



AN EXEMPLARY LESSON
{DARS - E - 'IBRAT}

BY:
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رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

A Startling Incident of a famous Scholar & Sage
and the Astounding Outcome

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Foreword By Translator

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

Someone asked Hadrat Junaid رحمۃ اللہ علیہ: "Hadrat! What benefit do the *murîdîn* (those intending to become close to Allâh ﷻ) derive from the stories of the Auliya (saints)?" He replied: "Stories (of the Auliya) are one of the armies of Allâh ﷻ. The hearts of the *murîdîn* derive strength and peace from these anecdotes". The questioner asked for proof of this claim. Hadrat Junaid رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said: "Allâh ﷻ says in the Qur'ân:

"Every episode which we narrate to you from the stories of the messengers, we strengthen there-with your heart."

Allâh ﷻ states in the Qur'ân at another place:

"Certainly, in their incidents is lesson for the intelligent ones."

Thus, there is great benefit in reading the stories of the Ambiyâ ﷺ and *Sulahâ* (pious people). On the one hand, a person attains spiritual strength and peace of mind. On the other hand, a person with intelligence derives great lesson and reformation when pondering over these incidents.

Hence, Hadrat Muftî Muhammad Shafi' Sâhib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has narrated the incident of a well-known saint, Abû Abdullâh Andalusî رحمۃ اللہ علیہ as an exemplary lesson for us to take heed.

Some of the lessons which can be learnt from this anecdote are:

1. Allâh ﷻ is the controller of hearts. He is independent. He can do as He pleases.
2. Allâh ﷻ gives honour and disgrace to whomsoever He wishes.
3. The only thing that can protect and save a person is the *fadl* (kindness) of Allâh ﷻ. Knowledge and action alone is not sufficient. However, these things are the means by which Allâh's *fadl* can be attained. Therefore, they should be sought and together with this, Allâh's ﷻ *fadl* should also be sought through du'â.

4. One should never look down upon others. It is not even permissible to look down at disbelievers. This however does not mean that we should not hate their disbelief. We should hate the action and not the person. The example of this is that of a handsome prince who has some contagious sores on his face. We do not hate the prince but we dislike the sores on him. Once the sores are cured and removed, we should not mind staying with him and benefiting. As long as the sores are there, we are afraid of being infected. Therefore we stay far away from him. Yes, for purposes of treatment or necessity, people will have to go near him. Similarly, we should not stay in the company of the *kuffâr*, otherwise our *îmân* might be spoilt and we can become affected with *kufr*. However, due to necessity of the purposes of *da'wat* (invitation), it will be permissible to the extent of necessity to mingle with them. Nabî ﷺ has said: "Do not accompany anyone except a *mu'min* (believer)". In another *Hadîth* Rasûlullâh ﷺ stated: "A man is on the religion of his bosom friend. Therefore, every one of you should see who he befriends". We should therefore, not keep their company. Together with this, we should not feel ourselves superior to them. It is quite possible that Allâh ﷻ grants them guidance and they supercede us. It is also possible that our *îmân* (نعوذ بالله من ذلك) be snatched away. Thus, in no way, do we have the right to feel superior to them as none knows his final condition since this will be the determining factor. May Allâh ﷻ grant us all death on *îmân*. *Âmîn*.
5. We should always make *du'â* for our *Mashâikh* and *Azâtizah* who have benefited us. Even if they become sinners or disbelievers, we should continue making *du'â* for them. Yes, in this condition we should not remain in their company.

May Allâh ﷻ grant us the ability to benefit from this incident.

والحمد لله رب العلمين وصلي الله علي خير خلقه محمد وآله واصحابه واتباعه اجمعين برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 الحمد لله و كفى و سلام على عباده الذين اصطفى

For a person of deep insight, the changing of the day and night, the rising and falling of nations, the vicissitudes of the world and the incidents of our pious predecessors and their successors holds in their laps, thousands of lessons and echo with a resounding voice.

This world is not a place for placing your heart (i.e. falling in love with)

This is a place of admonition, not of amusement.

In short, the history of the world is a mirror for these lessons. Here, one page will be opened for our respected readers. How beautifully has our leader Hadrat Shaikhul Hind رحمته الله عليه said:

*The vicissitudes of the world are the advices of Allâh,
 Look! From every change comes a shout:
 Understand! Understand!*

The following story, which is full of admonition, is being narrated from Allâmah Damîrî's رحمته الله عليه book *Hayâtul Hayawân* which was printed in Egypt.

It was the end of the second century Hijrah. A long era had not passed since the setting of the sun of Nubuwwah. The elements of trust, virtue and piety were predominant in the people. Some of the budding sons of Islam, upon which Islam would rise and shine, were in government and some were attaining spiritual instruction. It was the era of the *A`immah* of Dîn.

In every city one could see Ulamâ of Dîn as well as Sulahâ and Muttaqîn (pious people). The city of Islam, Baghdad - at

this time the Muslim capital - was decorated with inward and outward embellishments, making it a beautiful jewel.

If on one hand, the captivating buildings and flowing rivers attracted the heart, then on the other hand, the gatherings of the Ulamâ and pious people, the *halqahs* (gatherings) of learning and teaching and the alluring voices of *zîkr* and *tilâwah* were sufficient provision for the satisfaction of Allâh's ﷺ pious servants. There was a wonderful and unique gathering of *Fuqahâ*, *Muḥadithîn*, worshippers and *zuhâd* (ascetics).

In this blessed vicinity was a well known *buzurg* (sage) by the name of Abû Abdullâh Andalusî, who was the spiritual guide of most of Iraq and the teacher of the *Muḥadithîn* (experts in *Aḥâdîth*). He had more than twelve thousand *murîd's* (disciples). We wish to present to you an exemplary incident regarding him.

This *buzurg*, besides being a *zâhid* (ascetic), *âbid* (worshipper) and *'arif billâh* (one who has recognized Allâh ﷻ), was also a great Imâm of *Tafsîr* and *Ḥadîth*. It is mentioned that he had memorized thirty thousand *Aḥâdîth* and he would recite the Qur'ân in all the different modes of recitation.

Once he intended to undertake a journey. Many of his students and *murîds* joined him. Amongst them was *Hadrat Junaid Baghdadi* راجعہ اللہ علیہ and *Hadrat Shiblî* راجعہ اللہ علیہ.

Hadrat Shiblî راجعہ اللہ علیہ narrates the incident:

By the kindness of Allâh ﷻ, we passed our journey with peace and tranquility. We happened to pass by a town of Christians. The time of *Ṣalâh* had dawned but due to non-availability of water we had not yet performed it. Reaching this town we sought water. We went around this town. We reached some churches and temples in which there were gatherings of sun-worshippers, Jews, priests and ascetics of

the cross-worshipping Christians. Some were worshipping the sun, while others were prostrating before fire. Some had made the cross the fulfiller of their needs. We looked on in surprise. Astonished at the peoples foolishness and devotion, we continued further.

Eventually we reached a well at the outskirts of the city. A few young girls were there drawing water. By chance, Shaikh Abû Abdullâh Andalusî's gaze fell on one of these girls, who together with being distinguished from her peers with her natural beauty, was beautified with jewellery and clothing. As his gaze fell on her, his condition began changing. His face began changing. In this condition, he addressed the friends of this girl.

Shaikh: Who is this girl?

Friends: She is the daughter of the chief of this area.

Shaikh: Then why has her father made her so low that she herself has to fill water from the well? Does he not have any servants who could do this service?

Friends: Definitely he has. However, her father is a very intelligent and learned person. He does not want her to develop pride in his wealth, possessions and servants, thereby destroying her innate character. Also, she must not be deficient in serving her husband when she gets married.

Hadrat Muftî Shafî' Sâhib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ states: "The leader sending his daughter to venture out and to go to the well is without doubt improper and contemptible. However, his keeping in mind her character and obedience to her husband is worthy of note. We should take lesson from this. We should not destroy the character of our young girls at home. Rather, we should impart to them the etiquettes of conduct at her in-laws home and the lesson of obedience to her husband."

Hadrat Shiblî رحمۃ اللہ علیہ further narrates that after this, the Shaikh lowered his head and sat down. Three whole days passed in this manner. He did not eat, drink or speak to anyone. However at the time of Salâh, he would perform it. A great number of his students and *murîds* were present. They were in a difficult situation and there seemed no way out.

Hadrat Shiblî رحمۃ اللہ علیہ states that on the third day, after seeing this condition, I stepped forward and said, " O Shaikh! Your *murîds* are surprised and worried about your continuous silence. Say something, what has happened?"

Shaikh (turning to the people): O my friends! For how long can I conceal my condition? The love of that girl that I had seen day before yesterday has completely overcome me. It has taken control of all my limbs. Now it is impossible for me to leave this land.

Hadrat Shiblî رحمۃ اللہ علیہ : O our Leader! You are the spiritual guide of the people of Iraq. You are famous for your knowledge, status, abstinence and worship. Your *murîds* are more than twelve thousand in number. I ask you by the intervention of the Qur'ân, do not disgrace us all.

Shaikh: My friends! Your destiny and mine has been predestined by Allâh ﷻ. The clothing of *wilâyat* (sainthood) has been snatched from me and the signs of guidance have been lifted.

Saying this he began crying and said: "O my people! Fate has come to pass. Now matters are not in my control".

Hadrat Shiblî رحمۃ اللہ علیہ says that we were completely stunned by this strange incident and we began crying due to grief. Shaikh also cried with us until the ground became wet due to the gushing of tears. After this we were compelled to return home to Baghdad. The people, on hearing of our return came out of the city to meet Shaikh. On seeing that he was not with us, enquired the reason. We narrated the

entire incident. After hearing about it, the people began wailing and crying. Many *murîds* of Shaikh, in sadness and grief, departed for the *Âkhirah*. The remaining people fell down and began to make *du'â* in the court of Allâh ﷻ, who is completely independent, "O the changer of hearts! Grant Shaikh guidance and return him to his former status".

After this, all the *Khânqahs* closed down. For one year, with sorrow and grief, we remained disturbed due to the separation from Shaikh. After one year, we, the *murîds*, intended to go and enquire about Shaikh, to see where and in what condition he is. A group of us undertook the journey. When we reached this area, we asked the people there about the condition of Shaikh.

Town people: He is in the jungle grazing the swines.

We: May Allâh ﷻ protect us! What has happened?

Town people: He proposed to the chief's daughter. The father accepted the proposal with the condition that he grazes the swines. Hence, he is now delegated to grazing the swines.

On hearing this, we were shocked. Due to grief, it seemed as though our hearts would burst. From our eyes, tears gushed forth. With great difficulty, we managed to hold ourselves together and reached the jungle where Shaikh was grazing the swines. We saw on his head the headgear of the Christians and around his neck was a *zunnâr* (religious symbol of the Christians). He was standing in front of the pigs, leaning on the same *asâ* (staff) he used to lean on during his lectures and discourses. This only added salt to our wounds.

Shaikh saw us coming and he lowered his head. We came closer and said: "As Salâmu alaikum"

Shaikh (with a somewhat subdued voice): “Wa alaikumusalâm”

Hadrat Shiblî: O our Shaikh! What is your condition today in spite of your knowledge, virtue, Hadîth and Tafsîr?

Shaikh: My Brothers! I do not have any choice. As My Master desires, He has used me. After getting so close to Him, He wished to throw me far from His door. Now who can remove His decree? O beloved ones! Fear the wrath of Allâh ﷻ who is completely independent. Never be proud of your knowledge and virtue.

After this he lifted his gaze to the heavens and said, “O my Master! It was never my thought that You would disgrace and humiliate me and remove me from Your door”.

After saying this he sought assistance from Allâh ﷻ and began crying. He called out, “O Shiblî! Look at others and take lesson.

It is narrated in a Hadîth:

السعيد من وعظ بغيره

The fortunate one is he who takes lesson from others

Hadrat Shiblî ﷺ (due to crying, with a stammering voice, in a fearful tone): O our Sustainer! We seek assistance only from You. We complain only to You. In all work, we have trust only in You. Remove this calamity from us, since there is none save You who is the Remover.

The swine on hearing the crying and fearful voices, all gathered and began crying and shouting like a hen being slaughtered. They made such a loud noise that echoes reverberated in the jungles and mountains. This place was a model of the plains of Qiyâmah.

On this side, Shaikh in intense grief cried abundantly.

Hadrat Shiblí رحمته الله عليه: Shaikh you were a Hâfiz of the Qur'ân. You used to recite in the seven different *Qirâts*. Do you remember any verses of the Qur'ân?

Hadrat Shaikh: O my friends! Besides two verses of the Qur'ân, I cannot remember anything of the Qur'ân.

Hadrat Shiblí رحمته الله عليه: What are these two verses?

Shaikh: One is this verse:

وَمَنْ يَهِنِ اللَّهُ فَمَالَهُ مِنْ مُكْرِمٍ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ

"The one who Allâh ﷻ disgraces, there is none who can give him honour. Verily Allâh does whatever he wishes."

The second verse is:

وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

"The one who chooses kufr (disbelief) in place of Îmân, definitely he has gone astray from the straight path."

Hadrat Shiblí رحمته الله عليه: O Shaikh, you knew thirty thousand Ahâdith with the chain of narrators by heart. Do you remember any of them?

Shaikh: I only remember one Hadîth:

مَنْ بَدَّلَ دِينَهُ فَاقْتُلُوهُ

The person who changes his Dîn (religion), kill him.

Hadrat Shiblí رحمته الله عليه: On seeing this condition, we left Shaikh there and returned with thousands of sorrows and in despair. We set off to Baghdad. We had just crossed three *manzils* when suddenly on the third day we saw Shaikh in front of us, who after having a bath in the river came out and in a loud voice recited the *shahâdat*:

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله و اشهد ان محمداً رسول الله

Only that person can understand our happiness at that moment, who had an idea of our previous sorrow, despair and calamity.

Shaikh رحمته عليه (on coming closer): Hand me a clean set of clothes.

After taking the clothes, he immediately started performing Ṣalâh. We waited for Shaikh to complete his Ṣalâh so that we could hear the complete story. A short while later, Shaikh completed his Ṣalâh and sat down facing us.

We: Thousands and thousands of thanks be to Allâh ﷻ, who is *Qâdir* (Most Powerful) and *Alîm* (Most Knowledgeable) and who has joined you with us and has brought back our group after being scattered. However, explain to us why you came after initially refusing?

Shaikh: My friends! When you left me, I made *du'â* to Allâh ﷻ, beseeching Him humbly, "O Allâh ﷻ! Save me from this difficulty, I am Your sinful slave. At that moment, the Hearer of *du'âs* heard my voice and obliterated all my sins."

We: Shaikh! Was there any reason for this test?

Shaikh: Yes, when we arrived at the town, we passed by the churches, idols and temples. On seeing the fire-worshippers and cross-worshippers involved in their worship to others besides Allâh ﷻ, pride and greatness came into my heart that we are *muwahhidîn* (believers in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ) and these wretched people are so ignorant and foolish that they worship such lifeless and senseless objects.

At that moment, I heard a voice from the unseen, "This *Îmân* and *tauhîd* is not your personal excellence. All this is Our *taufîq* (granting of divine ability). If you wish, we will show you now". At that juncture, I perceived something flying out of my heart, which in reality was *îmân*.

Hadrat Shibli رحمته اللہ علیہ says: After this, our caravan reached Baghdad with great happiness and success. All the *murîds* expressed great joy on meeting Shaikh and on his re-entering of Islam. The *Khânqahs* were opened. The king of the time came to visit Shaikh and presented some gifts to him.

Shaikh then became involved in his previous work. Once again, his efforts of Hadîth, Tafsîr, advice, teaching and instruction began. Allâh ﷻ granted him all the knowledge he had forgotten. In fact, compared to before, in every knowledge and field there was an increase. His students now numbered forty thousand. In this way some time passed.

One day, after performing the Fajr Salâh, we were sitting in the presence of Shaikh, when suddenly we heard someone knocking at the door of the room. I went to the door and saw a person wrapped in black clothing.

I asked: Who are you? Where have you come from? What do you want?

The person said: Tell your Shaikh that I am that girl who met him in so and so place (she took the name of that place where the Shaikh had been tested). I am here to serve him.

This is true that when one becomes Allâh's, the whole world becomes his.

I went to the Shaikh and told him. On hearing this, he became pale. He began shivering due to fear. Thereafter he gave permission for her to come in.

On seeing Shaikh, the girl cried profusely. Due to her severe sobbing, she was unable to speak.

Shaikh (addressing the girl): Why did you come here? And how did you reach here?

Girl: O my Master! When you left our village and I came to know, I became greatly perturbed and uneasy. Only my heart knows. No hunger or thirst remained. Where would sleep come? The whole night I remained in this agitation. Just before dawn I lay down for a while. At this time, I was overpowered by drowsiness. In this drowsiness I saw a man in a dream saying to me, "If you wish to be included amongst the believers, then leave idol-worship and follow the Shaikh. Repent from your religion and enter into the religion of the Shaikh".

I (addressing the person in my dream): What is the religion of the Shaikh?

Person: His religion is Islam.

I: What is Islam?

Person: To testify with the heart and tongue that there is none worthy of worship but Allâh ﷻ and Muhammad ﷺ is his true Rasûl and messenger.

I: How will I reach the Shaikh?

Person: Close your eyes and place your hand in mine.

I said: "Very good!" I stood up and placed my hand in this person's hand.

Person: (holding my hand walked with me for a while): Enough! Open your eyes.

I opened my eyes and found myself at the edge of the Tigris River (which flows at the edge of Baghdad). I was amazed. I looked around in wonder that in a few minutes I had traversed such a distance.

This person pointed to your room and said, "Here in front of you is the room of Shaikh. Go there and tell him that his brother Khidr عليه السلام sends *salâms*".

According to his directions, I reached here. Now I am present in your service. Make me a Muslim.

Shaikh made her a Muslim and made her reside in a room adjacent to his, where she could worship Allâh ﷻ.

The girl became involved in *'ibâbah* (worship). She surpassed most of her contemporaries in *'ibâbah* and abstinence (*zuhd*). The whole day she would fast and the whole night she would tie her hands in front of her Independent Master.

Due to her exertions, her body withered. Besides skin and bones, nothing else could be seen. Finally, she became sick. The sickness became prolonged until eventually death stared her in the face. Now this traveler to the hereafter had no sorrow left in her heart except that she wanted to cool her eyes by meeting Shaikh one time. Since the time she lived in her room she did not see the Shaikh, nor did he see her.

Finally she sent for the Shaikh to come to her once before she passed away.

Shaikh, on hearing this, came immediately. The dying girl intended to look at the Shaikh with grief stricken eyes. However her eyes were so full of tears that it did not allow her a chance to look fully. Tears continued to stream down her face and due to weakness she could not speak.

However it was as if she was saying, "This is my final breath, O *zâlim* (oppressor)! Look properly, your wet eyes will continue shedding tears forever".

Finally, in stammering and low voice, she uttered, "Assalâmu alaikum"

Shaikh (in a voice full of compassion): Do not worry, Inshâ Allâh soon our meeting will be in Jannah.

The girl was affected by Shaikh's words of encouragement and kept quiet. Now this silence would remain for a long time only to be broken on the Day of Qiyâmah. Not a long time passed before she bid farewell to the transitory world.

Shaikh was distressed due to her death. However he too did not live for very long after this.

Hadrat Shiblî رحمته اللہ علیہ says: After a few days, Shaikh too left this transitory abode. After a few days, I saw Shaikh in my dream residing in a beautiful garden. His Nikâh was made with seventy *hûr* (damsels of Jannah). The first was the very same girl. Now both of them were united forever, enjoying the eternal bounties of Jannah.

ذالك فضل الله يؤتيه من يشاء ❁ و الله ذو الفضل العظيم

