



# REFORMING ONESELF IS THE FOREMOST OBLIGATION



**Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb**  
(*Damat Barakatuhum*)

*Khanqah Maseehiyyah - Sukkur - Pakistan*

# ***REFORMING ONESELF IS THE FOREMOST OBLIGATION***

***An enlightening discourse on  
the need for reforming oneself***

by

**Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb**

*(Damat Barakatuhum)*

*Khanqah Masehiyyah - Sukkur – Pakistan*

## **Reforming Oneself is the Foremost Obligation**

Summary of a discourse delivered by

Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed (*Damat Barakatuhum*)

At Darul Ihsan Humanitarian Centre, Durban, South Africa

on 30 July 2022

Published by Muslims First

Email: [firstmuslims@gmail.com](mailto:firstmuslims@gmail.com)

Website: [www.muslimsfirst.com](http://www.muslimsfirst.com)

1<sup>st</sup> Edition: Muharram 1445 | August 2023

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Design & Layout by Moulana Muhammad Badsha

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*A humble request for Duas for all associated with this publication,  
their parents and teachers.*



*'Verily the one who purifies his soul has  
attained the highest level of success.'*

*(Surah al A'la: 14)*

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## FOREWORD

### Hadhrat Hafez Qaasim Paruk

*(Damat Barakatuhum)*

Khalifah of Shafeequl Ummah Hadhrat Maulana Shah  
Muhammad Farooq Saheb *(Rahimahullah)*



The institution of Tazkiyah/Tasawwuf is an integral component of Deen. In the current technological age, we are witnessing an unprecedented volume of information. The challenge of presenting authentic and reliable articles is thus an imperative for spreading the true temperament of Deen.

It is undoubtedly a mercy upon the Ummah that we have a personality like Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb *(Damat Barakatuhum)* in our midst, the noble son of Shafeequl Ummah Hadhrat Moulana Shah Muhammad

Farooq (*Rahimahullah*). A unique trait in Hadhrat's manner of imparting the importance of the institution of Tasawwuf is that it is not only simple, but the Saalik (seeker) looks forward to rectify his life. Indeed, Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb (*Damat Barakatuhum*) has imbibed the eloquent style of Hadhrat Shafeequl Ummah (*Rahimahullah*) and presented the importance of reformation in an easy, respectful and understandable manner. May Allah Ta'ala keep the shade of Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb (*Damat Barakatuhum*) upon the Ummah for many years so that we may continue deriving benefit and guidance from his discourses. Aameen.

Furthermore, we express gratitude unto Allah Ta'ala for the bounty of our respected and dear friend, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Ameer Saheb (*Hafizahullah*) who has regularly transcribed and translated the talks of Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb (*Hafizahullah*) into English. This discussion on Ihsaan provides the reader with simple but potent tools to attain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. May Allah Ta'ala reward Moulana Muhammad Ameer Saheb



immensely. May Allah Ta'ala continue accepting Moulana Saheb (*Hafizahullah*) for the propagation of Deen.

Was Salaam

**Qaasim Paruk**

*Pietermaritzburg – South Africa*

19 July 2023 – 1 Muharram 1445

## FOREWORD

### **Hadhrat Mufti Zubair Bayat**

*(Damat Barakatuhum)*

Ameer of Darul Ihsan Humanitarian Centre, Durban, South  
Africa



This wonderful treatise, titled "Reforming Oneself is the Foremost Obligation" is based on a most inspiring discourse, delivered by Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed *(Damat Barakatuhum)* at Darul Ihsan Centre in Durban, South Africa, at a Saturday Morning Islah and Zikr Majlis, held on 30 July, 2022. The personality of Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed *(Damat Barakatuhum)* is very endearing, his mannerism is impeccable and his style of speaking is most captivating. People are drawn towards his discourses as metal is towards a magnet. This discourse is an addition to the jewel box of gems of his many discourses, and Moulana Muhammad

Ameer Saheb (*Hafizahullah*) is deserving of commendation and appreciation for capturing it in written form and publishing it for the benefit of the Ummah.

May Allah Ta'ala in His infinite mercy and grace accept this work, reward all who were instrumental in its publication and make it most beneficial for the Ummah until Qiyamah.

Was Salaam

**Zubair Bayat**

*Durban – South Africa*

8 August 2023 - 18 Muharram 1445

## OPENING SERMON



*All praises are for Allah Ta'ala alone, we praise Him and we seek His assistance, we seek protection from the evil of our own souls and the evil of our deeds.*

*Whosoever He guides, there is none to misguide Him and whosoever He misguides there is none to guide him.*

*We testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, He is alone and has no partner.*

*We testify that our Leader, our Messenger, our Beloved, and the Beloved of our Creator, our Healer and the Healer of our hearts, our Master is Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).*

*May the blessings and salutations of Allah Ta'ala be upon him, his family and companions in abundance. He is that beloved in whom we have hope that he will intercede for us on the day of judgement.*

## **IHSAN IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR DEEN**

It is the infinite mercy and favour of Allah Ta'ala, and with immense gratitude to Allah Ta'ala that He has granted me this opportunity to be present at Darul Ihsan Centre today. Witnessing this beautiful structure has brought immense joy to my heart. Being here gives me great pleasure. The name Darul Ihsan is exceptionally beautiful; we have been taught that Ihsan is an integral part of our Deen and Iman and we have been taught to develop Ihsan. This institution is the door to Ihsan (excellence).

On my previous visit, the building was in its construction stages. Allah Ta'ala has been extremely kind and merciful that today this building stands as a beautiful structure and from here the fayz (beneficial teachings and spiritual blessings) of Deen and various projects and services are being conducted.

We make dua that Allah Ta'ala always keep this garden alive with purpose and may it continue to flourish and blossom.

## HOW TO SUSTAIN STRUCTURES

To build structures is easy, but maintaining and sustaining them with purpose is the main objective. How are institutions kept alive and sustained? Institutions are sustained through the Zikr of Allah Ta'ala and through service to Deen and humanity.

We thank Allah Ta'ala that the esteemed personality of Hadhrat Mufti Zubair Saheb (*Damat Barakatuhum*) is such that his supervision and his presence is an immeasurable blessing for those associated with him. Allah Ta'ala has created certain personalities for the sole purpose of serving his Deen. These chosen personalities are such that they are not in need of buildings and structures. They are, within themselves, an entire movement and institution.

## **MADRASAH IS THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENT**

In Pakistan, there was a time when the government threatened to nationalize institutions and take control of the governance of all the Madrasahs and Islamic institutions in the country. Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Saheb (*Rahimahullah* - of Pakistan) responded to the government saying: *"Do you people think that the Madrasah is the name of a certain institution or building? A Madrasah does not represent a building or institution, but in reality, it is an association between a student and a teacher. So if you take away our buildings we will continue teaching our lessons on the foot paths, on the roads, in parks, under trees and wherever else is suitable. Wherever we will sit to teach, this will be a Madrasah."*

Allah Ta'ala has not made the progress of Deen dependent on buildings and structures. These facilities are for the purposes of ease. Importantly, the real objective is to exert oneself in one's work. The service of Deen is not something occasional or for a few days; this effort is continuous and ongoing. There should be a desire and eagerness within a person to constantly reflect upon what needs to be done and

look forward as to how one can do better. A true servant is constantly in pursuit of improvement and excellence. To merely build structures and feel content is not the objective; rather we should remain focused on doing the work in the best possible manner.



## **GOOD WORK WILL FACE OBSTACLES**

This work requires a collective team effort. Remember, any work that is undertaken to please Allah Ta'ala as a service to humanity will face impediments and obstacles. These obstacles serve the purpose of breaking the inner desire for fame and pride, so that a person does not regard himself great and worthy of praise and his attention does not turn to himself. Another reason for obstacles is that it is an indication that Allah Ta'ala loves the work that is taking place and covets it with acceptance.

## **RESPOND TO CRITICISM WITH GOODNESS**

Regarding obstacles in one's efforts, Maseehul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah (*Rahimahullah*) would mention that when criticism was levelled at Ambiya (*Alayhimus Salaam*), Sahabah (*Radiyallahu Anhum*) and Auliya (pious servants), and they were tested with condemnation and abuse, then why would people not criticise us? So we should not be perturbed by the criticism of people. Do not respond to abuse with abuse. The answer to abuse and criticism is kindness and goodness.

## **I NEED TO IMPROVE MYSELF**

The most important point to consider is the need to reform and improve oneself. This is the first and the most important step. Helping and serving others begins with one's own rectification. When an individual reforms himself, the effect of this reformation will affect and inspire others. The greatest service to accomplish is to rectify oneself before trying to reform others. And this road to Allah Ta'ala is acquired through the company of the friends of Allah Ta'ala. Without the guidance and company of the friends of Allah, this objective is difficult to achieve. This road is easy, but at the same time the journey is long.

## **A TRUE DEVOTEE IS NEVER SATIATED**

Hadhrat Hajee Imdadullah Muhajir Makki (*Rahimahullah*), who is the fountainhead of our silsilah (spiritual tree), and through whose blessings we are gathered here today, used to say that the journey of 'true love' is never fully accomplished, rather it is a path without an end. The example of this devotion is like a grapevine; the more it is pruned, the more it flourishes. Similarly, the path of divine love is a path that has no limit, rather it continues endlessly.

Therefore, Hadhrat Hajee Imdadullah (*Rahimahullah*) explains that a true seeker is never satiated in his quest for divine proximity. He remains restless, in a state of want with his quest unfulfilled. The more he achieves, the more his quest for divine love increases and the more his recognition of Allah Ta'ala increases. He thus draws the conclusion that despite his achievements, he has in reality achieved nothing; in fact, he believes that his journey has only begun.

## IMMERSING ONESELF IN DEVOTION

We have one person who journeys 'to' Allah (*Sayr Ilallah*), and another who immerses himself 'in' the divine love of Allah Ta'ala (*Sayr Fillah*). The journey 'to' Allah Ta'ala has a destination, but the journey of immersion 'in' the divine love of Allah Ta'ala has no end. This journey of divine love blossoms and flourishes the more one travels this path.

So after embarking upon this path, a person may question, "What have I gained?"

Today, it is common that after making Zikr and sitting in the company of the Shaykh for a short while, one begins to question the benefit. Sometimes a person's gaze is on some worldly benefit; that if I associate with the pious servants of Allah then I will experience increase in business, or some illness will be removed, or some difficulty will be overcome. There are different scales by which people assess and evaluate progress. However, the scales which our pious seniors have shown us are far higher and more noble than our consideration. We should also extend our gaze beyond these apparent or superficial benefits.

## **WHEN YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE ACHIEVED NOTHING**

Hadhrat Hajee Imdadullah (*Rahimahullah*) explains that a person who spends an entire life in the service of Islam and then believes that he has achieved nothing, has in fact achieved everything.

What is the yardstick of spiritual achievement? The yardstick is to efface oneself. Achievement in this path is commensurate with the level of annihilation and humility. The greater the humility, the more success one shall achieve. Reflect, to what extent has one humbled oneself, how much has one crushed the ego? A person goes about saying, 'I, me, myself, etc. This 'highness' and self-pride should be suppressed. Until a person does not subdue the ego, he has not even begun the journey to reach Allah Ta'ala, where will he ever be anywhere near immersing himself in the devotion of Allah Ta'ala?

## **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DESTINATION AND JOURNEY**

Consider the example of a person who travels to Johannesburg. We will assume that he has reached his destination when he reaches Johannesburg, however he has not yet seen or visited the city of Johannesburg. So reaching Johannesburg, is likened to a person who journeys 'to' Allah Ta'ala and reaches this destination. However, he has not yet discovered the true greatness of Allah Ta'ala. The journey of discovering Allah's greatness is so vast that an entire life will pass, but the destination will not be reached. So we should engross ourselves in our effort by following the teachings imparted to us.

## **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FOLLOWING THE TEACHINGS AND MAKING AN EFFORT?**

A person acquires guidance from a Shaykh, as you all come here on a weekly basis, Zikr takes place and advice is imparted. The advice that has reached your ears should be internalised and taken to heart. When this advice will permeate the heart, then practise will follow. If the advice remains limited to the ears, then it is famously said, 'Take it in from one ear and out from the other'. Words that remain in the ears do not remain, they are lost. So let it penetrate the heart, then it will be easy to practise. To gain this ability also requires effort; we are not automated machines or robots. Effort was made to come here, engage in Zikr, and to sit patiently and listen; all this has happened through effort, so after going from here, remember this lesson and keep it alive. Do not procrastinate till next week.



## REMEMBER TO DO YOUR ZIKR

Mufti Zubair Saheb (*Hafizahullah*) has informed me that this is a weekly program (on Saturday mornings) where Zikr takes place, advice is delivered and after which breakfast is served. So when we go home we still remember and relish the delicious breakfast, but we tend to forget that we need to make Zikr. So just as we remember breakfast daily, we should also make Zikr daily. This should be our daily 'breakfast'. We should not wait for an entire week to come here and make Zikr. If we wish to do so, then we should also procrastinate our breakfast for an entire week! No one does this because we realise our bodies require physical nourishment and by having a good breakfast we will be able to have a good day. So this is our thinking which is applicable to our physical needs, which is correct and required, but if we take our effort further and make Zikr also, then our work will have greater effect. Zikr will strengthen our inner ability, and when our soul is strengthened and fortified through Zikr, then our passions will be weakened. When passions are weakened, then a person is protected from falling prey to sin and vice. He will be conscious of the presence of Allah Ta'ala which will prevent him from lying, cheating and deceiving.

## **ZIKR SHOULD BE WITH EVERY BREATH WE TAKE**

How will this consciousness be created? It will be developed through Zikr and not by having breakfast. Just as it is necessary for us to have breakfast to give our physical body nourishment, it is also imperative to give our soul nourishment by making the Zikr of Allah Ta'ala. And just as we do not wait for an entire week to have the next breakfast, similarly we should not wait for the next week to make Zikr, rather Zikr should be made with every breath we take. There is no need to wait for anyone or any specific time to make Zikr. Become so accustomed to the Zikr that in every posture, whilst getting up, sitting, walking and moving about; whilst doing chores, Zikr should continue. When a person makes Zikr continuously, then its effect will rub off onto the other limbs. Now the consciousness of Allah Ta'ala will permeate his eyes, ears, tongue and limbs. In this way a person shall be saved from many sins. This lesson must be remembered.

Here (at the Saturday morning programme at Darul Ihsan Centre), Zikr is made collectively and advice is imparted. This is to train one in the method of making Zikr, to develop

the habit of Zikr and to become steadfast on Zikr. However, the real objective is to make Zikr at home individually, and to make our homes alive with the Zikr of Allah.

## THE TWO KHANQAHS OF A SEEKER

Another important aspect is to remember the advice imparted. This advice should not be forgotten after leaving here.

My Shaykh, Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat (*Rahimahullah*) used to say that there are two types of Khanqahs. One is the physical Khanqah, and one is the figurative Khanqah. The physical Khanqah is where the Shaykh resides, where discourses are delivered and seekers attend for their reformation. The other Khanqah is after learning the teachings, a person practises upon them wherever he is, out in the world where he will face many challenges that will test his patience and resolve. It is then that he will remember the teachings of the Shaykh and practice on these teachings in the absence of the Shaykh. To follow the Shaykh in his presence is easy; everyone lowers their heads in the presence of the Shaykh and narrate their lovely dreams and feelings. However, the true test is when one goes home, in the presence of the parents, wife and family. Today, our behaviour with the family is poor. Now is the time to recall the lesson of the Shaykh, what did he teach?

## **HOW SHOULD ONE RESPOND WHEN TESTED?**

Some unpleasantness will be encountered from the side of parents, wife, children, employees or subjects. What should one do in this case? Should one respond in rage and anger? At such a time the teaching of the Shaykh is to be tolerant, patient, and forgiving, to 'drink in' one's anger and not to react with harshness. That person who remembers the lesson of the Shaykh in his absence is now in the figurative Khanqah, as he remembered and applied the teachings he learnt in the physical Khanqah. The one who remembers and implements the lessons of the Shaykh, is considered to be truly in the Khanqah. We should mould our lives in such a way that we are constantly conscious of this.

## HOW TO MAKE LIFE WORTH LIVING?

Look at the lives of the righteous. They have shown us how life is made. It doesn't happen with one week's worth of effort; rather it is a lifelong effort that yields righteousness.

Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Thanwi (*Rahimahullah*) used to say that many people visit the pious servants for 'blessings' - there is no doubt that the personal items and effects of righteous servants contain Barakah (blessings), but for how long will one keep seeking these blessings from the personal items and effects of these servants? Ponder on how blessings appeared in the lives of the pious, and what drew these blessings to them? It is through A'maal (good deeds). They became the friends of Allah Ta'ala through good actions. We can also attain the ability to do good actions and mould our lives as they have done. Just as the pious attained these blessings, one who makes effort like they have will also begin to possess Barakah.

## SINCERITY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

The righteous servants are so sincere, that my honourable father (Hadhrat Shafeequl Ummat *Rahimahullah*) used to say: *"The association with the pious servants of Allah is such that they wish their disciples to exceed them, unlike other professions, where people do not wish for their disciples to excel beyond them."* In this world, no person wants anyone to surpass him, but the pious truly wish for their students to surpass them. Is there anyone willing to take this benefit? The person who will listen to and follow the teachings of the pious, will enjoy rapid progress and achieve success.

## **THE IMPEDIMENT OF SELF-OPINION**

When a person has adopted the path of seeking Allah Ta'ala, and despite accompanying the pious servants, sees no change within himself, then it means that there is some impediment in his life that is preventing him from progress. One should reflect deeply over what this impediment could be? It is the obstacle of being self-opinionated and regarding oneself to be someone of worth. We have people who associate with the pious servants, sit in their talks, listen to their advices, but eventually do what their desires want them to do. They act on their personal desires and preferences. The advice and lessons of the Shaykh are forgotten. Because we act on our personal opinions and follow our passions, we lack 'Barakah' in our lives. A person acting with ego cannot make progress and will not find Allah Ta'ala. This path is meant to crush the ego of a person - whether one likes it or not, one must listen to one's elders, even if one does not understand the wisdom. And eventually, one will understand their wisdom, but first practise is required. The demand of love is to first accept and practise, then the understanding will follow. And if we do not understand something, then do not object to the guidance of



the Shaykh, rather regard it as a deficiency of one's own understanding.

## **PRIDE MUST BE REMOVED**

This inner malady of pride must be extracted from within, then only will one acquire blessings and the friendship of Allah Ta'ala. It is easy to become a friend of Allah Ta'ala, but the impediment is from our side, not from the side of Allah Ta'ala. When the obstacle is from our side, we should make an effort to eradicate it.

May Allah Ta'ala make this sitting of ours a means of effecting change in our lives and may it be a means of increasing the love and recognition of Allah. May Allah Ta'ala give us true appreciation of our seniors and most importantly may we practise upon their teachings. May we be protected from pride, arrogance, ego and vanity.

## ABOUT SHAYKH ABDUL MU'EEED

Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed Saheb (*Damat Barakatuhum*) was born and resides in the Sindh Province of Pakistan in a town called Sukkur. He is the eldest son of the great spiritual master and luminary, Shafeequl Ummat Hadhrat Moulana Shah Muhammad Farooq Saheb (*Rahimahullah*), who was the eminent *Khalifah* and successor of Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat, Moulana Maseehullah (*Rahimahullah*) of Jalalabad, India.

The family migrated to Pakistan from Aligarh in India after the partition of India. Born in a religious family, he was given a sound upbringing by his parents. In his young days he would travel with his father to Jalalabad in India to spend time in the company of Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat, Moulana Maseehullah (*Rahimahullah*). Due to his father's special relationship with Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat, the young Abdul Mu'eed was given special attention in the Khanqah and was considered to be part of the household. Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed (*Damat Barakatuhum*) once related: "*My father would advise me to drink abundantly from the borehole water of the Khanqah in Jalalabad, India, as the soil*

*here contains the special blessings of our Shaykh, Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat (Rahimahullah)."*

Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed, fondly known as Bhaijaan (meaning the eldest brother), was the *Naazim* (Chief Administrator) of *Khanqah Maseehiyyah*, which was established by his honourable father in Sukkur under the guidance and instruction of his Shaykh, Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat (Rahimahullah). Hadhrat Bhaijaan would astutely administer all the important affairs of the *Khanqah* while his father, the spiritual fountainhead, undertook the responsibility of delivering daily *majalis* and discourses, receiving guests and spiritual seekers, and satiating the spiritual thirst of the people. The responsibilities of the *Khanqah* include ensuring that guests are comfortable and all arrangements are made according to the style and temperament of the *silsila* (noble chain of Mashaaikh). This effort would reach its peak in the last ten days of Ramadan when the I'tikaf programme would draw Ulama and seekers from far and wide. Some 300 to 400 guests would participate in the Sunnah I'tikaf annually, whilst many more would participate in the programmes at different intervals in

Ramadan. All related administrative responsibilities were shouldered by Hadhrat Bhaijaan (*Damat Barakatuhum*) for many years.

After the demise of his beloved father and Shaykh (*Rahimahullah*) in 1999, and his dear friend Hadhrat Dr. Muhammad Sabir (*Rahimahullah*), the natural successor of his father in 2007, Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed was tasked by his seniors with the enormous responsibility of carrying forward the 'mission'. Under the instruction of, and with the Duas, blessings and permission of a great sage of the *Chistiyyah* spiritual tree, Hadhrat Nawab Ishrat Ali Khan Qaisar (*Rahimahullah*), who was a disciple of Hakeemul Ummat, Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (*Rahimahullah*) and Khalifah of Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat (*Rahimahullah*), Hadhrat Bhaijaan, reluctantly but humbly and ably embraced the enormous task ahead of him with the benefit of the spiritual training given to him by his father.

With utmost humility, respect, courage and steadfastness, Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed continues to fulfil the responsibility of his seniors with the same fervour, punctuality and steadfastness of his seniors and attributes

all achievements to their blessings and spiritual *faydh* (transmission). Amazingly, he possesses and espouses many of the noble traits of affection, love and compassion possessed by his father and Shaykh, Hadhrat Shafeequl Ummat Moulana Shah Muhammad Farooq (*Rahimahullah*).

Hadhrat Shaykh travels extensively in Pakistan and abroad for the purpose of spreading the Deen. He has been to the Caribbean Islands, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, China, Zambia, Malawi, Belgium, Germany, Turkey, Denmark and several other countries. He also travels to the United Kingdom and South Africa almost annually for the purpose of reformation.

Hadhrat Shaykh has a deep love and affinity for the *Haramain Sharifain* and visits the sacred lands whenever the opportunity arises. He would accompany his father (*Rahimahullah*) annually and serve the *Hujjaj*, guests of Allah Ta'ala for almost two decades.

May Allah Ta'ala protect Hadhrat and accept his efforts.

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

## An enlightening discourse on the need for reforming oneself

This treatise is based on a most inspiring discourse delivered by Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed (*Damat Barakatuhum*) at Darul Ihsan Centre in Durban, South Africa, at a Saturday Morning Islah and Zikr Majlis, held on 30 July, 2022.

The personality of Hadhrat Shaykh Abdul Mu'eed (*Damat Barakatuhum*) is very endearing, his mannerism is impeccable and his style of speaking is most captivating. People are drawn towards his discourses as metal is towards a magnet.

This discourse is an addition to the jewel box of gems of his many discourses captured in written form and published for the benefit of the Ummah.

Published, layout and design by:

