

Fazail-e-Qur'aan

Virtues of Qur'aan

**By Shaykhul-Hadeeth Maulana Mohammed Zakariyya
Kandhalwi (RA)**

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Foreword

All praise be to Allah Who created man, gave him the gift of expression and revealed for him the Holy Qur'an, which is a source of advice, healing guidance and mercy for those who have faith. The Qur'an contains nothing that is doubtful or crooked. It is absolutely straight, and authority, and 'Nur' (enlightenment) for the believers. Abundant and perfect salutation be on Muhammad Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) (blessings and peace from Allah be upon him), the person who is the best of all creation, whose 'Nur' illuminated the hearts of the living and their graves after death, whose appearance was a bounty for the whole universe. Peace be upon his descendants and Companions, who are the stars of guidance and propagators of the Holy Qur'an, and also upon those believers who are their followers in faith.

After this praise and salutation. I (the author), Zakariya, son of Yahya, son of Isma'il, state that these hurriedly written pages contain forty ahadith (plural of hadith-a saying of the Holy Prophet) (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), which I have compiled on virtues of the Holy Qur'an, in obedience to such people whose words are law for me and following whom is most valuable to me. One of the special favors of Allah, the Sanctified and Pure; which have always descended upon the higher "Madrasah" (religious school) of Mazahir-ul-Ulum, Saharanpur, has been the annual gathering of this 'Madrasah' for the purpose of briefly mentioning the progress of the institution. For this gathering at the 'Madrasah', not much effort is made to collect speakers, preachers and the famous people of India, but more attention is paid to invite men whose hearts are full of love for Allah and 'Masha'ikh' (saintly people) who prefer to live unknown. Although those days have receded in the past when 'Hujjat-ul-Islam' (a title meaning a great authority on Islam) Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanautvi Saheb (Rahmatullah alaih) (blessings of Allah be upon him) and Qutbul Irshad (a title meaning a great savant) Hadrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Ganghoi Saheb (Nawwar Allahu marqadahu) (may Allah enlighten his grave) used to honor this gathering with their presence and illuminate the hearts of all who attended, and the scene has not yet disappeared from the eyes when the spiritual descendants of those revivalists of Islam- Hadrat Shaikh-ul-Hind (Rahmatullah alaih), Hadrat Shah Abdur Rahim (Rahmatullah alaih), Hadrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Rahim (Rahmatullah alaih), and hadrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Saheb (Nawwarallahho marqadahu) use to assemble at the annual gathering of the 'Madrasah'. Their presence was a fountain source of life and light for deadened souls and quenched the thirst of those who sought Divine love.

At present, though the annual gatherings do not have the illuminations of even such sources of guidance, their true spiritual descendants still honor these gatherings with their presence and enrich the audience with bounties and blessings. The people who attended the gathering this year are witnesses to this. Only those who possess eyes that see can experience the effulgence, but sightless beings like us can also feel something unusual.

At the annual gathering of this 'Madrasah' if a person comes to listen to polished speeches and forceful lectures, he will perhaps not return so much happy as one who seeks a balm for his heart (spiritual treatment).

"All praise and supplication is for Allah."

In the same connection, during this year on 27th 'Zilqa'dah' (name of the eleventh month of Islamic calendar), 1348 Hijri, Hadrat Shah Hafiz Mohammad Yasin Naginwi (Rahmatullah alaih) visited the 'Madrasah'. His coming was like a shower of affection and kindness, and I cannot adequately thank him for this. After knowing about him that he is one of the spiritual heirs of Hadrat Gangohi (Rahmatullah alaih), there is no need of mentioning his fine qualities of devotion and piety, and the presence of 'Anwaar' (plural of 'Nur'-enlightenment and blessings) in his own person.

When this gathering was over, he returned home and honored me with a kind letter asking me to compile forty 'ahadith' regarding the virtues of the Glorious Quran and send them to him along with their translations. He also wrote to me that, if I did not carry out his wishes, he would ask the successor to my Shaikh (teacher) and elderly

uncle, Maulana Hafiz Alhaj Maulvi Mohammad Ilyas (Rahmatullah alaih), to confirm this order of his. He made it certain that he wanted me to do this job. Incidentally, I received that honored message when I was out traveling and my uncle was present (at Saharanpur). On my return, my uncle gave this letter to me along with his own firm orders for compliance. Now there was no occasion for me for any excuse or to plead lack of ability. Although my occupation with the commentary of 'Mo'atta' (a book of Ahadith) of Imam Malik (Rahmatullah alaih) was a good excuse, I had to postpone that work for a few days and, in compliance with the urgent orders, produce my effort for his esteemed consideration. I beg to be excused for such shortcomings as are inevitable because of my incompetence.

I have done it in the hope of being raised together on the day of judgement, together with such people as were referred by the Rasululllah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) when he said: "Whoever will preserve for my Ummah (followers of Prophet) forty 'Ahadith' concerning important matters of their faith, Almighty Allah will raise him, on the Day of Judgement, as an 'Alim' (religious scholar) and I will intercede on his behalf and stand witness in his favor."

Alqami (Rahmatullah alaih) says that the word 'preserve' occurring in this hadith is used in the sense of securing something and guarding it against loss by either committing it to memory without recording it or by recording in black and white, without even memorizing it. So any one writing them in the form of a book and passing them on to others will also be covered by the blessings mentioned in this 'Hadith'.

Munavi (Rahmatullah alaih) is of the opinion that 'preserve for my Ummat' means reporting of a 'hadith' along with its authority. According to some, 'preserve' includes even those who are reporting it to other Muslims without memorizing it or even without knowing its meanings.

Also the expression 'forty ahadith' has been used in general sense, i.e. these 'ahadith' may be all 'sahih' (authentic), 'hasan' (correct) or even 'daif' (weak) to the degree that can be acted upon because of their virtues.

'Allaho akbar'! (How Great Allah is!). Many are the facilities provided in Islam. And commendable indeed has been the role of scholars and theologians. Who took such pains to explain the subtleties of various expressions? May the Almighty Allah bless us all with perfection in Islam.

It is important to note that whenever I have quoted a 'hadith' without mentioning the name of the book, it should be deemed to have been taken from one of the five books. Viz., 'Al-Mishkat', 'Tanqih-ur-Rawat', 'Al-Mirqat', 'Sharah-ul-Ihya-ul-Ulm' and 'At-Targhib of Mindhiri'. On which I have relied and from which I have drawn extensively. Whenever I have quoted from any other book, the source has been mentioned.

It is incumbent upon the reader of the Qur'an to observe the rules of reverence for its recitation.

Before proceeding further, it seems desirable to mention first some of the requirements of decorum for reading of the Holy Qur'an; because, as admitted.

One who is devoid of reverence misses Allah's special favor.

In brief, the essence of all the rules of reverence is to consider the Glorious Qur'an as the words of the Almighty Allah, Whom we worship, and as the Word of One Whom we love and seek.

Those who have ever experienced love know how worthy of adoration is a letter or speech of the beloved. The ecstatic raptures caused by such a communication are beyond all rules of propriety because, as it is said:

"Love itself will teach one the rules of conduct in love."

So, while reading the Qur'an, if we attempt to visualize the real beauty and limitless bounty of our Beloved Allah. Our hearts will be swayed by emotions of heavenly love. At the same time, the Qur'an is the Word of the Master of masters and the commands of the Emperor of all kings. It is the law promulgated by the All-powerful Monarch. We should, therefore read the Qur'an with the emotions both of love and awe.

It is said that whenever Hadrat 'Ikramah' (Radhi Allahu anho) (may Allah be pleased with him) opened the Book for recitation, he became unconscious and fell down. Then he would utter,

"This is the Word of my Allah, this is the Word of my Allah."

The aforesaid contains briefly the spirit of the requirements of decorum as written in great detail by the Muslim scholars. It will further be explained in the following paragraphs. In short, a Muslim should read the Book of Allah not just as a servant, but as a slave in the spirit of complete humility towards his Lord, Master and Benefactor. The 'Sufia' (plural of 'sufi'-mystic) have written that, if a person feels his shortcomings in exercising due respect and reverence while reciting the Qur'an, he will continue to progress along the path of nearness to Almighty Allah. But a person who regards himself with approval or pride will not advance further.

Rules of Reverence for reading the Holy Qur'an

After cleaning the teeth with 'miswak' (a green twig of special varieties of trees used for brushing the teeth) and 'wudu' (ablution), one should sit in a quiet place with grace and humility and face towards 'Qiblah' (direction towards K'abah in Mecca). Then, with an attentive heart, deep devotion and zest befitting the occasion, one should recite, imagining all the time that he is reciting it to Almighty Allah. If one understands the meaning, one should pause and reflect on 'ayaat' (plural of 'ayat'- a verse of the Qur'an) of promise and mercy and should beg for His forgiveness and compassion. On 'ayaat' of punishment and admonition, one should seek His refuge, as except Him there is no Helper. On ayaat pertaining to His Majesty and Sanctity, one should say "Subhan Allah" (Glory to Allah). If one does not spontaneously shed tears reading the Book, one must induce oneself to weep a little.

For a lover, the moments of greatest pleasure are those when,

In the presence of his beloved, he is full of self-reproach and shedding tears profusely.

One should not read fast unless one desires to memorize it. The Qur'an should be placed in a slightly elevated position on a wooden stand or a pillow. One should not talk to others during recitation. If one is forced by necessity to speak to someone, it should be done after first closing the Book, and then recite 'Ta'awwudh' (seeking refuge of Allah against Satan), before reading again. If people nearby are occupied in their work, reading in a low voice is appreciated otherwise reading loudly is more rewarding.

The 'Masha'ikh' have mentioned six external and six internal rules of reverence for reading the Holy Qur'an, which are given below:

Rules of External Reverence

- (1) Perform 'Wudu' and then sit facing Qiblah in an extremely dignified manner.
- (2) Do not proceed fast, but read with measure and correct pronunciation.
- (3) Try to weep, even if you have to compel yourself to do so.
- (4) The response to 'Ayat' of mercy or of punishment should be as explained above.
- (5) Reading should be in a low voice, if insincerity is apprehended on your own part or disturbance is caused to others. Otherwise read in a loud voice.

(6) Read in a melodious voice, because there are numerous 'ahadith' laying emphasis on this.

Rules of Internal Reverence

(1) The heart should be full of the glory of Qur'an i.e. realizing how sublime it is.

(2) Bear in the heart the Loftiness, Majesty and Magnificence of Almighty Allah, Whose Revelation the Qur'an is.

(3) The heart should be free from distraction and doubts.

(4) Dwell upon the meanings and enjoy reading it.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) once spent the whole night reading over and over again the following 'ayat':

"If Thou should chastise them, they are Thy servants, and if Thou should forgive them,

Thou art the Mighty, the Wise (v: 118)

Once, Hadrat Sa'id ibn-e-Jubair (Radhi Allahu anho) spent the whole night repeating the following 'ayat':

"And withdraw aside today, O guilty ones! (XXXVI: 59).

(5) Submit your heart to the subject matter of the verses you are reading. For instance, on 'ayat' containing a message of mercy, the heart should be filled with delight. And on 'ayat' of chastisement, the heart should tremble with awe.

(6) The tears should be made as attentive as if Almighty Allah Himself is speaking and the reader is listening to Him.

May Allah, out of His mercy and kindness, grant all of us the ability to read the Qur'an according to these rules of reverence.

A Religious Principle

The memorizing of that much of the Glorious Qur'an as is necessary for (the offering of) 'salat' (Islamic way of worshipping Allah) is obligatory for every Muslim, whereas memorizing the whole of the Holy Qur'an is 'Fard-e-Kifayah',

i.e., an act obligatory on all, but which may suffice if performed by an adequate number. If there were not a single 'hafiz' (May Allah forbid) all the Muslims would be held responsible for this sin.

. Mulla' Ali Qari (Rahmatullah alaih) has further reported from Zarkashi that if, in a town or a village, there were no person to read the Holy Qur'an, all the Muslim inhabitants of that place would be considered sinful. In this age of darkness and ignorance when the Muslims have become misguided in respect of many aspects of Islam, it is generally considered useless and stupid to memorize the Qur'an and a sheer waste of time and mental energy to repeat its words without understanding their meaning. If this were the only case of our aversion to faith, something in detail could be written about it. But today all our acts are erring and all our thoughts are leading us astray. For how many should one wail and about how many should one complain.

So to Allah do we complain and from Him do we seek help.

Part I: 40 Ahadith

1. Who is the best person?

Hadrat Uthman (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "The best amongst you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it." In most of the books, this hadith is quoted with the word 'and' between 'learns' and 'teaches' as above. Thus the greatest reward would be for him who learns the Holy Qur'an and thereafter teaches it to others. But in some of the books this 'hadith' is narrated with the word 'or', in which case the meaning would be 'The best amongst you is he who learns the Qur'an or teaches it.'

According to this version, the reward is general, i.e., equally great whether one learns himself or teaches to others. Thus there would be equal virtue for both.

The Qur'an is the basis of the religion of Islam, and on the preservation and propagation of the Qur'an depends the very existence of this faith. Hence the virtue of learning and teaching the Qur'an is self-evident and does not need further elucidation.

There are, however, various degrees of excellence. The highest is to learn the Qur'an along with its meanings and purport and the least is to learn its words only.

The 'hadith' mentioned above is supported also by another saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) as reported by Hadrat Sa'id ibn-I-Salim (Radhi Allahu anho): "If a person who has acquired knowledge of the Holy Qur'an considers another person who has been gifted with something else to be more fortunate than himself, he has shown disrespect to the blessings of Allah bestowed on him on account of his learning the Qur'an." It is evident that since the Qur'an, being the Word of Allah, is superior to all other discourses as mentioned in some of the 'ahadith' quoted later, its reading and teaching must be superior to everything else.

Mullah Ali Qari quotes from another 'hadith' that whoever acquires the knowledge of Holy Qur'an stores the knowledge of prophethood in his forehead.

Sahl Tastari (Radhi Allahu anho) says that the proof of love for Allah is the existence of love for the word of Allah in one's heart.

In 'Sharah Ihya', the list of people who will be given shelter in the shade of 'Arsh' (Throne of Allah) on the fearful Day of Judgement includes those persons who teach the Qur'an to the children of Muslims and also those who learn the Holy Qur'an in their childhood and are devoted to its recitation when grown up.

2. Blessing of recitation and virtues of the Word of Allah

Hadrat Abu Sa'id (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Almighty Allah says, "If anybody finds no time for My remembrance and for begging favors of Me, because of his remaining busy with the Holy Qur'an, I shall give him more than what I give to all those who beg favors of Me." The superiority of the Word of Allah over all other words is like the superiority of Allah over the entire creation."

In another words, compared to those who are begging favors of Allah, He will surely confer some better reward on a person who remains so occupied with committing the Qur'an to memory or learning and understanding it that he hardly gets time for 'du'a'(prayer). It is commonly known that when a man distributes sweets, or something else amongst others, a share is set aside for the person who cannot attend the function because of the task of distribution given to him by the distributor himself. In another 'hadith' in the same context, it is mentioned that Allah would give such a person a better reward than what He would give to His ever-grateful servants.

3. Reward of two, three and four ayaat

Hadrat 'Uqbah ibn-e-Amir (Radhi Allaho anho) has said: "Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasalam) came to us while we were sitting on the 'Suffah' and asked if any one of us would like to go to the market of 'Buthan' or 'Aqiq' and fetch from there two she-camels of the finest breed without committing any sin or severing a tie of kinship. We replied that every one of us would love to do so. Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) then said that going to the masjid (mosque) and reciting or teaching two ayaat of Qur'an is more precious than two she-camels, and that similarly reciting or teaching of four 'ayat' is better than four she-camels and an equal number of camels."

"Suffah" is the name of a particular raised platform in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) in Medina. It used to be occupied by the poor Muslim 'muhajirin' (Plural of muhajir-emigrant from Mecca to Medina) who are known as "Ashab-us-Suffah" (Men of Suffah). The number of these men varied from time to time: 'Allamah Suyuti (Rahmatullah alaihe) has listed one hundred and one names and also written an independent booklet about their names.

'Buthan' and 'Aqiq' were the two market places for camels near Medina. The camel, more particularly a she-camel having a fat hump, was a favorite of the Arabs.

The expression "without sin" is significant. A thing can be acquired without labor either by extortion, through illegal inheritance (by forcefully taking over the property of some relative) or by theft. Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) thus ruled out all such acquisitions. Acquiring a thing without labor and without any sin is certainly preferred by all, but much more valuable is the learning of a new ayaat.

It is clear fact that let alone one or two camels , even if one acquires the kingdom of all the seven 'aqlim' (continents) one will be forced to leave it, if not today surely tomorrow (at the time of death), but the reward of one 'ayat' will be ever-lasting. We see even in this life that a man feels happier when he is given only one rupee (without the condition of returning it), rather than if he is given one thousand rupees for keeping in his safe custody for a while only. In getting any benefit out of it. In fact, this 'hadith' implies an admonition not to compare something temporary with something eternal. Whether in action or at rest, a man should consider if his efforts are being wasted on acquiring the temporary gains of this world, or, are directed towards achieving the everlasting ones Woe be to the waste of effort for which we earn eternal misery. The last phrase of the 'hadith' "superior to an equal number of camels" contains three meanings. Firsii, up to the number four, the reward has been mentioned in detail. Beyond this, it is briefly mentioned that the more 'ayaat' a person acquires, the greater will be their superiority over the number of camels. In this case, the word 'camels' at the end refers to the species-either he-camels or she-camels-and the number implied is more than four because, up to the number four, the reward has been mentioned in detail. The second meaning is that the numbers mentioned are the same as referred to earlier, the significance being that inclinations are always different; some are fond of she-camels, others prefer as he-camel. Therefore, Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) has used the expression to signify that every 'ayat' is superior to a she-camel, and, if one prefers a he-camel, an 'ayat' is also superior to a he-camel. The third meaning is that the numbers mentioned are the same as referred to before and not more than four. According to the second meaning, the explanation that an 'ayat' is superior to a she-camel or he-camel does not hold good, but it implies a collection, i.e., one 'ayat' is superior to a he-camels and a she-camels. Thus a single 'ayat' has been compared to a pair or couple (of camels). (May Allah bless his grave with Divine light) has preferred the latter interpretation because it points to a superior virtue. This, however, does not mean that the reward of an 'ayat' can be equaled to a camel or two camels. All this is for inducement and illustration. It has been clearly written before that an 'ayat' whose reward is permanent and enduring is superior and preferable even to a kingdom over the seven 'aqlim' (continents), which is bound to disintegrate.

Mulla Ali Qari has written an account of a pious Shaikh who went to Mecca for Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca on the 9th day of 'Dhilhijjah-the 12th month of the Islamic calendar). When he landed at Jeddah, some of his friends in

business requested him to prolong his stay in Jeddah, so that they could earn more profit for their merchandise by virtue of his blessed presence. In fact they wanted that some of the servants of the Shaikh be benefited by the profits of their business. At first the Shaikh expressed his inability to prolong his stay, but when they insisted, the Shaikh asked them as to the maximum profit that they would earn for their goods. They explained that the profit was not the same in all cases; but the maximum that they could expect was hundred per cent. The Shaikh said: "You have taken all this trouble for such a petty gain; for such an insignificant gain. I cannot miss the 'salaat' in the respected 'Haram' (the most Sacred Mosque), where the reward of 'salat' gets multiplied one hundred thousand times". In fact, we Muslims should consider how, for petty worldly gains, we sometimes sacrifice great spiritual benefits.

4. Rewards for fluent recitation and for faltering recitation

Hadrat Aishah (Radhi Allahu anha) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) once said, "One who is well versed in the Qur'an will be in the company of those angels who are scribes, noble and righteous; and one who falters in reading the Qur'an, and has to exert hard for learning, gets double the reward."

"One who is well versed in the Qur'an" means one who is proficient in memorizing as well as in reciting it. It is highly praiseworthy if one masters its meaning and significance as well. "To be with the angels," means that, like the angels who transferred the Qur'an from 'Lauhe-e-Mahfuz' (Protected Tablet in the Heavens), therefore, both have the same occupation; or that he will join the company of such angels on the Day of Judgement. One who falters will get double reward-one for his reading and the other for his effort in reading the Qur'an, in spite of faltering again and again. It does not mean that his reward will exceed that of a well-versed person. The reward that is mentioned for a well-versed person is far greater, so much so that he will be in the company of special angels. The explanation is that the labor involved in faltering and the difficulties in the reading of the Qur'an carry an independent reward. As such, reading of the Qur'an should not be given up, even though faltering may be an excuse.

Mulla Ali Qari has reproduced from the 'riwayat' (saying) of Tibrani and Baihaqi that one who cannot memorize the Qur'an well and yet persists in learning it by heart gets double reward. Similarly, one who cherishes a longing for memorizing it and does not possess the ability to do so, but does not give up his efforts, will be reckoned by Almighty Allah among the 'huffaz' (Plural of hafiz-one who has learnt the whole Qur'an by heart) on the Day of Resurrection.

5. Two things for which jealousy is permissible

Hadrat Ibn-e-Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said:

"Hasad (Jealousy) is not permitted except in respect of two persons-one whom Allah blesses with recitation of Qur'an and he remains engaged in it day and night, and the other who is given a lot of wealth by Allah and he spends it day and night."

On the authority of many 'ayaat' of the Qur'an and numerous 'ahadith', 'hasad' is an evil and is absolutely forbidden. This 'hadith', however, appears to permit 'hasad' in respect of two persons. Because there are many well-known traditions dealing with 'hasad', the 'ulama' (Plural of alim-religious scholar) have interpreted this 'hadith' in two ways. Firstly, 'hasad' as denoted by Arabic word ('ghibtah') is taken here in the sense of emulation. There is a difference between jealousy and emulation. Hasad is a desire that one possessing a blessing should be deprived of it; whether the person who feels jealous acquires it or not, while emulation signifies a desire to possess a thing, whether the actual owner is deprived of it or not. Since 'hasad' is haram (religiously unlawful) under 'Ijma' (consensus of opinion), the 'Ulama' as 'ghibtah', meaning emulation. Ghibtah is permissible in worldly affairs and commendable in religious matters.

The second interpretation is that the term 'hasad' has been used in a hypothetical sense, i.e., if 'hasad' were permissible it would have been so with regard to the two persons mentioned above.

6. Similitude of those who recite the Holy Qur'an and those who do not

Hadrat Abu Musa (Radhi Allahu anho) narrated that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said:

"The example of a 'mo'min' (believer) who reads the Qur'an is like that of 'turanj' (citron), which has a pleasant smell and a sweet taste. The example of a 'mo'min' who does not read the Qur'an is like that of a date, which has no smell, though its taste is sweet, the 'munafiq' (hypocrite) who does not read the Qur'an is like a wild gourd, which has a bitter taste and no smell, and the 'munafiq' who reads the Qur'an is like a 'raithan' (sweet-smelling flower), which is fragrant but has a bitter taste."

In this 'hadith' an abstract quality of reading the Glorious Qur'an, has been compared to concrete objects in order to illustrate the difference between reading and not reading the Holy Qur'an. Otherwise it is obvious that material objects of this world like 'citrons' and 'dates' cannot match the sweetness and perfume of the Qur'an. There are, however, special points in this similitude, which pertain to the deep knowledge of the Prophets and testify to the vast understanding of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam). Consider, for example, the citron, which gives flavor to the mouth, cleans the stomach and stimulates the digestion. These are the qualities specially associated with the reading of the Qur'an since, fragrance in the mouth, internal purity and spiritual strength result from reading the Qur'an. It is also said that if there is 'citron' in the house, no genie can enter it. Some physicians say that 'citron' strengthens the memory and it is reported in the 'Ihya' by Hazrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) that three things, i.e., cleaning the teeth with 'miswak', fasting and reading the Holy Qur'an strengthen the memory.

In the Book of Abu Da'ud, it is mentioned at the conclusion of the 'hadith' given above that a good companion is like a person having musk. Even if you do not get musk, you will at least enjoy its fragrance. An evil companion is like a person with a furnace, near whom, even if you do not get blackened, you certainly cannot avoid the smoke. It is, therefore, important that one should be very careful in choosing his companions, with whom he has to mix generally.

7. Rise and fall of nations by reason of the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said:

"Allah exalts many people by means of this Book (the Holy Qur'an), and He also degrades and disgraces many others by means of the same."

People who believe in the Holy Book and act upon it are given by Allah position of honor and respect, both in this life as well as in the Hereafter, while those who do not act upon it are disgraced by Allah. This principle is also borne out by the various 'ayaat' of the Holy Qur'an. At one place it reads:

"He misleads many by this Book and guides many thereby."

At another place we come across:

"And We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy for believers, though it increases for the evil-doers naught save ruin."

The Prophet (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) is also reported to have said: "Many hypocrites of this Ummat will be the 'qurra', i.e., those who recite the Qur'an correctly." In 'Ihya-ul-Ulum' it is reported from some 'mashikh', "As soon as a man starts reading a 'surah' (chapter of the Holy Qur'an), the angels start invoking mercy for him and they continue to do so till he stops reading; on the contrary another person starts reading a 'surah, and the angels start cursing him and they continue to do so till he completes the reading.

Some scholars have stated that sometimes a man reads the Holy Qur'an and invokes curses on himself without even knowing it. For instance, he reads in the Holy Qur'an:

"Beware, the curse of Allah is on the wrong-doers and he exposes himself to this warning because of his wrongdoing."

In the like manner, he reads in the Qur'an:

"Beware the curse of Allah is upon the liars."

In fact he exposes himself to the warning by reason of his being himself a liar.

'Amir ibn-e-Wathilah (Radhi Allahu anho) says that Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) had appointed Nafe ibn-e-Abdul Harith as the Governor of Mecca. Once he asked the latter as to whom he had appointed as the administrator of forests. "Ibn-e-Abzi" replied Nafe. "Who is Ibn-e-Abzi?" said Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allahu anho). "He is one of our slaves" was the reply. "Why have you appointed a slave the 'amir' (leader)?" objected Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allahu anho). "Because he recites the Book of Allah" said Nafe. At this, Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) narrated the 'hadith' that it had been said by Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) that, because of this Book, Allah elevates many people and degrades many.

8. Three things shall be under 'Arsh (of Allah) on the Day of Judgement Reading it completely twice a year is the right of the Holy Qur'an Commentary requires expert knowledge of fifteen sciences

9. Elevated stage in Paradise by virtue of the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman ibn-e-Auf (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "On the Day of Judgement, three things will be under the shade of the 'Arsh' (Allah's Throne). One, the Holy Qur'an which will argue with men- the Qur'an has both an apparent and deeper meaning. The second will be 'amanat' (Trust). The third will be kinship, which shall proclaim 'O, Allah! Have mercy on the person who upheld me and deprive him of Your mercy whosoever severed me.'

Three things will be under the shade of the 'Arsh' signifies their utmost nearness in the sublime presence of Allah. "The Qur'an will argue" means that it will please the cause of those people who read it, respect it and act upon its commandments. It will intercede on their behalf and solicit upgrading of their rank. Mulla Ali Qari has narrated on the authority of 'Tirmazi' (a book of Hadith) that, in the presence of Almighty Allah, the Holy Qur'an will beg Allah to grant an apparel to its reader. Almighty Allah will give him a crown of honor. The Qur'an will again beseech Allah to be pleased with him, and Almighty Allah will express His pleasure to him.

We find in this life that the pleasure of the beloved is considered to be the most coveted gift. Similarly in the life Hereafter, no bounty shall stand comparison with the pleasure of our Beloved Almighty Allah. And in case of those who ignore their duty towards the Qur'an, it will challenge them saying, "Did you care for me? Did you fulfil your obligations towards me?"

It has been reported on the authority of Imam Abu Hanifa (Rahmatullah Alaih) in 'Ihya' that it is the due right of the Qur'an that it should be read completely twice a year. Those of us who never care to read the Qur'an should first consider how they will defend themselves against such a strong plaintiff. Death is inevitable and there can be no escape from it.

The last three are the branches of 'Ilm-ul-Balaghaght' (knowledge of oratory), and are considered very important subjects, which a commentator should master, because the Glorious Qur'an is a perfect miracle and its amazing constructions can only be understood after mastering these subjects.

(8) 'Ilm-ul-Qir'at, i.e. knowledge of the art of pronunciation, because different methods of recitation sometimes convey different meanings, and sometimes one meaning is to be preferred over the other.

(9) 'Ilm-ul-Aqa'id, i.e., knowledge of the fundamentals of faith. This is necessary to explain certain analogies. The literal meaning of certain 'ayaat' referring to Almighty Allah is not the correct one. For example, the analogy in the ayat, (The hand of Allah is over their hands) Will have to be explained because Allah has no physical hands.

(10) Usul-e-Fiqah i.e., Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. These are necessary for reasoning out and finding arguments in the basic support of statements.

(11) Asbab-unaz-ul, i.e., the particular circumstances which caused the revelation (of ayat). The meaning of an 'ayat' will be better understood if we know how and when it had been revealed. Sometimes the true meaning of an 'ayat' is understood only if we know the circumstances in which the ayat had been revealed.

(12) Nasikh-o-mansukh, i.e., knowledge of commandments that have subsequently been abrogated or changed, so that abrogated commandments may be distinguished from the standing ones.

(13) 'Ilm-ul-Fiqah, i.e. knowledge of Islamic Jurisprudence, because it is only through this knowledge that we arrive at a complete understanding of general principles.

(14) Knowledge of such 'ahadith' that happen to be commentary on certain brief verses of the Qur'an.

(15) The last but most important is the 'Ilm-e-Wahbi' or the gifted understanding, bestowed by Almighty Allah upon His selected ones, as is referred in the 'hadith'

"Whosoever acts upon what he knows, Almighty Allah bestows upon him the knowledge of things not known to him."

It is this special understanding that was implied in the reply of Hadrat 'Ali (Karram Allahu wajhu) (may Allah be kind to him) when he was asked by the people if he had received from Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) any special knowledge or instructions which were not received by others. Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) said, "I swear nothing special, except the clear understanding which Almighty Allah bestows upon a person in respect of the Qur'an."

Ibne-Abi-Dunya says that the knowledge above are like tools, i.e., essential pre-requisite for a commentator. A commentary written by a person who is not thoroughly acquainted with these branches of knowledge will be based on his personal opinion, which is prohibited. The Sahabah (Companions of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) already had Arabic language as their mother-tongue, and they reached the depth of the rest of the knowledge by means of their illuminating contact that they had with Raslullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam).

'Allamah Suyuti' says that those who think that it is beyond the capacity of a man to acquire 'Ilm-e-Wahbi', or gifted understanding, are not right. To get knowledge from Allah, one should adopt the means to this end, e.g., acting upon the knowledge that one has acquired, and disinclination towards the world.

It is stated in 'Kimia-e-Sa'adat' that three persons are not blessed with complete understanding of the Qur'an. First, one who is not well versed in Arabic, secondly, one who persists in committing a major sin or indulges in act of religious innovation, because these actions blacken his heart, which in turn prevents him from understanding

the Qur'an. Thirdly, one who is a rationalist, even in the matter of faith, and feels embarrassed when he reads an ayat of the Qur'an which he is not able to fully rationalize.

May Allah protect us from all such sins and evils.

10.A reward of ten virtues for every word of the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Whosoever reads one letter of the Book of Allah is credited with one 'hasnah' (blessing) and one blessing is equal to tenfold the like thereof in its reward. I do not say that (alam) is one letter, but (alif) is one letter (lam) is one letter, and (mim) is one letter."

The hadith affirms that whereas, ordinarily for the purpose of reward an act as a whole is taken into account but in the case of Qur'an it is not so, parts also count. Thus, in reading each letter is counted as one good deed. And the reward of each good deed will be increased ten times, as promised by Almighty Allah.

"One who brings a good deed, for him will be tenfold the like thereof".

Ten times, however, is the minimum increase.

Allah multiplies the reward for whomsoever He desires.

That each letter of the Holy Qur'an, when read, amounts to a good deed, has been illustrated by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) by saying that (alam) is not one letter, but (alif), (lam) and (mim) are three separate letters, so (alam) will comprise thirty blessings. There is a difference of opinion among scholars whether (alif, lam, mim) is the beginning of 'surah' Baqarah or of surah 'Feel'. If it is the beginning of surah 'Baqarah', and only three letters are counted, as they are written, then the blessings will be thirty. And if it is the beginning of surah 'Feel', then (alif), (lam) and (mim) which is the beginning of surah 'Baqarah' will be nine letters. Therefore, its reward will be ninety blessings.

Baihaqi (Rahmatullah alaihe) has reported another 'hadith' similar to this portion of the above mentioned hadith, viz., "I do not say that (Bismillah) is one letter, but uphold that (ba) (sin) and (mim) etc , are separate letters."

11. Parents of one who recites the Holy Qur'an and acts according To it, shall wear a crown more brilliant than the sun

Hadrat Ma'az Johani (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Whosoever reads the Qur'an and acts upon what is contained in it, his parents will be made to wear a crown on the Day of Judgement, the brilliance of which will excel that of the Sun, if the same were within your worldly houses. So, what do you think about the person who himself acts upon it?"

Thus, it is through the virtues of hi reading the Qur'an and acting upon it that the parents of the reader will be honored wit ha crown, the brilliance of which will far excel the light of the Sun even if the Sun were within one's own house. The Sun is at a great distance from us and even then its light is so bright. If the Sun comes down into one's house, its light and brilliance will surely increase manifold. The light of the crown to be worn by the parents of the reader will be still more brilliant. When this is in store for the parents, what will be the reward of the reader himself? Surely if the beneficiaries get so much, the reward of the person who is the real cause should be much more. The parents get this reward solely because they were the cause of the reader coming into being, or were responsible for his education.

In addition to the fact that the light of the Sun will be far greater if it were in one's own house, this simile implies yet another delicate point. Attachment and liking for a thing increase when it always remains with a person. Therefore, the feeling of strangeness for the Sun due to distance will give place to attachment, because of its

close nearness all the time. Thus in addition to describing the brilliance of the crown, the 'hadith' implies this attachment with the crown and also the great satisfaction that it belongs to oneself. Everybody gets benefited by the Sun, but if it were to be given entirely to a person, how very proud he would feel.

Hakim (Rahmatullah alaihe) has reported from Buraidah, (Radhi Allahu anho) saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam); "One who recites the Qur'an and acts upon it will be made to wear a crown woven with 'nur', and his parents will be made to wear garments, which will be more valuable than the entire world. They will say, 'Almighty Allah! What is it that we are being given these garments for?' 'In lieu of the reading of Qur'an by your child.' will be the reply.'

It is given in Jama'ul Fawa'id by Tibrani (Rahmatullah alaih) that Hadrat Anas (Radhi Allahu anho) had reported the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), "Whosoever teaches the reading of Qur'an to his son (without memorizing it), all his sins, whether, whether previous or subsequent, will be forgiven; and whoever makes his child memorize the Qur'an will be raised on the Day of Judgement in the semblance of a full moon; and his son will be asked to start recitation, and for every 'ayat' read by the child, the status of the parent will be raised to the next higher grade of 'Jannat', till the recitation of the Holy Qur'an is completed."

Such are the blessings for teaching the Qur'an to your children. This is not all. There is another point. God forbid, if you drive your child of the knowledge of 'din' (religion) for the sake of a few coppers, not only shall you be deprived of eternal reward but you shall be held answerable before Allah. Is it not a fact that you are depriving your dear child of reading the Qur'an for fear that Mullahs and Huffaz, after memorizing the Qur'an become dependent on others for their livings? Please remember that not only do you expose your children to eternal misery, but carry on your shoulders a very heavy accountability. The hadith that-

"Each one of you is a guardian, and will be questioned about those under his control."

Means that everyone shall be questioned about his subordinates and dependents as to what extent he taught 'Din' to them. Surely one should guard himself and his dependents against these shortcomings. But (as the proverb goes) "Should one discard clothes for fear of lice?" Nay, one should surely try to keep his clothes clean. If you impart religious education to your child, you will be free from your responsibilities. As long as the child lives, and whatever good deed he does and 'salat' he performs and forgiveness that he seeks from Allah for you, will elevate your position in Paradise. If for the sake of this life and for the lust of a few coppers, you keep him ignorant of 'din' not only will you have to suffer for this misdeed but whatever evil and misdeeds he does, your account will not be free from their burden. For God's sake, have pity on yourselves. This life is only a passing phase and death will put an end to all its hardship, however great, but the sufferings for which there is no end, will be everlasting.

12. Fire does not burn the Holy Qur'an

'Uqbah ibn-e-Amir (Radhi Allahu anho) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "If the Qur'an is placed in a skin and then put in the fire, it will not get burnt."

The scholars of 'Hadith' have interpreted this 'hadith' in two ways. Some of them take the words 'skin' and 'fire' in the literal sense. In this case the 'hadith' refers to a miracle which was particular in the lifetime of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) in the same way, as the miracles of other prophets were specific to their lifetime. In the second case, the word 'skin' is interpreted to mean the human skin and the word 'fire' means the fire of Hell. Thus the application of the 'hadith' is general and not confined to any particular period. It means that if any 'hafiz' of Qur'an were cast in due to any crime on his part, the fire of Hell will not affect him. In another Hadith it is said that the fire will not even touch him. The second interpretation of the above-mentioned 'hadith' is also supported by another 'hadith' reported by Abu Ummamah (Radhi Allahu anho) and also given in the book Sharah-ul-Sunnah, by Mula Ali Qari, which says, "Learn the Qur'an by heart, because Almighty Allah does not punish the heart which

contains the Qur'an." In its meanings this 'hadith' is clear and confirmed by Qur'an. Those who regard memorizing the Qur'an as useless should, for God's sake, ponder over these merits. The last-mentioned one alone should prompt everybody to dedicate his life to learning the Qur'an by heart, because there is no one who has not committed sins and does not deserve the fire of Hell.

In Sharah-ul-Ihya there is a list of those people who will rest in the shade of Allah's mercy (protection) on the horrible Day of Judgement. It is mentioned therein that, according to a 'hadith' reported from Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) by Dailmi that the custodians of Qur'an, in other words those who learn the Qur'an by heart, will be in the protection (shade) of Allah, in the company of the Prophets and other virtuous people.

13. One who memorizes and acts upon the Holy Qur'an shall be granted The right to intercede on behalf of ten persons

Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads Qur'an and learns it by heart, and regards what it makes lawful as lawful and its unlawful as forbidden, will be admitted into 'Jannat', by the Almighty Allah who will also accept his intercession in respect of ten such persons of his family who shall have been doomed to Hell."

By the grace of Allah, entry into Jannat is ensured for every believer though it may come after his being punished for his misdeeds. The 'hafiz' will, however, be favored with this entry right from the beginning. The ten persons in whose favor his intercession will be accepted will be those sinful and disobedient Muslims who are guilty of major sins. There can be no intercession, however, for the unbelievers. Almighty Allah has said:

"Whosoever ascribes partners unto Allah, for him Allah has forbidden Jannat, and for evil-doers there will be none amongst the helpers. It is also said in the Qur'an: "the Prophet and the believers are not allowed to pray for the forgiveness of 'mushrikin' (Plural of mushrik, one who ascribes partners unto Allah) even if they are their relatives."

The Qur'anic 'ayat' clearly say that 'mushrikin' will never be forgiven. The intercession of 'huffaz' will, therefore, be for those Muslims whose entry into Hell has been determined by their sins.

Those who are not 'huffaz' and cannot memorize the Qur'an should at least make one of their relatives a 'hafiz' so that by His grace they may be saved from their own evil-doings.

Allah be thanked for this gracious favor on the person whose father, uncles and grandfathers both maternal and paternal, were all huffaz. (This applies to the author May Allah bless him with more favors).

14. Similitude of one who learns and recites the Qur'an is like a bag full of musk

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allahu anho) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "learn the Qur'an and recite it, because the example of one who learns the Qur'an, reads it and recites it in 'Tahajjud' (salat late after midnight) is like an open bag full of musk, the fragrance whereof spreads over the entire place, and a person who has learnt the Qur'an but sleeps while the Qur'an is in his heart, is like a bag full of musk but with its mouth closed."

It means that the example of one who learns the Quran and cares for it and recites it in 'Tahajjud salat' is like that of a musk container which, if opened, fills the whole house with its sweet smell in the same way, the entire house is lit up with divine light and blessings due to the recitation by the 'hafiz'. Even if the 'hafiz' remains asleep or does not recite through his negligence, the Qur'an in his heart is in any case the musk. This negligence resulted in the loss that others were deprived of the blessings of Qur'an, but his heart does, in any case, contain the musk of Qur'an.

15. A heart devoid of the Holy Qur'an is like a deserted house

Hadrat Abdullah ibn-e-Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho) has narrated the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam): "He in whose heart there is no part of the Qur'an is like a deserted house."

The allusion to a deserted house has a subtle meaning, which is expressed by the proverb that "an idle man's brain is the devil's workshop" (literally the demon gets hold of an empty house). Similarly a heart, devoid of Qur'an gets more and more possessed by Satan. What an emphasis is therein this 'hadith' for memorizing the Holy Qur'an, that the heart which has not secured it has been likened to a deserted house.

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allahu anho) says: "In the house where the Qur'an is read, the household members increase, virtues and blessings multiply, angels descend upon them and Satan quits the house. Whereas the house in which Qur'an is not recited, life therein becomes straitened and devoid of blessings, angels leave the house and Satan ravages it."

Hadrat Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) and some others reported Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) to have said that a deserted house is one in which the Holy Qur'an is not recited.

16. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an in Salaat is more virtuous

Hadrat A'ishah (Radhi Allahu anha) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Recitation of the Qur'an in Salaat is more rewarding than the recitation outside salat; recitation outside salat is preferable to tasbeeh and takbir (repeating words of Praise for Allah); tasbeeh is superior to sadaqah (alms), sadaqah to 'Sawm' (fasting) and 'Sawm' is protection against Fire."

The superiority of recitation of the Qur'an over 'Zikr' (glorification and remembrance of Allah) is evident because Qur'an is the Word of Allah. As mentioned earlier, the superiority of the Word of Allah over the speech of others is like His superiority over His creation. The superiority of 'Zikr' over 'Sadaqah' has been stressed in other 'ahadith' as well. But the superiority of 'sadaqah' over 'Sawm' as given in this 'Hadith', seems contrary to that given in some other 'Ahadith' where 'Sawm' is said to be better than 'sadaqah.' This difference is due to the variations in the type of people and their conditions of life.

According to this 'hadith' 'Sawm' comes last in the order of merit. When 'Sawm' is protection against the Fire of Hell, we can imagine numerous blessings of the recitation of Qur'an.

The author of 'Ihya' reports on the authority of Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) that for every letter recited there are hundred blessings for one who reads the Qur'an while standing in 'salat', fifty blessings for one who reads while sitting in 'salat', twenty-five blessings for one who reads in the of 'wudu' outside salat, ten blessings for one who reads without 'wudu', and one blessing for him who does not read himself but listens eagerly to the reader.

17. The reward of reciting three ayaat in Salaat

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allahu anho) says: "Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) asked us, 'Does any one of you like that when he returns home, he should find three she-camels, pregnant and fat.' We said, 'We would love to do so.' Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Three 'ayat' which one of you may recite in his 'salat' are better than three big pregnant and fat she-camels."

A similar subject-matter has been described in hadith 3. In this 'hadith' there is a reference to recitation of the Qur'an inside 'Salaat' which is more virtuous than recitation outside 'salat'. That is why a comparison has been made to pregnant she-camels. Because just as in one case, there is a reference to two virtues, that is 'salat' and recitation, in the other case there is a reference to two things that is she-camel and her pregnancy. It has been

mentioned under hadith 3 that 'ahadith' of this kind are only for the purpose of a simile, otherwise the everlasting reward of one 'ayat' is more valuable than thousands of mortal she-camels.

18. Rewards of visual recitation and recitation by memory

Hazrat Usman bin Abdullah bin Aus Thaqafi (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates from his grand-father that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Reciting the Qur'an from memory carries one thousand degrees of 'thawab' (spiritual reward), while reading the Qur'an from the Book increase it up to two thousand degrees."

Many virtues of being a 'hafiz' have been mentioned before. In this 'hadith', however, preference is shown to reading from the Holy Book as compared to reciting it from memory, because reading from the Book is not only conducive to deeper understanding and meditation but also includes several other devotional acts, such as looking into the Qur'an and touching it, etc. the difference in the apparent meanings of the various 'ahadith' has led to a difference of opinion among the scholars of 'hadith' as to whether reading from the Holy Book is better than reciting it from memory. By reason of the above 'hadith', and because reading from the Book safeguards against making mistakes and includes the virtuous act of looking at the Holy Book, some scholars give preference to reading by looking into the Book. By reason of other 'ahadith', and because reciting from memory is conducive to greater devotion and is free from Riya (dissimulation) and because this was the way of recitation of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) himself, some scholars consider that reciting from memory is preferable. Imam Nawawi (Rahmatullah alaih) has decided that the preference between the two depends upon the individuals. Some people concentrate and meditate better while reading from the Book, while others do so, reciting from memory. Therefore, reading from the Book is preferable for some and reciting from memory for others. Hafiz (Rahmatullah alaih) also has favored this interpretation in his book 'Fath-ul-Bari.'

It is said that on account of excessive reading by Hadrat Uthman (Radhi Allahu anho) two scripts of the Holy Qur'an got torn up. Amr ibn-e-Maimun (Rahmatullah alih) has mentioned in 'Sharh-ul-Ihya', that one who opens the Holy Qur'an after Fajr (Dawn) salat and reads a hundred 'ayat' gets a reward as large as the entire world. Reading the Qur'an by looking into it is reported to be beneficial for eyesight. Hadrat Abu Ubaidah (Radhi Allahu anho) has narrated a lengthy 'hadith' in which each 'rawi' (reporter) says that he had some trouble with his eyes and that his teacher bade him to recite the Qur'an by looking into it. Hadrat Imam Shafi (Rahmatullah alaih) often used to open the Qur'an after 'Isha' (night) salat and close it only a little before Fajr salat.'

19. Recitation of Qur'an cleans the rust of hearts.

Abdullah ibn-e-Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) narrated: "Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "The hearts get rusted as does iron with water. When someone asked, 'what could cleanse hearts again?' Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, 'Frequent remembrance of death and recitation of Qur'an.'

Excess of sins and negligence in the remembrance of Allah cause the hearts to rust, as water causes iron to rust. The reading of 'Qur'an and the remembrance of death polish the rusted hearts. The heart is like a mirror. If it is not cleaned, it will not properly reflect the recognition of Allah. The more burnished and brighter it is, the better will it show from the enlightenment. Therefore, the more we indulge in sinful lust and devilish acts, the more are we deprived of the recognition of Almighty Allah. It is with a view to polishing the mirror of the heart that 'masha'ikh' enjoin upon their disciples to devote themselves to self-discipline endeavors, spiritual occupation, incantation and remembrance of Allah.

It is mentioned in some 'ahadith' that when a man commits a sin, a black dot stains his heart. If he repents in real earnest, this dot is removed, but if he commits another sin, another black dot appears. In this way, if he goes on committing sins after sins his heart gets completely blackened. At this stage the heart becomes quite disinclined to do good, and keeps on turning to evil.

May Allah save us from such a stage.

"Verily their evil deeds have covered their hearts with rust" refers to this blackening of the heart.

According to another 'hadith', Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "I leave two 'wuaz' (plural of waiz-Preacher)- one speaking and the other silent. That which speaks is the Holy Qur'an and that which is silent is the remembrance of death."

Certainly the words of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) are worthy of loving acceptance. But only those who take proper heed derive benefit from a sermon. On the other hand, if we consider 'Din' itself as being a useless occupation and an obstacle in the way of material progress, we will neither feel the need of spiritual advice nor act upon it.

Hadrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alaih) says, "People of earlier times believed the Holy Qur'an to be the Commandment of Allah, they contemplated over it throughout the night and acted upon it during the day. Whereas today you exercise particular care to pronounce its words and vowels correctly, but do not take it as the Commandment of Allah, and do not contemplate over it."

20. The Holy Qur'an is the honor and distinction of Muslims

Hadrat A'ishah (Radhi Allahu anha) reports that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Certainly there is always a thing in which people take pride. And that which is glory and pride for my Ummat is the Holy Qur'an."

People indicate their nobility and dignity by virtue of their lineage, their family and other similar things. The Qur'an is the source of nobility and pride for the Ummat in the sense that reading, memorizing and teaching it, as also acting upon it, in short, everything related to it, confers an honor upon them. Why should it not be so? After all, it is the Word of the Beloved and the Commandment of the Master. Its dignity excels all worldly honors. However great the achievements of this worldly life, however splendid, vanish sooner or later, while the splendor and dignity of the Qur'an is eternal and unbounded.

Even the minor attributes of the Glorious Qur'an are such as we should be proud of, let alone its excellence in other respects, for example, its beautiful composition, wonderful coherence, the right choice of words, the proper development of arguments, the narration of past events and prophecies about the future. Its assailing remarks concerning other people are such as cannot be contradicted, e.g., the remark about the Jews, that they profess their love for Allah, but they never long for death. The listener is impressed by its recitation and the reader never gets tired of reading it. It is usual that, however lovely a discourse may be, it may become tired of reading it for the twentieth time if not the tenth; or the fortieth time, if not the twentieth. On the other hand, if we just memorize one section of the Qur'an, one may read it two hundred times or four hundred times or go on doing so for the whole life, but one shall never lose interest. And if something prevents us from enjoying it, that will be for a while only. In fact, the more we read the Qur'an, the greater will be our enjoyment and satisfaction. Even if a few of the above excellent qualities were to be found in any composition, we would be all praise for it. So, if all these qualities were present in a composition to a perfect degree, surely it would have to be regarded with the greatest honor and pride.

Now, we should just reflect on our own condition. How many of us feel really proud of having memorized the whole Qur'an? Does a 'hafiz' command real respect in our eyes? Alas! Our honor and pride lie in high university degrees, in big titles, in worldly pomp and show, and in the wealth, which we will have to leave behind us on our death.

O, Allah! Have mercy upon us.

21. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an is Nur (effulgence) in the life and a provision in the Hereafter Houses of recitation shine like the moon and stars, for those in Heaven

Number and subject-matter of Heavenly Booklets and Divine books

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) says that he requested Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) to give him some lasting advice. Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said: "Cultivate the fear and reverence of Allah in your heart, because this is the root of all virtuous deeds." I asked him to add something more and he said, "Stick to the reading of the Qur'an, because it is a 'nur' in this life and 'Zakhirah' (provision) for the Hereafter."

The fear of Allah is the root of all good actions. A man, whose heart is filled with fear of Allah, does neither commit any sin nor experience any difficulty.

Whoever fears Allah, Allah will make away for him out of every difficulty and provide from whence he has no expectation.

Some of the foregoing traditions also disclose that the Qur'an is illuminating. In Sharah-ul-Ihya, Hadrat Abu Naim (Rahmatullah alaih) states that Hadrat Basit (Radhi Allaho anho) has reported from Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) that the houses in which the Holy Qur'an is read shine unto the inhabitants of Heaven as do the stars shine unto the inhabitants of Earth.

This 'hadith' which has been quoted from 'AT-Targhib', is only a part of a long hadith reported from Ibn-e-Habban by Mulla Ali Qari in detail and by Suyuti in brief. Although the above-mentioned part of the Hadith is sufficient for the purpose of this book, yet the whole hadith includes many essential and useful subjects and, therefore, its subject-matter is given in the following paragraphs.

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) says that he inquired from Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) about the number of books revealed by Almighty Allah. Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) replied, "One hundred booklets and four books. Fifty booklets were revealed to Hadrat Shith (Alayhis Salam) (peace be upon him), thirty to Hadrat Idris (Alayhis Salam) (peace be upon him), ten to Hadrat Ibrahim (Alayhis Salam) and ten to Hadrat Musa (Alayhis Salam) before the Torah. In addition, four books, i.e., the Torah, the Bible, the Psalms and the Holy Qur'an have been revealed by Almighty Allah."

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) enquired about the contents of the booklets revealed to Hadrat Ibrahim (Alayhis Salam). Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) replied that they consisted of proverbs, e.g., "O, you strong and proud king! I did not appoint you to hoard wealth, but to prevent the complaint of the oppressed from reaching me by redressing it before-hand, because I do not reject the complaint of the oppressed person, even though he may be a disbeliever.

(The author states that whenever Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) deputed any of his Companions as an 'amir' or Governor, in addition to giving other advice, he used to emphasize:

"Beware of the invocation of the oppressed because between him and Allah there is no veil or intermediary."

As a Persian verse goes: "Beware of the sigh of hose oppressed, when they pray."

Divine acceptance readily greets them.

These booklets also mentioned that it is incumbent on a wise man, unless he is deprived of sanity, to divide his time in three parts: one for worship of his Lord; one for self-reckoning to consider what acts, good or bad, he did and one for his lawful earning of livelihood. It is also incumbent upon him to watch of his time and be thoughtful about improving his conditions and to guard his tongue against unnecessary and useless talk. Whoever keeps a check on his own speech, his tongue will indulge less in useless talk.

Also, wise man should not travel except for three purposes viz., for making provision for the life Hereafter, or in search of livelihood, or for such recreation as is permissible.

Hadrat Abu Zar then inquired about the contents of the booklets revealed to Hadrat Musa (Alayhis Salam). Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "They contained monitions only, such as 'I am astonished by one who finds pleasures in anything in spite of his faith in the certainty of death. (Naturally when a person becomes sure of his sentence of hanging, and mounting the gallows, he can never find pleasure in anything). 'I am astonished by one who laughs in spite of his faith in certainty of death.' I am astonished by one who observes accidents, changes and revolutions of the world all the time, and still finds satisfaction in it. 'I am astonished by one who believes in predestination, still suffers from grief and hardship.' 'I am astonished by one who believes that he will soon be required to render an account and still does no good deed."

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) goes on saying that he asked for more advice. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) advised that he should cultivate fear of Allah, because it is root and basis of all spiritual actions. Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) then begged for more advice. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Be consistent in recitation of Qur'an and remembrance of Allah, because it is 'nur' in this world and 'Zakhirah' in Heaven." Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) again sought further advice and was told, "Abstain from too much of laughter, because it causes the heart to wither, and the face loses its lustre." (Too much of laughter is injurious both for the outward and inward disposition of man.)

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) sought further advice, whereupon Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Stick to 'jihad' because this is the 'rohbaniat' (monasticism) for my Ummat. (Rohban- Plural of 'rahib' were those persons of the previous umam -Plural of ummat- following of a Prophet- who severed all their worldly connections and turned towards Allah.

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) asked for more advice and Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Associate yourself with the poor and the needy, be friendly with them and sit in their company." When Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) requested further advice, and Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Look towards those who rank below you (so that you may get used to being thankful) and do not look at those who rank above you, lest you should despise the favors of Allah upon you."

When Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) again asked for more advice, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said: "Let your faults prevent you from criticizing others and do not try to find fault with others, because you commit those faults yourself. It is enough to prove you guilty that you should find in others such faults as you yourself possess, though you may not be aware of them, and that you should find in others such misdeeds as you yourself commit." After this, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) patted the chest of Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) with his loving hand and said, "O, Abu Zar! There is no wisdom better than prudence, nor any piety better than refraining from the unlawful, nor any nobility better than polite manners."

(In stating the contents of this long 'hadith', the gist and meaning has been kept in view, in preference to the literal translation.)

22. Descent of Sakinah and mercy upon, and the surrounding by Angels of, A group engaged in recitation of the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Never do a people collect in one of the houses of Allah (mosque) reciting the Qur'an and reading it out to one another, but 'Sakinah' (tranquility) descends upon them, Rahmat (mercy) enshrouds them, the angels throng around them and Almighty Allah mentions them, in the assembly of angels."

This Hadith describes the special virtues of religious schools and institutions. Acquisition of either reward mentioned above is so sublime that even if one devotes his whole life to acquire it, it will be worth while. But here there are so many rewards, especially the last one. Mention in the Court of Almighty Lord and remembrance in the company of the beloved are bounties that can hardly be surpassed.

Descending of 'sakinah' has been mentioned in many 'ahadith'. The scholars of 'ahadith' have interpreted its real significance in many ways. The various interpretations, however, do not contradict each other and can be meaningfully put together.

Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) had interpreted 'sakinah' as a special breeze, which has a face like that of a human being.

Allamah Suddi (Rahmatullah alaih) is reported to have said that it is the name of a large golden dish in Paradise used for washing the hearts of the prophets (Alaihim-ussalam) (peace be upon them).

Some have said that it is a special form of mercy.

Tibri (Rahmatullah alaih) prefers the view that it means peace of heart. Some interpret it as grace, others consider it as dignity, and some take it to mean angels. There are other views as well. Hafiz has written in 'Fath-ul-Bari' that 'sakina' includes all the above mentioned blessings. In the opinion of Nawawi (Rahmatullah alaih), it is a combination of tranquility, mercy, etc., and descends along with the angels. It is mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

"Then Allah caused His 'sakinah' to descend upon him" (IX: 40)

"It is He Who sent down 'sakinah' into the hearts of the believers" (XLVIII :4)

"Wherein is 'sakinah' from your Lord" (II :248)

Thus this happy blessing is mentioned in several 'ayaat' of the Qur'an, and there are many ahadith containing tidings of this.

It is narrated in 'Ihya' that once Ibn-e-Thauban (Radhi Allahu anho) had promised one of his relatives that he would break his fast with him, but reached the house of his relative next morning. When the host complained about the guest being so late, the guest said, "But for the promise that I owe you, I would never disclose what prevented me from coming to you. I just got late by chance until it was time of 'Isha Salat'. I thought I should complete my 'Witr' (compulsory salat of three 'rakat' following 'Isha') as well, lest I should die during the night without offering this 'salat', because there can be no surety against death. While I was reciting 'qunut' (a special invocation in Witr salat), I saw a green garden of Paradise, which had all sorts of flowers. I was so absorbed in the vision that it was dawn." There have been hundreds of similar incidents in the lives of our righteous ancestors. Such things are, however, experienced only when there is complete separation from everyone besides Allah, and perfect attention towards Him.

Similarly there are many 'ahadith' mentioning enshrouding by the angels. A detailed story about Usaid ibn-e-Hudhair (Radhi Allahu anho) is given in the books of Hadith. It is said that while he was reciting the Holy Qur'an, he felt a sort of cloud spread over himself. The prophet (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) informed him that these were angels who had gathered to listen to the recitation of the Qur'an. Due to their great throng they appeared like a cloud.

Once a Sahabi (companion of the Holy Prophet, Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) felt a sort of cloud over himself. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) told him that it was 'sakinah', which was sent down by reason of the recitation of the Qur'an.

In Muslim Sharif, this 'hadith' is given in greater detail. The concluding sentence is-

"One whose evil deeds drive him away from the mercy of Allah, the superiority of his lineage or nobility of his family cannot bring him near it."

Thus a person who has a continuous noble pedigree, but indulges in disobedience and impiety, cannot be equal in the presence of Allah to a Muslim who is of low birth and abject in humility, but otherwise God-fearing and devout. Verily the noblest of you in the view of Allah is the one who is most God-fearing.

23. Those seeking nearness to Allah have no act more effective than recitation Of the Holy Qur'an The dream of Imam Ahmad ibn-e-Hambal A means of attaining the stage of 'Ihsan'

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam) said, "You cannot turn to Allah and gain nearness to Him with anything superior to that which directly proceeded from Him, i.e., the Holy Qur'an."

It is evident from numerous 'ahadith' that there is no better means of seeking nearness to the presence of Allah than recitation of the Qur'an. Imam Ahmad ibn-e-Hambal (Rahmatullah alaih) says, " I saw Almighty Allah in a dream and asked Him what was the best means for seeking nearness to His presence. Allah said, "O, Ahmad! It is My Word (i.e. Qur'an). I inquired whether it is only reading while understanding the meaning, or reading without understanding. Allah said 'Whether by understanding the meaning or without understanding, it is a means of nearness either way."

That the reading of the Qur'an is the best means of getting access to Almighty Allah is explained in the commentary of Maulana Shah Abdul Aziz Dehvi (Nawwar-Allaho Marqadahu), who is an authority for the prosperity. Its substance is that 'Suluk' ela-Allah' (the path of mystics towards Allah) which is also called 'Martabe ihsan' (stages in nearness towards Allah) can be attained in three ways:

- (1) 'Tasawwur', known as meditation in Shari'at and muraqabah in the terminology of mystics.
- (2) Remembrance of Allah by repeating words of praise for Him.
- (3) Reading of the Holy Qur'an.

Since the first method is remembrance in the heart, so there remain in fact two ways only; first the remembrance by heart or by word of mouth, and secondly recitation of the Qur'an. The essence of 'Zikr' is that the word, which is used for or refers to Almighty Allah, should be repeated over and over again. This repetition helps 'mudrasah' (the faculty of understanding) in concentrating upon the person of the one being remembered. It would give rise to a feeling of immediate presence of that person. Constancy in this state is called 'ma 'iyat' (togetherness), which is referred to in the 'hadith' below:

"My servant ceases not to seek nearness to Me through 'Nafle' (optional) salat, until I make him My favorite, and thus I become his ears wherewith he hears, his eyes wherewith he sees, and his hands wherewith he holds, and his feet wherewith he walks.

It means that when a person, through excessive devotion becomes a favorite of Allah, Allah becomes a guardian of all the limbs of his body so that his eyes, ears, etc. all submit to His will. This blessing is said to be the result of constancy in 'Nafil salat', because 'Fard' (obligatory) salat are specified and do not admit of excess, while nearness and close attachment demand constancy and concentration, as mentioned above.

But this mode of seeking nearness is exclusive for that Pure and Beloved Being (Allah), and it is impossible to seek nearness to anybody else by remembering his name over and over again. This is because the one whose nearness is being sought must have two attributes. First, he should be omniscient, so that he comprehends the 'Zikr' of all the "Zakirin"(Plural of 'Zakir' - one who remembers Allah) whether by word of mouth or by heart, irrespective of language, time and place. Secondly, he should have the power to illumine the understanding and fulfil the yearning of one who remembers, which is known as 'dunu' (nearness), 'tadalli' (being nearer), 'nuzul' (descent) and 'qurb' (nearness). Since these two prerequisites are possessed only by Allah, the above mentioned methods of seeking nearness is effective only in respect of Him. The following 'Hadith-e-Qudsi' (a revelation of Allah quoted by Rasululllah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam). Points to this fact:

"Whoever comes near Me by one span, I go near him by an arm's length; whoever comes near Me by one arm's length, I go near him by one 'bah' (stretch of both arms); whoever comes to Me walking, I go towards him running."

This similitude is only for illustration. Otherwise, Allah 'Subhanau wa Taqaddus' (Glorious and Sacred Allah) is above walking and running .it only means that those who remember and seek Him are helped and looked after by Almighty Allah in a measure far in excess of their own inner urge and efforts. This is so, because it behooves His Benevolence. So, the steadfastness of those who remember Him invokes constant attention and results in the descent of favors of Almighty Allah, the Glorious. The Qur'an altogether is 'Zikr' of Allah, in the sense that no 'ayat' of the Qur'an is devoid of remembrance and attention towards Allah. And as such it bears characteristics of 'Zikr' as mentioned above. There is, however, another distinction of the Qur'an, which is the cause of increased nearness to Allah. And it is this: that every discourse carries the qualities and influencing traits of the speaker. It is obvious that recitation of the poetry of sinful and wicked people has its evil effects. While the verses of righteous people exercise a noble influence. It is for this reason that excessive study of knowledge of logic and philosophy produces pride and conceit, while excessive devotion to the study of 'hadith' leads to humility. Although as languages, both English and Persian are equal, they produce varying influences upon the readers due to the divergence in the beliefs and attitudes of the various authors. It can be concluded that repeated recitation of the Qur'an will result in the reader's being influenced by the qualities of the Originator of the verses and in developing a natural affinity for them. Moreover, if a person is devoted to the publications of an author, he naturally starts liking and favoring that person. In the same way, the reader of the Qur'an is sure to win Allah's abundant grace, which in turn promotes nearness to Him. May Allah bless us all with His favors.

24. Men of Qur'an are of the household of Allah

Hadrat Anas (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "For Allah, from amongst the people, there are some who are those of His household." The Sahabah (Radhi Allaho anhum) (may Allah be pleased with them) asked, "Who are those people?" he replied "Men of the Qur'an. They are of the household of Allah, and are his favored ones."

"Men of the Qur'an are those who always remain occupied with the Qur'an and have got a special attachment to it. That such people are the household of Allah and His favorites is evident. It is, therefore, clear from the foregoing that, as long as such people always remain occupied with the Qur'an, special favors of Almighty Allah continue to be conferred upon them. Certainly those who live in constant company do become as one of the household. What a great honor it is to belong to His household, to be reckoned amongst the 'Men of Allah' and to become His favorites, with such little striving and endeavor. What sacrifices of comfort and money are not made by people for admittance to worldly darbars (royal courts) or to be elected as members of an Assembly. Hey flatter the voters and bear all sorts of humiliations; yet they consider all this worth while. But the endeavor for the Qur'an is considered as a waste of time and energy:

"Look at the difference between the paths; what a great divergence!"

25. Allah's special attention towards the Prophet who recites the Holy Qur'an in a sweet tone.

26. Allah's special attention towards recitation by a Qari Hadrat 'Abdullah ibn-e-Mas'ud and a singer

Hadrat Fudalah Ibn-e-Ubaid (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Almighty Allah listens to the voice of the reader of the Qur'an more eagerly than does a master to the song of his singing 'bandi' (slave girl)."

It is natural that singing should attract attention. But religious people do not listen to singing because of the restriction in Islam. However, Islam does not prohibit listening to the song of a slave woman in one's lawful possession., even though, this may attract the fullest attention.

It is, however, necessary that the Qur'an shall not be recited in a singing tone, because doing so is forbidden according to several 'ahadith'. In one 'hadith' it is said:

"Beware of reciting the Qur'an in a musical tone, like that of lovers signing their love poems as musical compositions."

The 'masha'ikh' say that one who reads the Glorious Qur'an like a musical song is a 'fasiq' (evil-doer), and even a listener to such recitation commits a sin. It is, however, desirable to recite the Qur'an in a sweet voice without following the rules of singing. There are various 'ahadith' containing exhortation for reading the Qur'an in a sweet voice. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has said at one place, "Adorn the

Qur'an with a good voice." In another 'hadith' it is said, "A sweet voice makes the beauty of the Qur'an twice as beautiful."

Hadrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (Rahmatullah alaih) has written in his book (Ghunya) that once Hadrat Abdullah ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) happened to pass a place in the vicinity of Kufa and saw a gathering of evil-doers in a house. A singer named Zazan was singing and playing his instrument. On hearing his voice, Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) said, "What a sweet voice, only if it were used for reciting the Glorious Qur'an," and thus saying he covered his head with a piece of cloth and went his way. Zazan had seen him saying something. On inquiring from the people, he came to know that Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) was a Sahabi who had passed saying those words. Zazan got very much perturbed by that remark and, to cut the story short, he broke all his musical instruments and became a follower of Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) and thereafter rose to the position of a distinguished scholar of his time.

There are various 'ahadith' that commend reading of the Holy Qur'an in a good voice and at the same time prohibit reading it in a voice resembling singing, as has been stated before.

Hadrat Huzaifah (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Recite the Qur'an in the Arabic accent, do not recite it in the tone of lovers or in the voice of Jews and Christians. There will shortly arise a people who will recite the Qur'an with affectation like signers and mourners, and such reading will be of no advantage to them at all. They themselves will get into trouble, and so also those who admire their reading."

Taus (Rahmatullah alaih) writes that someone asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) "Who it was who read the Glorious Qur'an in the best voice?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) replied, "It is he whom you hear

and feel that he is under the fear of Allah, i.e., his voice shows his being overwhelmed with fear." This is, however, the extreme benevolence of Allah that He does not expect from a person anything beyond his capacity. There is a 'hadith' that Allah has deputed an angel on a special duty. If there be somebody who recites the Qur'an, but is unable to do so as correctly, as it should be done, this angel corrects his recitation before he takes it up to the Heavens."

"Oh, Allah! I cannot enumerate the praises due to Thee."

27. The Holy Prophet's exhortation for reciting the Holy Qur'an day and night

Hadrat Ubaidah Mulaiki (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "O, you devotees of the Qur'an! Do not use the Qur'an as a pillow, but read it properly day and night, as it ought to be read. Propagate the Holy Qur'an, read it in a good voice and ponder over its contents, so that you may succeed. Do not seek a reward for it (in this life), because it has got a magnificent reward (in the Hereafter)."

A few points in this Hadith are as follows:

(1) It is said that the Qur'an should not be used as a pillow. Doing so is an act of disrespect towards Holy Book. It has been written by Ibn-e-Hajar (Radhi Allahu anho) that using the Qur'an as a pillow, stretching ones' feet towards it, and trampling over it, are acts which are all forbidden. Secondly the expression "using as a pillow" also implies showing neglect towards the Holy Qur'an. It serves no purpose to place it on a pillow, as it is sometimes found places on a stand by the side of a grave in a shrine for 'barakah' (blessings). This is utter disregard of the Holy Book. We owe it to the Holy Book that it should be read.

(1) that it should be read.

(2) The expression "Read it as it ought to be read" means that it should be read with the highest degree of reverence. Commandment to this effect is there in the Qur'an itself.

"Those to whom We have given the Book, read it as it ought to be read."

The orders of a king are received with great respect, and a letter from the beloved is read with great fondness; similarly the Qur'an should be read with great respect and fondness.

(3) The expression "Propagate the Qur'an" means that we should do so by speech, by writing, by persuasion, by practicing and by all other possible means.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) ordered its propagation and spreading, but some of our bright thinkers consider it a vain task, and at the same time they claim that they have great love for Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) and for Islam.

According to a Persian verse:

"I am afraid, O, Bedouin! You can never reach Ka'bah (the most Sacred Mosque on earth in Mecca). Because the path you are following lead to Turkistan."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has ordered spreading of the Qur'an, but we do not hesitate to put all sorts of hurdles in the way of its propagation. We make laws for compulsory secular education so that children, instead of learning the Qur'an, are force to join primary schools. We are displeased with teachers in religious schools for spoiling the lives of children, and, therefore, we do not send or children to them. Even if this apprehension is correct, it does not absolve us of our responsibility. On the other hand, our responsibility becomes even greater because we are all duty-bound, individually and collectively, to propagate the Qur'an. The religious teacher is, no doubt, responsible for this shortcomings, but if, because of his defects, we prevent children from going to

religious schools, get notices issued to their parents in the name of compulsory primary education, compelling them to deprive their children of learning the Qur'an, then this is like killing a tuberculosis patient by giving him poison. An attempt to justify our hostile conduct by the supposed omission on the part of the religious teacher is a lame excuse, and this argument will not avail in the Court of Almighty Allah. We may consider it necessary to educate our children in subjects like elementary arithmetic, to make them fit for running a petty grocery shop or for getting employment with the country's rulers, but according to Almighty Allah the learning of the Qur'an is the most important.

(1) That recitation should be in a sweet voice has already been explained under the previous 'hadith'

(2) We are required to ponder over the meaning of the Qur'an. There is a quotation from Torah in 'Ihya', which Allah says, "My servant! Are you not ashamed of your behavior towards Me? If you receive a letter from a friend while you are going on a road you stop and sit at a suitable place and read it with full attention and try to understand every word therein. But in case of My Book, wherein I have explained everything and have repeatedly emphasized important matters, so that you may ponder over and understand them, you show an attitude of indifference. Do you consider Me inferior to your friend even? O, My servant! Some of your friends sit with you and talk to you; you pay them full attention. You listen to them and try to understand them. If anybody tries to interrupt you, you stop him with a gesture. I talk to you, through My Book, but you pay no heed. Do you consider Me inferior to your friends? " The merits of meditation and contemplation on the contents of the Qur'an have already been mentioned in the Foreword of this book and again under 'hadith 8'.

The expression "Do not seek prompt reward" means that no wages should be accepted for reciting the Qur'an, because your recitation is going to fetch you a great reward in the Hereafter.

To accept reward for it in this life is just like being content with shells instead of money. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "When my Ummat will attach more value to money, it will lose the dignity which Islam confers on it, and when it will give up enjoining good and forbidding evil, it will be deprived of the blessings of Divine Revelation, viz., the understanding of the Qur'an."

"O Allah! Guard us against this."

28. The Holy Qur'an contains the essence of all previous Revelations and more

Hadrat Waathilah (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "I have been given 'Sa'ba Tuwali' in lieu of the Torah, (Mi'in) in lieu of the Psalms, (Mathani) in lieu of the Bible, and (Mufassal) as a special favor to me."

The first seven sowaar are called 'Sab'a Tuwal' (the seven longest ones), the next eleven are called 'Mi'in (sowaar consisting of about hundred ayaat each), the following twenty sowaar are known as 'Mathani' (oft-repeated sowaar), while all the remaining sowaar are called 'Mufassal' (the explicit ones). This division is according to a popular interpretation, but there is some difference of opinion as to whether a certain 'surah' is included in 'Saba'a Tuwal' or 'Mi'in'. Similarly there is disagreement as to whether a 'surah' falls under 'Mathani or Mufassal'. But this disagreement does not affect the meaning and purpose of this 'hadith'. This 'hadith' shows that the Holy Qur'an contains the equivalents of all the important Heavenly Books that had been revealed earlier and, moreover, contains 'Mufassal' as a special addition, the like of which is not to be found in the earlier Books.

29. The Holy Prophet sits in the company of poor Muhajirin

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates "Once I was sitting with a group of indigent 'muhajirin', who did not even have sufficient clothes to cover their whole body and as such some of them were hiding themselves behind others. A 'qari' (one who is well versed in reciting the Qur'an) was reciting the Glorious Qur'an. Suddenly Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) came and stood near us. On his arrival the reader stopped reciting. He

invoked peace upon us, and asked us what we had been doing. We replied that we had been listening to the Holy Qur'an. Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "All praise is for Allah, Who created such people in my Ummat that I have been ordered to stay with them." Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) sat in our midst so as to be equidistant from all of us. Then he asked all of us to get closer to him. All of us sat with our faces towards him. Thereafter, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, 'O, you poor, 'muhajirin', I give you glad tidings of perfect 'NUR' on the Day of Judgement, and you shall enter Paradise before wealthy people by half a day, and this half day will be equal to five hundreds years."

That 'muhajirin' did not even have sufficient clothes to cover their whole body apparently refers to the exposure of that part of the body, which it is not obligatory to cover. But in public one feels shy at the exposure of even such parts. This is the reason why they were sitting behind one another.

They did not become aware of the arrival of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) as he came, because of their pre-occupation. They saw him when he had come very near to them and then, out of respect, the reader stopped reading.

Although Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) had seen one of them reading the Qur'an, he inquired about what they had been doing. This inquiry was to express his pleasure over what he had seen them doing.

One day in the next life will be equal to one thousand years of this world, as is given in the Holy Qur'an:

"Lo! A day with your Lord is as a thousand years of that ye reckon."

This is the reason why the Arabic word (ghadan) (tomorrow) is generally used while referring to the Day of Judgement. Even this will be the probable length of a day for the believers in general. As for the disbelievers, the Qur'an says that:

"A day will be equal to fifty thousand years."

For true believers, this day will be shorter according to their status. It is reported that , for some true believers, it will be like the time spent in two 'rakaat' (plural of rak'at- unit of salat consisting of three postures) of Fajr salat.

The merits of reading the Qur'an are given in many ahadith. Similarly, the merits of listening to the Qur'an are also found in numerous 'ahadith'. The act of listening to the recitation of the Qur'an is so virtuous that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) had been ordered to stay among those engaged in reading the Qur'an, as given in this 'hadith'. Some learned scholars are of the opinion that listening to the Qur'an is more virtuous than reading it, because reading the Qur'an is more virtuous than reading it, because reading the Qur'an is 'nafl' and listening 'fard', and 'fard' act is always better than a 'nafl' one.

From this 'hadith' there is one more deduction, in respect of which the learned scholars differ in their opinion. There is disagreement as to whether a destitute but steadfast person, who conceals hi poverty from others is better, or a wealthy person who is grateful to Allah and discharges his obligations. This 'hadith' provides an argument in favor of the destitute one who is steadfast.

30. The reward for reciting and listening to recitation of the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "who ever listens to one 'ayat' of the Holy Qur'an, there is written for him a twofold virtue, and whoever recites it (one ayat), it shall be 'nur' for him on the Day of Judgement."

The scholars of 'Hadith' have questioned the above hadith with respect to its authority, but its subject-matter is also affirmed by various other traditions to the effect that even listening to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an carries great reward, so much so that according to some scholars, listening to the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an is more virtuous than its reading. Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), while sitting on the 'mimbar' (pulpit), said to him, "Recite the Qur'an for me." Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) said "it does not behoove me to read out the Qur'an to you, because it is you to whom it was revealed." Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "It is my heart's desire to listen." Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allahu anho) adds that when he recited the Qur'an tears started flowing from the eyes of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), the freed slave of Huzaifah (Radhi Allahu anho), was reciting the Glorious Qur'an and Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) stood by, listening to him for a long time. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) listened to recitation of the Glorious Qur'an by Abu Musa Ash'ari (Radhi Allahu anho) and admired his reading.

31. Rewards of loud and silent recitation

Amir (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "One reading the Qur'an loudly is like one who gives alms openly, and one who reads silently is like one who gives alms secretly."

Sometimes it is more rewarding to give alms openly, when there is some good reason and the intention is to induce others by example. At other times, giving alms secretly is more virtuous, for instance, when the intention is to avoid show on one's own part or to save the recipient from humiliation.

In the same way, recitation of the Qur'an in a loud voice carries more reward when the intention is to induce others; besides, in this there is reward also for those who listen. At times it would be preferable to read silently, so as to avoid inconvenience to others or show on one's part. Thus the reading, either way, has independent virtue. Sometimes one mode is preferable, and sometimes the other.

Many people have argued on the basis of this 'hadith' that reading in a low voice is more virtuous. Imam Baihaqi (Rahmatullah alaih) in his book, 'Kitab-ush-Shu'ab', has written that Hadrat 'Aishah (Radhi Allahu anha) had reported that the reward of doing a good act secretly is seventy times more than that of doing it openly. But, according to the rules laid down by 'muhaddithin' (scholars of Ahadith), this hadith is 'dha'if' (weak).

Hadrat Jabir (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Do not read in a loud voice, lest the voice of one should get mixed up with the other." Hadrat Umar Ibne-Abdul Aziz (Radhi Allahu anho) found a person reading the Qur'an in a loud voice in Masjid-I-Nabawi and had stopped him. The reader, however, tried to argue, whereupon Hadrat 'Umar ibn-e-Abdul Aziz (Radhi Allahu anho) said, "If you read for the sake of Allah, read in a low voice and, if you read for the sake of men, then such reading is of no use."

Similarly an advice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), for the reading of the Qur'an in a loud voice, has also been reported. 'Sharah-ul-Ihya' contains both 'riwayyat' (Plural of 'riwayat- Narrative tradition) and 'athar' (sayings of Sahabah) urging the reading of the Glorious Qur'an in a loud as well as in a low voice.

32. Qur'an as an interceder

Hadrat jabir (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "The Qur'an is such an interceder whose intercession is accepted, and a disputant whose dispute is upheld. Whoever keeps it in front of him, it draws him to Paradise, and whoever puts it behind his back, it hurls him into Hell."

This means that, if the Qur'an intercedes on behalf of anybody, its intercession is accepted by Almighty Allah. The meaning of the 'pleading of the Glorious Qur'an' has already been explained under hadith 8: The Qur'an pleads in the Court of Allah for increasing the status of those who abide by it, and takes to task those who neglect it. If one keeps it in front of him, i.e., follows it and acts upon its commands throughout

his life, it leads him to Paradise. And if one turns his back towards it, i.e., does not follow it, he will, no doubt, fall into the pit of Hell. According to the author, indifference to the Qur'an can also amount to putting it behind the back. In many 'ahadith' there are several warnings for those who neglect the Word of Allah. In the book of 'Sahih-ul-Bukhari' there is a long 'hadith', according to which Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) was once made by Almighty Allah to view some of the punishments given to the sinful ones. He was shown a person on whose head a stone was being struck with such force that the head was crushed. On the inquiry of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) it was said that Allah had taught His Glorious Word to that person, but he neither recited it during the night nor acted upon it during the day, so now this treatment for him will continue till the Day of Judgement. May Allah through His grace save us

from His chastisement. In fact, the Holy Qur'an is such a great blessing that any indifference to it certainly deserves the severest punishment. Hadrat 'Abdullah ibn-e-'Amr (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "the Sowm (Fast) and the Qur'an both intercede for the obedient person. The fast submits, 'O Allah! I prevented him from eating and drinking during the day, so You accept my intercession on his behalf and the Holy Qur'an says, 'O Allah! I denied him sleep at night, so You accept my intercession for him.' Consequently, the intercession of both of them is accepted."

In the book 'Targhib'. The 'hadith' mentions the words 'ta'am' and 'sharaab' i.e., food and drink, as translated above, but in the book of Hakim we find the word 'shahwaat' (passions) in place of 'sharaab', i.e., fasting prevented a person from eating and indulging in his passions. It is implied here that one should abstain even from such acts of physical pleasure, which are permissible e.g. kissing and embracing (one's own wife). It is given in some 'ahadith' that the Holy Qur'an will appear in the semblance of a youth and will say, "It is I who kept you awake during the night and thirsty during the day."

This 'hadith' implies that a 'hafiz' should recite the Qur'an in Nafl salat at night, as explained already in detail under 'hadith 27'. In the Holy Qur'an itself at various places there are encouragement to this effect. Some verses are given below.

- (1) And keep awake some part of the night for reciting it in Tahajjud salat.
- (2) And worship Him in a portion of the night and glorify Him during the long night.
- (3) They recite verses revealed by Allah during the night and they fall in sajdah (prostration) before Him.
- (4) And who spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing.

Consequently, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) and his Sahabah (Radhi Allahu anhom) sometimes spent the whole night in reciting the Holy Qur'an. It is reported about Hadrat 'Uthman (Radhi Allahu anho) that sometimes he recited the whole of Qur'an in a single rak'at of his Witr salat. In the same way, 'Abdullah ibn-e-Zubair (Radhi Allahu anho) used to recite the whole Qur'an in a single night. Sa'id ibn-e-jabir (Radhi Allahu anho) read out the whole Qur'an in tow raka'at inside the Ka'bah. Thabit Banani used to read out the whole Qur'an in one days and night, and so was also the case with Abu Hurairah. Abu Shaikh hanai (Rahmatullah alaih) said, "I read the whole Qur'an twice, and ten parts in addition, in a single night. If I wanted, I could have completed the third reading as well." In the course of his journey for the Haj Pilgrimage, Saleh ibn-e-Kaisan (Radhi Allahu anho) often used to complete two readings of the Qur'an each night. Mansur ibn-e-Zazan (Rahmatullah alaihe) completed one reading during Nafl salat before noon, and the second reading in the interval between Zuhr (afternoon) and Asr (late afternoon) salat, and he spent the whole night in offering Nafl salat, weeping so much that the end of his turban would become wet. Similarly had been the case with many others, as described by Mohammad ibn-e-Nasr (Rahmatullah alaih) in his book 'Qayam-ul-Lail.'

It is written in *Sharah-ul-Ihya'* that our ancestors in Din'differed from one another in their practices of completing the reading of the whole Qur'an. Some of them completed one reading of the whole Qur'an every day, as was the practice of Imam Shafa'I (Rahmatullah alaih) in months other than Ramadhan; and some completed two readings everyday, as was also done by Imam Sahfa'I (Rahmatullah alaih) during the

some completed two readings everyday, as was also done by Imam Sahfa'I (Rahmatullah alaih) during the month of Ramadhan. Such was also the practice of Aswad, Saleh bin Kaisan, Saeed bin Jubair and of many others. Some used to complete three reading every day. This was the practice of Sulaim ibn-e-Atar, who was an eminent Taba'l (the follower of a Sahabi). He had taken part in the conquest of Egypt during the regime of Hadrat 'Umar (Radhi Allaho anho) and was also appointed ruler of Qasas by Hadrat Amir Mu'aviah (Radhi Allaho anho). He used to complete three readings of the whole Qur'an every night.

Imam Nawawi writes in '*Kitab-ul-Azkar*' that the maximum daily recitation reported is of Ibn-ul-Katib who used to complete eight readings of the Holy Qur'an during each day and night. Ibn-e-Qudamah has reported that, according to Imam Hambal (Rahmatullah alaih), there is no limitation in this respect and that

it entirely depends on the zest of the reader. Historians have stated that Imam 'Azam (Rahmatullah alaih) used to complete sixty-one reading in the month of Ramadhan- once everyday, once every night, and one reading was completed in 'Tarawih salat (a Sunnat-e-mu'akkadah salat offered after 'Isha' during Ramadhan).

On the other hand, Rasulullah (sallalloho alaihe wasallam) has said that one who completes one reading of the Qur'an in less than three days cannot meditate upon it. For this reason, Ibn-e-Hazam and some others are of the opinion that reading the whole Qur'an in less than three days is forbidden. According to the author this 'hadith' refers to the capacity of the readers in general, otherwise completion of one reading of the Holy Qur'an in less than three days by a group of Sahabah has been reported. Similarly, according to the opinion of the Jimhur (general body of 'ulama), there is no limitation on the maximum period in which one reading should be completed. The reading should be completed within such time as is convenient. But some 'ulama' say that the maximum period should not exceed forty days. This means that at least three-fourth of a part should be read daily and if, for any reason, this much of reading is not done on an any day, the missed portion should also be covered on the next day, so that the whole reading is completed within forty days. According to the consensus of opinion, this is not obligatory but, in view of the belief of some 'ulama' it is better that the daily reading should not be less than this. This view is supported by some 'ahadith'. The author of *Majma'* has reported in one hadith:

"Whoever completed the reading of the whole Qur'an in forty nights delayed the matter."

Some 'Ulama are of the opinion that the whole reading should be completed once every month, though it is preferable to complete one reading every week, as was the practice of the most of the Sahabah. One should start on Friday and read one manzil (halting stage) daily, thus to complete on Thursday. It has already been stated that, according to Imam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alaih), we owe it to the Qur'an that it must be read at least twice a year. Therefore, under no circumstances should one do less than this.

There is a 'hadith' according to which, if the reading of the whole Qur'an is completed in the beginning of the day, the angels invoke mercy, for the reader throughout the rest of the day and for rest of a night if done in the beginning of the night. Some 'masha'ikh' have, therefore, concluded that the reading of the whole Qur'an should be completed preferably in the early part of the day during he summer season and the early part of the night during winter, so that the reader is benefited for a longer period by the prayers of the angels.

33. Intercession of Fast and the Holy Qur'an Stories of recitation Rules for completing the reading of the Holy Qur'an

34. No interceder shall be better than the Holy Qur'an Protection afforded by the Qur'an in the grave

Hadrat Sa'id Bin Sulaim (Radhi Allahu anho) has reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "On the Day of Judgement, before Allah, no other intercessor will have a greater status than the Qur'an, neither a Prophet nor an angel, etc."

It has been learnt from several other 'ahadith' that the Holy Qur'an is an intercessor- such intercessor whose intercession will be accepted. May Almighty Allah make the Qur'an intercede for us all, and may He not make it an opponent or a complainant against us.

In Lu'ali Masnu'ah, it is reported from the 'riwayat' of Bazzar, which is not considered as concocted, when a man dies and his relatives are busy in funeral rites, there stands an extremely handsome man by his head. When the dead body is shrouded, that man gets in between the shroud and the chest of the deceased. When, after the burial, the people return home, two angels, Nunkar and Nakir (names of two special angels), come in the grave and try to separate this handsome man so that they may be able to interrogate the dead man in privacy about his faith. But the handsome man says, "He is my companion, he is my friend. I will not leave him alone in any case. If you are appointed for interrogation, do your job. I cannot leave him until I get him admitted into 'Paradise'. Thereafter he turns to his dead companion and says, 'I am the Qur'an, which you used to read, sometimes in loud voice and sometimes in a low voice. Do not worry. After the interrogation of Munkar and Nakir, you will have no grief.' When the interrogation is over, the handsome man arranges for him from al-Mala il-A'ala (the angels in Heaven) a silk bedding filled with musk. May Allah bestow this favor on all of us.

This 'hadith' in its complete form contains a description of many virtues and has not been quoted in full for the sake of brevity.

35. One who reads the Holy Qur'an secures in his heart the knowledge of Prophethood

Hadrat Abdullah ibn-e- Amr (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "whoever reads the Qur'an secures the knowledge of prophethood within his ribs (bosom), though Divine Revelation is not sent upon him. It does not befit one endowed with the Qur'an that he should be indignant with those in anger, nor should he indulge in any act of ignorance with those who are ignorant, while the Qur'an is there in his bosom." Since the chain of 'wahi' (revelation) ended with Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), further 'wahi' cannot come. But since the Qur'an is the word of the Almighty Allah, it doubtlessly contains the knowledge of 'Nabuwat (prophethood) and if anybody is blessed with this knowledge, it is incumbent upon him that he should display the best conduct, and should refrain from bad manners. Fudail ibn-e-Ayaz (Rahmatullah alaihe) has stated that a hafiz of the Qur'an is a bearer of the banner of Islam, and as such it does not behoove him to join those who indulge in frivolous pursuits, or associate with the neglectful, or

36. Three persons shall be strolling on mounds of musk

Hadrat Ibn-e-Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "Three persons are such as will have no fear of the horrors of the Day of Judgement, nor will they be required to render any account. They will stroll merrily on mounds of musk until the people are relieved of rendering their account. One is a person who learnt the Qur'an, merely seeking Allah's pleasure and there with leads people in salat in a manner that they are pleased with him; the second person is one who invites men to salat for the pleasure of Allah alone. The third person is one who has fair dealings between him and his master, as well as between himself and his sub-ordinates."

The severity, the horror, the dread and the miseries of the Day of Judgement are so great that a true Muslim is neither unmindful nor unaware of them. To be relieved of those worries in any way, on the Day of Judgement is a favor that surpasses thousands of blessings and millions of pleasures. Those who will then be made to relax and rejoice will be the fortunate ones indeed. Utter ruin and loss is the lot of those insensible persons who consider the reading of the Qur'an as useless and waste of time.

In 'Mu'jam Kabir' it is written about this 'hadith' that its reporter, Hadrat Abdullah ibn-e-Umar (Radhi Allaho anho), who was a Sahabi of Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "If I had not heard this 'hadith' from Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) once, once again and once again (he repeated it seven times), I would never have reported it."

37. Learning of one ayat is more rewarding than hundred rak'aat of Nafil salaah

Hadrat Abu Zar (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "O, Abu Zar if you go in the morning and learn one 'ayat' from the Book of Allah, it will be better for you than your offering one hundred rakaat of Nafil salat, and if you learn one chapter of knowledge, which may or may not be practiced at that time will be better for you than your offering one thousand 'rak'at' of Nafil salat.

It is mentioned in many 'ahadith' that acquiring knowledge of religion is more virtuous than worship. There are so many traditions on the virtues of learning that they cannot all be mentioned here. Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "The superiority of an 'alim over an 'abid' (worshipper) is like my superiority over the lowest among you." He is also reported to have said that a single 'Faqih' (jurist) is harder against Satan than one thousand worshippers.

38. One who recites ten ayaat shall not be reckoned among the neglectful

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "whoever recites ten 'aya'at' in a night, is not reckoned amongst the neglectful."

It takes only a few minutes to recite ten aya'at'. Doing so saves a man from being included in the list of the neglectful, for that night. It is really a great reward.

39. One steadfast in Salaah is not of the neglectful

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allaho anho) narrates that Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "whoever remains steadfast in the five salaah will not be written amongst the neglectful; and whoever reads one hundred 'aya'at' in a night will be written among the 'qanitin' (the obedient)."

Hadrat hasan Basri (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads one hundred 'aya'at' in a night will be exempted from the demands of the Qur'an, and one who reads two hundred ayaat will get a reward for offering Salat throughout the night and one who recites five hundred to one thousand ayaat will get one 'quntar.' The 'Sahabah' asked, "What is meant by qintar?" Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "It is equal to twelve thousand 'Darahim' or Dananir (Plural of dirham and dinar, respectively - unit of currency used in Hijaz in the Holy Prophet's days).

40. The Book of Allah is protection against evil disorders

Hadrat Ibn-e-Abbas (Radhi Allaho anho) has reported, "Hadrat Jibra'il (Alayhis Salam) once informed Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that many 'fitan' (plural of fitnah-evil disorder) will certainly appear. Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) asked, 'what will be the way out, O Jibra'il?' He replied, "The Book of Allah."

To act upon the Book of Allah serves as a safeguard against 'fitan', and its blessed recitation is a means of relief from the evils. It has already been mentioned in hadith 22 that if the Qur'an is recited in a house, peace and mercy descend upon it and Satan quits the place. The 'ulama' interpret 'fitan' to mean the coming of Dajjal (Islamic Anti-Christ), the invasion by the Tatars, and like incidents. A long 'riwayat' from hadrat Ali (Radhi Allaho anho) also includes the subject matter of this 'hadith'.

It is mentioned in this 'riwayat' of Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allaho anho) that Hadrat Yahya (Alayhis Salam) told the Israelites: "Allah orders you to read His book, and if you do so, you will be like the people protected in a fort, so that on whichever side the enemy wants to attack you, he will find there the Word of Allah as a guard to repulse him."

PART 2- CONCLUDING SECTION

There are a few 'ahadith' over and above the forty already narrated, which certainly need to be mentioned, being appropriate for this place.

In this section, some special virtues of certain 'sowar' are narrated. These 'sowar' are short, but excel in virtues and rewards. In addition, there are one or two important matters, about which the readers of the Qur'an need to be warned.

1. Surah Fatihah as a balm for all ailments Virtues of Surah Fatihah and some other Sowar and ayaat

Hadrat 'Abdul Malik ibn-e-Umar (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "In 'surah' Fatihah, there is a cure for all ailments."

The virtues of surah 'Fatihah' are found in many 'ahadith'. It is reported in one 'hadith', "A Sahabi was offering Nafil salat; Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) called him, but since he was offering salat he did not respond. After completing the salat he went to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) , who asked him why he did not respond as soon as he was called. He submitted that he could not do so because he was offering salat. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) asked if he did not read the following verse in Qur'an:

"Respond to the call of Allah and His Messenger whenever They call you."

Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, 'I tell you of a 'surah' which is the greatest, the most virtuous in the Holy Qur'an. It is 'suh' Al-Hamd (the first surah of the Qur'an), which had seven ayaat. These are the 'Saba' Mathani' and represent the Grand Qur'an.' It is said by some sufia that whatever there was in the earlier Divine Books is condensed in the Glorious Qur'an., and the contents of Qur'an are condensed into 'surah Fatihah; and that which is in 'surah Fatihah is found in Bism-I-Allah and that which is in Bism-Allah is to be found in its first letter (ba). It is explained that (ba) is a co-ordinating conjunction and stands for uniting. Surely the ultimate aim is to effect union of a devotee with almighty Allah. Some 'Sufia' have gone still further and have said that whatever there is in (ba) is to be found in its dot, which signifies Unity of Allah- a thing which is indivisible as a dot.

Some scholars are reported to have said that the verse:

"We worship Thee and we seek Thy help", is a prayer for fulfillment of all our objectives, both worldly and spiritual. According to another hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "By Him Who is in possession of my life, a 'surah' like this one has neither been revealed in the Torah nor in the Bible nor in the Psalms, nor even in the rest of the Qur'an.

The 'Mashaikh' have stated that the reading of 'surah' Fatihah with firm belief and faith cures all maladies, whether spiritual or worldly, external or internal. To use its writing as an amulet, and also licking its writing is useful in the treatment of diseases. It occurs in Sihah (the six authentic books of Hadith) that the Sahabah used to read 'surah Fatihah' and blow upon those bitten by a snake or a scorpion and even on the epileptic and on the mentally deranged. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) had also approved of this. There is another 'riwayat' to the effect that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) recited this 'surah' and blew on Sa'ib ibn-e-Yazid and applied his saliva on the spot (where some pain was felt by the latter). According to another hadith, it is said that if, at the time of going to sleep, one reads 'surah Fatihah' and surah 'Ikhlas' and blow on himself he will be immune from all dangers except death.

According to one 'riwayat', surah Fatihah' is equivalent to two-third of the Qur'an in reward. It is also reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has said, "I have been given four things from the special treasure of 'Arsh', from which nothing has ever been given to any one before. These are 'surah Fatihah', 'Ayat- ul-Kursi', the

concluding 'ayaat' of 'surah Baqarah' and 'Surah Kauthar.' Hadrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alaihe) reports the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) that whoever reads 'surah Fatihah' is like one who reads the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the Glorious Qur'an.

It is reported in one hadith that the Devil lamented, wept and threw dust on his head on four occasions; first when he was cursed; secondly when he was cast out of Heaven unto the earth; thirdly when Hadrat Muhammad (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) was given the Prophethood, and fourthly when 'surah Fatihah' was revealed.

It is reported from Sha'bi (Rahmatullah alaihe) that once a man came to him and complained of pain in his kidney. Sha'bi (rahmatullah alaihe) advised him to read Asasul Qur'an (Foundation of the Qur'an) and blow on the aching spot. When he inquired what was meant by 'Asasul Qur'an', Sha'bi replied 'Surah Fatihah'.

It is written in the established practices of 'masha'ikh' that 'surah Fatihah' is Isme-A'zam, the Most Glorious Name of Allah, and it should be read for the achievement of all our objectives. There are two ways of reading it:

One method is to read this 'surah forty-one times for forty days, in the interval between the Sunnat (a practice of the Holy Prophet) (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) and 'Fardh' rak'ats of the Fajr Salat. The (mim) of Bism Illah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim) should be read jointly with (lam) of (Al-hamdo li-Lah). Whatever the objective may be, it will, in -sah-Allah (if Allah wills), be fulfilled. In the treatment of a patient or of one who is bewitched, it should be recited and blown on water to be used for drinking.

The second method is to read it seventy times between the Sunnat and the Fard rak'at of the Fajr salat on the first Sunday of a new moon, after which the number is reduced by ten every day until the course ends with a reading of ten times on the seventh day. Then this weekly course should be repeated, so as to complete four weeks. If the purpose is achieved at the end of the first month, well and good, otherwise this course should be repeated for the second and, if necessary for the third month.

The 'surah' is also written with water of roses, musk and saffron, on a porcelain dish, then the writing for drinking off and the wash-water is given to the patient for drinking for forty days. This is a sure treatment of chronic diseases. To read it seven times and then blow on the patient is similarly an accepted treatment for toothache, headache and in the stomach.

All these points have been briefly quoted from the book 'Mazahir-e-Haq.'

'Muslim Sharif' contains a 'hadith in which Ibn-e-'Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) was sitting among us and said, "In Heaven there has been opened today a door which was never opened before, and out of it has descended an angel who had never descended before. The angel said to me, "Receive the good news of two 'anwaar' which have not been bestowed upon anyone else before. One is 'surah Fatihah' and the other the concluding portion of 'surah Baqarah', i.e. its last 'ruku' (section of the Qur'an)." These two soorahs have been called 'Nur', because on the Day of Judgement these will travel in front of their readers (illuminating their path).

2. Blessings of Surah Yasin

Hadrat 'Ata ibn-e-Abi Rabah, (Radhi Allahu anho) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "Whoever reads 'surah Yasin' in the beginning of the day, all his needs for that day are fulfilled."

Many merits of 'surah Yasin' are mentioned in 'ahadith'. It is said in one 'hadith', "Everything has a heart, and the heart of the Glorious Qur'an is 'surah Yasin'. Whoever reads surah 'Yasin', Almighty Allah records for him a reward equal to that of reading the whole Qur'an ten times."

According to another hadith Almighty Allah recited 'surah Yasin' and 'surah Taha' one thousand years before the creation of Heaven and Earth, and on hearing this the angels said, "Blessing is for the 'ummat' unto whom the Qur'an will be sent down, blessing is for the hearts that will bear, i.e. memorize it, and blessing is for the tongues that will recite it."

There is other 'riwayat' like this, 'Whoever reads 'surah Yasin' for the pleasure of Allah only, all his earlier sins are forgiven. There fore make a practice of reading this surah over your dead."

According to one 'hadith' 'surah Yasin' is named in, Torah as 'mun'mah' (giver of good things), because it contains benefits for its reader in this life as well as in the Hereafter; it removes from him the afflictions of this world and the next; and takes away the dread of the next life.

This 'surah' is also known as 'Rafi'ah Khafidah' , i.e. that which exalts the status of the believers and degrades the unbelievers. According to a 'riwayat', Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "My heart desires that 'surah Yasin', should be present in the heart of everyone of my Ummat." According to another 'hadith', if anybody recites 'surah Yasin' every night and then dies, he dies as 'Shahid' (martyr).

It is reported in another 'hadith', "Whoever reads 'surah Yasin', is forgiven; whoever reads it in hunger, is satisfied; whoever reads it having lost his way, finds the way; whoever reads it on losing animal, finds the same. And when one reads it apprehending that his food will run short, that food becomes sufficient. And if one reads it beside a person who is in the throes of death, the same are made easy for him. And if anyone reads it on a woman experiencing difficulty in child-birth, her delivery becomes easy."

Maqri (Rahmatullah alaihe) said, "If 'surah Yasin' is read by one who fears the ruler or an enemy, he gets rid of this fear." According to another 'hadith', if somebody reads 'surah Yasin' and 'surah Was-Saaffat' on Friday and begs of Allah something, hi prayer is granted. (Most of the above has been drawn from Mazahir-e-Haq, though the scholars of 'hadith have questioned some of the 'riwayaat')

3. Blessings of Surah Waqi'ah

Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads 'surah Al-Waqi'ah every night, starvation shall never afflict him."

Ibn-e-Mas'ud (Radhi Allaho anho) used to command his daughters to recite this 'surah' every night.

The virtues of 'surah Al-Waqi'ah' are also reported in many ahadith. There is a 'riwayat' to the effect that whoever reads sowa 'Al-Hadid', Al-Waqi'ah and Ar-Rahman', is reckoned amongst the dwellers of 'Jannat-ul-Firdaus' (the highest level of Paradise). In another hadith, it is stated that 'surah Al-Waqi'ah', is surah 'Alghina.' Read it and teach it to your children. Another riwayat says: "Teach it to your wives." Hadrat 'Aishah (Radhi Allah anha) is reported to have emphasized its reading. But it is low mentality on our part to read it only for the sake of petty worldly gain. If instead, it is read for the contentment of the heart and for the sake of the next world, then worldly gains will come to us without the asking.

4. Blessings of Surah Tabarak-al-lazi

Hadrat Abu Hurairah (Radhi Allaho anho) narrates that Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "There is in the Qur'an a 'surah' of thirty 'aya'at' which intercedes for a person (its reader) until he is forgiven. This is 'surah Tabarak-al-lazi."

About 'surah Tabarak-al-lazi', there is a 'riwayat' also that Rasulallah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "My heart desires that this 'surah' should be in the heart of every believer."

According to a 'hadith', one who reads 'surah Tabarak-al-Lazi; and 'Alif-Lam-Mim-Sajdah', between the Maghrib (dusk) salaah and the 'Ishah' Salaah, is like a person who stands in Salaah throughout the night called 'Lailat-ul-Qadr' (27th night of Ramadhan-the month of fasting and the 9th month of the Islamic calendar). It is also reported that if somebody reads these two surahs, seventy virtues are added to his account and seventy sins are condoned. According to another 'riwayat' , if one reads these two 'surahs', reward equal to that of standing in salat throughout 'lailat-ul-Qadr' is written for him. This is also mentioned in 'Mazahir'.

Tirmidi (Rahmatullah alaih) reports from Ibn-e-Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho): "some ashabah pitched a tent, at a place without knowing that there was a grave at that place. All of a sudden, those who were putting up the tent heard somebody reciting 'surah Tabarak-al-Lazi'. They reported the matter to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), who explained to them that this 'surah' guards against Allah's chastisement and ensures deliverance."

Jabir (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) would not go to sleep until he had recited the 'surahs' Alif-Lam-Mim Sajdah and Tabarak-al-Ladhi.

Khalid Ibn-e-Ma'dan (Radhi Allahu anho) has said that he had heard it narrated, "There was a man who was a great sinner, but he used to recite 'surah Sajdah'. He never read anything else. This 'surah' spread its wings over that man and submitted to Allah, 'O, my Lord! This man used to recite me very frequently'. So the intercession of that 'surah' was accepted. It was ordered that each sin in his account should be substituted by a virtue." Khalid ibn-e-Ma'dan (Radhi Allahu anho) has also reported, " This 'surah' pleads for its reader in the grave and says, 'O, Allah! If I am contained in Thy Book, then accept my intercession, otherwise write me off from Thy Book. This 'Surah' appears in the form of a bird, spreads its wings over the dead and guards him against punishment in the grave." He has reported all these merits for 'Surah Tabarak-al-Ladhi' as well. He himself would never go to sleep unless he had read these two surahs.

Ta'us (Rahmatullah alaih) has said, "These two surahs carry sixty virtues in excess of those carried by any other surah."

The punishment in the grave is not an ordinary affair after death, the first stage that one has to pass through is the grave. Whenever hadrat 'Usman (Radhi Allahu anho) stood by a grave, he used to weep so much that his beard would become wet with tears. Somebody asked him why he wept more at the mention of the grave than he did at the mention of Heaven and Hell. He replied, "I have heard from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) that the grave is the first stage towards the Hereafter. Whoever is saved from chastisement in it, for him the subsequent events become easy, and whoever is not saved from chastisement in it, for him the coming events will be harsher still. After I have also heard that no scene is more horrible than that of the grave.":

"O, Allah ! Save us from this punishment through Thy mercy and Grace."

5. Which is the most virtuous act?

Ibn-e- Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho) says: "Somebody asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) as to which of the acts is the most virtuous. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) replied: "al-hal wal-murtahil." The man inquired, 'O, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam)! What is 'alhal wal murtahil?' Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) replied, "it is that particular reader of the Qur'an who starts reading from the beginning and continues till he reaches its end, and after the end, he starts at the beginning again. Wherever he stops, he proceeds further."

The Arabic word (al-haal) means one who reaches a halting place, and the word (al-murtahil) means one who departs in other words, as soon as a reading of the Holy Qur'an is finished, one should start again. And it should not be that when one reading is finished the other may be taken up later on. The term (al-haal wal murtahil) is explained in a riwayat in Kanzul-A'maal to mean (al-khatimatul miftah) (one who concludes and opens), i.e. one who completes the whole reading of the Holy Qur'an and then immediately starts another. Probably this has led

to the practice generally prevalent in our country, according to which the reader while finishing the whole Qur'an does not stop after reading the last 'surah' but also reads from the beginning of the Qur'an up to Muflihoon. Doing so has now become a mere ritual and the people do not care to continue further and complete the reading. This 'hadith' teaches us that, as soon as one reading of the Glorious Qur'an is completed, afresh reading should be taken up immediately and brought to completion. It is written in Sharah-ul-Ihya' as well as in 'Allamah Suyuti's Al-Itqan that according to Darmi whenever Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) read surah An-nas (the last surah), he would offer the du'a meant to be read on completion of a reading of the whole Qur'an.

6. Need for devotion to the Holy Qur'an

Abu Musa Ash'ari (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "Be watchful towards the Qur'an. I swear by Him in Whose hands my life is, that the Qur'an is apt to escape from the hearts more rapidly than do the camels from their strings."

If a man becomes neglectful in looking after an animal, and the animal frees itself from the halter, it will bolt away. Similarly if the Holy Qur'an is not looked after, it will not be remembered and will be forgotten. The fact that the Holy Qur'an gets committed to memory is a distinct miracle of the Book itself. Otherwise memorizing a book one half or even one-third of its size is not only difficult but well nigh impossible. Therefore, the fact that the Holy Qur'an gets committed to memory is mentioned by Almighty Allah as a Divine favor in 'surah Al-Qamar', where it is repeated over and over

"We have made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, So is there any one who will remember?"

The author of Al-Jalalain writes that the interrogatory clause in this 'ayat' is in fact an imperative one. Thus Almighty Allah has stressed over and over again the importance of memorizing the Qur'an, but if we Muslims are so perverse as to think that this act is useless and wasteful of time and energy, this blunder on our part is sufficient to justify our destruction. It is a matter of surprise indeed that, when Uzair (alayhis Salam) reproduced the Torah from memory he was exalted to be called the "Son of God," poor indeed is the regard that we have for the blessing and favor of Allah, that He has made the memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an easy for all of us (and not only for an individual as in the case of Torah). It is for such people that the Qur'an says:

"And those who do wrong will come to know by what a (Great) reverse they will be over-turned!"

It is merely through the grace and blessing of Almighty Allah that the Qur'an gets memorized, but afterwards, if a person neglects it, he is made to forget it. There are severe admonitions for those who forget the Glorious Qur'an after having learnt it. Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "The sins of my 'Ummat' were shown to me. I did not find any sin as great as that of forgetting the Holy Qur'an after having read it." In another 'hadith' it is said that any one who forgets Qur'an after having read it, will appear in the Court of Allah as leper. According to a 'riwayat' of Razin (Radhi Allaho anho) in 'Jama-ul-Fawa'id', the following ayaat refer to it:

Bu whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a narrowed life and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement. He shall say: "My Lord, why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed." He will say, "Even so Our Commandments came to thee, but thou didst neglect them; even thus shalt thou be forsaken today." (xx:126-6)

7. Punishment for one who reads the Holy Qur'an for worldly benefits alone

Buraidah (Radhi Allaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallalloho alaihe wasallam) said, "He who reads the Qur'an so that he might thereby get something to eat from the people, shall so appear on the Day of Judgement that his face will only be a bone, on which there will be no flesh."

This means that those who read the Glorious Qur'an in order to fulfill the need of this world will get no share in the Hereafter. Rasulallah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam) has said, "We read the Holy Qur'an. There are amongst us Arabs as well as non-Arabs. Go on reading the Qur'an as you do it now. Shortly, there will rise people who will set right the pronunciation of letters of the Qur'an as an arrow, i.e., they will work hard to adorn it and spend hours in improving the pronunciation of each and every letter. They will take great pains over phonetics. But all this will be with a worldly motive. They will be the least concerned with the Hereafter." This hadith further signifies that mere recitation in a pleasing voice is of no avail if there be no sincerity and if the purpose is only to earn worldly benefit, ".....there will be no flesh" means that when a man makes the noblest of all things (i.e. the Qur'an) the means for earning the inferior things of this world, the noblest of all parts of the body, i.e. his face, will be deprived of its beauty.

Once 'Imam ibn-e-Haseen (Radhi Allahu anho) happened to pass by a preacher who recited the Glorious Qur'an and then begged of the people. He was grieved to see this painful sight and recited 'inna li-Llahe wa inna ilaihe raj 'un' (verily we are from Allah and will return to Him). He said that he had heard from Rasulallah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam) that whoever recites the Glorious Qur'an should beg whatever he needs only from Almighty Allah. Shortly, there will come into existence a people who will recite and then beg of the people. It is reported from some scholars that the 'example of one who earns the gains of this world through the knowledge of 'Din' is like that of one who cleans his shoes with his cheeks; the shoes will no doubt be cleaned, but the act is most stupid. It is such people who are referred to in the following 'ayat' of the Glorious Qur'an:

"These are they who buy error at the price of guidance. So their commerce doth not prosper, neither are they guided."

Ubai ibn-e-Ka'b (Radhi Allahu anho) has narrated, "I taught a 'surah' of the Glorious Qur'an to a man who gave me a bow as a gift. I mentioned this to Rasulallah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam), who said that I had accepted a bow from Hell." A similar incident has been mentioned about himself by 'Ubadah ibn-e-Saamit (Radhi Allahu anho) in whose case Rasulallah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam) had said, "You have hung between your shoulders a spark from Hell." According to another 'riwayat' Rasulallah (Sallallohu alaihe wasallam) had said, "If you are prepared to put a yoke of Hell round your neck, you may accept it."

Now a word for such 'huffaz' who are working in Qur'anic schools, only for the sake of money. It is humbly requested that they should give a thoughtful consideration to their status and responsibility. This unbecoming conduct on their part is being attacked and made an excuse by some people for stopping the reading or memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an. They alone are not responsible for the evil consequences, but such 'huffaz' also share the responsibility for stopping the teaching of the Glorious Qur'an. These 'huffaz' think that they are engaged in the propagation of the Qur'an, but in reality they are obstructing it, through their misconduct and bad intentions. The 'ulama' have not permitted the acceptance of salary for teaching the Glorious Qur'an so that it becomes the primary motive. In fact, the real motive of the teachers should only be to promote the education and propagation of knowledge of the Qur'an. No salary can be a return for the sublime act of teaching the Qur'an. Such remuneration is only for meeting personal needs and has been permitted when forced by circumstances, in cases of dire necessity.

PART 3 - FINAL NOTE

The purpose of describing the beauties and virtues of the Holy Qur'an in the foregoing pages is to cultivate a love for it. Love for the Holy Qur'an is needed for developing love for Almighty Allah, and vice versa. Love for one leads to love for the other.

The creation of man in this world is only for the purpose of acquiring a realization of Allah, and all other creation is for the sake of man. As a Persian poet says:

"The Clouds, the Wind, the Moon, the Sun and the Sky are constantly at work,

So that you earn your living and do not eat in forgetfulness

The whole creation is involved in working for you in obedience,

The law of justice will not be fulfilled if you fail to obey (Allah)."

So man should learn a lesson from their punctuality and obedience in their functions of rendering service to him.

Sometimes, as a warning, temporary changes are caused in their functions by Almighty Allah. There is no rain when it should rain; no wind blows when it should blow; similar changes are wrought in the Moon and the Sun through their eclipses. In short, everything is subject to some change for admonishing those who neglect their duty to their Creator. How astonishing indeed that all these things be made subservient to fulfill man's needs, yet their obedience does not lead man to his own submission to the Creator. Love alone provides the best help for obedience and submission to Almighty Allah.

'Verily, the lover submits to his beloved.'

When a person falls in love with someone, submission and obedience to the beloved becomes his habit and second nature. Disobedience to the beloved becomes as hard as is unwilling obedience to one whom one does not love.

One way of developing love for someone is the observation of his beauty and excellence. This observation may be through the physical senses or through inner perception. If a look at a beautiful face can lead to spontaneous love, a sweet heart-captivating voice can also sometimes produce a magnetic effect. A Persian poet says:

'Look alone do not inspire love;'

Often this wealth is attained through charming words.

Sometimes it is the sweetness of voice, which draws the heart unconsciously, and sometimes it is the beauty and wisdom of expression, which causes one to fall in love. Experienced men have suggested that in order to develop love, one should dwell upon the fine attributes of the beloved, and none other than the beloved should find a place in one's heart. It is true even in the case of earthly love that the sight of a beautiful face or a hand urges one to see the other parts of the body of the beloved, so that love may increase and the yearning of the heart may be satisfied, but the stage of satisfaction is never reached. As an Urdu poet says:

'The disease worsened as the treatment progressed.'

If after sowing the seeds in a field, one does not care to water it, no crop will grow there. Similarly, after falling in love involuntarily, if one does not pay attention to the beloved, this love will vanish in course of time. But if one keeps on visualizing the charming features, the stature as well as the gait and the manner of speaking of the beloved, love will go on increasing every moment.

Unusual are the ways in the school of love, One who learns his lesson gets no leave.

If you forget the lesson of love, there is a riddance for you at once. But the more you learn it, the more you are entrapped. In the same way, if a man wants to develop love with someone worthy of love, he should find out the excellence, the charms and the valued attributes of the beloved and should not remain content with what he knows but should always be eager to know more about them.

When even in the case of mortal beloved, the lover is not satisfied with a partial view of the beloved, and is always on the lookout for more chances to see as much of the beloved as he can, then Almighty Allah, the Pure and Sanctified, Who is the fountainhead of all elegance and beauty, (and in fact there is no beauty in this world except His) is certainly such a beloved Whose loveliness and perfection knows no bounds and is limitless. One of the manifestations of His utmost excellence is the Glorious Quran, which is the Word of Allah Himself. What greater pleasure can there be for a lover of the Divine, than the fact that the Qur'an is Allah's own Revelation. A poet says:

'O, flower! How pleased am I with you. You have the smell of someone (beloved).'

Even if we leave aside the consideration that the Holy Qur'an has its origin in Allah and is His attribute, the relationship that the Qur'an has with Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) is enough for a Muslim to adore it. A study of the Qur'an itself makes one realize that there is no excellence elsewhere that cannot be found in the Glorious Qur'an. A poet says:

'The limits of sight are narrow and the flowers of your beauty numerous;

He who plucks the flowers of your spring complains of the inadequacy of his hold'

There is another verse to this effect:

'How many of your graces can be adored; Your charms are innumerable and my restless heart is one.'

It is evident to the careful reader of the above 'ahadith', that there is hardly any important thing of this world to which attention has not been drawn. Whatever taste for love and beauty one may possess, its excellence and perfection will be found in the Qur'an. In the first 'hadith' the excellence of the Glorious Qur'an has been established over the beauty, as a whole or in substance, that lies in all worldly things; against the infinite number of excellent attributes that one can imagine, the Glorious Qur'an is found to be superior and matchless in respect of all of them.

The Holy Qur'an is superior to all other lovable things, taken individually or collectively in every respect. If one loves somebody because of the innumerable benefits accruing from him, Almighty Allah has promised (in hadith 2) that He will give to the reader of the Qur'an more than that begged of Him by all other persons.

If somebody is adored for his personal greatness, attainment or excellence, Almighty Allah has said (in the same hadith) that the superiority of the Qur'an over all other discourses is like the superiority of Allah Himself over His creation, of the master over his slaves and of the possessor over those possessed.

If anybody is fond of wealth, property, servants and animals, and loves to rear animals of a particular kind, he is warned (in hadith 3) that the knowledge of the Qur'an is far more valuable than any number of good animals acquired even without labor or crime.

If a mystic seeks piety and fear of Allah, and works hard to acquire them, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has said (in hadith 4) that those who become proficient in the study of the Qur'an, will be reckoned amongst the

angels. The piety of the angels cannot be excelled by anybody, because they cannot pass even a moment in disobedience to Allah.

Also if anybody takes pride in getting double the reward or if he likes that his words should carry a double weight, he should consider how even the reader who falters in his recitation gets double the reward.

If any jealous person can delight only in evil conduct, and jealousy has become a part and parcel of his nature and he cannot give up this vice, he can be rightly jealous of a 'hafiz' whose excellence is worth being jealous of, as said by Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) (hadith 5)

Let one who relishes fruit and cannot live without it, know that the Qur'an is like citron. If anybody is fond of sweets, he should know that Qur'an is sweeter than dates. (hadith 6 refers to this)

If anybody is desirous of honor and dignity and cannot resist being a member of some council, he should know that the Qur'an exalts the rank of its reader, both in this world as well as in the Hereafter. (This is mentioned in hadith 7)

If anybody wants a sincere and dedicated companion, who should be ready to defend him in every dispute, he should know that the Qur'an is ready to defend its devotee in the court of the Emperor of all emperors (as mentioned in hadith 8)

If a seeker of subtleties devotes his life to the critical study of various subjects and appreciation of a delicate point is sufficient to turn him away from the greatest pleasure of this world. He should know that the body of the Qur'an is a treasure full of subtleties (as described in hadith 9)

If anybody attaches importance to discovering hidden secrets, and considers that experience in the criminal investigation department is an accomplishment and devotes his life to acquiring it, he should know that the body of the Holy Qur'an reveals those mysteries whose depths are boundless and to which hadith 10 refers.

Also if one hankers after the construction of lofty buildings and wants his special abode to be on the seventh floor, then verily the Qur'an raises its devotee to the seven thousandth floor in Paradise.

If anybody desires to do business which should bring maximum profit with a minimum of labor, he should know that the recitation of each letter of the Holy Qur'an yields ten blessings (as referred to in Hadith 10)

If anybody hankers after a crown and a throne, and for their sake fights battles in this world, he should consider that the Qur'an gets for the parents of its devotees a crown whose brilliance has no parallel in this world. (This is mentioned in hadith 11)

If there is any expert in feats of jugglery who can catch a burning coal in his hand or can put a burning match-stick in his mouth, he should realize that the Glorious Qur'an provides safety even against the fire of Hell. (For this see hadith 12)

There are people who want to develop good relations with government officers and take pride in relating how, as a result of their recommendation to an officer, and accused had not been punished but had been set free. For finding access to these officers, they spend their time and money everyday in flatteries and arrange dinners and so on. Through the intercession of its devotees, the Glorious Qur'an arranges deliverance of ten people who shall have been condemned to Hell. (This is mentioned in hadith 13)

Now let us consider 'hadith' 14. If somebody is fond of flowers and gardens and loves sweet smells, he should realize that the Holy Qur'an has been compared to musk. If somebody loves perfumes and wants to bathe in dried musk, then the example of the Glorious Qur'an is like a musk-vase. This is only for illustration, otherwise musk has

no comparison with the fragrance of the Holy Qur'an. The particles of this earth cannot be likened to the Heavenly ones. A Persian poet says:

That sprinkling of musk is in fact the act of your looks; it is out of expediency that lovers accuse the Chinese deer (reported to yield musk).

A person who is often beaten and works for fear of punishment, and persuasion if of no avail to him, will be benefited to know that one whose heart is devoid of the Qur'an, is like a ruined house (as mentioned in hadith 15)

If a devotee is in search of the best way of all worships and is careful to devote himself to those acts which bring maximum of reward, he should know that recitation of the Holy Qur'an is superior to all other forms of worship, and it is specifically mentioned in hadith 16 that it is superior to Nafl salat, fasting, tasbih and tahlil' (acclamation).

Some people are deeply interested in pregnant animals, as they fetch more prices than the ordinary ones. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has specifically said that the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an is far more precious than such animals (see hadith 17)

Many people are always worried about their health. They take exercise and bathe every day, they run or got out for a walk in the morning. There are others who are given to grief, worry and anxiety. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has said that the 'surah Fatihah' provides treatment for everyday disease and the Holy Qur'an cures the ailment of the heart, as mentioned in hadith 19.

People take pride in so many things that it is difficult to enumerate all these, for example, some boast of their lineage or good habits, others of their popularity or foresight. In fact, a thing of real pride is the Glorious Qur'an, which possesses all beauty and perfection.

As a Persian verse goes:

"What all the other beloved possess collectively, You alone possess all that." (For this see hadith 20)

Many people are fond of accumulating wealth. For this purpose, they practice miserliness in their food and dress, undergo many hardships and develop a mania that is not satisfied by any amount of wealth. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has advised us that the only thing that should be treasured as much as possible is the Holy Qur'an. No treasure of wealth is better than this. (Hadith 21 refers to this).

Similarly if anybody is fond of illumination and uses ten electric bulbs to light up his room, he should know that the Holy Qur'an provides the best of lights.

People earnestly desire to receive presents, and they expect gifts from their friends everyday. They increase their sphere of acquaintance only with this motive. If anyone of their friends does not send them their share of fruit from his garden, they complain of him. They should realize that the Holy Qur'an is the best giver of gifts. Peace descends on those who recite the Glorious Qur'an. If you are enamoured of someone because he sends you a present everyday, then you would be pleased to know that the attachment with the Glorious Qur'an will bring you precious gifts (see hadith 22)

Some people fawn on a minister, so that he may mention them in the court of the ruler, some flatters the subordinates so that they may praise him before the officer. Sometimes a person entreats others so that they may mention his name in the presence of his beloved. Let all such people learn how, through the Glorious Qur'an, they may make themselves worthy of being mentioned by the beloved Lord Himself. (We find this mentioned in hadith 23)

If a person is always eager to know about the most favorite thing of the beloved, and he is prepared to perform even the most arduous task to procure it, he should know that there is nothing more lovable to Allah than the Glorious Qur'an.

Some people seek access to the court of the ruler and, with this end in view; they plan and struggle all their lives. Through the Holy Qur'an we can become the special favorites of Almighty Allah, before Whom the greatest of kings is completely helpless (see hadith 24)

It is strange that in order to become a member of some council, or to join the hunting party of some man in authority, people make sacrifices of time, money and comfort. They use all sorts of mean tactics for approaching them and thereby spoil their own temporal as well as spiritual life, only for the sake of gaining some false honors. Is it then not necessary to make some effort to win the real honor, and become a courtier of the Almighty Lord? If they can spend their whole life for the vanity of this world, we must spend at least a part of our lives for pleasing the very One Who gave us this life.

If you are fond of 'chishtiat' and do not find solace except in gatherings of men devotees, you should know that gatherings for recitation of the Qur'an are far more enthralling and attract the ears of the most unmindful.

If you want to attract the attention of our Great Master, you must devote yourself to the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an (This is discussed in ahadith 25 and 26)

If we declare ourselves to be Muslims and also feel proud of Islam, then we should know that it is the command of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) that the Glorious Qur'an should be recited in a befitting manner. If our Islam is not a mere declaration and it has really something to do with obedience to Allah and His Prophet (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), then we should realize that Almighty Allah and Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) have commanded the recitation of the Qur'an.

If you are a staunch nationalist and love a Turkish cap because you consider it to be a part of Islamic dress, if you are interested in national culture and its propagation by all possible means, if you write articles in the newspapers for this purpose and pass resolutions in public meetings, you should know that Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has commanded us to do our best to propagate the Holy Qur'an (see hadith 27)

At this stage, it will not be out of place to express disappointment about the attitude of our national leaders in respect of the Qur'an. They do not assist in its propagation but in some ways, help in obstructing it. Learning the Qur'an is looked upon by them as useless and a waste of time and effort. It is also considered an act of mental waste and fruitless toil. It may be that some of them are not in favor of this attitude, but when a group of people are engaged in anti-Qur'anic propaganda, silence on the part of our national leaders is tantamount to helping them in the crime. An Urdu poet says:

We admit, you will not disregard us, but we will be reduced to dust, before you become aware.

There are many who argue that the institution of teaching and learning the Holy Qur'an is promoted by the religious teachers for earning their bread. This is a vehement attack on the intention of all such teachers. Those who make such accusations are responsible for this calumny, which will have to be proved in the Hereafter. Such people are humbly requested to consider the results of the efforts of these so-called 'selfish teachers' and also the would-be results of their own unselfish proposals. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has commanded us to propagate the Holy Book. They should judge for themselves how fare they have personally contributed in carrying out the command of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam). Their attention is drawn to another misconception. Some people might think that they are not a party to this anti-Quranic propaganda and therefore remain unconcerned, but this cannot save them from the wrath of Allah.

The Sahabah (Radhi Allahu anhum) said to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam):

"Shall we be destroyed while there are righteous persons amongst us."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) replied: "Yes (it will be so), when evil shall have overwhelmed." There is another hadith to the same effect, 'Almighty Allah ordered that a certain village should be overturned. Jibra'il (Alayhis salam) submitted that in that village there was a person who had never committed any sin. Almighty Allah said that it was true, but though he witnessed so much disobedience to Me (around him), there never did appear a frown on his face (in its disapproval). In fact, it is because of these 'ahadith' that the "Ulama" do not hesitate to express their disapproval when they see any disobedience to Almighty Allah being committed. It is deplorable that some of our so-called enlightened people consider it to be narrow mindedness on the part of 'Ulama'. This so-called broadmindedness on the part of such people does not absolve them of their responsibility; they should understand that it is not the duty of 'ulama' alone to check disobedience to the Commandments of Allah. But it is the duty of every Muslim who sees disobedience being committed and has the power to stop it. Bilal Ibn Sa'd (Radhiallahu anho) has said, 'If evil deeds are committed secretly, only the evil-doers suffer for it, but if they are committed openly, and nobody prevents them, all the people are punished.'

There are some who are fond of history, and travel to consult old books of history wherever they may find them. Such people had better devote themselves to the study of the Qur'an, in which they will find an equivalent to all the books that are admitted to be most authoritative on the past ages.

If you want to acquire such a lofty status that even Prophets be commanded to sit in your company and participate in your gathering, you can do so through the Holy Qur'an. (Hadith 29 refers to this).

If you are so lazy that you cannot apply yourself to hard work, even then you can earn an honorable status without any labor by means of the Glorious Qur'an. You should sit down and keep on listening silently to children reciting the Qur'an in school. Thereby you shall earn a lot of reward without any hard work on your part. (This is referred to in hadith 30)

If you are fond of variety, you can find it in the various ideas and different subjects of the Holy Qur'an, some dealing with mercy, others with chastisement, some relating to different stories and others to various commandments, and so on. You can also change your mode of recitation, low at times and loud at others (see hadith 31).

If your sins have passed all limits and you believe, you are to die one day, ahadith 32 to 34 will exhort you to lose not time and start recitation of the Qur'an, because you can never find such an influential intercessor, whose intercession is certain to be accepted. On the other hand, if you are very respectful and your sense of respect and honor makes you avoid disputes with quarrelsome people, even at the cost of your valuable rights, you should try to avoid dispute with the Qur'an on the Day of Judgement, when it will be the strongest complainant, whose contention will be upheld and there will be no body to defend the respondent.

If you are in need of a guide who would lead you to the house of you beloved, and one would pay any price for such a guidance, you should take to recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Again if you want to safeguard yourself against imprisonment, you have no way out except recitation of the Glorious Qur'an.

If you want to acquire the knowledge of the Prophets and you are its devotee, hadith 35 shows that you can specialize in it through study of the Qur'an. Similarly if you are keen to develop the best of character, you can do so through recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

If you are very fond of hilly stations and they alone provide you with the best recreation and satisfaction, you should know that the Holy Qur'an will provide recreation for you on mounds of musk, even on the Day of Judgement, when all creatures will be in a state of terror. (Hadith 36 refers to this.)

If you want to excel in the worship of Almighty Allah by remaining busy in 'Nafil' salat' day and night, you should know that teaching and learning the Holy Qur'an is a better means of doing so. (See hadith 37)

If you want to keep yourself away from all troubles and save yourself from all anxieties, you can do so simply by devoting yourself to the Holy Qur'an. (This is pointed out in hadith 40)

If you need to consult a physician, you should know that 'surah Fatehah' provides treatment of all diseases, vide hadith 1 of part 2- concluding Section.

If your numerous daily needs remain unfulfilled, why should you not recite 'surah Yasin', vide hadith 2 of part 2- Concluding Section.

If you hander after money, you had better read 'surah Waqiah'. (hadith 3 under Part 2-Concluding Section, refers to this)

If fear of chastisement in the grave haunts you, it can also be relieved by the Glorious Qur'an, vide hadith 4 of part II-Concluding Section.

If you are looking for an occupation that will absorb all your time, you can find none better than the Holy Qur'an, vide hadith 5 of Part 2- Concluding Section.

If one has acquired the wealth of the Glorious Qur'an he should carefully guard against its loss. To lose such blessing, after having got it, is a great tragedy. He should also abstain from such unworthy acts as might convert this blessing into a curse (vide ahadith 6 and 7 of part 2-Concluding Section).

I know that I am not competent enough to point out the beauties of the Glorious Qur'an. I have explained them according to my humble understanding. This has, however, opened up a field of contemplation for scholars of deep understanding. According to those who are well versed in the art of love the following five qualities of the beloved incite love. First, it is the being of the beloved, which one loves. The vicissitudes of time have no effect on the form of the Glorious Qur'an; this guarantees its life and security. Secondly, there should be a natural relationship between the lover and the beloved. The Qur'an is the attribute of Almighty Allah. The relationship between the Creator and His creation, the Master and His servants needs no explanation. A Persian poet says:

The Creator of mankind has, with the life of Man, a connection that is incomprehensible and unimaginable.

An Urdu poet says:

He has a relationship of friendliness with all; He reaches out to the heart of each and everyone.

The third, fourth and fifth qualities are beauty, perfection and benevolence, respectively.

If the foregoing 'ahadith' are studied keeping the above three qualities in view, scholars will not feel contented with what has been written by me, but they will themselves arrive at the natural conclusion that all considerations that promote love and liking, such as sense of respect and status, fondness and constancy, beauty and perfection, greatness in short all such things as promote love are pointed out by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) to be possessed in a superb way by the Glorious Qur'an. It is but natural that some of these virtues may be hidden, and may not be directly visible, as is the case with most of the worldly valuables. We do not reject a delicious fruit because of its rough outer cover. Nobody starts hating his beloved lady because she wears a veil.

He would try, by all possible means, that his lady love unveils herself, but if he does not succeed, the very sight of the veil will thrill him, provided he is sure that it is his beloved indeed behind it. No doubt, the Glorious Qur'an excels in all the virtues that induce love, but if, for any reason, we fail to understand and realize them, it will not be wise on our part to become indifferent and disappointed. We should attribute this failure to our own shortcomings and feel sorry at our loss. We should contemplate more and more upon the beauties of the Glorious Qur'an and become worthy of understanding the Divine Book.

'Uthman (Radhi Allahu anho) and Huzaifah. (Radhi Allahu anho) have reported that, if hearts become clean of all fifth, then one would never be satiated with reading the Holy Qur'an. Thabit Banani (Rahmatullah alaih) said, "I put in labor of twenty years to learn the Qur'an and it has been giving me solace for these twenty years. Thus it is obvious that whoever repents over his sins and then meditates upon the Glorious Qur'an, will find it to possess all beauties that all the beloved collectively possess. I wish I were also such a person. I, however, request the readers that they should not look to the humble personality of the writer, lest it should prevent them from realizing their objective, but they should consider the subject-matter and its source. I am only a means of drawing their attention to these sublime matters.

At this stage, it is just possible that some reader of this book might be blessed by Almighty Allah with an urge to learn the Holy Qur'an by heart and become a 'hafiz'. If anyone has a desire to make his child a 'hafiz', then no special effort is required because this tender age itself is most conducive to memorizing. But if some grown-up person desires to memorize the Holy Qur'an, I suggest that he should start with a special prayer, which was recommended by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) and has been found effective by many people. It has been reported by 'Tirmizi, Hakim and others as follows:

Hadrat ibn-e-'Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that he was once in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) when Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) came in and said "O, Prophet of Allah! You are dearer to me than my father and mother. I try to memorize the Qur'an but cannot do so, as it vanishes from my memory." Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "shall I tell you of a method that will benefit you as well as those to whom it is conveyed by you? You will then be able to retain whatever you learn." At the request of Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, "when the night preceding Friday comes, rise up in its last third portion, if possible, for that would be excellent, because this is the best part of the night, as this is the time when angels descend and prayers are specially granted at this hour. It was for this time that Hadrat Yaqub (Alayhis salam) had been waiting when he had said to his sons that he would, in the near future, pray to his Lord for forgiveness for them. If it be difficult to get up at that time, then you should do so in the middle part of the night and if even that be not possible, offer the four 'rak'at' in the early part of the night. After reciting 'surah Fatihah' in each 'rak'at', 'surah Yasin' should be recited in the first 'rak'at', 'surah Dukhan' in the second, 'surah Alif-Lam-Mim Sajdah' in the third and 'surah Mulk' in the fourth. After completing at-tahiyaat (glorification of Allah in the sitting posture in salat) you should praise and glorify Almighty Allah abundantly, invoke peace and blessings on me and on all the Prophets, and seek forgiveness for all believers and those Muslim brethren who have passed away before you, and then recite the following 'du'a'

Before the 'du'a' it may be mentioned that several forms of 'hamd-o-thana' (praise and glorification), etc., which are required to be recited before this 'du'a' are reported in other 'ahadith' given in 'Shuruh-e-Hisn' and 'Munajat Maqbul'. Those who can consult these books should themselves find the details and thereby enrich their 'du'a'. For the convenience of those who cannot read these books, brief extracts are given as under:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضًا نَفْسِهِ وَزِينَةً عَرْشِهِ
وَ مِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ

اللَّهُمَّ لَا أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَيَّ نَفْسِكَ
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَ بَارِكْ عَلَيَّ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ
الْهَاشِمِيِّ وَ عَلَيَّ آلِهِ وَ أَصْحَابِهِ الْبِرَّةِ الْكِرَامِ وَ عَلَيَّ سَائِرِ
الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَ لِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَ لَا تَجْعَلْ فِي
قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَعُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَ لِجَمِيعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ الْمُسْلِمَاتِ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعٌ مُجِيبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ

All praise to Allah, the Lord of Worlds, praise up to the (countless) number of His creatures, matching his pleasure, weighty as the weight of His Throne and expansive as the ink (needed) for the writing of His Words. O, Allah! I cannot comprehend the praise due to Thee. Thou art as Thou praisest Thyself. O, Allah! Send Thy peace, blessings and prosperity upon our Chief, the Ummi (not taught by any one), the Hashimite Prophet Muhammad and upon all the Prophets and Apostles and upon Thy favorite angels. O, Allah! Forgive us and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and place not in our hearts any rancor towards those who believe. O, our Lord! You are Most Compassionate and Most Merciful. O, Master of the Worlds! Forgive me and my parents and al believers and Muslims, whether male of female. Verily, Thou art the Hearer and Granter of our supplications.

After this, the following 'du'a' which was taught by Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) to Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho), as mentioned in the above 'hadith' should be read:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِي بِتَرْكِ الْمَعَاصِي أَبَدًا مَا أَبْقَيْتَنِي وَارْحَمْنِي أَنْ
 أَتَكَلَّفَ مَا لَا يَعْنِينِي وَارْزُقْنِي حُسْنَ النَّظَرِ فِيمَا يُرْضِيكَ عَنِّي
 اللَّهُمَّ بَدِيعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ وَالْعِزَّةِ
 الَّتِي لَا تُرَامُ أَسْئَلُكَ يَا اللَّهُ يَا رَحْمَانَ بِجَلَالِكَ وَنُورِ وَجْهِكَ
 أَنْ تُلْزِمَ قَلْبِي حِفْظَ كِتَابِكَ كَمَا عَلَّمْتَنِي وَارْزُقْنِي أَنْ أَقْرَأَهُ عَلَيَّ
 النَّحْوَالَّذِي يُرْضِيكَ عَنِّي

اللَّهُمَّ بَدِيعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْعَرْضِ ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ وَالْعِزَّةِ
 الَّتِي لَا تُرَامُ أَسْئَلُكَ يَا اللَّهُ يَا رَحْمَانَ بِجَلَالِكَ وَنُورِ وَجْهِكَ
 أَنْ تُنَوِّرَ بِكِتَابِكَ بَصِيرَتِي وَأَنْ تُطَلِّقَ بِهِ لِسَانِي وَأَنْ تُفَرِّجَ بِهِ
 عَن قَلْبِي وَأَنْ تَشْرَحَ بِهِ صَدْرِي وَأَنْ تَغْسِلَ بِهِ بَدَنِي فَإِنَّهُ
 لَا يُعِينُنِي عَلَيَّ الْحَقَّ غَيْرُكَ وَلَا يُؤْتِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْتَ وَلَا حَوْلَ
 وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

'O, Allah! Have mercy upon me, so that I always abstain from sinful deeds as long as I am alive, be kind to me so that I do not toil in vain pursuits, and bless me with solace in that which pleases Thee. O, Allah! The Originator of Heavens and Earth, Master of Glory and Honor, Lord of such Majesty, attainment of which cannot even be conceived. O, Allah! The Most Beneficent, I pray in the name of Thy majesty and Effulgence of Thy Countenance, to illumine my vision with the 'nur' of Thy Book, bless my tongue with a flow in its reading, and through its blessing remove heaviness of my heart, open my mind, and wash away (the sins of) my body. Certainly there is none except Thee to support me in the cause of truth, and none except Thee fulfill this desire of mine. There can be no safeguard (against evil) nor any power (over virtue) except with the help of Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.

Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) further said to hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho), "Repeat this act for three, five or seven Fridays. If Allah so wills, your prayer will certainly be granted. I swear by Him Who made me prophet that acceptance of his prayer will never be missed by any believer."

Ibn-e-'Abbas (Radhi Allahu anho) reports that hardly had five or seven Fridays passed when Hadrat Ali (Radhi Allahu anho) came to Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) and said, "Previously I used to learn about four 'ayaat' but I was not able to retain them, and now I learn about forty and I can remember them as clearly as if I

have the Qur'an open before me. Previously when I heard a 'ahdith' and then repeated it I could not retain it, and now I hear 'ahadith' and, when I narrate them to others, I do not miss a single word."

May Almighty Allah bless me and you with memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an and the 'ahadith' by the grace of His Prophet's beneficence.

O, Almighty Allah! By Thy Mercy, send Thy Peace and blessings on Muhammad (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam), the best of Thy creation and our Chief, and on his family and on his Companions. Thou art the Most Compassionate of all the Most Merciful ones.

PART 4- COMPLEMENTARY NOTE

The forty 'ahadith' given in the foregoing pages relate to a special subject matter and as such it has not been possible to maintain brevity. These days, we have become easy-going and it is difficult to bear even slight hardships in the cause of religion. In view of this, I give here another set of forty 'ahadith', which are very brief and are reported at one place from Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam). The beauty about it is that it embraces all the vital teachings of Islam and is unique in this respect. It is given in 'Kanzul A'mal' and ascribed to a group of the earliest scholars of 'Hadith'. Of the scholars of later times, Maulana Qutbuddin Muhajir Makki (Rahmatullah alaihe) has also mentioned it. Let those having a zeal for Islam commit at least this 'hadith' to memory and earn a bounteous reward for doing so little. This 'hadith' is given below:

"Salman (Radhi Allahu anho) narrates that he had asked Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) about the forty 'ahadith' concerning which he had said that, if anyone from amongst his Ummat memorized them, he would enter Paradise. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) replied: "You should believe:

(1) In Allah, i.e. in His Person and Attributes; and

(2) The Last Day; and

(3) The Angels; and

(4) The earlier (Divine) Books; and

(5) All the Prophets; and

(6) The rising after death; and

(7) The destiny, i.e. all that is good or bad is from Allah; and

(8) That you bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and that Mohammad (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) is His Messenger; and

(9) That at the time of each Salaat you make good Salaat at its proper time after performing a perfect 'Wudhu'; and perfect 'Wudhu' is one performed with due regard even to 'adaab' (due respects) and 'mustahibbat' (plural of 'mustahib'- desirable action.) 'Wudhu' should preferably be performed a fresh at a time of each salaat, although the previous 'Wudhu' subsists, and this is 'mustahab'. To make good Salaat means to be mindful of its component parts like 'fard', 'sunnat' and 'mustahib'. In another 'hadith', it is said that during Salaat the rows should be straight, i.e. the rows should not be curved and there should be no unoccupied space between them. This is also included in the meaning of establishing Salaat.

(10) Pay the 'Zakaat' (obligatory charity on wealth exceeding a prescribed limit) and

(11) Fast during the month of Ramadhan; and

(12) Perform 'Hajj' if you have wealth;

The availability of wealth has particularly been mentioned, because want of wealth is generally made an excuse for non-performance of Hajj. Otherwise it is evident that the other prerequisites that make the 'Hajj' obligatory should also exist.

(13) You should perform the twelve 'rak'at' sunnat-e-mu'khadah salat' every day; (According to other 'ahadith' these twelve 'rakat' are detailed as two 'rakat' before the two fard rak'at of Fajr salat, four before and two rak'at

after the four fard rak'at of Zohr, two after the three fard rak'at of Maghrib, and two after the four fard rak'at of 'Isha'.)

(14) You should never miss the Witr salat at night; Witr salat is wajib (compulsory, but less than Fard and more important than sunnat) and is, therefore, specially emphasized.

(15) You should ascribe no partners unto Allah.

(16) You should not disobey your parents;

(17) You should not devour the property of orphans unjustly; (Unjustly implies that there is no harm in using the belongings of an orphan in a lawful manner, as is the case under certain circumstances.)

(18) You should not drink wine;

(19) You should not commit adultery;

(20) You should not indulge in false oaths;

(21) You should not give false evidence;

(22) You should not yield to your base desires;

(23) You should not backbite on a Muslim brother;

(24) You should not bring a false charge against a chaste woman (or a chaste man);

(25) You should not bear ill-will towards your Muslim brethren;

(26) You should not indulge in useless amusements;

(27) You should not join the idle spectators;

(28) You should not call a short-statured person "O, you short-statured one!" with the intention of finding fault with him; (there is no harm if a person is called by derogatory nickname which has become associated with him, provided the nickname is used neither as a taunt nor as a term of abuse. But using it as a taunt is not permissible)

(29) You should not indulge in jokes at the cost of others;

(30) You should not indulge in slanders among Muslims;

(31) You should not be ever grateful to Allah for His bounties;

(32) You should be steadfast in suffering and calamity;

(33) You should not be heedless of chastisement by Allah;

(34) You should not sever your ties of kinship with your relatives;

(35) You should discharge your obligations to your relatives;

(36) You should not curse any creature of Allah;

(37) You should remember and glorify Allah by repeating (Subhan-Allah) (All praise for Allah) (la ilaha il-lallah) (there is no god but Allah) (Allaho akbar) frequently;

(38) You should not miss the Friday and 'Eid salaah'

(39) You should believe that whatever good or bad lot befalls you was predestined and could not be avoided, and whatever you have missed, you were ordained to do so; and

(40) You should not give up the recitation of the Qur'an under any circumstances."

Salmaan (Radhi Allahu anho) says that he asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam): "What reward would be given to one who memorizes these 'ahadith?' Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) said, 'Allah will raise him up in the company of the Prophets and the 'ulema.'

May Almighty Allah, through His sheer Grace, forgive all our sins and include us in the company of His obedient servants by His mercy alone. This is not beyond His generous grace. The readers are humbly requested to remember this sinner in their prayers.

MOHAMMAD ZAKARIYA KANDHLAVI,

Mazaher-ul-Ulum, Saharanpur

29th of Dhil-Hijja 1348 Hijri