

Dār-ul-Eḥsān

Epistles

Volume 3 Issue 3 *Rabī' Al-Awwal*
1431 AH - 16 February 2010 CE

This month's focus on:

To My Shaikh with Love by Dr Muḥammad Iqbal – reviewed by Prof Manzoor Mirza

Virtues of *Rabī' Al-Awwal*

The *Jawahir Al-Ghaibi* has it that the recompense of the voluntary prayers said during the first twelve days of *Rabī' Al-Awwal* must be passed on to the Holy Spirit ﷺ, because the holy *Ashabah*, *Tabi'in* and *Taba Tabi'in*, may Allāh the Almighty be pleased with them all, used to transmit the reward of these prayers to the Holy Spirit ﷺ. They comprise twenty units that have the *Surah Al-Ikhlās* said twenty one times in each unit. If there is not the opportunity to pray daily for twelve days, they must be said on the second and twelfth days in the said order and the reward passed on to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The worshipper of this prayer has been given the glad tiding of the place in Paradise by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Visitation of and the glad tiding by the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) after his demise is synonymous to as if (seeing him) in his life.

It is written in the *Kitāb Al-Awrād* that when the Moon for the month of *Rabī' Al-Awwal* is sighted one must pray 16 units of voluntary prayer, reciting in couplets and *Surah Al-Ikhlās* three times after *Surah Al-Fatiha* once in each unit. Once he is free from the whole prayer, he must recite the following *Darud Sharif* one thousand times:

... *Allahumma sallay 'ala Muhammadin nabi al-ummi wa rahmatullahi wa barakatohu!* (O Allāh! Send blessing to Muḥammad, the Unlettered Messenger, and the mercy and graces too!)

The *Darud Sharif* must be recited for twelve days after '*Ishā*' prayer followed by sleep with *wudū*. Thus he will dream of the the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The *Kitāb Al-Masha'ikh* has it that if one recites this *Darud Sharif* one thousand and twenty five times daily after '*Ishā*' prayer from the first day of sighting the Moon until the last day of *Rabī' Al-Awwal*, will have the audience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his vision. This *Darud Sharif* is as follows:

... *Allahumma sallay 'ala Muhammad(in)w wa 'ala āle Muhammad(in) Kuma sallayta 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala āle Ibrahima! Innaka hamdidum majid!* (O Allāh! Send blessing to Muḥammad and his offspring as You did send blessing to Ibrahim and his offspring! You are, indeed, the praiseworthy and the Most High!)

The book cited above has it that if someone recites the following *Darud Sharif* one hundred and twenty five thousand times daily during the whole of *Rabī' Al-Awwal*, he will certainly see the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his dream. The *Darud Sharif*

is: ... *Sallallahu 'alayhi wa Sallam!* (Peace and blessing be on him!)

Alternative it must recited thus: ... *Assalatu wassalamu 'alaika yā Rasul Allāh!* (Peace and blessing be to you, O the Messenger of Allāh!)

The Words of Wisdom by Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali قدس سره العزیز *continued-*

7614. NOBODY has to stay here for ever. You deserted your own memory such as *Tarīqat* would never ever forget about it.

قبیلہ محمد صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کا صدقہ الہی
شاہ کربلا کا تصدیق الہی
عبدالحمید (المعروف شیخ آف سرگودھا)
کی رفاقت کو قبول فرما الہی یا حی یا قیوم

For the sake of the Tribe of Muḥammad ﷺ, O Allāh the Almighty!

For the sake of the honour of the King of Karbala ﷺ, O Allāh the Almighty!

Accept the friendship of Abdul Majid, well-known as Shaikh of Sargodha

(And the humble servant of Dār-ul-Eḥsān), O Allāh the Almighty!

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7615. I cannot say it for anyone else. As to me the status of the lady baking bread is that of the mother.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7616. *Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!* Its Sanctity!

Avoid *Ḥarām* (the forbidden)!

Establish *dhikr* for ever!

Keep the thought unified!

Keep in sight the Satan, his companions, the whispering self and the evil self all the time.

Whether it is the star or crown bearer, he is the king's representative.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7618. WHENEVER the heart becomes poorly, it does so because of hurting some heart.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7619. WHEN the servant begins to burn because of his own sins committed, he must be enjoying it.

You had the taste, now look at the accountability.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7620. DESPITE the utmost love one has to do some work after some break so that we live within our limits, lest we forget shepherding having worn the crown.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7621. O You! Sacrifice your self not the lamb!

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

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Forthcoming Events:

26 Feb 10	<i>Eid Milad An-Nabi</i> ﷺ
05 Mar 10	Birthday of Ḥaḍrat Sayyiduna Makhdum 'Ala-ud-Din 'Ali Ahmad As-Sabir Al-Kalyari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ
15 Feb 10	Death Anniversary of Hadrat Shah Abdul Karim رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ, Nasirpur Kalan, District Sargodha, Pakistan

Dār-ul-Eḥsān Epistles ...

Focus on: *To My Shaikh with Love* - Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat ‘Ali قدس سره العزیز, the *Sultan of Faqr* by Dr Muḥammad Iqbal, Dār-ul-Eḥsān Publications, pp 452, Huddersfield, United Kingdom, 2009 CE

The book is the biography of the sufi saint Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali قدس سره العزیز, the *Sultan of Faqr* of his time. The writer went near the saint in early sixties in order to seek change in his life, when he was lecturer in chemistry at the former Islamia College, Lyallpur (now Faisalabad). The sufi was stationed at Salarwala lying in between Sangla Hill and Chak Jhumra, where he had established a religious seminary known as *Dār-ul-Eḥsan*. The motive that drew the author near the saint was to bring in a process of change in his self for better.

There is no denying the fact that in the life of the present day’s man the finer aspects of human existence have moved outside the pale of the real purpose of life. Man is dominated by material urges and he has become a playful tool in the hands of mean desires. It is impelled all the time by material calls of life. In this process the real purpose of living is blurred by material urges. The secular West hankers after materialism as it considers the latter to be all and end all of life. In the blind race of materialism the West has come to believe that the man can live by bread alone, though the biblical saying runs contrary to it. The West believes in the superiority of materialism and neglects spiritualism. The people in the Third World in a bid to improve their living standards have fallen a victim to materialism as that holds the key to their better living prospects.

Particularly, the educated, the elite classes, have accepted the philosophy of materialism to usher in a change to their material mode of living, hence have shown alienation towards spiritualism. Dr Iqbal, the author biographer, felt the existence of a gap in his being and was attracted towards the saint to improve his inward living. He was the recipient of the special favours of the saint.

Out of love and reverence, the Shaikh was called *Babaji* by his followers. Shaikh literally means an old, wise and experienced. Babaji devoted his life to the study of the *Holy Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was the meticulous practitioner of the commandments of the *Holy Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*. He cherished an intense love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, his *Risalat* (Prophetology) and *Tawhid* (Unicity of Godhead). This of his practice is discernable in his many and various books. He stood for self-discipline, inner purification and a blind and dedicated pursuit of truth. By virtue of his inner refinement, *Babaji* held a great position of reverence and respect among his followers.

By virtue of his long association with the saint, the writer found in him a man of God. He came under the tutelage of the saint and commissioned himself to translate his works in to English with a total sense of commitment and devotion. He

remained under the umbrella of the saint’s affection and love until his death in 1997.

The Shaikh was a prolific writer who wrote thirty volumes of his monologues called *Maqālat-i-Hikmat* (The Word of Wisdom) which in a way may be regarded as his autobiography. They cover the different dimensions of Islam, juridical, philosophical, ontological, corporeal and theosophical. In one of the monologues the scribe read that the Shaikh likened himself in his daily life to the bird who flew away every day in search of livelihood and returned to his nest with the stomach filled with the necessary provision. He led an austere life and showed complete disaffection to the worldly possessions. He had no thought for the morrow. All the offering of the day by his followers were distributed among the needy and the poor by the end of the day. Nothing was carried forward to the next day. That showed that the Shaikh had absolutely no regard for the worldly possessions. He was the man of God and followed completely the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The saint acted on the maxim: ‘Example is better than precept’ to inspire his followers to lead a simple life, followed by obedience of

the Almighty Allah’s commandments and dictates of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Words of Wisdom, in short, cover the different aspects of Islam which make an interesting and a compulsive reading by the believers.

Babaji was an army officer who had a leaning for Sufism. It was on 22 June 1945 that he decided to leave the army service. He had a bright future career as an army officer, but in disregard to all material temptations, he decided to step down. He wrote the instrument of abdication and passed it on to his Commandant Brigadier



Dr Muḥammad Iqbal (right) presenting the Biography to Professor Bob Crayon, Vice-Chancellor, Huddersfield University with Professor Mark Halstead (left).

W L D Veitch in order to have himself relieved of the service. Because of the World War II and his brilliant role and duties which he was discharging at the time the British were not inclined to accept his resignation. *Babaji* had, nevertheless, burnt his boats and decided to live the life of a hermit, a sufi par excellence. Whilst in detention and because of his insistence he was given poison mixed in medicinal syrup, but escaped its deadly effects as he vomited it all out spontaneously. The British came to realize that he commanded supernatural powers to have survived the dose of the deadly poison. Therefore, he was honourably released from the military service. The paltry sum of money he had on him, he gave away to his butler and towards the fare to his journey to Kalyar Sharif to pay homage to his mentor, the Shaikh Al-Chishtiyyah, Ḥaḍrat ‘Ala-ud-Din ‘Ali Ahmad As-Sabir رحمہ اللہ at his shrine in Kalyar, near Roorkee Cantt. Ever since he lived like a hermit, given to mystical exercises, aiming higher still at the purification of his inner self and guiding believers on to the path of righteousness. After the partition of the Indian sub-Continent, he came over to Pakistan and after some wanderings in the Punjab permanently settled at Salarwala where he established the seminary *Dār-ul-Eḥsān* which, in course of time, became a throbbing centre of Sufism. Large number of believers came to visit the sufi master daily

for his instructions to remove the worldly impurities encrusting their inner selves.

The British Army Commandant Brigadier Veitch in his confidential report during the young Barkat Ali's service remarked: "It is no exaggeration to say that I have never met a man in India to touch him. He is as keen as mustard; he works as a clock works in the office as well as on the columns." The Shaikh was a man of impeccable character. This quality endeared him to Allāh the Almighty and all those who came in to contact with him. He earned the reputation of a sufi master living for the pleasure of Allāh the Almighty and His Holy Messenger ﷺ. He emerged as a *Mard-i-Kamil* (the perfect man) in the words of Dr Muḥammad Iqbal (d. 1938 CE), the philosopher poet of Islam. In the words of the biographer: "The perfect man alone is eligible for the position of the Pole Star (*Qutub Al-Aqtāb*) of the thousands of the living *Awliyā' Allāh* (pl. for *wali* meaning the saintly friend) – according to Ali Ibn Uthman Al-Hujwiri's synod, an ecclesiastical council) or parliament comprising three hundred and fifty six of their elects ... I safely identified Babaji as one of the *Abdals* some twenty years before his demise." The Shaikh stood at a highly pitched position of eminence in the domain of Sufism. He was a perfect guide who wheeled immense influence on his followers who, in turn, devoted under his guidance to the recitation of *dhikrullah* (frequent remembrance of Allāh the Almighty) to throw out the worldly filth and impurities gathered around their hearts. Indeed, he was like a light house, shedding his brilliant light on to those who were eager to lead their lives according to the *Holy Qur'ān* and the sacred *Sunnah*. Thus he influenced a number of generations during his life time.

The Shaikh opened two large hospitals, one at *Dār-ul-Ehsān* and the other at Camp- to meet the needs of patients of whatever colour or creed, and particularly promoted surgical operations there to remove cataracts. He paid particular attention towards promoting social welfare activities which is the core of Islam as it stands for alleviating human sufferings in different forms. He was the practitioner of social welfare activities. After his demise the eye hospital additionally functions at Dasuha, near Faisalabad City, where a large number of people receive the benefit of the removal of cataracts free of charge, irrespective of distinction of caste, colour, or creed. The poorer section of the society in particular benefits largely from this facility. This *Sadqa-i-Jaria* continues ever after the death of the saint. People visit the shrine of the saint at Dasuha and offer prayers for the departed holy soul.

Dr Muhammad Iqbal has paid his respect and love to his Shaikh by writing his biography based on the deceased's monologues and other rare sources. The book is well documented and deserves to be read by all who have an inclination of spiritual aspects of Islam. The book has been published by *Dār-ul-Ehsān* Publications, Huddersfield, and has the 'foreword' written by Professor Mark J Halstead, the University of Huddersfield (UK) which in itself is enlightening as it throws light on Babaji's different mystical aspects. To quote: "From a Muslim's perspective Babaji was a saint. His actions led to the conversion of tens of thousands of wandering Indian tribes. In addition he helped with the schooling of thousands of children and meeting the health care of many of the most deprived members of society. ... Because the Holy Prophet ﷺ had dealings with non-Muslim leaders, Babaji also took upon himself to be active in the external world, for example by engaging in communication with such leaders as Queen Elizabeth II and the Archbishop of Canterbury. But at the same time he was a deep man of deep humanity, lacking in personal ambition or any desire for self

aggrandizement." Indeed, a great tribute to the saint!

The biography *To My Shaikh with Love*, can be had from www.amazon.co.uk or the publisher directly.

- Reviewed by Professor Manzoor Mirza, Additional Secretary Education (Retired), Govt of the Punjab, & Formerly the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Education, Lahore, Pakistan

- *Dār-ul-Ehsān UK*

The Words of Wisdom by Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali قدس سره العزیز continued-

7622. ALLĀH the Almighty has provided you with all the means of comfort and ease. You were made the *ummati* (member of the Muslim *Ummah*) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and you came down to the field as *mujahid* (the holy warrior) of the Greater Holy War.

You were given the good news of ... *la khawfun 'alayhim wa la hum yahznun* (there is no fear unto them; nor are they aggrieved!)

Everything of the world was created for you and you for Himself!

You remain worried, victim to disappointment and despair.

Why is all this?

This is because:

1. You tell lies. The angels run away a mile because of the bad odour of the lie, and the blessings of truth evaporate.
2. You back-bite! In other words, you eat the dead body. It is your food. This is why you do not feel anything odd about the dirt and the hateful.
3. You carry tales! You do it all the time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "The back-biter will not enter the Paradise!"
4. You are jealous! 'Jealousy eats the good away just as fire burns the dry wood.'

This is your life, a combination of lies, back-biting, carrying tales and jealousy. You neither abandoned it nor did you refrain from them. Even though you lived the life of hundred years, you circumambulated them. There is no other reason but you are the victim of your own lies, back-biting, carrying tales and jealousy.

If you rid yourself of these four, your clay will be pure and sacred. The jobs that Allāh the Almighty has created you for would be fulfilled.

Avoiding these four individually or collectively amounts to the soul, spirit and faith of the Nation. Rid yourself off them and without fail. When your physical body is free from lies, back-biting, carrying tales and jealousy, it became healthy and reaped rewards.

The disbelievers followed practically these traits and sparkled like the glittering star. Lies, back-biting, carrying tales and jealousy circulate in your physical body like blood. And you are traversing the path of life subject to them. Your prayers, recitation of the *Holy Qur'ān*, fasting, *Hajj* and *Zakāt* are all rendered ineffectual, just leaving aside only the first article of Faith i.e. the *kalimah*.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

7623. I inherited ... *Subhān al-'Aziz al-Ghaffar* (Glory be to the Powerful, the Forgiving). Whatever state You keep us in we will call on you ... *Subhān al-'Aziz al-Ghaffar* and He affords you your forgiveness wherever you may be.

Yā-Hayyu yā-Qayyūm!

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