

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Tadhkiratu'l Awliya'
A tadhkira (in memoriam) of

ASH-SHAYKH AL-KAMIL AL-HABIB
AHMAD MASHHUR BIN TAHA AL-HADDAD اللَّهِ نَفَعْنَا بِهِ
(1325-1416 A.H. / 1907-1995)

A Tadhkira by: Siddiq Osman Noormuhammad

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A1. The niyyaat (intentions) of my shaykh ^{نفعنا الله} in reciting Surah al-Fatiha

فَاتِحَةَ الْحَبِيبِ أَحْمَدَ مَشْهُورَ بْنِ طَهٍ الْحَدَّادِ

الْفَاتِحَةَ بِالْقَبُولِ وَالْإِقْبَالِ وَصَلَاحِ الْأَحْوَالِ وَالْأَعْمَالِ وَالْعِيَالِ فِي الْحَالِ وَالْإِسْتِقْبَالِ وَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَيِّنُ صَفَحَاتِ أَيْمَانِنَا وَمَجَالِسِنَا بِالْعِلْمِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ وَيَخْتِمُهَا بِالنُّجْحِ وَالنُّصْحِ وَالسَّعَادَةِ وَيَرْفَعُ عَنْ قُلُوبِنَا غِشَاوَةَ الْعَقْلَةِ عَنْ مَلَاخِظَةِ الْجَبْرُوتِ حَتَّى تُشَاهِدُ عَجَائِبَ صُنْعِهِ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوتِ وَيُبْصِرُنَا بِمَوَاقِعِ أَقْدَامِنَا وَمَطَارِحِ أَبْصَارِنَا وَمَوَاقِفِ عُقُولِنَا لِتَرَى ظَوَاهِرَ الْأُمُورِ مِنْ بَاطِنِهَا وَحَقَّهَا مِنْ بَاطِلِهَا وَيَلْبِسُنَا حُلَّةَ التَّقْوَى وَالْعِرْفَانِ وَيُؤَمِّنُنَا مِنْ نَوَائِبِ صُرُوفِ الْحَدَثَانِ وَيَكْفِينَا شَرَّ فِتَنِ آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ وَيَجْعَلُنَا مِنْ عِبِيدِ الْإِحْسَانِ وَيَخْتِمُ لَنَا بِخَاتِمَةِ الشَّهَادَةِ وَالْإِيمَانِ بِلَا مَحْنَةٍ وَلَا امْتِحَانٍ وَإِلَى حَضْرَةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

A suggested interpretation

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

(Let us recite Surah) Al-Fatiha for acceptance (by Allah ﷻ) and drawing near (to Him), and for goodness in our situations, and deeds and families, now and in the future; and that may Allah beautify the records (of good deeds) of our days and our gatherings with knowledge and worship, and seal them with success, guidance and bliss; and that He lifts from our hearts the veil of heedlessness that obstructs from seeing the Realm of His Majestic Power until they (the hearts) witness the marvels of His creation in His universal Dominion and His Spiritual Kingdom, and that He gives us discernment about the steps we take, the location of our perception, and the positioning of the halting stations of our minds, so that we perceive beyond the outward aspect of matters, and distinguish the truth from the falsehood (of matters); and that He clothes us in the robes of piety and knowledge; and that He safeguards us from disastrous events in the ups and downs of life, and protects us from the evil of the trials of the end of times; and that He makes us His virtuous devotees; and that He ends our lives as believing Muslims with the Declaration of Muslim Faith without any hardship or test. (This Fatiha is) To the presence of the Prophet, may Allah bless Him and his Family, and grant him peace.

Al-Fatiha!

A2. Sources for this tadhkira of my shaykh نفعنا به الله

اللَّحْمْدُ لِلَّهِ All Praise is for Allah رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ Who forever blesses and bestows peace on our Beloved Prophet Sayyidina wa Mawlana wa Habibuna Muhammad al-Mustafa ﷺ.

This **tadhkira** (in memoriam) of my shaykh, al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur bin Taha al-Haddad نفعنا به الله (1325-1416 A.H. / 1907-1995) is primarily based on these sources:

- (i) Recollections of my association and attachment with him in Mombasa and Nairobi, Kenya, especially from 1401 to 1409 A.H. / 1981 to 1989.
- (ii) Personal interviews in Mombasa in the month of Shawwal 1440 A.H. / June 2019 with those who had ta‘alluq (attachment) with him in Kenya.
- (iii) His spiritual masterpiece Miftah u’l-Jannah (Key to the Garden, The Key to Paradise) whose third Arabic edition contains his biography by his blessed son as-Sayyid Muhammad رحمته عليه. This kitab (book) teaches us about Islam, Iman (Faith) and Ihsaan (spiritual excellence). Each kitab has rights. One of the rights of Miftah u’l-Jannah over the muridin (disciples) of al-Habib is that they should recite at least the verses of the Qur’an Karim in it.
- (iv) His talks, and what he said in his durus (study sessions), and anecdotes about him in Kenya. These were compiled by his blessed grandson as-Sayyid Muhammad bin Mustafa bin ‘Alawi Abu Numay رحمته عليه of Mombasa titled Manba‘ u’l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help), which is his second spiritual masterpiece of about 200 pages.
- (v) Safahaat (Pages), the 630 page biography of al-Habib in Arabic by his blessed eldest son as-Sayyid Hamid رحمته عليه. This is a comprehensive compilation of all the writings in both prose and poetry, and some of the talks of al-Habib نفعنا به الله in Jeddah; as well as the writings about al-Habib, in both prose and poetry by the mashayikh (spiritual masters), the ‘ulama’ (scholars), and the shu‘ara’ (poets).
- (vi) Al-‘Uqud u’l-jaahizah wa’l-wu‘udun-naajizah fi taraajimi ba’dhi-shshakhsiyyaat i’l-baarizah (The ready-made document and the fulfilled promises in the biographies of some prominent personalities) by as-Sayyid ‘Abdal Qadir bin ‘Abdar-Rahman al-Junaid رحمته عليه of Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania, a 600 page book of biographies of more than 180 eminent mashayikh, ‘ulama’, and salihin (the pious) of which 87 pages are about al-Habib نفعنا به الله.
- (vii) His short yet comprehensive biography in Kiswahili by his grandson as-Sayyid Muhammad bin Mustafa رحمته عليه, and
- (viii) Oral tradition.

اللَّحْمْدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ)!

This study could not benefit from the biography of al-Habib ^{اللّه} نفعنا به by Dr. Mostafa al-Badawi ^{اللّه} حفظه in the Exemplars series edited by Dr. Haroon Sugich ^{اللّه} حفظه, as it was already completed before the publication of the Exemplars. For the same reason, it will not benefit from a more extensive biography by Dr. Mostafa al-Badawi which is eagerly awaited.

A3. Welcome to my shaykh al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur bin Taha al-Haddad نفعنا به الله (1325-1416 A.H. / 1907-1995)

الحمد لله All Praise is for Allah سبحانه, and may His blessings and peace be forever on our Beloved Prophet Sayyidina wa Mawlana Muhammad al-Mustafa صلى الله عليه وسلم, his Family عليه السلام, and Companions رضي الله عنهم.

This chapter is in four parts:

- (a) Introduction to my shaykh al-Habib نفعنا به الله.
- (b) A short biography of al-Habib.
- (c) It was predicted that al-Habib was destined for great heights.
- (d) Al-Habib is outstanding and unique in many ways.

InshaAllah (Allah Willing), we shall come to each part of this chapter in turn.

(a) Introduction to my shaykh, al-Habib نفعنا به الله

Sayyidi wa Murshidi, my shaykh al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur bin Taha al-Haddad نفعنا به الله is a descendant of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, from Sayyidina ‘Ali al-Murtada رضي الله عنه, who is the Gate of Knowledge, Sayyidatina Fatima az-Zahra رضي الله عنها, who is the leader of the ladies in Paradise, and their son Sayyidina Imam al-Husayn رضي الله عنه who is Sayyidu’sh-shuhada’ (the leader of the martyrs).

Henceforth I shall simply refer to him as al-Habib (the beloved).

He is Shafi’i shari‘atan (in sacred Muslim law), Ash‘ari ‘aqidatan (in creed), and ‘Alawi mashraban (in drinking and providing drink at the spiritual fount).

نفعنا به الله (may Allah سبحانه make us benefit from him)! Amin!

The theme of this tadhkira (memoriam) in the remembrance of al-Habib نفعنا به الله is that he is ash-Shaykh al-kamil (a shaykh perfected by Allah سبحانه).

In Chapter 47 of Miftah u’l-Jannah (Key to the Garden, The Key to Paradise), his classic of Muslim spirituality, al-Habib has given various definitions of a shaykh, one of which is:

الْكَامِلُ فِي ذَاتِهِ الْمُكْمَلِ لِغَيْرِهِ

The one who is perfected in himself, and perfecting to others.

Al-Habib perfectly fits this definition. We identified him as ash-Shaykh al-kamil and we wished to be attached to him.

This tadhkira is in five parts.

This Part A of the tadhkira is the Introduction which shows that as ash-Shaykh al-kamil, al-Habib’s teaching is based on the Qur’an Karim, Ahadith (Sayings of our Beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم), and their interpretation by the pious predecessors.

Part B explains in some detail that as ash-Shaykh al-kamil, al-Habib is bahr al-'ilm (a sea of knowledge). We learn from al-Habib both outward and inward knowledge in a wholesome comprehensive way that goes right to our hearts. If al-Habib takes us under his wing, he gives us learning and recitations to last us for our life-time.

سُبْحَانَكَ (Glorified is Allah ﷻ)!

Part C is about ta'alluq (attachment) with al-Habib. He was identified as ash-Shaykh al-kamil who was a sea of knowledge, so those who knew about this, wanted to associate with him. Once they associated with him, they got attached to him. I was blessed to have the opportunity of associating with him and then getting attached to him in Kenya. I shall narrate how those who associated with al-Habib, especially myself benefited from the blessings of sitting in gatherings with him, and praying behind him. We were living through history as it unfolded before our eyes. Allah ﷻ had appointed al-Habib to unfold this history for us.

اللَّحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

In Part D, I shall talk about the many other noble attributes of al-Habib. This further develops on the theme that al-Habib is ash-Shaykh al-kamil. We learn that:

- (i) Allah ﷻ enabled al-Habib to transform lives to greater piety,
- (ii) Allah ﷻ appointed him as ad-Da'i al-kamil (an accomplished inviter to Islam),
- (iii) he did not seek muridin (disciples) but people sought him out and caravans headed for him from all directions as he had been identified as a singularly unique shaykh,
- (iv) he is shaykh u'l-mashayikh (a shaykh of shaykhs),
- (v) he is al-Habib (the beloved) for all those who know him world-wide, as he was not parochial,
- (vi) he is seen in dreams and in waking vision together with the Beloved Prophet ﷺ,
- (vii) Allah ﷻ made him one of the rijal u'l-ghayb (men of the unseen),
- (viii) Allah ﷻ made him sahib u'l-kashf (a shaykh with spiritual unveilings),
- (ix) he performed karaamaat (miracles) which Allah ﷻ bestowed on him. The miracles of the Prophets ﷺ are called mu'jizaat while the miracles which Allah ﷻ bestows on the awliya' Allah (His Friends) are called karaamaat,
- (x) he saw angels and gave authorizations to jinns,

(xi) he is al-‘Arif Billah, knower of the Attributes of Allah ﷻ from the heart; and among the muqarrabun, those drawn near to Allah (in a qualitative sense), and

(xii) he achieved various spiritual states (ahwaal) and spiritual stations (maqamaat) which Allah ﷻ ordained for him.

اللَّحْمْدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

Part E is about the salawaat (invocations of blessings) which Allah ﷻ poured on al-Habib’s heart to compose, and about his religious poetry; as well as poems composed in his honour. This completes the theme that al-Habib is ash-Shaykh al-kamil.

(b) A short biography of al-Habib نفعنا به

Al-Habib’s son Muhammad رضي الله عنه was the first one to write his biography. Dr. Mostafa Hasan al-Badawi رحمته الله of Madina al-Munawwarah included it in the “Preface” to the third Arabic edition of Miftah u’l-Jannah. He translated it as Key to the Garden. There are some people in the U.K. who have accepted Islam by just reading this book, without even having seen al-Habib نفعنا به. Let us then benefit from a summary of the biography of al-Habib as given in the “Preface”.

Al-Habib was born in the town of Qaydun in Hadhramaut, Yemen, in 1325 A.H, 1907. His mother as-Sayyidah al-‘Arifatu Billah, al-Hababah Safiyyah bint al-Imam Tahir bin ‘Umar al-Haddad رضي الله عنه was a direct descendant of Imam ‘Abdallah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad نفعنا به. She was a **hafizah** of the Qur’an Karim, that is, she had memorized the whole Qur’an. It has been narrated that she was so much attached to the Qur’an Karim that she could be heard reciting it while she was sleeping. With such a pious mother, al-Habib was for sure destined for great heights.

When he was seven years old, al-Habib’s mother sent him to pray Salat al-Fajr behind al-‘Arif Billah al-Habib Ahmad bin Hasan al-‘Attas نفعنا به (1257-1334 A.H). His first teachers in the Ribat (Academy) of Qaydun, Hadhramaut were his uncles al-Habib ‘Abdallah bin Tahir al-Haddad نفعنا به and al-Habib ‘Alawi bin Tahir al-Haddad نفعنا به (1301-1353 A.H). There, he proved himself to be the most outstanding student, academically brilliant. The latter took him to Bogor, Indonesia when al-Habib نفعنا به was about 20 years old. I used to visit Bogor with my family when we lived in Jakarta in 1978. Bogor is 55 km. (35 miles) away from Jakarta. In Bogor, his teachers were al-Habib ‘Alawi bin Muhammad al-Haddad نفعنا به, al-Habib Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Mihdar نفعنا به, and al-Habib ‘Abdallah bin Muhsin al-‘Attas نفعنا به. He was in Indonesia for about 3 years.

From Indonesia, al-Habib نفعنا به went to al-Mukalla in Hadhramaut where he associated with al-‘Arif Billah al-Habib Ahmad bin Muhsin al-Haddaar نفعنا به (1279-1357 A.H) whom he considered to be one of his greatest shaykhs, and from whom he received his fath (spiritual opening).

From there, he went to Zanzibar in 1347 A.H, 1928, when he was 21 years old. In Zanzibar, he was seen to be such a great ‘alim (scholar) that he was appointed to do the tafsir (exegesis, interpretation) of the Qur’an Karim in the Jami‘ Masjid there, even though he was so young. He

was so proficient in tafsir that he took two whole weeks just to explain one verse of Surah al-Fatiha, namely,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You only (O Allah) do we worship and to You only do we pray for help. (1:4)

After six months, he returned to Hadhramaut.

He came to Mombasa in 1351 A.H, 1933 where As-Sayyid Muhammad ‘Abdallah ash-Shatiri رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ helped him to settle down and became his first confidant. Al-Habib نَفَعَنَا اللهُ stayed for sometime at the house of ash-Shaykh Swaleh bin Salim Eleyyan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, who after As-Sayyid ash-Shatiri passed ahead, became and remained his confidant for the rest of his life and who, together with his family, benefited from the blessings of al-Habib staying with them. Later on, al-Habib moved to his own rented house.

From Mombasa, he went to Lamu to meet al-‘Arif Billah al-Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl نَفَعَنَا اللهُ (1269-1354 A.H), the grand-shaykh in Kenya, and took **ijaza** (authorization) from him. He also met and became attached to al-‘Arif Billah, al-Bahr al-muhit (the encircling ocean of knowledge), al-Qutb al-Habib ‘Umar bin Sumayt نَفَعَنَا اللهُ (1303-1396 A.H), the grand-shaykh of Comoro Islands, another of his great shaykhs. Since al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur نَفَعَنَا اللهُ received spiritual openings (futuh) from many spiritual masters, he is sahibu’l futuh (a shaykh with multiple spiritual openings).

Al-Habib moved to Kampala, Uganda in 1375 A.H, 1955 where he became the khatib (sermonizer) and imam (prayer leader) in Masjid Nakasero. He stayed in Uganda for about thirteen years, and came back to Mombasa in 1389 A.H, 1969, and settled there, calling it his “second home”.

Al-Habib set up a small business in Mombasa so he could earn his living and not depend on anyone. Later on, he exclusively devoted himself to the work of **da‘wah** (propagation of Islam). He travelled all over Eastern and Central Africa, as far as the Congo for this purpose when modes of transport were very rudimentary and means of communication such as the telephone and the telex were almost non-existent. It has been reported that in his travels to invite people to Islam, sometimes he had to wade through flooded rivers and walk to remote villages that were inaccessible by car. He was on the maqaam (spiritual station) of tawakkul, reliance on Allah ﷻ. He converted thousands of people to Islam, only Allah ﷻ knows the exact number.

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ Al-Hamdu Lillah (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

However, I never heard him talk about his work of da‘wah, nor did he ever mention it in his study sessions which are contained in Manba‘ u’l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help). We get accounts of these only from his biographies, either oral or written by those who travelled with him, or those who asked him about it. Such was al-Habib نَفَعَنَا اللهُ, a man of Allah ﷻ.

In Arua, Uganda, on the border with Congo, he teamed up with ash-Shareef Saeed bin ‘Abdallah al-Beidh نفعنا به الله of Mambrui, Kenya who had established a small business there, while also doing the work of calling people to Islam.

Al-‘Allamah Ustadh Muhammad Shareef Saeed al-Beidh نفعنا به الله, the Principal of Madrasa al-Ghanna’ al-Islamiyyah in Mambrui said many significant things in his last talk about al-Habib نفعنا به الله at the Anniversary Celebration of al-Habib in Watamu, Kenya, some of which are:

- (i) It was al-Habib who bought the piece of land for the construction of Madrasa al-Ghanna’, and al-Habib was the one who advised, initiated and oversaw its construction. The barakaat (blessings) of al-Habib in the construction of this madrasa are clear for everyone to see, as this madrasa has produced many ‘ulama’ (scholars) and ustadhs (teachers) who help in the propagation of Islam in Kenya and elsewhere.
- (ii) Al-Habib also helped in the establishment of masajid in Kwale, Garsen and Hola in Kenya, as well as masajid in Uganda, where al-Habib was very successful in the work of da‘wa Ilallah, calling people to Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ.
- (iii) In the month of Ramadhan, people would line up from morning to evening seeking financial help from al-Habib and he gave them. He also gave Zakat more than any rich man did.
- (iv) Al-Habib used to hand out presents in many madrasas, attending about three to five graduation ceremonies in a day. Once, he attended a madrasa program in Gede at noon, then Madrasa Tahdhib in Malindi, then came to Madrasa Nuri in Mambrui. By the time he came to Madrasa al-Ghanna’, he was so tired that Ustadh Muhammad told him to rest, and they would call him when it was time for prize-giving. When the program began with a qasida of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به الله and al-Habib heard it, he came to join them although he was exhausted, saying that he could not miss the recitation of this qasida.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (Glorified is Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ)!

We also learn from his biography in Kiswahili written by his grandson as-Sayyid Muhammad bin Mustafa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that al-Habib took the lead in getting six masajid built in the south coast of Kenya. He also helped to build or get re-built other masajid and madaris in other parts of Kenya as well as in other countries.

In Mombasa, he gave a dars (study session) every day after Salat al-‘Asr in Masjid Konzi where he was the khatib. Then, his dars moved to Masjid Shaykh Jundan. He led the Salat al-‘Isha and Salat at-Tarawih in Masjid Birikau (Memon Masjid) where he held study sessions for forty years.

Al-Habib spent his whole life studying and teaching. He practiced more than he advised.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ (All Praise is for Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ)!

From Mombasa, he used to travel for Hajj every year. Every year, in the month of Sha‘ban he would come to Kenya from Jeddah where he resided and leave for Hajj in the month of Dhu‘l-Qa‘dah, so most of his time was spent in Jeddah together with his life-long companion al-Habib ‘Abdal Qadir as-Saqqaf نفعنا الله. There, as in Mombasa, his house was open for everyone to visit; and at his home in Jeddah, in the forefront to serve guests who came from all over the world to meet him were his sons and grandsons. Perhaps he held the greatest number of his talks and study sessions in Jeddah compared to other cities.

It has been said that he performed Hajj forty times.

الله أكبر (Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ is Supremely Great)!

Al-Habib was a multiple migrant who travelled by land, sea and air. His stay in each of the cities he travelled to, was very fruitful and memorable in specific ways.

سبحان الله SubhanAllah (Glorified is Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ)!

(c) It was predicted that al-Habib الله was destined for great heights

We learn that al-Habib was destined for great heights from Manba‘ u‘l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help). Let us look at some incidents in this connection.

Before he was born, glad tidings were received that al-Habib shall be virtuous like his maternal grandfather. Al-Habib narrated this incident to his grandson As-Sayyid Muhammad bin Mustafa Abu Numay رضي الله عنه in Mombasa. He said:

My father travelled to Shihr (a town in Hadhramaut) while my mother was pregnant with me. One night, while in Shihr, in his dream, he saw that he was carrying my (maternal) grandfather al-Habib Tahir bin ‘Umar al-Haddad نفعنا الله on his shoulder. It appeared that al-Habib Tahir bin ‘Umar became small until he appeared to be a baby. So, the next morning, my father went to al-Habib Ahmad al-Junaydi الله and narrated to him the dream. Al-Habib Ahmad al-Junaydi نفعنا الله asked him: “Do you have any connection with al-Habib Tahir bin ‘Umar (al-Haddad)?” He replied to him, “Yes.” He asked him, “What is that connection?” He said to him, “I have married his daughter”. So al-Habib Ahmad said to him, “Is she pregnant?” He said, “Yes.” So al-Habib Ahmad al-Junaydi said, “The baby that will be born shall be like his grandfather.” (Manba‘ u‘l-Imdad, p. 194).

الله أكبر (All Praise is for Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ)

Al-Habib also gave his grandson as-Sayyid Muhammad bin Mustafa رضي الله عنه some more information about his father al-Habib Taha al-Haddad نفعنا الله. He said that his father reached the spiritual rank of nujaba’ (who are outstanding noble saints). Every day, he used to recite twenty ajza’ (plural of juz, part) of the Qur’an. This was in addition to his other awraad and adhkaar (regular voluntary devotions in the remembrance of Allah سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ). (Manba‘ u‘l-Imdad, p.191).

We come to another incident that occurred at the time al-Habib was yet a student in Qaydun, Hadhramaut. He also narrated this incident to his grandson. He said:

When al-Habib ‘Abdar-Rahman Khered نفعنا الله came to Qaydun, he toured the Ribat (the Academy). The students stood to shake hands with him and I was with them. When I shook hands with him and kissed his hand, al-Habib who was blind, held my hand firmly and asked my shaykh al-Habib ‘Alawi bin Tahir نفعنا الله, “Whose son is he, O ‘Alawi?” He replied to him, “He’s the son of Taha bin ‘Ali” نفعنا الله. So al-Habib ‘Abdar-Rahman said to al-Habib ‘Alawi, “Pay attention to him. With him are many spiritual mysteries which he deserves.” (Manba‘ u’l-Imdad, p. 195).

أَكْبَرُهُ (Allah سُبْحَانَهُ is Supremely Great)!

From this we learn that al-Habib ‘Abdar-Rahman Khered نفعنا الله was Sahib u’l-kashf (a shaykh with spiritual unveilings). Through kashf, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ bestowed upon him the ‘ilm u’l-ghayb (hidden knowledge) that al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur نفعنا الله was destined for great heights. Although he did not have eyesight, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ made him see through ‘ayn al-yaqin (the eye of certainty) which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ had provided him in his heart. If this is the level of the ‘ilm u’l-ghayb (hidden knowledge) of a shaykh, then what must be the extent of the ‘ilm u’l-ghayb of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ? Is it ever possible for us to fathom it?

صَلُّوا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَيْهِ

Invoke Allah’s blessings on the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ bless him and grant him peace!

One more incident has been narrated in Manba‘ u’l-Imdad on pages 189-191. It is about the time al-Habib went to Lamu from Mombasa, Kenya, to meet al-‘Arif Billah al-Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl نفعنا الله. Al-Habib Swaleh who was the grand-shaykh in Kenya at that time, asked al-Habib, even though he was only 26 years of age, to lead the salat az-Zuhr (afternoon obligatory Prayer). Al-Habib Swaleh obviously knew through kashf (spiritual unveiling) that al-Habib was destined for great maqaamaat (spiritual stations).

Just these three incidents given in this section are sufficient for us to appreciate that the Ba ‘Alawi of Hadhramaut, descendants of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, produce one great shaykh after another, and one great WaliyyAllah (Friend of Allah) after another. As a result, the Ba ‘Alawi ‘ulama’ (scholars) and mashayikh (spiritual masters) have leadership in the Muslim community. The lesson is to acquire beneficial ‘ilm (knowledge) and become pious, and leadership shall be bestowed by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ if He Wills.

(d) Al-Habib ^{الله} نفعنا به is outstanding and unique in many ways

As mentioned earlier, al-Habib's eldest son, as-Sayyid Hamid ^{رضي الله عنه} wrote a biography of al-Habib ^{الله} نفعنا به of about 630 pages titled Safahaat (Pages). When we analyze the qasaaid (poems) and manzumaat (instructive poems) in it, we find that al-Habib is unique in that his own shaykhs composed qasaaid in his praise. Al-Habib had obviously touched their hearts, for them to compose poems in his praise.

The analysis of the qasaaid in Safahaat also shows that al-Habib himself composed about 30 qasaaid and manzumaat while 48 qasaaid were composed in his honour by various mashayikh (spiritual masters), 'ulama' (scholars) and shu'ara' (poets). He composed many other qasaaid, all compiled in his Diwan (Collected Poems). We also find that more than 40 elegies were composed mourning his passing ahead.

Al-Habib ^{الله} نفعنا به was cheerful and humble to the final degree. His whole being was shining with the nur (light) of the love of Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى} and the love of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad ^{صلى الله عليه وسلم}. As a WaliyyAllah (Friend of Allah), he was and is ma'Allah (with Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى}), and considered himself to be one of the fuqara' (needy before Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى}) and powerless before His Omnipotence. He was the embodiment of tasawwuf (Muslim spiritual culture), on ihsaan (spiritual excellence). He was sahib u'l-waqt (the man of the moment, the man of the times). All those who deliver a talk at his anniversary celebrations in Mombasa inevitably mention how he has touched the hearts of all those who associated with him through his Mustafawi akhlaq (Prophetic character).

Al-Habib left behind five sons, seven daughters, and about a hundred grand-children.

اللَّحْمْدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah ^{سبحانه وتعالى})!

His sons who survived him are:

- (i) As-Sayyid Hamid ^{رضي الله عنه}, his eldest son, who was first with him in Kenya, then went with him to Uganda, then settled in Jeddah,
- (ii) As-Sayyid Muhammad ^{رضي الله عنه}, who lived with him in Jeddah,
- (iii) As-Sayyid Ali ^{رضي الله عنه}, who lived with him in Jeddah,
- (iv) As-Sayyid Hasan ^{الله} حفظه, who is the Kadhi (Magistrate for Muslim Personal Law) in the Comoro Islands, and
- (v) As-Sayyid Abdul Qadir ^{الله} حفظه, his youngest son who always travelled with him, then settled in Jeddah.

Al-Habib passed ahead peacefully at the time of al-'Asr on Wednesday 14 Rajab, 1416 A.H, 6 December 1995 in Jeddah. His **Salatu'l Janazah** was prayed, first at his home in Jeddah, led by Imam Muhammad bin 'Alawi al-Maliki ^{رضي الله عنه}, then in front of the Ka'ba. He is the only person for

whom the **Tahlil (laa ilaha Illallah**, none is to be worshipped but Allah) was loudly chanted in congregation by those who carried his bier and those who accompanied it from the Ka‘ba till he was laid to rest in Jannatu’l Ma‘la, the graveyard in Makkah al-Mukarramah, which is also the last resting place of **Umm u’l-mu’minin** Sayyidatina Khadija al-Kubra رضي الله عنها, from whom he traces his descent.

اللهم (May Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم make us benefit from him)! Amin!

A4. The teaching of my shaykh is based on the Noble Qur'an, Ahadith, and their interpretation by the pious predecessors (salaf u's-salihin رضوا عنهم)

An introduction to my shaykh al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur al-Haddad نفعنا به الله must first explain the foundation of his teachings. This is the aim of this chapter.

Al-Habib said that the teaching of Islam by the 'ulama' (scholars) is based on the Noble Qur'an, Ahadith (Sayings of the Prophet ﷺ) and its interpretation by the pious predecessors. As he follows that tradition, we find that his own writings and talks are based on the Noble Qur'an, Ahadith, his own explanations, and/or the interpretation of the pious predecessors.

For ease of explanation, the pious predecessors whom al-Habib has quoted and/or mentioned in his talks and writings can be classified in three broad categories.

- (i) Al-Habib's own ancestors who trace their ancestry all the way to our Beloved Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa ﷺ. Al-Habib mentions them one by one to show that they are all Awliya' Allah (Friends of Allah) and 'ulama' (scholars).
- (ii) The Illuminated Awliya' Allah and the 'ulama' in the sufi tradition who compiled or wrote classics of Muslim spirituality which continue to illuminate the hearts of Muslims. These include the muhaddithin, those who compiled books of Hadith.
- (iii) The Tabi'in (Followers of the Prophet ﷺ, the second generation of Muslims), other sufi masters, other famous 'ulama', and the shu'ara' (poets).

In this way, al-Habib draws out attention to the spiritually rich scholarly tradition of Islam based on piety from the time of the Prophet ﷺ to the present.

سبحان الله (Glorified is Allah ﷻ)!

This chapter covers all these explanations in six parts:

- (a) The Qur'an and Ahadith (Sayings of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ).
- (b) Interpretation of the pious predecessors: An Example.
- (c) Al-Habib's own ancestors.
- (d) The 'Ulama' (scholars) in the sufi tradition.
- (e) The Tabi'in, the Muhaddithin, other sufi masters, other famous 'ulama' and the shu'ara'.
- (f) Al-Habib's conclusion of Miftah u'l-Jannah with verses of the Qur'an.

Let us then begin by benefitting from Chapter 41 of Miftah u'l-Jannah titled "Dhikrullah (Zikrullah): Remembrance of Allah, the Exalted", and gain barakaat (blessings) by reciting the verses of the Qur'an, Ahadith, al-Habib's own explanation and the interpretation of al-Imam al-Habib 'Abdallah bin 'Alawi al-Haddad نفعنا به الله, whom he took as his foremost shaykh.

(a) Qur'an and Ahadith

First we come to the verses of the Qur'an Karim.

وَأَذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا

Thus remember the Name of your Lord, and devote yourself to Him a complete devotion. (73:8)

When al-Habib quotes a verse, he also explains its meaning. For the sake of brevity, I shall quote his explanation of only this verse.

“This is an exhortation to remember Allah continuously. It is best done by excellence in devotion and a complete detachment from everything else other than Him.”

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

(Those) who have believed and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah; surely, it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts find peace. (13:28)

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

And establish the Salah (Prayer) for My remembrance. (20:14)

فَأذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُمْ

So remember Me, I shall remember you. (2:152)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. (33:41)

يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ

(the foremost angels) glorify Him night and day; they never tire. (21:20)

Then he comes to Ahadith of which I quote two from the chapter on Dhikrullah (remembrance of Allah ﷻ).

The Prophet ﷺ said, “The unique are the foremost”. He was asked, “O Prophetic Messenger of Allah, who are the unique?” and he replied, “The men and women who remember Allah abundantly”.

(Narrated by (Hadhrat) Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه, and compiled by Imam Muslim رحمته الله عليه).

“He who remembers his Lord and he who does not, is like the living and the dead”.

(Narrated by (Hadhrat) Abu Musa al-Ash‘ari رضي الله عنه, and compiled by Imam al-Bukhari رضي الله عنه and Imam Muslim رضي الله عنه).

In this way, al-Habib quotes verses of the Qur’an and Ahadith throughout Miftah u’l-Jannah for which he gives his own interpretation.

For some of the Ahadith he quotes, he mentions the Sahaba رضي الله عنهم (Companions of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) who narrated the Ahadith. These are the Sahaba رضي الله عنهم he quoted or mentioned in Miftah u’l-Jannah in the order in which they appear in the text (except for the Khulafa’ ar-Rashidun whom I list first).

Sayyidina Abu Bakr as-Siddiq,
Sayyidina ‘Umar al-Faruq,
Sayyidina ‘Uthman Dhu’n-Nurayn,
Sayyidina ‘Ali al-Murtada,

(Hadhrat) ‘Abdallah ibn Mas‘ud,
(Hadhrat) Anas bin Malik,
(Hadhrat) Mu‘adh ibn Jabal,
(Hadhrat) Abu Hurayra,
(Hadhrat) Irbaad ibn Saria as-Sulami,

(Hadhrat) Khalid ibn al-Walid,
(Hadhrat) Usama ibn Zayd,
(Hadhrat) ‘Abdallah ibn ‘Abbas,
(Hadhrat) Abu’d-Darda’
(Hadhrat) an-Nu‘man ibn Bashir

(Hadhrat) Bilal al-Habashi,
(Hadhrat) Jabir ibn Samura,
(Hadhrat) Anjasha al-Habashi,
(Hadhrat) al-Bara’ ibn Malik,

(Hadhrat) Abu Musa al-Ash‘ari,
(Hadhrat) Hassaan bin Thabit, and
(Hadhrat) Jarir ibn ‘Abdallah al-Bajali, رضي الله عنه.

(b) Interpretation of the pious predecessors: An example

Then he comes to the interpretation of the pious predecessors. In this instance, he quotes this couplet of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا الله from his Diwan (Collected Poems).

وَأَذْكَرُ إِلَهَكَ ذِكْرًا لَا نَفَارُفُهُ فَإِنَّمَا الذِّكْرُ كَالسُّلْطَانِ فِي الْقُرْبِ

(Qasida ب 10, p. 82, couplet number 26).

And remember your God with a remembrance you never leave
As indeed, the remembrance (of Allah ﷻ) is the sultan of nearness (to Him)

A few chapters later, al-Habib نفعنا به goes on to quote some more couplets of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به about Dhikrullah.

وَ إِنْ رُمْتَ أَنْ تَحْظَى بِقَلْبٍ مُنَوَّرٍ نَقِيٍّ عَنِ الْأَعْيَارِ فَأَعْكَفْ عَلَى الذِّكْرِ
وَ ثَابِرٌ عَلَيْهِ فِي الظَّلَامِ وَ فِي الضِّيَاءِ وَ فِي كُلِّ حَالٍ بِاللِّسَانِ وَ بِالسِّرِّ
فَأَتَكَ إِنْ لَزِمْتَهُ بِتَوَجُّهِهِ بَدَا لَكَ نُورٌ لَيْسَ كَالشَّمْسِ وَ الْبَدْرِ
وَ لَكِنَّهُ نُورٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَ أَرَدَ أَتَى ذِكْرَهُ فِي سُورَةِ النُّورِ فَاسْتَفْرَ

(Qasida 1, p. 209-210, couplets number 18-21).

If you wish to acquire a shining heart,
that is pure, free from undergoing any change, then hold fast to dhikr

Persist in it in the darkness of the night as well as in daylight
and in every state, with the tongue and with the innermost recesses of the heart

For if you keep doing it with concentration
a light shall burst upon you, unlike the full moon or the sun

But it is a light from Allah, that He mentions
in the Surah of Light (in the Qur'an), so recite it.

(c) Al-Habib's own ancestors

In this way, al-Habib نفعنا به quotes many pious predecessors (salafu's salihin) who can be classified, for ease of understanding, in two major categories. In the first category are al-Habib's own ancestors who trace their ancestry all the way to the Beloved Prophet ﷺ. Al-Habib mentioned them in one of his talks in Manba' u'l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help, p. 72-74) which I shall quote first, followed by the other categories.

He said in his talk in Mambrui, Kenya in 1407 A.H. about "The Continuous chain of authorities linking the Ba 'Alawi saadaat to the Prophet ﷺ".

".....A continuous chain from one descendent of the Prophet to another, from one scholar to another scholar, from a pious person to a pious person, to the Prophet ﷺ. This is the religion. This is the knowledge. This is the clear success that binds you with the pious predecessors.

And our connection follows to our Habib Swaleh bin 'Alawi Jamal al-Layl, and al-Habib 'Abdallah al-Beidh, and al-Habib 'Ali al-Habashi. And before them, like al-Imam al-Habib

‘Abdallah al-Haddad. And before them, al-Habib ‘Umar al-‘Attas. And before them, al-Habib ‘Abdallah al-‘Aydarus and his father. And before them, al-Habib ‘Abdar-Rahman as-Saqqaf and his father al-Habib Muhammad bin ‘Ali Sahib ad-Dawilah. And before them, ash-Shaykh ‘Abdallah Ba ‘Alawi. And before them, Sayyidina al-Faqih al-Muqaddam Muhammad bin ‘Ali Ba ‘Alawi. And before them, like Sayyidina ‘Ali bin ‘Alawi Khali‘ Qasam who heard the reply of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his Family and grant him peace, when he greeted him with **Salam**. And before them, to ‘Alawi bin ‘Ubaydillah bin Ahmad bin ‘Isa al-Muhajir. All of them are in this spiritual path. And there is no interruption between them to separate them. All of them, as well as those with them and those who followed them, are on the spiritual path of Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillah ﷺ.

And in the same way, they rise up with them to Sayyidina ‘Isa Abi’l Muhajir Ilallah, to Sayyidina Muhammad an-Naqib, to Sayyidina ‘Ali al-‘Uraydi who is well known in Madina even now. And al-‘Uraydi in the same way meets with his father Ja‘far as-Sadiq, and Ja‘far as-Sadiq meets with his father Muhammad al-Baqir, and Muhammad al-Baqir meets with his father ‘Ali Zayn u’l-‘Abidin wa Zayn u’s-Sajidin, and ‘Ali Zayn u’l-‘Abidin meets with his father al-Husayn, and al-Husayn bin ‘Ali and his brother al-Hasan meet with their father Sayyidina ‘Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, the (cousin) brother of Rasulullah ﷺ. And Sayyidina ‘Ali bin Abi Talib meets with his (cousin) brother Sayyidina Rasulullah ﷺ. And Rasulullah is Rasulullah who is connected with the fountain of Divine Revelation.

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۗ ۙ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

And he does not speak by his own desire. It is only the Revelation that is revealed (to him). (53:3-4)

This is our spiritual path.

.....

All praise is for Allah for this, our attribute; and this, our spiritual path. May Allah, the Exalted, be pleased with, and support our Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl, whose soul I know is present now and the soul of al-Imam al-Haddad. Allah willing, many souls are present with us”.

Since al-Habib said that their souls are present, it shows that he had a special spiritual ta‘alluq (attachment) with them.

The Ba ‘Alawi are well-known for producing one WaliyyAllah (Friend of Allah) after another, and one great ‘alim (scholar) after another, such that the Ba ‘Alawi shaykhs are like a galaxy of stars from whom nur (spiritual light) emanates. Al-Habib نفعنا الله has in turn produced many shaykhs as it is very clear to those who have known him.

As far as the other pious predecessors in the Ahl u’s-Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘ah are concerned, he also mentions them in his talks as well as in his writings. He once gave a talk on the greatness of the four Imams of madhhab, that is, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi‘i, Imam Malik, and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal رحمهم الله which indicates how highly he esteems these pious predecessors (salaf u’s-salihin). (Manba‘ u’l-Imdad, p. 74-75)

Al-Habib also said that the Qaadiiriyyah, the Shadhiliyyah, the Naqshbandiyyah, and the ‘Alawiyyah are all spiritual paths of Dhikrullah (remembrance of Allah ﷻ), only the names are different. This shows that he was all-embracing, not parochial.

Then we come to his writings. For the sake of brevity, I shall only list those pious predecessors whom he quotes or mentions in Miftah u’l-Jannah, in the order in which they occur in the book, without repeating the names of those who have already been mentioned. For the sake of ease in reading and understanding, I have classified them in two categories, the first of which is:

(d) The ‘Ulama’ (scholars) in the sufi tradition

In Chapter 39 of Miftah u’l-Jannah, al-Habib mentions “valuable books” which he calls “milestones for spiritual seekers”. This shows his esteem for the ‘ulama’ (scholars) نفعنا الله who authored these classics. It also shows that al-Habib is a Shaykh u’t-tariqa (a shaykh of the spiritual path). The milestones he mentions are:

Qut al-qulub (Nourishment of the Hearts), by Abu Talib al-Makki,

Ihya’ ‘Ulum i’d-Din (The Revival of Religious Knowledge), by Imam al-Ghazali,
(Al-Habib explained in one of his study sessions the significance of the Ihya’ and how highly he esteemed it, Manba‘ u’l-Imdad, p. 59),

Risalah al-Qushayriyya, Ar-Risalah fi ‘ilm i’t-Tasawwuf (The Treatise of Imam al-Qushayri, about the Sufi tradition and Spiritual Excellence),

‘Awarif u’l-ma‘arif (The Knowledge of the Illuminated), by Imam Shahab u’d-Din Suhrawardi,

Kitab u’z-zuhd wa’r-raqaa’iq (The Book of Detachment and words that soften the heart), by Ibn al-Mubarak,

Hilyatu’l-Awliya’ wa Tabaaqat u’l-Asfiya’ (The Adornment of the saints and the ranks of the elite), by Imam Abu Nu‘aym al-Asfahani,

Riyadh u's-Salihin (The Gardens of the Righteous), a book of Hadith by Imam an-Nawawi,

Bustan u'l-'Arifin (The Garden of the Illuminated), a book on the sufi tradition by Imam an-Nawawi,

Musnad (A Book of Hadith) by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, especially the chapter on “Words that soften the heart”, and (similar chapters) in other books of Hadith,

Al-Aadaab al-Mufrad (The Exemplary Conduct of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), a book of Hadith by Imam al-Bukhari,

Dalail u'n-Nubuwwah (The Proofs of Prophethood), a book of Hadith by Imam al-Bayhaqi,

The books of Imam ash-Sha‘arani,

The books of Imam al-Haddad, رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and

other books of biography and manaqib.

Now we come to the final category.

(e) The Tabi‘in, the Muhaddithin, other sufi masters, other famous ‘ulama’ and the shu‘ara’

(i) The Tabi‘in (the Followers, the second generation of Muslims) of whom the more well-known are:

Wahb ibn Munabbih,
Al-Hasan al-Basri.

(ii) The Muhaddithin (compilers of books of Ahadith, or Hadith scholars)

Al-Habib quotes from all the well-known Muhaddithin of whom he specifically mentions these. (This is the only category of scholars whose names I am repeating).

Imam al-Bukhari,
Imam Muslim,
Imam at-Tirmidhi,
Imam Abu Dawud,
Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal,
Imam al-Bayhaqi, and
Imam an-Nawawi.

(iii) Sufi masters

Imam ‘Abdallah ibn Ja‘far Mad-har al-‘Alawi,

Sari as-Saqati,
Imam Abu'l-Hasan ash-Shadhili.

(iv) Other 'ulama' (scholars), of whom the more well-known are:

(Imam Hafiz Isma'il) Ibn Kathir, and
Mulla 'Ali al-Qari.

(v) Shu'ara' (poets)

Jarir ibn 'Atiya,
Imam al-Busiri, and
Imam Ahmad bin 'Umar Badhib, رحمته الله.

Al-Habib has also mentioned many Awliya' Allah (Friends of Allah) and the salihin (pious) رحمته الله in Manba' u'l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help). For the sake of brevity, I shall only list the more well-known ones other than those mentioned elsewhere in this tadhkira. They are:

As-Sayyid Ahmad Zayni Dahlan,

Ash-Shaykh Bura'i
(Al-Habib said that his words have spiritual light),

Sayyidina Ibrahim bin Adham,

Ash-Shaykh 'Abdallah Ba Sawdan
(whose title is Salman Ahl al-Bayt just as the title of Hadhrat Salman al-Farisi رحمته الله),

Ash-Shaykh Abu'l-'Abbas al-Mursi, the Khalifa of ash-Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan ash-Shadhili,

Ash-Shaykh 'Ali Baa Raas,

Ash-Shaykh Sa'id bin 'Isa al-'Amudi
(Al-Habib said that he is a treasure of the mysteries of the Ba 'Alawi),

Ash-Shaykh Yusuf ibn Isma'il an-Nabhani
(who, al-Habib said, loved RasulAllah صلى الله عليه وسلم), (Manba' u'l-Imdad, p. 129),

Ash-Shaykh 'Abdallah Ahmad an-Nasafi, Sahib u't-Tafsir.
(Al-Habib said that he loved to recite his tafsir (exegesis) because his shaykh al-Habib 'Alawi bin Muhammad al-Haddad رحمته الله loved to recite it). (Manba' u'l-Imdad, p. 142).

Al-Imam Fakhr u'd-Din ar-Razi, Sahib u't-Tafsir رحمته الله.

In this way, al-Habib رحمته الله has conveyed the noble teachings of Islam as well as emphasized the historically rich, scholarly and spiritual tradition of Islam.

(f) Al-Habib concludes Miftah u'l-Jannah with verses of the Qur'an

As al-Habib's teachings are based first and foremost on the Qur'an, it comes naturally to him to conclude Miftah u'l-Jannah with verses of the Qur'an and he quotes these:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا

O you who believe! If you fear Allah, he will grant you a Criterion (to judge between right and wrong). (8:29)

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ

So fear Allah, for Allah is the One Who instructs you. (2:282)

أَوْ مَن كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ

Can he who was dead (ignorant), then We brought him back to life (with guidance) and made for him a light whereby he walks among people..... (6:122)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ

O you who believe! Fear Allah and believe in His Prophetic Messenger, and He will give you a double portion of His Mercy and He will provide for you a light by which you shall walk (on the Straight Path). (57:28)

أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

For those people He has inscribed Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself, and He will admit them into Gardens (of Paradise) beneath which streams flow to dwell therein forever. Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him (as their Lord). They are the Partisans of Allah. Indeed, it is the Partisans of Allah who are the Successful. (58:22)

وَمَن يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ٦٩ ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا

And whoever obeys Allah and the Prophetic Messenger, then they are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, (the Company) of the Prophets, the Sincerely Truthful

believers, the martyrs, and the Righteous, and what an excellent company they are. Such is the Favour from Allah, and Sufficient is Allah as the All-Knowing. (4:69-70)

We notice that al-Habib brings his own spiritual masterpiece Miftah u'l-Jannah (Key to the Garden, The Key to Paradise) to conclusion by quoting verses of the Qur'an (6:122 and 57:28) which say that Allah ﷻ provides the Muslim believer a light by which he walks. The message is that if we follow the Qur'an and Hadith, and their interpretation by the Illuminated pious predecessors in the sufi tradition, Allah ﷻ Himself shall illuminate us by providing for us a light. The last two verses he quotes in Miftah u'l-Jannah are (4:69-70). These exhort us to obey Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ, so that Allah ﷻ puts us in the company of the Prophets ﷺ, the Sincerely Truthful believers ﷺ, the martyrs ﷺ, and the Righteous ﷺ. It is very clear that al-Habib has fulfilled his responsibility as shaykh u't-tariqa (a shaykh of the spiritual path) by bringing his wholesome and comprehensive teachings to a perfect conclusion. This is just one example to show that al-Habib ﷻ is ash-Shaykh al-kamil (a Shaykh perfected by Allah ﷻ).

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

A5. His blessed investiture by al-‘Arif Billah al-Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl ^{الله} of Lamu

An introduction to al-Habib ^{الله} cannot be complete without talking about his memorable investiture by al-Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl ^{الله} (1269-1354 A.H.) of Lamu, Kenya.

We learn from one of the dars of al-Habib ^{الله} in Manba‘ u’l-Imdad (A Fountain of Help, p. 189-191) that the day he visited al-Habib Swaleh bin ‘Alawi Jamal al-Layl ^{الله} in Lamu was a very blessed and memorable one in his life. We learn that al-Habib was indeed destined for great maqaamaat (spiritual stations).

Al-Habib visited al-Habib Swaleh ^{الله} in Lamu in the month of Dhu’l Qa‘dah 1351 A.H. on his way to Hajj. Al-Habib Swaleh passed ahead on the second of Muharram 1354 A.H, only three years later.

Al-Habib ^{الله} narrated that al-Habib Ahmad Badawi ^{الله} came with a large delegation to fetch him at the port of Lamu. He asked him how he knew that he was coming. He replied that his father al-Habib Swaleh ^{الله} told him in the morning to go to fetch their son al-Haddad.

They went to the house of al-Habib Swaleh ^{الله} who welcomed him. Al-Habib requested him to fill his heart (with knowledge and spiritual light). So he gave him ijaza (permission, authorization) and cloaked him and prayed for him and gazed at him powerfully. Then they went to Masjid ar-Riyadha for Salat az-Zuhr. Al-Habib Swaleh asked al-Habib ^{الله} to lead the Salah, although al-Habib was only 26 years old while al-Habib Swaleh was 82. Al-Habib did not want to do that out of respect, so al-Habib Ahmad Badawi ^{الله} asked him to value the opportunity. Then, al-Habib accepted.

After Salat al-‘Asr, al-Habib ^{الله} attended the dars of al-Habib Swaleh ^{الله} from the Ihya’ ‘Ulum-i’ d-Deen (Revival of Religious Knowledge) of Imam al-Ghazali ^{الله}. The topic was about the proper etiquette for a traveler.

Al-Habib ^{الله} stayed in Lamu for some days, after which he went to Kismayu in Somalia with as-Sayyid ‘Ali bin Ahmad Badawi ^{الله}, and as-Sayyid ‘Umar al-‘Aydid ^{الله}, and from Kismayu, he journeyed to Jeddah.

To receive such a high honour from such a great WaliyyAllah (Friend of Allah) at such a young age! Obviously, al-Habib Swaleh ^{الله} had discerned through kashf (spiritual unveiling) that al-Habib was destined for great heights!

^{الله} (Glorified is Allah ^{الله})!

A6. My shaykh al-Habib Ahmad Mashhur تفعا لله preserved and promoted the legacy of Imam al-Habib ‘Abdallah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad تفعا لله

The legacy of Qutb u’ d-Da‘wah wa’l-Irshaad Imam al-Habib ‘Abdallah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad تفعا لله is the legacy of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which is the propagation of Islam based on the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Al-Habib تفعا لله preserved and promoted this legacy of his ancestor.

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ taught us to purify our hearts by removing the diseases of the heart such as malice, jealousy and arrogance. Those who followed him propagated this teaching. Imam al-Haddad did it so successfully that he came to be called **Haddad al-qulub**. Haddad in Arabic means an iron-smith. So, **Haddad al-qulub** is the iron-smith who smelts your heart in the spiritual furnace to purify it of rust and make it glow. Al-Habib fulfilled this legacy of Imam al-Haddad to such an extent that he also came to be called **Haddad al-qulub**.

تفعا لله (may Allah ﷻ make us benefit from him)! Amin!

Al-Adib ash-Sha‘ir as-Sayyid ‘Abdal Qadir bin Salim Khered حفظه الله has referred to al-Habib as **Haddad al-qulub** in one of the **manaqib** (qasidas, poems) he composed in his honour. It was recited at the home of Dr. as-Sayyid ‘Abdar-Rahman bin ‘Alawi as-Saqqaf حفظه الله in Jeddah on Friday, 18 Sha‘ban 1412 A.H. We received a copy of its audio recording which we uploaded on our zikrmawlid.net website. Al-Habib’s eldest son, as-Sayyid Hamid رحمته الله, included it in his biography of al-Habib titled Safahaat (Pages) on pages 499-501. Let us benefit from the **barakaat** (blessings) of some of its 30 couplets.

فَأَكْرَمَ بِهَا مَجْدًا وَ عِزًّا وَ سُودًا	عَنِ الْمُصْطَفَى صَحَّتْ وَرَائْتُهُ لَكُمْ
لَهَا خَبْرٌ أَنْتُمْ وَ جَدُّكَ مُبْتَدَا	بِرَاكَ إِلَهِ الْخَلْقِ تَكْمِلُ جُمْلَةً
سَلَلْتُمْ عَلَى الْأَعْدَاءِ سَيْفًا مُهَدَّدَا	بِإِفْرِيْقِيَا قَدْ بَارَكَ اللهُ جُهْدَكُمْ
عَلَى رَأْسِ هَذَا الْقَرْنِ جِئْتِ مُجَدِّدَا	بُكُمْ أَصْبَحَ الدِّينُ الْحَنِيفِيُّ ظَاهِرًا
وَ لِلدِّينِ قَدْ أَسَّسْتَ حِصْنًا مُشِيدَا	سَلَكْتَ بِهِمْ تَقْوَى الْإِلَهِ طَرِيقَةً
شَبَابًا مُقِيمًا لَا بِشَيْبِ مُهَدَّدَا	فَأَضْحَى سَوَادُ اللَّوْنِ فِيهَا لِدِينِنَا
بِنَظَرَتِكُمْ كَمْ مِنْ حِجَابٍ تَبَدَّدَا	وَرُوحُكَ فِي الطَّلَابِ تَسْرِي قُوِيَّةً
وَ مَرْتَبَةً بَلْ فِيكَ حَقًّا تَجَسَّدَا	تُمَثِّلُ حَدَادَ الْقُلُوبِ تَخَلَّفَا

From the chosen Prophet you surely received his inheritance
so you were ennobled with its glory, honour and domination

The God of creation blessed you with perfection in all respects
You are the (bearer of) news (or the predicate in the sentence)
while your grandfather (the Prophet ﷺ) is the beginning
(or the subject in the sentence)

Allah has blessed your exertions in Africa
you were an unsheathed Indian sword against your enemies

You came as a bright dawn on the Upright Religion
you came at the head of this century as a **Mujaddid** (Renewer)

You walked with them on the path of reverential awe of Allah
and you established a high fortress for the religion (of Islam)

So Africans appeared in it for the religion
enduring youth, not weak old men

And your spirit travelled strongly in (the hearts of) your students
with your gaze, how many are the veils you removed (to unveil spiritual mysteries)

You are like Imam al-Haddad al-qulub in character
and in spiritual rank, and in reality his physical embodiment

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (Glorified is Allah ﷻ)!

Al-Habib تفعاية preserved and promoted the legacy of Imam al-Haddad تفعاية in many ways. These are some of the ways that come to mind about how he did it:

(i) He gave the **adhkaar** and **awraad** (regular voluntary additional invocations) of Imam al-Haddad such as Ratib al-Haddad and Wird u'l-Latif as **wazifa** to his disciples to recite every day. He recited Wird u'l-Latif after Salat al-Fajr and Ratib al-Haddad at night in congregation with those who prayed with him.

(ii) He promoted the translation of the books of Imam al-Haddad. Dr. Mostafa al-Badawi حفظه الله benefited from keeping company with al-Habib and became famous as the translator of the books of Imam al-Haddad. Al-Habib's study sessions were mostly based on the books of Imam al-Haddad. He never used his own book, Miftah u'l-Jannah in his study sessions. This is al-Habib!

(iii) He recited the qasaaid (religious poems) of Imam al-Haddad, explained their meanings and encouraged others to recite them. He composed about 30 qasaaid himself which have been included in Safahaat (Pages), as well as those in his Diwan (Collected Poems), while other mashayikh composed 48 qasidas in his honour, including some by his own shaykhs, but no one knew about them because they were never mentioned. This is al-Habib!

(iv) Propagation of Islam is by word of mouth, in writing and by going on foot. It has been said that among the later folk, Imam al-Haddad excelled the most in all these three ways. Al-Habib also excelled in propagating Islam; in his study sessions and talks, in his book Miftah u'l-Jannah, and by travelling all the way to the Congo in Central Africa to propagate Islam. In the villages that he went to, al-Habib donated to the people food and clothing that they required.

(v) He promoted the teaching of Imam al-Haddad that we should try to become among the **Ashab u'l-Yamin** (the blissful people of the Right Hand) on the Day of Judgement.

(vi) He included the '**Aqidah** (Creed) of the **Ahl u's-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah** as expounded by Imam al-Haddad in An-Nasaih i'd-Diniyyah (The Counsels of Religion) in his own book Miftah u'l-Jannah.

(vii) He promoted the teaching of Imam al-Haddad about **fikr** (contemplation) by including the chapter about **fikr** from Rislatu'l Mu'awanah (The Book of Assistance) of Imam al-Haddad in Miftah u'l-Jannah. Imam al-Haddad advised us not to contemplate about the Dhaat (Essence) of Allah ﷻ but to contemplate about the creations of Allah ﷻ. So, al-Habib gave examples of some of the creations of Allah ﷻ to contemplate about in Miftah u'l-Jannah and in Manba' u'l-Imdad. This is al-Habib!

(viii) Like Imam al-Haddad, he taught and lived according to Islam based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as interpreted and lived by the **Awliya' Allah** (Friends of Allah) and the **salaf u's-salihin** (pious predecessors). Like Imam al-Haddad, he quoted them in both prose and poetry and/or mentioned their names.

(ix) He followed the tradition of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به in writing letters to his disciples in other countries. For example, he corresponded with as-Sayyid 'Abdal Qadir bin 'Abdar-Rahman al-Junaid رحمته عليه of Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania who wrote many letters to al-Habib نفعنا به which he included in his book of biographies titled Al-'Uqud u'l-jaahizah (The ready-made document). In some of the letters, as-Sayyid 'Abdal Qadir composed poems in honour of al-Habib and/or requested for ijaazaat (authorizations). Al-Habib replied to many of his letters, making du'a' for him, and sometimes gave him ijaazaat and/or quoted poems of other mashayikh or poems that he had himself composed.

It is obvious that al-Habib نفعنا به fulfilled his duty as the vicegerent of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به.

اللَّحْمْدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

We learn from Manba' u'l-Imdad (page 197) that al-Habib نفعنا به appeared to ash-Shaykh Zaini رحمته عليه, sahib Makkah, as al-Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به. Al-Habib said:

“Ash-Shaykh Zaini, Sahib Makkah رحمته عليه informed me that he saw me (appear to him) as al-Habib 'Abdallah al-Haddad نفعنا به. So I said to him that this is not unusual as anyone who invites to Allah ﷻ with their invitation, they are manifested in him. And I was giving the invitation of al-Habib 'Abdallah al-Haddad نفعنا به in Mombasa and Uganda and other places with his Ratib and his books”.

الله أكبر (Allah ﷻ is Supremely Great)!

When we organize the **hawl** (anniversary celebration) of al-Habib in Toronto on 14th Rajab to celebrate his achievements in spreading Islam and promoting piety, we distribute the **hadiyyah** (gift) on the occasion in the name of Imam al-Haddad, not in the name of al-Habib because that is what he would have wished for us to do.

Al-Fatiha!

A7. My shaykh al-Habib نفعنا به at the Anniversary Celebration of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به in Dar-es-Salam

The theme of this tadhkira is that al-Habib is ash-Shaykh al-kamil (a shaykh perfected by Allah ﷻ) whom Allah ﷻ made bahr al-‘ilm (a sea of knowledge). In support of that is an earlier chapter titled, “The teaching of my shaykh is based on the Noble Qur’an, Ahadith and their interpretation by the pious predecessors”. This is followed by the chapter titled, “My shaykh preserved and promoted the legacy of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به”, as he considered Imam al-Haddad to be his foremost shaykh. So it is appropriate to conclude this first part of the tadhkira (memoriam) with the talk that al-Habib gave at the Anniversary Celebration of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به in Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania in 1410 A.H. This is what he said, as given in Manba‘ u’l Imdad (A Fountain of Help, p. 132). For the sake of brevity, I shall quote only the introductory part of his talk.

“My noble brothers! The gathering in this assembly is for the Anniversary Celebration of al-Habib ‘Abdallah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad. We have been invited to be with you in this blessed gathering which is from the great treasure of treasures and tremendous blessings with which we have been favoured in this trip of ours (from Mombasa). So a gathering like this connects us to those who are present and they connect us to the Chosen (Prophet ﷺ), and the Chosen (Prophet ﷺ) connects us with Allah ﷻ. And this gathering and this assembly is all for Allah, and for the Prophetic Messenger of Allah, and for the people of Allah. Only the blissful are driven to it and attend it. And whoever loves a people, he is with them, and they are not invited to it except by inviters of love and inviters of connection. May Allah make us established on that and make us among the people of love and obtainers from them. (Amin)!

إِلَيْهِمْ مُعْتَنِي كُلُّ مَطْلُوبُهُ تَيْسَّرُ

أَلَا يَا بَحْتُ مَنْ زَارَهُمُ بِالصِّدْقِ وَأَنْدَرُ

Note: The word wa’ndar is of Hadhrami usage as explained in the sharh (appreciation) of the Diwan (Collected Religious Poems) of Imam al-Haddad نفعنا به.

O how fortunate is the one who visits them (the Awliya’ Allah ﷺ), does their ziyarah
with sincerity and goes out to them
In visiting them, all my wishes are easily fulfilled

So you are in the presence of these mashayikh (spiritual masters), and these descendants of the Prophet ﷺ, and these scholars, and all the Awliya’ Allah (Friends of Allah) that connect you with them. Because in the hearts there are attractions and in the souls there are attractions. If they are attracted in a certain direction, they get connected to it. And as far as spiritual mystery is concerned, all spiritual mystery is that of the hearts and of the souls. So if the souls get connected with the souls, and the hearts with the hearts, goodness comes and (spiritual) help is obtained. So gatherings and assemblies such as these and anniversaries such as these gather you with them and connect the souls with souls. Allah makes us among those who arrive and connects us with our pious predecessors, and our families and makes us from them and with them. Then, if these are the attractions, then surely in the heart is an attraction. And it is the attraction of Faith. If you see that your heart, O man, inclines towards invitation to goodness, and inclines towards invitation to

guidance and to the people of goodness, then you should know that surely, you are blissful and that surely you are from them. And whoever loves a people, and is connected with them, then he is from them and is counted to be among them.

أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

They are the partisans of Allah. Indeed, it is the partisans of Allah who are the successful (here and in the Hereafter). (58:22)

O Allah! Make us from them, O Lord of the worlds!”

Amin! Yaa Rabba'l ‘alamin (may it be so, O Lord of the worlds)!

Here, al-Habib also talks of “our pious predecessors”. This ties in very well with what has been said throughout this introductory Part A about his pious predecessors. It is obvious that al-Habib has close ta‘alluq (attachment) with the souls of his pious predecessors.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (All Praise is for Allah ﷻ)!

This concluding chapter of Part A of the tadhkira leads us to Part B which shows that one of the main attributes of al-Habib نفعنا الله as ash-Shaykh al-kamil is that he is bahr al-‘ilm (a sea of knowledge).

Al-Fatiha!