

An Advice of a Brother to the Concerned One.

The Journey of Man

All praise and glory be to the one who provides for mankind endlessly, the one who is independent of all, glory be to the one who has enabled me to write this advice and given you the ability to read this. Glory is to the one who only charges man to do what he is able to do, although we do not worship, the way he truly deserves of being worshiped.

I believe in God, and His angels, and His books, and His messengers, and resurrection after death, and that God Most High creates the good and evil of destiny. I believe too in the accounting and the scales, hell and paradise. All the foregoing is reality.

God is One, not in a numerical sense, but in the sense that He has no partner – *"Say: He is God, One; God the Eternally Subsistent and Besought; He begets not, nor was He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."* He resembles nothing among His creation, nor does anything among His creation resemble Him. He has been, unceasing, and He is, unceasing, with His names and attributes, both those relating to His Essence and those relating to His acts. With regards to this the proof of Islam has transmitted to us an example all can understand. When questioned on how can Allaah be the first (*Awaal*) and the last (*Akhi'r*) at the same time? In reply to the attack of the devil, which he whispered to the believer, he answered; "imagine a man and a woman only have one child. When asked who your first child is they will point to him/her and then upon answering to who is your last, again the same child will be presented" so,

understand o slave of Allaah, that he is the first and the last without any beginning. As for those relating to His Essence, they are life, power, knowledge, speech, hearing, sight, and will. As for those relating to His acts, they are creativity, sustenance, originating and fashioning, making, and other active attributes. He has been, unceasing, and He is, unceasing, with His attributes and names; neither attribute nor name was created. He has always and unceasingly been a knower, by virtue of His knowledge, and His knowledge is a pre-eternal attribute. He has always and unceasingly been powerful, by virtue of His power, and His power is a pre-eternal attribute. He has always and unceasingly been speaking by virtue of His speech and His speech is a pre-eternal attribute. He has always and unceasingly been a creator, by virtue of His creativity, and His creativity is a pre-eternal attribute. He has always and unceasingly been an agent, by virtue of His activity, and His activity is a pre-eternal attribute; the object of His activity is creation, and His activity is uncreated. His attributes existed in pre-eternity, without being created or called into existence at a particular moment. Whoever says that they are created or summoned into existence at a particular moment, or is uncertain about the attributes and doubts them, is an unbeliever in God Almighty. I testify to all the articles of faith expressed by the last prophet *salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam*, by the rightly guided companions and then later by the great *a'im'mas* (scholars), of the *Ahle'sunnah'wal'jamma*.

Understand o seeker of truth you are not the person you think you are, the real you is more loved by the almighty more than the casing which you are in. you are an entity which is dearer to Allah than the angels and all creation, as he has made you his deputy over his creation known to you and I as the earth.

You are the soul, which has been in existence longer than you presume it to be, even before you were breath into the womb of your mother by the angels. Know that Allaah has favoured you to be from his beloved's Ummah he has favoured you in giving you iman and another chance to repent on to him, a chance by which you can draw nearer to him, many believers are suffering just as you read this advice, many have lost a loved one, within the time you are reading this. Others are on their death beds wishing for another chance to turn to Allaah sincerely, wishing if time could be turned back to do so in order to correct their miserable ways, a life which was devoid of the *I'badaah* (worship) of the almighty whilst others are contemplating on their purpose of life suffering in silence from the oppression of their own doings, contemplating the idea of placing an end to their lives, as there seems to be no source of assistance. Looking for an aid by which they can turn back the time and recover the losses.

Realise o Muslim, you are reading this by the grace and blessing of Allaah, no anxiety is upon you, and no suffering is upon you now whilst you read this, an advice from your brother. Remember just as you read this, a chance has been given to you by the almighty, so turn to him o brother/sister in faith, this will remain as words once we have gone, remember this is nothing new, the advice which was given by the *sultanul arifeen* (the king of the lovers of god) to his companions, then further down the generations the wise men of our Ummah to their students as advice for their well being in this life and more importantly the life to come. The time gone by will never come to pass again, in the words of imam shafi "time is a sword and if you don't cut with it, it will cut you" may Allaah Azzawajal bless the men of wisdom, like that of the great imam.

Many have heard this advice and shunned it, but are now regretting the ways they took, realising the value of the advice which was worth more than their children, family and wealth, but to of no avail now. Your existence did not merely begin with the entrance into this world. You as a creation of the almighty were in the place were your real self, the soul, cries to return to, to a place where the almighty shows his infinite mercy, a place where your forefather Adam was and is in, a place where the pleasure of the almighty is expressed endlessly, the place as the permanent home of yours, your righteous brothers, sisters, the home of your father, your mother, the home of the loved one which you have lost and all of creation. This place as named by the almighty is paradise, free from all defects, where everlasting peace and pleasure is manifested at its full. To understand why we have been sent here is to recall the events, as to where we were and why we have been placed here. This is also a great blessing of the almighty; take this as an indication of his guidance towards you O seeker of truth, the wayfarer to Allaah. Understand that, we are here, on a business trip on which we are soon to return to our lord and present the results of our transaction upon questioning by the *malaika's* (angels) in our graves. The *habibul azaam* (the beloved of the greatest) explained to us in a sahih hadeeth "I am but a traveller who takes shade under the tree for a while and then gets up and leaves it". The wise men of our Ummah give the analogies of this world as that of the business trip.

We draw on an example to explain this further. Imagine you are working for an organisation of which its influence and power has dazzled and amazed the whole world. One day the managing director calls you in, for a meeting in which he stresses that you will be sent on a business trip. But before giving you the news he

clarifies the reasons why he has chosen you, “you are an employee who has been of the mentioning of senior managements for some time now, with regards to the hard efforts you put in, in extinguishing your daily tasks”. Now on hearing all the desirable news he then informs you of his wish to send you on the trip. With the news you turn to leave the room, just as you are about to leave the room, he calls you back in and “since you are going on the trip, here, this is a gift, tickets so that you can take your family, also with the spending money of several thousand pounds. As he gives you all the blessings and shows how he has favoured you. You keep in mind of the importance of the business trip you are to make. Keeping in mind the real reason as to your trip, the real essence why you are to undertake the trip and also at the same time show gratitude for all this.

Once the trade trip is over you are summoned to the director’s office, upon your arrival he expresses his emotions to you, which are evident from the wide smile on his face. Once the welcoming words are over he asks you the vital question “did you manage to succeed in the task you were destined to do?” your face suddenly changes as that of an animal soon to be eaten, expression which devours the pleasurable moments which you and your family had on the business trip, placing an end to all the joys of the trip, upon answering to his question “I forgot about the reasons for the trip and what I was to do”. His face drastically changes and the end is clear.

Imagine o brother in faith; imagine how it will be on the day every soul shall know its lord, the disbelievers and the believers. Imagine how it will be when we have to face the questioning, the day when no one will be our friend save those who only met and loved one another for the pleasure of the almighty. Surely our

time will come to pass one day, just as it has on others, we will also follow the same trail. The name which will be mentioned in mosques that such a person has passed away and the funeral prayer will take place at this time, the world will not come to a halt at our passing away, so understand o wayfarer to Allaah, the cars, the planes will continue to run, the people will continue to laugh and joke, at our demise few will only shed tears for a day or two and then all will return back to their own ways, the people we gave our life for, children, wife, friends will continue to live on.

To clarify this, recall all the events, which have occurred in your life from the time of your appearance on this world, to the present day, to the point of you reading this advice. The thirty or twenty years of life is shortened down to 10 minutes, all the events which occurred in your life is of only 10 minutes, if you yourself can not bring the mind to remember your life then forever understand that, this will be the case with others, a few days you and I will be of the mentioning on people tongues, then a month, a year where by afterwards in the distant memories of people, eventually completely to be forgotten about. Upon recalling the name of yours or mine, people who were close will find it difficult is recover the image of you as a person, as it will have been erased from their memories.

Some will stand with respect on seeing your coffin pass by in the funeral car and others will only pay few glances to it and carry on with their activity, others will not even take time to spare a glance at your coffin, amongst them might be one or two people who used to know you from the world. This is the reality of the world. So remember not to pledge your allegiance to anyone other than the almighty who is the only deserving of such a friendship. At times family problems are damaging, the

relationship to ones kin is slashed and several years passes by which between mothers, and daughters fathers and sons, brother and brother there is no words of kindness passed between each other, take this o brother, as a subtle message from the almighty of the temporal love which exists between people, once the son of Adam has left this world life will continue to live on. In many cases, we will not even be known as to whether we ever existed or not.

This advice you are reading, is the same with regards to it being a knowledge amongst the other knowledge which are temporarily stored in your intellect, then as time surpasses man it will also be erased from your memory, just as other advices and guidance have been, if you do not pay heed and transform it into actions.

As the almighty says:

By Al-'Asr (the time).

Verily! Man is in loss,

Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc.).

So try to do your best before you meet the same end as those you have seen regretting the past, cursing, wishing to change it and crying.

As the saying of the great man syyidina Ali (*Radhi'allaah'hu'anhu*) is “die before you die”, die in the sense become the full embodiment of Qur'aan and the Sunnah submit

your will to that of the almighty. Whatever he wants and ordains for you accept it, as the *sultanul arifeen* was sent for this very reason, to be followed and to show us the real image of the world.

O believer in the faith that the last and the best of creation preached, ask your self the question, have you really felt the yearning of your soul to change?

This will remain as it is unless; you don't put it into practice the divine guidance with sincerity. Search for ways in which you can place the advices you hear and read, the conferences you attend, into action as well as purifying yourself, for the outcast and cursed devil was of a great worshipper, we have come to know from the Qu'raan and the Sunnah. The wise men of the Ummah say Satan formerly known as azaazil was the *us'tad* (teacher) of the many angels (*malaika's*), teaching about the *mari'fah* (gnosis) of Allaah Azzawajal, know now o seeker of truth many fail to understand this point which the Almighty has shown to us. The *ilm* (knowledge) and the previous (*I'badaah*) was not a means to his salvation, when he was placed in front of his test with Adam the father of mankind, his nature was evident. This led to his downfall and being cursed forever. The crucial point is, he had not taken the steps to purification, rectification of his heart, *Al tazkiyah tul nafs* (purification of the heart), as to purify himself from arrogance (*kibr*) and jealousy (*hasad*)

Even so if a slave of Allaah has undergone Tazkiyah seek the mercy of Allaah to enable you to enter *Jannah* (paradise) not the *ibaadah* and *ilm* of your efforts. As many great men of previous nations have fallen on this notion that ones actions and *ilm* will enable you to have guaranteed place in paradise. Nonetheless o Muslim do not let this deceive you, you are required to perform good deeds and then relay on Allaah for your salvation, as

examples on this issue is limitless such as the teachings of the most beloved of Allaah and his companions.

Follow the *Tareeqah Muhammadiyah* (the way of the prophet) for only he is deserving of being followed in the absolute and unconditionally. Know that all other ways will be of no use to you once you have traversed the phase of this journey, when all will turn their backs and leave you in the dark, 6 foot hole, none amongst the creation will be willing to accompany you to the unavoidable place, only the one who loves you for who you are with no hidden want. Know that this is the beloved of the almighty. Once while being in the company of his companions he *salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam* (peace and blessings be upon him) revealed, "I wish I was able to meet my brothers" in reply, the companions said "ya rasulAllah are we not of your brothers"? The *syyeddul arifeen* answered "no my brothers are those who will come after me and believe in me without seeing me, you however are my companions" (Al Hadith)

Imagine! The best of creation, the one who will intercede for us on the day when our closest companion, our mothers, fathers, our children will run away from us claiming "this day I have nothing to do with you".

No king, no man of esteem will ever exclaim such words to whom they have no relation to or of no interest.

May Allaah help you and be a means of support for you.

The states of the heart:

Come to know that the states of the heart are two, by which every son of Adam delves in for the entire life span he goes through on the face of this transient world; the *ulema* (scholars) and the wise men have transmitted to us as being, constriction

(*Al Qabz*) and expansion (*Al Bast*). If the heart was to be divided up into two sections whereby each section having the mentioned names, we can understand to an extent why our situation is as it is. We will draw on example to clarify this further, imagine you are undergoing difficult times [considering you are at ease now with less or no anxiety], by which you seem to be in neglect of the obligations of the *deen* (religion), as well as your daily affairs, the rights of the wife, the children, the rights of the parents are not expressed in its rightful manner, the offering of the five daily salah is of great burden, to an extent as to uttering of one '*Subhan'Allaah*' (Glory is for the lord of the worlds) is a great burden and struggle. Understand o brother in faith that you are in the section of the heart or undergoing a state, which is named constriction.

The forms may vary but underneath all, is the state of constriction, regret, remorse and sorrow, which are some of the attributes of constriction. The state of expansion will be opposite to that of constriction, at times it is under the disguise of other forms, happiness, ease etc to name but a few.

The constriction (*Al Qabz*)

You, the one who is currently going through times of difficulty, ask yourself the question why are you sad/depressed? Or feeling, life leading you down the Satans steps? You feel let down by the creation and no light seems to be there for you to take you out of the miserable state you are experiencing. Remember this o slave of Allaah that you are in a blessed phase of the test which will, like all things on the face of this deceptive world come to an end, know that Allaah has great things in store for you as after winter comes spring and then summer, realise that the state of

constriction upon your heart will soon come to pass followed by expansion where the hard efforts of your in striving to be strong will come to fruition. Allaah loves you, for this reason you are being taken through difficult times. Know that in times when the heart is constricted and you feel not the need to carry out the injunctions of the *dheen* remember one thing, which is well expressed in the words of the *Shaykh Ahmad Dabbagh*

“...Why do you feel lazy to carry out good deeds?

Are you the slave of your feelings or are you the slave of Allah [*subhan'Allaah'wa'taala*]...”

Understand this, that whatever test you are experiencing; the grass is greener on the other side, there is light at the end of the tunnel, which to you, seems to be never-ending. Allaah azzawajal loves the one who turns to him so, in placing you in situations where one finds the heart in a state of constriction; it is therefore an opportunity for you to turn to him. Know that the heart will change and it will experience the expansion.

The wise men of the ummah have come to understand that depending on the individual the states can vary, an *ummathi* (follower) of the beloved can experience one state for the majority part of his/her life. One state may dominate your life over the other with no sign of it changing but know that whenever the change of heart will come it will be with a great fruition from the almighty, the struggles will pay and the rewards will be heavy. Either here in this temporal world or in the real life to come, and in some cases in both places. So keep in mind the wise saying of Shaykh Ahmad Dabbagh whatever the situation calls for understand that you are not the slave of your feelings or the different states you undergo but the slave of the one who provides for you, the one who blesses you, the one who said to his most honorable creation in the Hadith *qudsi*

On the authority of Anas *Radhi'allaah'hu'anhu* (may Allaah be pleased with him) who said I heard the messenger of Allaah azzawajal say: Allaah almighty said: “o son of Adam, so long as you call upon me and ask of me, I shall forgive you for what you have done and I shall not mind. O son of Adam were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you to then to ask of me. I would forgive you”.

“O son of Adam, were you to come to me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face me, ascribing no partner to me, I would bring to you forgiveness nearly as great as it”. It was related by *at tirmidihi*, with a sound chain.

Remember for every act or thinking to take place you must exhaust some energy, whether it is simply thinking about something or carrying out any actions, irrespective of it being in the obedience of the almighty or otherwise.

In being depressed you are recalling the times of ease, the time of the loved one who you used to spend time with, or the time and hard effort you put in, in preparing for the exam on which you did not perform to well, and for others the day when you were financially able. Such thoughts are prevalent upon ones mind in order to be of the saddening state. Ask yourself the question o believers if you are putting efforts in recalling the past, know that recalling the past and reliving the past will not deal with the situation of the present. The past will not come to pass again, more so ask yourself the question, if time and efforts are being spent likewise, why not challenge the thinking and change it to think positively, or use the time you spend recalling the events of the past in a productive way. Recalling the past will only make you sadder.

Understand that being sad will not be the solution to solve the state you are in. o *a'bid* (worshiper of Allaah) who is in the

state of constriction who see's no ends meet, In most cases the cursed devil uses this opportunity to whisper into the open mind of the mentally struggling one. Statements like "why me" or "why do I have to be the one going through this..." are common, come to know this that theses are the temptings of the devil, that he is trying to mislead you from the path of salvation. During the experience of constriction of the heart one is more prone to committing mistakes and sins of which you regret afterwards. When the outcast and cursed one tempts you with his whisperings, ask yourself the question or moreover challenge the evil whisper and abstain from whatever he utters. Examples are of the ones in which he will say, "stop worshiping your lord for he has certainly left you, for certainly he has lead you astray". Know o obedient slave of God that God never leaves the one who calls on to him.

Man by his essence is hollow, unless he has awakened his soul, by connecting to the almighty. See therefore that whoever has slashed his connection with the almighty searches channels in ways he can fulfil the hollowness within him. Understand this then, the emptiness causes him to worship and take objects as his *illah* (god), whether it be worshiping the Satan himself or in the form of idols. Leaving the worship of the almighty, will only lead you to worshiping other than he, like that of the evil self.

Man in his nature is created to worship, for surely the almighty has informed us in his mighty words.

Challenge the whisper and carry out the good deed you had planned to carry out for It is only a whisper, carry out the prayers you intended to do, and see what happens, the result will be clear. The person himself brings onto many a time the state of constriction of the heart. At times the state is placed on the son of Adam because of his persistence in committing sins. So, stop

my dear brother try not to commit sins, do not think for a moment you are too weak to stop committing sins, for a man once came to a shaykh complaining of his inability to do so, the reply was, “the very act of committing sin is the proof of you having the ability to stop”, “for surely the almighty has given the son of Adam willpower the act itself is a sign that the willpower is being utilised in the wrongful manner, of which the need to channel it in the rightful manner is required”. **For surely all acts require for you to sacrifice something, in the example of committing sins, you have to obey in order to disobey, to make you come to an understanding you have to obey the cursed one in order to disobey the lord of the worlds. To illustrate this further, for acts of disobedience you have to exhaust your energy and time, so why not exhaust this effort, which you are doing in obeying your *nafs* (ego) and the devil, for the worship and repentance to the almighty, the being of whom there is no likeness.**

The father of mankind was in a state of constriction when he was placed here on earth, regret, remorse and sorrow were the prevalent states, but through perseverance in repenting he was enfolded into the mercy of Allaah. Never! Lose hope in the mercy and guidance of Allah Azzawajal as to do so is *kufr* (an act of disbelief), simply because you are limiting the help and mercy of Allah Azzawajal.

When the beloved went to Ta'aif he *Salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam* was turned down and to make the situation worse for the beloved he was chased out by children throwing stones. For two or three miles the beloved (may Allah Azzawajal bless him with his infinite blessings and give him the promised station as he has promised!) ran, the stones were thrown to such a degree his blessed body was full with flowing blood, his blessed feet was

covered in blood due to the excessive bleeding, imagine how the beloved felt, this happened at a time when his closest source of comfort from the dunya terms, his beloved uncle and wife, kadhija *radiallahu'anha* (may Allaah be pleased with her) passed away, the most disliked person by the disbelievers in his home town Makkah, in despair he turned to Ta'aif but what was their reply we have just seen. One of the events which happened before the throwing of the stones was, he *Salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam*, went to meet the leaders of the town, to do dawah. The three leaders in answer to his *Salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam* wishes, said words like "if you had any good the first people to benefit from you would have been the people from your own town" the other said "if you are a real prophet then who am I to talk to you and if you are not then you are a liar and I have no time to speak to you". Imagine! O Muslim what he the greatest and the most closest to Allah Azzawajal must have been going through, BUT understand what was to come after the experience, the *Is'ra'wal'miraj* (the night ascension), more so immediate help and guidance was given to him when he made the dua under the tree, angels of wrath were sent to him but as he *Salla'huali'hi'wa'Salam* is a mercy to all the worlds replied "no, maybe later Ta'aif will be from the muslims" to the nearest words, and we see the fruits of it today. So, understand and remember o Muslim with every hardship/s there will be ease, if not in this world then in the real life of ours in *akhirah* (afterlife) *InshaAllaah*. Do not try to look at the situation from your limited perspective. As the wisdom behind everything in the infinite knowledge of the almighty is far greater than you can imagine.

The question of free will

Mans great misconception amongst others is the idea of free will, what is the free will? Know o obedient slave of the greatest, that we have been endowed freedom of will in two areas, that is to say we can either do good or evil, none, on the face of the earth can delay ones departure from this deceptive world or do something which no man has been able to do. Come to understand this then, we only can do good or evil, we can either accept the divinely revealed words or reject them, we can either worship our lord or reject him and worship the outcast and the cursed one. Many a time, in amongst the past and the present generation man has tried to determine his own life by whatever means, either by wearing out his energy in trying to prolong his life span, or to shorten it, but to no avail. Only what is written will come to pass. Realise this that you cannot increase or decrease the amount of providence *Al rizq* you have, not even by one grain of wheat. Whatever *rizq* you have been destined will unfold no matter the circumstances, but at times it can be delayed. This is to the effect that ones life will not be summoned to account before the lord of the worlds, unless you have been given your destined share, the angel of death (*Israel – the name of the angel of death*) has no ability to recall back the soul unless you have had the full share of your *rizq*. The angel of distributing the destined *rizk* for all of the creation is consulted before his (*Israel*) duty is to be extinguished, as to whether the son of Adam has had his full share. Once the report has given to the angel of death that it has been fulfilled, only then does the powerful angel appear at your presence

Al rizk is distributed to the slave of the almighty, no matter what route he takes, i.e. good or evil, the route or the channel you adopt to obtain your destined share.

Clear this from your mind, that a robber who steals from a house would have most certainly have attained the amount of wealth, be it in the form of food, gold or silver but he chose to steal. Nevertheless the channel through which he acquired the wealth was evil. Understand therefore we can only intend and do good or evil; the case of worshipping is the same o brother in faith, for we can only worship the lord or the evil nafs which resides in our selves or the outcast one. There is not the case of, not worshipping at all, or anything.

The expansion (*Al Bast*)

The state of the heart is at ease, no situation arises that the heart does not stay in its mutual harmony. No situation has the effect of changing it to that of the previous state mentioned, although, it can be so. Know that at the time of the heart being in the state of expansion you experience a state to where, all is seemed as being in peace. To perform good deeds you feel at tranquillity and find it easy, one at peace with his heart. To perform extra prayers and acts of good deeds you will opt for. When seeing, hearing, listening and speaking you avoid words, which are of unworthy to be mentioned, you avoid listening to things, which the shariyah does not permit. You avoid going to places where it's not permitted, on seeing, you lower your gaze to what has been disallowed and also including the rest of the bodily organs which every son of Adam utilises either to

Disobey or obey the almighty. Eating, the private parts, the hands for examples. You try to perform *A'mar'bil maruf'wa'nah'ya'nil'munkar* (performing and commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil).

Understand this, that as the heart is one of which is changing from time to time, the wise one will be always vigilant of its activities. In some cases it is transmitted to us from the wise men as being the nafs. Know and realise, do not be deluded in thinking you are what you are acting as, for surely when the state of constriction reappears upon us the real state is apparent.

As the wise men have said, the one who at times of difficulty is the same person at the time of ease is the real servant of Allaah. This is however something, which is not easy for all to accomplish as most of mankind, are drowning in the sea of sins. This can be attained however when one goes under a strict *tazkiyah* (purification) of the heart programme under the guidance of a teacher.

One who is under such state should have the concern that Allaah has not left him to himself, for he has said, the sons of Adam with whom his wrath has been decreed will have their full share fun and joy here in this transient world, so no reward shall be for them in the life to come. For, to be in the curse and wrath of the almighty is one of great hardship upon you and will be, as the almighty has shown us in his mighty words. The Satan was one of such examples, he was in the state of expansion as all was going well for him, elevated in the sight of the almighty and furthermore taken into paradise, he at these times was at ease and proud of himself of what he had achieved, and performing acts of righteousness for these reasons. No hardship, no pain was upon him BUT when placed in front of the test, the state of constriction appeared and a mighty constriction it was! This

made him react in ways he did not do before making apparent all the evilness inside of himself.

Know therefore o seeker of truth the wise saying of the men of our ummah.

So whatever state you are experiencing do not change when hard times afflict you. As the proof of Islam Al ghazali said; if one is to pour water from a container at one go on a rock then no trace will there be on it, but if a drop is constantly poured on the rock over some time, a mark will be left on it. In light of the wise example, do acts of *I'badaah* in consistency. Do not do it for states, feelings or situations, for Allaah surely loves acts with steadfastness. Allah does not love a man who acts righteous one day and acts like a devil the next whereas a man who does an act of worship whether it is small or large but with steadfastness is loved by Allaah.

From the examples of the past the almighty often tests man at times of ease, at times when the son of Adam is satisfied. To see whether or not you still turn to him, cry to him as you used to, to ask of him and to thank him. Take advantage of this state o slave of Allaah at these times, make constant *du'aa* (to make a request to Allah) ask the almighty to aid you in your worship and to give you steadfastness in *I'badaah* so at the times when the heart is not inclined to righteousness you persevere in acts which will be a means of you felicity on the day of rising, and for the trials to come. Take this advice of a brother to the concerned one, understand clearly now, what your aspirations and hope in life should be, clear your mind and realise how deceptive this life is, every day, you see, hear and listen to how people have been deceived, of how people have been let down by other people for surely a lover leaves his beloved at times of difficulties the past has been to an example to us for such situations. Remember not

to give your heart to anyone but to the almighty. Do not give the inner part of the most precious part of the body to anyone apart from the one who hides mans countless sins whether they are of small or large, the one who loves the son of Adam more than the mother loves her child.

May these words of advice be of assistance for you in this world and the next to come. May Allaah sanctify the men of wisdom in our ummah, the scholars, the *Awliyah* (friends of Allaah) for whom the blessings of the almighty is descending limitlessly, as they have been source of guidance for us. The words of advice shared here, are the jewels and priceless teachings of the great Shaykh Ahmad Dabbagh, not of mine. For the almighty has destined to inspire the men of Allaah with wisdom, and guidance. So cling, o wayfarer to Allaah, cling on to them wherever you find them, stay in their company as much as you can, as they are the sea of knowledge and guidance for you. Sit at their feet. Be at their assistance, for the greatest has said in his infinite words; those who used to love each other only for the pleasure of the almighty will be together on the day of questioning when no other relationship or friendship will be of any use.

The qualities of the real friend of Allaah, the heirs of the beloved, the scholars.

If a seeker of truth wishes to study under a teacher, he should first consider the following factors in the Shaykh, as many fraudulent men seek to hold such stations. If the latter does not possess these qualities, do not become his student.

1. The shaykh must know the rulings of the sacred law *shariyah* and Sunnah. He should not ignorant of the *shariyah*.
2. He must not possess any quality that is contrary to the *shariyah* and the prophetic Sunnah. His *Aqaa'id* (beliefs) must be the same as those that have been mentioned by the beloved and the scholars of the *Ahle'sunnah'wal'jamma*. He must not possess any quality that is contrary to all rulings of the sacred law and all those things connected to reformation of the heart that have been mentioned namely jealousy, hatred for another Muslim etc.
3. He should not be making the field of tazkiyah and tarbiyah (spiritual training) as a means of his worldly earnings carrying out the programme of study as a means of sustenance. (That is, he must not be doing it for financial gain).
4. He must be one who is extinct in the love of Allaah and his beloved messenger, not just by words but also by practice, dressing, and *Ak'laaq* (the characteristics).
5. He must give superiority to Allaah, the exalted and his commands over his self, Satan, family, people and everyone outwardly and inwardly.
6. He must give superiority to the messenger of Allaah and his way of life over all other leader and ways of life both inwardly and externally, thus becomes coloured in the colour of Sunnah (way of the prophet).
7. He must fulfil the rights of creation by having compassion on them in worldly matters and in the matters of hereafter by facilitating the path of Allaah, the Glorious.
8. In short, he should be a walking and talking Qu'ran and Sunnah.

9. He must have travelled the path, to the closeness and pleasure of Allaah himself and must be aware of the whole path, process, prerequisites, principle, obstacles, states and stations of ihsaan and the methodology to instruct people at different levels from beginners to the advance seekers.