until Allah saves him.

- **What advice should we give to a relative who wants to marry a non-Muslim woman?**

We should tell them to think deeply about the choice they are making. They Prophet ﷺ said: “Choose well for your seed.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Tawbah*, 9:62

- **Ubayy bin Ka`b said to the Prophet ﷺ: “I bestow prayers upon you and do so in abundance. How much of my prayers should I make for you?” What is the meaning of this statement?**

The scholars say there are several possible meanings. The meaning which is closest to the wording of the hadith is ‘how much of the reward of my prayers should I donate to you?’

A second possible meaning is ‘how much of all my duas should I make for you?’

A third meaning is ‘how much of my time should I spend bestowing prayers upon you?’

The first meaning encompasses the other two meanings.

When Ubayy said that he would make all his prayers for the Prophet, the Prophet said to him: “If you do that, your worries will be removed and your sins will be forgiven.”<sup>3</sup>

- **What can we do to discourage convert sisters from wearing make up?**

First of all we should strive to make faith firm in their hearts so that they taste the sweetness of faith. We should let them mix with other sisters who have left things like make up. We should teach them about the lives of the Mothers of the Believers and the daughters of the Prophet ﷺ so that they then come to venerate these great women. We should convey to them the true meaning of honour and nobility that Allah has accorded believers both male and female in what He has legislated for them. We should convey to them also that the hijab and modesty are a means of honouring and protecting a woman.

We should not talk about the issue directly in the first instance but rather we work on establishing the foundations of their faith. Each individual is different so we must take this into account. Some will take longer than others to leave these things. The Prophet ﷺ taught Mu`adh to call people in stages: first to call them to faith, then to prayer and then to zakat.

- **How do I prepare for hajj?**

You prepare for Hajj by purifying your heart, making sincere tawbah and giving people the rights that are due to them. You need to learn the rulings of Hajj and Umrah and etiquettes of Ziyarah. You must have veneration for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and the Sacred House. Also read about how the pious performed Hajj and visited the Prophet ﷺ .

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<sup>2</sup> Narrated by Ibn Mājah

<sup>3</sup> Narrated by Aḥmad, al-Tirmidhī and al-Hākim

- **I possess some books which contain deviant beliefs and opinions. What should I do with them?**

To remove harm from the path of the believers is one of the branches of faith so you should remove these books from the path of the believers by burning them or disposing of them in any other way that is appropriate.

Someone sent a batch of books full of innovations to one of the pious. He asked him some time later if he had received them. He replied that he had received them and that it had cost him one matchstick. In other words, it had only taken one match to burn all the books.

Books which contain deviant beliefs either within Islam or outside Islam should only be in the possession of specialists who are able to refute these beliefs and clarify the truth. It is better for people who do not possess this knowledge to dispose of these books.

Life is short, the journey is long and we only have a small amount of provision. We do not have to time to pay attention to things which distract us.

- **What assists someone in lowering their gaze?**

The beginning of lowering the gaze is sincere resolve. If someone maintains that resolve then Allah will allow him to taste the sweetness of faith and thus assist him in continuing to lower his gaze.

- **What dhikr can we give someone who is close to death?**

They can recite the following 40 times and then repeat this at intervals

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

*Lā ilāha illā anta subḥānaka innī kuntu min az-ẓālimīn*

There is no deity other than You. Transcendent are You. Truly I am one of the wrongdoers.

- I am a doctor. What dua should I recite to prevent myself catching anything from the people I am treating?

You should recite the Prophetic dua:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَافَانِي مِمَّا ابْتَلَاكَ بِهِ وَفَضَّلَنِي عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ تَفْضِيلًا

*Alḥamdulillāhilladhī `āfānī mimma`btalāka bihi wa faḍḍalanī `alā kathīrin mimman khalaqa tafḍīlā*

Praise be to Allah, Who has protected me from that with which He has afflicted you and has favoured me greatly over many of those whom He has created.

Also pray for those who are sick, especially if they are Muslim, by repeating 7 times:

أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ رَبَّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ أَنْ يَشْفِيكَ وَيُعَافِيكَ

*As'alu'Allāha'al-`azīm rabba'arshi'l-`azīm an yashfiyaka wa yu'afik*

I ask Allah the Almighty, Lord of the Mighty Throne to heal you

- What can I do to get rid of a bad habit?

You do this by reflecting on the return to Allah and longing to meet the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. You must then avoid places which arouse in you the desire to return to that habit and if you do feel that desire you should remember Allah and the next life. You should keep the company of those who remind you of Allah and those with whom you find tranquillity.

- How can someone make *tawassul* by their shaykh in times of difficulty?

You do this by asking Allah by the status ('*jāh*' or '*ḥaqq*') of the shaykh as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught us:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ وَأَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ بِنَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدٍ

*Allāhumma innī as'aluka wa atawajjawahu ilayka bi nabiyyika Muḥammad*

O Allah, I ask You and I turn to You through Your Prophet Muhammad..

- **If I fall asleep before completing the adhkar that it is recommended to recite before sleeping should I make them up when I wake up?**

You will be rewarded for intending to recite them all even if you fall asleep before completing them. Strictly speaking they are adhkar for a specific time and thus cannot be made up. However, if you do make them up you are guaranteeing yourself the reward for reciting them and teaching your lower self a lesson that it cannot fall asleep before completing them.

- **Why do women make up the majority of the people of the Fire?**

The reason for this is that there are more women than men in total, so just as the majority of the people of the Fire are women, likewise the majority of the people of Paradise are women. A male believer will marry at least two women in Paradise (not to mention the *hur al-`ayn* - the maidens of Paradise) so there are at least twice as many women in Paradise as there are men. In fact, there are more. Out of his concern for the Ummah, the Prophet ﷺ warned women of two things which may cause them to enter the Fire – not appreciating their husbands and cursing excessively.<sup>4</sup>

- **If someone is not a good speaker and does not have a lot of knowledge what can he do to call people to Allah?**

Someone can be engaged in calling people to Allah through reflection and then giving advice to people based upon what he has reflected upon. He can spend his time and wealth, he can practically assist those engaged in dawah and he can make dua. He can distribute books and recordings to those who will benefit. He can call people to Allah on an individual basis and he can do so by showing good character to people generally.

- **Why was the tawbah of Muhallim bin Juthamah not accepted?**

This was because he wrongly killed a Muslim and he could not be forgiven until the person that he wronged forgave him. The Prophet ﷺ was also closing the door to anyone that thinks that they can take liberties in spilling Muslim blood.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhāri and Muslim

<sup>5</sup> Narrated by Ibn Abī Shaybah and others

### **General Advice**

We have the light of the Prophetic message and we should thus be above being affected by events that take place. We should remain firm in times of turmoil and not become agitated. Hardships and attacks upon Islam are in fact a sign that the time in which the religion will spread and be made manifest is near.

This year's Dowra is scheduled to commence on 4<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 1437 / 9<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Brothers who wish to attend should write to:

[prdaralmustafa@gmail.com](mailto:prdaralmustafa@gmail.com)

Sisters should write to:

[daralzhraa@gmail.com](mailto:daralzhraa@gmail.com)

The next meeting is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> Shaban 1437 / 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so in this meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rajab 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 2<sup>nd</sup> Rajab 1437 / 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Sayyidi Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do I know if my intention is sound?**

You must continually reflect upon and analyse what is in your heart and continually ask Allah to bless you with a sound intention.

- **How can someone experience sadness at the death of a loved one while at the same time be content with Allah's decree?**

This is possible because you experience sadness from one perspective and contentment from another perspective. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said upon losing his son Ibrahim: "The eye sheds tears, the heart feels sorrow but we only say that which pleases our Lord. We are saddened by your departure, Ibrahim."

- **Some Muslim women in the West have taken to wearing a shirt and trousers so as not to stand out too much. What do you say about this?**

As a principle we should be concerned with seeking Allah's pleasure rather than trying to fit in with society. Our aim should be to follow the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the pious. As for the ruling it is permissible for women to wear this as long as it is normal for women to dress in this way in that society. The clothing must not be tight fitting and must not expose the shape of the body. In general women must not expose any part of the body which must be covered to strange men.

- **What can someone do if they experience homosexual inclinations?**

Such a person must dislike these inclinations and plead with Allah that He removes them from his heart. He must not act upon these inclinations and he must distance himself from anything which might cause him to act upon them. He will not be taken to account for that which is out of his control but he will be taken to account for being content with these inclinations and acting upon them.

He should repeat this Prophetic dua nineteen times a day:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اللَّهُمَّ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ وَمِنْ  
عَذَابِكَ أَسْتَجِيْرُ أَصْلِحْ لِيْ شَأْنِيْ كُلَّهُ وَلَا تَكِلْنِيْ إِلَى نَفْسِيْ وَلَا إِلَى أَحَدٍ  
مِنْ خَلْقِكَ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

*Bismillāhi'rrahmāni'rrahīm Allāhumma Yā Ḥayyu ya Qayyūm biraḥmatik astaghīthu wa min`adhābika astajīr. Aṣliḥ lī sh'anī kullahu wa la takilnī ilā nafsī wa lā ilā aḥadin min khalqika ṭarfata `ayn*

In the name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful. O Allah, O Living! O Sustainer! I call upon Your Mercy for assistance, and from Your chastisement I seek refuge! Make good all my affairs and do not entrust me to myself or any of Your creation for the blink of an eye.

- **I have prayed the istikharah prayer seven times and I am still unsure as to how to proceed. What should I do?**

You should consult one of the pious and go with whatever he advises you to do.

- **How can I reduce the time I spend asleep?**

You do this gradually by cutting down your sleep by a quarter of an hour at a time. This requires determination and aspiration.

We should try to read the following dua 3,000 times in the blessed month of Rajab.

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ  
الْكَافِرِينَ

*Rabbana'ghfirlanā dhunūbanā wa isrāfanā fī amrinā wa thabbit aqdāmanā wa'nṣurnā `ala'l-qawmi'l-kāfirīn*

'Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our transgressions, make our feet firm and assist us against those who reject faith.' (3:147)

The result of the dua is mentioned in the next verse: 'So Allah gave them the reward of this world and the best reward of the Hereafter. Allah loves those who act with excellence.'  
(3:148)

The next meeting is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> Rajab 1437 / 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so in the next meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumada al-Ula 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 18<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Ula 1437 / 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Sayyidi Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **If someone's mother is from Ahl al-Bayt is he or she considered to be from Ahl al-Bayt?**

No, they are not legally considered to be from Ahl al-Bayt. Thus it is not forbidden for them to receive zakat and they do not receive a portion from the spoils of battle (*khums*). However, they are regarded to be among the relatives of the Ahl al-Bayt and among those that the Prophet ﷺ referred to be as being related to him through marriage.

The general principle is that although a person's ties to his mother's parents and relatives must be honoured, his lineage goes through his father and he is regarded to be a member of his father's family or tribe. There are two exceptions to this. One is Sayyiduna `Isa, who had no father and is thus known by his mother - `Isa bin Maryam. In the Qur'an, Allah mentions Sayyiduna `Isa as being among the progeny of Sayyiduna Ibrahim, despite the fact that Sayyiduna `Isa is only descended from Sayyiduna Ibrahim through his mother, Sayyidatuna Maryam.

The other exception is the descendants of Sayyidatuna Fatimah, all of whom are considered to be the direct descendants of the Prophet ﷺ even though they are descended from him through their mother and not their father. This is why the Prophet ﷺ referred to Sayyiduna al-Hasan as his son. This is one of the Prophet's unique attributes (*khasa'is*).

- **I have taken the `ahd (covenant) but have not consistent in reciting my awrad. Does this mean I have broken the covenant?**

This does not mean that you have broken the covenant but you should strive to recite even a small amount of the awrad and to be consistent in that.

- **In the hadith we learn that there will be certain people that will come to the Pool of the Prophet and will then be driven away. The Prophet ﷺ will call out: “These are my companions!” It will be said to him: “You do not know what they did after you left.” How can the Companions of the Prophet be treated in this way?**

There are two ways of understanding this hadith.

The first is that it refers to the few who having accepted Islam and met the Prophet ﷺ later left Islam and died in a state of disbelief.

The second is that the word ‘companions’ does not literally refer to the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ who met him during his lifetime but rather it refers to his whole Ummah. There will be a number of people from his Ummah who will come to his Pool but will then be driven away from it as a punishment for disobeying him.

- **Are hunger strikes permissible?**

Hunger strikes are a means of achieving some kind of goal. If that goal is valid then they are permissible as long as the person on strike does not harm himself, for this is forbidden in the Shari`ah. The food which everyone must avoid is that which is impermissible and then that which is dubious. If someone is forced to eat food which is impermissible out of fear of losing his life then he must only eat that which is enough to allow him to survive. If someone has reached the highest level of reliance upon Allah (*tawakkul*) then he will not need to eat anything and Allah will give him sustenance directly.

- **Does someone have to be in a blessed place to receive spiritual assistance?**

If someone has the choice and the ability then they should visit blessed places to seek spiritual assistance. However, we should be certain that Allah’s gaze is upon the whole earth and no place is beyond His knowledge. Wherever someone is (even if he is not on the earth) he will receive spiritual assistance through his shuyukh and chain of connection to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ according to his truthfulness (*sidq*).

- **There is a shaykh in our area. Can we benefit from him?**

He must be someone of truthfulness (*sidq*) and taqwa. A sign of his truthfulness is that he praises the pious scholars of the Ummah and does not attack any of them. His taqwa can be gauged by looking at his dealings with women and with electronic devices.

- **What is the meaning of an opening (*fath*)?**

An opening is an unveiling which allows the person who receives it to witness the spiritual and angelic realm after being restricted to witnessing the physical realm. He is thus raised from the state of certainty based upon knowledge (*`ilm al-yaqin*) to the state of certainty based upon witnessing (*`ayn al-yaqin*).

See also: <http://muwasala.org/on-the-meaning-of-spiritual-openings-fat%E1%B8%A5/>

- **What are the best prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ (salawat) to recite?**

Every prayer contains goodness and blessings. Priority should be given to the salawat that have been narrated in the Sunnah (such as al-Salat al-Ibrahimiyyah), then the salawat that have been narrated by the early generations or salawat that your Shaykh recommends.

- **Can someone mention your words without attributing them to you if this is of more benefit?**

This is fine.

- **When do your sins cut you off from Allah?**

Your sins cut you off from Allah when you are content to commit them and refuse to leave them. If, however, you feel remorse and have a sincere resolve to leave them they do not cut you off.

Habib Umar mentioned that we should all plead with Allah to guide those of our relatives and loved ones who have not accepted Islam.

The next meeting is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> Rajab / 9<sup>th</sup> April

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi al-Thani 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Thani 1437 / 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Sayyidi Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah protect him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What can I do to get rid of satanic whisperings (*waswasah*) at the time of entering the prayer?**

You can do this by being aware of the greatness of Allah. Imam Ahmad bin Hasan al-`Attas was of the opinion that it is sufficient for someone entering the prayer to bring to mind Allah's greatness.<sup>1</sup> You should recite also Surat al-Nas at this time for protection.

- **It is very hard to avoid shaking hands and looking at women in my work place. What should I do?**

If possible you should wear gloves when you shake hands with them. When your gaze falls upon them you should envisage the Ka`bah and al-Hujrah al-Sharifah (in which the Prophet is buried) and think about being in the company of the Prophet ﷺ in Paradise. Allah says: **Say to the believing men that they must lower their gaze.**<sup>2</sup> Reflect upon this verse and upon Who is issuing the command. Persevere in this and realise that you are in a type of jihad. You will then acquire a hatred for disobedience.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Shafi School the intention must be combined with the opening takbir. People sometimes find this difficult to act upon and as a result they can be affected by whisperings and doubts. Imam Ahmad bin Hasan al-`Attas thus directed people not to worry about whether the intention was made at the correct time, but rather to focus on the meaning of the opening takbir which is to realise and express Allah's greatness.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Nur*, 24:30

- **Can zakat money be given to non-Muslims with the intention of calling them to Islam?**

If there is evidence that there is a good chance that they will become Muslim then there are opinions within some of the four schools which allow this, on the basis that they fall into the category of “those whose hearts are to be reconciled.” However, it is better that zakat money is given to those who have recently accepted Islam since the scholars are in agreement that they fall into this category. Instead money which is not zakat should be given to non-Muslims.

- **A new translation of the Qur’an with commentary has recently become available. Some of the commentators are of the opinion that all religions are one and that the People of the Book will not be punished in the Fire. What is your position on this?**

A commentary based on false foundations is unacceptable. The issue is very clear in the Qur’an: if someone receives the message of the Prophet ﷺ and then refuses to believe he is a disbeliever who will remain forever in the Fire. The verses in Surat al-Bayyinah are sufficient in this regard: ***Surely those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and the polytheists will be forever in the Hell Fire. They are the worst of creatures*** (98:6). The People of the Book are the people of the Tawrah and the Injil, the Jews and the Christians. Those who do not believe in our Prophet ﷺ after he was sent are disbelievers and they will be with the polytheists who will abide forever in the Fire.

The Quran and the Sunnah clarify how we treat non-Muslims. As long as they are not at war with us we must deal with them with goodness and justice and we present Islam to them in the best way.

- **How do we deal with family members who have been affected by deviant beliefs regarding the Companions?**

We should try to explain to them in the most appropriate way that the Qur’an praises the Companions, the Prophet ﷺ praised them and so too did Sayyiduna Ali and his children and grandchildren. The example we should follow is the example of the Prophet and the elect of the Prophetic Household (Ahl al-Bayt). They loved the foremost, the first of the Emigrants and the Helpers and none of them spoke badly about any of the Companions. If we do not follow their example, who are we following in reality? Should we follow the path of those who wronged the members of the Prophet Household and cursed them or should we follow the path of the Prophetic Household? Can we express our love for the Prophetic Household by going against their way and following the way of those who showed enmity to them?

- **How can I avoid falling into backbiting?**

Guard your tongue and if you hear anyone else backbiting do not to listen to them.

- **How do we deal with people in open disobedience to Allah?**

We do not condone their disobedience and we must not be present while they are in disobedience to Allah. Instead we should try to find a time when they are ready to listen to us. We can then either give them sincere advice (*nasihah*) directly or use some indirect means such as inviting them to a gathering or giving them a book or a recording.

Habib said that although there is no real need to request permission, he gave everyone permission to bestow salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ in general and to recite Dala'il al-Khayrat in particular.

The Dowra will commence this year on 2<sup>nd</sup> Shawwal / 7<sup>th</sup> July

Habib often encourages people to support the Muslim community in Chiapas, Mexico. This article contains information on the work taking place there.

<http://seekershut.org/blog/2016/02/muslim-converts-in-chiapas/>

The next meeting is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> Jumada al-Ula / 27<sup>th</sup> March

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Safar and Rabi al-Awwal 1437

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 1<sup>st</sup> Rabi al-Awwal 1437 / 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- What can I do to increase in presence (*ḥudūr*) in my prayer?

Allah made striving the means to attain this. Other things which are of assistance before entering the prayer are: attempting to empty your heart of anything other than Allah; removing from your place of prayer anything that might distract you such as images and seeking refuge in Allah from the whisperings of the Devil by reciting Surat al-Nas and the following Prophetic supplication:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِوَجْهِهِ الْكَرِيمِ وَبِسُلْطَانِهِ الْقَدِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

*A`udhu billāhi-l`Azīm wa biwajhihi-l`karīm wa bi sulṭānihi-l-qadīm min ashayṭān-irrajīm*

'I seek refuge in Allah the Almighty, in His noble countenance and in His eternal power from the accursed Devil.'

You should also seek to increase your realisation of Allah's greatness and His awareness of you. If you are persistent in this and you strive to attain presence, Allah will bless you with it.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-attaining-concentration-in-prayer/>

- **What can I do to help me see the Prophet ﷺ ?**

The most important thing is that love and adoration for the Prophet ﷺ dominate your heart and that he is in your thoughts constantly. If this is combined with following his Sunnah, serving the da`wah and longing for him, you will be blessed with his vision at the time Allah decrees in a dream state and a waking state in this life and then in the next life.

See also this beautiful answer:

<http://muwasala.org/on-attaining-vision-of-the-prophet-%E1%B9%A3/>

- **How do we help people who accept Islam but struggle with drug addiction?**

We should be overjoyed by the fact that they have accepted Islam and we should increase their veneration for Islam in their hearts and minds. Those who have strong determination will very quickly deal with these addictions, although they are a minority. We should use different means to deal with these addictions such as natural remedies, moving them from bad environments to good environments and developing their love and veneration for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and the afterlife.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-curing-addiction-and-leaving-bad-habits/>

- **Whenever I think I have dealt with one of the diseases in my heart I find I have other diseases. What should I do?**

This is a sign that the remedies you are using are working. Continue to seek to purify yourself of these diseases. The more you search and put the spotlight on these diseases the more you will be aware of them and the better you will be able to deal with them. The fact that you have been made aware of these diseases is a sign that Allah wants good for you and wants to rid you of them. You should continue seeking remedies for these diseases and never despair and abandon good actions.

- **If someone receives good tidings from one of the pious or in a dream how should they react?**

They should show gratitude to Allah, increase in humility and increase in desire to good works. They should constantly reflect upon the state of the best of the Companions who were given the greatest of good tidings of Paradise and other things from the Prophet ﷺ, the most truthful of all people. However, they were not deluded by these things but rather lived out their lives in a state of fear of Allah, humility and uprightness.

- **How should we react to hostility towards Muslims?**

This hostility is nothing strange - it is both human nature and a manifestation of the Devil working with his allies. We should look at the conduct of the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions during the days of hardship in Makkah. They showed patience, steadfastness, excellence in their dealings and avoided provoking their antagonisers and thus displayed the true teachings of Islam. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would respond to bad treatment with good treatment and would pardon and forgive those who wronged him.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-reacting-to-anti-muslim-hostility-following-woolwich-killing/>

- **How do we get the most out of reciting the adhkar of the Khulasah?**

The main thing is to be consistent and recite the adhkar with presence of heart. However no one should allow anything to stop them from reciting the adhkar even if they feel they do not have presence of heart. They must not allow the Devil to make them despair. Rather they should continue and seek to have etiquette and seek the most important thing, which is presence of heart. Allah describes the people of intellect as being people that remember Allah while standing, sitting and lying on their sides.

- **What can be read to deal with fear and anxiety?**

Firstly we need to strengthen our trust in Allah. We can also use the following three remedies:

1. Recite Ayat al-Kursi, Surat al-Inshirah and Surat Quraysh (and if possible Surat al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nas) after every prayer, before sleeping and every time you enter and leave the house.
2. Recite the following verse 3 times in the morning and 3 times in the evening

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَى طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِن شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِم مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُل لَّو كُنتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحَّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

(Al `Imran, 3:154)

3. Recite 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi'shrah lī ṣadrī wa yassir lī amrī*

("My Lord, bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair." *Ta Ha* 20:25-26)

- **General advice**

Refer to Qabas al-Nūr al-Mubīn (Habib Umar’s summarised version of the section in the Ihya’ `Ulūm al-Dīn which deals with destructive tendencies) for the remedies to spiritual ailments. It is hoped that a translation will soon be available.

Be consistent in reciting your adhkar and bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ in this month.

- **Dar al-Mustafa’s Da`wah Conference (Multaqā)**

The Conference will begin on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Rabi al-Awwal (4<sup>th</sup> January), the day of the annual Mawlid in Dar al-Mustafa, and continue until Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> (7<sup>th</sup> January). Flights are now running from Amman and Dubai to Seiyun.

The next meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Awwal 1437 / 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Hijjah 1436

### Questions and Answers

***The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1436 / 10<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Sayyidi Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:***

- **What is the intellect?**

The intellect is a faculty which enables us to understand reality. It is unique to humans and through it they are able to access things which other creatures are unable to access. The intellect is a gift and secret which Allah bestowed upon mankind. Allah said about its origin: ***I breathed into him of My spirit.***<sup>1</sup>

A person's intellect should prevent him from abasing himself. For that reason the scholars define the intellect as being a faculty which prevents the person who possesses it from doing anything which is inappropriate. If someone's intellect does not prevent them from doing things which are inappropriate that person has no intellect in reality. The Prophet ﷺ knew that Sayyidunā Khālid bin Walīd had a sound intellect and was thus surprised that it was not until the sixth year of the Hijrah that he became Muslim. The Prophet expected that his intellect would lead him to become Muslim long before that.

The Prophet ﷺ informed us about the nature of the intellect. When Allah created the intellect He told it to come forward and it came forward; He told it to go back and it went back; He told it to move and it moved and He told it to be still and it was still. He said: "I swear by My greatness that you are the most beloved of things to Me and I will place you in the most beloved of My creation to Me." Then He created ignorance, the opposite of intellect. He told it to come forward and it went back; He told it to go back and it came forward; He told it to be still and it moved and He told it to move and it was still. He said: "I swear by My greatness that you are the most hated of things to Me and I will place you in the most hated of My creation to Me."

The intellect is what enables us to understand reality, to obey the divine commands and to do what is pleasing to Allah. It is only through the intellect that someone knows the value of time. Just as your sight allows you to see physical things, your intellect allows you to witness

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Hijr*, 15:29

the truth. A person's understanding of Allah's speech and the strength of their faith is according to the level of their intellect. It is a gift from Allah but it can be developed through reflection and experience. We ask Allah to expand our intellect.

- **What things would constitute the murīd breaking the covenant with his shaykh?**

These things would constitute breaking the covenant:

Being content to contravene the Sacred Law

Showing enmity or having hatred for any of the pious slaves of Allah

Having contempt for the Sacred Law or the Spiritual Path (Tariqah)

Having contempt for any of the affairs of Allah, His Messenger ﷺ or the next life

Having bad thoughts about the Shaykh which the murīd then believes to be true

- **If the murīd breaks his covenant with his shaykh is it possible to rectify the situation?**

The murīd has no option but to return to Allah. He may rectify the situation by making tawbah as long as he is not in the throes of death and as long as the Sun has not risen from the West. Clearly someone who breaks the covenant and then makes amends is not the same as someone who has not broken it in the first place.

- **How can we distinguish between the effects of psychological illness, the Evil Eye and black magic?**

Each one has a different source. Both the Evil Eye and black magic can cause psychological illness. Psychological illness itself relates to the make up of the soul of the individual and his way of thinking.

When someone who is envious of someone else looks at that person he may give him the Evil Eye. This may then affect his mind, soul or body or it may lead to some harm befalling him.

Black magic is caused by blowing upon knots and calling upon jinn and similar things. It may affect a person's mind, soul or body (such as being prevented from standing up) or it may lead to some harm befalling him.

- **When harm befalls you, how do you know whether it is from the effects of the Evil Eye or due to one's sins?**

Generally speaking anything that befalls you is due to your sins, although it can be to raise your station. If it is due to the Evil Eye it usually occurs suddenly and it leads to a state which is not your normal state.

- **How does a murīd study his Shaykh?**

The murīd studies his shaykh by reflecting upon his states and what they signify and upon the directions that he gives (*isharāt*), his wayfaring and his Prophetic inheritance. He then seeks to benefit from this and become illuminated by it.

- **What can be recited by someone who is suffering from breast cancer?**

The following can be recited:

1. The six verses of healing from the Qur'an
2. Al-Ṣalāt al-Ṭibbiyyah

See:

[http://muwasala.org/prayers\\_for\\_illness/](http://muwasala.org/prayers_for_illness/)

3. The following verse 7 times or up to 70 times a day

وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ

*Wa bi'lḥaqqi anzalnāhu wa bi'lḥaqqi nazal*

We sent it down in truth, and in truth it has descended (*al-Isrā'*, 17:105)

4. These surahs: al-Inshirāḥ, al-Qadr, Quraysh, al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nās
5. This Prophetic dua.

Say 3 times:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ

*Bismillāh*

In the name of Allah

Then say 7 times:

أَعُوذُ بِعِزَّةِ اللَّهِ وَقُدْرَتِهِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا أَجِدُ وَأُحَاذِرُ

*A`ūdhu bi `izzatillahi wa qudratihi min sharri ma ajid wa uḥādir*

I seek refuge in Allah's might and power from any evil that I am experiencing or I fear

6. This can also be repeated 100 times a day or more or less

رَبِّ إِنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

*Rabbi innī massani aḍḍurru wa anta arḥamu'r'rāhimīn*

My Lord, affliction has seized me, but You are the Most Merciful

- **What are the most important themes to focus on when teaching people about the Hijrah?**

We should teach people about the truthfulness and patience of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in giving victory to Allah's cause and leaving one place for another. We should also talk about how he interacted with the things that Allah has decreed to take place in this life, such as people harming us and being given power over us.

We should then highlight the fact that if we have taqwā, the schemes of those who oppose the truth will eventually come to nothing. The disbelievers who possessed power plotted to either imprison, expel or kill the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but their plot failed. Likewise they came to the cave but did not find him صلى الله عليه وسلم .

- **What can we learn from the two hijrahs to Abyssinia?**

We learn the need to choose places in which we are able to establish the religion and practise it in safety and freedom.

- **What adhkār should women recite when they are menstruating?**

They can recite all the adhkār that they would normally recite. They should recite verses of the Qur'an with the intention of protection not recitation of the Qur'an. It may be preferable for them not to recite longer surahs such as Ya Sin and al-Mulk but it is also permissible for them to do so with the intention of protection.

- **How does one make the tasbīḥ of Sayyidah Fāṭimah on one's fingers?**

It can be done in any way but the way that Imam al-Haddad describes is to begin by placing one's right thumb at the top of one's right index finger. One then counts three tasbīḥs on one's index finger – one at the top, one in the middle and one at the bottom. You then do the same on the remaining three fingers of the right hand. You then place your left thumb on at the top of your left index finger and count three tasbihs on that finger and three on each of the other three fingers of the left hand. You have now counted twenty four. You now return to the right hand and count a further nine in the same way – three on the index finger, three on the middle finger and three on the third finger.

You repeat this for tahmīd and takbīr, except when you go to sleep when you repeat the takbīr 34 times.

- **Two people want to get married but both sets of parents wish to delay the marriage. Should they accept this or plead with their parents to allow them to marry?**

If they are in need of getting married they may plead with their parents. If it becomes an absolute necessity that they get married then it is permissible for them to do so without the consent of their parents.

- **How can someone reach a state whereby their left hand is not aware of what their right hand has spent?**

They can reach this state by constantly remembering what has been narrated about the merit of generosity and giving charity in secret.

- **At what point should I increase my awrād?**

You do this when you are consistent in reciting the awrād that you are already reciting and you have the desire to increase and sufficient time to do so.

- **Once someone is consistent in praying the compulsory prayers what Sunnah prayers should they pray?**

The most important Sunnah prayers are Witr and the Sunnah before Fajr. Witr is compulsory according to the Hanafi School and some of the Companions and Hanafi scholars were of the opinion that the Sunnah of Fajr is also compulsory. After that, the other Sunnah prayers before and after the compulsory prayers should be performed as well as the Ḍuḥā (midmorning) prayer.

- **How do we deal with relatives who commit acts of disobedience such as drinking alcohol and want us to join with them in doing so?**

We must forbid them from these things and not be present when they are committing these acts of disobedience.

- **How do I protect myself from holding a bad opinion?**

When bad thoughts come to mind you reject them, as the Prophet ﷺ told us to do

- **How do we increase in attachment to our Shaykh?**

Generally speaking, the murīd increases in attachment to his shaykh by knowing his merits and unique attributes and realising that he is a deputy of the Prophet ﷺ and the imams in his chain of connection.

As for us specifically, the connection is strengthened by venerating the Prophet ﷺ, following him, studying his attributes and increasing in love for him.

- **We are planning a gathering on the last night of the year. What should be read in the gathering?**

You should read the duas of the pious mentioned in the book '*Kanz al-Najāḥ wa'l-Surūr*', you should seek forgiveness from Allah (*istighfār*) and bestow prayers upon the Prophet in abundance.

- **What can someone who is unable to conceive recite?**

Our Shaykh, Ḥabīb `Attās al-Ḥabashī, used to recommend reciting Surat al-Fatihah 41 times between the Sunnah and Fard of Fajr with the intention of being blessed with a child.

Also recite the following verses 100 times a day or more or less:

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

*Rabbi hab lī milladunka dhurriyyatan ṭayyibatan innaka samī`u-du`ā'*

"O my Lord! Grant me from You pure descendants, for You hear all prayers!" (*Āl `Imrān*, 3:38)

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ

*Rabbi lā tadharnī fardan wa anta khayrul-wāriṭhīn*

"O my Lord! Leave me not without offspring, and You are the best of inheritors." (*Al-Anbiyā'*, 21:89)

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

*Rabbanā hab lanā min azwājinā wa dhurriyyātinā qurrata `ayun wa'ja'lnā lilmuttaqīna imāmā*

"Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous." (*Al-Furqān*, 25:74)

- **If someone has low *himmah* (spiritual ambition) what should they do?**

They should stand facing the qiblah and say Allaaah (extending the 'a') 66 times.

- **General advice**

Visiting blessed places and people has a big effect in increasing your faith and knowledge of Allah, strengthening the ties of love and brotherhood and assisting your wayfaring. You should make visits as far as available local or international. They have a different function to visiting individuals. In the prayer itself we visit Allah and His Messenger and the pious. Throughout the prayer we visit Allah up until the point when we give greetings to Him in the tashahhud. We visit the Prophet ﷺ when we give him greetings of salam in the *tashahhud* and then there is a type of visit to Allah's pious slaves when we give greetings of salam to them. However we only address Allah and His Messenger directly in the prayer. Directly addressing anyone other than Allah and the Prophet invalidates the prayer. If we do not address the Prophet in the tashahhud our prayer will be invalid. This is how great his station is in Allah's sight. May Allah give us true love for him.

We should pray for each other that Allah puts blessings in our time.

Habib prayed for Shaykh Ismail Didu, who died in Mina, Kamran Khan from the UK who was killed in the crane accident in Makkah and Salahud-Din Abdul-Razacq, the husband of Ustadha Zaynab Ansari, who recently passed away in the US.

- **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> November

Those who wish to take the `ahd should prepare by consistently reciting what adhkār they are able to recite and by reading Imam al-Haddad's '*Ādāb Sulūk al-Murīd*' (Good Manners). There should be an opportunity to take the `ahd in the next meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 21<sup>st</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1436 / 5<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīẓ (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we react to those who condemn celebrating the mawlid?**

The mawlid is part of the Prophetic Biography (Sīrah) and celebrating it is a means of connection to the Prophet ﷺ. It should be treated just as the Sīrah, the remembrance of Allah and the remembrance of the Prophet are treated. It is a means of achieving objectives such as increasing in love for and connection to the Prophet ﷺ. It is not compulsory in itself but rather takes the ruling of the objectives that it is being used to achieve. It should be used in the best way, just as other means are used. The situation may dictate that it be concealed or left, such as when it would have a detrimental effect on the da`wah. It should not be left merely in response to those who condemn it, especially when it is not expected that those people will respond to our da`wah. When the majority will benefit it should not be left.

- **What is our position on kissing the thumbnails and rubbing them on the eyes when the Prophet ﷺ is mentioned during the adhan?**

This practice should be given its place, which is that it is the practice of many of the pious people of the Ummah. It cannot be considered an innovation or something prohibited. Likewise it cannot be considered an obligation. We should not make an issue of these things, but rather we should focus on that which is more important and beneficial.

- **I hold a gathering in the house in which I teach my children about Islam. What is the best dua with which to end the gathering?**

The best dua is the dua which the Prophet ﷺ taught us:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

*Subhānakallāhumma wa bi ḥamdika ashadu allā ilāha illā anta astaghfiruka wa atūbu ilayk*

Transcendent are You, O Allah, and praise be to You as You praise Yourself. I bear witness that there is no deity save You. I seek Your forgiveness and I repent to You.

If possible you can also teach them the verses of Ḥabīb `Abdullāh bin Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir which are traditionally recited at the end of gatherings. They can be found in the Khulasah. They should be recited before the Prophetic dua, which should be the last thing to be recited.

- **How do we deal with non-Muslim parents when they engage in things which are forbidden?**

You should show mercy to them and wish that Allah guides them and use whatever means are available to enable this. Treat them well at all times but avoid their company when they are doing things which are inappropriate or are disobeying Allah. Give them gifts and assist them in all that is permissible.

- **How do we raise our aspiration in reading our adhkār?**

Remember the great rewards for doing so and read your adhkār with other people at times. Start by setting yourself a small amount which you are able to recite consistently. You should not leave this amount when your aspiration is low but you can do more when your aspiration is high.

- **What is the best way of obeying the Prophetic command to spread peace, feed people, honour the ties of kinship and pray at night?**

We do this by not harming any human or animal and by having a good transaction with inanimate objects such that we walk upon the earth in humility. We should look after our relatives and neighbours and speak well whenever we meet anyone. We should pray in the night even if it is only two units of prayer. We should give charity, give people gifts and invite them to our houses.

- **What can be recited for those who are sick?**

Repeat the following:

يَا لَطِيفًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا عَلِيمًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا خَبِيرًا بِخَلْقِهِ الْطُّفُ بِنَا يَا لَطِيفُ ، يَا  
عَلِيمُ ، يَا خَبِيرُ

*Ya Laṭīfan bi khalqihī ya `Alīman bi khalqihī ya Khabīran bi khalqihī ulṭuf binā yā Laṭīfu yā `Alīmu ya Khabīru*

O One Who is gentle with His creation, O One who has complete knowledge of His creation, O One who has complete awareness of His creation! Treat us with gentleness O Gentle, O All-Knowing, O All-Aware!

Also repeat al-Ṣalāt al-Ṭibbiyyah:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ طِبِّ الْقُلُوبِ وَ دَوَائِهَا وَعَافِيَةِ الْأَبْدَانِ وَ  
شِفَائِهَا وَ قُوَّةِ الْأَرْوَاحِ وَ غِذَائِهَا وَ نُورِ الْأَبْصَارِ وَ ضِيَائِهَا وَ عَلَى آلِهِ  
وَ صَحْبِهِ وَ سَلَّمَ

O Allah, bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions, the source of medicine and healing for people's hearts, the

source of health and well-being for people's bodies, the source of nourishment for people's souls and the source of light for people's vision.

Repeat twenty times in the morning and evening:

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

*Wa idhā mariḍtu fa huwa yashfīn*

When I am ill, it is He Who cures me (26:80)

See also:

[http://muwasala.org/prayers\\_for\\_illness/](http://muwasala.org/prayers_for_illness/)

- **Since Ramadan finished, I feel like I have lost my connection with Allah when I worship Him. What can I do?**

You should let Allah see your regret and sense of loss and meanwhile continue to worship Him seeking to regain what you have lost.

- **Please explain the statement of Imām al-Ḥaddād: “We will not leave them, even if they leave us.”**

The Shuyukh honour their covenants with those who are attached to them even if those people do not treat them well. As far as they are able, they continue to give good advice to them, pray for them and intercede on their behalf with Allah.

- Can we use computer generated music to accompany the Burdah in order to encourage people to attend our gatherings?

If the sounds generated resemble instruments which are forbidden (such as the flute) they should be avoided but if they resemble instruments which are permissible (such as drums) this is acceptable. We should not hasten to attract people using means unless they are clearly permissible for people will attend your gatherings in due course without the use of these means. Showing good character, reciting with beautiful voices and making our gatherings beautiful are prophetic means of calling people to Allah and are effective.

- **New Dhikr**

Those requesting a new dhikr should recite the following 11,000 times:

وَأَفْوِضْ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

*Wa ufawwiḍū amrī il'Allāh inn'Allāha baṣīrun bi'l-`ibād*

I surrender my affair to Allah, for Allah is constantly aware of His slaves (40:44)

If they have already completed this, they should recite the following 30,000 times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ  
الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*Subḥānallāh wa'l-ḥamdulillāh wa lā ilāha ill'Allāh wa'llāhu akbar wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi'l-`aliyyi'l-`azīm*

Transcendent is Allah; all praise belongs to Allah; there is no deity save Allah; Allah is most great; there is no strength or power save by Allah, the Most High, the Almighty.

- **The Ten Days of Dhu'l Hijjah**

Take advantage of the first ten days of Dhu'l Hijjah. Immense gifts are contained in these days and nights. Standing in prayer on one of these nights is like standing in prayer on Laylat al-Qadr. Fasting one day is like fasting the whole year. Fasting the Day of `Arafah is like fasting 1,000 days or (according to some narrations) even 10,000 days.

To read more go to:

<http://muwasala.org/the-first-ten-days-of-dhul-%E1%B8%A5ijjah/>

- **Ziyarah and Multaqa**

The special visit (Ziyarah Khassah) to Nabi Allah Hud عليه السلام will take place at the beginning of Muharram as usual inshallah. The Dawah Conference (Multaqa) will be in Rabi al-Awwal.

- **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah / 10<sup>th</sup> October

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramaḍān 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 24<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān 1436 / 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What etiquettes should be observed when someone embraces Islam?**

It is good that it be made public.

As for the wording, the person embracing Islam should be told to say:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

*Ashhadu allā ilāha ill'Allāh wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan rasūlullāh*

The meaning should be explained to him or her:

“I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

If possible she told to say the following and the meaning should be explained:

آمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَبِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ

مِنْ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

*Āmantu billāh wa malāi`katihi wa kutubihi wa rusulihi wa'l-yawmi'l-ākhir wa b'il-qadari khayrihi and sharrihi min Allāhi ta`ālā*

“I believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and in pre-ordainment, whether it be good or bad from Allah Most High.”

رَضِيتُ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيًّا وَرَسُولًا

*Raḍītu billāh rabban wa bil-Islāmi dīnan wa bi Muḥammadin nabīyan rasūlan*

“I am content with Allah as a Lord, with Islam as a religion, and with Muhammad as a Prophet and Messenger.”

- **What can we do if we find our brothers are reluctant to co-operate and work together on dawah projects?**

We should ask Allah to rectify the situation, maintain ties with them and ask other people to encourage them to co-operate. We should also invite them to attend meetings or gatherings from time to time.

- **What awrād should not be left if we wish to strengthen our connection with our shuyukh?**

You should recite whatever you can from the awrad of the Khulasah even if it is only Wird al-Laṭīf and the Wird of Shaykh Abū Bakr bin Sālim.

### **Concerning Adhkar**

- The first dhikr to be read upon taking the path is the Dhikr of Imam al-Aydarus, which is as follows:

***La ilaha illa Allah 12,000 times***

***Allah, Allah 12,000 times***

***Hu, Hu 12,000 times***

(reading *Allah, Allah* and *Hu, Hu* counts as one)

- Those who have completed the Dhikr of Imam al-Aydarus should recite the following salat 33,000 times:

<http://muwasala.org/nurik-al-sari/>

There is no specific time frame for this dhikr. The main thing is you do it in your spare time with presence of heart while still maintaining your other adhkar.

- Upon completing this you recite whatever dhikr Sayyidi Habib Umar has given in the most recent Monthly Meeting. Likewise whenever you finish a dhikr you begin the dhikr which has been given most recently in the Meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> Shawwal / 15<sup>th</sup> August.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Sha`bān 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 26<sup>th</sup> Sha`bān 1436 / 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him). He began by talking at length about his blessed mother, Ḥabābah Zahrā' bint Ḥafīz al-Haddār (may Allah have mercy upon her).*

*To read a summary of what he said, please go to:*

<http://muwasala.org/beginnings-and-endings/>

He said: "May Allah reward those who conveyed their condolences. If your condolences are accepted you will receive the same reward that the person who patiently bears the calamity receives."

*He then answered the following questions:*

- **What actions should we focus on in Ramadan?**
  1. Our focus should be on perfecting our fasting by not disobeying Allah with our bodies and avoiding vain and crude speech
  2. We should also perfect our night prayer by ensuring we pray with present hearts
  3. We should make sure we break our fast on lawful food
  4. We should reflect upon the Qur'an
  5. Many of the pious recommend reciting Sūrat al-Faḥ on the first night of Ramadan
  6. We should recite the dhikr of Ramadan in abundance:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ نَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ نَسَأُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

*Ashhadu allā ilahā ill'Allāh nastaghfirullāh nas'aluk'al-jannata wa na'ūdhu bika minannār.*

'I testify that there is no deity save Allah and we seek the forgiveness of Allah. We ask You for Paradise and seek refuge in You from the Fire.'

- **We are arranging classes for both men and women. What is the correct etiquette with regards to how they are seated?**

The minimum is that men be one side and women on the other side. Then you can do more than that according to people's readiness. There is no problem being in a gathering in which men and women are sitting together if they are non-Muslim and you are intending to call them to Allah. However, if you are organising the lesson yourself men and women should be separate. A Muslim who has been blessed with the methodology of Islam should not be affected by his environment but rather he should have an effect on the environment and improve it.

- **How can we increase in presence of heart in our prayer?**

You do this by having strong resolve and determination to attain presence and by consistently striving to attain it. Before entering the prayer you should seek refuge from the Devil by reciting Surat al-Nas and the following Prophetic supplication:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِوَجْهِهِ الْكَرِيمِ وَبِسُلْطَانِهِ الْقَدِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ  
الرَّجِيمِ

'I seek refuge in Allah the Almighty, in His noble countenance and in His eternal power from the accursed Devil.'

You should focus upon the action you are performing and the words that you are saying while you are doing so. Whenever your mind wanders, force it back to focus on those words and actions.

- **How should I balance between reciting the Qur'an, memorisation and studying tafsir during Ramadan?**

You should recite for half an hour, memorise for an hour and study tafsir for half an hour.

- **What can be recited during labour?**

Repeat the prayer that the Prophet ﷺ would recite at times of hardship:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا  
اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

'There is no deity save Allah, the Almighty, the Forbearing. There is no deity save Allah, the Lord of the Mighty Throne. There is no deity save Allah the Lord of the heavens and the earth and the Noble Throne.'

Also repeat the following ayah:

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ

*Then He made the path easy<sup>1</sup>*

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-adhkar-to-read-during-pregnancy-and-related-advice/>

<http://muwasala.org/on-prayers-to-read-during-childbirth/>

- **How do we encourage our relatives to pray and fast?**

By teaching them the merits and rewards of these actions mentioned in the hadith

The Dowra will go ahead as planned inshallah. Those who are able to attend may attend at the beginning or during the course of the Dowra. Those who are unable to attend may follow the lessons online. We should do what has been facilitated for us while surrendering our affairs to Allah. We should take advantage of whatever situation Allah places us in and spread goodness according to our ability. **Allah does not burden a soul with more than it can bear.** There will be far greater opportunities to attend the Dowra in Dar al-Mustafa in future years and will be far easier to do so with Allah's permission.

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<sup>1</sup> `Abasa, 80:20

For details of lessons that will be livestreamed in Ramadan and the Dowra go to:

<http://muwasala.org/live/>

The next meeting is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> Ramadan / 11<sup>th</sup> July.

For those who wish to take the `ahd (covenant) of the Tariqah, there will be an opportunity to do so at the end of the next meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rajab 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 20<sup>th</sup> Rajab 1436 / 9th May 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Is it recommended to fast on the day after the night of the ‘Isrā’ and Mi`rāj (27<sup>th</sup> Rajab)?**

Generally speaking fasting in the sacred months is better than fasting in the other months. There is a sound hadith in which Ibn `Umar was asked whether the Prophet ﷺ used to fast in Rajab. He said: “Yes, and he would ennoble it (meaning the month of Rajab).” Some of the pious recommend fasting on the day of the of the ‘Isrā’ and Mi`rāj but it is not something that has been directly narrated on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ. Above all we should seek a true connection with the Prophet, the one who was taken on the ‘Isrā’ and Mi`rāj.

- **What is the meaning of the following verse: *He was two bow-lengths or even nearer?*<sup>1</sup>**

This is how Allah expresses the proximity of His Prophet ﷺ to Him when He manifested Himself to him (on the Mi`rāj). This proximity is not physical but rather metaphorical.

- **How can people stop themselves from excessive use of the internet?**

This can be done by focusing the heart on remembrance and reflection. You should remember Allah until His remembrance dominates your heart. You should reflect upon the life of the Prophet ﷺ. This engenders a longing to be in his company and a

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Najm*, 53:9

longing to meet him. You should also avoid keeping the company of those who spend a lot of time using the internet.

- **What can be recited for a headache?**

Put your hand on your head and recite *Sūrat al-Qadr* and the last four verses of *Sūrat al-Hashr* in the morning and evening.

- **Do we have permission to read the books of Imām al-Ghazālī?**

The books of Imām al-Ghazālī are extremely beneficial and are quick to rectify and illuminate the heart. It is said that the early Bā`Alawī Imāms praised two things to a great extent: the books of Imām al-Ghazālī and the visit of the Prophet Hūd عليه السلام. This shows that there is a general permission to read the books and there is no fear for the person reading it.

- **What can be read to put blessings (barakah) in our time and give us physical strength?**

Recite the following verses 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi-shrah li şadrī wa yassir li amrī*

“My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair.”<sup>2</sup>

Recite 116 times:

يَا قَوِيٌّ

*Yā Qawwī*

‘O Most Powerful’

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<sup>2</sup> *Tā Hā* 20:25-26

Recite 133 times:

يَا لَطِيفُ

*Yā Laṭīf*

'O Gentle'

- **Should we give priority to keeping the company of people who are on the same path or those who remind us of Allah?**

You should strive to keep the company of those who remind you of Allah but at the same time give those who are on the same path their rights. Their rights are that you check up on them, help them as far as you able to and pray for them. It is not our way to avoid keeping the company of anyone as long as there is benefit in that and no harm.

- **What should our state be at the end of this blessed month?**

You should be in a state of brokenness in front of Allah and you should have a truthful resolve to seek to draw close to Allah for the rest of your life.

- **What can be recited to remove scary thoughts?**

When you experience these thoughts, recite the following Surahs: *Quraysh*, *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Falaq* and *al-Nās*. If this continues recite verse 154 of *Sūrat Āl `Imrān* (3:154).

- **What principles should be followed when talking about Imām al-Mahdī?**

We should restrict ourselves to talking about what is narrated in the hadith about him. We should realise that his coming is a sign of Allah and something that Allah has promised that will come to pass at its appointed time. Our hearts should not be focused on his coming but rather on the obligations we would have to fulfil where he to appear. We should ask ourselves what we are doing to serve the Sacred Law which he will come to serve. Also refer to the section in the book '*Tawhīj al-Nabīh*' (page 192) for clarification of our methodology in relation to these affairs.

- **How do we help those suffering from drug addiction?**

We should make sure they receive the correct medication and also give them some dhikr.

- **How can women perform their duties at home in spite of the fact that they have to go out to work?**

They can do this by only going out when it is necessary to do and by wearing modest attire when they do so. They should follow the example of the daughters of the Prophet Shu`ayb, whom Allah mentions in the Qur'an: ***He (Mūsā) found at a distance from them two women keeping back (their flocks).***<sup>3</sup> They refused to mix with the men but rather waited until they had finished watering their flocks. When their father sent one of them to Mūsā, Allah describes her as '***walking shyly.***' When there is no longer a necessity for them to be out, they should return to attend to their duties in the house.

- **Can someone who is driving alone to work be considered to be in a form of khalwah?**

Yes, this could be a lesser khalwah when one isolates oneself to be with Allah. It is like when someone wraps a shawl around their head so they can only see what is in front of them and not what is around them.

- **A friend who has recently embraced Islam has decided to follow the Shia branch of Islam. What advice should I give him to convince him to follow one of the four Sunni schools?**

If you see that he is ready to listen then advise him and guide him towards following one of the Sunni schools. Tell him that the chain of transmission of all the four schools goes back to Imām Ja`far al-Şādiq: Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Mālik received knowledge from Imām Ja`far directly; Imām al-Shāfi`ī received knowledge from Imām Ja`far through Imām Mālik and Imam Aḥmad received knowledge from Imām Ja`far through Imām Shāfi`ī and Imām Mālik. You should praise the four schools without denigrating any of the other schools.

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<sup>3</sup> *Al-Qaşaş*, 28:23

- **Do we have permission to pass on adhkār given out in this meeting to others?**

Yes, you are free to do so.

- **If someone has not taken the covenant and the tariqah may they still read the adhkār that are given out?**

Yes, they may do so whether or not they have taken the covenant and the tariqah.

Habib requested that people in North America visit Shaykh Mudar's community in Mexico if they are able to do, especially if they can teach something on a daily basis. Please contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator for details.

The next meeting is scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> Sha`bān / 13<sup>th</sup> June

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumādā al-Ūlā 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 1<sup>st</sup> Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1436 / 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we teach our children love of the Prophet ﷺ ?**

We should teach them about his life and tell them stories about him. We should teach them about his greatness in Allah's sight and teach them that he is the one who benefits Allah's creation the most and that he is the greatest intercessor on the Day of Judgement. We must also teach them how to bestow prayers upon him.

- **Is it possible to see the Prophet ﷺ in the form of your shaykh?**

The Prophet ﷺ can be seen in the form of anyone who is connected to him and anyone who has any portion of his legacy. His appearance will depend upon the state of the person who sees him.

- **I live with non-Muslims, some of whom are interested in Islam. What can I do to convey the message of Islam to them?**

You should tell them that through uttering the testification of faith mankind is raised by freeing himself from created things. You should tell them about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: his mercy and compassion, his awesome character and his benefit and service to mankind. The meanings of the testification of faith will thus become ingrained in their minds. Showing them good character, having good dealings with them and giving them gifts will assist in this.

- **At our mosque, what can we do to help new Muslims?**

You should be cheerful in your dealings with them, you should invite them to your homes and help and serve them. You should discuss with them the attributes of Allah, the Prophets and the pious and talk to them about the next life.

- **We will shortly be travelling to perform `Umrah and Ziyarah. What advice do you have?**

Visit the Companions buried in Baqī` and at Uḥud, Sayyidah Khadījah and those buried at al-Ma`alāh. Try to visit the scholars and attend their gatherings. Before going you should renew your repentance and increase your determination in directing yourselves to Allah. You should come in a state of yearning and maintain a good opinion of everyone you meet.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/advice-for-umrah-and-ziyarah/>

<http://muwasala.org/imam-al-%E1%B8%A5addads-counsels-on-%E1%B8%A5ajj-and-umrah/>

- **What can I do to strengthen my faith and reliance upon Allah?**

You can do this by remembering Allah in abundance with presence of heart, bestowing abundant prayers upon Prophet ﷺ reading the books of the pious and reflecting on the stories contained in the Qur'an

- **What can I do to reduce my love of the Dunya?**

Recite this 40 times a day:

يَا حَيُّ قَيُّوْمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

*Yā Hayyu yā Qayyūmu lā ilāha illā anta*

O Living, O Self-Existing there is no deity save You

Recite this verse 100 times a day:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*Huw'Allāhu'lladhī lā ilāha illā hu, 'Ālimu'l ghaybi wash-shahadah, Hu arrahmānu' rahīm*

***He is Allāh, there is no deity save Him, Knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful.***<sup>1</sup>

Recite the du`a of Imām al-Ḥaddād several times a day:

اللَّهُمَّ أَخْرِجْ مِنْ قَلْبِي كُلَّ قَدْرٍ لِلدُّنْيَا، وَكُلَّ مَحَلٍّ لِلخَلْقِ؛ يَمِيلُ بِي إِلَى  
مَعْصِيَتِكَ، أَوْ يُشْغِلُنِي عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ، أَوْ يُحُولُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ التَّحَقُّقِ بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ  
الْخَاصَّةِ، وَمَحَبَّتِكَ الْخَالِصَةِ

O Allah, remove from my heart any love for the material world and any status I may afford to people which cause me to disobey You or distract me from worshipping You or come between me and attaining special knowledge of You and sincere love for You.

- **What can we read to stop our children having nightmares?**

You should teach them to read Āyat al-Kursī before they sleep if they are able to read it. If not, it should be read over them. If they are old enough, they should also read Āyat al-Kursī and Sūrat al-Inshirāḥ after every prayer.

- **New anti-terror laws make life difficult for Muslims. What advice do you have for us?**

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Ḥashr, 59:22

You should be firm in following the Prophet ﷺ with gentleness while being wary and showing wisdom. You should continue reciting your adhkar and strive to strengthen your reliance upon Allah. You should be completely content with events that Allah has decreed to take place. At the same time you should take advantage of whatever avenues are opened for you. May Allah show gentleness to you.

- **How do we strengthen our connection to our shaykh?**

You do this by strengthening your connection to the Prophet ﷺ and perfecting your following of him.

- **We witness the suffering of our brethren in Palestine and we feel helpless. When will relief come and what can we do?**

There is no doubt that the people of Palestine and the Muslims in many other lands are suffering. We should not expect anyone other than Allah to alleviate that suffering, and the correct way to seek relief is to be upright in doing that which pleases Him. We should reflect upon the wisdoms that Allah has in testing His slaves. We should plead with Allah to remove the suffering and improve the states of the Muslims while at the same time being content with whatever He decrees. We should realise that we deserve worse than what we are receiving due to our wrongdoings. Allah says: ***If Allah were to take people to account for their wrongdoings, He would not leave on the earth a single living creature.***<sup>2</sup> We should continually ask Allah for His forgiveness and pardon. We should look at those who had patience alongside their Prophets, look at their suffering and look at how Allah gave them victory.

Allah says: ***Many a prophet was killed<sup>3</sup> with a number of devoted men beside them but they never lost heart due to what befell them in Allah's way. They were not weakened and they did not give in. Allah loves those who are steadfast. All that they said was: 'Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our transgressions, make our feet firm and assist us against those who reject faith.'*** What they said reflects their state: they recognised their wrongdoings and then sought forgiveness and assistance from Allah. The result was: ***So Allah gave them a reward in this world and the best reward of the Hereafter, and Allah loves the people of excellence.***<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Al-Nahl*, 16:61

<sup>3</sup> Another reading of the Qur'an would translate as: 'Many of the pious fought with the Prophets.'

<sup>4</sup> *Āl 'Imrān*, 3:146 -8

*They were so shaken that even the Messenger and those of faith who were with him said: "When will the help of Allah come?" Indeed the help of Allah is near.*<sup>5</sup>

*Until the time came when the Messengers despaired (of their people) and knew that they were treated as liars, Our victory came to them.*<sup>6</sup>

The Prophet said ﷺ: "With patience comes victory, with difficulty comes relief and with hardship comes ease."

- **What can do to help me wake up for fajr?**

You should seek Allah's forgiveness (make istighfār) before sunset and you should go to sleep in a state of purity. You should read the recommended adhkar before sleeping, especially subḥānallāh 33 times, alḥamdullilāh 33 times and Allāhu akbar 34 times, along with Āyat al-Kursī and the last four verses of Sūrat al-Kahf.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-getting-up-for-the-night-and-fajr-prayers/>

- **At what age should our children start memorising the Qur'an?**

As soon as they can recite the Qur'an well they should start memorising it, especially if they have good memories. The earlier they start, the better.

- **After giving birth I have not been able to be consistent in my awrād and other acts of worship. What can I do to maintain my spiritual progress?**

You should take a moderate path – not neglecting the awrād completely and not trying to do too much. Rather you should do that which is easy for you to maintain. You will still be rewarded for that which you are unable to do.

- **If we come across a new dhikr or dua should we take permission before reading it?**

If it is from the Sunnah there is no need to take permission. Likewise there is no need to take permission before reading the duas and adhkar of the great Imams of the

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<sup>5</sup> *Al-Baqarah*, 2:214

<sup>6</sup> *Yusūf*, 12:110

Ummah as long as the meaning is clear and they are easy to read. Besides that, permission should be sought.

- **What dhikr should be read in this month?**

Read the following 3,000 times:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

Rabbanā ḡalamnā anfusanā wa in lam taghfir lanā wa tarḡamnā lanakūnanna min al-khāsirīn

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves and if You do not forgive us and show mercy to us, we will be among the losers.”<sup>7</sup>

### General Advice

- Anyone who is able to should read the following verses 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi-shraḡ lī ṡadrī wa yassir lī amrī*

“My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair.”<sup>8</sup>

- Those that attend the Meeting should make a habit of making dua for each other, especially when someone mentions a specific project or a relative who has passed away or is unwell.

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<sup>7</sup> Al-A`rāf, 7:23

<sup>8</sup> Ta Ha 20:25-26

- In most meetings someone asks about the safety situation in Yemen and how it affects those coming to visit or study in Tarim. Sayyidi Habib Umar and the administration of Dar al-Mustafa have the utmost concern for the welfare of those wishing to come to Tarim. Their assessment of the local situation is far more accurate than the assessment of foreign governments, let alone the media. If they felt that anyone's life was in danger they would tell people not to come. Let us put faith in our teachers.
- People often request that Sayyidi Habib Umar chooses a new book for them to teach in their circles. Habib did however mentioned in a previous meeting that people should choose books themselves based on the curriculum of Dar al-Mustafa. They should choose the book that most suits the level of the students. See:

<http://www.daralmustafaedu.com>

or

<http://tarim.shifa.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Dar-al-Mustafa-Curriculum.pdf>

The next meeting is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> April / 29<sup>th</sup> Jumādā al-Ākhirah.

## Monthly Meeting

Rabī` al-Thānī 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 25<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Thānī 1436 / 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **These are difficult times for Muslims in America. Recently young Muslims have been killed and an Islamic centre has been burnt down. What advice do you have for us?**

These are some of the tribulations that occur at the end of time. Following the correct moderate path is what deflects these tribulations.

Muslims should follow the example of those that Allah describes in the Qur'an:

***Many a prophet was killed<sup>1</sup> with a number of devoted men beside them but they never lost heart due to what befell them in Allah's way. They were not weakened and they did not give in. Allah loves those who are steadfast. All that they said was: 'Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our transgressions, make our feet firm and assist us against those who reject faith.' So Allah gave them a reward in this world and the best reward of the Hereafter, and Allah loves the people of excellence.<sup>2</sup>***

Just as Allah gave the previous nations the reward of this life and the next, Allah out of His generosity will give a similar or even better reward to someone who says the same thing and attains the same state.

Muslims should beware of doing anything that contravenes the Sacred Law or of denying anyone their rights. Their actions should reflect the true teachings of Islam. Allah will give them support in the face of what they are suffering. Those who are involved in calling to Allah should remind people of what we have just mentioned and try to make people's faith firm. They should aim to prevent things like this happening.

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<sup>1</sup> Another reading of the Qur'an would translate as: 'Many of the pious fought with the Prophets..'

<sup>2</sup> *Āl `Imrān*, 3:146 -8

- **We have been instructed to bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. How many prayers would be regarded as being abundant? Is it better to repeat a short formula so as to bestow more prayers or should I also read some longer prayers?**

Some scholars say 300 prayers would be regarded as ‘abundant’. Others say 700. So try to read either number according to your ability. You should choose a prayer that you can repeat easily while also reading some other prayers even if they are long.

- **The hadith mentions that there will be one group that will be saved. There is a lot of debate about who this group is. Could you shed some light on this?**

The Prophet ﷺ said that it is the group that is on the same path as him and his Companions. It is impossible to say definitely that you are in that group. Believing in *la ilaha illallah Muhammad Rasulallah* is the way of the Prophet and the Companions, so anyone who believes in that is on their path to some degree.

Thereafter people vary in closeness to the Prophet and the Companions according to the attributes they possess. The closer someone is to them, the more likely they are to be saved. The way of the Prophet and the Companions and those who emulated them was not to debate over subjects such as this but rather to act and seek to attain praiseworthy attributes. If we waste time in these debates instead of seeking to act and attain these attributes then we have failed to follow their path. Our concern should be with increasing in love, veneration, connection and emulation of the Prophet and his Companions.

- **How can I stay awake after fajr until sunrise?**

You can do this by reflecting upon the reward and benefits of doing so and by keeping this time alive with Allah’s remembrance with a group of people. If this is not possible, you can drive sleep away by walking around in the place where you prayed. If you pray fajr with a small group of people you can delay the prayer so that there is not too long to wait until sunrise.

- **If someone is able to start a business should they do so? Is there a contradiction between going into business and relying upon Allah (tawakkul)?**

The one who is able to do business and has lawful means should do so with a good intention, but this should not distract him from doing something that is more important. In his business, he should intend to benefit others. A believer must rely upon Allah whether he is in business or not. This entails that he repels any fear of poverty or concern about his provision. Most people take the means to earn their provision whereas others do not. Regardless of the state that has been facilitated for them they should rely upon Allah and proceed in tranquillity.

- **Does someone have to visit to Tarim in order to attain the attributes of the great Imams of the past?**

This is one of the means to do so, but what is required above all is complete determination and true focus on the path regardless of where you are in the world. The only time when it is compulsory to travel is to perform Hajj (if it is incumbent upon you) or to seek knowledge which it is compulsory for you to learn. Travelling to visit the pious, to visit blessed places and to seek other types of knowledge is recommended. In general, travelling is permissible, unless it is undertaken for something that is forbidden, in which case it is forbidden. The Prophet ﷺ informed us that the Jewish scholar told the man who wished to repent to leave a land inhabited by evil people and to travel to a land inhabited by pious people. He informed us that Allah showed mercy to him due to his proximity to the land of the pious. This shows the merit of going to the places where the pious reside.

- **My wedding is coming up this week. What advice do you have?**

As for the wedding, you should act upon every Sunnah that you are able to act upon and strive to avoid everything which violates the Sacred Law, whether it is big or small. The wedding should bring happiness to all those around you including Muslims and non Muslims.

In the marriage itself, you should intend obeying the command of Allah and establishing a pious family. You should intend that your family and all your descendants come to the Prophet ﷺ at the Pool (to be a source of joy and pride for him).

- **I have taken bayah with another shaykh previously. May I still take bayah with you?**

Anyone who has taken bayah with another shaykh whose tariqah is sound should remain true to that bayah as far as he is able. He should only take bayah with another shaykh with the intention of seeking blessings from that shaykh (tabarruk) as long as he has the permission of his original shaykh. If his shaykh does not give him permission or if he wishes to move from one shaykh to another out of caprice he must not do so. He should only leave one shaykh and take bayah with another in the following situations: if he has the permission of his original shaykh, or if his original shaykh openly contravenes the Sacred Law or the etiquettes of the Sacred Law or if something prevents him from being in contact with his shaykh.

- **My parents prohibit me from practising certain elements of the dīn. What should I do?**

Obey them in that which is in accordance with the Sacred Law. Do not obey them in things that contravene the Sacred Law, but at the same time, not be rude or aggressive towards them.

- **What should I do with interest payments that have accumulated in my bank account?**

You should give the money to the poor and needy or some public project, such as repairing roads, providing medication for the sick, or feeding the poor. You cannot use it yourself or consider it your property. When you give it, it cannot be considered charity but you will have the reward of preserving it and using it in a way that pleases Allah.

- **Having spent time with you I now find it difficult to focus on the work that I am doing being distant from you. How can I overcome this?**

You should not be worried about being parted for a short time but should rather focus on the everlasting meeting in Paradise. You should know that being present in your adhkar and other actions is one of the best means of preparing for the everlasting communion.

**Those who have completed Dhikr al-Aydarus should read this prayer upon the Prophet 33,000 times:**

<http://muwasala.org/nurik-al-sari/>

The next meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> March / 23<sup>rd</sup> Jumād al-Awwal

## Monthly Meeting

Rabī` al-Awwal 1436

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 26<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Awwal 1436 / 17<sup>th</sup> January 2015. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we protect our children from bad influences in the society in which we live? We fear for their faith.**

It is good to have fear for our children since corruption is everywhere, especially in societies the values of which are distant from Islamic values. This fear must not, however, lead to despair but rather should lead us to take action. Allah gave the believers a model in the life of the wife of Fir`awn. In spite of the fact that she lived with Fir`awn in his palace, she will be rewarded by being a wife of the Prophet ﷺ in the next life due to her truthfulness, patience and firmness.

This fear should lead us to create environments which protect our children and to shut the doors to corruption as far as we are able. We should arrange group activities for our children according to their age. These activities should be enjoyable and safe from any harm. We should also give them a portion of adhkar to read and give them that which illuminates their minds.

If it is possible to move to an environment which is better for our children then we can do that as long as that does not lead us to neglect any responsibility we have in the place where we are currently living. Otherwise we should remain where we are and follow the principles mentioned.

- **Should we send our children to a better environment?**

We should send them at an age where they are mature enough to live in that environment and able to receive knowledge.

- **I have received some water in which one of the hairs of the Prophet ﷺ has been placed. What is the best way of using it?**

You should venerate it due to the station of the Prophet in Allah's sight. You should reflect upon the fact that the Companions would almost fight to get their hands on some of the water that had touched the Prophet's body. You should drink a little and wipe some on your eyes, your forehead and your chest. You should hope by that to be made firm, to remain upright and to meet him ﷺ.

- **I have a harsh tongue. What can I do to remedy this?**

You must remember the consequences of what you say in the next life and reflect on what has been narrated about guarding the tongue in the Sunnah. Repeat this du`a in abundance:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِ قَلْبِي وَ سَدِّدْ لِسَانِي

*Allāhumma' hdi qalbī wa saddid lisānī*

O Allah, guide my heart and set right my tongue

Also repeat this verse 100 times a day:

هُوَ اللهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*HuAllahu'lladhi la ilaha illa hu, 'Alimu'l ghaybi wash-shahada, Hu arrahmanu' rahim*

**He is Allah, there is no god other than Him, knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al-Hashr, 59:22)**

- **A mosque has just been established. What adhkar should be recited in it and what other advice do you have for us?**

The Qur'an should be recited in abundance, especially Sūrat al-Faḥ, and also al-baqiyāt al-ṣāliḥāt (*subḥānallāh wa'l-ḥamdulillāh wa lā ilāha ill'Allāh w'allāhu akbar*). You should bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ.. Regular reminders should be delivered to the congregation. Topics should include the merit of praying in congregation, the etiquettes of wuḍū' and prayer, and the reward for showing good character. There should also be a circle of knowledge every day or every few days or every week. The toilets and wuḍū' areas should be well built and well maintained. Someone should be appointed to warmly receive visitors.

- **What should someone who is in a state of deep depression do?**

They should place their hope in Allah and remember Him abundantly.

They should recite the following in abundance:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

*Lā ilāha illā anta subḥānaka innī kuntu min al-zālimīn*

‘There is no deity save You, transcendent are You, truly I am amongst the wrongdoers’

They should also bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ ..

- **How can we become among those who are drawn near?**

Allah says in the hadith qudsi: “My slave draws near to Me with nothing more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him, and then he continues to draw nearer to Me with supererogatory devotions until I love him.”

One of the pious said:

*The one who does not draw close to the knowers of Allah has not drawn close*

*And one who has drawn close must have etiquette (adab)*

Imām Abū Bakr al-ʿAdanī summarises the attributes which one requires to attain closeness to those who are close to Allah:

تَقْرِبُ إِلَيْنَا أَيُّهَا الْعَاشِقُ الْمُضْنَى بِحُبِّكَ فِينَا لَا بِشِعْرِ و لَا مَغْنَى

سَوَى بَافْتِقَارِ و انْكَسَارِ و ذَلَّةِ و عَدَمِ اخْتِيَارِ و اتِّبَاعِ لِمَا قَلْنَا

*‘Draw close to us, O emaciated lover through your love for us, not through poetry or song*

*But rather through neediness, brokenness, lowliness and surrendering your choice and following what I say.’*

Above all, your closeness to the people of Allah is according to your closeness to Allah.

One of the pious said that being deprived of etiquette when in the company of the pious is worse than being deprived of their company altogether. May Allah bless us with etiquette.

- **Does man have free will or not?**

Man's Creator requests things from him and decrees things to occur by him. He has a choice in that which is requested from him but he has no choice in that which is decreed to occur by him. Our role in life is thus to perform that which has been requested from us to the best of our ability, using the strength and ability which we have been given.

Anyone who has intellect can distinguish between someone who moves their arm out of choice and someone whose has a twitch and whose arm moves without his control. This shows us that some things are within our control and some are not.

A man once stood in front of Sayyidunā `Alī and asked him whether man has free will or not.

Sayyidunā `Alī said: "Lift your foot." The man did so.

Then he said: "Lift your other foot."

"I am unable to," the man said.

"That is your answer," said Sayyidunā `Alī.

Thus to say that mankind has complete free will is incorrect and to say that he has no free will is also incorrect. In reality man has free will in some things and not in others.

This is the answer in Arabic in full:

ما خلاصة القول في الإنسان: أمخير أم مسير؟

إن خالق الإنسان أراد أشياء به و أراد أشياء منه فما أرادها منه فهو مخير فيها و ما أرادها به فهو مسير فيها فدورنا في الحياة أن نحسن القيام بما أراد منا بتسخير قوانا و قدراتنا في العمل بما شرع لنا.

و كل عاقل يفرق بين حركة يد الإنسان الاختيارية وحركة المرتعش المصاب المريض الذي تتحرك يده من دون اختياره فهذا يمثل ما هو مسير و ما هو مخير.

و قف رجل أمام سيدنا علي و سأله عن الإنسان أمخير أم مسير؟

فقال سيدنا علي: ارفع رجلك فرفع رجله

قال: ارفع الثانية

قال: لا أقدر

قال: فهذا جوابك

إِنَّ فِإِطْلَاقِ أَنَّهُ مَسِيرٌ غَلَطٌ وَ إِطْلَاقِ أَنَّهُ مَخِيرٌ غَلَطٌ وَ الْحَقُّ أَنَّهُ مَسِيرٌ فِي أَشْيَاءٍ مَخِيرٍ فِي أَشْيَاءٍ

- **How do I remain firm in performing acts of worship?**

You need to realise the greatness of the One you are worshipping and that He is worthy of being worshipped and that worship is the greatest honour that Allah bestows upon a person and through it he is raised.

- **What can I read to stop me being overly concerned with pleasing people?**

It is sufficient to recite the du`a of Imām al-Ḥaddād:

اللَّهُمَّ أَخْرِجْ مِنْ قَلْبِي كُلَّ قَدْرٍ لِلدُّنْيَا، وَكُلَّ مَحَلٍّ لِلخَلْقِ؛ يَمِيلُ بِي إِلَى مَعْصِيَتِكَ، أَوْ يُشْغِنِي عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ، أَوْ يَحُولُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ التَّحَقُّقِ بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ الْخَاصَّةِ، وَمَحَبَّتِكَ الْخَاصَّةِ

O Allah, remove from my heart any love for the material world and any status I may afford to people which cause me to disobey You or distract me from worshipping You or come between me and attaining special knowledge of You and sincere love for You.

- **What is the best response to the French cartoons?**

The best response is to educate people about the Prophet ﷺ through public talks, conferences and social media. The perpetrators wish to divert the Muslims from doing that which benefits them, so we should ignore them and show the falsehood of the cartoons without mentioning the cartoons and those who drew them. The fact that people pay attention to the cartoons helps them to spread.

We should look at how Allah responded to those who abused the Prophet ﷺ. Rather than directly reporting their words and mentioning their names, Allah asserts the greatness of the Prophet:

***You are not, by the favour of your Lord, a madman. You shall have a reward that is unlimited. Yours is indeed a tremendous character.***<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qalam, 68:2-4

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ḥāqqah, 69:38-45

***So I swear by all that you can see and all that you cannot see that it is indeed the word of a Noble Messenger. It is not the word of a poet. Little do you believe. Nor is it the word of a soothsayer. Little do you remember. This is a message sent down from the Lord of the Worlds. If he had invented any sayings in Our name, we would certainly have taken him by the right hand.***<sup>2</sup>

In other words, had the Prophet invented something and attributed it to Allah, Allah would have destroyed him.

This is our response and there is nothing better than the way Allah responds. If we respond to everything which they do in the way they want us to respond then we will lose our way. Many of us act as if we do not have an example to follow. So let us follow the teachings of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and this will be a means of success and victory.

- **Who was Ḥabīb `Abd al-Qādir al-Saqqāf?**

He was a complete and perfect heir of the Prophet ﷺ. His father and all his forefathers were representatives (*khulafā'*) of the Prophet and he inherited this *khilāfah* from them.

He can be described as follows:

هم أقوام غذوا في المحبة من صغرهم  
وعاشوا في مخافات و غابوا في فكرهم

*They are people who were nourished with love from their infancy*

*They lived in fear of their Lord and were absorbed in reflection*

Whenever he was wrongly treated, he responded in the best of ways. Whenever people fell short in giving him his rights, he overlooked it. He never found fault with anything or spoke badly about anything in his gatherings. However busy he was, he never neglected reciting and reflecting upon the Qur'an. He never fell short in striving to benefit people. He said: "If someone comes to me in need, I cannot relax until I have done everything I can to fulfil his need."

Imam al-Haddad summarises the attributes of people such as Ḥabīb `Abd al-Qādir as follows:

و قد درج الأسلاف من قبل هؤلاء و همتهم نيل المكارم و الفضل  
لقد رفضوا الدنيا الغرور و ما سعوا لها و الذي يأتي يبادر بالبذل  
فقيرهم حر و ذو المال منفق رجاء ثواب الله في صالح السبل

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<sup>2</sup> *Al-Hāqqah*, 69:38-45

لباسهم التقوى و سيماهم الحيا و قصدهم الرحمن في القول و الفعل

*Our predecessors travelled the path before them and their aim was attaining merit and noble character*

*They rejected the deceptive dunya and never strove to attain anything of it. Whatever came to them they quickly spent.*

*The poor among them were free and the wealthy spent their wealth in the best of ways hoping for Allah's reward*

*Taqwa was their garment and shyness was their attribute and the Most Compassionate was the One they sought in their words and deeds.*

May we live according to their way.

[See Ḥabīb `Abd al-Qādir's biography: <http://muwasala.org/%E1%B8%A5abib-abd-al-qadir-al-saqqaf>]

**The next meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> February/ 24<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Thani.**

# Monthly Meeting

Muḥarram 1436

## Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 15<sup>th</sup> Muḥarram 1436 / 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do we give advice to parents or relatives who are older than us if they disobey Allah?**

We should ask elders or people they respect to give them advice. We can also give them books or show them videos which we think may affect them. In general we should not be overly affected by the negative things we see in them. We should focus on their positive attributes and do what we can to rectify the situation.

- **How do we avoid people who do not benefit us without driving them away from the dīn?**

You must avoid the wrong that they do while showing them good character and giving them good advice and kind words when the opportunity arises. If they are doing something which is forbidden do not partake in it but do not be harsh to them when they are not doing so. Continue to ask Allah to rectify them and guide them. Keep in mind that they may be guided and then intercede for you on the Day of Judgement. The bounty of Allah cannot be limited.

- **Should someone take money for teaching the Islamic Sciences?**

Earning money should not be the intention and objective of the one teaching. Teaching the Islamic sciences should not be turned into a business. Rather, the teacher should be concerned about conveying the Sacred Law to people. If someone gives him something and he is happy to do so and it is easy for him to do so then he can accept it. If he needs it he can keep it and if he does not then he can give it to someone in need. He should not accept money if the person who gives it has gone

through to difficulty to obtain it – such as if he had to borrow the money. The sign of the teacher’s truthfulness is that he does not differentiate in the way he teaches and cares for his students between those that pay him and those that do not and those that pay him a little and those that pay him a lot. Rather he treats them all equally.

- **What can I recite for protection?**

Taqwā is the foundation of all protection. Every act of worship performed with sincerity protects the one who performs it. Reciting Āyat al-Kursī has a specific effect in protecting one if it is recited after every prayer, before sleeping and when entering and leaving the house. The litanies of Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Sakrān, Imām al-Nawawī and Shaykh Abū Bakr bin Sālim are among the greatest litanies composed by the pious for protection.

- **How does one differentiate between when acts out of wisdom and when one acts following the caprice (hawā) of the lower self?**

Caprice and wisdom are in opposition to each other. Someone driven by his caprice rushes to gratify the desires of his lower self in a state of heedlessness of Allah. Someone who acts out of wisdom, on the other hand, rushes to seek that which pleases Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and this is hard for his lower self. He experiences tranquillity, especially when he remembers Allah, and increases in humility and abasement in front of Allah.

- **How do I strengthen my faith?**

You strengthen your faith by reflecting upon the Qur’an, remembering Allah with a present heart and seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) and bestowing prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ in abundance.

- **What should a man do if a woman wishes to shake hands with him?**

If the woman’s forearms are covered then he can put his hand on her arm instead of shaking her hand. If it is cold he could shake hands with her while wearing gloves. However, it is better if he informs that it is against his religion to shake hands with women out of respect for them.

- **What can I read to control my anger?**

Read the following ten times in the morning and ten times in the evening:

اللَّهُمَّ اذْهَبْ غَيْظَ قَلْبِي وَاغْفِرْ لِي ذَنْبِي وَاَجِرْنِي مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ

*Allāhumma adhib ghayza qalbī wa'ghfir lī dhanbī wa ajirnī min mudillāti-l-fitan*

“O Allah, remove anger from my heart, forgive my sins and save me from tribulations which send people astray.”

See also: <http://muwasala.org/on-overcoming-anger/>

- **What is the role of the Shaykh in purification of the heart?**

The Shaykh is the most important means of removing the seeker's blameworthy traits. The Shaykh is not someone who makes false claims or performs miracles but rather someone who is upright in his religion and has a sanad (chain of connection) in purification of the heart. If the seeker is truthful, Allah will cause him to meet a shaykh who will purify them.

- **How do I respond to someone who is envious of me?**

Seek refuge in Allah from envy and show kindness to the person who is envious of you.

Before asking a question in the meeting, we advise that you first look at the answers at muwasala.org. It may be that your question has already been answered.

The next meeting is scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Awwal 1436 / 27<sup>th</sup> December 2014

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Hijjah 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 24<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1435 / 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How did the Prophet ﷺ spend the end of year?**

He taught us to seek the best of every day and night, and he taught us to end every day, night, week, month and year in the best way. Allah says: ***it is He Who made the Night and the Day to follow each other: for the one who wishes to reflect or to show gratitude.***<sup>1</sup>

- **What advice do you have for raising children well?**

We should have good intentions in doing so. We should be conscious of their feelings and emotions. We should let them constantly hear the remembrance of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. We should gradually accustom them to following the Sunnah. We should protect them from being exposed to evil and evil people whether that be through the company they keep or the things they watch or listen to.

- **What can be read for waswasah (satanic whisperings)?**

Read Sūrat al-Nās eleven times in the morning and evening.

- **What should we do if our Shia friends invite us to one of their gatherings on Ashura?**

We tell them that there are sunnahs that the grandfather of Sayyidunā al-Ḥusayn taught us to implement on this day. If there is anything prohibited that takes place in the gathering, such as people hitting themselves or cursing the Companions, then we

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<sup>1</sup>Al-Furqān, 25:62

<sup>2</sup> Sayyidi Habib Umar mentions in *Khulāṣat al-Madad* that this should be read 70 times in the morning

cannot attend. This goes against the Sunnah of the Prophet and the Ahl al-Bayt. If not, it is fine to attend merely to remember al-Husayn. We do not involve ourselves in anything that will cause dissension.

Some people make false claims that Ashura is a day of sadness in Tarim and that this was the way of Imām al-Ḥaddād, but this is completely false. Such people only have to witness what takes place in Tarim on that day.

- **What do you do if you have a certain number of adhkar to read and you forget the number that you have read?**

You should estimate the number you are certain you have read. If you are unsure whether you read 3,000 or 4,000 for example, you should always go with the lesser amount.

- **How do we remain firm in our faith?**

We remain firm by asking Allah for firmness, keeping the company of the pious and spending time in remembrance of Allah and reflection.

We should also repeat these supplications:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

*Rabbanā lā tuzigh qulūbanā ba`da idh hadaytanā wa hab lanā min ladunka raḥmatan innaka anta'l-wahhāb*

Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy, for truly You are the Bestower of bounties without measure

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ وَالْأَبْصَارِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

*Ya muqallib al-qulūbi wa'l-abṣār thabbit qalbī `alā dīnik*

O Turner of people's hearts and eyes, make my heart firm upon the religion

يَا اللَّهُ بِهَا يَا اللَّهُ بِهَا يَا اللَّهُ بِحُسْنِ الْخَاتِمَةِ

*Yā Allāh bihā yā Allāh bihā yā Allāh bi ḥusni'l-khātimah*

O Allah, O Allah, O Allah, we ask You for a good ending!

- **Would you recommend us to go to Palestine to show political solidarity with the Palestinian people?**

What is recommended is to go to Masjid al-Aqṣā, as the Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to do, to pray to Allah there and to help the Muslims in need there. The more Muslims that come together in the masjid to pray, the more likely it is that Allah will relieve people's suffering. There is no need for us to get involved in politics.

- **What can be read to make it easier to learn Arabic?**

Bestowing prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ will make it easier to learn Arabic.

- **What helps us to refrain from sins?**

The following things help: knowing the magnitude of the sins and their harmful effects and end results; truthfully returning to Allah in repentance and seeking His assistance to remain upright.

- **What helps us to be consistent in reading our adhkar?**

We should know that our lives will pass by either in remembrance or in other than that and it is better for our time to be spent in remembrance. We should also reflect upon the rewards and benefits that have been narrated regarding remembrance. We can read the adhkar with a group if this will be of benefit.

- **What do I do if I do not have enough time to recite the Qur'an, read my adhkar and perform other acts of worship?**

The general rule is that you try to combine all these acts of worship and have a specific time for everything. However, if there is not enough time for everything, reciting the Qur'an takes precedence, then adhkar and then other acts of worship.

- **What do we say to people if they ask us about ISIS?**

We say that we do not know its real state – its origins, beliefs etc. We have information about the organisation but we do not know if it is reliable. We ask that

all Muslims are given the ability to please Allah and that no one is a cause of harm or division or a tool in the hands of the disbelievers. We have no business in praising anyone or speaking ill of anyone, especially when we have no reliable information about them. Instead, we have duties in the time and place in which we find ourselves, which cannot be neglected.

- **How do we increase in reliance upon Allah (*tawakkul*)?**

Read the following seven times in the morning and evening:

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

*Ḥasbiy'Allahu lā ilāha illā huwa `alayhi tawakkaltu wa huwa rabbu'l-`arshi'l-`aẓīm*

Allah is sufficient for me; there is no deity save He. On Him do I rely; He is the Lord of the Awesome Throne

Also repeat the following in abundance:

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

*Ḥasbunallāhu wa n`am al-wakīl*

Allah is enough for us and He is the best One in whom we place our trust.<sup>2</sup>

رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

*Rabbanā `alayka tawakkalnā wa ilayka anabnā wa ilayka al-maṣīr*

Our Lord, in You we put our trust, to You we turn in repentance and to You is the final end.

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<sup>2</sup> Sayyidi Habib Umar mentions in *Khulāṣat al-Madad* that this should be read 70 times in the morning and evening

Anyone who has finished a dhikr and wants a new one should read the following prayer 10,000 times:

اللَّهُمَّ يَا سَرِيعَ الْعَوْثِ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَأَعِثْنَا بِهِ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ

*Allāhumma yā sarī` al-ghawth ṣallī wa sallim `alā sayyidinā Muḥammad wa `alā ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa aghithnā bihi wa'l-muslimīn*

O Allāh, O Swift to Give Assistance, bestow prayers and peace upon our Master Muḥammad and upon his Family and Companions, and by him assist us and the Muslims.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Shawwāl 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 27<sup>th</sup> Shawwāl 1435/23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How can we prevent excessive use of mobile devices?**

Our use of mobile devices must be governed by taqwā, knowledge and intelligence. We must use them in the best way, be in complete control of them and avoid any evil that their use may entail. Making light of a small part of evil leads to a great amount of evil. By using them correctly we are supporting the cause of Allah. One of the first manifestations of victory is in our use of these devices. This is related to our victory in our use of our limbs which points to a victory in our battle with our lower selves. Anyone who is in control of their body and lower self will receive assistance from Allah. Allah says: ***If you assist Allah, He will assist you and make your feet firm.***<sup>1</sup> He also says: ***Allah will truly assist whoever assists Him.***<sup>2</sup> Allah then mentions the signs of those who assist Him: they are those who establish the prayer, pay zakat, enjoin good and forbid evil.

- **I follow the adhkār that are broadcast live from Dār al-Muṣṭafā. However there is a time difference. Is it acceptable for me to read those adhkār at that time even though I am in a different time zone?**

This is acceptable. There is some latitude because the time of the adhkār of the morning begins at midnight and ends at the time for zuhr prayer. The time of the adhkār of the evening begins at the time of the zuhr prayer and ends at midnight. It is also possible to change the wording of the adhkār. For example, in Dār al-Muṣṭafā they may be saying: "I ask for the good of this night," so you could say: "I ask for the good of this day."

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<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad, 47:7

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ḥajj, 22:40

The most important thing is focus and presence of heart when you read the adkhār. If you find this focus when following the broadcast then carry on. If not then it is better to do it alone.

See also

<http://muwasala.org/on-reading-wird-al-latif-outside-its-time/>

- **How do we benefit from our Shaykh even though we are physically distant from him?**

You benefit by truly turning yourself to Allah, acting upon any advice the Shaykh gives you and by remaining in touch through the means that are available.

See also:

<http://muwasala.org/on-physical-remoteness-from-ones-shaykh-and-filling-the-void-in-ones-heart/>

- **How do we instil in our children a love of worship?**

You must let them see your own concern for worship and you must talk to them about the virtues of worship and its reward in the hereafter.

- **How do we deal with extremism among the youth?**

We deal with it by properly presenting to them the texts of the Qur'an and the hadith and the life of the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions.

The next meeting is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> Dhū'l-Qa`dah 1435/ 13<sup>th</sup> September 2014

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramaḍān 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 29<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān 1434/26<sup>th</sup> July 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What does it mean when we say that the Beloved ﷺ is created from Allah's light?**

This has been reported in several hadith narrations. In reality there is no light other than the light of Allah and every light is derived from His divine light. Allah says: **Allah is the light of the heavens and earth**. The foundation of created light is the light of the Prophet. His light and spirit was the first thing that Allah created before He created any physical things. He is the first in the created world. There are a number of things which are mentioned as being the first thing that Allah created, such as the Throne, the Footstool and the Pen. These things were created before other things and were among the first things to be created, but they were created after the light of the Prophet and were derived from his light.

- **Is it permissible to give zakat al-fitr to non-Muslims?**

One of the categories of people who qualify to receive zakat are 'those whose hearts are to be reconciled' (*al-mu'allafah qulūbuhum*). This term has two meanings. The first is those who have recently embraced Islam but are still weak in their resolve and in their faith. The second is those who it is hoped will embrace Islam, especially if they are given some zakat. Some scholars follow the second interpretation. So if all the needy Muslims in the community have been given some zakat then it is permissible to follow the second opinion and give to those who are close to Islam.

- **What is the basis of the dhikr 'Hu'?**

Dhikr or remembrance means for the One being remembered to be present in the heart of the one remembering Him. 'Hu', meaning 'Him,' is a pronoun which refers to

Allah the Creator. If your heart is present with the One being remembered while you are repeating the word 'Hu', then you have attained the purpose of the dhikr.

- **Should images of dead people be used to raise awareness of humanitarian issues?**

Firstly, the dead person should not be displayed in a way that is degrading, since the sanctity of the believer is the same whether he is dead or alive. Secondly there must be some benefit in displaying these images. Thirdly the person displaying them must have a good intention.

- **Should I take a wage for teaching the Qur'an?**

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "The best thing to take a wage for is the Book of Allah." Some scholars use this hadith as evidence for the permissibility of taking a wage for teaching the Qur'an. Your intention should be good and the sign of your sincerity is that you would continue teaching even if you stopped being paid. You should use what you earn to pay for your needs and you should give any extra money away in charity.

- **A lot of my time is spent raising my children and doing the housework. How can I be consistent in reading my awrād?**

Try to read the awrād while doing the housework. Perhaps the children will then memorize these awrād. A young child memorised Sūrah Yā Sīn before knowing how to read and write just by hearing his mother reciting it while cleaning the house every day.

**There was a request for something to read for protecting children. Habib's answer can be found in this answer:**

[http://muwasala.org/prayers\\_for\\_illness/](http://muwasala.org/prayers_for_illness/)

Habib mentioned that 'Id is opportunity to strengthen brotherhood and faith and display the beauty of Islam and that we should give non-Muslim neighbors gifts to make them realize the greatness of Islam.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

### Rajab and Sha`bān 1435

#### Questions and Answers

*What follows is a selection of questions answered by Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) in the Rajab and Sha`bān Monthly Meetings.*

We should express our joy at the arrival of Ramaḍān in our households. This joy could be witnessed throughout the Ummah but declined when people's hearts became focused on trivial worldly things.

During Ramaḍān, the knowers of Allah receive new openings in the Qur`ān and in other acts of worship.

- **What should our intentions be upon receiving Ramaḍān?**

We should intend to be in the state that Allah and His Messenger love for us to be in. We should seek to attain Allah's pleasure and to strengthen our following of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We should intend that a new door is opened to us in understanding the Qur`ān and acting according to it. We should intend to avoid the inward things that nullify our fast just as we avoid the outward things. We should truly seek to raise our fast from the fast of the ordinary people to the fast of the elite and we should aspire to attain the fast of the elite of the elite even if only for a short time.

[Habib is referring to the three grades of fasting mentioned by Imam al-Ghazali in *Iḥyā' `Ulūm al-Dīn*. The fast of the ordinary people means abstaining from food, drink and sexual satisfaction. These are the outward things which nullify the fast. The fast of the elite is guarding one's ears, eyes, tongue, hands and feet and all other organs from disobedience. By disobeying Allah with these organs one nullifies one's fast inwardly. The fast of the elite of the elite is for the heart to be focused on nothing but Allah. It is broken by thinking of anything other than Allah.]

- **Is there a specific dhikr which we should read in Ramaḍān?**

We should recite the Qur`an in abundance. We should plead with Allah in abundance for the state of the Ummah generally and for our own states specifically.

We should read the du`ā' of Ramaḍān 3,000 times at least:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ نَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ نَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

*Ashhadu allā ilahā ill'Allāh nastaghfirullāh nas'aluk'al-jannata wa na'ūdhu bika minannār.*

'I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship other than Allah and we seek the forgiveness of Allah. We ask You for Paradise and seek refuge in You from the Fire.'

- **Regarding the entrance of Ramaḍān and the day of Eid, if one's family does not follow the moon sighting, should one follow the moon sighting or do what one's family is doing to avoid conflict?**

You must submit to the correct opinion according to the Sacred Law without disrespecting your family and without argumentation or animosity. If they celebrate Eid on a different day then express your joy and give them your good wishes even though you yourself are not celebrating it on that day.

- **We would like to consult you on every affair relating to our efforts in calling people to Allah. However, we do not wish to take too much of your time. What principle should we follow in consultation?**

You should consult us in affairs which are unclear. For example, if it is not possible to determine whether a certain act will have good or bad consequences. There is no need to consult us regarding affairs which are clear. However, you should still seek the blessing of consulting those who are close to you and those who are easy to consult as much as possible.

- **Should I learn a language such as Spanish or Chinese for the sake of calling people to Allah?**

This is a good intention for learning such languages. However, you should bear in mind the time and effort required to learn these languages and not give learning them priority over something which is more important. We should not forget that there are specialists in most languages among the *Ahl al-Sunnah* so we should focus on working together to spread the message of Islam. This would save a lot of time and energy.

- **What is the remedy for laziness in acts of worship?**

You must have firm resolve and force your lower self to strive little by little until it becomes accustomed to this.

Also Repeat the Prophetic supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَزَنِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ  
وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ غَلَبَةِ الدَّيْنِ وَقَهْرِ  
الرِّجَالِ

'O Allah, I seek refuge in You from worry and grief, and I seek refuge in You from incapacity and laziness, and I seek refuge in You from cowardice and miserliness, and I seek refuge in You from being overcome by debts and from the tyranny of men.'

The next meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1435/26<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

There will be an opportunity for people to take the `ahd in next month's meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

### Rajab and Sha`bān 1435

#### Questions and Answers

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'O Allah, I seek refuge in You from worry and grief, and I seek refuge in You from incapacity and laziness, and I seek refuge in You from cowardice and miserliness, and I seek refuge in You from being overcome by debts and from the tyranny of men.'

The next meeting is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> Ramadan 1435/26<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

There will be an opportunity for people to take the `ahd in next month's meeting inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumādā al-Ūlā 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 28<sup>th</sup> Jumādā al-Ūlā 1434/29<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What are the benefits of Sūrat al-Fātiḥah for the seeker?**

Sūrat al-Fātiḥah is one of the best litanies for the seeker. It is good if it can be read 40 or 41 times a day. Doing so is a means of removing affliction and fulfilling one's needs. Even better is reading it 100 times a day. It can be either be read at one time standing facing the qiblah, or it can be apportioned over the five prayers as follows: 21 times after Fajr, 22 times after Zuhr, 23 times after `Aṣr, 24 times after Maghrib, and 10 times `Ishā'. If you are unable to complete the appointed number at the specific time you can make it up after the next prayer. Imām al-Ghazālī and many of knowers of Allah mention this method. Imām al-Ḥaddād composed a du`ā' to be read after this recitation.<sup>1</sup>

- **How can we unite the Muslims in the US, particularly the rich and poor?**

We should encourage Muslims to show mercy and compassion to each other and we should encourage the wealthy to donate some of their wealth to the poor. We should bring them together in gatherings of knowledge and remembrance. We should arrange visits between different communities. The wealthy should visit the poor with humility and the poor should visit the rich not desiring their wealth. They should visit each other for the sake of Allah, to please the Prophet ﷺ and to strengthen the ties of brotherhood.

- **Sometimes we see that the behaviour of certain people involved in da`wah or spreading knowledge appears to be inconsistent with Prophetic teachings. Should we maintain a good opinion of them and make excuses for them or should we apply different criteria to them?**

We should maintain a good opinion of all people. This does not prevent us, however, from giving sincere advice and counsel to such people. Our counsel should be

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<sup>1</sup> See *Wasīlat al-'Ibād*

appropriate to their station and personality.

- Anyone who is requesting a new dhikr should read 10,000 times:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، صَلَاةً تَكُونُ  
لَكَ رِضَى وَلِحَقِّهِ أَدَاءٌ

*Allāhumma ṣalli wa sallim `alā sayyidinā Muḥammad wa `alā āli sayyidinā  
Muḥammad ṣalātan takūnu laka riḍā wa liḥaqqihi adā'*

O Allah, bestow Your prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad and upon the Family of our Master Muhammad, prayers which are pleasing to You and fulfil the right which is due to him.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1435/ 26<sup>th</sup> April 2014**, in shā Allah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabī` al-Thānī 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 28<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Thānī 1434/1<sup>st</sup> March 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- What dhikr can be read to remove disturbing images from the mind?

Read regularly:

اللَّهُ مَعِيَ، اللَّهُ شَاهِدِي، اللَّهُ حَاضِرِي، اللَّهُ قَرِيبٌ مِنِّي، اللَّهُ نَاطِرٌ  
إِلَيَّ

*Allāhu ma`ī, Allāhu shāhidī, Allāhu hādirī, Allāhu qarībun minnī, Allāh nazirun ilayya*  
Allah is with me, Allah witnesses me, Allah is present with me, Allah is near me, Allah is watching me.

Read 100 times a day:

هُوَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّحِیْمُ

*Huw'Allāhu'lladhī lā ilāha illā hu, 'Ālimu'l ghaybi wash-shahādah, Hu arrahmānu' rahīm*

***He is Allāh, there is no god other than Him, knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al-Ḥashr, 59:22)***

Bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. While doing so imagine that you are in the Blessed Rawḍah or in front of the Ka`bah. All of this will purify the heart and remove disturbing images.

- **What can one read to ward off the evil eye?**

You can read:

1. Surat al-Ikhlāṣ, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nās
2. These verses of the Qur'ān:

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ  
إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ

*Wa in yakādu'lladhīna kafarū layuzliqūnaka bi abṣārihim lammā sami'u' dhikra wa yaqūlūna innahu lamajnūn. Wa mā huwa illa dhikrun lil 'ālamīn (Al-Qalam, 68.51-2).*

فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ  
الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ

*Farji`l-başara hal tarā min fuṭūr thumma'rji`l-başara karratayni yanqalib ilayka`l-  
başara khāsi'an wa huwa ḥasīr (Al-Mulk 67:3-4)*

3. This Prophetic supplication:

أَعِيذُ نَفْسِي بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ وَكُلِّ عَيْنٍ لَامَّةٍ

*U`īdhu nafsī bi kalimātillāhi'tāmmha, min kulli shayṭānin wa hāmmah wa kulli 'aynin  
lāmmah*

I seek refuge for myself in the complete words of Allah from every devil and every creature and from every evil eye.

- **What should our perspective be on academic studies?**

Academic studies should be seen merely as a means of attaining knowledge. We recognise that this is the system in place and that it encompasses various philosophies. There is no harm in using it as a means to attain knowledge as long as we do not contravene the Sacred Law in doing so. It is important to emphasise that academic studies do not take the place of Islamic studies. Thus anyone who enters into academic studies must also devote some time to studying the Sacred Law at the hands of those who are worthy of teaching it and possess sound chains of connection in the Islamic sciences.

- **What can be given to a child who has allergies to certain foods?**

Give the child drink milk and honey if it is able to drink it. Read the ayāt of shifā (the six ayāt of the Qur’ān in which shifā is mentioned) followed by al-Ṣalāt al-Ṭibbiyyah.

[These adkhār can be read generally for anyone who is sick. Please see [http://muwasala.org/prayers\\_for\\_illness/](http://muwasala.org/prayers_for_illness/)]

- **Anyone who is requesting a new dhikr should read 10,000 times:**

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

*Allāhumma ṣalli `alā ḥabībika sayyidinā Muḥammad wa ālihi wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallim*

O Allāh, bestow Your prayers and peace upon Your Beloved, our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Jumād al-Ūlā 1435/ 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014.**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabī` al-Awwal 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 24<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Awwal 1434/25th January 2014. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Should we attend gatherings in which forbidden musical instruments are used?**

If there is scholarly consensus that they are forbidden then there is no way we can attend. If the scholars differ over whether they are permissible or not, we should assess what benefit there is in attending. If there is great benefit to be had in attending, we can overlook the fact that the scholars differ over the permissibility of these instruments. If there is not great benefit to be had, it is better not to attend.

- **A mawlid has been organised in the lounge of a hotel in which there is a bar selling alcohol. Should we attend?**

Firstly, the organisers should know that it is better to hold it in another place. Then we should assess the potential harm that the attendees are exposing themselves to. If there is no harm then we should assess the potential benefit of the mawlid. Finally only those who are well grounded in calling to Allah and hope to influence others should attend.

- **What dhikr can be read to bring harmony and remove hatred from people's hearts?**

You should read the last two verses of Sūrat al-Tawbah and the following Prophetic supplication:

اللّٰهُمَّ اقسِمِ لَنَا مِنْ خَشِيَّتِكَ مَا تَحُولُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَمَعَاصِيكَ،  
وَمِنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا تُبَلِّغُنَا بِهِ جَنَّتِكَ،

## وَمِنَ الْيَقِينِ مَا تَهَوَّنُ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا مَصَائِبَ الدُّنْيَا

‘O Allah, apportion to us fear of You which prevents us from disobeying You; enable us to perform acts of obedience which cause us to reach Your Garden of Paradise and bless us with certainty which softens for us the calamities of this worldly life.’

- **When I first learnt about Islam, I was taught that the Prophet ﷺ is merely a man and that we should not be excessive in praising him. How do I correct this belief?**

You should heal yourself with the Qur’an, as this is one of the best sources of healing. You should read and reflect upon the verses which praise the Prophet ﷺ and mention his greatness and also read the commentaries on these verses. Reflect, for example, upon Allah’s statement: **Truly you are in Our gaze.**<sup>1</sup>

You should also realise that Allah chose him out of all mankind and the greatness of the Chosen One is according to the greatness of the One who chose Him. Allah only magnifies people or things which are great in His sight.

Finally, you should reflect upon his unique attributes. Did any other human being ascend beyond the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary (*Sidrat al-Muntahā*)? Will any other human say on the Day of Judgement at the point of intercession: “I am the one for this”? Did any other human being say that if all the Prophets were alive they would have to follow him? So the Prophet ﷺ is a human, but not like any other.

- **The early scholars of the Bā`Alawī Way are often known as ‘Imām.’ Then they became to be known as ‘Shaykh.’ In latter times they became known as ‘Ḥabā’ib.’ What is the reason behind this?**

This relates to the era in which they lived. When the term ‘Imām’ was widely used in the Ummah, that term was used. Then when the concept of the Shaykh of Ṭarīqah became widespread, they used that term. They then increased in number and some of them had reached the rank of ‘Imām’ or ‘Shaykh’ and some had not, so the term ‘Ḥabīb’ was used to include all of them. The word ‘Ḥabīb’ means the one who is loved for Allah’s sake. Love for the relatives of the Prophet ﷺ is a requirement. Allah says to the Prophet: **Say: I do not ask any reward from you for this (conveying the message) other than love for (my) kinsfolk.**<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Al-Ṭūr*, 52:48. One meaning of this is that the Prophet ﷺ constantly receives immense care and concern from Allah.

2 *Al-Shūrā*, 42:23

- **I sometimes experience laziness or bad thoughts after attending gatherings of remembrance. What can I do to combat this?**

This is a result of the anger of the devil and the frustration of the lower self, due to the good that you have attained. So ignore these things and the devil will achieve nothing, and continue doing good works.

- **When we begin reading a certain dhikr we taste the sweetness of the dhikr, but this gradually disappears. How do we retain this?**

The soul naturally reacts to new things and gains new energy from them. So you should seek a renewal in your presence every time you read your adhkār and increase your contemplation on them so that you receive new gifts from Allah.

- **What is the secret of the book ‘Dalā’il al-Khayrāt’?**

The book contains many prayers upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and was compiled by a knower of Allah who was sincere. The fact that it is loved by the elite as well as ordinary people is a sign that it has been accepted by Allah. Many of those who read it obtain a stronger connection to the Prophet ﷺ and some of the veils between them and Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are removed.

- **How can someone remove the pleasure of committing acts of disobedience from their heart?**

Remember the punishment and end result of these acts and the fact that they constitute disobedience to the Creator Who treats you with kindness and constantly bestows His gifts upon you. Someone may enjoy a certain type of food but if they were informed that there was filth or poison in it, the pleasure would immediately disappear.

- **Do you recommend we read the books of Shaykh `Abd al-Qādir al-Jaylānī?**

Yes, the Shaykh was one of the greatest knowers of Allah as well as being one of the descendants of the Prophet ﷺ. He has benefited people throughout the world. One of his best known works is *al-Futūḥāt al-Rabbāniyyah*, which is a collection of transcripts of his speeches. It has a good effect upon the reader and brings about purification and illumination. Another work of his, *al-Ghunyah*, is also beneficial but a few parts which are not his work have been added to it.

- **I find myself thinking about calling to Allah when I am making dhikr. Is this blameworthy?**

You should focus on the meaning of the dhikr that you are reading. Everything has an appointed time and you should focus on the thing you are doing while you are doing it. An exception to this is an urgent issue relating to calling to Allah which needs to be addressed immediately.

- **What is our position on the works of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah?**

The way of our predecessors was not to hold a bad opinion of anyone and not to speak badly about anyone in the knowledge that Allah will take everyone to account for their words or actions. At times they would warn people of certain books which contained errors or incorrect positions. They would accept the truth and reject falsehood whoever it came from. We never heard our great teachers in Ḥaḍramawt attacking Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah. They would sometimes mention his positions, especially when speaking to those who venerate him. They would use his teachings to heal them and bring them back to the way of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā`ah. When we went outside Ḥaḍramawt, we heard people condemning him and calling him an innovator or disbeliever for the first time. We had never heard this from our teachers in Ḥaḍramawt.

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Anyone who wants a new dhikr should read the formula given out to read in Rabī` al-Awwal. If you are unable to complete the number in Rabī` al-Awwal you can finish it in Rabī` al-Thānī. If it is still difficult you can split the number between two or three people.

The **next meeting** is scheduled for **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Thānī 1435/ 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014**.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Şafar 1435

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dār al-Muṣṭafā on 25<sup>th</sup> Şafar 1434/28th December 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What dhikr can a woman read to strengthen her resolve in wearing the hijab?**

Firstly she should remember that in wearing the hijab she is obeying the command of Allah. She should read the following ayah 70 times a day if possible, or at least ten times:

﴿وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ﴾

Wa huwa-llāhu fi'ssamāwāti wa fi'l-arḍi ya`lamu sirrakum wa jahrakum wa ya`lamu mā taksibūn

***And He is Allah in the heavens and on the earth. He knows what you hide and what you reveal and He knows what deeds you perform. (Al-An`ām, 6:3)***

- **We sometimes find difficulty in working with people attached to other shuyūkh. What should we do?**

You should do what you can to overcome your differences with them through your perception, intention and feelings for them. Your differences should not cause you to distance yourself from each other and they should not destroy the spirit of co-operation. They may not agree with something you are doing, so do not force them to take part in it. If it is something important that cannot be left, do it in a way that does not cause friction. If it is something that can be left, then do something else which does not cause any friction. We should help and co-operate if they are doing something which does not conflict with our principles. If what they are doing will cause conflict or harm to the da`wah we very gently decline to get involved.

- **I recite al-Wird al-Laṭīf in the morning. Should I recite al-Wird al-Laṭīf again in the evening or the Rātib of Imām al-Ḥaddād?**

If it is possible to read both, this is best. If this is not possible, then read one or the other. One makes up for the other.

- **Is it considered bad etiquette to consult more than one shaykh on the same matter and then to follow that which one feels most comfortable with?**

Firstly, if it is an issue of sulūk (spiritual wayfaring) you must only consult one shaykh. You may not consult another shaykh on the issue and you certainly may not make your own judgement. If it is an issue of fiqh (law) you may consult more than one shaykh if you are doing so out of caution and seeking an opinion which is harder upon the nafs (lower self). You should not do so if your intention is to seek out dispensations and that which your lower self is most comfortable with. In general, the one who consults a number of shuyūkh and then chooses the opinion which is most suitable to him is making himself the shaykh of those shuyūkh.

- **I have been involved in da`wah for some years and I feel drained and I lack the support of those around me. What advice do you have for me?**

You must remember for whose sake you are working. You must be true to Him and remain serving Him until you meet Him. Even if no one on the face of the earth supported you and everyone was against you, it would still be your obligation to remain calling to Allah until you meet Him. At a certain time Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm was the only believer on the earth. Allah said about him: ***Truly Ibrahim was an entire nation.***

Habīb answered these questions in other sessions:

- **What intentions should people planning to get married make?**

They should intend obeying the command of Allah and following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They should intend having children who will make up a pious family which will serve Allah's religion on the earth. They should intend increasing the number of the Ummah of the Prophet, and being a source of pride for the Prophet on the Day of Judgement. They should intend marrying to assist them in lowering their gaze and safeguarding their modesty.

- **The hadith states that if someone prays the five prayers in congregation for forty days consistently catching the opening takbīr with the imām they will be safe from the Fire and safe from hypocrisy.<sup>1</sup> How can a woman attain this reward if her monthly cycle prevents her from praying forty days consistently?**

She can attain the reward by praying in congregation consistently up until her cycle starts. Then as soon as it finishes, she continues where she left off.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Rabī` al-Awwal 1435/ 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014.**

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<sup>1</sup> Narrated by al-Tirmidhī

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Hijjah 1434

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 28<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 1434/2<sup>nd</sup> November 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **The situation is very difficult for Muslim women in France. The hijab is banned in schools and in the workplace and attacks on Muslim women are on the increase. There is widespread Islamophobia in the media and in politics. How should we react to these attacks and how should we protect our religion and not allow hatred to enter our hearts?**

The real essence of the believers becomes manifest in times of hardship. Women should retain their modesty as far as possible<sup>1</sup> and remain firm, show good character and patiently bear the hardships they are exposed to and ***the end result will belong to the people of taqwā***. Allah mentioned in the Qur'ān the types of people who have hatred for Islam in every generation: ***You are those who love them, but they love you not... when they are alone, they bite off the very tips of their fingers in rage... if any good befalls you, it grieves them, and if any evil befalls you, they rejoice at it***.

Allah did not then say: "You should hate them, treat them harshly, plot against them or be happy if evil afflicts them." Rather Allah said: ***If you have patience (ṣabr) and taqwā then their scheming will not harm you.***<sup>2</sup> Our brothers and sisters should embody this Qur'anic character: we should wish goodness and guidance for them in spite of their harming and insulting us.

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<sup>1</sup> Ḥabīb mentioned that they may leave the niqab or face covering, since the scholars differ over whether it is compulsory. They may not, however, leave the hijab which covers the hair and they should avoid beautifying themselves and using perfume.

<sup>2</sup> Āl `Imrān, 3:119-20

Allah mentioned that the Messengers said to their peoples: ***We shall patiently bear the harm that you have inflicted upon us, for those who put their trust should put their trust in Allah.***<sup>3</sup>

- **Is it permissible to attend a gathering of knowledge in which men are sitting on one side and women on the other without a barrier between them?**

It is permissible to attend as long as there is no looking at the opposite sex and no shaking of hands between men and women. You must look at your heart to decide whether there is benefit in attending and whether you increase in īmān.

- **What is the best way of being a means of guidance to those around us?**

Our firmness upon our principles, our good character and the purity of our hearts are means of guidance for those around us. We must also choose the best words when we speak and speak to people according to their understanding.

- **A brother in prison wishes to take this path. What are the first steps he should take?**

He should take the following steps:

- Sincerely seek Allah
- Perform the obligatory prayer
- Read a portion of the adhkār daily from the Khulāṣah
- Read 'The Book of Assistance' or 'Good Manners' by Imām al-Ḥaddād and act upon what he reads as far as he is able

This constitutes a strong connection to the spiritual path. He can then take the covenant at a later time either directly or through an intermediary.

- ***What can I do with my husband who does not agree with the way of taṣawwuf and does not like my attachment to this way?***

You need to deal with him according to the principles of taṣawwuf: being patient, treating him well and not arguing with him. If you do this he will be completely immersed in taṣawwuf. Treat him well and treat him gently and ask Allah in abundance that He expands his heart.<sup>4</sup> All that the people of taṣawwuf need to do in every situation is to deal with people according to the principles of taṣawwuf.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibrāhīm*, 14:12

<sup>4</sup> Meaning he becomes convinced of the correctness of the way of taṣawwuf

The realities of taṣawwuf are, however, precious and its stations are lofty and we ask for a great portion of it.

- **Some people claim that it is not from the sunnah for women to wear the niqab and gloves. What should our response be to this?**

Allah legislated the hijab to conceal women’s beauty and to prevent any type of temptation or fitnah taking place. It is sufficient for us that the Prophet ﷺ chose that the women of his household cover their faces on the Farewell Pilgrimage in spite of the fact that they were in iḥrām (pilgrim sanctity). Sayyidah `Ā’ishah said: “When men on horseback approached, we would lower our veils over our faces and when they went away, we would lift our veils.” This prophetic choice is sufficient as an instruction to the Ummah. However, we should not blindly stick to one opinion nor enter into argumentation. There is no way we can condemn a path which is more modest, nor can we find fault with a woman who is deficient in covering herself.

- **I am learning Prophetic medicine. What should my intention be in doing so?**

You should intend benefiting people, venerating the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, bringing people closer to him and calling people to Allah’s religion.

- **Some of those calling to Allah in the West need clarification on the issue of criticising the bad sides of Western society while at the same time recognising the good sides—this being a means of guidance for people. Please clarify for us the principles here.**

Any culture, understanding and moral character in agreement with the Sacred Law should be praised. We cannot accept for our own selves anything that is contrary to the Sacred Law in Western society. We have to clarify the bad sides of Western society in the best possible way. Our call to Allah should not, however, focus on this. Rather it is founded upon knowledge of Allah and prophethood. When someone accepts this, we gradually introduce legal aspects and we clarify things with the best words and best intentions.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Muḥarram/ 30<sup>th</sup> November**, inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1434

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 21<sup>st</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah 1434/28<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How do I repel satanic whisperings (*waswasah*)?**

You do this firstly by ignoring them, seeking refuge in Allah from them and pleading with Him to rid you of them. You must then make Allah's remembrance dominant over the heart by forcing yourself to be present and focusing your thoughts on the meaning of the remembrance and the greatness of the One Whom you are remembering.

You should also recite Sūrat al-Nās up to 100 times a day and recite 181 times a day:

يَا قَهَّارَ

Ya Qahhār

"O Compeller"

- **How can I travel the path to Allah when I am in a bad environment which hardens my heart?**

You can do this by making sure your heart is continually present with Allah and those in Allah's presence. Thus, although your body is in a bad environment, your heart is in a good one. You can only do this by sincerely turning to Allah and by forcing yourself to be present with Him. One of the best means of softening the heart is bestowing abundant prayers upon the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and imagining that you are in the blessed Rawḍah in front of him.

- **How do we deal with those who backbite us, particularly if it has negative consequences on the da`wah?**

You should ask Allah that He allows such people to repent. You should rely upon Allah's bounty and generosity in attaining success in da`wah and do not be concerned by these perceived negative consequences. All the Prophets and Messengers suffered backbiting and mockery but this did not prevent them from being successful in their da`wah. Shayṭān often deceives people into making perceived negative consequences an excuse not to pardon and forgive the person who has wronged them. Rather you should follow the Prophet ﷺ and the pious in swiftly forgiving such people. If you are truthful in this, Allah will aid their da`wah efforts.

- **If you see your shaykh in a dream, what does it signify?**

For the seeker to see his shaykh in a dream is generally a sign of his connection to him. It may be accompanied by some advice, direction or encouragement from the shaykh. If this advice is clear and in accordance with the principles of the Sacred Law and the spiritual way, then they can act upon it. If it is not, he should not follow this advice and he should know that his lower self is to blame.

- **How can we rectify our relations with our relatives?**

You can do this by sincerely wanting the best for them and using wisdom and gentleness in your dealings with them.

You can also recite the following verses:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ  
 لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

*It is He Who has strengthened you with His aid and with the believers; He has united their hearts. Had you spent all that is on the earth, you could not have united their hearts, but Allah has united them. Truly He is Mighty and Wise. (Al-Anfāl, 8:62-3)*

You can also repeat the last two verses of Sūrat al-Tawbah (9:128-9). Repeating these two verses for 41 days with the intention of bringing their hearts together is a means of rectification.

- **People affected by innovative beliefs are interfering in our da`wah. How should we respond?**

You should increase in dignity, serenity, humility and sincerity. You should want good for those who are in that state and ask Allah to change their state to a better state. Do not get involved in debate and argumentation. Ignore their efforts to discredit you when this is more effective. If need be, clarify controversial issues without mentioning individuals and groups and their perspectives. If you are forced to mention individuals then do so as little as possible, only mention them briefly and avoid doing so in public. Reading the following repels harm:

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ  
وَأَفْوِضْ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

- **How do we maintain high ambition (himmah) on the spiritual path and in da`wah?**

You can do this by remembering the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, his striving and the striving of the Companions and the pious. Also reflect upon the next life, reward and companionship of the Prophet in paradise صلى الله عليه وسلم.

- **What is the remedy for love of status?**

Reflect upon what is contained on the subject in *Qabas al-Nūr al-Mubīn*.<sup>1</sup> You need to raise your ambition from that which is lowly to that which is lofty. The highest kind of status among people will come to nothing, so we should seek status with Allah by realising our slavehood to Him.

- **What should we do if our parents or relatives are involved in usury (ribā)?**

You should give him sincere advice, or get someone else to do so. That which is definitely from an unlawful source must be avoided. Try and ensure that there is a stream of lawful income for the family.

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<sup>1</sup> Ḥabīb `Umar's summary of *Iḥyā' `Ulūm al-Dīn*

- **How do we differentiate between pride which is based upon the dīn and upon arrogance?**

Pride or honour which is based upon the dīn is coupled with humility, fear of the return to Him and good action according to the Sacred Law and in veneration of it. At the core of our religion is humility, fear of Allah, being good to people and wisdom. The two greatest signs that point to someone being arrogant are that they look down upon others and do not accept the truth when confronted by it. Arrogant people are certain that they are better than others and do not live in fear of a bad ending.

- **I feel distant from my shaykh. How do I strengthen my connection to him?**

You can do this by acting upon his advice. Also bestow abundant prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ with love and longing.

### **Parting Advice**

Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb advised those who will be performing Ḥajj this year to focus on the purposes behind the Ḥajj and seek the secrets which are contained in it. Those who will not be physically present should take part with their hearts and actions. They should wish that they are there with those performing Ḥajj and should pray for them, assist them and congratulate them.

In these blessed days you should continuously be at the door of your Lord – fasting and praying during the night, and being present with Allah in recitation of the Qur’ān and remembrance of Him.

You should attempt to read the adhkar which many of the pious traditionally read in these days. [They will shortly be posted at [muwasala.org](http://muwasala.org)]

Those who are able should sacrifice an animal (Uḍḥiyah/Qurbani). If it is a recommended sacrifice, you can keep a portion of the meat for yourself, give a portion to your relatives and give a portion in charity. If you have vowed to make the sacrifice then you are not permitted to eat the meat. It is good if you can perform it in a place where people are in need. [Anyone wishing to perform it in Tarim can write to [info-eng@alrafh.org](mailto:info-eng@alrafh.org) for more information].

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Dhu’l-Hijjah/ 2<sup>nd</sup> November inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Shawwāl 1434

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 24<sup>th</sup> Shawwāl 1434/31<sup>st</sup> August 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **What type of dhikr can someone make if they are not affiliated to any tarīqah?**

The dhikr of Allah is beneficial in whatever form is it made. If it is taken from someone with a *sanad* (unbroken chain of connection) to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ it has more effect and is closer to being accepted and this is essentially the meaning of tarīqah. Furthermore, if it is taken from someone with a sanad in travelling the spiritual path then it will have a more illuminating effect and be more effective.

- **What can be read in the house to improve the relationship between husband and wife?**

Any du`ā' is beneficial. Specifically reciting the last two verses of Sūrat al-Tawbah (9.128-9) 41 times daily increases harmony between married couples and people in general.

Also recite in abundance:

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا  
قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

(Al-Furqān, 25:74)

*Rabbanā hab lanā min azwājinā wa dhurriyyātinā qurrata `ayun wa'ja'lnā lil-muttaqīn imāmā*

Our Lord, grant us spouses and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and make us an example to the people of taqwā.

- **How do we deal with someone afflicted with delusional ideas?**

We ignore those delusions and clarify the truth to them in the clearest way in the hope that this will be a remedy.

- **I will be teaching religious studies in university. What is the best way to benefit my students?**

The first thing is that you yourself have complete certainty in the true religion and that you explain the concepts in the best way. Your belief should be reflected in your good character and dealings with people. Your heart should be filled with the desire to clarify the truth to the students. It should also be filled with mercy and compassion for them. You should strive to benefit all people by doing good to them. When you talk about comparative religion you should avoid provoking controversy. Instead you should be fair and accurate in clarifying the truth such that a seeker of truth can see it and accept it.

- **Can we invite those who belong to another tariqah or who do not belong to any tariqah to take part in this meeting as a group?**

As long as they have a true desire to seek Allah, a concern for calling people to Allah, they have a good understanding and are able to have an effect on others then we can.

- **Many of the scholars of whom we have a high opinion of have taken political stances at these times of discord. How should we deal with this?**

We should follow them in any stance they take which entails avoiding evil and excessive involvement in political struggle. If they have taken political stances we should firmly believe that they have taken these stances on the basis of understanding given to them by Allah. We accept their stances but do not follow them in them and do not publicize those stances.

- **What can be recited to assist memorisation of the Qur'an?**

Recite verse 164 of Sūrat al-Baqarah before sleeping whether one sleeps in the day or night.

**Anyone who has completed a dhikr they have been assigned and is requesting a new dhikr should recite 30,000 times:**

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْحَلِيمُ،  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ،  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ  
الْأَرْضِ، وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāh ul-`Azīmul-Ḥalīm,*

*Lā ilāha ill-Allāhu rabbu'l`arshi-l`Azīm,*

*La ilāha ill-Allāhu rabbu`ssamāwāti wa rabbu'l-arḍi wa rabbu'l`arshi-l-karīm*

“There is no god but Allah, the Awesome, the Forbearing, there is no god but Allah, the Lord of the mighty throne, there is no god but Allah the Lord of the heavens and the earth and the noble throne.”<sup>1</sup>

Ḥabīb mentioned that we should completely avoid involvement in any struggles which are not based upon the religion and upon truth. We should respect any laws that are put in place, such as curfews.

Ḥabīb announced the dates of the Multaqā or Da`wah Conference, held at Dar al-Muṣṭafā. It begins on the evening of Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November and continues until Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>. The visit to the Prophet Hud will take place on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> and Friday 8<sup>th</sup>.

The **next meeting** is scheduled for **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> Dhu'l-Qa`dah / 28<sup>th</sup> September** inshallah.

<sup>1</sup> This is known as the *Du`ā' al-Karb* or the Prayer of Distress. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would recite it in times of distress.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Ramaḍān 1434/August 2013

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 25<sup>th</sup> Ramaḍān 1434/3<sup>rd</sup> August 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- How can we encourage people to keep coming to the mosque after Ramaḍān?

You can do so by mentioning the virtues and rewards of doing so. Our states after Ramaḍān are indications of acceptance of our actions in Ramaḍān. If someone has the desire to revert back to sins and disobedience after Ramaḍān it is a sign that their actions in Ramaḍān have not been accepted.

- What can be read to help us to go against our lower selves?

Read the following verse 100 times a day:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*HuAllāhu'lladhī lā ilāha illā hu, 'Ālimu'l ghaybi wash-shahadah, Hu arrahmānu' rahīm*

***He is Allāh, there is no god other than Him, knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al-Ḥashr, 59:22)***

Also regularly repeat the du`ā' of Imām al-Ḥaddād:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي وَاهْدِنِي وَوَفِّقْنِي لِتَهْدِيْبِ أَخْلَاقِ نَفْسِي وَتَلْطِيفِ كَثَافَتِهَا  
بِالرِّيَاضَةِ الْبَالِغَةِ الْمَاحِقَةِ لِلرُّعُونَاتِ النَّفْسِيَّةِ الْقَاهِرَةِ لِلْحُظُوظِ الشَّهْوَانِيَّةِ

المُزَيَّنَةِ بِالْحُضُورِ الدَّائِمِ مَعَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَوَصْفِ حُسْنِ الْأَدَبِ عَلَى  
بَسَاطَةِ الذَّلَّةِ وَالانْكِسَارِ وَالافتِقَارِ وَالاضْطِرَارِ تَحْقِيقًا لِلْعُبُودِيَّةِ وَوَفَاءً  
بِحَقِّ الرُّبُوبِيَّةِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

O Allah, assist me, guide me and enable me to refine the attributes of my lower self. Enable me to lighten its heaviness with great acts of spiritual striving which destroy its weaknesses and overcome its base desires. May these acts be beautified by constant presence with Allah (mighty and glorious) and perfect etiquette with Him in a state of lowliness, brokenness and complete neediness, while attaining true slavehood and honouring His divinity, for truly You are able to do all things.

- **I have been praying the istikhārah prayer concerning an important matter but nothing has been made clear to me. What should I do?**

Repeat your istikhārah and seek advice from the people of piety. Usually things will become clear after repeating it 7 times.

**Anyone who has completed a dhikr they have been assigned and is requesting a new dhikr should read 45,000 times:**

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

*Ḥasbunallāhu wa n`am al-wakīl*

“Allah is enough for us and He is the best One in whom we place our trust.”

[Note – the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator.]

The **next meeting** is scheduled for **Saturday 24th Shawwāl/ 31<sup>st</sup> August**, inshallah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Sha`bān 1434/July 2013

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 27<sup>th</sup> Sha`bān 1434/6th July 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **How should we prepare for the month of Ramaḍān?**

We should prepare for Ramaḍān by purifying our hearts; by making a firm resolve to act with excellence; by striving to implement sunnahs and etiquettes; by increasing our recitation of the Qur`ān and by caring for our relatives and the needy according to our ability.

- **How can we increase in our love and yearning for the Prophet ﷺ through fasting?**

We do this by:

1. Being aware that we are following him in our fasting;
2. Applying the sunnahs pertaining to fasting which he taught us;
3. Being aware that this act of worship and the great reward that it entails came to us by means of him. Because of him, Allah concealed for us in this act of worship a reward which only He knows. Allah says in the ḥadīth qudsī that every action has a fixed reward – “except for fasting - it is for Me and I reward accordingly;”
4. Reading the supplications which he taught us and bestowing prayers and peace upon him throughout our fast.

- **How do we respond to those who criticise our shaykhs or our Tarīqah?**

We do this by clarifying the truth. This entails:

1. Choosing our words and dealing well with those who mistreat us
2. Mentioning attributes and concepts and not the names of opponents or critics

3. Addressing controversial issues in a way that is relevant with firm knowledge
4. Clarifying the truth to those who we believe will benefit from clarification. As for those who will not benefit from clarification, they should be completely ignored, such that it is as if they have not said anything and we have not heard anything.

We hope that our brothers understand this issue so that this question does not need to be repeated. We hope that they spread this answer.

- **Are the Salafis considered to be from the *Ahl al-Sunnah w'al-Jamā`ah*?**

We have to look at people's true state and not at names or titles. Whoever follows the principles of the Ash`aris and Maturidis in tenets of faith and the principles of the four schools of Sunni Law is considered to be from Ahl al-Sunnah w'al-Jamā`ah. These schools are the closest in their emulation of the pious predecessors (*salaf*). Those who follow these principles are considered to be from the Ahl al-Sunnah w'al-Jamā`ah, whatever name they are given. Those who do not follow these principles are not considered to be from the Ahl al-Sunnah w'al-Jamā`ah, whatever name they are given.

- **How do we have patience with things that sadden us?**

We have patience by witnessing the One who decreed that these things take place, returning to Him and trusting in Him, and emulating His Messenger ﷺ.

- **Some people conduct certain activities while calling to Allah which are dubious according to the Sacred Law. They claim they have permission to do so from Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar. How do we deal with this?**

Firstly, it should be clear that the Sacred Law is above everyone and no-one has permission to transgress it. Our path is founded upon rejecting everything that contravenes the Sacred Law and upon avoiding differences of opinions and doubtful things. Sometimes the opinions of qualified scholars, however, differ regarding certain issues, and this will affect our methodology. Once we have understood these principles we may need to seek clarification on specific issues, for perhaps there are things in them which we are not aware of.

- **What is the ruling on working in a bank which deals with interest?**

If the bank conducts other financial dealings in which there is no interest then it is dubious to work there. If it only deals with interest then this is forbidden to work there. Working in such an institution constitutes recording and assisting transactions in which there is interest.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Prophet ﷺ cursed the two parties involved in usurious transactions, as well as the one who records those transactions, and the two people who witness them. (Narrated by Muslim, Abū Dāūd and al-Tirmidhī)

- **Why do we increase in vigilance of our intentions?**

We must closely observe and inspect them. Taking ourselves to account regarding our intentions constitutes vigilance. It should be accompanied with pleading with Allah that He purifies our intentions.

- **How can we best serve those who have recently accepted Islam in our community?**

The best thing we can do is to teach new Muslims a sound understanding of the religion. We need to teach them how to perform the most important acts of worship and we need to teach them about Allah, His Prophets and Messengers, the angels and the next life. We should encourage them to show people noble character, especially their parents and families. We should direct them to be a cause of guidance of others. We should hold gatherings for them or establish a place of learning for them.

- **What is the ruling on spending money on other things if someone has enough money to perform Ḥajj?**

It is permissible to spend money on anything that is permissible. However, if someone has the financial means to perform Ḥajj in a given year but does not do so, then this person is negligent, even though many of the scholars say that if someone anticipates being able to perform Hajj in future years the obligation is not immediate. There is no harm in spending money on those in dire need or spending it on travelling to seek obligatory knowledge (instead of spending it on performing Ḥajj).

- **How does one go about secluding oneself for the purpose of worship (making *khalwah*)?**

Any time in which someone is alone focusing on Allah is a type of *khalwah*. At that time he or she should recite the Qur'ān or adhkār which have been transmitted. The purpose of *khalwah* is focusing oneself on Allah, being present with Him and purifying one's heart. The most beneficial dhikr for the majority of Muslims and those at the beginning of the path is *lā ilāha ill'Allāh*. The utmost benefit in times of seclusion is obtained through the permission and observation of one's shaykh and through his giving the seeker adhkār which are appropriate to him or her.

- **Which books do you advise reading for clarification on this path?**

Clarification can be found in some of Imam al-Haddad's books. The path is to act on what is in those books and to combine between strengthening one's faith and performing pious deeds. The definitions of the Tarīqah which can be found in the early prints of the *Khulāṣah* are sufficient. If someone is looking for more detail they

can read Ḥabīb Zayn bin Sumayṭ's book, *al-Manhaj al-Sawī*.

- **With what intention should we recite Sūrat al-Wāq`iah?**

We should recite Sūrat al-Wāq`iah with the intention of increasing in certainty and increasing in inward and outward provision. The sūrah mentions the states of the hereafter, reflecting upon which is one of the foundations in strengthening one's certainty. Allah also calls us to strengthen our certainty by looking at the created things around us: ***Do you see the seed that you sow in the ground? Is it you that cause it to grow or are We the cause? Do you see the water which you drink? Do you bring it down from the clouds or do We?***

**[Note: the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator. Some pieces of advice that Ḥabīb `Umar gave have been presented in the form of questions and answers.]**

**The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 26th Ramadan/ 3<sup>rd</sup> August. There will be an opportunity for people to take the `ahd in this meeting inshallah.**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rajab 1434/June 2013

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 22nd Rajab 1434/1st June 2013. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **Is it a *sunnah* to carry a staff?**

Someone may carry one out of need due to old age or poor health. Other than that, it is a *sunnah* for the *khaṭīb* to carry it while delivering the *khuṭbah* on Friday and for someone travelling. At the age of forty, Imām al-Shāfi`ī started to carry a staff. When asked about this (since he was still in good health) he said that it was to remind him that he was travelling, meaning to the next life. There is no harm in anyone carrying one unless it is the custom in a certain area that only people of knowledge and piety or older people carry one. In that case, the custom of that area should be respected. A woman should only use a staff if she needs it due to old age or poor health. Otherwise her modesty should prevent her from doing so.

- **What should we do on the night of the Isrā' and Mi`rāj?**

Nothing specific is prescribed on that night. However, you should mention the Prophet (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace) and pray for the Ummah in abundance. Fasting on the following day (27th Rajab) is also good. Rewards for doing so are mentioned in some narrations. Although these narrations are weak, fasting is generally recommended in the sacred months, of which Rajab is one.

- **I work as an imām in a prison. What topics should I talk about when I teach the inmates?**

This is an important job and allows you to benefit people by calling them to Allah. We are happy that you are doing it. Focus on things which strengthen their imān and trust in Allāh. You should remind them of the importance of staying on the path of Allāh, which saves them from the prison of this life and the greater prison in the next life. Remind them of the states of the Messenger of Allāh. Remind them of the importance of having *ṣabr* (patience and fortitude) and remind them that they will be rewarded if they are patient and it will have a good impact on their time in prison.

Constantly remind them of Allāh’s blessings upon them. Teach them the importance of showing mercy and goodness to mankind and the result of that in the next life. Remind them that as Muslims they should be examples and teachers in their communities and be people that benefit their fellow humans. Although they may have done wrong, perhaps there is a divine wisdom in their imprisonment – that they return to their communities having rectified themselves.

- **How do we remove anything other than Allāh from our hearts?**

We do this by planting veneration for Allāh and love for Him in our hearts.

- **We are taught to turn away from this life and focus on the next life. However our worries and responsibilities preoccupy us. How do we clear our minds and focus on the next life?**

Our worries should remind us of the worthlessness of this life and cause us to turn away from it. We should flee to Allāh and seek that He removes our worries. By fulfilling our responsibilities we take provision for the next life.

- **Is touching graves a blameworthy innovation, as Imām al-Nawawī mentions?**

Doing so may be considered a blameworthy innovation if the person doing so is motivated by an incorrect belief or if it is done in a way that resembles the polytheists. It may also be considered a blameworthy innovation if doing so leads ordinary people who lack knowledge to fall into doing something impermissible. The general principle is that it is disliked unless it is done out of love and longing for the person whose grave it is.

It is narrated that the Companion Sayyidunā Bilāl bin Ḥārith al-Muzanī pressed himself to the grave of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and kissed it, interceding with the Prophet to be given rain. He then saw the Prophet in a dream. He instructed him to go to Sayyidunā `Umar and to tell him to perform the rain prayer and they will then be given rain and this happened. His actions were witnessed by a number of the Companions and no-one condemned him for doing what he did.

Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī once pressed his face to the grave of the Prophet. When he was criticised for what he was doing, he said: “I did not come to a stone but rather I came to the Messenger of Allāh.”

- **Can someone who has taken the `ahd (covenant) attend gatherings of remembrance of the Rifā`ī Tarīqah in which swords are used?**

You should not purposefully attend these gatherings. If you find yourself in such a gathering then you can attend but do not take part in these actions.

- **What is the difference between someone who dislikes to meet Allāh and someone who is fearful of meeting Him?**

There is a great difference. The one who dislikes to meet Allāh has no connection to Allāh and he attempts to flee from Him. As for the fearful one, his fear may be accompanied with love for Allāh. He is fearful of not being accepted by Allāh or being punished by Him.

- **When I visit the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and Sayyidah Khadījah (may Allah be pleased with her) I have many things in my heart that I wish to express but when I get there my mind goes blank. What should I do?**

Your standing in those places suffices even if you do not say anything. Ḥabīb `Alawī bin Shihāb said that he knew the intention of anyone that was coming to visit him when they passed Masjid Surūr, before even reaching his house. If that was his state, how much greater is the knowledge of the Messenger of Allāh and Sayyidah Khadījah of those visiting them? Someone complained to Imām al-Ḥaddād that he would visit Sayyidunā al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam and his heart would be full of needs but when he reached the grave he forgot everything. Imām al-Ḥaddād informed that merely reaching al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam was enough.

- **I am unable to come to the Dowra this year. How can I benefit from my summer vacation?**

You can follow some of the Dowra lessons online, attend the gatherings of the pious people in your region, involve yourself in calling to Allāh in your region and apportion some extra time for remembrance and worship.

- **How can a student of knowledge be involved in serving others while not being distracted from his studies?**

You can give sincere advice (*nasīḥah*) and encouragement to your fellow students and you can serve them in things which do not take a lot of time and effort. You can use your knowledge to write articles on beneficial topics.

- **A soldier was recently killed by Muslims in the street in London. As a result, Muslims in Britain have received a lot of hostility. How should they react in these situations?**

This is a test for the Muslims. If they wish to pass the test, they must respond in the best way. Muslims need to clarify the truth and absolve themselves from acts which contravene the Sacred Law. They should be patient in the face of hostility. As Allah says: ***When the ignorant address them, say: "Peace."***<sup>1</sup> If Muslims continue to clarify the truth with their words and their deeds, the reality of Islam will become manifest and those who hate Islam and those who are biased against it will not have any ground to stand on. It will become clear that a religion cannot be held responsible for the actions of a few individuals, unless the religion itself condones those actions.

- **How does one rid oneself of desire for forbidden things?**

You must control your lower self with the force of your anger, which Imām al-Ghazālī likens to a fierce dog. You must also truly return to Allāh and seek to approach Him.

**The next meeting is scheduled for 27th Sha`bān/6th July inshallah.**

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1 *Al-Furqān, 25:63*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumāda al-Ākhirah 1434/May 2013

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 24th Jumāda al-Ākhirah 1434/4th May 2013.*

*Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **We are planning to attend part of the Dowra this year. How can we prepare to attain the biggest of openings?**

Attend the Dowra with truthfulness, sincerity, humility and veneration. Broaden your perspective on everything you experience, have a present heart, maintain a good opinion and be keen to benefit. May Allāh grant us all success.

- **I am involved in political activism at university, raising awareness of the state of the Palestinian people. I have found my heart has hardened. Should the seeker be involved in this kind of work and if so, how does he maintain a sound spiritual state?**

Firstly you should pray for the people of Palestine specifically and for the Muslims in general. If you are able to give them financial assistance and you are sure it will reach those in need then you should do so. Seekers should constantly turn themselves to Allāh and plead with Him to relieve the sufferings of the people of Palestine and all Muslims in all places.

If you do involve yourself in this work, you should not be hasty in making statements on these issues and you should not believe everything that is said about them. You should beware of being a tool which is used by one Muslim faction against another. You should exercise caution and not rush to give superficial support to any cause. You must not insult anyone or wrongly accuse them of anything and you must not get involved in argumentation.

Follow these guidelines and do not allow yourself to be distracted from your duties of reading your *adhkār* and calling people to Allāh in the university and elsewhere.

- **What is the remedy for having a bad opinion of everyone?**

The Messenger of Allāh said: “If you make an assumption do not believe it to be true.” So the way out is not to believe this opinion and then rebuke yourself and remind yourself that Allah loves for you to think good of people in all situations.

- **I have a difficult decision to make. How do I know if I am making the right decision?**

Repeat the istikhārah prayer up to seven times [until your heart is settled]. If you know someone who is firm in their religion and possesses sound intellect then seek their advice. Rely upon Allāh in all of this and surrender your affair to Him.

- **We wish you can visit us in America or send one of Habaib to live with us.**

You are where your heart is. May Allāh increase the number of pious people and spread them throughout the earth. If a person maintains love and truthfulness, Allāh and those in His presence will be with him wherever he is.

- **I have followed one school (madhab) for some time but most of my family and relatives follow a different school. Should I change and follow their school?**

There is no problem for any Muslim to follow any of the four schools, for the founders of these schools are the Imams of the Ahl al-Sunnah. We prefer that people follow the same school as their relatives and those that they live close to. That said, there is no problem if different members of the same household follow different schools. In an environment where there are numerous followers of the different schools the scholars of each school need to work together harmoniously.

- **I find it hard to resist communicating with the opposite sex through the internet and this is damaging my religion. What should I do?**

Renew your resolve to leave this habit. Ask for Allāh’s assistance and He will grant it to you. Look for good friends and spend time communicating with them instead. Busy yourself with reflecting on how to attain the company of the Messenger of Allāh and those who will attain high stations in Paradise.

Read every day 100 times:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*HuwAllāhu’lladhī lā ilāha illā hu, ‘Ālimu’l ghaybi wash-shahadah,  
Hu arrahmānu’ rrahīm*

**He is Allāh, there is no god other than Him, knower of the unseen and the seen,  
He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al-Ḥashr, 59:22)**

- **What is the ruling on women looking at their shaykhs or teachers?**

Allah says: **Say to the believing men that they must lower their gaze... and say to the believing women that they must lower their gaze.**<sup>1</sup> What this means is that neither gender is permitted to look at the other<sup>2</sup> with desire, nor are they permitted to gaze at the features of the other gender. There is unlikely to be any harm in someone looking at an elderly member of the opposite gender, as long as that person does not look with desire or with the intention of gazing at their features. Evidence for this is in Allah saying: **As for elderly women who are past the prospect of marriage, there is no blame on them if they lay aside their (outer) garments, provided they do not openly display their beauty.**<sup>3</sup> If a woman's heart is safe from feelings of desire when looking at her teacher, especially if he is elderly, then there is no harm in her doing so. If, however, she does feel desire she must lower her gaze and not look at him.

- **Is it right for a man to feel jealous regarding his wife looking at her shaykh or teacher?**

If there is cause for doubts then yes, but if it is merely whisperings or baseless assumptions, then no. When there is no basis for this, this is considered as harbouring a bad opinion. However, a man should not be too lax if there is cause for doubt and have no concern for the honour of his womenfolk.

- **I dig graves for Muslims. Are there are any *adhkār* that I should read while working?**

This is noble work to be involved in and there is a great reward in it.

Upon beginning to dig and upon placing the body in the grave you should say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ مِلَّةِ سَيِّدِنَا رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

*Bismillāh wa `alā millati Sayyidinā Rasūlillāh*

In the name of Allāh and upon the religion of our Master the Messenger of Allāh While digging and upon burial repeat Sūrat al-Qadr and pray that the dead person is made firm when they are questioned and pray that Allah makes their grave a garden of Paradise.

Once the dead person has been placed in the grave, throw three handfuls of earth

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1 *Al-Nūr*, 24:30-31

2 Providing that they are not relatives whom it is permissible for them to look at.

3 *Al-Nūr*, 24:60

over them.

Upon throwing the first handful say:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ

*Minhā khalaqnākum*  
**From this We have created you**

Upon throwing the second handful say:

وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ

*Fīhā nu`īdukum*  
**To it We will cause you to return**

Upon throwing the third handful say:

وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى

*Wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratān ukhrā*  
**And from it We will bring you forth once again<sup>4</sup>**

If possible, recite Sūrat Yā Sīn upon digging the grave and after the burial, since the Prophet said: “Recite Sūrat Yā Sīn over your dead.”

- **How long does a student need to study in Dar al-Muṣṭafā to gain a firm grounding in the Dar’s methodology?**

If he has not previously studied and he has average understanding he will need three to five years. However, if someone visited for one day only they would benefit.

- **What should be read during the month of Rajab?**

We should make seek forgiveness from Allāh (make *istighfār*) in abundance.

It is good to read any of these formulas in abundance:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِمَا يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ كَمَا يُحِبُّهُ اللَّهُ

*Astaghfirullāh limā ya`lamuhu Allāh, Astaghfirullāh kamā yuḥibbuhu-llāh*  
I seek the forgiveness of Allah for everything that He knows; I seek Allah’s forgiveness in the way that He loves.

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<sup>4</sup> Tā Hā, 20:55

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الذُّنُوبِ وَالْآثَامِ

*Astaghfirullāh dha'l-Jalāli w'al-Ikrām min jamī`adhunūbi wa al-āthām.*

**I seek the forgiveness of Allah**, the Possessor of Majesty and Honour, for all my sins and wrongdoings.

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومَ الَّذِي لَا  
يَمُوتُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

*Astaghfirullāh alladhī lā ilāha illā huwa arrahmān arrahīm al-Ḥayya al-Qayyum  
alladhī lā yamūtu wa atūbu ilayhi rabbi-ghfir lī*

**I seek the forgiveness of Allah**, besides Who there is no god; the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, the Living, the Sustainer, the One Who never dies and I repent to Him. O Lord, forgive me.

It is also good to read what is known in Ḥaḍramawt as *Istighfār Rajab*, a compilation of *istighfār* compiled by Ḥabīb Ḥasan, the son of Imām `Abdullāh bin `Alawī al-Ḥaddād.

There was a request for people to visit their brothers and sisters in Mexico. Sayyidī al-Ḥabīb `Umar said that if anyone who has a few days and is able to, he would love for them to go.

The next meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> Rajab/ 6<sup>th</sup> June inshallāh.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Jumād al- Ūlā 1434/April 2013

### Questions and Answers

*The Meeting took place in Dar al-Muṣṭafā on 25th Jumād al-Ūlā 1434/6th April 2013.*

*Sayyidī al- Ḥabīb `Umar bin Ḥafīz (may Allāh preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:*

- **In our town the Muslims do not have their own cemetery. However, the government has offered to dedicate a part of the existing cemetery purely to the Muslim dead. Are they allowed to agree to this or must they establish a separate cemetery?**

It is obligatory for the Muslims to bury their dead in that place until they find a place purely dedicated to them.

- **What should our response be to those who insult Shaykh al-Būṭī, may Allāh have mercy upon him?**

We should remind those who are prepared to accept sincere advice of the statement of the Prophet (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace): “Mention the good qualities of those among you who have died.” We should also remind them that the Sacred Law prohibits us from insulting Muslims who are alive, let alone those who are dead. Allāh Himself will defend the honour of those who are dead. We should ignore those who are not prepared to accept sincere advice.

Shaykh al-Būṭī inherited the states of many of the great imams. For instance, his death was connected to the mosque, as were the deaths of Sayyidunā `Umar and Sayyidunā `Alī.<sup>1</sup> He died with the *muṣḥaf* (the Qur’an) open in front of him and some of his blood fell upon it, and this also happened to Sayyidunā `Uthmān. Many people insulted him after his death, and this happened to many of the great imams of the Ahl al-Bayt. May Allāh raise his station.

The principle we should follow in situations like this is to give advice to those who

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyidunā `Umar was stabbed in the mosque and Sayyidunā `Alī was struck on his way to the mosque.

are ready to listen and to ignore those are not ready to listen. We should not enter into fruitless debate that merely arouses people's caprice and prevents them from listening and accepting rational proofs. A man once insulted Sayyidunā `Umar and he became angry, but one of the Companions said to him: "This is an ignorant person and Allāh says: ***Hold to forgiveness (of others), command what is right and turn away from the ignorant.***"<sup>2</sup> Sayyidunā `Umar repeated the verse to himself and then ignored what the man had said.

- **How do we re-new our response to the call of Allāh and His Messenger and realise its greatness?**

We do this by reflecting upon our return to Allāh, remembering reality and purifying ourselves from vile traits. We should also avoid the company of those who do not benefit us.

- **What is the best way to deal with a sibling who has left the fold of Islām? What sort of relations should I keep, or attempt to keep with her?**

You should pity her and show compassion to her. You should not condone what she has done but you should not cut ties with her. You should anticipate the moment in which Allāh gazes upon her and returns her to the true faith. How you deal with her depends on her personality. If turning away from her would have a positive effect then do this. If not, you should treat her with gentleness from a distance until the turmoil that is in her heart has subsided to some degree. When this has occurred, she will be ready to return to Islām, Allāh willing. You should pray for her abundantly.

- **We would like to celebrate the birth of Sayyidah Fāṭimah. Would you recommend us to do so?**

This is good but during the celebration you should also mention some of the other Companions who were closest to the Prophet such as Sayyidunā Abu Bakr, Sayyidunā `Umar and Sayyidunā `Uthmān, so that no-one misunderstands the purpose behind the gathering due to their own inclinations.

- **How do we deal with people who are in open disobedience to Allah?**

We need to speak to them on a personal level. We also need to give them permissible alternatives to the forbidden things which they are doing and we should facilitate this for them. We should move them to an environment in which their hearts can be attached to the remembrance of Allāh and His Messenger (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace) for a few days before they come back to their original environment. We should pray for them abundantly.

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<sup>2</sup>Al-`Arāf, 7:199

- **What can a student recite in order to keep his intentions pure and to banish laziness and procrastination at the time of study?**

You should read the merits of seeking knowledge. There is a very useful section on this in the introduction to Imam al-Nawawi's *al-Majmu'*. You should also study the biographies of those who exerted great efforts in seeking knowledge.

Read 100 times a day:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

*Huwa Allāhu'lladhī la ilāha illā hu, 'Ālimu'l ghaybi w'al-shahādah, Hu al-raḥmānu' raḥīm*

**He is Allah, there is no god other than Him, knower of the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful. (Al- Ḥashr, 59:22)**

- **Is it permissible to eat the food of Muslims who have some unlawful income from selling alcohol or other prohibited things?**

It is permissible as long as you do not know for sure that the food has been purchased with money from an unlawful source and you know that they have income from lawful sources. However, it is better out of scrupulousness to avoid eating such food.

- **How can someone increase their fear of Allāh?**

You can do this by reflecting upon His greatness and the return to Him and upon His promises of reward and punishment.

- **Is it permissible for a woman to travel with her mother but without a *maḥram* (a male relative whom she cannot marry)? She has a *maḥram* who will see her off at the airport and another *maḥram* who will pick her up at the other end.**

Some contemporary scholars take the view that this is permissible but if there is no dire need then this should be avoided, especially if the journey takes three days, due to the explicit statement of the Prophet (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace) in the sound hadith: "It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allāh and the Last Day to travel for a distance that it takes three days to cover without her husband or a *maḥram*."

- **We are involved in a project facilitating marriages in the Muslim community. Do you have any advice for us?**

This is a great service because it will lead to the establishment of good Muslim families and protect the Ummah from different types of evil. You should tell those who are seeking to get married to read the following prayer from the Qur'an in abundance:

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

*Rabbi innī lima anzalta ilayya min khayrin faqir*

***O my Lord! Truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that You send me!***<sup>β</sup>

- **How do we seek spiritual assistance from the imams in our spiritual chain of connection?**

We do this by loving and revering them for the sake of Allāh, regularly reciting some of the Qur'an or some adhkar and donating the reward to them, reading their biographies and sharing what you have read with your family.

- **How do we protect our children from being affected by an environment which is not conducive to their Islam?**

We do this by reminding them of the religion and establishing gatherings of remembrance and knowledge for them. We need to warn them repeatedly about things which they may see which are in contravention to the Sacred Law. They should not go out too freely in this environment but rather other activities should be arranged for them which protect their religion.

- **How can we strengthen the ties of brotherhood between those who have taken this spiritual path?**

We can do this by reminding those who have taken this spiritual path that they are travelling companions, and that those travelling together on the same path must be united. They are all the children of the same chain of connection and this dictates that they be brothers and sisters to each other. We also need to remind them that the ṭarīqah is founded upon spreading harmony and brotherhood throughout the whole Ummah so this brotherhood should be even stronger between those affiliated to the ṭarīqah. So let us apply these things and then spread them.

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<sup>β</sup> Al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:24

- **If a Muslim commits suicide should we pray for them as we would pray for any Muslim that has died?**

It is permissible to pray for any Muslim, unless we are certain that they have left Islam or fallen into disbelief before dying.

- **Is it possible for a seeker to enter *khalwah* (spiritual seclusion) without the supervision of a shaykh?**

This is like someone taking medicine without the supervision of a doctor. There may be general benefit in taking the medicine, but the patient will not receive full treatment without the supervision of the doctor.

- **What is the most appropriate clothing for women who have taken this spiritual path to wear?**

The most appropriate clothing is that which is most modest, concealing and closest to the clothing of Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā', the daughters of the Prophet and the wives of the Prophet, the Mothers of the Believers (may Allāh be pleased with them all).

- **Can someone attend part of the Dowra?**

Yes, this is possible; even someone who wants to attend only one day of the Dowra.

[Note – the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Questions relating to the issues of individuals can be found on the video. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator.]

The next meeting is scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> Jumād al-Akhirah 1434 / 27<sup>th</sup> April 2013 inshallāh.

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### Questions from Habib `Umar's Internet Lessons on Tazkiyah

#### A Selection of Questions from Past Lessons

Answered by Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him).

- **Some people misunderstand the hadith: “Those who do not concern themselves with the affairs of the Muslims are not from them.” They use the hadith as a justification for doing things which are forbidden by the Sacred Law. Then they accuse of not concerning themselves with the affairs of the Muslims. How do we respond?**

To concern oneself with the affairs of the Muslims means to pray for them and plead with Allah for their wellbeing. It means to assist those in need in whatever way possible as long as this assistance will reach those who need it. This is one of the duties of the believer in every time and place. Some people understand that acting upon the hadith means to verbally abuse or physically attack other Muslims. They have understandings which have no basis in the Sacred Law and cannot be justified rationally. These people need to concern themselves with their own affairs. Their doing so constitutes concerning themselves with the affairs of the Muslims. They need other Muslims to concern themselves with them to save them from the predicament which they are in. It is as the Prophet said: “The other nations will gather together against you just as people gather to eat from the same bowl.”

In spite of this, the people of truthfulness and sincerity continue to receive Allah's subtle gifts and support which strengthens the religion. Whatever occurs, Allah will protect and give victory to His religion. At certain times people will leave the religion in droves just as they entered it in droves,<sup>1</sup> but in the end Allah will always give victory to His religion: ***He is the One Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that it be transcendent over all other religions.***<sup>2</sup>

There will always be people who get involved in these struggles without any worldly motive, thinking they are doing the right thing, and they will be judged according to their intention. If they had no way of knowing what the correct position was then they will be excused by Allah.

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<sup>1</sup>Habib `Umar mentioned in a recent lesson that in our times many people are leaving Islam due to the actions of Muslim extremists, whereas in the past very few people left Islam in spite of the concerted efforts of missionaries to convert them to Christianity.

<sup>2</sup>*Al-Tawbah*, 9:33

- **What is the wisdom behind reciting Surat al-Fatihah and donating the reward for its recitation to the dead?**

It is recited because it is the greatest chapter of the Qur'an and its recitation carries a great reward with Allah. It should thus be given precedence over other verses or chapters of the Qur'an. However, donating the reward of any recitation of the Qur'an to the dead is one of the best actions that someone can perform on behalf of a dead person. The dead are those most in need of these gifts, since they no longer have the ability to act. They may, however, still receive them from people whom Allah has given the opportunity to act while they are still alive. May Allah make us among the people of the Qur'an and among those who act according to it. May He have mercy on those among us who are dead and those who are alive, O Most Merciful, through Your immense mercy.

- **I feel as though I have been rejected by Allah. How do I know if this is true or not?**

Allah the Real has called His slaves to His door. No one may definitely say if they or anyone else have been rejected, until after they meet Allah. At this point the truth is revealed. As long as someone has an instant left to live no one may say definitely whether they are rejected or not. The person who is rejected is someone who dies on a religion other than Islam, having turned away from Allah and Allah having turned away from him. All that we have are our outward signs which point to this, but only Allah knows the reality of people's states. It is not appropriate for a slave to make a definite judgement about himself or anyone else, for this judgement belongs to Allah alone. So we cannot make false claims. Allah concealed the truth of this affair. He ordered you to seek Him and if you do so, you will be accepted. He called you to His door on the tongues of those beloved to Him, so good tidings to the one who hears the call and responds.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi' al-Thani 1434/March 2013

### Questions and Answers

The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27th Rabi' al-Thani 1434/ 9th March 2013. Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **I have finished the dhikr you gave in Muharram. What dhikr should I read next?**

Anyone who has finished the previous dhikr and wants another dhikr should read the following prayer upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) 10,000 times:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى جَامِعِ الْمَحَامِدِ مَنْ بِهِ تُفَرَّجُ الْكُرُوبُ وَ تُكْشَفُ  
الشَّدَائِدُ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ يَا وَاحِدَ

*Allāhumma ṣalli wa sallim `alā Jāmi` al-Mahāmid man bihi tufarraju'l-kurūb wa tukshafu al-shadā'id Sayyidinā Muḥammadin wa `alā ālihi wa saḥbih ya Ḥayyu ya Qayyūmu ya Wāḥid*

O Allah, bestow Your prayers and peace upon the possessor of all praiseworthy attributes, the one through whom tribulations are removed and hardships relieved, our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions, O Living, O Everlasting, O One!

- **What is the best way to rid oneself of blameworthy qualities?**

The best way to do this is through a combination of remembrance (*dhikr*), spiritual striving (*mujahadah*) and studying the books of the people of Tasawwuf.

- **The teachings of Islam encourage us to reduce our food intake but medical experts say that doing this weakens one's immune system. How do we respond to this?**

Reducing one's food intake may weaken the immune system if it is done suddenly without giving the body the nourishment that it requires. If, however, it is done gradually while giving the body the nourishment that it requires it improves one's

health and strengthens the immune system. Experience shows that those who have strived to lessen their food have been the healthiest people.

- **What should we read in the Rawdah or in front of the Ka`bah?**

There are booklets compiled on supplications to be read at these times, such as *al-Hiyad al-Mutahharah li Za'ir al-Madinah al-Munawwarah* and *Zad al-Nasik* (both by Habib Umar). [*Zad al-Nasik* may be downloaded from Habib Umar's website <http://www.alhabibomar.com/Book.aspx?SectionID=6&RefID=213>]. The recently published book, *Dajij al-Mulihhin*, also contains many supplications.

However, if Allah inspires you to make a certain supplication then this should be given priority.

- **The people running our local mosque have spread bad rumours about our efforts calling people to Allah. How should we deal with them?**

Remain firm in showing good character and clarify controversial issues when asked with gentleness. Your good character will contrast with their bad character and this will become clear to all. ***A good deed and a bad deed are not equal. Repel (evil) with that which is better.***<sup>1</sup>

- **What can be read for stress or anxiety?**

The following can be read 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

*Rabbi-shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri*

("My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair" (*Ta Ha*, 20:25-26))

Also Ayat al-Kursi and Surat al-Inshirah should be read after every prayer and whenever entering or leaving the house.

- **What can I do to control my Anger?**

Remember the virtue of controlling your anger. Remember that by controlling your anger you save yourself from the anger of Allah. Remember if you cannot control your anger you expose yourself to mistakes in this life and punishment in the next life. By controlling your anger you emulate the Prophets and the pious and by failing to do so you emulate foolish people and devils.

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<sup>1</sup> *Fussilat*, 41:34

When you become angry, sit if you were standing and recline or lie down if you were sitting. Also make *wudu'* or *ghusl*. Seek refuge in Allah by making the following supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْأَذْهَبْ غَيْظَ قَلْبِي وَأَجْرِنِي مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ

*Allāhumma rabba Muḥammadin al-Nabī adhib ghayza qalbī wa ajrnī min mudillāti-l-fitan*

“O Allah, Lord of Muhammad, the Prophet, remove anger from my heart and save me from tribulations which send people astray.”

If you are sincere in seeking to control your anger you will naturally become forbearing.

- **Is it acceptable to wear a *subḥah* (prayer beads) around my neck?**

It is preferable not to do so, particularly in gatherings of remembrance and around other people. There is no harm wearing it in private when reciting the Qur’an or in prayer.

- **Some of my relatives say offensive things about Allah and His Messenger. How should I deal with this?**

If they will accept it, then give them sincere advice. If they will not accept it, and it is not absolutely necessary for you to be with them when they are saying these things, then avoid such gatherings. When you find the opportunity and people are ready to listen, speak to them about the greatness of Allah and His Messenger using rational proofs and firm evidence from the Qur’an and Sunnah.

- **I am unable to wake up for Fajr and I feel lonely. What can I do?**

Try to find comfort in remembering Allah. Choose a good friend who can speak to you before going to sleep and then call you to wake you up for Fajr.

- **Can people who are unable to repay their debts travel the path to Allah?**

If they are sincere in desiring to repay their debts by any means possible then there is no doubt that they can. The sign of this sincerity is that whenever they earn some money they put it towards repaying their debts and do not spend it on things which they do not need and which their lower selves desire. As long as they have this sincerity they can travel the path, no matter how long it takes to repay their debts.

Those who are veiled are the ones who do not have a sincere desire to repay their debts and those who do not repay them when they are able to do so.

- **How can I strengthen my connection to my shaykh?**

You can do this by obeying his instructions, loving him for the sake of Allah and witnessing his Prophetic inheritance.

- **Can the seeker be involved in business?**

Yes, as long as there is nothing dubious in his business. He must pray his prayers in congregation, being there to make the opening takbir with the imam. He must also spend a portion of time in remembrance of Allah and recitation of the Qur'an.

***The following two answers contain specific advice for individuals. However, we can all benefit from the general principles mentioned.***

- **Doctors are advising my wife to have a caesarean section due to some health issues. What do you advise her to do?**

She should not undergo the operation unless it is absolutely necessary and she should not allow the doctors to rush her into doing so. She should recite the following and if it appears to be absolutely necessary after some time has elapsed then they can go ahead.

Read the Fatihah for Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim and for his shayh, Shaykh Ma'ruf Ba Jamal.

:Repeat the following verse

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ  
Al-Nahl, 16:78

ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا  
Ghafir, 40:78

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ  
Abasa, 80:20

Please contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator for the full Pregnancy Advice List.

- **I have been offered a teaching post in an Islamic school in a Muslim country. I would also like to raise my children in an Islamic environment. What do you recommend?**

You may do so, but you must hold firm to the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah. Beliefs contrary to the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah should not be imposed upon you in the school. At the same time you should not enter into fruitless debates on issues of belief but rather you should present your beliefs with wisdom if there is a need to do so.

You must not think that just because it is a Muslim country that your children will receive a good upbringing by default. Rather, you must choose people that have sincerity, taqwa, fear of Allah and scrupulousness to be in the company of your children and to play a part in their development.

Habib Umar gave *ijazah* (permission) to everyone who wishes to read the Burdah, his mawlids and other mawlids of the pious.

Habib also gave special permission to everyone to call to Allah in the clearest way based on humility, wisdom and mercy. This is in addition to the general permission given by Allah and His Messenger.

There were requests for adhkar to read in weekly gatherings. Habib said there are some adhkar that he will look over before they can be sent out.

Habib mentioned that you can now receive Dar al-Mustafa radio (Nur al-Iman) online. Go to <http://www.ne.daralmustafaedu.com>. He was interested in hearing people's feedback.

[Note: the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Questions relating to the issues of individuals can be found on the video. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator.]

Next meeting: 6th April/ 25th Jumad Awwal in sha' Allah.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Rabi' al-Awwal 1434/February 2013

### Questions and Answers

The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 28<sup>th</sup> Rabi' al-Awwal 1434/9<sup>th</sup> February 2013. Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "This religion is firm so enter into it gently." How does this apply to seeking to attain presence in the prayer?**

What is meant is that we should not take on actions which we are not able to perform. However, we must expend all our efforts in attaining presence in our prayer and we must be consistent in doing so. It is normal at the beginning of the path for presence to come and go, and we cannot attain presence without exerting effort. To attain this presence we need to make ourselves aware of Allah's greatness and understand the meaning of what we are reciting in the prayer.

- **What books would you recommend to help acquaint newcomers with this path?**

The books of Imam al-Ghazali, Imam al-Nawawi, and Imam al-Haddad are good for acquainting newcomers with the path.

- **Some of the followers of other spiritual paths make movements while making dhikr. Should we take part?**

They do this seeking to attain presence with Allah following the instructions of their shaykhs. We should joyfully participate with them in the dhikr without making these movements.

- **Should women go out to work?**

Both men and women should busy themselves with that which is most beneficial and fitting for them. Women are generally better than men at performing many of the duties within the household so it is best that they perform them. If men go out to work they must do so in obedience to the Sacred Law. For their work to be lawful, their income must come from a lawful source, they must not be a cause of harm to

anyone and they must avoid mixing with strange women. Likewise if women go out to work they must fulfil the same duties and be especially careful of mixing with strange men and exposing any of their beauty to them. It is permissible for women to go out to work and it may be required if there is a need. This is illustrated in the Qur'an when the daughters of Sayyiduna Shu`ayb say: "***We cannot water (our flocks) until the shepherds take back (their flocks), and our father is an elderly man.***"<sup>1</sup> They mentioned two things: that they only went out because they needed to (due to their father being old) and in doing so they did not contravene the Sacred Law by mixing with strange men.

- **The heart of a man has become attached to a woman who is unlawful for him to marry. How can he remove this attachment?**

He must strive to fill his heart with longing to meet Allah and to be in the company of His Messenger while pleading with Allah that He removes this attachment from his heart. At the same time he should block off any things which remind him of this woman, such as meetings, conversations or photos. If he does these things Allah will help him and not leave him to fall prey to his lower self or to the devil.

**Habib `Umar mentioned as a general principal that when it comes to concepts such as the Mawlid, which some people have difficulty understanding, we should clarify the concept in the best way and do so gently and gradually.**

**For those who have taken the covenant:**

We congratulate all those who were blessed to take the covenant and also those who renewed their covenant. May it be a means of attaining the strongest connection to Allah and His Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Habib `Umar said you should start off by reading the dhikr of Imam `Abdullah bin Abu Bakr al-`Aydarus as follows:

***La ilaha ill'Allah*** 12,000 times

***Allah, Allah*** 12,000 times

***Hu, Hu*** 12,000 times

(reading *Allah, Allah* and *Hu, Hu* counts as one)

After this, you continue to say each of them twelve times after each obligatory prayer.

*La ilaha illa Allah* is the key of the heart (*qalb*), *Allah, Allah* is the key of the spirit

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Qasas*, 28:23-28

(ruh), Hu, Hu is the key of the secret (sirr).

The spirit is the inward portion of the heart, and the secret is the inward of the spirit.

The heart is the place of spiritual knowledge (*ma`rifah*) and the spirit is the place of love (*mahabbah*), and the secret is the place of witnessing (*mushahadah*).

Those who have already read the Dhikr al-`Aydarus should read the following prayer upon the Prophet 33,000 times:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ نُورِكَ السَّارِي وَمَدَدِكَ  
الْجَارِي واجْمَعْنِي بِهِ فِي كُلِّ لَطْوَارِي وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ  
يَانُورُ

*Allāhumma ṣalli wa sallim `ala sayyidinā Muḥammadin nūrik as-sārī wa madadik al-jārī w'ajm `anī bihi fī kulli aṭwārī wa `ala ālihi wa saḥbih ya Nur.*

O Allāh, bestow your prayers and peace upon our Master Muḥammad, Your light which spreads and Your assistance which flows (throughout creation) and join me with him in all my states, and upon his family and companions, O Light!

[Note – the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Questions relating to the issues of individuals can be found on the video. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator.]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Safar 1434/January 2013

### Questions and Answers

The Meeting took place in al-Shihr on 30<sup>th</sup> Safar 1434/12<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions.

- **Some organisers of talks and gatherings in North America prefer that there is no barrier between men and women at these events. They do this to accommodate different people's views and because they believe it is more in keeping with living in the West. This has led to a number of problems. What advice would you have for them?**

Ignorance of the subtleties of understanding the reality in which we live and how to interact with it causes people to make mistakes. We take our understanding from the Sacred Law and any measures we take should not lead to something which is forbidden or disliked. Whatever situation we find ourselves in should be a means for our elevation and if we find something which is wrong we should correct it. We should not merely follow a trend that is prevalent. Our role in life is to rectify that which is wrong, straighten out that which is crooked and to enlighten that which is darkened. It is true that at times we need to take things slowly and gradually but we should never lower ourselves and neglect the Sacred Law. We can never make a secondary issue a foundational issue and we can never make a foundational issue a secondary issue. We cannot make the main priority being in keeping with our situation (in the West) and make observing the etiquettes of Islam and the Sunnah of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) a secondary issue. We should welcome the month of Rabi` al-Awwal by venerating the Sunnah and acting upon it and we should know that our mission is to establish it and spread it. All sections of the Ummah are in the utmost need of following the way and the teachings of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in the knowledge that this is the methodology which is most beloved and most pleasing to Allah.

- **How can we establish the mawlid without stirring up divisions between the Muslims, since there are some who say it is impermissible?**

You can call it by another name such as 'Commemorating the life of the Prophet' or a gathering of remembrance or knowledge or poetry so that when people find out

what it contains they will see that there is nothing in it which is impermissible.

- **How can we actualise and embody hope in Allah and become a means of hope for others?**

We must seek to attain knowledge of Allah through knowledge of His attributes: His greatness, His immense kindness to His slaves, that He gives without account, that everything in His hands and that His mercy precedes His wrath. The more we attain knowledge of Allah the more we will actualise and embody hope in Allah.

- **We have now finished Dhikr al-`Aydarus (12,000 times la ilaha illallah/Allah Allah/Hu Hu). What dhikr should we read after it?**

The next dhikr to read is Ayat al-Kursi 27,000 times along with a specific prayer upon the Prophet (see attachment) but since it is Rabi` al-Awwal you can read the following prayer upon the Prophet 33,000 times before reading that:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ نُورِكَ السَّارِي وَمَدَدِكَ الْجَارِي واجْمَعْنِي بِهِ فِي كُلِّ أَطْوَارِي وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ يَا نُورُ

*Allāhumma ṣalli wa sallim `ala sayyidinā Muḥammadin nūrik as-sārī wa madadik al-jārī w'ajm `anī bihi fī kulli aṭwārī wa `ala ālihi wa ṣahbih ya Nur.*

O Allāh, bestow your prayers and peace upon our Master Muḥammad, Your light which spreads and Your assistance which flows (throughout creation) and join me with him in all my states, and upon his family and companions, O Light!

- **It is taking me a long time to complete the dhikr you gave me (33,000 prayers upon the Prophet). What should I do?**

You should persist in reading it in your spare time. It is not a problem if it takes a long time to complete but you must strive to bestow prayers upon the Prophet with veneration, longing and love for him.

- **I have recently been experiencing a lot of ups and downs in my spiritual wayfaring. How can I attain consistency?**

You must know that you are not divinely protected from error and you must follow up a bad deed with a good deed and be sincere in your return to Allah every time you fall short. If you are consistent in this, recognising your own incapacity, the All-Merciful will bestow His mercy upon you and make your feet firm.

- **Must a man have financial stability before getting married?**

This is not necessary and it is only customs and illusions that have made it an obligation. It is not a necessity according to the Sacred Law or rationally. In fact marriage is a means of easing one's provision. One should take the means to attaining stability according to what is easy. "Marry in a state of poverty and Allah will provide for you." Allah says: ***Marry those among you who are single, and the virtuous ones among your slaves, male or female. If they are in a state of poverty, Allah will give them a means out of His grace.***<sup>1</sup> People differ in the degree of their reliance in Allah but if both potential partners have a portion of this, then there is no need to be overly concerned with financial stability.

- **What prayer upon the Prophet should we read in abundance in the month of Rabi` al-Awwal?**

You should read the following prayer along with any other prayers which you read normally. [Habib later mentioned we should attempt to read it 10,000 times in Rabi` al-Awwal]

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ مِفْتَاحِ بَابِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ، عَدَدَ مَا فِي عِلْمِ اللَّهِ،  
صَلَاةً وَسَلَامًا دَائِمِينَ بِدَوَامِ مُلْكِ اللَّهِ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ

*Allāhumma ṣalli wa sallim `ala sayyidinā Muḥammadin miḥtāḥi bābi raḥmatillāh, `adada mā fī `ilmillāh, ṣalātan wa salāman dā'imayni bi dawāmi mulkillāh wa `ala ālihi wa ṣaḥbih.*

O Allah, bestow Your prayers and peace upon our Master Muhammad, the key to the door of the mercy of Allah, prayers and peace as numerous as that which the knowledge of Allah encompasses, remaining as long as the dominion of Allah remains, and upon his Family and Companions.

- **How can someone be involved in calling to Allah while at the same time give their family the rights due to them?**

By following the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who taught us to give everyone the right due to them. We maintain a balance so that we do not neglect our families while at the same time our families should not prevent us from seriously taking part in calling to Allah. Whoever sincerely tries to maintain this balance, Allah makes it easy for him.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Nūr*, 24:32

- **If I am unable to recite the Wird al-Latif after Fajr, up until what time can I still recite it?**

You have until the time for zuhr prayer to perform it and it would be regarded as being a current performance (*adā'*), but you can make it up any time after that (*qadā'*). The time of all the adhkar of the morning begin at midnight and end at the time for zuhr prayer. The time of all the adhkar of the evening begin at the time of the zuhr prayer and last until midnight.

- **What are the foundational problems of the Ummah?**

Ignorance, heedlessness and turning away from Allah are the foundational problems. The solutions are knowledge, remembrance and turning to Allah.

- **What can I do to attach the hearts of people in our city to the religion, to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to sacred knowledge and to purification of the heart?**

You can do this by presenting these things in the best way and meeting and dealing with people in the best way, and also by telling appropriate stories from the life of the Prophet.

- **Some scholars mention that if someone remembers Allah without being able to hear himself then these adhkar do not count, although he is rewarded for them. Please clarify this. Is it enough for us to move our tongues when reading the adhkar that you have given us even if we cannot hear ourselves?**

This relates to adhkar which are either obligatory or recommended, such as the adhkar in the prayer. Someone must read these adhkar so that they can hear themselves in order for it to be valid and to attain the reward. As for adhkar that someone reads outside the prayer and on their own, there is no need for them to hear themselves. In fact we hope that people reach a state in which the dhikr is so dominant that there are no longer letters associated with it and beyond that, that the one remembering is no longer conscious of the fact that he is in remembrance because he is truly present with the One Being Remembered, exalted is He.

Habib Umar once again emphasised the importance of us visiting our brothers and sisters in different cities and countries for the sake of Allah. This rejuvenates the love we have for each other, strengthens our connections to each other and our connections to Allah and His Messenger and increases our spiritual aspiration.

The next meeting is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> Rabi` al-Awwal 1434 / 9<sup>th</sup> February 2013. Habib Umar said he is looking forward to hearing about what has been taking place in Rabi` al-Awwal in our houses and our communities.

[Note – the questions translated here are those which are of general benefit. Questions relating to the issues of individuals can be found on the video. Anyone that needs clarification on a personal issue may contact the Monthly Meetings Co-ordinator.]

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### Questions from Habib `Umar's Internet Lessons on Tazkiyah

#### A Selection of Questions from Past Lessons

Answered by Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him).

1. **The people of *tasawwuf* have gained a reputation for being far removed from reality. It seems that they are not concerned about the state of the Muslims. People are being killed in a number of places, but we do not see the people of *tasawwuf* involved in the fighting, whereas we see a good number of other Islamic movements participating. What do you say about this?**

It is the duty of all sincere and truthful Muslims at all times to keep away from places where dubious things and dissension are taking place.

As for the issue of fighting, we say: show us fighting that is taking place today between believing Muslims—whose only objective is for the Word of Allah to be transcendent<sup>1</sup>—and between disbelieving people preventing them from establishing the Sacred Law of Allah the Exalted. Where can they be found? Has the struggle for political power turned into *jihad* in your view? As the hadith states: “When two Muslims clash with their swords, then both the killer and the one killed are in the Fire.”

The best thing for a Muslim is not to be present when this takes place. In fact, it is praiseworthy for him not to be present! The killer and the one killed will end up in the Fire and you are asking, “Why are you not participating?” The answer is, because I do not like the Fire. If you like the Fire, then by all means participate. Show us a place where *jihad* is taking place in obedience to Allah's command whose only objective is for the Word of Allah to be transcendent. If you find it then you will see who will race to it and who will be in the front ranks. It is not for anyone whose head is filled with worldly motives to claim that he is making *jihad* for the sake of Allah.

We hear the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying to us: “There will be times of dissension during which the one who is sitting is better than the one who is standing; the one who is standing is better than the one who is walking, and the one who is walking is better than the one who is running.”<sup>2</sup> Now people are saying that the one running is better than the one walking; the one walking is better than the one standing,

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This is the definition the Prophet gave of true *jihad* in the hadith 1

.Meaning that the less actively involved a person is, the better 2

and the one standing is better than the one sitting. We say to them, "You have got things the wrong way round." The statement of the Prophet is correct and your statement and understanding are wrong. The one who is sitting is better than the one who is standing. The one who is standing is better than the one who is walking. The one who is walking is better than the one who is running. The latter is the worst of them. Do you want the best people to be in the worst category? The pious people and the people of *tasamwuf* always know what is the best and most appropriate stance. In whatever situation they are in, you will find them taking that stance.

Today people are fighting each other on the basis of different ideologies and false judgments which have no basis in the Sacred Law. They are fighting each other with egotistical motives for worldly gains. So if you like the Fire, go and fight on either side. Leave those who do not like the Fire and fear it. They look for the best place in which to sit just as the Prophet guided them to do so, peace and blessings be upon him and his Family and Companions.

As for the issue of reputation, it is not the way of the people who are truthful with Allah, nor for the people of *tasamwuf*, to seek fame or reputation. It never crosses their minds what their reputation is among people. They seek status in the sight of Allah the Exalted. They do not care what people say. Someone who wishes to be known and loves fame is not truthful with Allah. Ignore what people say and think and seek; along with the pious people, status with the Lord of people. Allah is enough for us and He is the best One in whom we place our trust.

## **2. Does the Messenger of Allah know every member of his Ummah? Does he know my name and does he know that I am Muslim, just as he knew the Companions?**

Allah displayed the whole Ummah to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), then He displayed to him all of their actions large and small. Their actions are displayed to him at all times: *Say: act, for Allah will see your actions along with His Messenger and the believers.*<sup>3</sup>

Today there are tiny chips which can store vast amounts of information but this is nothing compared to the knowledge of Allah. What should concern us is not merely that the Prophet knows us and our names but that he knows us to have truthfulness, to have etiquette, to be acting according to his counsels. Does he know you to be truthful or to be a liar? Does he know you to be sincere or to be ostentatious? We should ask ourselves these questions and remember *It is more fitting that they please Allah and His Messenger if they are truly believers.*<sup>4</sup>

May Allah bless us with complete faith and true faith.

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*Al-Tawbah*, 9:105      3

*Al-Tawbah*, 9:62      4

### 3. What is the ruling on women travelling in a group without a male relative?

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said in the sound hadith: “It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to travel for a distance that it takes three days to cover without her husband or a *mabram* (a male relative who she cannot marry).” Another hadith states that the distance is that which it takes a day and a night to cover.

The relied upon opinion in the Shafi`i school is that it is permissible for a woman to travel with a group of trustworthy women only in order to perform a compulsory hajj. If she is travelling for any other purpose, she must travel with her husband or a *mabram*. There are, however, other opinions in the Shafi`i school and other schools that permit a woman to travel with a group of trustworthy women for a purpose other than hajj with the condition that she is safe from harm. She should also have a *mabram* to see her off and a *mabram* to meet her at her destination. In the Hanafi school, it is permissible for a woman to travel without her husband or a *mabram* unless the distance to her extended destination exceeds 77km / 48miles.

So the scholars differ on the issue, but it is better for a woman to be cautious and to only travel with her husband or a *mabram* unless she has no other option. We should return to the principle behind the ruling. By instructing women to travel with their husbands or male relatives, Allah honours them and shows them special care, more than he does for men. In general, an ordinary person may travel alone, but someone important always has a few people accompanying them. In the same way, Allah says: “These women are a trust and they must be honoured, so do not leave them to travel alone.” The role of a male relative is to serve the women he is travelling with.

A man was once sitting waiting in an airport in an Arab country. He saw a non-Muslim woman who has travelling alone. She was immodestly dressed and struggling to carry her suitcases. She needed to go to the toilet so she came up to him and asked him in her own language to look after her suitcases. He agreed and she went into the toilet. While he was waiting for her, a Muslim woman wearing hijab passed by. She was with her husband, who was carrying her suitcase and their child. She was walking behind him with great modesty and dignity. He said to the man next to him, “Look at the state of the woman who wants freedom and decided to travel alone! If I did not have any conscience, any humanity or any religion I would have taken her bags and gone off while she was in the toilet. The other woman, however, is honoured and protected by the Sacred Law such that her husband is carrying her suitcase and their child and she is walking behind him with modesty and dignity.”

Look at the difference between adhering to the Sacred Law and following the reasoning of people who have no knowledge of reality.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Monthly Meeting

Muharram 1434/December 2012

### Questions and Answers

The Meeting took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 24<sup>th</sup> Muharram 1434/ 8<sup>th</sup> December 2012. Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **What is the meaning of an opening (*fath*). Is it something that happens instantly or gradually?**

An opening has different degrees and different meanings. When the people of *tasawwuf* talk about it, they mean by it the removal of the veil such the seeker is able to witness the Unseen with their inner sight. An opening may be limited to one area, or it may be an “absolute opening” or a “clear opening.” The latter is the greatest type of opening and it enables the one who has been given it to see things with absolute clarity.

The seeker is prepared gradually to receive his opening until it comes at the appointed time at the hands of the one who Allah has chosen, who is known as *Shaykh al-Fath*, or the shaykh through whom one is given one’s opening.

There are two other types of shaykh. The first is the one from whom one obtains knowledge of the rulings of the Sacred Law. He must possess a sound chain of connection in the sciences of the Sacred Law. He is known as *Shaykh al-Ta`lim*. The more shaykhs of this type one takes knowledge from, the more expansive one’s knowledge will be.

The second type is the shaykh who oversees the seeker’s spiritual progress, known as *Shaykh al-Tarbiyyah*. The seeker must rely upon one but may benefit from others. The shaykh must be someone that the seeker’s heart is focused on and someone in whom the seeker witnesses complete Prophetic inheritance. This shaykh may also be the seeker’s *Shaykh al-Fath*.

As for the *Shaykh al-Fath*, it can only be one person, and the seeker has no choice in who he is.

- **I have completed reading the formula of prayer upon the Prophet (*nurik al-sari*) 33,000 times. What should I read next?**

Anyone that has finished a previous dhikr and needs a new one should read 40,000 times:

# رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا

*Rabbana atina mil-ladunka rahmatan wa hayyi' lana min amrina rashada*

Our Lord, bestow on us mercy from Your essence and dispose of our affair for us in the right way!<sup>1</sup>

This is the dhikr of the People of the Cave. Allah raised their station and made the recitation of their surah a protection from the Dajjal.

- **The time of Fajr in Northern Europe differs a lot from summer time to winter time, which makes it difficult to follow a set programme of prayer and dhikr before and after the Fajr prayer. What should we do?**

You should do what you are able to and try and awake at least a few minutes before Fajr throughout the year. When Fajr time is very early in the summer months you can catch up on your sleep after it, before you go to work. You should take a middle path, not taking it too easy and not making it too difficult for yourself so you become exhausted.

- **Some people recommend praying four rakats on the last Wednesday of the month of Safar and reading certain surahs in them. Is there any evidence for doing this?**

There is no specific evidence for this. However, the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said of prayers that are completely supererogatory: “Prayer is the best thing one may do, so let whoever wishes perform much of it and whoever wishes perform a little.” The great scholar Shaykh `Abd al-Hamid Quds (who was a teacher in the Masjid al-Haram) mentions in his book *'Kanẓ al-Najah w'al-Surur'* praying four rakats and reading certain surahs in them. These rakats, however, are to be prayed at the time of duha (mid-morning), are part of that sunnah and do not constitute a new prayer specifically for the month of Safar.

- **I wish to take this path. What are the first steps I should take?**

Take the following steps:

- Try to pay the five prayers in congregation;
- Read a portion of the Qur'an every day even if it is a small amount;
- Read the dhikr of Imam al-`Aydarus: *La ilaha illa Allah 12,000 times*, then *Allah, Allah 12,000 times*, then *Hu, Hu 12,000 times*;
- Read Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim's book *Miftah al-Sara'ir*;
- Read 'The Book of Assistance' and try your utmost to act on what you read;
- If there are people in your locality that are teaching beneficial knowledge and they have a sound methodology then try to attend their lessons;

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Kahf*, 18:10

- If there are people calling to Allah then try to work with them.
  
- **Is the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) aware of our thoughts, just as he is aware of our sending greetings of salam to him?**

He is aware of our thoughts, but the question is whether he pays attention to them, since he is completely busy with his Lord. He pays attention to thoughts which pertain to him or his call to Allah, and thoughts which are of benefit to his Ummah.

*For those who wish to take the covenant (‘abd) and thereby enter the tariqah, there will be an opportunity in the Rabi` al-Awwal meeting in sha Allah. In the meantime those people should remain firm in their love for and allegiance to the Shaykh and the Imams of this way; they should continue reading ‘The Book of Assistance’ and acting upon what they read and they should continue reading their awrad.*

The **next meeting** will be on **30<sup>th</sup> Safar 1434/12<sup>th</sup> January 2013** inshallah.

# Monthly Meeting Sixteen

## Questions and Answers

In the sixteenth Monthly Internet Meeting, which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 24th Ramadan 1433/ 11th August 2012, Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions.

Habib `Umar first emphasised the importance of assisting the poor and needy. Honouring those that no-one cares about for the sake of Allah is one of the greatest means for Allah to change our condition.

**- Some of the people of innovation are actively promoting their beliefs in our area. What is the best way to deal with them?**

We should clarify to them the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah in the best way without causing friction so that ordinary Muslims realise that the Ahl al-Sunnah have a valid methodology. We should distribute booklets or pamphlets which clarify the evidences of the Ahl al-Sunnah on controversial issues. These issues should not, however, be our main focus. Rather, we should focus on attaining the realities of faith, attaining good character and preparing for the next life.

**- Is it permissible to feed non-Muslims in Ramadan during the day?**

It is permissible, but it is preferable to feed them at night so that they are aware of the sanctity of Ramadan. There is a great reward in feeding non-Muslims this and it is a means of calling them to Allah.

**- Is it permissible to donate the reward of our *adhkar* to others? If so, who should we donate the reward to?**

This is permissible and is a means of seeking to draw near to Allah. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the most worthy of receiving the reward, then our Muslim parents, relatives and teachers and those who have rights over us.

**-I attended the Dawrah and I am worried that I will not be able to honour the trust of acting according to what I have learnt.**

This fear is a good thing along as it does not lead to despair, and the sign that this is valid is that it drives you to honour that trust.

**- When will Allah give victory to the Muslims?**

We have to ask ourselves when are we going to truly obey His commands? We should do what we can to rectify our own situation and reflect on how Allah tested the believers of previous nations and how he tested our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

**- How should we deal with mental illness amongst our youth? Is there a light dhikr that people can read that can ease their state?**

In general, any dhikr or prayer upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is beneficial in this regard. The following adhkar can be read specifically:

Read 100 times a day:

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَ يَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

Rabbi-shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri

(“My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair.” Ta Ha 20:25–26)

Read 70–450 times a day according to the need:

حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

Hasbunallahu wa n`am al-wakil

(“Allah is enough for us and He is the best One in whom we place our trust.” Al `Imran 3.173)

Read 11–100 times a day:

وَأَفْوِضْ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

wa ufawwidu amri ila'llah inna'llaha basirun bi'l`ibad

("I resign my affair to Allah, Allah is fully aware of (His) slaves." Ghafir 40.44)

Read Surat al-Inshirah (94) and Ayat al-Kursi after every prayer;

Surat al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nas are also effective in warding off different types of harm.

**- What advice do you have for those who wish to take the `ahd but have not yet had the opportunity?**

They should begin by reading what they are able to of the Khulasah as well as "Good Manners" or "The Book of Assistance" by Imam al-Haddad while reflecting and acting upon what they read. They should focus their hearts upon Allah and wait for an opportunity to take the `ahd online in the future.

**- What is the sunnah of growing the beard?**

There are different narrations regarding this. Ibn `Umar is narrated as trimming his beard when it went beyond a fist's length. It is also authentically narrated that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would tidy his beard and trim its edges.

**- We have a weekly gathering that moves from place to place each week. Should it continue to move or is it better that it should be in one place?**

Whatever is more beneficial: if it is easy for everyone to come together in one place and more people are able to attend then this is better. You

should not neglect to visit other places from time to time though.

**- My mother has lost the ability to speak. Is there any dhikr that can be read to help her regain her speech?**

Read over her 10 times in the morning and evening:

وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

wa'hlul uqdatan min lisani yafqahu qawli

("Untie the knot from my tongue, so that they understand my speech." Ta Ha 20:27-28)

أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

Antaqana Allahu'lladhi antaqa kulla shay

("Allah has given us speech, the One Who has given speech to everything." Fussilat 41.21)

**- My husband has debts but he has been offered financial support to go on Hajj. Should he go?**

As long as those who he is in debt to allow him to go.

**- How do we fill the void in our hearts that we feel from not physically being in your company?**

Imagine yourself often to be in the Rawdah, at the Mihrab of the Prophet and in front of the Hujrah (the enclosure in which he is buried), bestow abundant prayers upon him, attach yourself to him and be keen to act upon his Sunnah. Also attend our internet lessons and watch/listen to our recorded talks and lessons as much as possible.

## Monthly Meeting Fifteen

### Questions and Answers

In the fifteenth Monthly Internet Meeting, which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 24<sup>th</sup> Sha`ban 1433/ 14<sup>th</sup> July 2012, Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions. Unfortunately the Meeting was interrupted by technical problems and power cuts and thus only a few questions were answered.

- **Do we have permission to give the *adhkar* which are contained in the *Khulasah* to those not connected to the Tariqah?**

You can certainly give them *adhkar* like the *Wird al-Latif* and any *adhkar* which are suitable to the state of the person being given them. For instance, someone who has problems with the Ahl al-Sunnah understanding of *tawassul* should not be given poems which contain *tawassul*.

- **My mother is not a Muslim and she forbids me from wearing the *qamis* or *thawb*, although I am in a place where wearing it is effective in calling people to Islam. Should I obey her or continue to wear it?**

It is sunnah to wear the *qamis* if one wears it with the intention of following the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). However, we have been commanded to treat our parents well and this dictates that you do not wear it in front of your mother. It would not be considered disobedience to wear it to the Friday prayer or in gatherings of knowledge. At times other than these you need to decide whether the benefit of wearing it outweighs the negative effect it has on your mother or not.

- **What can I do when I feel lazy or unmotivated to perform acts of obedience?**

You need to push yourself to perform them using fear and hope. Also reflect on the rewards that those performing them receive from Allah and study the biographies of those who exerted great efforts in performing acts of obedience.

The next meeting will be on 23<sup>rd</sup> Ramadan 1433 / 11<sup>th</sup> August 2012 inshallah.

## Monthly Meeting Fourteen

### Questions and Answers

In the fourteenth Monthly Internet Meeting, which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sha`ban 1433/ 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012, Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions.

- **Some people claim that there should be no partition between men and women in mosques on the basis that such a partition did not exist in the time of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). How do we respond to such people?**

After the verses that commanded women to wear the *hijab* were revealed, women were described as walking in Medina like ‘black crows.’ Since there was no barrier between men and women, the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) said (referring to the prayer): “The best rows for men are the front rows and the worst are the back rows; the best rows for women are the back rows and the worst are the front rows.” The statement of Sayyidah `A’ishah – “Had the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) seen what women are doing now, he would have prevented them from coming to the mosque” – is an indication of the understanding which she took from the Prophet, based wholly on modesty. [These three narrations are evidence of the level of modesty prevalent amongst the Companions which meant that partitions were not a necessity. It is obvious that such a level of modesty is absent from society today.]

Partitions are only a means to accomplish the objectives [of preserving modesty and establishing Allah’s worship in the best way]. Women may need to change their clothing to prepare for prayer and if they are able to do so in concealment then this is better. Both men and women love to take advantage of the time they have in the mosque to attain complete humility in front of Allah [and the existence of a partition assists them in this]. If those with experience in secular education have found that segregating students along gender lines is more beneficial to their learning then it is only fitting that we do the same in order to accomplish the higher objective of establishing the prayer correctly. Along with this we know that placing a barrier between men and women is not an obligation, and neither is it prohibited so there is no reason for the issue to cause unnecessary argumentation. We need to remove the barriers that exist between the hearts by showing mercy and respect, having a good opinion of one another and working together to do good.

- **Is complete segregation between men and women best whenever possible?**

This is most often the case. Sometimes people do not completely understand what is most beneficial for them, so they may need some preparation to understand that. Allah's command concerning dealings with the Mothers of the Believers is sufficient for us: ***If you ask them for something, then ask them from behind a screen.*** Allah then says: ***This makes for greater purity for your hearts and theirs.***<sup>1</sup> These explicit Qur'anic texts are sufficient. Before the verses of *hijab* were revealed, some men inclined towards praying in the back rows (closer to the women) and others; out of fear for their religion, strove to pray in the front rows. As a result, Allah revealed: ***We know those of you who hasten forward and We know those that lag behind. Surely it is your Lord Who will gather them together; for He is perfect in wisdom and knowledge.***<sup>2</sup> How can this not be enough for someone? Here there is a specific command: ***Say to the believing men that they must lower their gaze... and say to the believing women that they must lower their gaze.***<sup>3</sup> Anything which assists in implementing this command can only be praiseworthy. We also know that it is permissible for a group of men to address a group of women so we should not jump to prohibit that which the Sacred Law has not prohibited but at the same time we should not belittle that which the Sacred Law has recommended.

- **A group of us are going to Mexico with the intention of calling to Allah. What guidelines do you have for us?**

They should present Islam to the non Muslims through their states, their actions and their words. They should attempt to revive the reality of Islam among the Muslims. Their talks with the Muslims should focus on strengthening their connection with Allah and His Messenger and preparing for the Hereafter. They should remind the Muslims that they are people with a great mission in life and that they are representatives of the Muslims in the rest of the world.

[These guidelines can be followed by anyone calling to Allah in a majority non Muslim country]

- **Is it obligatory for a woman to attend a wedding feast if she knows that there are things at the wedding that are displeasing to Allah?**

It is not obligatory for a man or a woman to attend a wedding feast if they know that transgressions of the Sacred Law will take place there. The individual must then weigh up what will be the consequences of his or her presence or absence. If a person can attend without participating in an act of disobedience and without condoning it, and at the same time can be of

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Ahzab*, 33:53

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Hijr*, 15:24-25

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Nur*, 24:30-31

benefit in calling people to Allah, then it is better that they attend. If, however, that person by attending will participate in act of disobedience and will not be able to call people to Allah, then it is better that they do not attend.

- **I have been invited to a wedding feast. If I do not attend I will hurt the feelings of those who invited me, but there may be things which are impermissible there. What should I do?**

We only avoiding hurting people's feelings when that does not entail transgressing against the Sacred Law.

- **Please explain the saying of Imam al-Qushayri in his *Risalah*: 'The Sufi is a man of the moment.'**

This means that he is focused at all times on that which is most appropriate for him and most beloved to his Lord. Neither the past nor the future distracts him from performing that which he must perform in the present time, so he excels in fulfilling his obligations in the time and state in which he finds himself. He always endeavours to find that which is most pleasing to Allah and His Messenger.

- **What is the reality of good character?**

Good character is a state which is firmly established in the soul from which beautiful actions proceed with ease. Someone who has good character properly implements the following verse: ***Hold to forgiveness (of others), command what is right and turn away from the ignorant.***<sup>4</sup> They are firmly established in the qualities of pardoning those that wrong them, maintaining ties with those that sever ties with them and giving to those that withhold from giving them.

- **What is the state of a seeker who continues to commit sins while maintaining an attachment to and a longing for the people of Allah?**

Good is hoped for this person. They should be constantly aware of their state and they should attempt to rectify it. They should know that an attachment to the pious and a longing to be in their company are good deeds in themselves. They should increase in remorse for their wrongdoings.

- **With what intentions should we come to Tarim?**

You should intend following and emulating the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him), being a cause of joy to him, seeking Allah's greatest pleasure and being in the company of His Beloved in the Abode of Ennoblement. You should broaden your intentions and perspectives as much as possible and intend rectifying your hearts and rectifying the Ummah.

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<sup>4</sup>Al-'Araf, 7:199

- **What is our perspective as Muslims in the West on the concept of democracy? To what degree should we be assimilated into Western society?**

Islam legislates the concept of *shura* (mutual consultation) and teaches us not to be oppressive or totalitarian. It also teaches us to act in the best interests of humanity. We should develop a proper understanding of these concepts and then we should convey these meanings well and teach them to those around us.

We can be assimilated as long as everything we do is condoned by the Sacred Law and as long as that assimilation brings benefit to Allah's slaves.<sup>5</sup> One of the blessings of Allah is His saying: ***Allah has made faith beloved to you and has made it beautiful in your hearts; and He has made disbelief, corruption and disobedience hateful to you; such are those who are rightly guided – a grace and favour from Allah, and Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.***<sup>6</sup>

- **How can we become stronger in lowering our gaze?**

By being more present with Allah and having a true longing to see Allah's Messenger. The stronger the believer's faith is the more able they are to lower their gaze.

- **Young men and women mix freely with each other at schools and things like Facebook make it easy for them to get to know each other. What can we do to guide them?**

We can guide them by trying to strengthen the attachment of their hearts to their Lord and helping them to taste the sweetness of being close to Allah and being connected to His Messenger. We should also teach them about those who attained truthfulness and certainty. We should give them a portion of time in which they remember Allah and reflect upon His Speech. We should teach them to reflect on the punishments that forbidden gazes or speech entail, and upon the harmful effects of such conduct on the heart and the mind, and its consequences in this life and the next.

- **Is there a specific prayer upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that we should read in the month of Sha`ban?**

You should read any formula in abundance along with the following formula specifically:

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<sup>5</sup> Whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim

<sup>6</sup> *Al-Hujurat*, 49:7-8

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ الْفَاتِحِ لِمَا أُغْلِقَ  
الْخَاتِمِ لِمَا سَبَقَ نَاصِرِ الْحَقِّ بِالْخَقِّ وَالْهَادِي إِلَى صِرَاطِكَ  
الْمُسْتَقِيمِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ صَحْبِهِ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَمِقْدَارِهِ  
الْعَظِيمِ

O Allah, bestow Your Prayers and Peace upon our Master Muhammad, the one who opens that which is closed, the seal of those that came before, the defender of truth with truth and the guide to Your Straight Path (and upon his Family and Companions), in accordance with the greatness of his rank.

- **There is a married woman who feels depressed when she stays at home too long. Should she go out and work?**

It is better if she is able to go out to keep the company of pious women and serve the religion. She should strive to be present with Allah when she remembers Him and recites the Qur'an. She should read the following 100 times a day:

(رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي)

*Rabbi-shrah li sadri wa yassir li amri*

**'My Lord bring tranquillity to my heart and give me ease in my affair'<sup>7</sup>**

- **What is the definition of having a bad opinion of the Muslims?**

To anticipate that they will be the cause of evil occurring or that evil will befall them in this life and the next. To forbid them from transgressing the Sacred Law is not having a bad opinion, but making a judgement that this person will not repent, will not be granted forgiveness or that they will have a bad ending, is.

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<sup>7</sup> Ta Ha, 20:25-26

- **We have been instructed to give charity when tribulation befalls us. What should our intention be in doing so and how should it be done?**

The intention should be pleasing the One in Whose hand is the whole affair and following the guidance of His Messenger. We should find the wealth which is most precious to us and seek out those most in need and give it to them.

- **How do we understand the statement that “whenever the Messenger of Allah was given the choice between two things he chose the easier one, as long as this did not entail a sin, in which case he was the furthest of people from it”?**

If there was nothing to distinguish between the two things in terms of the harm or benefit they entailed and if both things were merely permissible he would choose the thing which was easier and lighter.

- **I live in a region where there are very few scholars. How can I continue my studies?**

You should make use of the internet and recordings of scholars’ commentaries on books.

## Monthly Meeting Thirteen

### Questions and Answers

In the thirteenth Monthly Internet Meeting which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 28<sup>th</sup> Jumad al-Thani 1433/ 19<sup>th</sup> May 2012 Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions.

- **There is a new mosque in our community which follows a somewhat extreme methodology. This has caused divisions in the community and confusion, especially amongst new Muslims, who have been told not to pray in the oldest mosque in the town, which welcomes followers of all four schools of jurisprudence. The people in the new mosque tell those who pray there not to give greetings of salam to those who do not follow their methodology. What is the best way of dealing with these problems?**

These problems should not stop you from embodying the attributes which you are obliged to embody. You should remain steadfast in performing your duty of showing mercy and compassion to others, even if they are mistreating you. You should give them greetings of salam even if they do not give you those greetings. If the opportunity arises to clarify the message, this should be done in a manner that does not arouse people's egos. Otherwise remaining silent on issues that cause argumentation is better. You should expend extra effort in showing new Muslims good character and inviting them to your homes whenever possible and visiting them in their homes. You must be patient with these waves that come for their time is short. Do not be affected by their refusal to return the greeting of salam or by their being cold. If they insult you do not disturbed by this, for this is a sign of weakness.

- **My wife was remembering Allah using a *subhah* (prayer beads) on the bus on her way to Jum`ah. A man came and told her that doing so was an innovation and forbade for her from doing so. He then took the *subhah* from her. What should my response be?**

You should pity this person who has such a poor understanding that he has done such a thing. Not only has he misunderstood the concept in question, but he has wrongly taken someone else's property. His state is pitiful and we hope that Allah will save him from this state. If she is able to meet him with a smiling face and is able to overlook what he did this is more in accordance with the meaning of *tasbih* (declaring Allah's transcendence).

- **Is it permissible to listen to music?**

This depends on the instrument which is being listened to. If it is an instrument which the sacred texts forbid, such as the *mizmar* (a flute which has a reed) then it is impermissible to listen to it.

If it is an instrument which is not prohibited, such as a *duff* (tambourine) or a *na`i* (hollow flute) then it is permissible, although there is a difference of opinion amongst the scholars regarding the *na`i*.

- **When I give someone sincere advice (nasihah) and they reject it I become upset. How can I tell that I am upset for Allah's sake and not merely because that person has gone against my will?**

If you are upset by someone not accepting nasihah given by anyone on the face of the earth then you are sincere, but this should not cause you to become angry or harsh. If you are upset only when someone does not accept your nasihah then this is a sign of a lack of sincerity. In any case you should be suspicious of your own motives while continuing to give nasihah, motivated by a burning concern for others. You should ask Allah to guide you and all His slaves. You should look at how well you accept nasihah from others and how happy you are when someone gives you nasihah.

- **What is the best way to accept sincere advice (nasihah)?**

Be glad that you have received it and reflecting on how to apply it and benefit from it as much as possible. Thank and pray for the person that gave you the nasihah.

- **We have a weekly gathering in which we read the *hadarah* of Imam al-`Aydarus for which we took permission. Is it fine for people who are not connected to the Tariqah to attend?**

It is fine for everyone who loves good and everyone who wishes to benefit to attend. Attending these gatherings is not restricted to those who have entered this Tariqah. Rather one of the objectives of the Tariqah is benefiting people. Even non-Muslims may attend if it is likely that they will benefit as long as they do not show bad etiquette and do not cause people to have doubts.

Those who should not attend are those who criticise or have doubts about what is taking place in the gathering. This is to protect them from becoming confused and from committing a wrongdoing by condemning the people in the gathering. It is also to protect the people that attend the gathering from becoming confused and thus not attending.

- **What should we read after finishing the Dhikr al-`Aydarus (*La ilaha illa Allah 12,000 times; Allah, Allah 12,000 times; Hu, Hu 12,000 times*)?**

You should read Ayat al-Kursi along with a specific prayer on the Prophet (see attachment) 27,000 times.

If you have not memorised Ayat al-Kursi or find difficulty in reading it, you can read 40,000 times:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

*La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min azzalimin*

**“There is no god but You, transcendent are You, truly I am amongst the wrongdoers.”<sup>1</sup>**

- **I feel exhausted from calling to Allah in an environment in which we do not have the company of the pious. How can we continue doing this work and solving people’s problems while experiencing this exhaustion?**

Be conscious of your connection to Allah and His Messenger and to all the imams who constitute the chain of connection to the Messenger, and be conscious that you are following the Messenger of Allah and representing him. This will ensure that your spirit is connected. You also need to return to Allah constantly and pray to Him.

- **How we do balance between concern for affairs of the da`wah and concern for our own spiritual progress?**

Make all of your da`wah efforts a vehicle to purifying the soul and illuminating it. You should also be glad when you find people that are serving the da`wah well because it takes some of the weight off you. Your concern for the da`wah should not cause you to neglect reciting a portion of the Qur’an daily and spending some time in remembrance. Likewise you should pray in congregation, perform the Sunnah prayers before and after the obligatory prayers and pray the *Witr* and *Duha* prayers, and give a portion of money, even if only a little, daily in charity. You should also read some of the books of the scholars of the spiritual way.

- **How do we attain *barakah* (blessings) in our time?**

Ask for this from Allah, have conviction and resolve in your affairs, do not be lazy and do not procrastinate. Truly seek assistance from Allah and rid yourself of the illusion of possessing any power or strength.

- **How do we remedy the conduct of our children if they have gone astray and will not listen to any advice?**

Firstly pray for their guidance. Repeat the following verses:

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Anbiya’*, 21:87

وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

*Wa aslih li fi dhurriyyati inni tubtu ilayka wa inni min al-muslimin*

**Rectify me in my progeny. Truly I turn to you in repentance to You and truly I am one of those who submits.<sup>2</sup>**

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

*Rabbana hab lana min azwajina wa dhurriyyatina qurrata `ayun wa`ja`lna lilmuttaqin imama*

**"Our Lord, grant us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."<sup>3</sup>**

Look at the permissible things that they enjoy doing and strengthen your relationship with them through these things.

- **Some of those who have taken the covenant feel that it is difficult to connect to the Shaykh and consult him regarding their private affairs. What should they do?**

They can contact him by email or phone. If someone is truly attached and has true aspiration they will be completely in Allah's care. Guidance and instruction will come through inspiration or in dreams or by other means.

- **Do we have permission to read the verses of *shifa* (healing) in the Qur'an?**

Everyone has permission to read these verses and also to read the supplications in the Sunnah for shifa.

[These are the verses of Shifa. The sick person can read them morning and evening or they can be read over water and drunk morning and evening.]

وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ  
وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ahqaf, 46:15

<sup>3</sup> Al-Furqan, 25:74

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ  
وَنَزَّلَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ  
قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً

- **How can a married couple progress spiritually together?**

By studying the life of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and by being aware that in their marriage they are representing Allah on the earth.

- **What can I do if I cannot get up for Fajr?**

Make a firm resolve to do so, strive to your utmost ability to do so and seek Allah's aid.

- **If someone sees the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in a dream and he orders them to do something how should they respond?**

If he orders someone to do something which is praiseworthy according to the Sacred Law and is in accordance with the Sunnah then they should obey that order.

If he orders someone to do something which is contrary to the Sunnah or the Sacred Law then this should be interpreted as a mistaken impression on the part of the person who had the dream.

If he orders someone to take someone as a spiritual guide then if that person is upright in following the Sunnah and the Sacred Law then this is an indication of the truthfulness of the dream.

If he orders someone not to keep the company of someone then if that person is not upright and contravenes the Sacred Law or if the person having the dream's faith and certainty are weakened by keeping his company then this is an indication of the truthfulness of the dream.

The opposite is true. Someone may understand that they have been told to take someone as a spiritual guide and if that person is not upright then this is an indication of the falseness of the dream.

Someone may understand that they have been told not to keep the company of someone and if

that person is upright then this is also an indication of the falseness of the dream.

In general dreams that contain good tidings or good signs should gladden you but not delude you. They should increase you in energy and aspiration.

- **People are scared of coming to Yemen to attend the Dowra in the current climate. What should we say to them?**

People were asking this question at the time of the Dowra last year. If inward or outward harm were feared for anyone we would not be content for anyone to come.

- **Is it appropriate at an Islamic school for students to perform a play on a subject such as the Hijrah?**

It is appropriate if the subject is carefully chosen such that it is of benefit to the audience and is relevant to the environment in which it is being performed. The play must also conform to the Sunnah and to proper etiquette.

- **How do we reconcile between the mercy that the Prophet showed towards the disbelievers and the supplication that we read in the litany of Imam Abu Bakr al-Sakran<sup>4</sup>: ‘deflect their gaze and turn it away from us..’?**

This supplication is for protection from a specific category of people, namely those who have wicked intentions from among mankind and jinn-kind. For their gaze to be deflected is in reality a mercy for them. This reflects some of the supplications of the Prophet when he prayed against those who had wicked intentions and opposed him, such as: “O Allah defeat them and shake them!” All of this is encompassed in the general meaning of mercy. It was appropriate for the state which he was in, placing everything in its correct context.

- **What can we read as a remedy for anger and depression?**

Read Ayat al-Kursi, Surat al-Inshirah, Surat al-Ikhlās, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nas after every prayer.

- **My spouse is less firm in the religion than me and is not connected to the Tariqah. What advice do you have for me?**

Show him or her good character, be concerned for him or her, pray for him or her and give him or her recordings or books etc. that will be of benefit.

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<sup>4</sup> The litany of Imam Abu Bakr al-Sakran can be found in *Khulasat al-Madad* after Surah Ya Sin. It is a short but very powerful litany that should be read daily for protection from all types of evil.

- **What is it recommended to do when an eclipse occurs?**

It is recommended to take a bath (*ghusl*), to give charity, seek forgiveness and bestow prayers upon the Prophet in abundance. It is also recommended to pray two rak`ats (in congregation). The best way of performing it is that be in each rak`at two standings in which one recites the Qur'an and two bows (*ruku`*). It is recommended that there be two khutbahs after the rak`ats (similar to Jum`ah).

- **What advice do you have for someone who constantly has suicidal thoughts?**

They should focus their thoughts on attaining the company of the Chosen One (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), bestow prayers upon him in abundance and seek forgiveness from Allah in abundance.

**The next meeting will be on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2012 inshallah.**

## Monthly Meeting Twelve

### Questions and Answers

In the twelfth Monthly Internet Meeting which took place in Malaysia on 29<sup>th</sup> Jumad al-Awwal 1433/21<sup>st</sup> April 2012 Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **Do we have permission to repeat adhkar that we have been given such as the Dhikr of Imam al-`Aydarus, especially if we feel that our hearts were not present when we read them?**

No one should think they cannot return to a dhikr they have finished. They may repeat it as many times as they wish. Let them keep their tongues moist with the dhikr of Allah. The most important thing is that the heart is present during the dhikr.

- **Do we have permission to read different formulae of prayers upon the Prophet, such as *al-Salat al-Yaqutiyya*?**

Yes, you have permission to read any formula of prayer upon the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.

- **How can someone attain truthfulness with Allah?**

By directing oneself fully to Him and by making your state, your deeds and your words conform to one another. Every person that truly directs himself to Allah will receive assistance from Allah.

- **What can we read to facilitate our provision (*rizq*)?**

Read 100 times a day:

يا فَتَّاحُ يا رَزَّاقُ يا كافي يا مُغْنِي

*Ya Fattah, ya Razzaq, ya Kafi, ya Mughni*

O Opener, O Provider, O One Who is Sufficient , O Enricher

Also be consistent in praying the *Duha* (midmorning) prayer and reading Surat al-Waqi`ah every day. After Asr is the best time.

Also read 100 times a day:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ

*La ilaha ill'Allah al-Maliku 'l-Haqqu 'l-Mubin*

“There is no god but Allah, the King, the Real, the One Who makes things manifest.”

After Zuhr is the best time for this.

Also read 100 times a day:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

*Subhanallahi wa bi hamdihi, subhanallahi-l-'Azim, astaghfirullah*

“Transcendent is Allah, and praise be to Him; transcendent is Allah the Almighty; I seek the forgiveness of Allah.”

The best time to read this is before praying the two *sunnah rakats* of *Fajr* or between the *sunnah* and the *fard*.

- **How do we motivate people to attend gatherings of remembrance?**

This can be achieved by reminding them of the merits of the remembrance of Allah that are mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Also you must seek to experience the meaning of remembrance so that you carry the desire to the one who you are speaking to. This is attained through your heart being attached through your chain of connection to the Prophet Muhammad and striving to attain brokenness and humbleness in front of Allah.

- **I am seeking to get married. Is there a du`a I can read to facilitate this?**

Read the following du`a from the Qur'an 100 times a day:

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

*Rabbi inni lima anzalta ilayya min khayrin faqir*

"O my Lord! truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that You send me!"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Qasas*, 28:24

- **How can someone rid themselves of bad thoughts?**

By remembering Allah abundantly and striving to be present while doing so until the remembrance of Allah dominates the heart. Also read 181 times a day:

يا قَهَّار

*Ya Qahhar*

Also raise your head to the sky and repeating the name of Allah, elongating the “a” : Allaaah

- **Is there something someone can read to cure addiction or to help them leave bad habits?**

They should read the following dhikr at least 300 times a day. The stronger the habit the more dhikr is needed.

يا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ وَمِنْ عَذَابِكَ أَسْتَجِيْرُ  
أَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ وَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي وَلَا إِلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْ  
خَلْقِكَ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

*Ya Hayyu ya Qayyum bi rahmatika astaghith wa min `adhabika astajir, aslih li sha'ni kullah wa la takilni ila nafsi wa ila ahadin min khalqika tarfata `ayn*

O Living! O Sustainer! I call upon Your Mercy for assistance, and from Your punishment I seek refuge! Make good all my affairs and do not entrust me to myself or any of Your creation even for the blink of an eye.

- **What guidelines would you give for eating meat in the West?**

There are two conditions. One is that the animal has been slaughtered in the correct manner and the other that it has been slaughtered by a Muslim. If these conditions are met then there is no problem in eating the meat. Otherwise we should refrain from eating it.

- **Non-Muslims sometimes give us greetings on our Eids. Is it permissible to give them greetings on their holy days?**

It is permissible to do so, but not in a manner which implies any meaning related to their disbelief or polytheism, or in a manner that gives the impression of condoning any bad practices that they may perform. We can make the greetings and give them prayers for their guidance. We can, for example, say to them: “may you be given well-being” ( `afiyah), which implies well-being in this life and also the next. We can wish them a good day or month (depending on what they are celebrating), intending true goodness, which is that they be guided.

- **How do we attain true love for our shaykh?**

By asking for that from Allah and pleading with Him to be given it. We should also study how the Companions were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and how the seekers of the past were with their shaykhs. We can find this in their biographies.

- **A sister in America who lived in Tarim for a while feels that she is suffering spiritually from living there. What should she do?**

She should visit Tarim at least once every five years. She should be consistent in reciting the Qur’an and her adhkar, and she should try to follow (Habib Umar’s) lessons and talks on the net.

- **What can we read for protection from the Evil Eye?**

You can read Surat al-Ikhlās, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nas and the following du`as:

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ وَكُلِّ عَيْنٍ  
لَامَّةٍ

*A`udhu bi kalimatillah tammati min kulli shaytanin wa hammah wa kulli `aynin lammah*

“I seek refuge in the complete words of Allah from every devil, every creature and every evil eye.”

حَصَّنْتُ نَفْسِي بِالْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ أَبَدًا وَدَفَعْتُ عَنِّي السُّوءَ  
بِأَلْفِ أَلْفِ أَلْفٍ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*Hassantu nafsi b'il-Hayyi l-Qayyum alladhi la yamutu abadan wa dafa`tu `an ni'ssu'a bi alfi alfi  
alfi la hawla wa la quwwata illa billahi al-'Aliyyi al-'Azim.*

I place myself in the protection of the Living, the Self-Sufficient who never dies and I drive evil away from myself with “there is no strength nor might except in Allah the Sublime the Almighty” a billion times over.

- **What du`as can we read during childbirth?**

Plead with Allah in abundance for blessings (*barakah*) and ease.

**During pregnancy** repeat the following verses:

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

*Rabbi hab li milladunka dhurriyatan tayyibah innaka sami`u-du`a*

**"O my Lord, grant me a progeny that is pure, for You hear (our) prayers!"<sup>2</sup>**

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

*Rabbana hab lana min azwajina wa dhurriyyatina qurrata `ayun wa`ja`lna lilmuttaqin imama*

**"Our Lord, grant us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."<sup>3</sup>**

**During childbirth** repeat Allah's name "*al-Latif*" in abundance, along with the following:

يَا لَطِيفًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا عَلِيمًا بِخَلْقِهِ ، يَا خَيْرًا بِخَلْقِهِ .. الْطُّفُ بِنَا يَا  
لَطِيفُ ، يَا عَلِيمُ ، يَا خَيْرُ

<sup>2</sup> *Al `Imran, 3:38*

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Furqan, 25:74*

*Ya Latifan bi khalqihi ya `Aliman bi khalqihi ya Khabiran bi khalqihi ultuf bina ya Latifu ya `Alimu  
ya Khabiru (repeat 3 times)*

O One Who is gentle with His creation, O One who has complete knowledge of His creation, O  
One who has complete awareness of His creation! Treat us with gentleness O Gentle, O All-  
Knowing, O All-Aware!

يَا لَطِيفًا لَمْ يَزَلْ أَلْطُفْ بِنَا فِيمَا نَزَلَ .. إِنَّكَ لَطِيفٌ لَمْ تَزَلْ ..  
أَلْطُفْ بِنَا وَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

*Ya Latifan lam yazal ultuf bina fima nazal innaka Latifun lam yazal ultuf bina wa'l-muslimin  
(repeat 3 times)*

O Gentle Who remains forever, be gentle to us in all that befalls us, You are constantly Gentle,  
treat us and the Muslims with gentleness!

Also repeat these verses:

ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ

Thumm 'assabila yassarah

***Then He made the path easy<sup>4</sup>***

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ

Wa Allah akhrajakummin butuni ummahatikum

***Allah brought you forth from your mothers' wombs<sup>5</sup>***

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<sup>4</sup> `Abasa, 80:20

<sup>5</sup> Al-Nahl, 16:78

Habib Umar said that anyone who is able to attend the Dowra in Tarim this summer should try do so. For information go to [www.thedowra.com](http://www.thedowra.com)

A survey on the current Islamic discourse was mentioned in the meeting and a request was made for people to take part in it. Anyone that is interested should go to:

[Surveygizmo.com/s3 /866925/Islamic-discourse](https://surveygizmo.com/s3/866925/Islamic-discourse)

**Note:** some questions have been reworded to make them more general so that everyone can benefit, not just the original questioner.

We urge people to reflect upon these answers and apply the principles mentioned in them to their own situations. These answers should serve as a reference so that Habib Umar is not asked the same question repeatedly. Feel free to pass these answers and the adhkar contained in them to others who would benefit from them.

## Monthly Meeting Eleven

### Questions and Answers

In the eleventh Monthly Internet Meeting which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 17<sup>th</sup> Rabi` al-Thani 1433/ 10<sup>th</sup> March 2012 Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **What advice do you have for us if we lose our aspiration for travelling the spiritual path?**

Re-new your approach to Allah. Sit for an hour or two or three facing the *qiblah* imagining that you are in the Blessed *Rawdah* or in front of the grave of the Messenger of Allah, seeking a connection to him, closeness to him, and his companionship, while bestowing many prayers upon him. This will be a means of renewing your approach.

- **What should we do if we feel we have not fulfilled the covenant we made upon taking the spiritual path? Is there a way we can start again with a clean slate?**

If someone falls into heedlessness or transgression they should rush to renew their repentance and to return to the works that they had left. Then they should wait for the opportunity to verbally receive the dhikr (*talqin*) and to renew the covenant with one of the shaykhs when someone new is taking it. If the first seed has been ruined, then a new seed can be planted and if it is protected and watered it will in time bear fruit.

- **Can one renew one's connection to the path by retaking the covenant with any of the Ba `Alawi shaykhs and not the original shaykh with whom one took the covenant?**

The foundational principle is that all the Ba `Alawi shaykhs are one. However, if one does re-new the covenant with a shaykh other than the original shaykh it should be done with the permission of the original shaykh or with the knowledge that he is happy with this taking place. This is because there may be things that the one wishing to renew the covenant is unaware of, which

the original shaykh is aware of. If someone wishes to take blessings (*tabarruk*) by making a covenant with any shaykh of any spiritual path or even any believer then this is acceptable.

- **I am at work at `Asr and Maghrib time so I am unable to read the *awrad* at that time. Should I make them up at another time?**

*Awrads* should always be made up if you are unable to read them at their set time. Someone who is usually busy at the set time should choose another time to read them. If you are unable to do that you should read them in your heart at work at the set time without saying them out loud.

- **Is it permissible to recite the *awrad* in a language other than Arabic, or should we strive to understand them in Arabic and recite them in Arabic?**

It is permissible to read them in another language but there is more merit in reading them in Arabic and striving to understand them, even some of them, according to your ability. If this is difficult then you may read the translation of the *awrad* in any language.

This does not apply to the invocations during the prayer, which must be recited in Arabic.

- **We as African Americans have a lot of resentment towards slavery in our history. How should we view this incident? How can we heal ourselves and assist others in the healing process?**

Generally speaking, every person who has a sound disposition detests oppression, and believers detest it more specifically. Allah says in the *hadith qudsi*: "I have prohibited Myself from oppression and I have prohibited you from oppressing one another so do not oppress one another." Wrongful enslavement is one of the worst crimes mankind can commit. When people delayed giving other people the rights that were due to them, our master `Umar ibn al-Khattab said: "What allowed you to enslave people when their mothers gave birth to them as free men?" [He was referring to something far less grave than enslavement but he used this metaphor to highlight its gravity.]

Rightful enslavement due to disbelief is legislated for in the Sacred Law. The Prophetic Sunnah then clarified how slaves should be treated: slaves were not to be looked down upon, let alone mistreated. An example of this is that the Mother of the Believers, `A'ishah, used to have her slave, Masruq, lead her in prayer, and she would pray behind him in spite of her status.

Then we have to ask, in our present situation, how do we deal with and remember the occurrence of slavery mentioned in the question specifically and other similar events, all of which are detestable? Our remembering other people's error should not cause us to fall into error ourselves. This is the principle which the Sacred Law teaches, as demonstrated in the hadith: "If your brother reviles you for a fault you do not possess, do not revile him for a fault he does possess." These events should be remembered to cause people to reflect, to learn lessons and to prevent oppression from occurring again. This should not renew feelings of resentment and be a barrier to progress in the future. Since Allah has blessed you with Islam, your role should now be to show the people of the world, past and present, the beauty and the nobility that Islam has brought you. A poet said, representing one of the people of the Prophetic house:

*When we were the governors, pardon was our natural character*

*But when you were the governors you caused blood to spill*

*You permitted captives to be executed*

*Whereas we would pardon our captives*

*This is enough to demonstrate the difference between us and you*

*Since every vessel only pours forth what is contained in it*

We hope that our brothers in the United States, and particularly our African American brothers, will carry the banner of the beauty of Islam to show the world who Allah is, who His Messenger is and who the believers are. Through this, all illusions and false claims will vanish so people know that the only way to correct the condition of humanity is the way of Allah and His Messenger.

- **How can we increase in faith, submission, certainty and steadfastness in the face of what is happening to our relatives and people in Syria? What can we do to help?**

We must be certain that Allah causes these things to happen for a purpose. We should remember that the oppression that these people are suffering only increases them in elevation

in Allah's sight and it is a cause for their sins to be forgiven and expiated. We should remember our own transgressions and the fact that we are a cause of these things happening in our time. These events should also give us hope that the future will be better, since it is the pattern in Allah's creation<sup>1</sup> that ease and goodness follow hardship.

Imam al-Haddad said:

*If adversity continues for a long time*

*It is a good sign that the good which is awaited will last for a long time*

There is no doubt that Sham<sup>2</sup> and Yemen will be safe havens at the time of discord in the world, for the Truthful One's prophecy will no doubt be realised. However this may be after those places suffer some tribulations for a period of time. We must make pray for them abundantly and assist those suffering in whatever way we can.

- **What is the best way of calling non-Muslims to Allah? By giving out pamphlets or copies of the Qur'an, or by speeches, or by actions?**

The foundational principle is that, as an expression of your servant-hood to Allah, your heart is filled with mercy and compassion; you then go forth calling people to Allah in obedience to Allah's command, focusing on the state of your heart and having good dealings with them. After that there are various methods that are not mutually exclusive. We should use all the available means, and not use some and neglect others. Precedence should be given to certain methods over others according to the place in which you are calling and nature of the people and according to what Allah inspires you to choose.

- **How should the relationship between the scholars and the callers to Allah be?**

If someone claims to be a scholar when in reality he has not attained true knowledge or someone claims to be calling to Allah when in reality he is calling to his caprice or to a group, then this needs clarification. It is unacceptable for someone to be content to bear a grudge

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<sup>1</sup> Literally, Allah's *sunnah*

<sup>2</sup> "Greater Syria" or the Levant. It includes present day Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon.

against someone else and they must rise above this. Far worse than this is for that grudge to lead that person to harm or insult the other. The minimum level of co-operation is working together on those issues that they agree upon and excusing one another on the issues that they differ over.

If the scholar's knowledge is true and the caller's call is true then their relationship is more lofty than we can describe. In it is the highest manifestation of love and co-operation for the sake of Allah on the Earth. Each of them sees the other as being more virtuous.

There is an example of this in what Imam al-Shafi'i said about Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, who was his student, and not his peer:

*They said: "You visit Ahmad and he visits you."*

*I said: "Virtue does not leave his house."*

*If I visit him it is due to his virtue, and if he visits me it is by his virtue*

*So virtue is his in both cases."*

- **If you feel that the members of the organisation that you are involved with no longer call to Allah but rather call to the organisation, is it better to leave that organisation?**

If you can continue truly calling to Allah within the organisation and you are able to attain some correct objectives then remain with it. If, however, you are being used as a tool by the organisation and you cannot truly call to Allah then it is better to look for another organisation.

- **How can we overcome our anger?**

Through knowledge and action. Knowledge is to remember the reward that Allah has promised to those who overcome their anger and those who show forbearance and to remember that venting one's anger distances you from Allah. The best way for someone to avoid incurring Allah's anger is by them not becoming angry with others. As for actions: sitting if you were standing; lying if you were sitting; making wudu'; remembering Allah and making du'a and doing good to the person who has angered you or wronged you.

- **If we have not completed reading the formula of prayer upon the Prophet that was given in Rabi` al-Awwal 10,000 times can we continue reading it?**

Yes, those who have not completed it and also those who have completed it may continue to read it in Rabi` al-Thani.

Next month's meeting will be on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Jumad al-Awwal/21<sup>st</sup> April inshallah.

## Monthly Meeting Ten

### Questions and Answers

In the tenth Monthly Internet Meeting which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 26<sup>th</sup> Rabi` al-Awwal 1433/ 18<sup>th</sup> February 2012 Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **I can't sleep (*qaylulah*) after Zuhr because I am at work so I become sleepy at `Asr time. What can I do to prevent this?**

You should have a good sleep at the beginning of the night. Before sleeping you should say: *Subhan Allah* (transcendent is Allah) 33 times, *Alhamdulillah* (all praise be to Allah) 33 times and *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is most great) 34 times. You should also recite the last verses of Surat al-Kahf (18.107-110). [This will help you to wake up to pray in the night and prevent you from becoming sleepy at `Asr time inshallah].

- **How can I be consistent in reading my *awrad* (regular invocations)?**

By remembering the great effect that reading them has in this life and the next. Also by making sure your heart is present when you read them so that you can experience their meanings. You should remember that the gifts that come from the heart from Allah come according to the *awrad* that you read.

- **What were the Prophet's favourite foods?**

The food he ate most was dates. He also ate barley, wheat and sorghum. He loved squash and he loved sweet things, especially honey. He liked the foreleg and the shoulder of the sheep.

- **If someone wants to continue reading the formula given at the beginning of Rabi` al-Awwal after completing 10,000 how much should they read?**

They should read according to their ability from 10 to 100 times daily or more.

- **What is the most effective means of calling people to Allah when in a public place?**

Having great mercy, concern and compassion for those one is calling. Also displaying noble character and speaking in a good manner.

- **We are worried about preserving our children's Islam in the environment we live in. What should we do?**

Pray for them in abundance and teach them to love the Messenger, the people of the Prophetic House, the Companions and the pious.

- **How do we deal with Muslims that mistreat us?**

By treating them well and praying for them. Allah says: ***A good deed and a bad deed are not equal. Repel [evil] with that which is better.*** The outcome of this is: ***then the one whom between him and you was enmity will become as if he is an intimate friend.*** (Fussilat 41.34)

- **If someone has extreme beliefs and then renounces them, at what point should they be introduced to the Shaykhs of the spiritual path and aspects of Tasawwuf?**

They should be introduced to these things according to their aptitude. What is more important is that they are taught the straight path by learning the methodology of the Prophet, the Companions and the pious people of the Ummah. When they have learnt a portion of this, they will be ready to understand the concept of taking the spiritual path at the hands of a shaykh.

- **What do we do if we cannot read the *awrad* because do not know Arabic?**

You can repeat *la ilaha ill'Allah Muhammad Rasulallah sallAllahu `alayhi wa sallam* in abundance. If you also read Surat al-Ikhlās and seek forgiveness from Allah (by saying, for example '*astaghfirullah*') the matter will be complete.

- **How do we deal with sectarian disputes amongst the Muslims (with groups such as the Shi`ah)?**

Avoid causing harm to others or promoting fanaticism and look for opportunities to unite conflicting groups and to benefit from them.

These two questions were sent in at the end of the meeting and answered by Habib Umar in his tazkiyah lesson the following day:

- **What can be read in the house to increase love and mercy between family members and between husband and wife?**

Every member of the family should read Ayat al-Kursi once and Surat al-Ikhlās three times every time they enter the house. This increases harmony between family members.

Also reading the last two verses of Surat al-Tawbah (9.128-9) 41 times daily increases harmony between married couples and people in general.

- **How can we attend mawlid gatherings sincerely for the sake of Allah instead of attending merely for pleasure?**

By attending seeking the pleasure of the Creator through loving and venerating His Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and mentioning his attributes. We should then think about how we can act upon what we hear, and improve our following of the Prophet and make a firm resolve to strive to attain the attributes that we hear mentioned. If we do this in every mawlid we attend we will be connected to the spirit and aims of the mawlid.

Brother Waseem requested that Habib Umar pray for the guidance of his non-Muslim friend. Habib prayed for his guidance and all our loved ones who have not yet embraced Islam.

The next meeting will inshallah be at 4pm Mecca time on 17<sup>th</sup> Rabi` al-Thani 1433/ 10<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

## Monthly Meeting Nine

### Questions and Answers

In the ninth Monthly Internet Meeting which took place in Dar al-Mustafa on 27<sup>th</sup> Safar 1433/ 21<sup>st</sup> January 2012 Sayyidi al-Habib Umar bin Hafiz (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him) answered the following questions:

- **Is there any special formula of prayer upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that we should read during Rabi` al-Awwal?**

There is no doubt that this is the month of bestowing prayers upon the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). Many of the pious of the Ummah are united with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) in this month. Any formula that we read is beneficial. You benefit according to the degree to which your heart is filled with the intention of obeying the command (to bestow prayers upon him) and love, longing and veneration for him. Read whatever formula you know and after doing so ask Allah to relieve the suffering of the Muslims.

Habib `Ali bin Salim al-Ada`j Ibn Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Salim saw the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) at the blessed *shubbak* (the screen in front of his grave) and asked him to teach him a formula to read. He told him to read:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ حَبِيبِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَدَدَ مَا يَكُونُ وَ مَا  
قَدْ كَانَ

*Allahumma salli `ala sayyidina Muhammad Habib al-Rahman `adada ma yakun wa ma qad kan*

“O Allah, bestow Your prayers upon our Master Muhammad, the Beloved of the Most Compassionate to the number of things that will be and that have been.”

- **What is the most beautiful gift that someone can give to the Messenger of Allah in the month of Rabi` al-Awwal?**

In reality we are unable to benefit him in any way but what pleases him is for us to understand his words and his teachings and then by acting upon that to attain high stations. He is content with that which benefits us.

One of the greatest of those things (as we understand from the Book and the *Sunnah*) is for us to be a means of guidance for someone. That person may be a non-Muslim who accepts Islam or a disobedient or heedless Muslim who repents and becomes upright.

Another thing is giving life to his *Sunnah* and establishing it. If we establish the *Sunnah* in our homes and teach it to our children this makes him happy because it is us that benefit from this. He said in the hadith: “Whoever brings life to my *Sunnah* during the time of corruption of my Ummah will have the reward of a martyr” (or in one narration: “one hundred martyrs”).

Another thing is to do good to the creation in general, to the believers specifically, and the elite of the believers more specifically.

A further thing is to strengthen our love for the believers, for the people of the Prophetic Household and for the Companions.

Finally, we should make big intentions in Rabi’ al-Awwal, such as gathering together with our brothers and attending or arranging lessons or courses.

- **How can we inspire people to long for the Messenger of Allah?**

By mentioning his virtues, qualities and his life.

By embodying his character and his dealing.

By deepening our love, longing and veneration for him.

If such a person speaks he will have such an effect on those listening such that they begin to long for the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

- **How do we deal with those that disagree with us holding the mawlid? Should we invite them to attend?**

We should hold many mawlids in this month and we should invite those who do not disagree with the mawlid. Of the people that disagree with the mawlid, some are prepared to discuss the issue and if they can be convinced of its merit then they can be invited to attend. If they remain unconvinced we should show patience with them. Others may be insulting or fanatical in their rejection of the mawlid so we should not discuss the issue with them. Those who have problems with some of the things that take place in the mawlid can be invited to attend at the end of the gathering, to share a meal for example.

We should know that the misgivings people have about the mawlid are false and that they have been wrongly spread in the Ummah. There is no valid evidence either intellectually or in the Sacred Law to support the prohibition of the recitation of the mawlid. There is no text in the Sacred Law that prohibits celebrating the birth of an animal, let alone the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). Thus reciting the mawlid would at the very least be merely permissible

(*mubah*). However, since the mawlid is combined with acts of obedience and leads to an increase in people's faith, it is regarded as being recommended (*mandub*).

That being said, we recognise that people have been affected by these false misgivings so we should not be so rigid that we cause divisions amongst the Muslims and add fuel to the fire.

- **I am responsible for organising a mawlid. Sometimes I am so busy with the organisation that I am not actually joyful during the mawlid. What should I do?**

The preparations for the mawlid should be made in a state of joy while following the Sunnah – they should not be excessive and there should not be any ostentation. While organising you should have love for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) in your heart and be conscious that you are following him. While busy with the organisation you should be bestowing prayers upon him.<sup>1</sup>

- **What intentions should we make before reciting the Qur'an?**

We should intend:

- Listening to the speech of Allah as if we are hearing it conveyed to us by Allah on the tongue of the Messenger of Allah;
- Having an intimate conversation with Allah through His speech, the best thing through which we commune with Him;
- Drawing near to Him through His speech;
- Opening the door to knowledge through its sublime source, which is Allah's speech;
- Seeking the downpour of Allah's mercy, as Allah says: ***When the Qur'an is recited, listen to it with attention and be silent so that you receive mercy.***<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These principles can be applied to anyone involved in organising or serving in gatherings of knowledge or remembrance.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-A`raf*, 7:204.

On a separate occasion Habib Umar mentioned the following intentions for reciting the Qur'an: using your time in the best way; seeking to please the Prophet; beautifying your heart, mind and tongue with the speech of Allah and joining with those in the heavens and the earth who are reciting the Qur'an at that time.

- **When is it our duty to forbid the wrong?**

One of the conditions of forbidding the wrong (*al-nahi `an al-munkar*) is that there be scholarly consensus (*ijma`*) that the thing which you are forbidding people from doing is wrong.<sup>3</sup> Another condition is that doing this does not lead to a greater wrong. This applies to the generality of Muslims.

As for individuals, according to their readiness to act and their level, they may be reminded gently and given sincere advice about the importance of *Sunnahs*, recommended actions and etiquettes and the importance of avoiding disliked or dubious actions or things over which the scholars differ or that which is less appropriate (*khilaf al-awla*).

If you know that something is prohibited by the majority of scholars but you do not know that there is consensus on that then you should forbid people from doing it gently. You could say for example: "according to my knowledge this is something that the Sacred Law prohibits."

Fulfilling these conditions when forbidding the wrong prevents argumentation or dispute arising and prevents relationships from being severed. Giving sincere advice to one's brothers and sisters according to their level remains a separate duty.

- **What are the signs that indicate that a spiritual traveller has progressed?**

That he has a desire to attain that which Allah possesses

That he has an increase in love for Allah and His Messenger

That he finds comfort in acts of obedience

That he is repulsed by acts of disobedience

That he finds comfort in the remembrance of Allah

That he has an increase in longing to be in the company of the Messenger of Allah

- **What are the signs that indicate that a spiritual traveller is remaining stationary and not progressing?**

That he is not seeking an increase in a good way

- **What are the signs that indicate that a spiritual traveller is sliding back along the path?**

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<sup>3</sup> Meaning that there is no difference of opinion amongst the scholars over the issue

That he inclines towards acts of disobedience and transgressions and feels an affinity towards those that commit them.

- **When I listen to lessons or lectures or read the books of Imam al-Haddad I am convinced that what I am hearing or reading is correct but I find it hard to act upon that. What should I do?**

You should act on what you have learnt gradually and constantly renew your resolve. Place your hopes in Allah and seek to be present with Him.

- **What is the difference between the 'Greatest Intercession' and the intercession of the *awliya'* (the friends of Allah)?**

The 'Greatest Intercession' is specific to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). It is also known as the 'Praiseworthy Station' (*al-Maqam al-Mahmud*). It takes place when the Prophet intercedes on behalf of all people that they be moved from being exposed to the sun to the place where the judgement will take place. Everyone, whether they are believers or non-believers, will benefit from this intercession.

After that comes the intercession of the various prophets. Each prophet has a greater right than anyone else to intercede for his own nation, and he may be given the permission to intercede for people not from his nation according to his station with Allah and his relationship to those people. After that comes the intercession of the true saints (*al-siddiqun*) and the scholars, then the intercession of the martyrs and the pious. Some believers will be given permission to intercede for themselves; others will be given permission to intercede for two or three people; others will be given permission to intercede for a group of people. Each person is given this permission according to his rank with Allah. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said that Uways al-Qarani will be given permission to intercede for people as numerous as the Arab tribes of Rabi`a and Mudar, which amounts to millions of people.

- **A sister has just become Muslim. When we teach her how to pray should we teach her the differences between the various schools of law?**

Praise be to Allah Who guided her to Islam and may He make her steadfast and increase her in faith. Convey to her our congratulations upon entering Islam. Knowledge of the schools of law and the differences between them comes at a later stage for those who have already begun seeking sacred knowledge. Firstly we should teach her to pray in such a manner that she performs everything that the various schools view as obligatory. We should look at the people whose company she will keep and if they follow a particular school then she should learn to pray

in a way that is harmonious with them so that no problems arise. We should teach her the basic tenets of the religion but we should go into more depth in teaching her about the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), the Companions, the pious people of the Ummah and the afterlife, as this will help to increase her in faith and certainty. If she becomes aware of the differences between the schools of law we should teach her that all the schools are in agreement over the fundamentals. The difference of opinion in the branches of the Law is due to the texts of the Sacred Law, which allow for much latitude.

- **I have been given some statues by one of my relatives and when I removed them from the house their feelings were hurt. Is it permissible to leave them in the house?**

Firstly you should thank them for their thoughtfulness in giving you this gift and give them a gift in return. If they are three-dimensional images that are not children's toys it is impermissible to leave them in the house. You should tell them that your religion does not permit you to display statues in the house. We have to strike a balance here: we should not hurt people's feelings but at the same time we cannot keep people happy by violating the Sacred Law.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Questions from Habib `Umar's Internet Lessons on Tazkiyah

### A Selection of Questions from Past Lessons

Answered by **Sayyidi al-Habib `Umar bin Hafiz** (may Allah preserve him and benefit us by him).

#### 1. I try to focus on my prayer but I often lose concentration. What should I do?

Carry on trying. Attempt to perfect your transaction with Allah first of all by being focused when you purify yourself before prayer (when making *wudu* or *ghusl*). Then before entering the prayer seek refuge in Allah from the Devil. Read the following:

أَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ الْعَظِیْمِ وَبِوَجْهِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ وَبِسُلْطٰنِهِ الْقَدِیْمِ مِنَ الشَّیْطٰنِ  
الرَّجِیْمِ

'I seek refuge in Allah the Almighty, in His noble countenance and in His eternal power from the accursed Devil.'

Also recite Surat al-Nas. Consistently trying and striving is a means of attaining Allah's mercy, gifts, and compassion. So carry on struggling and do not despair and do not give up.

**Translator's Note** – Habib Ahmad bin Zayn al-Habashi said that if someone is unable to find presence in their prayer, they should witness their weakness and inability to do so while in the prayer. He said: “Perhaps witnessing this weakness is more beneficial than actually being present, and witnessing this weakness is in fact being present with Allah.”

#### 2. Do we need permission to call people to Allah?

We have been given general permission by Allah and His Messenger to call people to Allah. This is understood from the following hadiths: “Convey (the message) on my behalf even if it is only one verse”; “The one who calls people to guidance will have a reward like the reward of all those who follow him”; “Let the one present among you convey (the message) to those absent”; “May Allah illuminate the face of a person who hears my words and understands them and then conveys them to others exactly as he heard them.”

These hadiths give anyone the general permission to call to Allah but such a person must do so with awareness and they must do so in the best way. Their efforts must not lead to evil or bring about the opposite outcome.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond this there is the special permission to call to Allah which is given to someone by the possessors of sacred and divine knowledge. This special permission has a specific effect and benefit and is accompanied by extra light. It is alluded to in the hadith: "Convey (the message) on my behalf even if it is only one verse." His saying "on my behalf" alludes to the fact that the caller should not rely on himself or on his own efforts but should be focused on fully following the Messenger and calling to Allah on his behalf.

**Translator's Note** – by virtue of our connection to our teachers we have a portion of this special permission to call to Allah. When the opportunity arises, however, we should ask our teachers for this special permission. We will thus receive it with a direct chain of transmission to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and our efforts in calling to Allah will be more blessed.

### **3. We hear talk of people "reaching Allah." What does this actually mean?**

"Reaching Allah" is reaching the noble station of special knowledge of Him. Someone who has attained this state witnesses Allah in every instant, and nothing may cut them off from their Lord. Someone who wishes to reach Allah must first of all be steadfast in their obedience to Him. They must then remove from their heart all blameworthy traits and attain all praiseworthy traits and then be constantly mindful of Allah. Then their inner sight becomes illuminated and the light of witnessing Him becomes firm in their heart. Finally, they attain a portion of special knowledge of Him and pure love for Him. This is reaching Allah. Those who reached Allah, whether they were prophets, or their companions or those who followed them with excellence, came from different walks of life. Some of them were traders, some were farmers and some had no worldly involvement whatsoever. Some went out to struggle for the sake of Allah and some spent all of their time teaching. Any person, whatever their background, has the ability to reach Allah.

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning that instead of bringing people closer to Allah, that person's calling drives them further away from Him.