

**Sufi Wisdom
&
Spiritual Consciousness**

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Spiritual Consciousness**

Compiled by
S. L. Peeran



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Sufi Wisdom & Spiritual Consciousness

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Preface

Sufism is mystical and spiritual side of Islam. It focuses on the twin and mutually complimentary themes of love and luminosity—the core of Islamic mysticism. Naturally, notes of tolerance and ‘Suleh-e-kul’ (equal respect and peace for all creeds predominate.)

Islam means peace and total surrender to the all-encompassing Eternal Being Allah.

The belief is that Adam is created by Allah with four elements and Eve from his rib. Due to their disobedience of Allah’s command they were thrown to earth. They were to dwell for a time on earth and their soul would return to Allah purified and enlightened by a process of self-purification. Their progeny has been in search for their own self and for peace. Great Prophets have come with their teachings. After a period of time, after Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), emerged the subject ‘Irfan’ or ‘Tasawwuf’ popularized by western scholars as ‘Sufism’. The Saints and eminent Sufis wrote treatises, books and their lectures were recorded. So also their lengthy letters preserved.

This book ‘Sufi Wisdom and Spiritual Consciousness’ is an attempt to present to lay readers in a nutshell a few chapters of Holy Quran; briefly state the teachings of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him); present a few recorded lectures of Saint of Baghdad Shaikh Abdul Qadir Gilani (d1166), present excerpts

from the books of Sheikh Ali Hujwiri alias Data Ganj Bakhsh of Lahore (book written in 1060), Sheikh Farid al-Din Attar (d1220), Al Ghazali (d1111), Moulana Jalauddin Rumi (d1273), Shaikh Sadi (d1292), Hazreth Nizamuddin Awliya of Delhi(d1325) and Sheikh Sharafuddin b. Yahya Maneri (1381).

It is hoped that the readers will develop interest to read the original classical works on 'Irfan'/'Tassawuff' or popularly known as Sufism.

All the excerpts of the books are ancient and within the domain of public and freely available on www.freebooks.com and on internet.

I am thankful to Sri Sudharshan Kcherry of authors books group New Delhi for readily agreeing to publish this compilation.

Bangalore
17-10-2015

Syed Liaqath Peeran

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Sufis and their Teachings

Man is a social animal prone to thinking, innovation, creativity, inquisitiveness and intrinsically constructive in nature. Man has been existing on the planet earth from millions of years either have evolved from apes or having been believed to have been created by God, the Supreme Creator of the universe in his own image. The belief of man which dawned on him from antiquity is that God when after creating beauty and love desired to place it in man, so that this creature can marvel on his creation and man be a vicegerent on the earth. The further belief is that all that God has created has been made subservient to man. So that man can achieve perfection in his living and manners with sound thinking and right actions, right intentions so that he can live in peace with all the creations and achieve heaven on earth itself, without destruction, evil dominating and demon having control on men and matters.

It is man's further belief that divinity dwells in him which nurtures compassion, humility, sincerity, sublimity, graciousness, dignity and all finer elements of man. Man has also realized that there is enormous influence on him of negativity which is destructive in nature robbing peace, solace and tranquility in him. He has also found his innate nature of goodness and evil both trying to claim ascendancy with each other. It is to the good fortune of man that many charismatic, magnetic personalities

arose time and again in mankind, who have elevated his status and helped him to overcome his weakness and capture and captivate the evil whenever it stole the thunder and achieved supremacy. These enlightened personalities have always left their foot print and mark on the march of time for humanity to follow their footsteps to achieve eternal peace (as-sakina), happiness, joy, ecstasy and tranquility.

The pursuit of higher learning and to maintain composure, equilibrium has been the endeavor of man. He cultivates it and nurtures it in his progeny and creates groups, societies to retain the higher ideals and practice it to attain peace in life.

The eternal desire of man to reach higher consciousness and to feel the Divine and get absorbed in His light has ever been from his creation and more so as is believed from the time he lost the paradise. The Divine has guided man and from the guidance sprung in his heart love, beauty graciousness, compassion, mercy and many more such qualities which are divine in nature. Those among the mankind who perfected their inner self, polished their mirror of their heart from all the impurities came to be specifically referred as divine persons and they achieved a niche in the mankind. They were the Prophets, Seers, Saints, Sufis, Mystics, Yogis and men of perfection. Their lives were glorious and glowing example for humanity to follow. Their teachings were an eternal guide and lamp to enlighten the dark path ways of life. They gave moral codes, instructions, left behind their living examples and taught ways and means to enlighten man to achieve peace, tranquility, graciousness, spirituality and divinity. From among their basic teachings were the recognition of all embracing, Omniscient, Omnipotent Being referred in various tongues as God, Eshwara and Allah. The fundamental teaching is God, Eshwara or Allah is all Merciful, Beneficent, full of Love, Graciousness, Kindness and ever Forgiving. At the same

time besides guiding man, would take account of man's deeds; awarding or punishing or forgiving and granting clemency.

The further teaching is that man should fully surrender to that Great being and subject himself to his laws, moral code, be ever prayerful, charitable, thankful, fully relying on Him. Be patient during adversory and despondency and never give up hope and always fear Him and of the consequences of evil actions and deeds.

After the advent of Islam, the teachings of Prophet Mohammed (Pbuh) and the commands of the Holy Quran were interpreted in various ways thus bringing divisions and sectarian conflicts in the religion. Those followers who stayed away from the hum drum of life, from the strife and wars and political developments and devoted their whole life in perfecting and polishing their being, lived in pursuit of knowledge and for seeking the Grace of the Divine Being came to be known, as time passed, as Sufis, those who wore wool and lived an ascetic life and lived in search of truth. They humbled themselves before the Great Being by total surrender, seeking knowledge and wisdom and passing it on to their followers and disciples. They lived in monasteries, away from the hub and rub of the societies. They, with their refined living, graciousness, simplicity and humility achieved saint- hood. Their prayers for the needy and those who sought help were answered. They started their own schools of thought to pass on their teachings in the light of 'Sunna' i, e the canonical and religious law as laid down by Holy Quran and sayings of holy Prophet (Pbuh). They wrote extensively and their prose and poetry caught the imagination of the learned and common man. Their foremost teaching was humanism and love. To unite man kind in a bondage so that society can be stable and mankind can achieve peace and happiness. Some Sufi masters were far ahead of their times. The religious teachers commonly called as

‘Mullah’s’ would find fault with their teaching and unconventional living. They would instigate the rulers and masses against them and that would lead to their persecution. They would be called as heretics and being outside the pale of the canonical law (Shariat laws). While religious scholars would be strict in legalities and legal conventions, the Sufis besides observing the legal sanctions would be more conscious of perfecting their inner self and polishing their heart to prepare themselves for merger in the Divine and to achieve divinity and to enlighten themselves with higher knowledge. The study of rules and regulation of external religious observation came to be classed under the heading ‘Shariat’, canonical aspect of law. While the teachings for perfection of heart and the teachings related to it was classed under the subject of ‘Tariqat’. The servant hood and the teachings of higher aspect and knowledge of Divine were classed under the subject ‘Marifat’. The Sufi master would teach the novice, their disciple to master the ‘Shariat’, while understanding the true import and intention of the law to follow and capture its spirit. While observing the external performance of the law their teachings would be to lead the novice to reach the Divine and experience and feel the Divine’s presence, to realize first the human nature and self and then with self knowledge realize the Divine Being, His Omni-potency, Omnipresence and Omniscience. The enormous knowledge and wisdom of these god-intoxicated Sufis are found in their works of antiquity. One who takes up to the path of ‘Tariqat’ and ‘Marifat’ reaches self realization. Their religious and spiritual experiences are also found in their voluminous work.

Sufism is as old as the man himself. There is no word like Sufism in the study of the subject. The German scholar while studying the science and the learning of the Sufis wrote a book terming the subject as Sufism. From then on the western nations and the western scholars have been calling the study of Islamic mysticism as Sufism, which study in Islam is known as ‘Irfaan’,

the knowledge of your own self or ‘Tasawwuf’, the depth of the knowledge of the Divine. How did this Sufism arrive and has it got any basis and has it got any logic? is an often question asked by strangers to this subject. It is confused that religion and the mythology is one and the same. The atheist and empirical minded say that mythology is based on superstitious believes of the people and they being in dark always assume that some strange things happen in the cosmos and there is influence of the planets and that creates problems in the world. There is a lack of understanding of their own self and the nature in which they are nurtured.

Sufism is a subject which has been made into a theory. It is more of practice to reach the Divine. The belief is that God was a secret and wanted to reveal Himself. It is believed that the Creator of the whole universe, the Creator of all that is there in the space, moon and all the universal bodies, the Creator of all the matter, is a Single Unitary Being. Being which is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. And He has no partner, no avatar and He is existing from ever and will exist forever. He just said “KUN” (Be) and the whole universe came into existence.

It could be akin to the theory of big bang when universe has come into existence. Lord gave the command “BE” and the command has fulfilled itself in bringing into existence the entire ever expanding cosmos. The Lord after having revealed Himself in the form of beauty and love, desired to place His vicegerent, a representative on the earth in His own image. So He created man, whose first name was Adam, with four elements of fire, water, dust and air. He blew His soul into this Adam’s clay. It’s believed that the soul did not sustain inside the dark being of the Adam. So He had to create light and the Muslims refer this light to be the light of Prophet Mohammed (Saw), Christians believe it to be the light of Jesus, and Hindus believe it to be the light of Brahma. This light along with the

soul of the Lord dwelled in the heart of the Adam. The first beings created are the angels from light, who were commanded to bow down before the Adam, but the arch angel, who was a Jinn created from fire, refused to do so. The arch angel was thrown out from the presence of the Lord and he became a devil or a Satan. The belief is that the Satan took permission from the Lord to way lay Adam and the generations to be born from the seeds of the man.

God created from the rib of Adam, his life mate Eve. They dwelled in the garden of bliss. God had commanded them not to go near the tree of eternity but the Satan instigated Adam who refused to heed Satan, but Eve fell to the glib and honeyed talk of the devil. Eve instigated Adam to eat the fruit of knowledge and that resulted in their banishment. After God taught them the secret words and all the names of the Lord they sought pardon. God commanded them to ajourn on earth to do good deeds, stay away from the bickering, to stay away from the instigations of the Satan. Lord commanded man to know his own self and cleanse his own self and purify all the blemishes of the heart and mind. So that the Effulgence of the Lord shines in the heart. Thus, the knowledge of the inner self dawned from the primordial time, from the time when God created Adam and thus God commanded man to search for Him in his own self.

You would see the reflection of the Divine in every particle of the matter, in every particle of space. It is the Divine who runs the whole show, and we are all mere puppets. This is the belief of Sufi poets, who would put this thought in their poetry. The Lord has been sending great Prophets and men of letters, men of learning and men of wisdom from ages to enlighten man. Men of very high accomplished thinking, logic and inner understanding would enlighten all those who come to them. That is how the subject of law has come into existence. Thus, evil was driven away by the acts of goodness.

When Gautama Siddhartha left for the search of truth and found that it is the attachment to one's own self, which gives rise to frustration in the mind and the heart. You have to rise above frustrations to reach 'moksha', the peace, the internal peace 'As-salaama'. You have to live above all the worldly desires and surrender to the Great Being

The qualities of Mercy and Beneficence are very close to the heart of God. So He commands man to color his own being in these great two qualities of the Lord of Mercy and Compassion. All religions of the world teaches compassion and mercy. Now in order to reach the pinnacle of success of beneficence and mercy, man has to free himself from all that is disturbing in his mind and heart and his living has to be a life of purity. Purity of mind, purity of soul and purity of heart is the basic teaching of Sufis. Thus, Sufism has arrived in this world from the time of the birth of man. Man has been in search of his own Master.

Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi, one of the greatest poets and a great Sufi of erst while era wrote a great Mathnawi, a long poem of more than 20,000 lines in which he has written and taken strength from the stories of the times and from them has drawn the philosophy that the man, who has lost his roots needs to go back to the Divine. The method to reach the Divine is by love and it is only through love, forgiveness, patience, thank fullness, gratitude and all such heavenly qualities, that can take man to the Divine. His every particle in his being should speak of the Divine and Divine alone. His life should become pure, his living should become pure. So also his work should become pure, his actions should become pure. He has to live a life of purity and for that he has to be put in to the cradle of love, which he found in the abundance when he was born in his mother's lap. The mother gives love, nurtures the child with love and affection. Thus, the Sufis believe that if at all we have to reach the heaven then we

have to serve our mother. Heaven lies at the feet of the mother, so said our Prophet (sas). These heavenly qualities are dealt in-depth by an adept, a Sufi master, who has received his training from his master and the chain goes up to the Prophet (sas)

To reach the kingdom of the heaven one has to practice the principles of the honesty, truthfulness, integrity and these qualities have to be inculcated in the mind and heart. It is the Sufi Master who keeps looking into the eyes of the disciple and reads his mind and heart and would be able to tell him as to what is troubling him; whether it's the ego or it's the pride or it is the baser elements of lust or such other baser qualities which disturbs the pupil. The master is a trained adept, who has conquered his inner self and reached the Divine by purification of his soul. Sufis live a life above themselves and they live for others. They are the most recluse persons, they live a life of total subjugation, a life of surrender to the Lord and surrender to the Prophet's commands and live a life of purity.

Sufis wore wool. The wool is soft and warm signifying kindness and warmth of the heart. They always sit in the first line in the assemble of prayers and they are the first to acknowledge the greatness of the Great soul of the cosmos. They refuse to believe that the God could transcend into the human self and that self could become his avatar. They only believe that the man has been created for worship and he has to subjugate himself and find the path to reach the Divine but not claim himself to be Divine or a god himself or become mini god himself. That philosophy of avatars or avatars taking birth or the guru becoming god is not accepted in Sufism or in the religion of Islam or in any other monotheistic religions.

What are the teachings of a Sufi master and how does one search for a Sufi master? Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi warns that many devils are in the garb of Sufi masters. He warns man not

to lend his hand and become a disciple of the person claiming to be a Sufi master or a peer or a peeran unless he is satisfied that the Sufi master is a totally surrendered person and a person of truth, a person of honesty and a person of integrity and the Sufi master's only interest is to make him perfect, help him polish the mirror of the heart, so that he can see the Divine in his own self. A Sufi Master should have no other desire, no other attachment, no other plan. Neither he has a desire to acquire money and wealth, but his only desire is to reach the Divine, to spread the knowledge of the Divine. Only such a person is entitled to teach Sufism. You may say it's very difficult to find such a Master in this world. If you search in your own self then the Divine will show you the path.

The Holy Quran speaks about the three inner consciousnesses. As a human being, the biologist say that man is a product of evolution and that he is an evolved being from the apes and the monkeys. If this be true then the carnal desires in man is the animal consciousness that is 'nafse-e-ammarah'. The Sufis recognize that man has initially acquired all the instincts and behavior of an animal. An animal will always search for food, satisfy his hunger, satisfy his lust, fight for his territory, conquer anyone who would attempt to seize him and he lives for his own desires and his lust. In such a person, the inner consciousness is filled with anger, jealousy and other instincts of ego and greed. The animal consciousness makes a person proud and his heart turns into a stone.

So the first and foremost aspects of the teachings are that a person's heart and mind and soul is filled with animal consciousness and that man should conquer the animal consciousness. This has to be conquered by the various methods as taught in Sufism.

The second stage is 'nafs-e-lawwama', the consciousness which teaches you about the right and wrong. You are told as

to what is right and what is wrong. Man keeps developing moral consciousness which keeps telling him as to what he shall do and what he shall not do. This is based on the teachings of the society and also about the purity which dwells in the heart and mind. The moral consciousness reminds man not to do a wrong, a wrong which hurts another human being and which takes away the liberty of other human beings. A wrong destroys the goodness of the man and nature.

The third consciousness is referred to as ‘nafs-e-mutmainna’. In this self dwells divinity. The self which seeks the Lord; man begins to live by the dictates of the Lord and remains in the purified state. He practices day in and day out to remain in that position. He keeps remembering the names of the Lord. The cleanliness of the body is by taking regular bath by water. The cleanliness of the tongue is by shunning evil talk. The cleanliness of the mind is to remove all that disturbs the mind, to maintain equanimity; to maintain the benevolence of the mind and heart. So the ‘nafs-e-lawwwama’ achieves the Divine. This perfection is achieved through daily attempt to retain the light in the heart and mind. This process is carried out from morning till evening. A Sufi master teaches his pupil to be true to his own self, to be true to his mind and heart and carry on the dictates of the God. As a humble servant, one is required to carry out all the duties assigned to one’s self in a most perfect manner and without disturbing one’s mind and heart. The main focus of life is to see the inner light and to enlighten oneself. To enlighten one’s being with the knowledge of the Divine. To live a very honest, simple, humble and sublime life.

Sufism or Tasawwuf or Irfan, the inner core of Islam, teaches humanism, love, brotherhood and oneness and believes in creating a world citizenship through “Tauheed” (monotheism). Sufism or Irfan is a way of life to achieve perfection in manners,

cultivate and culture the mind and heart with purity of thought and good behavior, through possession of all virtues and negation of all vices by a process of self-annihilation, self realization, self sacrifice and surrender of will before the Supreme Will of Almighty Allah. Sufism is an absolutely peaceful and totally non-violent movement to awaken the soul to greater grandeur through simple living and practicing lofty ideals, through meditation, Zikr' (incantation), Sama (singing of holy hymns) and other Sufi practices, by accepting the Risalat (Prophethood) of our Holy Prophet Mohammed sallallahu alaihi wasallam; by strengthening of faith, servitude (yaqeen), by protecting the precepts of Holy Prophet, performance of daily Namaz (prayers); acts and deeds of righteousness, seeking and observing "Taqwa" (awe of Allah); 'Taubah' (repentance). "Tawakkal" (full surrender and trust in Allah); 'Ikhlas' (Sincerity), 'Sidq' (Truth fullness), 'contentment (Tawakkul), 'Haya' (shame), 'Sabr'(patience), 'Shukr' (gratitude, thankfulness), 'Zikr' (remembrance), 'Zohad' (renunciation), 'Khauf' (Fear), 'Rida' (hope), Khushu' (fearfulness, humility), 'Istiqamat (uprightness) a 'state'in which Allah's grace comes perpetual for it implies the perfect performance of Allah's service, 'Firasa (insight) as Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam said "Beware of the believers insight, for he sees with the sight of Allah"; 'Wara' (abstaining, that is from all unnecessary and unseemly occupations) and 'Simt' (silence). The Prophet is quoted as having said "Whosoever believes in Allah and his last day, let him speak good or else let him be silent". Silence is interpreted both literally as meaning that the man should learn to govern his tongue and metaphorically is referring to a heart that silently accepts whatever Allah may decree), 'Adab' (Decent manners, as Prophet (sas) said 'Allah mannered me and taught me good manners" live in righteous conduct; Dua (Prayer, seeking constantly supplicant to Allah, for Allah says, pray for me and I will answer you") 'Faqr' (poverty) for Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam

said “The poor shall enter paradise five hundred years before the rich, ‘Tafakkur’ (meditation), ‘Muraqaba (contemplation) and ‘Muhasabah’ (Self examination), ‘Tauheed’ (belief in one Allah), ‘Mahabba’ (love), ‘Shauq’(yearning), Uns’ (intimacy), ‘Rida’ (satisfaction). Truth is realized by daily submission to the rule of law laid down by Allah, for achieving the perfection of human self by “Mujahida; a collateral form of Jihad’ to mean ‘earnest striving after the mystical life”. As the Holy Quran says “And they that strive earnestly in our cause, we surely guide upon our paths (Quran 29: 69). Prophet Sallallahu alaihi wasallam says that the “greater warfare (Al Jihad ul Akbar) is against the earnest striving with the carnal soul (mujahidat un nufs). It is by seeking refuge in Allah and seek His protection from the animal and satanic forces working in man, by observing ‘Saum’ (fasting) for the purpose of purification of inner and outer actions of man, by ‘Kurbani’ (sacrifice) so as to enable man to break away from the shackles of selfishness, self centeredness and to break away from the indulgence of pleasure seeking, materialism, ritualism, taboos and superstitions so as to achieve perpetual peace and “As-Sakina” (eternal peace) through deeds of everlasting goodness(Baqiyat us Salihat), thus to achieve Allah’s realization.

Sufism enlightens the mind, sharpens the wit, broadens the outlook and purifies the heart and thinking. Above all Sufism or Irfan makes a person humane and a perfect gentleman in every sense of the term. Sufism is a branch of Islamic spiritualism and its study and practice is known as “Tasawwuf” (Gnosis). The study is divided into four branches “Shariat” (common law), ‘Tariqat’ (spiritual path), “Ubudiat (servanthood – unity with Allah) and ‘Marifat’ (Allah’s realization – Gnosis). Sufism begins with acceptance of ‘Tawheed’ (monotheism) and Risalath of Prophet Mohammed sallallahu alaihi wasallam by observance of personal hygiene, strict disciplined life, doing charity and earning through the sweat of the brow.

Sufism or Tasuwwuf or Irfan has fallen into bad ways due to corruption, talisman, grave worship and 'peerism, 'amil, 'kamils, exorcists and black magic. The ancient thought, philosophy search for truth and yearning for the effulgence of the Lord and for the merger of the soul and to sing paeans for Him and for His Holy Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam has slowly declined. The Govt. of India promulgated Waqf Act which has taken over the administration of Dargahs and khankhas. All the lands attached to these Khankhas and Dargahs were all allotted to the tenants berefting it of any source of income. The families of Sajjada Nisheens have fallen into hard times, due to lack of traditional education and all 'khankhas' practically being closed. We, therefore do not find the teachings of Sufism known as 'Tasawwuff' being transmitted in the families of the Sajjada Nisheens and all those traditional families, who contributed to the growth and existence of the science of spiritualism. They have practically diminished. In its place have now come into existence "Peerism", self styled 'peers' with colorful dresses and head gears, speaking jargons with scant or no knowledge of Holy Quran, precepts of Holy Prophet, intricate knowledge of "Tasawwuf", Sufi literature, its culture and philosophy. They hardly do any 'Zikr' deep penance, meditations, self sacrifice and delve deep into their consciousness. The fundamental feature of Sufism is to have absolute control of the inner self and achieve higher consciousness, which is unknown to these self styled 'peers', who are nothing short of being 'jokers', charlatans, self styled godmen indulging in trickery and mockery of true saintship. Although, it cannot be said of true Sufies and real standard bearers of the science of Tasawwuf, on whose account the Science of Tasawwuf is still in existence and Allah willing, with ushering of education, dawning of self realization and hard work of true Sufies, the situation is bound to turn a new corner and the glory of Tasawwuf and emergence of true and real saints for guidance is sure to happen.

I have penned a few poems on the present situation. I note them down herein.

Ah! Men of piety

I trusted and believed in their saffron robes
Awe and wonder on seeing piety on aged faces
With long flowing white beards, green turbans
With rosary in hand, muttering His name on lips.

It took a long time to discover, to my dismay
That they were as much human and men of clay
With gluttony and love for pleasure, with roving eyes
To catch a glimpse of beauty of vulnerable ones.

They create a wonder by showing a trick or two
Predict your future, with the help of stars
Read your mind, hypnotize and mismerise you
Gullible men, women beg and pray for relief.

They show pity to widows and orphans
Scare the rich of oncoming calamities
Speak of hell and heaven to poor and knave
But, their greed for money wouldn't wane.

It is in chaos that order presents itself. Only after destruction and damage that a new civilization comes in its place, old order changes to new. That is how evolution of new ideas and new systems with better way of life comes into existence with old sunna, Islamic philosophy retaining its glory and charm.

Here is my poem on 'Pious men' from my collection of poems 'A call from the unknown' (Page # 68.)

Pious Men

Have you seen birds ever stopping in mid flight
Trees moving around, stars coming down
Ghosts appearing in broad day light
Thunder and lightening occurring on a clear sky?

You can't shut the light that pierces
 The darkness that surrounds
 The changing seasons, the reverberating sounds
 The pollution, the disorder, that life presents.

Suddenly virtuous men, saints, prophets appear
 In an age full of turmoil, chaos and wars
 Like rainbows on dark clouds of pathos
 To cheer men and clear minds from grief.

Pious men are beacon of light
 A light house of knowledge and will power
 To dispel doubt and darkness
 To lead men to solace and peace.

Sufies are faqeers. The word 'faqr' signifies – fasting in the name of the Lord, contentment, persistence and perseverance in prayers with fortitude and patience, subjugation of despicable elements, total faith in the will of Supreme Being – Allah, to practice pure thought and to lead a life of truth to achieve a blissful life. One who practices regularly these four qualities and leads a pious life of dedication and total surrender to Allah is a Sufi and a faqeer. To become a 'faqeer', to practice 'faqr' and 'faqa' to walk on the path of 'Tariqath' to achieve 'marifat- e-elahi', then one has to start his journey by truly embracing 'Tawheed' and accepting the Risalat of Prophet Mohammed sallallahu alaihi wasallam. A Faqeer is a totally a surrendered soul with deep piety, humility and sincere to the core with absolute love for Allah, His Prophets and for the humanity. They reflect on the inner aspects of man and every quality and feelings are analyzed to achieve self realization leading to Allah realization. The lower self is conquered and the self becomes purified and God imposed. They achieve enlightenment and pure 'wilayat' or sainthood and come to be recognized as "Wali Allah' (friend of Allah) or 'Peers'. These saints become true personification of all virtues and saviors of humanity. They teach their disciples the ways to conquer their lower animal self and lead them to pure love of the Lord.

Here is a poem on 'Faqeers ' from my collection of poems 'New Frontiers' (page # 77)

Faqeers

Chill penury begets pain and shame to them
But their minds are crystal clear like diamond
Profound thoughts overflowing and oozing out
Like fountain and mighty waterfalls
Creating gardens to bear fragrant flowers
Their wingless souls are sans pangs of suffering
Glittering gold and currency though enriching
But to ennoble the mind, it seldom helps
When soul and mind dampens and meanders
Poverty pinches and living does become hard.
Faceless, nameless and homeless, they ever be.
As 'Fakeers' and 'darvishes', they move about free.

Let me say something about the 'love' for Allah, which melts the most hardest heart to enlighten and illuminate it. It is best put in the form of poems:

Love

Doubtless mind
Soul serene
With Thee (Allah) besides me
Life is a trifle
Rudder of faith
Cuts off turbulence
Meandering thoughts
Dampens the spirit,
Shackles of iron
Or walls of bricks
Cannot curb or
Prevent LOVE
Pure and sublime

(From 'In Golden Times, Page1)

Here is one more poem on Love, from "In Golden Times" (Page-3.)

‘Love’s many facets’

As a seed seeks a safe place to hide
Till it gains the strength to sprout and grow
Hearts that are weak or marred by frailties
Need LOVE to make them strong and pure.

Love lives in souls lofty and true.
And shuns the mighty and haughty.
Love can never find a place
In hearts that are hard and stony.

Love shines and sparkles in speech
Never adopting a harsh tone.
In songs sung with a melodious voice.
If reflects itself and is amply shown.
Though love spells special passion for youth
Its magic hold entranced, in its spell,
People of all ages – young and old,
Neither age nor customs its glory can dim.

In love, sympathy flows like a stream
Gushing and flowing with ecstasy
Springs of charm oozing out milk and honey
Love cheers up a lonely heart

Though sad and painful the pangs of love
We are told that sweet they are,
And that, not to have loved at all,
To love and lose, its better far!

Another poem on “Sharing Love” from my book “In Silent Moments” (page 41)

Sharing Love

Love is divine spark, hidden in depths of heart
For man to cherish till death doth him apart
To give meaning to life and life after
A binder and a coagulator.

Love is sacrifice and sacrifice is to die
A sincere attempt to give up ever lie.
The inner being gets effaced for the Beloved.
Immersed in thoughts, drunk in His breath.

Where love lets lovely springs to flow
In its bottom lies dormant sorrow
To creep up and let streams of tears
On sad thoughts for love to share
A bleeding heart bears gems within
To emit rays of hopes to wash off sin.

From my book “In Silent Moments”, – (Page 63) the following poem is reproduced:

Protect yourself

Better be within your being
Enclosed, enwrapped safely
In your own cocoon in your shell
Well protected, encapsulated
Than, be let you stray away
From the well trodden paths
Of honeyed love and affection
Of divine and healthy living.
To be exposed to lurking dangers
And swallowed by mighty sharks
Like magical springs emitting milk and honey.
Love oozes from hearts that are kindly.

As regard ‘Truth’, I have penned two poems, they are (“In Golden Times” – page 5)

Wooring Truth

Truth being crystal clear
Needs no eulogy or praise,
Its effulgence and brightness its showers
On loving and compassionate souls.

Truth pursued with sincerity and humility
Showers its spiritual grace and bliss.
Truth is complete only with love.
Compassion, Mercy, Charity and Justice

Truth is eternal and surpasses
All barriers and is beyond nothingness.
Truth is infinite and dwells in hearts
Pure and simple, humble and kind.

To experience 'Truth', one needs to appeal to it to dawn on the mind, heart and soul. Here is an appeal to Truth from 'In Golden Times'(page 6)

O, Truth

O, long awaited Truth! Descent from heaven above
And shower on me thy mercy and thy love.
My failings have stamped on me their black mark;
Please light up my conscience, gloomy and dark.

Self pity has enveloped my whole being
And blinded my eyes, preventing me from seeing
The path of growth and in others, belief.
From my short comings help me find relief.

Whenever my anger roars and thunders
It makes me commit all sorts of blunders!
It crumbles my will to do good deeds,
Makes me look small and to shame it leads!

O Truth, pure and ever sublime,
To drive away my passions and guilt, tell 'Time'
Cool my senses and light up my mind,
So that a home in my heart, LOVE may find.

To achieve 'Inner peace' one needs to shun selfishness, self centeredness, attachments to wealth, women and property. Here is a poem on 'Inner peace', from 'In Silence Moments' (page 38)

Inner Peace

Look to the inner voice
Its light is eternal
Its joys are multiple
Its grace is divine
It is soothing and pleasing
Its voice is melodious
It has motherly concern and care
It knows your anguish and pain
Listen to it.
Sit silence
In meditation
In calm stillness
Close your eyes
In your heart – recite
“La illaha illallah
Mohammadur Rasool Allah
Allah hu Allah hu .
Allah hu Allah hu .

An illumined soul is an enlightened one to guide the humanity. Here is a poem on ‘An Illumined Soul’ from my collections ‘A search from within’ (page 49)

An illumined soul

Every moment is becoming past
Mingling with times and history
By gones be by gones, past is past
Words slipping from lips can’t come back.

Deep down in your self, a feeling
Of remorse, repulsion, regrets
Of acts disapproved and shunned
To beginning of a change in you.

A new experience fresh breath
A new life, a new lease
A change of mind, a change of heart.

A new discovery for better living.
A new learning, a new growing
An expansion of vision, a new light
A glow within, a new consciousness
Ever forgiving an illumined soul.

Every Sufi and faqeer has to be sincere and simple and what is sincerity?. Here is a poem on ‘Sincerity’ and also on “Simplicity”, from my book ‘A search from within’ – (page 38) the following are the poems:

Sincerity

Sincerity touches the heart
Touches every one indeed
Touches infinity surely
Sincerity is pure and simple

It has no choice
It showers no undue favour
It has no prejudice
It has no hate

Sincerity is for all
Sincerity is everything
Good and sublime
Sincerity is rare in its kind.

It has no beginning
It has no end
It flows and flows
Like a crystal clear stream

From ‘In Golden Times’ – (Page 9), the following poem on “Simplicity”:

Simplicity

Isn't simplicity Divinity profound?
In it is sincerity found.

Shinning Truth radiates its glory;
Its lustrous light tells its own story.

It admits not an iota of lie,
It lets not calmness ever die,
It gives tranquility its due,
And patience is its main virtue.

Profound it is in goodness
And quick in its forgiveness
Steady and straight is its path,
Its thoughts, in purity take a bath.

All promises made, it helps up,
With knowledge it fills its cup
Simplicity is humble and modest
But never bows to pride's behest.

It always remains without fear
To everyone its always dear.

All sufies and fakeers begin their journey by purification. Here is a poem from my book "A searchfrom within" (page 73).

Purify Ourselves

Come, come, let us fill our vacuums
In heart in mind and in our souls
With love, affection and warmth
Illumine with million lights of knowledge.
Let us enliven our sagging spirits.
With rhyme and rhythm, with melodies
With cheers and allow them to soar
Higher and higher like a skylark.

Let us dwell deeper and deeper
In the realms of the heart
And bring out treasures to gleam
Our eyes and to enlighten ourselves

Let us purify ourselves afresh
With the cool streams of love.

The whole aim in the life of a Sufi, a darvesh and faqeer is to realize the Lord and His Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam. Here is a poem 'Ninety Nine Names' from 'In Silent Moments' (page17)

Ninety Nine Names

Realize the Ninety nine Names
Ninety nine themes, units and pulses
Of the Lord surrounding you.
Of the Holy Prophet within you.

The light upon light, lights all
Enlighten your being with it.
Repeat the Names on your lips
Inhale Him, to surcharge you.

Let the streams of Love
Flow within to cleanse the being
Let the cream of charity
Flow through your hands of goodness.
Purify the mind with crystal thoughts
Honeyed – tongued glorify the Lord,
With His guidance tread your path,
Melodious songs thrill your heart.

Darveshes, Sufies and faqeers walk on the path of eternal goodness to reach peace, tranquility and ecstasy. I have penned a poem on 'Ecstasy' (From 'In Silent Moments' page 36)

Ecstasy

Every moment of bliss, ecstasy
Is a golden moment, a monument
Surpassing Himalayan heights of glory.
Millions years of chanting and praying!

A moth circumbulates, burns in flames
A supreme sacrifice on the altar of love.
Lightening reducing to ashes Mount Sinai.
Moses merging in splendour of the Supreme.

Mohammad's ascension to the Throne
On "Lailathul Qadar" in a flash –
A glorious and a golden moment
A Midas touch 'turns dust to gold.

A sigh of a dancing dervish!
With a heart glittering with love
With tattered clothes, dishevelled hair
Soul purified for final merger, O Lord!

In order to receive the Grace of Allah, first and foremost thing is one has to shun the company of Satan, shaitan, the devil. What does the devil do? It is explained in this poem from the book "New Frontiers" (Page 41)

Devil Speaks

In my anger and frustration
I bawled out again and again
Am I a Satan, a Devil
To be stoned, to be drive away
Lo! I heard the Satan speak
I am never driven away
By men or women, friend or foe
I am welcomed with folded hands
By men in white and black
In Saffron, in Green
In Yellow, in Orange
To learn from me
Every trick from my bag
I grant my grace to them
On their assurance to follow me
To cheat them by showing
Heaven in my palms.

It is the devilish inner self which changes the heart and mind to passion, hatred and evil to lead man to destruction by turning the heart to stone. I have penned about this “A Devilish Self” in my collection “A search from within” (page #94).

A Devilish Self

The devil, our shadow, our mischievous slave
 An ingenious one, an innovator, creative
 Our own inverted selfish egoistic self
 Always arguing within with shadow and pelf
 Controverting stubborn, digging heels, hot headed
 A glutton, careless and ruthless, to be dreaded
 Deep in learning with a scurrilous pen
 Long fiery tongue, a common kind among men
 Merciless with a heart of stone and polluted mind
 Creating dissention, confusion of every kind
 Disobediant, forgetful, unholy and irreligious
 Changing sides, a turncoat, liar and ambiguous
 Unmindful of other's concerns, always hurting
 Like chameleon changing colours, deceptive and sinning.

What does the Sufi Masters impart to their disciples to show the way to effulgence and enlightenment? You read it from my poem “Dawn of Enlightenment”, from “New Frontiers” (page # 21).

Dawn of Enlightenment

“Forty” said my master when I was in teens
 You should cross forty summers of life.
 And undergo its vicissitudes.
 You should cross bridges, rivers and storms.
 The senses should fail and the eyes glitter.
 The ears should sharpen and tongue loose its taste.
 The swiftness should slow down.
 Calmness should descend upon you like dusk dawning.
 The mirth and pleasures should wane.
 The burning sun should descend.
 The heavy monsoon downpour should end.

The rashness of your youth should decline.
Then the tranquil moon will shine.
The cool breeze from the sea would blow.
To soothe the senses and calm the wounds
The inner light will spread around.
The being will burn with brightness.
Mind canvas will be filled with beauty of nature.

Allah wants man to turn the heart to “Qalb e Saleem” a purified heart. Here is a poem from mycollection “In Golden Moments”.
(Page # 31).

A Purified Human Heart

Eyes get blinded on seeing blazing sun
On entering home, every thing appears dark
Prejudiced mind cannot enjoy any fun.
On seeing full moon, a jealous dog barks.

Crystal clear water cleans all dirt
A pure heart reflects love sublime
Beauty mesmerizes lovers to flirt
Blissful joys dazzle souls from golden times.

A beast can be turned to a pet
Man can scale mountains and moon
The grief and sorrows are all to forget about
But, a stricken heart suffers immensely.

From “In Golden Moments (page # 13), the following poem is noted:

A Sacred Human Heart

The wilderness and arid desert
With life scarce and dryness all around
The deadly silence and burning sun
Leave a parching tongue with looks wild.

The dangerous are grave indeed
The deadly snakes with fangs sharp and deep

A threat to man sans protectives
When exposed to nature base
A sacred heart is a pleasure to keep
In it dwells light to illumine the mind
Filled with faith and hope on Almighty
And seeks Grace and Mercy from dangers many.

The gushing springs with endless fountains
Makes the land fertile and enriches it
Man with love and kind heart
Creates fruits of good deeds, for all to enjoy.

Again on Purification of Heart and Soul, you reach enlightenment.
The poem on “Enlightenment” from “In Golden Moments”
(page #16) dwells on this aspect.

Enlightenment

Dread of supernatural lurks at bottom of heart
Bringing forth fear and harrow
But courage and bravery overcome them all
Man should not succumb and fall.

Evil eye casts its mighty spell
Which can crush stones to pieces.
Heart with sound faith, purifies the mind
To withstand the fiendish force.

Peace and contentment are divine gifts
To a tortured mind and soul
Being sustained in submission
Will fetch peace in humility.

A mind that glimmers with enlightened thought
From it ignorance and fear take flight
Knowledge and learning are powers
To strengthen the soul, to make beings bright.

The lives of Sufies are beyond their ownself. They are charitable
in nature and their charity is beyond all barriers of caste, creed

and race. This is reflected in the poem on “Charity” (from “In Golden Moments”)

Charity

Isn't charity beyond filial relationship?
To cut across all barriers, of color and race
Beyond self, but with warmth and cheer
Isn't like a diamond reflecting glorious colors?

The stillness of night bring eerie silence
Shrouded in mystery and fears abound
Life's rumbling draws in its bosom dark clouds
But, charity shines like a silver lining.

Does n't divinity sparkle in charity?
Its brilliance surrounds saintly beings
Permeating every aspect of their lives
Gushing forth from their bosom as love.

Charity purifies mind, enlightens the soul
And lightens the burden of craving
The burning greed vanishes from the heart
Raising goodness to a Divine Path.

Sufies are friends of Allah and of the entire humanity and this is reflected in this poem: from (“InGolden Moments”)

Friendship

Friendship is like a lilly white,
Its fragrance is sweet like honey,
Lasting till till times endless sight,
Flowing smoothly like a river;
Without asking from any one money.

Companions have in their bosom
Love aplenty and sun's generosity,
Shining on them tranquility of moon,
Vastness of an ocean for clarity.

Friendship enriches mind and soul.
 You look for friends in light and shade.
 To share joys, mirth and gaiety
 To seek comfort, solace and happiness,
 To share woes and enrich hopes.
 To stir the ship to safe shores.

Friendship renews bonds to sinew warmth,
 Which is hidden in nature's breast.
 It instills in mind strength of iron,
 To unfold thrill, to tickle sweet dreams,
 To reach the zenith of inner peace.

Transformation of inner being can be achieved only by “Mujahida” (struggling and conquering the inner devilish self) “Muraqiba” (meditation and contemplation and various methods of spiritual practices) These practices are purely Quranic and adapted from the practice and precept of Holy Prophet sallallahu alaihi wasallam. This aspect will be dealt in the next chapter.

On transformation is one Poem from the 8th collection of my poetry “Fountains of Hope” (page38) is presented here.

Transformation

My heart is enveloped with blanket of pathos
 Blood curdling life experiences mingled with pain
 Has choked my voice, clouded my thinking
 Hidden in my bosom are bleeding dreams.

Universal lamentation on freezing of Jews
 In gas chambers, nations splintered
 Every day somewhere Godhra enacted
 Fires burning children, chained insane persons.

Temples of peace shattered in earth rattling quakes
 Gandhies, Luther King, Kennedy assassinated
 Can fires be doused, to raise gardens of love?
 Bring twinkle in tiny eyes, a smiling Teresa?

Let's weave hearts with virtues of love
Transform rivers of blood to milk of human kindness.

Let me end up this chapter with a prayer for tranquility and a prayer for dawning of SupremeLight on our minds and souls.

Prayer For Tranquility

O the praised one, the chosen one
The purified and the sublime soul
The cherished one, the protected one
The privileged one, the gracious one.

How shall I please thee, O loved one
With my weary condition and wretchedness
With my chill penury and hollowed nature
With my empty head and dark soul.

O the enlightened soul, the guided one
Show me the path of enlightenment
Illumine my mind with million lights
Bring me ecstasy and supreme bliss.

O my deliverer, O my redeemer
Protect me on all sides and be with me
Let thy glimmer of hope, cherish me
Let peace prevail and tranquillity descend.

Lead Me To Light

Lead me to the light, O Lord.
For deep darkness surrounds me
Blinded with none to show me the way
That leads me to safety and your gardens
With thorny paths, marshy lands, shallow pits
Bitterness, cruel ways of tricky world
O Lord I seek Thy beaming light
For I am desolate and I yearn for Thee
Storms and tempests, cyclones and lightning
Thunder, tornadoes, with grave situations
Fears abounding with enemies surrounding

Without any protection or help from anyone
 O Lord! The Merciful and Beneficent
 Show clemency, protect me, Love me!

Sufism, Myth or Mysticism?

The adversaries of Sufism allege that Tasawwuf or Irfan is a myth and mysticism and not a reality and not Islam. This has been effectively dealt with by Shaikh Hisham Kabbani of the Naqshbandi Sufi order. A few excerpts taken from his book are noted below.

Imam Abu Hanifa said “If it were not for two years, I would have perished. For two years I accompanied Jafer as-Sadiq (RA) and I acquired the spiritual knowledge that made me a knower in the Way (i.e. Sufism). “[Ad-Durr Al-Mukhtar, Vol. 1, p43)

It is also mentioned in the book Ad-Durr Al-Mukhtar that Ibn Abidin rahmatullahi alaih said,

“Abu Ali Dakkak, one of the Sufi saints, received his path from Abul Qasim an-Nasarabadi, who received it from Shibli, who received it from Sari as-Saqati, who received it from Maruf al-Kharqi, who received it from Dawud at Tai, who received the knowledge, both the external and internal, from Imam Abu Hanifa rahmatullahi alaih, who supported the Sufi spiritual path.”

Imam Malik said, “Whoever studies jurisprudence and does not study Sufism will be corrupted. Whoever studies Sufies and does not study Jurisprudence will become a heretic. Whoever combines both will reach the truth.” (Kashf Al-Khafa Wa Muzid Al-abas, Vol. 1, p341]

Imam Shafi said, “I accompanied the Sufi people and I received from them three kinds of knowledge :

1. They taught me how to speak

2. They taught me how to treat people with leniency and a soft heart.
3. They guided me in the ways of Sufism. [Tanwir Al-Qulub, p405]

Imam Ahmed advising his son said, “O my son you have to sit with the Sufis, because they are like a fountain of knowledge. They recite the remembrance of Allah in their hearts. They are ascetics and they have the most spiritual power.” [Ghiza Al-Albab, Vol1, p 120]

He also said about the Sufis, “I do not know any people better than them.” [Ibid]

This then, is the opinion of the four great Imams of Madhab about the Sufis and indeed they themselves were Sufis in their own right.

But what about the generations after the four Imams, did they accept Sufism or did they discover something objectionable about Sufism.

Imam Ghazali rahmatullahi alaih, the Proof of Islam, said, “I knew it to be true that the Sufis are the seekers in Allah’s Way. Their conduct is the best of conduct. Their way is the best of ways. Their manners are the most sanctified. They have purified their hearts from other than Allah and they have made them as pathways for rivers to run receiving knowledge of the Divine Presence.” [Al-Munqidh Min Ad-Dalal, p 131]

Imam Nawawi said, “The specification of the Ways of the Sufis are five :

1. To keep the Presence of Allah in your hearts in public and in private.
2. To follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) by action and speech.

3. To keep away from dependence on people.
 4. To be happy with what Allah gives you, even if it is little.
 5. To always refer you matters to Allah, Almighty and Exalted.
- “[Al-Mazasid At-Tawhid, P20]

Ibn Taymiyah has said, “Sufism is the science of realities and states of experience. A Sufi is that person who purifies himself from everything which distracts him from the remembrance of Allah. [The Sufi] is so filled with knowledge of the heart and knowledge of the mind, that the value of gold and stones will be equal to him. Sufism safeguards the precious meaning and leaves behind the call of fame and vanity to reach the state of truthfulness. The best of humans after the prophets are the truthful ones, as Allah mentioned them in the Quran, ‘All who obey Allah and the Messenger are in the company of those on whom is grace of Allah: the prophets, the sincere lovers of truth (siddiqin) , the martyrs and the righteous. Ah! What a beautiful fellowship ‘ [4:69] ... [Sufis] strive to be obedient to Allah. Among them you will find the foremost in nearness by virtue of their striving and some of them are among the People of the Right Hand. [Majmu Afatawa Ibn Taymiyya, Vol 10, P 497]

Ibn Taymiyya has praised Sufis and Sufi practices in many of his books. He himself claims to be a Sufi Shaykh of the Qadri Sufi Order. He says, “I wore the blessed Sufi cloak of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Gilani, there being between him and me two Sufi Shaykhs” [Al Mas’ala At Tabiziyya]. Ibn Taymiyya’s Sufi lineage is given as follows: Shaykh Abdul Abdul Qadir Gilani (RA), Abu Umar Ibn Qudama, Muwaffaq Ad-Din Ibn Qudama, Ibn Ali Ibn Qudama and Ibn Taymiyya. [Majmu Afatawa Ibn Taymiyya, Vol 10, P516]

After Ibn Taymiyya his great student Ibn Qayyim had this to say about Sufis. He says, “We can witness the greatness of

the people of Sufism in the eyes of the earliest generations of Muslims by what has been mentioned by Sufyan atn-Thawri, one of the greatest Imams in the 2nd century and one of the foremost legal scholars. He said, “If it had not been for Abu Hisham as-Sufi, I would never have perceived the action of the subtle forms of hypocrisy in the self. (Manzil As- Sa’irin)

Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, whose followers we generally know as Wahhabis or Salafies. and his views on Sufis are stated by his son Abd Allah says, “My father and I do not deny or criticise the science of Sufism, but on the contrary we support it because it purifies the external and the internal of the hidden sins which are related to the heart and the outward form. Even though the individual might externally be on the right way, internally he might be on the wrong way. Sufism is necessary to correct it. “ [Ad Dia at Al Mukhthhafa Didd Ash Shaykh Ibn Abdul Wahab, p85]

Coming on now to the religious “reformers” of this century, we see that they all praised and agreed with Sufism, however, the followers of these reformers are under the delusion that their leaders denounced Sufism as being out of Islam.

Muhammad Abdul said, “Sufism appeared in the 1st century of Islam and it received tremendous honour. It purified the self, straightened the conduct and gave knowledge to people from the wisdom and secrets of the Divine Presence.” [Mujallat Al Muslim, p 24]

Rashid Rida said, “Sufism was a unique pillar from the pillars of the religion. Its purpose was to purify the self and to take account of one’s daily behaviour and to raise the people to a high station of spirituality.” [Ibid, P726]

Abul Hasan Ali An-Nadwi said, “The Sufis initiate people in Oneness and sincerity in following the Sunnah of the Prophet

(SAW), in repentance from their sins and in avoidance of every disobedience to Allah, Almighty and Exalted. Their guides encourage them to move in the way of perfect Love of Allah.” [Muslim in India, PP 140-146]

Abul Ala Mawdudi says, “Sufism is a reality whose signs are the love of Allah and the love of the Prophet (SAW), where one absents oneself for their sake and one is annihilated from anything other than them. It instructs us how to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (SAW).” [Mabadi Al Islam, P17]

Further he says, “The Shariah and Sufism; what is the similitude of the two? They are like the body and the soul. The body is the external knowledge, the Shariah, and the spirit is the internal knowledge.” [Ibid]

All reference presents in this article have been reproduced from the book “The Naqshbandi Sufi Way” written by Sheikh Hisham Al-Kabbani of the Naqshbandi Sufi Order.

This work is to encapsulate in a nut shell the teachings of highly attained and eminent Sufis to enable the readers to reach their own core of their heart and open the gate to reach divinity. The works extracted are from antiquity and all works are available free on [www. freebooks.com](http://www.freebooks.com) and on the internet. These books are within the public domain.

Appendix

The first thing Allah created Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has been stated in the Hadith, “Awwalu ma Khalaq Allahu Noori,” i.e. the first thing Allah created was my Noor. [Madaarijun Nubuwwah, Vol 2]

Hadith 4: ibn Asakir reports from Salman al-Farsi (radiyallahu ta’ala anhu) that: “Jibra’il came to Rasoolallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) and said that Allah says: I have not created anyone who

is more honoured to me than you. I have created the world and all that is therein so that they may know the rank that you possess. I would not have created the world if I had not created you”.

Angels are created from light and Jinn from Fire

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Allah created the angels from light. He created the jinn from a flame of fire, and He created Adam from what was described to you.” [Sahîh Muslim (5314)]

All the angels were ordered to prostrate before Adam alaihissalaam

“When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him.” Holy Quran 38:72

And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree, otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrong-doers).” [al-A’raaf 7:19]

“Then Shaytaan whispered to him, saying: ‘O Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away?’” [Ta-Ha 20:120]

“So He misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame (private parts) became manifest to them and they began to stick together the leaves of Paradise over themselves (in order to cover their shame). And their Lord called out to them (saying): ‘Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: Verily Shaytaan is an open enemy to you?’” [al-A’raaf 7:22]

Then Iblees asked for a respite until the Day of Resurrection, and Allah granted him that. Allah says:

- (Iblees (Satan)) said: “O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day they (the dead) will be resurrected.”
- Allah said: “Then, verily, you are of those reprieved,
- “Till the Day of the time appointed” (Quran, al-Hijr: 36 – 38).

(Iblees (Satan)) said: “O my Lord! Because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them (mankind) on the earth, and I shall mislead them all.

- “Except Your chosen, (guided) slaves among them” (Quran, al-Hijr: 39 –

And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein
Holy Quran 50:16

“When My servants question thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me” (Quran 2:186).

Sahih Muslim Hadith 6251 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah

Allah’s Messenger (saws) said: ‘Do you know who is a ‘muffis’ (abjectly poor or one who is totally bankrupt)?’ They (the Companions (r.a.) of the Prophet (saws)) said: ‘A ‘muffis’ amongst us is one who has neither dirham with him nor wealth.’ He (the Prophet (saws)) said: ‘The ‘muffis’ of my Ummah would be he who would come on the Day of Resurrection with prayers and fasts and Zakah but (he would find himself bankrupt on that day as he would have exhausted his funds of virtues) since he hurled abuses upon others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully consumed the wealth of others, shed the blood of others, and beat others. His virtues would be credited to the account of one (who suffered at his hand). And if his good deeds fall short to clear the account (of his mis-deeds), then their sins would be

entered in (his account) and he would be thrown in the Hell-Fire!

Nafs e Ammara bis Su :	The Self that dictates evil. Holy Quran 12:53
Nafs e Lawwama :	The Self Reproaching Self. Holy Quran 75:2
Nafs e Mulhima :	The Inspired Self Holy Quran 91:7-8
Nafs e Mutmainna :	The Satisfied Self. Holy Quran 89:27
Nafs e Razia :	The Self well pleased with lord Almighty. Holy Quran 89:28
Nafs e Marziya :	Allah is pleased with Human self Holy Quran 89:28-30
Nafs e Saliheen :	Self of Righteous (Holy Prophets) Holy Quran 29:9.

Sufies are faqeers. The word ‘faqr’ signifies – fasting in the name of the Lord, contentment.

Faqr as explained in a Hadeeth:

Anas narrated that Rasool Allah (saw) said, “O Allah (SWT), make me live a poor and resurrect me with the community of the poor on the Day of Resurrection.” Aishah, the wife of Rasool Allah (saw), asked him, “Why, O messenger of Allah?” He said to her, “They (the poor) enter the Paradise forty autumns before the rich. O Aishah, do not reject a poor even by (giving him) a half of a date. O Aishah, love the poor and approach to them, because Allah (SWT) will approach you on the Day of Resurrection.

Abu Hurrerah (R.A) narrates the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saying as:

“Verily Allah Ta’ala has said: ‘Whosoever shows enmity to a wali (friend) of Mine, then I have declared war against him. And My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more loved to Me than the religious duties I have obligated upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to me with nafil (supererogatory) deeds until I Love him. When I Love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to seek refuge with Me, I would surely grant him refuge.’” (Sahih Bukhari)

Muslims and mainstream scholars of Islam define Sufism as simply the name for the inner or esoteric dimension of Islam, which is supported and complemented by outward or exoteric practices of Islam, such as Islamic law.[17] In this view, “it is absolutely necessary to be a Muslim” to be a true Sufi, because Sufism’s “methods are inoperative without” Muslim “affiliation

Two origins of the word *sufi* have been suggested. Commonly, the lexical root of the word is traced to *afā* (صَفَاء), which in Arabic means “purity”. Another origin is *ūf* (صُوف), “wool” in Arabic, referring to the simple cloaks the early Muslim ascetics wore. The two were combined by the Sufi al-Rudhabari who said, “The Sufi is the one who wears wool on top of purity”. [29][30] Scholars, generally agree that *ūf* or “wool” is probably the root word of “Sufi.”

Others have suggested that the word comes from the term *ahl a-uffah* (“the people of the bench”), who were a group of impoverished companions of Muhammad who held regular gatherings of *dhikr*. These men and women who sat at Al-Masjid al-Nabawi are considered by some to be the first Sufies in existence.[31][32] Abd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin Qushayri and Ibn Khaldun both rejected all possibilities other than *ūf* on linguistic grounds.[33]

Sufism is a mystical-ascetic aspect of Islam. It is not a sect, rather it is considered as the part of Islamic teaching that deals with the purification of inner self. By focusing on the more spiritual aspects of religion, Sufis strive to obtain direct experience of God by making use of “intuitive and emotional faculties” that one must be trained to use.[34] Tasawwuf is regarded as a science of Islam that has always been an integral part of Orthodox Islam. In his *Al-Risala al-safadiyya*, Ibn Taymiyya describes the Sufis as those who belong to the path of the Sunna and represent it in their teachings and writings.

Bangalore

17 October 2015

Syed Liaqath Peeran

Excerpts from Holy Quran

“ Bismill Allah Ir Rahman Ir Rahim.
Al hamdu Lillahi Rabil Alameen
Ar Rahman nir Rahim
Maliki Yu Meddin
Iyaka Nabudu Wa IyakaNastayeen
Ahdinas Siratal Mustaqueen
Siratal Lazina Un amta Alaihim
Ghairil maqdubi alaihim.
Walad du al leen”
AMEEN

In the name of most High Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful”

Praise be to Allah
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds
Most Gracious, Most Merciful
Master of Day of Judgement
Thee do we worship
And Thine aid
We seek
Show us the
Straight way
The way of those
On whom Thou
Has bestowed
Thy Grace Those whose (portion)
Is not wrath and who go not astray
(S:1 A-1-7)

(2)

Allahu La ilaha
Ila hu Al hay ul Qayum
La'ta Quzhahu Seenataun
Walanoun, Lahu Ma fez
Sama Wati
Wama fil ard
Man zal laze yash fa hoo
Indahoo Ella bi ezhnihi

Yalamo mabayana
Aide him wama Khal fahum
Wala Yuheetuna Bi
Shaien bi ilmihi
Ella bi ma Sha aa
Wa siya Kursi hus
Samawati Wal ard
Wala Yahudu Hif zahuma
Wahu wal
Ali ul Azeem
(S.2 Ayats 254-255)

Allah! There is no god
But, he – the living
The self-subsisting, Supporter of all.
No slumber can seize Him.
Nor sleep, His are all things
In the Heavens and on earth
In His presence, except as He permitteth?
He knoweth what
(appeareth to His
creatures As)
Before or after
or Behind them.
Nor shall they
Compass aught
of His knowledge
except as he willeth.
His throne doth
extend over the heavens and the earth and
He feeleth and Preserving them.

For He is the High.
The Supreme (in glory).

(3)
Qul Hu wal lahu ahad
Allah hus Samad
Lam Ya lid
Walam yulad
Walana Ya Kul lahu
Kufa an Ahad
(S.112: A-1-4)
Say: He is Allah
The one;
Allah, the Eternal Absolute;
He begetteth not,
Nor is He begotten.
And there is none
Like unto Him.
(A 22)

(4)
(A23)Huwal la hul lazi lailaha illahuwa
Aali mul Qaibi
Washh shahadati
Huwar Rehman ur Rahim
Hu Walla hu lazi laillah illahu
Aal malikul Quddusul
Salammul mominul
Muhaimunal Azeezul
Jabbaru, Al muta Kabiru
Subhanal lahi Amma
Yush rekooon.
(A 24)Hu Wal Lahul Khaliqul
Bariul musaw werul
Lahul asma ul husna
Yusabi hu lahu
Mafis
samawati walardi
wahu wal azeezul Hakeem
Aameen.
(S.59. A 22-24)

22 (Allah is He; than whom there is no god – who knows
(all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious Most
Merciful.

23 Allah is He, than whom there is
No other god:-
The Sovereign, the Holy one,
The source of peace (and perfection),
The Guardian of Faith,
The Preserver of Safety,
The Exalted in Might,
The Irresistible, the Justly proud
Glory to Allah!
Above the partness, they attribute to Him.

24 He is Allah, the Creator, the Originator,
The Fashioner to Him belong the
Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the
Heavens and on earth cloth declare His
praises and Glory; And He is the Exalted in Might, the wise)

In the name of Allah, the most Merciful and Beneficent

Excerpt from Sura Noor or Light (C-159 XXIV, 35, 57)
(S-XXIV 35)

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth.
High above our petty evanescent lives,
He illumines our souls with means that reach
Our in most being. Universal is
His light, so pure and so intense
That grosser beings need a veil
To take His rays: His elect are e'er
Absorbed in prayer and praise and deeds
Of love, unlike the children of Darkness,
Struggling in Depths profound of vanities
False. All Nature sings to the glory
Of God, and men of fraud and hypocrisy
Are but rebels in the Kingdom of God.

Section - 5

35 God is the Light
Of the heavens and the earth.
The parable of His Light
Is as if there were a Niche
And within it a Lamp:
The Lamp enclose in Glass:

The glass as it were
A brilliant star;
Lit from a blessed Tree,
An Olive, neither of the East
Nor of the West,
Whose Oil is well-nigh
Luminous,
Though fire scarce touched it:
Light upon Light!
God doth guide
Whom He will
To His Light:
God doth set forth Parables
For men: and God
Doth know all things.

36 (Lit is such a Light)
In houses, which God
Hath permitted to be raised
To honour; for the celebration,
In them, of His name:
In them is He glorified
In the mornings
And In the evenings, (again and again)

37 By men whom neither
Traffic nor merchandise
Can divert from the Remembrance
Of God, nor from regular Prayer,
Nor from the practice
Of regular Charity:

Their (only) fear is
For the Day when
Hearts and eyes
Will be transformed
(In a world wholly new),

38 That God may reward them
According to the best
Of their deeds, and add
Even more for them
Out of His Grace:
For God doth provide
For those whom He will,
Without measure.

39 But the Unbelievers,
Their deeds are like a mirage
In sandy deserts, which
The man parched with thirst
Mistakes for water; until
When he comes up to it,
He finds it to be nothing:
But he finds God
(Ever) with him, and God
Will pay him his account:
And God is swift
In taking account.

40 Or (the Unbelievers' state)
Is like the depths of darkness
In a vast deep of darkness
In a vast deep ocean,
Overwhelmed with billow
Topped by billow,
Topped by (dark) clouds:
Depths of darkness, one
About another: if a man
Stretches out his hand,
He can hardly see it!
For any to whom God

Giveth not light
There is no light!

41 Seest thou not that it is
God Whose praises all beings
In the heavens and on earth
Do celebrate, and the birds
(Of the air) with wings
Outspread? Each one knows
Its own (mode of) prayer
And praise. And God
Knows well all that they do.

42 Yea, to God belongs
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth; and to God
Is the final Goal (of all).

43 Seest thou not that God
Makes the clouds move
Gently, then joins them
Together, then makes them
Into a heap? - then wilt thou
See rain issue forth
From their midst. And He
Sends down from the sky
Mountain masses (of clouds)
Wherein is hail: He strikes
There with whom He pleases
And He turns it away
From whom He pleases.
The vivid flash of His lightning
Well-nigh blinds the sight.

44 It is God Who alternates
The Night and the Day:
Verily in these things
Is an instructive example
For those who have vision!

45 And God has created
Every animal from water:
Of them there are some
That creep on their bellies;
some that walk on two legs;
And some that walk on four.
God creates what He wills;
For verily God has power
Over all things.

46 We have indeed sent down
Signs that make things manifest:
And God guides whom He wills
To a Way that is straight.

47 They say, “We believe
In God and in the Apostle,
And we obey “: but
Even after that, some of them
Turn away: they are not
(Really) Believers.

48 When they are summoned
To God and His Apostle,
In order that he may judge
Between them, behold, some
Of them, decline (to come).

49 But if the right is
On their side, they come
To him with all submission

50 Is it that there is
A disease in their hearts?
Or do they doubt,
Or are they in fear,
That God and His Apostle
Will deal unjustly with them?
Nay, it is they themselves
Who do wrong?

Sura XXX.

Rum, or The Roman Empire

In the name of God, Most Gracious and the Beneficent.

1. A. L. M
2. The Roman Empire
Has been defeated
3. In a land close by;
But they, (even) after
(This) defeat of theirs,
Will soon be victorious -
4. Within a few years.
With God is the Decision,
In the Past
And in the Future:
On that Day shall
The Believers rejoice-
5. With the help of God.
He helps whom He will,
And He is Exalted in Might,
Most Merciful.
6. (It is) the promise of God.
Never does God depart
From His promise:
But most men understand not.
Most Merciful
7. They know but the outer
(Things) in the life
Of this world; but
Of the End of things
They are heedless.
8. Do they not reflect
In their own minds?
Not but for just ends
And for a term appointed,
Did God create the heavens
And the earth, and all
Between them: yet are there
Truly many among men

Who deny the meeting
With their Lord
(At the Resurrection)!
9.Do they not travel
Through the earth, and sea
What was the End
Of those before them?
They were superior to them
In strength: they tilled
The soil and populated it
In greater numbers than these
Have done: there came to them
Their apostles with Clear (Signs),
(Which they rejected, to their
Own destruction): it was not
God who wronged them, but
They wronged their own souls.
10.In the long run
Evil in the extreme
Will be the End of those
Who do evil; for that
They rejected the Signs
Of God, and held them up
To ridicule.

Section - 2

11.It is God Who begins
(The process of) creation;
Then repeats it; then
Shall ye be brought back to Him.
12. On the Day that
The Hour will be established,
The guilty will be
Struck dumb with despair.
13. No intercessor will they have
Among their "Partners"
And they will (themselves)
Reject their "Partners"
14.On the Day that
The Hour will be established,

That Day shall (all men)
 Be sorted out.
 15. Then those who have believed
 And worked righteous deeds,
 Shall be made happy
 In a Mead of Delight.
 16. And those who have rejected
 Faith and falsely denied
 Out Signs and the meeting
 Of the Hereafter, - such
 Shall be brought forth to Punishment.
 17. So (give) glory to God,
 When ye reach eventide.
 And when ye rise In the morning;
 18. Yea, To Him be praise,
 In the heavens and on earth;
 And in the late afternoon
 And when the day
 Begins to decline.
 19. It is He Who brings out
 The living from the dead,
 And brings out the dead
 From the living, and Who
 Gives life to the earth
 After it is dead:
 And thus shall ye be
 Brought out (from the dead)

Section - 3

20. Among His Signs is this,
 That He created you
 From dust; and then –
 Behold, ye are men
 Scattered (far and wide)!

21. And among His Signs
 Is this, that He created
 For you mates from among
 Yourselves, that ye may
 Dwell in tranquillity with them,
 And He has put love

And mercy between your (hearts):
For those who reflect.

22. And among His Signs
Is the creation of the heavens
And the earth, and the variations
In your languages
And your colours; verily
In that are Signs
For those who know.

23. And among His Signs
Is the sleep that ye take
By night and by day,
And the quest that ye
(Make for livelihood)
Out of His Bounty: verily
In that are Signs
For those who hearken.

24. And among His Signs,
He shows you the lighting,
By way both of fear
And of hope, and He sends
Down rain from the sky
And with it gives life to
The earth after it is dead:
Verily in that are Signs
For those who are wise.

25. And among His Signs is this,
That heaven and earth
Stand by His Command:
Then when He calls you,
By a single call, from the earth,
Behold, ye (straightway) come forth.

26. To Him belongs every being
That is in the heavens
And on earth: all are
Devoutly obedient to Him.

27. It is He Who begins
(The process of) creation;
Then repeats it; and
For Him it is most easy.

To Him belongs the loftiest
 Similitude (we can think of)
 In the heavens and the earth;
 For He is Exalted in Might,
 Full of wisdom.

Section - 4

28. He does propound
 To you a similitude
 From your own (experience):
 Do ye have partners
 Among those whom your right hands
 Possess, to share as equals
 In the wealth We have
 Bestowed on you? Do ye
 Fear them as ye fear
 Each other? Thus do We
 Explain the Signs in detail
 To a people that understand.

29. Nay, the wrong - doers (merely)
 Follow their own lusts,
 Being devoid of knowledge.
 But who will guide those
 Whom God leaves astray?
 To them there will be
 No helpers.

30. So set thou thy face
 Steadily and truly to the Faith:
 (Establish) God's handiwork according
 To the pattern on which
 He has made mankind:
 No change (let there be)
 In the work (wrought)
 By God: that is
 The standard Religion:
 But most among mankind
 Understand not.

31. Turn ye back in repentance
 To Him, and fear Him:
 Establish regular prayers,

And be not ye among those
Who join gods with God, -
32.Those who split up
Their Religion, and become
(Mere) Sects, - each party
Rejoicing in that which
Is with itself!
33.When trouble touches men,
They cry to their Lord,
Turning back to Him
In repentance: but when
He gives them a taste
Of Mercy as from Himself,
Behold, some of them
Pay part-worship to
Other god's besides their Lord,
34.(As if) to show their ingratitude
For the (favours) We have
Bestowed on them! Then enjoy
(Your brief day): but soon
35.Or have We sent down
Authority to them, which
Points out to them
The things to which
They pay part-worship ?
36.When We give men
A taste of Mercy,
They exult thereat:
And when some evil
Afflicts them because of
What their (own) hands
Have sent forth, behold,
They are in despair!
37.See they not that God
Enlarges the provision and
Restricts it, to whomsoever
He pleases ? Verily in that
Are Signs for those who believe.
38.So give what is due
To kindred, the needy,

And the wayfarer.
 That is best for those
 Who seek the Countenance,
 Of God, and it is they
 Who will prosper.
 39. That which ye lay out
 For increase through the property
 Of (other) people, will have
 No increase with God:
 But that which ye lay out
 For charity, seeking
 The Countenance of God,
 (Will increase): it is
 These who will get
 A recompense multiplied.
 40. It is God Who has
 Created you: further, He has
 Provided for your sustenance;
 Then He will cause you
 To die; and again He will
 Give you life. Are there
 Any of your (false) "Partners"
 Who can do any single
 One of these things?
 Glory to Him! and High
 Is he above the partners
 They attribute (to Him)!

Section - 5

41. Mischief has appeared
 On land and sea because
 Of (the need) that the hands
 Of man have earned.
 That (God) may give them
 A taste of some of their
 Deeds: in order that they
 May turn back (from Evil).
 42. Say: "Travel through the earth
 And see what was the End
 Of those before (you):

Most of them worshipped
Others besides God.
43. But set thou thy face
To the right Religion.
Before there come from God
The Day which there is
No chance of averting:
On that Day shall men
Be divided (in two).
44. Those who reject Faith
Will suffer from that rejection:
And those who work righteousness
Will spread their couch
(Of repose) for themselves
(In heaven):
45. That He may reward those
Who believe and work righteous
Deeds, out of His Bounty.
For He loves not those
Who reject Faith.
46. Among His Signs is this,
That He sends the Winds,
As heralds of Glad Tidings,
Giving you a taste
Of His (Grace and) Mercy,
That the ships may sail
(Majestically) by His Command
And that ye may seek
Of His Bounty: in order
That ye may be grateful.
47. We did indeed send,
Before thee, apostles
To their (respective) peoples,
And they came to them
With Clear Signs: then,
To those who transgressed,
We meted out Retribution:
And it was due from us
To aid those who believed.
48. It is God Who sends

The Winds, and He raise
 The Clouds: then does He
 Spread them in the sky
 As He wills, and break them
 Into fragments, until thou seest
 Rain-drops issue from the midst
 Thereof: then when He has
 Made them reach such
 Of His servants as He wills,
 Behold, they do rejoice! -
 49. Even though, before they received
 (The rain) - just before this -
 They were dumb with despair!
 50. Then contemplate (O man!)
 The memorials of God's Mercy! -
 How He gives life
 To the earth after
 Its death: verily the same
 Will give life to the men
 Who are dead: for He
 Has power over all things.
 51. And if We (but) send
 A wind from which
 They see (their tilth)
 Turn yellow, - behold,
 They become, thereafter,
 Ungrateful (Unbelievers)!
 52. So verily thou canst not
 Make the dead to hear,
 Nor canst thou make
 The deaf to hear
 The call, when they show
 Their backs and turn away.
 53. Nor canst thou lead back
 The blind from their straying:
 Only those wilt thou make
 To hear, who believe
 In Our Signs and submit
 (Their wills in Islam).

Section - 6

54.It is God Who
Created you in a state
Of (helpless) weakness, then
Gave (you) strength after weakness.
Then after strength, gave (you)
Weakness and a hoary head.
He creates as He wills,
And it is He Who has
All knowledge and power.

55.On the Day that
The Hour (of reckoning)
Will be established,
The transgressors will swear
That they tarried not
But an hour: thus were
They used to being deluded!

56.But those endued with knowledge
And faith will say:
“Indeed ye did tarry,
Within God’s Decree,
To the Day of Resurrection,
And this is the Day
Of Resurrection: but ye –
Ye were not aware!

57.So on that Day no excuse
Of theirs will
Avail the Transgressors,
Nor will they be invited (then)
To seek grace (by repentance).

58.Verily We have propounded
For men, in this Qur-an
Every kind of Parable:
But if thou bring to them
Any Sign, the Unbelievers
Are sure to say, “Ye
Do nothing but talk vanities.”

59.Thus does God seal up
The hearts of those

Who understand not.
 60. So patiently persevere: for
 Verily the promise of God
 Is true: nor let those
 Shake thy firmness, who have
 (Themselves) no certainty of faith.

Sura XXXI
Luqman (the Wise).

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

1. A. L. M
2. These are Verses
Of the Wise Book,
3. A Guide and a Mercy
To the Doers of Good,
4. Those who establish regular Prayer,
And give regular Charity,
And have (in their hearts)
The assurance of the Hereafter.
5. These are on (true) guidance
From their Lord; and these
Are the ones who will prosper.
6. But there are, among men,
These who purchase idle tales,
Without knowledge (or meaning),
To mislead (men) from the Path
Of God and throw ridicule
(On the Path): for such
There will be a humiliating Penalty.
7. When Our Signs are rehearsed
To such a one, he turns
Away in arrogance, as if
He heard them not, as if
There were deafness in both
His ears: announce to him
A grievous Penalty.
8. For those who believe
And work righteous deeds.
There will be Gardens

Of Bliss ,-
9.To dwell therein. The promise
Of God is true: and He
Is Exalted in power, Wise.
10.He created the heavens
Without any pillars that ye
Can see; He set
On the earth mountains
Standing firm, lest it
Should shake with you;
And he scattered through it
Beasts of all kinds.
We send down rain
From the sky, and produce
On the earth every kind.
Of noble creature, in pairs.
11.Such is the Creations of God:
Now show Me what is there
That others besides Him
Have created: nay, but
The Transgressors are
In manifest error.

Section - 2

12.We bestowed (in the past)
Wisdom on Luqman:
“Show (thy) gratitude to God.”
Any who is (so) grateful
Does so to the profit
Of his own soul: but if
Any is ungrateful, verily
God is free of all wants,
Worthy of all praise.
13.Behold, Luqman said
To his son by way of
Instruction: “O my son!
Join not in worship
(Others) with God: for
False worship is indeed
The highest wrong-doing.”

14. And We have enjoined on man
 (To be good) to his parents:
 In travail upon travail
 Did his mother bear him
 And in years twain
 Was his weaning: (hear
 The command), " Show gratitude
 To Me and to thy parents:
 To Me is (thy final) Goal.
 15." But if they strive
 To make thee join
 Things of which thou hast
 No knowledge, obey them not;
 Yet bear them company
 In this life with justice
 (And consideration), and follow
 The way of those who
 Turn to Me (in love):
 In the End the return
 Of you all is to Me,
 And I will tell you
 The truth (and meaning)
 Of all that ye did."
 16." O my son!" (said Luqman),
 " If there be (but) the weight
 Of a mustard-seed and
 It were (hidden) in a rock,
 Or (anywhere) in the heavens or
 On earth, God will bring it
 Forth: for Gods understands
 The finest mysteries, (and)
 Is well-acquainted (with them).
 17." O my son! Establish
 Regular prayer, enjoin what is
 Just, and forbid what is wrong:
 And bear with patient constancy
 Whate'er betide thee: for this
 Is firmness (of purpose)
 In (the conduct of) affairs.
 18." And swell not thy cheek

(For pride) at men,
Nor walk in insolence
Through the earth;
For God loveth not
Any arrogant boaster.
19.” And be moderate
In thy pace, and lower
The voice; for the harshest
Of sounds without doubt
Is the braying of the ass.”

Section - 3

20.Do ye not see
That God has subjected
To your (use) all things
In the heavens and on earth.
And has made His bounties
Flow to you in exceeding
Measure, (both) seen and unseen ?
Yet there are among men
Those who dispute about God,
Without knowledge and without
Guidance, and without a Book
To enlighten them!
21.When they are told to follow
The (Revelation) that God
Has sent down, they say:
“Nay, we shall follow
The ways that we found
Our fathers (following).
“ What! even if it is
Satan beckoning them
To the Penalty
Of the (Blazing) Fire?
22.Whoever submits
His whole self to God,
And is a doer of good,
Has grasped indeed
The most trustworthy hand-hold:
And with God rests the End.

And Decision of (all) affairs.
 23. But if any reject Faith,
 Let not his rejection
 Grieve thee: to Us
 Is their Return, and We
 Shall tell them the truth
 Of their deeds: for God
 Knows well all that is
 In (men's) hearts.
 24. We grant them their pleasure
 For a little while:
 In the end shall We
 Drive them to
 A chastisement unrelenting.
 25. If thou ask them,
 Who it is that created
 The heavens and the earth.
 They will certainly say,
 "God". Say: "Praise be to God!"
 26. To God belong all things
 In heaven and earth: verily
 God is He (that is)
 Free of all wants,
 Worthy of all praise.
 27. And if all the trees
 On earth were pens
 And the Ocean (were ink),
 With seven Oceans behind it
 To add to its (supply),
 Yet would not the Words
 Of God be exhausted
 (In the writing): for God
 Is Exalted in power,
 Full of Wisdom.
 28. And your creation
 Or your resurrection
 Is in no wise but
 As an individual soul:
 For God is He Who
 Hears and sees (all things).

29. Seest thou not that
God merges Night into Day
And He merges Day into Night;
That He has subjected the sun
And the moon (to His Law),
Each running its course
For a term appointed; and
That God is well acquainted
With all that ye do?
30. That is because God is
The (only) Reality, and because
Whatever else they invoke
Besides Him is Falshehood;
And because God, - He is
The Most High, Most Great.

Section 4

31. Seest thou not that
The ships sail through
The Ocean by the grace
Of God ? - that He may
Show you of his Signs ?
Verily in this are Signs
For all who constantly persevere
And give thanks.
32. When a wave covers them
Like the canopy (of clouds)
They call to God,
Offering Him sincere devotion.
But when He has delivered them
Safely to land, there are
Among them those that halt
Between (right and wrong)
But none reject Our Signs
Except only a perfidious
Ungrateful (wretch)!
33. O mankind! do your duty
To your Lord, and fear
(The coming of) a Day
When no father can avail

Aught for his son, nor
A son avail aught
For his father.
Verily, the promise of God
Is true: let not then
This present life deceive you,
Nor let the Chief Deceiver
Deceive you about God.
34. Verily the knowledge
Of the Hour is
With God (alone).
It is He Who sends down
Rain, and He Who knows
What is in the wombs.
Nor does any one know
What it is that he will
Earn on the morrow.
Nor does any one know
In what land he is
To die. Verily with God
Is full knowledge and He
Is acquainted (with all things).

The Quran and Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The Quran and Sayings of Prophet Muhammad are the source of **Islamic values and traditions**. They offer **timeless wisdom for lasting community** which The Wisdom Fund strives to apply to contemporary issues. Our selection of the Sayings is from “The Sayings of Muhammad” by Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy (1882-1935) founder of the Pan-Islamic Society of London. The serious scholar of Islam may wish to examine The Quran, and other sources for the Sayings (hadith), in our Activists’ Library.

**An excellent pattern have ye in the Messenger of God.
-- The Quran, XXXIII:21**

In God’s Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

According to Abu Daud these four Sayings of The Prophet contain the summary of Islamic law.

- Actions will be judged according to intentions.
- The proof of a Muslim’s sincerity is that he payeth no heed to that which is not his business.
- No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

- That which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful likewise, but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain.

Abstinence

Remember the lord in retirement from the people and make prayer thy sleep, and hunger thy food.

Kill not your hearts with excess of eating and drinking.

Illumine your hearts with hunger, and strive to conquer yourself with hunger and thirst; continue to knock on the gates of paradise by hunger.

The world is sweet in the heart, and green to the eye; and verily God hath brought you, after those who went before you: then look to your action, and abstain from the world of wickedness.

The nearest to me are the abstinent, whoever they are, wherever they are.

A keeper of the fast, who doth not abandon lying and detraction, God careth not about his leaving off eating and drinking.

A man once said to Muhammad, “O Messenger of God, permit me to become a Eunuch.” He said, “That person is not of me who maketh another a eunuch, or becometh so himself; because the manner in which my followers become eunuchs is by fasting and abstinence.” The man said, permit me to retire from society, and to abandon the delights of the world.” He said, “The retirement that becometh my followers is to live in the world and yet to sit in the corner of a mosque in expectation of prayers.”

A man while fasting must abstain from all bad expressions and must not even resent an injury.

Torment not yourselves, lest God punish you.

There is no monasticism in Islam.

S'ad b. Abi Wakkas said: The apostle forbade Uthman b. Mazun from avoiding marriage: and if he had permitted that to him, we would have become eunuchs."

The man I most emulate is a Muslim unencumbered; a man of small family, and little money, a performer of prayers and a perfect worshipper of God in private, one who is unknown, and hath enough to supply his wants, and when he dieth, he will leave few women to cry for him, and few legacies.

Keep fast and eat also, stay awake at night and sleep also, for verily there is a duty on you to your body, not to labor overmuch, so that ye may not get ill and destroy yourselves; and verily there is a duty on you to your eyes, ye must sometimes sleep and give them rest; and verily there is a duty on you to your wife, and to your visitors and guests that come to see you; ye must talk to them; and nobody hath kept fast who fasted always; the fast of three days in every month is equal to constant fasting: then keep three days' fast in every month.

Adultery

When a man committeth adultery, Iman (Faith) leaveth him; but when he leaveth such evil ways, Iman will return to him.

The adultery of the eye is to look with desire on the wife of another; and the adultery of the tongue is to utter what is forbidden.

Ye followers of Muhammad, I swear of God, there is not anything which God so abhors, as adultery.

Every eye is an adulterer; and every woman perfumeth herself, and goeth to an assembly where men are, wishing to show herself to them, with a look of lasciviousness, is an adultress.

Aged Persons

To every young person who honors the old, on account of their age, may god apoint those who shall honor him in his years.

Verily, to honor an old man is showing respect to God.

Alms-giving

The best of alms is that which the right hand giveth, and the left hand knoweth not of.

The best of almsgiving is that which springeth from the heart, and is uttered by the lips to soften the wounds of the injured.

Almsgiving is duty unto you. Alms should be taken from the rich and returned to the poor.

There are seven people whom God will draw under His own shadow, on the day when there will be no other shadow; one of them a man who hath given alms and concealed it, so that his left hand knew not what his right hand did.

Muhammad said, "It is indispensable for every Muslim to give alms." The companions asked, "But if he hath not anything to give?" He said, "If he hath nothing, he must do a work with his hand, by which to obtain something and benefit himself; and give alms with the remainder." They said, "But if he is not able to do that work, to benefit himself and give alms to others?" The Rasul (Muhammad) said, "Then he should assist the needy and the oppressed." They asked, "What if he is not able to assist the oppressed?" He said, "Then he should exhort people to do good." They asked, "And if he cannot?" He said, "Then let him withhold himself from doing harm to people; for verily that is as alms and charity for him."

The people of the Rasul's house killed a goat, and the Rasul enquired, "What remaineth of it?" Aishah said, "Nothing but its

shoulder; for we have sent the rest to the poor and neighbors.” The Rasul said, “The whole goat remaineth except its shoulder; that is, that remaineth which ye have given away, and what ye have kept in the house is frail.”

The angels asked, “O God! Is there anything of Thy creation stronger than rocks?” God said, “Yes; iron is stronger than rocks, for it breaketh them.” The angels said, “O Lord! Is there anything of Thy creation stronger than iron?” God said, “Yes; fire is stronger than iron, for it melteth it.” And the angels said, “O defender! Is there anything of Thy creation stronger than fire?” God said, “Yes; water overcometh fire; it killeth it and maketh it cold.” Then the angels said, “O Lord! Is there anything of Thy creation stronger than water?” God said, “Yes; wind overcometh water: it agitateth it and putteth it in motion.” They said, “O our cherisher! Is there anything in Thy creation stronger than wind?” God said, “Yes, the children of Adam, giving alms; that is, those who give with their right hands and conceal if from their left, they overcome all.”

The most excellent of alms is that of a man of small property, which he has earned by labor, and from which he giveth as much as he is able.

Giving alms to the poor hath the reward of one alms; but that given to kindred hath two rewards; one, the reward of alms, the other the reward of helping relations.

A man’s first duty should be to his own family, if poor.

Animals

Fear God, in treating dumb animals and ride them when they are fit to be ridden and get off them when they are tired.

An adultress passed by a dog at a well; and the dog was holding out his tongue from thirst, which was near killing him, and the woman drew off her boot, and tied it to the end of her

garment, and drew water for the dog, and gave him to drink; and she was forgiven for that act.

A woman was punished for a cat which she tied till it died from hunger. She gave the cat nothing to eat, nor did she set it at liberty so that it might find some food.

“Are there rewards for doing good to quadrupeds, and giving them water to drink?” Muhammad said, “Verily there are heavenly rewards for any act of kindness to a live animal.”

Verily God hath one hundred loving kindnesses; one of which he hath sent down amongst man, quadrupeds, and every moving thing upon the face of the earth: by it they are kind to each other, and forgive one another; and by it the animals of the wilds are kind to their young; and God hath reserved ninety-nine loving kindnesses by which he will be gracious to His creatures on the last day.

A young man came before the Rasul with a carpet and said, “O Rasul! I passed through a wood and heard the voices of young birds; and I took and put them into my carpet; and their mother came fluttering around my head, and I uncovered the young, and the mother fell down upon them, then I wrapped them up in my carpet; and there are the young which I have.” Then the Rasul said, “Put them down.” And when he did so, their mother joined them: and Muhammad said, “Do you wonder at the affection of the mother towards her young? I swear by Him who hath sent me, verily God is more loving to His creatures than the mother to these young birds. Return them to the place from which ye took them, and let their mother be with them.”

Backbiting

Backbiting vitiates ablution and fasting.

Beauty

Muhammad said, “That person will not enter Paradise who hath one atom of pride in his heart.” And a man present said, “Verily, a man is fond of having good clothes, and good shoes.” Muhammad said, “God is Beauty and delighteth in the beautiful; but pride is holding man in contempt.”

Begging

Every man who shall beg, in order to increase his property, God will diminish it.

Verily God loveth a Muslim with a family, who is poor, and withholdeth himself from the unlawful and from begging.

Whoso openeth unto himself the door of begging, God will open unto him the door of poverty.

Verily it is better for any of you to take your rope and bring a bundle of wood upon your back and sell it, in which case God guardeth your honor than to beg of people, whether they give or not; if they do not give, your reputation suffereth, and you return disappointed; and if they give, it is worse than that, for it layeth you under obligation.

Whoever hath food for a day and a night, it is prohibited for him to beg.

Verily it is not right for the rich to ask, nor for a strong, robust person; but it is allowed for the indigent and the infirm.

“May I beg from people, O Messenger of God, when necessitous?” Muhammad said, “Do not beg unless absolutely compelled, then only from the virtuous.”

Benefits

There are two benefits, of which the generality of men are the losers, and of which they do not know the value.

Charity

Charity that is concealed appeaseth the wrath of God.

Prayers lighten the heart, and charity is proof of Iman (Faith), and abstinence from sin is perfect splendor; the Kuran is a proof of gain to you, if you do good, and it is a detriment to you if you do wrong; and every man who riseth in the morning either doeth that which will be the means of his redemption or his ruin.

Charity is a duty unto every Muslim. He who hath not the means thereto, let him do a good act or abstain from an evil one. That is his charity.

When you speak, speak the truth; perform when you promise; discharge your trust; commit not fornication; be chaste; have no impure desires; withhold your hands from striking, and from taking that which is unlawful and bad. The best of God's servants are those who when seen, remind of God; and the worst of God's servants are those who carry tales about, and do mischief and separate friends, and seek for the defects of the good.

Whoso hath left debt and children, let him come to me; I am their patron, I will discharge his debt and befriend his children.

Every good act is charity.

Doing justice between two people is charity; and assisting a man upon his beast, and lifting his baggage is charity; and pure, comforting words are charity; and answering a questioner with mildness, is charity; and removing that which is an inconvenience to wayfarers, such as thorns and stones, is a charity.

Every good act is charity; and verily it is a good act to meet your brother with an open countenance, and to pour water from your own water-bag into his vessel.

Your smiling in your brother's face is charity; and your exhorting man to virtuous deeds is charity; and your prohibiting the forbidden is charity; and your showing men the road, in the land in which they lose it, is charity; and your assisting the blind is charity.

Chastity

Modesty and chastity are part of the faith.

Christians and Jews

Muhammad once referred to strife, and said, "It will appear at the time of knowledge leaving the world." Ziad said, "O Messenger of God, how will knowledge go from the world, since we read the Kuran, and teach it to our children, and our children to theirs; and so on till the last day?" Then Muhammad said, "O Ziad, I supposed you the most learned man of Medinah. Do the Jews and Christians who read the Bible and the Evangel act on them?"

Do not exceed bounds in praising me, as the Christians do in praising Jesus, the son of Mary, by calling Him God, and the Son of God; I am only the Lord's servant; then call me the servant of God and His messenger.

When the bier of anyone passeth by thee, whether Jew, Christian or Muslim, rise to thy feet.

Cleanliness

Were it not for fear of troubling my disciples, verily I would order them to clean their teeth before every prayer.

God is pure and loveth purity and cleanliness.

Compassion

When the child (of Zainab) was brought to Muhammad, dying; its body trembling and moving; the eyes of the Apostle of God

shed many tears. And Sad said, “O Messenger of God! What is the weeping and shedding of tears?” Muhammad replied, “This is an expression of the tenderness and compassion, which the Lord hath put into the hearts of His servants; the Lord doth not have compassion on and commiserate with His servants, except such as are tender and full of feeling.”

The Apostle of God wept over Sad b. Ubadah. And he said, “Have not you heard that the Lord doth not punish on account of shedding tears, not from sobs of the heart from the afflicted?” He is not of the people of our way who slappeth his cheeks and teareth his collar, and mourneth like the mournings of Ignorance.

There is no reward but Paradise for a Muslim who suffereth with patience when the soul of his affectionate friend is taken

Once Muhammad went together with some of his companions to Abu Yusuf, a blacksmith who was the husband of the nurse of Muhammad’s son Ibrahim. And the Apostle of God took Ibrahim and kissed him and embraced him. On another occasion they went to see Ibrahim, when he was in his dying moments. The eyes of Muhammad were fixed, and flowed with tears; and Abd-al-Rahman, son of Auf, said to the Messenger of God, “Do you weep and shed tears, O Apostle of God?” He said, “O son of Auf, these are tears of compassion, and feeling due to the dead.” After that he shed tears again, and said, “Verily my eyes shed tears and my heart is afflicted, and I say nothing but what is pleasing to my Benefactor; for verily, O Ibrahim, I am melancholy at being separated from thee.”

Muhammad said, “Do you think this woman will cast her own child into the fire?” Those present said, “No.” Muhammad said, “Verily God is more compassionate on His creatures, than this woman on her own child.”

When one of the family of Muhammad died, and the women assembled, crying over the corpse, Omar stood up to prevent them from crying, and drive them away: but Muhammad said, "Let them alone, O Omar, because eyes are shedding tears; and the heart is stricken with calamity and sorrowful; and the time of misfortune near and fresh; and the crying of women is without wailing."

Conscience

A man asked Muhammad what was the mark whereby he might know the reality of his faith. Muhammad said, "If thou derive pleasure from the good which thou hast performed and thou be grieved for the evil which thou hast committed, thou art a true believer." The man said. "In what doth a fault really consist?" Muhammad said, "when action pricketh they conscience, forsake it."

All actions are judged by the motive prompting them.

Contentment

Riches are not from an abundance of worldly goods, but from a contented mind.

When you see a person, who has been given more than you in money and beauty; then look to those who have been given less.

Look to those inferior to yourselves, so that you may not hold God's benefits in contempt.

God loveth those who are content.

Control of Self

The most excellent Jihad is that for the conquest of self.

The exercise of religious duty will not atone for the fault of an abusive tongue.

A man cannot be a Muslim till his heart and tongue are so.

Whoever hath been given gentleness hath been given a good portion in this world and the next.

Whoever suppresseth his anger, when he hath in his power to show it, God will give him great reward.

That person is wise and sensible who subdueth his carnal desires and hopeth for rewards from God; and he is an ignorant man who followeth his lustful appetites, and with all this asketh for God's forgiveness.

May God fill the heart of that person who suppresseth his anger with safety and faith.

"Give me advice," said someone. Muhammad said, Be not angry."

Muaz said, "At the time of my being dispatched to the judgeship of Yemen, the last advice Muhammad gave me was this, 'O Muaz! be of good temper towards people.'"

He is not strong and powerful who throweth people down; but he is strong who withholdeth himself from anger.

No person hath drunk a better draught than that of anger which he hath swallowed for God's sake.

Courtesy

Humility and courtesy are acts of piety.

Verily, a man teaching his child manners is better for him than giving one bushel of grain in alms.

It is not right for a guest to stay so long as to incommode his host.

No man hath given his child anything better than good manners.

“O Apostle of God! Inform me, if I stop with a man, and he doth not entertain me, and he afterwards stoppeth at my house, am I to entertain him or to act with him as he with did me?” Muhammad said, “Entertain him.”

Respect people according to their eminence.

Being confined for room, the Apostle of god sat down upon his legs drawn up under his thighs. A desert Arab who was present said, “What is this way of sitting?” Muhammad said, “Verily God hath made me a humble servant, and not a proud king.”

Abuse nobody, and if a man abuse thee, and lay upon a vice which he knoweth in thee; then do not disclose one which thou knowest in him.

When victuals are placed before you no man must stand up till it be taken away; nor must one man leave off eating before the rest; and if he doeth he must make an apology.

It is of my ways that a man shall come out with his guest to the door of his house.

Meekness and modesty are two branches of Iman (Faith); and vain talking and embellishing are two branches of hypocrisy.

When three persons are together, two of them must not whisper to each other without letting the third hear, until others are present, because it would hurt him.

Crimes

The greatest crimes are to associate another with God, to vex your father and mother, to murder your own species, to commit suicide, and to swear to lie.

Cultivation of Land

There is no Muslim who planteth a tree, or soweth a field, and man birds or beast eat from them, but it is charity for him.

Whoever bringeth the dead land to life; that is cultivateth waste land, for him is reward therein.

Dead

And behold! a bier passed by Muhammad, and he stood up; and it was said to him, "This is the bier of a Jew." He said, "Was it not the holder of a soul, from which we should take example and fear?"

Do not speak ill of the dead.

When the bier of anyone passeth by thee, whether Jew, Christian, or Muslim, rise to thy feet."

Death

Wish not for death any of you; neither the doer of good works, for peradventure he may increase them by an increase of life; nor the offender, for perhaps he may obtain the forgiveness of God by repentance. Wish not, nor supplicate for death before its time cometh; for verily when ye die, hope is out and the ambition for reward: and verily, the increase of a Mumins' (Muslim's) life increaseth his good works.

Remember often the destroyer and cutter off of delights, which is death.

Not one of you must wish for death from any worldly affliction; but if there certainly is anyone wishing for death, he must say, "O Lord, keep me alive so long as life may be good for me, and wish me to die when it is better for me so to do."

The Faithful do not die; perhaps they become translated from this perishable world to the world of eternal existences.

Death is a blessing to a Muslim. Remember and speak well of your dead, and refrain from speaking ill of them.

There are two things disliked by the sons of Adam, one of them death; whereas it is better for Muslims than sinning; the second is scarcity of money; whereas its account will be small in futurity.

The grave is the first stage of the journey into eternity.

Death is a bridge that uniteth friend with friend.

Sleep is the brother of death.

Muhammad said, three days before his death, “Not one of you must die but with resignation to the will of God, and with hope for his beneficence and pardon.”

Debt

Whoso desireth that God should redeem him from the sorrows and travail of the last day, must delay in calling on poor debtors, or forgive the debt in part or in whole.

A martyr shall be pardoned every fault but debt.

Whoso hath a thing wherewith to discharge a debt, and refuseth to do it, it is right to dishonor and punish him.

Deliberation

Deliberation in undertakings is pleasing to God.

A good disposition, and deliberation in affairs, and a medium in all things, are one part of twenty-four parts of the qualities of the prophets.

Disposition to Good

He is of the most perfect Muslims, whose disposition is most liked by his own family.

Verily the most beloved of you by me, and nearest to me in the next world, are those of good dispositions; and verily the greatest enemies to me and farthest from me, are the ill-tempered.

Verily the most beloved of you by me are those of the best dispositions.

I have been sent to explain fully good dispositions.

O Lord! As thou hast made my body good, so make good my disposition.

Two qualities are not combined in any Muslim, avarice and bad disposition.

Disputation

Mankind will not go astray after having found the right road, unless from disputation.

Divorce

Every woman who asketh to be divorced from her husband without cause, the fragrance of the Garden is forbidden her.

The thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce.

Duty of Believers

I have left two things among you, and you will not stray as long as you hold them fast; one is the Book of God, the other the Laws of His Messenger.

God hath made a straight road, with two walls, one on each side of it, in which are open doors, with curtains drawn across. At the top of the road is an Admonisher who saith, "Go straight on the road, and not crooked;" and above this Admonisher is another who saith to any who pass through these doorways, "Pass not through these doors, or verily ye will fall." Now, the road

is Islam; and the open doors are those things which God hath forbidden; and the curtains before the doors the bounds set by God; the Admonisher is the Kuran, and the upper Admonisher God, in the heart of every Mumin (Muslim).

Verily ye are ordered the divine commandments, then forsake them not; ye are forbidden the unlawful, then do not fall therein; there are fixed boundaries, then pass not beyond them; and there is silence on some things without their being forgotten, then do not debate about them.

Happy is the Mumin (Muslim) for if good befalleth him, he praiseth and thanketh God; and if misfortune, praiseth God and beareth it patiently; therefore a Mumin is rewarded for every good he doth, even for his raising a morsel of food to the mouth of his wife.

Whoever hath eaten of pure food and practiced my laws, and mankind hath lived in security from him, will enter into the Abode of Bliss.

Muhammad once said to Anas, "Son, if you are able, keep your heart from morning till night and from night till morning, free from malice towards anyone;" then he said, "Oh! my son, this is one of my laws, and he who loveth my laws verily loveth me."

I admonish you to fear God, and yield obedience to my successor, although he may be a black slave, for this reason, that those amongst you who live after me will see great schisms. Therefore hold fast to my ways and those of my successors, who may lead you in the straight path, having found it themselves; and ardently seize my laws and be firm thereto.

There was not any Messenger sent before me by God to mankind but found friends and companions, who embraced his maxims and became his disciples; after which were born those who gave out precepts which they did not practice, and did what

they were ordered not to do; therefore those who oppose them with the hand, with the tongue, and with the heart are Mumin, and there is not anything in Iman besides this, even as much as a grain of mustard seed.

Do not associate any one thing with God, although they kill or burn you; nor affront intentionally your parents, although they should order you to quit your wife, your children, and your property. Do not drink wine; for it is the root of all evil; abstain from vice; and when a pestilence shall pervade mankind, and you shall be amongst them, remain with them; and cherish your children.

There are three roots to Iman (Faith): not to trouble him who shall say ‘there is no deity but God;’ not to think him an unbeliever on account of one fault; and not to discard him for one crime.

He is not a good Mumin who committeth adultery or getteth drunk, who stealeth, or plundereth, or who embezzleth; beware, beware.

When asked to mention one of the most excellent parts of Iman (Faith) Muhammad said, “To love him who loveth God, and hate him who hateth God, and to keep your tongue employed in repeating the name of God.” What else? He said, “To do unto all men as you would wish to have done unto you, and to reject for others what you would reject for yourself.”

He who progresseth daily is yet far off from the Ideal.

When you speak, speak the truth; perform when you promise; discharge your trust; commit not fornication; be chaste; have no impure desires; withhold your hands from striking, and from taking that which is unlawful or evil. The best of God’s servants are those who, when seen, remind of God; and the worst of God’s servants are those who carry tales

about to do mischief and separate friends, and seek for the defects of the good.

He who believeth in one God and the Hereafter, let him speak what is good or remain silent.

He who believeth in one God and the life beyond, let him not injure his neighbors.

Speak to men according to their mental capacities, for if you speak all things to all men, some cannot understand you, and so fall into errors.

It is not a sixth or a tenth of a man's devotion which is acceptable to God, but only such portions thereof as he offereth with understanding and true devotional spirit.

Verily your deeds will be brought back to you, as if you yourself were the creator of your own punishment.

Adore God as thou wouldst if thou sawest Him; for if thou seeest Him not, He seeth thee.

Feed the hungry and visit the sick, and free the captive, if he be unjustly confined. Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

“The duties of Muslims to each other are six.” It was asked, “What are they, O Messenger of God?” He said, “When you meet a Muslim, greet him, and when he inviteth you to dinner, accept; and when he asketh you for advice, give it to him; and when he sneezeth and saith, ‘Praise be to God,’ do you say, ‘May God have mercy upon thee;’ and when he is sick, visit him; and when he dieth, follow his bier.”

This life is but tillage for the next, do good that you may reap there; for striving is the ordinance of God and whatever God hath ordained can only be attained by striving.

Commandments are of three kinds; one commands an action, the reward of which is clear, then do it; another forbids an action which leads astray, abstain from it; and in another arise contradictions, resign that to God.

The world is forbidden to those of the life to come; the life to come is forbidden to those of this world.

Do a good deed for every bad deed that it may blot out the latter.

A true Mumin is thankful to God in prosperity, and resigned to His will in adversity.

That which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful likewise: but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain.

Be ye imbued with divine qualities.

He is true who protecteth his brethren both present and absent.

All Muslims are as one body. If a man complaineth of a pain in his head, his whole body complaineth; and if his eye complaineth, his whole body complaineth.

All Muslims are like the components parts of a foundation, each strengthening the others; in such a way they must support each other.

Assist your brother Muslim, whether he be an oppressor or oppressed. "But how shall we do it when he is an oppressor?" enquired a companion. Muhammad replied, "Assisting an oppressor consists in forbidding and withholding him from oppression."

Muslims are brothers in religion and they must not oppress one another, nor abandon assisting each other, nor hold one

another in contempt. The seat of righteousness is the heart; therefore that heart which is righteous, does not hold a Muslim in contempt; and all the things of one Muslim are unlawful to another: his blood, property, and reputation.

The creation is as God's family; for its sustenance is from Him: therefore the most beloved unto God is the person who doeth good to God's family.

The proof of a Muslim's sincerity is that he payeth no heed to that which is not his business.

The Faithful are those who perform their trust and fail not in their word, and keep their pledge.

No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself.

Verily when a Muslim is taken ill, after which God restoreth him to health, his illness hath covered his former faults, and it is an admonition to him of what cometh in future times; and verily, when a hypocrite is taken ill, and afterwards restored to health, he is like a camel which has been tied up, and afterwards set free; for the camel did not know for want of discrimination, why they tied him up and why they turned him loose; such is the hypocrite: on the contrary, a Mumin knoweth, that his indisposition was to atone for his faults.

Misfortune is always with the Muslim and his wife, either in their persons or their property or their children; either death or sickness; until they die, when there is no fault upon them.

Abusing a Muslim is disobedience to God; and it is infidelity to fight with one.

Every Muslim who calls a Muslim infidel will have the epithet returned to him.

It is unworthy of a Mumin to injure people's reputation; it is unworthy to curse anyone; and it is unworthy to abuse anyone; and it is unworthy of a Mumin to talk vainly.

It is better to sit alone than in company with the bad; and it is better to sit with the good than alone. And it is better to speak words to a speaker of knowledge than to remain silent; and silence is better than bad words.

Fear not the obloquy of the detractor in showing God's religion.

Refrain from seeing and speaking of the vices of mankind, which you know are in yourself.

Guard yourselves from six things, and I am your security for paradise. When you speak, speak the truth; perform when you promise; discharge your trust; be chaste in thought and action; and withhold your hand from striking, from taking that which is unlawful, and bad.

That person is not of us who inviteth others to aid him in oppression; and he is not of us who fighteth for his tribe in injustice; and he is not of us who dieth in assisting his tribe in tyranny.

He is not of us who is not affectionate to his little ones, and doth not respect the feelings of the aged; and he is not of us who doth not order that which is good and prohibit that which is evil.

Ye will not enter Paradise until ye have faith, and ye will not complete your faith until ye love one another.

No man hath believed perfectly, until he wisheth for his brother that which he wisheth for himself.

Verily, each of you is a mirror to his brother: then if he seeth a vice in his brother he must tell him to get rid of it.

That person is not a perfect Muslim who eatheth his fill, and leaveth his neighbors hungry.

O ye who have embraced Islam by the tongue, and to whose hearts it hath not reached, distress not Muslims, nor speak ill of them, nor seek for their defects.

Do not say that if people do good to us, we will do good to them; and if people oppress us, we will oppress them; but determine that if people do you good, you will do good to them; and if they oppress you, you will not oppress them.

“Teach me a work, such that when I perform it God and men will love me.” Muhammad said, “Desire not the world, and God will love you; and desire not what men have, and they will love you.

In prayers, all thoughts must be laid aside but those of God; in conversation no word is to be uttered which afterwards be repented of; do not covet from others, or have any hopes for them.

“There is a polish for everything that taketh away rust; and the polish for the heart is the remembrance of God.” The companions said, “Is not repelling the infidels also like this?” Muhammad said, “No, although one fights until one’s sword be broken!”

My Lord hath commanded me nine things: To reverence Him, externally, and internally; to speak the truth, and with propriety, in prosperity and adversity; moderation in affluence and poverty; to benefit my relations and kindred, who do not benefit me; to give alms to him who refuseth me; to forgive him who injureth me; that my silence should be in attaining a knowledge of God; that when I speak, I should mention Him; that when I look on God’s creatures, it should be as an example for the: and God hath ordered me to direct in that which is lawful.

A Muslim who mixeth with people and beareth inconveniences, is better than one who doth not mix with them and beareth no inconveniences.

Eloquence

Some eloquence is like magic.

Envy

If envy were proper, two persons would be the most proper objects of it; one, a man to whom god hath given riches, and appointed to bestow in charity; the other, to whom God hath granted the knowledge of religion, and acteth thereon himself, instructing others.

Keep yourselves far from envy; it eateth up and taketh away good actions, like as fire eateth up and burneth wood. Experience

He is not a perfect man of fortitude, who hath not fallen into misfortunes; and there is no physician but the experienced.

Forgiveness

Thus saith the Lord, “Verily those who are patient in adversity and forgive wrongs, are the doers of excellence.”

Once Muhammad was asked, “O Apostle of God!” How many times are we to forgive our servant’s faults?” He was silent. Again the questioner asked, and Muhammad gave no answer. But when the man asked a third time, he said, “Forgive your servants seventy times a day.”

There is no man who woundeth and pardoneth the giver of the wound but God will exalt his dignity and diminish his faults.

That man is nearest to God, who pardoneth, when he had in his power him who would have injured him.

Do not say, that if the people do good to us, we will do good to them; and if the people oppress us, we will oppress them; but determine that if people do you good, you will do good to them; and if they oppress you, you will not oppress them.

Gentleness

Verily, god is mild, and is fond of mildness, and he giveth to the mild what he doth not to the harsh.

Whoever hath been given gentleness hath been given a good portion, in this world and the next.

God is gentle and loveth gentleness.

Verily you have two qualities which God and His Messenger love - fortitude and gentleness.

God

Reflect upon God's creation but not upon His nature or else you will perish.

Whoever loveth to meet God, God loveth to meet him.

God saith, "I fulfill the faith of whoso putteth his faith in Me; and I am with him, and near him, when remembereth Me."

God saith, "Whoso doth one good act, for him are ten rewards; and I also give more to whomever I will; and whoso doth an ill, its punishment is equal to it, or I forgive him; and whoso seeketh to approach Me one span, I seek to approach one cubit; and whoso seeketh to approach Me one cubit, I seek to approach him two fathoms; and whoso walketh towards Me, I run towards him; and whoso cometh before Me with the earth full of sins, and believeth solely in Me, him I come before with a front of forgiveness as big as the earth."

God saith, “The person I hold as a beloved, I am his hearing by which he heareth, and I am his sight by which he seeth, and I am his hands by which he holdeth, and I am his feet by which he walketh.”

God saith, “O Man! Only follow thou My laws, and thou shall become like unto Me, and then say, ‘Be’ and behold, It is.”

God is One, and liketh unity.

We were with Muhammad on a journey, and some men stood up repeating aloud, “God is most great,” and the Rasul said, “O men! Be easy on yourselves, and do not distress yourselves by raising your voices, verily you do not call to one deaf or absent, but verily to one who heareth and seeth; and He is with you; and He to whom you pray is nearer to you than the neck of your camel.”

God saith, “I was a hidden treasure. I would fain be known. So I created Man.”

Do you love your creator? Love your fellow-beings first.

God’s Forgiveness

Muhammad said, “I would not have the whole wealth of the world in the place of this revelation. . . O My servants who have oppressed your own souls by sinning, despair not of the mercy of God.” A man said, “What of him who hath associated others with God?” Muhammad remained silent for a while and then said, “Know that him also God forgiveth; but on repentance.”

God saith, “Verily my compassion overcometh my wrath.”

God’s Kindness

If the unbeliever knew of the extent of the Lord’s mercy, even he would not despair of Paradise.

God's kindness towards his creature is more than a mother's towards her babe.

If you put your whole trust in God, as you ought, He most certainly will give you sustenance, as He doth the birds; they come out hungry in the morning, but return full to their nests.

Trust in God, but tie it (your camel).

God is not merciful to him who is not kind to mankind.

“Do none enter the Garden of Bliss save by God's mercy?” Muhammad said, “No. None enter save through God's favor.” “You also, O Messenger of God! Will you not enter Paradise save by God's compassion?” Muhammad put his hand on his head and said thrice, “I shall not enter unless God cover me with His mercy.”

Good Works

That person who relieveth a Mumin (Muslim) from distress in this world, God will in like manner relieve him in the next; and he who shall do good to the indigent, God will do good to him in this world and the next.

Be persistent in good actions.

Heart

Beware! verily there is a piece of flesh in the body of man, which when good, the whole body is good; and when bad, the whole body is bad, and that is the heart.

Muhammad said, “O Wabisah! are you come to ask what is goodness and what is badness?” Wabisah said, “Yes, I am come for that.” Then He joined his fingers and struck them upon Wabisah's breast, that is made a sign towards his heart, and said, “Ask the question from thine own heart.” This he repeated three

times aloud and said, “Goodness is a thing from which thy heart findeth firmness and rest; and badness is a thing which throweth thee into doubt, although men may acquit thee.”

Heaven and Hell

Hell is veiled in delights and Heaven in hardships and miseries.

Heaven lieth at the feet of mothers.

He will not enter hell who hath faith equal to a mustard seed in his heart; and he will not enter Paradise who hath a single grain of pride, equal to a mustard seed, in his heart.

Paradise is nearer to you than the thongs of your sandals; and the Fire likewise.

Deal gently with the people, and be not harsh; cheer them and condemn them not. Ye will meet with many ‘people of the Book’ who will question thee, what is the key to Heaven? Reply to them (the key to Heaven) to testify to the truth of God, and to do good work.

People asked Muhammad if to say “There is no deity but God” was not the key to Paradise. He said, “Yes, but it is a key which hath wards; and if ye come with a key of that description, Paradise will be opened to you, otherwise it will not.”

Paradise is not for him who reproacheth others with any favor he doth to them.

The people entitled to the Abode of Bliss are three; the first, a just king, a doer of good to his people endowed with virtue; the second, an affectionate man, of a tender heart to relations and others; the third, a virtuous man.

Verily a man used to come before the Rasul (Muhammad) bringing his son with him; and the Rasul said to him, “Dost thou

love this boy?” And the man said, “O Rasul of God! May God love thee as I love this son!” Then the Rasul did not see the boy with his father for some time; and He said, “What has become of that man’s son?” The said, “O Rasul! He is dead.” And the Rasul said to the man, “Dost thou not like this, that thou wilt find no door of Paradise but thy son will be there awaiting thee, in order to conduct thee into Paradise?” And another man said, “O Rasul! Is this joyful news particularly for this man, or for the whole of us?” Muhammad said, “For all of you.”

What is Paradise? Muhammad replied, “It is what the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor ever flashed across the mind of man.”

Hospitality

He who believeth in one God, and a future life, let him honor his guest.

Whoever believeth in God and the Hereafter must respect his guest; and whoever believeth in God and the Hereafter must not incommode his neighbors, and a Mumin must speak only good words, otherwise remain silent.

It is not right for a guest to stay so long as to incommode his host.

Humility

Humility and courtesy are acts of piety.

Verily God instructs me to be humble and lowly and not proud; and that no one should oppress another.

A tribe must desist from boasting of their forefathers; if they will not leave off boasting, verily they will be more abominable near God, than a black beetle which rolleth forward filth by its

nose; and verily God has removed from you pride and arrogance. There is no man but either a righteous Mumin or a sinner; mankind are all sons of Adam, and he was from earth.

Whoever is humble to men for God's sake, may God exalt his eminence.

Islam

“Inform me in the nature of Islam,” said Sufyan, “so that I may have no occasion to ask others about it.” Muhammad said, “Say, O Sufyan, ‘I believe in God;’ after which obey the commandments, and abandon the things forbidden.”

Islam commenced in a forlorn state, and will quickly return to what it was in the beginning; then be joyful, ye who are firm.

My religion is like clouds dropping much rain; some of them falling on pure, favorable soil, cause grass to grow; some of them fall in hollows from which mankind are benefited, some fall on high lands from which benefit is not derived; then the two first are like the persons acquainted with the religion of God and instructing others; and the last like the person not regarding it nor accepting the right path.

The greatest enemies of God are those who are entered into Islam, and do acts of infidelity, and who without cause, shed the blood of man.

When asked, “What is Islam?” Muhammad said, “Abstinence and Obedience to God.” Asked “What is one of the most excellent virtues of Iman (Faith)?” He said, “An amiable disposition.” “Which is the most excellent Hijrah (Renunciation)?” He said, “Abandoning that of which God disapproveth.”

“What is Islam?” someone asked. Muhammad said, “Purity of speech and charity.”

Every child is born with a disposition towards the natural religion (Islam - submission to the Divine Will). It is the parents who maketh it a Jew, Christian or a Magian.

Do you know what sappeth the foundations of Islam and ruineth it? The errors of the learned destroy it, and the disputations of the hypocrite, and the orders of kings who have lost the road.

Men differ like mines of gold and silver: the good in ignorance are the good in Islam, once they have obtained the knowledge of religion.

Jihad

The most excellent Jihad is that for the conquest of self.

The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.

Kindness

To gladden the heart of the weary, to remove the suffering of the afflicted, hath its own reward. In the day of trouble, the memory of the action cometh like a rush of the torrent, and taketh our burden away.

He who helpeth his fellow-creature in the hour of need, and he who helpeth the oppressed, him will God help in the Day of Travail.

What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the wrongs of the injured.

Who is the most favored of God? He, from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures.

All God's creatures are His family; and he is the most beloved of God who doeth most good to God's creatures.

Whoever is kind to His creatures, God is kind to him; therefore be kind to man on earth, whether good or bad; and being kind to the bad, is to withhold him from badness, thus in heaven you will be treated kindly.

He who is not kind to God's creatures, and to his own children, God will not be kind to him.

Kindness is a mark of faith: and whoever hath not kindness hath not faith.

The Kuran

The Kuran consisteth of five heads, things lawful, things unlawful, clear and positive precepts, mysteries, and examples. Then consider that lawful which is there declared to be so, and that which is forbidden as unlawful; obey the precepts, believe in the mysteries, and take warning from the examples.

Doth any of you suppose that God hath not forbidden anything except in the Kuran? Beware, for verily I swear by God that I have ordered, and prohibited things in manner like the Kuran: and God hath not made it lawful for you to enter the houses of the People of the Book (that is Jews, Christians, etc.) without their permission, or you beat their women, or eat their fruits.

The Kuran was sent down in seven dialects; and in every one of its sentences, there is an external and internal meaning.

The other messengers of God had their miracles, mine is the Kuran and will remain forever.

“By what rule,” said Muhammad, “would you be guided, O Muaz, in your administration of Yeman?” “By the law of the

Kuran.” “But if you find no direction in the Kuran?” “Then I will act according to the example of the Messenger of God.” “But if that faileth?” “Then I will exercise my own reason and judgement.”

Labor

Pray to God morning and evening, and employ the day in your avocations.

He who neither worketh for himself, nor for others, will not receive the reward of God.

Whoso is able and fit and doth not work for himself, or for others, God is not gracious to him.

Those who earn an honest living are the beloved of God.

God is gracious to him that earneth his living by his own labor, and not by begging.

Whoever desireth the world and its riches, in a lawful manner, in order to withhold himself from begging, and for a livelihood for his family, and for being kind to his neighbor, will come to God with his face as bright as the full moon on the fourteenth night of the lunar month.

Give the laborer his wage before his perspiration be dry.

Learning

He dieth not who giveth life to learning.

Whoso honoreth the learned, honoreth me.

The Messenger of God was asked, “What is the greatest vice of man?” He said, “You must not ask me about vice, but ask about virtue;” and he repeated this three times, after which he said, “Know ye! The worst of men is a bad learned man, and a good learned man is the best.”

Verily god doth not taketh away knowledge from the hands of His servants; but taketh it by taking away the learned; so that when no learned men remain, the ignorant will be placed at the head of affairs. Causes will be submitted to their decision, they will pass sentence without knowledge, will err themselves, and lead others into error.

An hour's contemplation is better than a year's adoration.

Philosophy is the stray camel of the Faithful, take hold of it wherever ye come across it.

Go in quest of knowledge even into China.

Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.

The knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which no charity is bestowed in the way of the Lord.

Do you know what sappeth the foundation of Islam, and ruineth it? The errors of the learned destroy it, the disputations of the hypocrite, and the orders of kings who have lost the road.

To spend more time in learning is better than spending more time praying; the support of religion is abstinence. It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night than to pray all night.

Whoever seeketh knowledge and findeth it, will get two rewards; one of them the reward for desiring it, and the other for attaining it; therefore, even if he do not attain it, for him is one reward.

That person who shall die while he is studying, in order to revive the knowledge of religion, will be only one degree inferior to the prophets.

One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers.

The pursuit of knowledge is a divine commandment for every Muslim; and to waste knowledge on those who are unworthy of it is like putting pearls, jewels, and gold on the necks of swine.

That person who shall pursue the path of knowledge, God will direct him to the path of Paradise; and verily the superiority of a learned man over an ignorant worshipper is like that of the full moon over all the stars.

He who knoweth his own self, knoweth God.

Verily the best of God's servants are just and learned kings; and verily the worst are bad and ignorant kings.

To listen to the words of the learned, and to instill into others the lessons of science, is better than religious exercises.

The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr.

He who leaveth home in search of knowledge, walketh in the path of God.

One hour's meditation on the work of the Creator is better than seventy years of prayer.

God hath treasures beneath the Throne, the keys whereof are the tongues of poets.

The acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent on every Muslim, male and female.

Acquire knowledge. It enableth its possessor to distinguish right from wrong; it lighteth the way to Heave; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when friendless; it guideth us to happiness; it sustaineth us in misery; it is an ornament among friends, and an armour against enemies.

With knowledge man riseth to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, associateth with sovereigns in this world, and attaineth to the perfection of happiness in the next.

Learn to know thyself.

The calamity of knowledge is forgetfulness; and to waste knowledge is to speak of it to the unworthy.

Who are the learned? Those who practice what they know.

Man's Growth

The son of Man groweth and with him grow two things - the love of wealth and love of long life.

“Who is the best man?” Muhammad replied, “He is the best man whose life is long and whose actions are good.” “Then who is the worst man?” “He whose life is long and whose actions are bad.

Marriage

Marriage is incumbent on all who possess the ability.

A woman may be married by four qualifications: one on account of her money; another, on account of the nobility of her pedigree; another on account of her beauty; the fourth, on account of her virtue. Therefore, look out for a woman that hath virtue: but if you do it from any other consideration, your hands be rubbed in dirt.

Meanness

Shall I tell you the very worst among you? Those who eat alone, and whip the slaves, and give to nobody.

Mishaps

Whatever mishap may befall you, it is on account of something which you have done.

No misfortune or vexation befallerth a servant of God, small or great, but on account of his faults committed: and most of these God forgiveth.

Modesty

True modesty is the source of all virtues.

Modesty and chastity are parts of the Faith.

Meekness and modesty are two branches of Iman; and vain talking and embellishing are two branches of hypocrisy.

All kinds of modesty are best.

Monopolies

Monopoly is unlawful in Islam.

The holder of a monopoly is a sinner and an offender.

The bringers of grain to the city to sell at a cheap rate gain immense advantage by it, and those who keepeth back grain in order to sell at a high rate is cursed.

Mothers

Heaven lieth at the feet of mothers.

“O Messenger of God! Verily I have done a great crime; is there any act by which I may repent?” He said, “Have you a mother?” “No,” said the questioner. “Have you an aunt?” asked Muhammad. He said, “Yes, I have.” Muhammad said, “Go, do good to her, and your crime will be pardoned.”

I and a woman whose color and cheeks shall have become black from toiling in the sun shall be near to one another in the next world as my two fingers; and that is a handsome widow, whose color and cheeks shall have become black in bringing up her family.

Muhammad The Prophet

I am no more than man; when I order you anything respecting religion, receive it; and when I order you anything about the affairs of the world, then I am nothing more than man.

Convey to other persons none of my words, except those ye know of a surety.

‘Aishah said, “A party of Jews asked permission to go to Muhammad, and said, ‘Death upon you.’ And I answered their insult by saying, ‘Rather upon you be death and curse.’ Then Muhammad said, ‘Be mild O Aishah! and make a point of being kind, and withhold thyself from speaking harshly.’ I said, ‘Did you not hear what they said?’ He said, ‘Verily, I do always say,’ “Be the same to you.””

Verily my heart is veiled with melancholy and sadness for my followers; and verily I ask pardon of God one hundred times daily.

Zaid, Muhammad’s servant, said, “I served Lord Muhammad ten years, and he never said ‘Uff,’ to me; and never said, ‘Why did you do so?’ and never said, ‘Why did you not do so?’”

Muhammad The Prophet’s Kindness

Once Muhammad was distributing meat in Jiranah; and behold, a woman came close to him, and he spread his garment for her to sit upon. When people saw such respect paid to this woman, they asked who she was; and those present said, “This is his nurse.”

When anyone was sick Muhammad used to rub his hands upon the sick person’s body, saying, “O Lord of mankind! Take away this pain, and give health; for Thou art the giver of health: there is no health by Thine, that health which leaveth no sickness.”

Muhammad The Prophet's Mission

Kais b. Sal said: "I came to Hirah, and saw the inhabitants worshipping their chief; and I said, 'Verily the Apostle of God is worthy of being worshipped.' Then I came to the Apostle and said, 'I saw the people of Hirah worshipping the chief of their tribe, and you are most worthy of being worshipped.' Then Muhammad said to me, 'Tell me, if you should pass by my grave, would you worship it?' I said, 'No.' And He said, 'Worship not me.'"

The Apostle was in the midst of a crowd of his companions, and a camel came and prostrated itself before him. They said, "O Apostle of God! Beasts and trees worship thee; then it is ment for us to whorship thee." Muhammad said, "Worship God, and you may honor your brother, that is me."

When the ambassadors of Bani Amir went to Muhammad, they said, "You are our master." He said, "God is your master." Then they said, "You are most excellent of the highest degree." And when He heard this He said, "Say so, or less, and do not exceed reasonable bounds in praise."

Muhammad slept upon a mat, and got up very marked on the body by it: and someone said, "O Messenger of God! If thou hadst ordered me, I would have spread a soft bed for thee." Lord Muhammad said, "What business have I with the world? I am a man on horseback, who standeth under the shade of a tree, then leaveth it."

To the light I have attained and in the light I live.

It was said to the Rasul, "O Messenger of God! Curse the infidels." Muhammad said, "I am not sent for this; nor was I sent but as mercy to mankind."

Muhammad The Prophet's Prayers

Muhammad used to say after making the profession of faith, “O Lord I supplicate Thee for firmness in faith, and inclination towards the straight path, and for Thine aid in being grateful to Thee, and in adoring Thee in every good way; and I supplicate Thee for an innocent heart which shall not incline to wickedness and for a true tongue. I supplicate Thee to guide me to all which Thou knowest to be virtuous and to preserve me from all which Thou knowest to be vicious. I supplicate Thee to forgive me my faults for Thou knowest them all.

When the Messenger of God entered a place of worship he said, “O God! Pardon my sins, and open for me the gates of Thy compassion,” and on leaving he would repeat the same.

O Lord grant to me the love of Thee; grant that I love those that love Thee; grant that I may do the deed than win Thy love; make thy love dearer to me than self, family and wealth.

O Lord! I make my complaint unto thee, of my feebleness, the vanity of my efforts. I am insignificant in the sight of men, O Thou Most Merciful! Lord of the weak! Thou art my Lord! Forsake me not. Leave me not a prey to strangers, nor to mine enemies. If Thou art not displeased, I am safe. I seek refuge in the light of Thy countenance, by which all darkness is dispelled, and peace cometh in the Here and Hereafter. Solve Thou my difficulties as it pleaseth Thee. There is no power, no strength, save in Thee.

Neighborliness

The best of persons in God's sight is the best amongst his friends; and the best of neighbors near God is the best person in his own neighborhood.

A Muslim who mixeth with people and putteth up with their inconveniences, is better than one who doth not mix with them, and bear with patience.

Do you love your creator? Love your fellow-beings first.

Omens

Of my disciples who will enter Paradise are those who do not use shells (do not consult oracles), and are not influenced by omens, like the people of Ignorance, and who put their whole trust in God.

Orphans

I and the guardian of orphans (whether the orphan be of his near or distant relations, or of strangers) will be in one place in the next world; like my two fingers, nearly touching each other.

The best Muslim's house is that in which is an orphan, who is benefited; and the worst Muslim's house is that in which an orphan is ill-treated.

Parents

Heaven lieth at the feet of mothers.

God's pleasure is in a father's pleasure; and God's displeasure is in a father's displeasure.

He who wisheth to enter Paradise at the best door must please his father and mother.

A man is bound to do good to his parents, although they may have injured him.

There is no child, a doer of good to his parents, who looketh on them with kindness and affection, but God will grant with every look the rewards for an approved pilgrimage.

Peacemaking

Shall I not inform you of a better act than fasting, alms, and prayers? Making peace between one another: enmity and malice tear up heavenly rewards by the roots.

Poetry

Some poetry is dressed in knowledge and art.

The truest words spoken by any poet are those of Labid: “Know that everything is vanity save God.”

God hath treasures beneath the Throne, the keys whereof are the tongues of poets.

Some poetry containeth much wisdom.

Poverty

Poverty is my pride.

Poverty may well become a cause of infidelity.

O Lord! Keep me alive a poor man, and let me die poor: and raise me amongst the poor.

O Aishah! Do not turn the poor away, without giving them, if but half a date.

Seek for my satisfaction in that of the poor and needy.

A man came to Muhammad and said, “Verily I love you.” He replied, “Look to what you say,” and repeated the same twice. Lord Muhammad said, “If you are sincere, then prepare yourself for poverty: for poverty reacheth him who loveth me quicker than a torrent reacheth the sea.

Prayer

Prayer is the miraj (union with, or annihilation in, the Divine Essence by means of continual upward progress) of the Faithful.

The Lord doth not regard a prayer in which the heart doth not accompany the body.

He whom prayer preventeth not from wrongdoing and evil, increaseth in naught save in remoteness from the Lord.

The key of Paradise is Prayer, and the key of prayer is ablution.

Say your prayers standing; but if you are not able, sitting; and if unable, on your sides.

Pride

The proud will not enter Paradise, or a violent speaker.

He will not enter hell, who hath faith equal to a single grain of mustard seed in his heart; and he will not enter Paradise, who hath pride equal to a single grain of mustard seed, in his heart.

Muhammad said, "That person will not enter Paradise who hath one atom of pride in his heart." And a man present said, "Verily, a man is fond of having good clothes and good shoes." Lord Muhammad said, "God is Beauty and delighteth in the beautiful; but pride is holding man in contempt."

Progress

Everyone is divinely furthered in accordance with his character.

It is your own conduct which will lead you to reward or punishment, as if you had been destined therefore.

Every human being hath two inclinations - one prompting him to good and impelling him thereto, and the other prompting him to evil and thereto impelling him; but Divine assistance is nigh, and he who asketh the help of God in contending with the evil promptings of his own heart obtaineth it.

The best of good acts in God's sight is that which is constantly attended to although in a small degree.

Prophecies

Verily ye are in an age in which if ye neglect one-tenth of what is ordered, ye will be doomed. After this a time will come, when he who shall observe one-tenth of what is now ordered will be redeemed.

Men will be liars towards the end of the world; and will relate such stories as neither you nor your fathers ever heard. Then avoid them, that they may not lead you astray and throw you into contention and strife.

The time is near in which nothing will remain of Islam but its name, and of the Kuran but its mere appearance, and the mosques of Muslims will be destitute of of knowledge and worship; and the learned will be the worst people under the heavens; and contention and strife will issue from them, and it will return upon themselves.

Ye follower of Muhammad, I swear by the Lord, if ye did but know what I know of the future state, verily ye would laugh little and cry much.

Verily, of things which I fear for you, after my departure from the world, is this: that the ornaments and goods of the world may be pleasing to you. Then a man said, "O Messenger of God! Doth good bring harm?" Lord Muhammad said, "Verily good doth not bring harm: I mean if there be much wealth it is a blessing; and there is no harm in it, unless from stinginess and extravagance; like the spring, which causeth nothing to grow but what is good: and harm and destruction are from abuse thereof."

Punishment

God doth not remove anyone out of the world, but that he wisheth to pardon him; and by the diseases of his body and distress for food, He exacteth the punishment of every fault that lieth on his shoulder.

Verily the reward is as great as the misfortune; that is, the more unfortunate and calamitous one is, the greater and more perfect his reward. And verily, when God loveth a people, He entangleth it in misfortune; therefore, he who is resigned to the pleasure of God, in misfortune, for him is God's favor.

Purity

They will enter the Garden of Bliss who have a true, pure, and merciful heart.

Religion is admonition, and it means being pure.

Reason

God hath not created anything better than Reason, or anything more perfect, or more beautiful than Reason; the benefits which God giveth are on its account; and understanding is by it, and God's wrath is caused by disregard of it.

Relatives

The best of you, before God and His creation, are those who are best in their own families, and I am the best to my family.

He is the most perfect of Muslims, whose disposition is most liked by his own family.

The favor of God doth not descend upon that family in which is one who deserts his relations.

He is not a perfect performer of the duties of relationship who doeth good to his relatives as they do good to him. He is perfect who doeth good to his relatives when they do not do good to him.

O Messenger of God! Verily I have done a great crime; is there any act by which I may repent? He said, "Have you a mother?" "No," said the questioner. "Have you an aunt?" asked Muhammad. He said, "Yes, I have." Lord Muhammad said, "Go, do good to her, and your crime will be pardoned."

The duty of a junior to a senior brother is as that of a child to its father.

Giving alms to the poor hath the reward of one alms; but that given to kindred hath two rewards; one, the reward of alms, the other, the reward of helping relations.

A man's first charity should be to his own family, if poor.

Repentance

A sincere repenter of faults is like him who hath committed none.

Reverence

Muhammad said one day to His companions, "Reverence God as becommeth you." They said, "Verily, O Apostle of God, we do reverence Him, and praise be to God who hath imbued us with it." Then Muhammad said, "It is not so; but whoever reverenceth God as it is suitable for him to do must guard his head from humbling itself to others, and from pride and arrogance towards God and God's creatures; he must guard his senses from whatever is wrong, and must guard his mouth from eating forbidden things, and his heart from receiving what is prohibited; and he must keep his death in mind, and the rotting of his bones. And whoever wisheth for future rewards must abandon the ornaments of the

world. Therefore, anyone attending to the aforementioned points has verily revered God as it his duty to do.

Riches

Riches are not from and abundance of worldly goods but from a contented mind.

It is difficult for a man laden with riches to climb the steep path which leads to bliss.

Whoever desireth the world and its riches, in a lawful manner, in order to withhold himself from begging, and for a livelihood for his family, and for being kind to his neighbor, will come to God with his face bright as the full moon on the fourteenth night of the lunar month.

Wealth, properly employed, is a blessing; and a man may lawfully endeavor to increase it by honest means.

Seemliness

A Bedouin was standing in the mosque of the Prophet, and defiled it; when he was immediately taken hold of; and Muhammad said, "Let him alone, and throw a skin of water upon the spot; because ye were not created but of comforters and not sent to create hardships." And they let him alone till he had done, and then Muhammad called the Bedouin to him, and said, "This mosque is not a proper place for that, or any kind of filth; mosques are only for the mention of God, saying prayers, and reading the Kuran."

Self-Indulgence

Muhammad asked His companions, "What are your opinions of the merits of that person, who drinketh liquor, committeth adultery, and stealeth? What should his punishment be?" They

said, “God and His Messenger know best.” He said, “These are great sins, and the punishment for them very dire.”

Servants

To those of your servants who please you give to eat what you eat yourself; and clothe them as yourself; but those who do not please you, part with them; and punish not God’s creatures.

He will not enter Paradise who behaveth ill to his slaves. The companions said, “O Apostle of God! Have you not told us, that there will be a great many slaves and orphans amongst your disciples?” He said, “Yes; then be kind to them as to your own children, and give them to eat what you eat yourselves. The slaves that say their prayers are your brothers.

Zaid, Muhammad’s servant, said, “I served Lord Muhammad ten years, and he never said ‘Uff,’ to me; and never said, ‘Why did you do so?’ and never said, ‘Why did you not do so?’”

Sick

There is not any Muslim who visiteth another in sickness, in the forenoon, but that seventy thousand angels send blessings upon him till the evening; and there is no one who visiteth the sick, in the afternoon, but that seventy thousand angels send blessings upon him till daybreak, and there will be a pardon for him in Paradise.

Feed the hungry and visit a sick person, and free the captive, if he be unjustly confined. Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

Whoever visiteth a sick person, an angel calleth from heaven, “Be happy in the world, and happy be your walking, and take you a habitation in Paradise.” Whoever visiteth a sick person always entereth into and swims in a sea of mercy until he sitteth down; and when he sitteth, he is drowned therein.

When you go to visit the sick, comfort his grief and say, “You will get well and live long,” because although this saying will not prevent what is predestined, it will solace his soul.

Verily God will say on the Day of Judgement, O children of Adam! I was sick and ye did not visit Me.” And the sons of Adam will say, “O our defender, how could we visit Thee? For thou art the Lord of the Universe, and art free from sickness.” And God will say, “O men! Such a one was sick and you did not visit him.” And God will say, “O children of Adam, I asked you for food, and ye gave it me not?” And the children of Adam will say, “O our patron, how could we give Thee food, seeing Thou art the cherisher of the Universe, and art free from hunger and eating?” And God will say, “Such a one asked you for bread and you did not give it him.

Silence

Much silence and a good disposition, there are no two works better than those.

Sin

Can anyone walk through water without wetting his feet? The companions replied, “No;” Muhammad said, “Such is the condition of those of the world; they are not safe from sins.”

Truth

He is not of me who, when he speaketh, speaketh falsely; who, when he promiseth, breaketh his promises; and who, when trust is reposed in him, faileth in his trust.

No man is true in the truest sense of the word but he who is true in work, in deed, and in thought.

Strive always to excel in virtue and truth.

It is not worthy of a speaker of truth to curse people.

Appropriate to yourselves the truth. Avoid lying.

Say what is true, although it may be bitter and displeasing to people.

Understanding

It is not a sixth or a tenth of a man's devotion which is acceptable to God, but only such portions thereof as he offereth with understanding and true devotional spirit.

Verily, a man hath performed prayers, fasts, charity, pilgrimage and all other good works; but he will not be rewarded except by the proportion of his understanding.

Usury

The taker of usury and the giver of it, and the writer of its papers and the witness to it, are equal in crime.

Widows

A giver of maintenance to widows and the poor, is like a bestower in the way of God, an utterer of prayers all the night, and a keeper of constant fast.

I and a woman whose color and cheeks shall have become black from toiling in the sun shall be near to one another in the next world as my two fingers; and that is a handsome widow, whose color and cheeks shall have become black in bringing up her family.

Wives

Admonish your wives with kindness.

A Muslim must not hate his wife; and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with another that is good.

Do you beat your own wife as you would a slave? That must you not do.

I (Muaviyah b. Haidah) said, “O Apostle of God! What is my duty to my wife?” He said, “That you give her to eat as you eat yourself, and clothe her as you clothe yourself; and do not slap her in the face nor abuse her, nor separate yourself from her in displeasure.

Give your wife good counsel; and if she has goodness in her, she will soon take it, and leave off idle talking; and do not beat your noble wife like a slave.

Muhammad said, “Beat not your wives.” Then Omar came to the Rasul (Muhammad) and said, “Wives have got the upper hand from hearing this.”

He is the most perfect Muslim whose disposition is best; and the best of you are they who behave best to their wives.

A virtuous wife is a man’s best treasure.

Women

Women are the twin halves of men.

The world and all things in it are valuable; but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

The best women are the virtuous; they are the most affectionate to infants, and the most careful of their husband’s property.

When a woman performeth the five times of prayer, and fasteth the month of Ramadan, and is chaste, and is not

disobedient to her husband, then tell her to enter Paradise by whichever door she liketh.

Verily a great number of women are assembled near my family, complaining of their husbands; and those men who ill-treat their wives do not behave well. He is not of my way who teacheth a woman to stray.

Asma, daughter of Yazid, said, "Victuals were brought to Muhammad, and he put them before some of us women who were present, and said, 'Eat ye.' But notwithstanding we were hungry we said, 'We have no inclination.' Muhammad said, 'O woman! Do not mix hunger with lies.'"

Whoever doeth good to girls, it will be a curtain to him from hell-fire.

Whoever befriendeth two girls till they come of age, will be in the next world along with me, like my two fingers joining each other.

Whoever befriendeth three daughters, or three sisters, and teacheth them manners, and is affectionate to them, till they come of age, may God apportion Paradise for him.

Whoever hath a daughter, and doth not bury her alive or scold her, or prefer his male children to her, may God bring him into Paradise.

Shall I not point out to you the best of virtues? It is your doing good to your daughter when she is returned to you having been divorced by her husband.

God enjoins you to treat women well, for they are your mothers, daughters, aunts.

The rights of women are sacred. See that women are maintained in the rights assigned to them.

Do not prevent your women from coming to the mosque.

World

The love of the world is the root of all evil.

This world is a prison for the Faithful, but a Paradise for unbelievers.

The world is a magician greater than Harut and Marut, and you should avoid it.

The world is sweet in the heart, and green to the eye; and verily God hath brought you, after those that went before you: then look to your actions, and abstain from the world and its wickedness.

The world is as a prison and as a famine to Muslims; and when they leave it you may say they leave famine and a prison.

Be in the world like a traveler, or like a passer on, and reckon yourself as of the dead.

Cursed is this world and cursed is all that is in this world, except the remembrance of God and that which aideth thereto.

**Prophet Muhammad's (SAS)
Last Sermon Date delivered: 632 A.C.,
9th day of Dhul al Hijjah, 10 A.H. in
the 'Uranah Valley of Mount Arafat.**

After praising, and thanking God, he said: "O People, listen well to my words, for I do not know whether, after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and TAKE THESE WORDS TO THOSE WHO COULD NOT BE PRESENT HERE TODAY.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Treat others justly so that no one would be unjust to you. Remember that you will indeed meet your LORD, and that HE will indeed reckon your deeds. God has forbidden you to take usury (*riba*), therefore all *riba* obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer inequity. God has judged that there shall be no *riba* and that all the *riba* due to `Abbas ibn `Abd al Muttalib shall henceforth be waived.

Every right arising out of homicide in pre-Islamic days is henceforth waived and the first such right that I waive is that arising from the murder of Rabi`ah ibn al Harith ibn `Abd al Muttalib.

O Men, the Unbelievers indulge in tampering with the calendar in order to make permissible that which God forbade, and to forbid that which God has made permissible. With God the months are twelve in number. Four of them are sacred, three of these are successive and one occurs singly between the months of Jumada and Sha`ban. Beware of the devil, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain rights over your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under God's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers. It is your right and they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste...

O People, listen to me in earnest, worship God (The One Creator of the Universe), perform your five daily prayers (*Salah*), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your financial obligation (*zakah*) of your wealth. Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember, one day you will appear before God (The Creator) and you will answer for your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, no prophet or messenger will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words which I convey to you. I am leaving you with the Book of God (the Qur'an*) and my sunnah (the life style and the behavioral mode of the Prophet), if you follow them you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness O God, that I have conveyed your message to your people.

*The **Qur'an**: Revealed to Prophet Muhammad during the period from 610-632 AC. The first five verses revealed are: (1) Read in the name of your Lord, Who created. (2) Created man out of a clot that clings (in the womb). (3) Read and your Lord is the Most Bountiful. (4) Who taught by the pen. (5) Taught man that which he knew not.

Excerpts From “The Kashf Al-Mahjub”
HAZRETH DATA GUNJ BAKSH (RAA)

Hazret Ali bin Uthman al-Jullabi al Hujwiri(raa) (d.c.467/1075) wrote the first book on Sufism “The Kashf Al Mahjub”. This is the oldest book on Sufism written centuries ago, translated and published by R.A.Nicholson in the end of 19th century. The excerpts from the book are produced herein.

ON SUFIISM

God, Almighty and Glorious, has said: “And those who walk meekly on the earth, and when the ignorant speak to them answer ‘Peace’,” (shall be rewarded with the highest place in Paradise). And the Apostle has said: “He that hears the voice of Sufis (ahl altasawwuf) and does not say Amen to their prayer is inscribed before God among the heedless.” The true meaning of this name has been much discussed and many books have been composed on the subject. Some assert that the Sufi is so called because he wears a woolen garment (jama-i suf); others that he is so called because he is in the first rank (saff-i awwal); others say it is because the Sufis claim to belong to the Ashab-i Suffa, with whom may God be well-pleased! Others, again declare that the name is derived from safa (purity). These explanations of the true meaning of Sufism are far from satisfying the

requirements of etymology, although each of them is supported by many subtle arguments. Safa (purity) is universally praised, and its opposite is kadar. The Apostle on whom be peace! - said: "The safw (pure part, i.e. the best) of this world is gone, and only its kadar (impurity) remains." Therefore, since the people of this persuasion have purged their morals and conduct, and have sought to free themselves from natural taints, on that account they are called Sufis; and this designation of the sect is a proper name (as asami-yi a'lam), inasmuch as the dignity of the Sufis is too great for their transactions (my amalnt) to be hidden, so that their name should need a derivation. In this age, however, God has veiled most people from Sufism and from its votaries, and has concealed its mysteries from their hearts. Accordingly some imagine that it consists merely in the practice of outward piety without inward contemplation, and others suppose that it is a form and a system without essence and root, to such an extent that they have adopted the view of scoffers (ahli-hazl) and theologians (ulama), who regard only the external, and have condemned Sufism altogether, making no attempt to discover what it really is. The people in general, blindly conforming to this opinion, have erased from their hearts the quest for inward purity and have discarded the tenets of the Ancients and the Companions of the Prophet. Verily, purity is characteristic of the Siddiq, if thou desirest a true Sufi- because purity (safa) has a root and a branch: its root being severance of the heart from "others" (aghyar), and its branch that the heart should be empty of this deceitful world. Both these are characteristic of the Greatest Siddiq, (the Caliph) Abu Bakr 'Abdallah b. Abi Quhafa, with whom may God be well-pleased! He is the leader (imam) of all the folk of this Path.

I said that safa (purity) is the opposite of kadar (impurity), and kadar is one of the qualities of Man. The true Sufi is he that leaves impurity behind. Thus, human nature (bashariyyat)

prevailed in the women of Egypt as they gazed, enraptured, on the wondrous beauty of Yusuf (Joseph), on whom be peace! But afterwards the preponderance was reversed, unit at last they beheld him with their human nature annihilated (ba-fand-yi bashariyyal) and cried: "This is no human being" (Kor.xii.31) They made him their object and gave expression to their own state. Hence the Shaykhs of this Path - God have mercy on them! - have said: *Laysa 'l-safa min sifat al-bashar li anna l-bashar madar wa'l madar la yakhlu min al-kadar*, "Purity is not one of the qualities of Man, for Man is clay, and clay is not one of the qualities of Man or Man is clay, and clay involves impurity, and Man cannot escape from impurity." Therefore purity bears on likeness to acts (af'al), nor can the human nature be destroyed by means of effort. The quality of purity is unrelated to acts and states, and its name is unconnected with names and nicknames - purity is characteristic of the lovers (of God), who are suns without cloud -because purity is the attribute of those who love, and the lover is he that is dead (fani) in his own attributes and living (baqi) in the attributes of his Beloved, and their "states" resemble the clear sun in the opinion of mystics (arbab-i-hal). The beloved of God, Muhammad the Chosen One, was asked concerning the state of Haritha. He answered: *'Abd nawwara 'llah qalbahu bi l-iman*, "He is a man whose heart is illumined by the light of faith, so that his face shines like the moon from the effect thereof, and he is formed by the Divine light." An eminent Sufi says: *Diya al-shams wa'l-qamar idha 'shiarakd namudhaj min safa al-hubb wa l-tawhid idha shtabakd*, "The combination of the light of the sun and moon, when they are in conjunction, is like the purity of Love and unification, when these are mingled together." Assuredly, the light of the sun and moon is worthless beside the light of the Love and Unification of God Almighty, and they should not be compared; but in this world there is no light more conspicuous than those two luminaries. The eye cannot

see the light of the sun and moon with complete demonstration. During the sway of the sun and moon it sees the sky, whereas the heart(dis) sees the empyrean (arsh) by the light of knowledge and unification and love, and while still in this world explores the world to come. All the Shykhs of this Path are agreed that when a man has escaped from the captivity of "stations" (maqamat), and gets rid of the impurity of "states" (ahwal), and is liberated from the abode of change and decay, and becomes endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, he is disjoined from all qualities. That is to say, he is not held in bondage by any praiseworthy quality of his own, nor does he regard it, nor is he made self-conceited thereby. His state is hidden from the perception of intelligences, and his time is exempt from the influence of thoughts. His presence (hudur) with God has no end and his existence has no cause. And when he arrives at this degree, he becomes annihilated (fani) in this world and in the next, and is made divine (rabbani) in the disappearance of humanity; and gold and earth are the same in his eyes, and the ordinances which others find hard to keep become easy to him.

"Sufi" is a name which is given, and has formerly been given, to the perfect saints and spiritual adepts. One of the shaykhs says: Man saffahu 'l-hubb fa-huwa saf wa-man saffahu 'l-habib fa-huwa Sufiyy, "He that is purified by love is pure, and he that is absorbed in the Beloved and has abandoned all else is a 'Sufi'." The name has no derivation answering to etymological requirements, inasmuch as Sufism is too exalted to have any genus from which it might be derived; for the derivation of one thing from another demands homogeneity (mujanasai). All that exists is the opposite of purity (safa), and things are not derived from their opposites. To Sufis the meaning of Sufism is clearer than the sun and does not need any explanation or indication. Since "Sufi" admits of no explanation, all the world are interpreters thereof, whether they recognize the dignity of the name or no at

the time when they learn its meaning. The perfect, then, among them are called Sufi, and the inferior aspirants (Taliban) among them are called Mutasawwif; for tasawwuf belongs to the form tafa'ul, which implies "taking trouble" (takalluf) and is a branch of the original root. The difference both in meaning and in etymology is evident. Purity (safa) is a saintship with a sign and a relation (riwayat), and Sufism (tasawwuf) is an uncomplaining imitation of purity (hikayai li'l-safa. bild shikayat). Purity, then, is a resplendent and manifest idea, and Sufism is an imitation of that idea. Its followers in this degree are of three kinds: the Sufi, the Mutasawwif, and the Mustaswif. The Sufi is he that is dead to self and living by the Truth; he has escaped from the grip of human faculties and has really attained (to God), The Mutasawwif is he that seeks to reach this rank by means of self-mortification (mujahadat) and in his search rectifies his conduct in accordance with their (the Sufis) example. The Mustaswif is he that make himself like them (the Sufis) for the sake of money and wealth and power and worldly advantage, but has no knowledge of these two things. Hence it has been said: Al-mustaswif 'inda 'l-Sufiyyat ka-l-dhubab wa-inda ghayrihim ka-'ldhi'ab, "The Mustaswif in the opinion of the Sufis is as despicable as flies, and his actions are mere cupidity; others regard him as being like a wolf, and his speech unbridled (be afsar), for he only desires a morsel of carrion," Therefore the Sufi is a man of union (sahib wusul), the Mutasawwif a man of principles (sahib usul), and the Mustaswif a man of superfluities (sahib fudul). and the Mustaswif a man of superfluities (sahib fudul). He that has the portion of union loses all end and object by gaining his end and reaching his object; he that has the portion of principle becomes firm in the "states" of the mystic path, and steadfastly devoted to the mysteries thereof; but he that has the portion of superfluity, is left devoid of all (worth having), and sits down at the gate of formality (rasm), and thereby he is veiled from reality (ma'ni), and this veil renders

both union and principle invisible to him. The Shaykhs of this persuasion have given many subtle definitions of Sufiism which cannot all be if God will, who is the Author of success.

Dhu 'l-Nun, the Egyptian, says: Al-Sufi idha nataqa bana nuiquhu 'an-haqa'iq wa-in sakata nataqat 'anhu 'l-jawarih bi-qat' al'-ala'iq, "The Sufi is he whose language, when he speaks, is the reality of his state, i.e. he says nothing which he is not, and when he is silent his conduct explains his state, and his state proclaims that he has cut all worldly ties;" i.e. all that he says is based on a sound principle and all that he does is pure detachment from the world (tajrid); when he speaks his speech is entirely the Truth, and when he is silent his actions are wholly "poverty" (faqr). Junayd says: Al-tasawwuf na't uqima 'lo'abd fih qila na'l li-'l-'abd am li-'l-haqq fazala na't al-haqq haqiqai wa-na't al-'abd rasm, "Sufiism is an attribute wherein is Man's subsistence." They said: "Is it an attribute of God or of mankind?" He replied: "Its essence is an attribute of God and its formal system is an attribute of mankind;" i.e. its essence involves the annihilation of human qualities, which is brought about by the everlastingness of the Divine qualities, and this is an attribute of God; whereas its formal system involves on the part of Man the continuance of self-mortification (mujahadat), and this continuance of self-mortification is an attribute of Man. Or the words may be taken in another sense, namely, that in real Unification (tawhid) there are, correctly speaking, no human attributes at all, because human attributes are not constant but are only formal (rasm), having no permanence, of God is the agent. Therefore they are really the attributes of God. Thus (to explain what is meant). God commands His servants to fast, and when they keep the fast He gives them the name of "faster" (saim), and nominally this "fasting" (sawm) belongs to Man, but really it belongs to God. Accordingly God told His Apostle and said: Al-sawm li wa-ana ajzi bihi, "Fasting is mine," because all His acts are His possessions and when men ascribe things to

themselves, the attribution is formal and metaphorical, not real. And Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri says: Al-tasawwuf tarku kulli hazz li-'l-nafs, "Sufism is the renunciation of all selfish pleasures." This renunciation is of two kinds: formal and essential. For example, if one renounces a pleasure, and finds pleasure in the renunciation, this is formal renunciation; but if the pleasure renounces him, then pleasure is annihilated, and this case falls under the head of true contemplation (mushahadat). Therefore renunciation of pleasure is the act of Man, but annihilation of pleasure is the act of God. The act of Man is formal and metaphorical, while the act of God is real. This saying (of Nuri) elucidates the saying of Junayd which has been quoted above. And Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri also says: Al-Sufiyyat humu 'ladhina safat arwahuhum fa-safu fi'l-saff al - awwal bayna yadayi 'l-haqq. "The Sufis are they whose spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from concupiscence, so that they have found rest with God in the first rank and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him." And he also says: Al-Sufi alladhi la yamlik wa-la yumlak, "The Sufi is he that has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything." This denotes the essence of annihilation (fana), since one whose qualities are annihilated neither possesses nor is possessed, inasmuch as the term "possession" can properly be applied only to existent things. The meaning is, that the Sufi does not make his own any good of this world or any glory of the next world, for he is not even in the possession and control of himself: he refrains from desiring authority over others, in order that others may not desire submission from him. This saying refers to a mystery of the Sufis which they-call "complete annihilation" (fana-yi kulli). If God will, we shall mention in this work, for your information, the points wherein they have fallen into error.

Ibn al-Jalla says: Al-tasawwuf haqiqai id rasm lahu, "Sufism is an essence without form," because the form belongs to mankind

in respect to their conduct (mu amalāt) while the essence thereof is peculiar to God. Since Sufism consists in turning away from mankind, it is necessarily without form. And Abu 'Amr Dimashqi says: Al-tasawwuf ru'yat al-known, bi-ayn al-naqs, bal ghadd al-tarf 'an al-known, "Sufism is: to see the imperfection of the phenomenal world (and this shows that human attributes are still existent), nay, to shut the eye to the phenomenal world" (and this shows that human attributes are annihilated; because the objects of sight are phenomena, and when phenomena disappear, sight also disappears). Shutting the eye to the phenomenal world leaves the spiritual vision subsistent, i.e. whoever becomes blind to self sees by means of God, because the seeker of phenomena is also a self-seeker, and his action proceeds from and through himself, and he cannot find any way of escaping from himself. Accordingly one sees himself to be imperfect, and one shuts his eye to self and does not see; and although the seer sees his imperfection, nevertheless his eye is a veil, and he is veiled by his sight, but he who does not see is not veiled by his blindness. This is a well established principle in the Path of aspirants to Sufism and mystics (arbab-i ma'ānī), but to explain it here would be unsuitable. And Abu Bakr Shibli says: Al-tasawwuf shirk li'annahū siyanai al-qalb 'an ru'yat al-ghayr wa-la ghayr, "Sufism is polytheism, because it is the guarding of the heart from the vision of 'other', and 'other' does not exist." That is to say, vision of other (than God) in affirming the Unity of God is polytheism, and when "other" has no value in the heart, it is absurd to guard the heart from remembrance of "other". And Husri says: Al-tasawwuf safa al-sirr min kudurat al-mukhalafat, "Sufism is the heart's being pure from the pollution of discord." The meaning thereof is that he should protect the heart from discord with God, because love is concord, and concord is the opposite of discord, and the lover has but one duty in the world, namely, to keep the commandment of the beloved; and if the

object of desire is one, how can discord arise? And Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b.'Ali b. Abi Talib -may God be pleased with them all! - says: Al-tasawwuf khulq fa-man zada alayka fi'l -khulq zada alayka fi 'l-tasawwuf, "Sufiism is goodness of disposition: he that has the better disposition is the better Sufi." Now goodness of disposition is of two kinds: towards God and towards men. The former is acquiescence in the Divine decrees, the latter is endurance of the burden of men's society for God's sake. These two aspects refer to the seeker (talib). God is independent of the seeker's acquiescence or anger, and these two qualities depend on consideration of His Unity. And Abu Muhammad Murtaish says: Al-Sufi la yasbiqu himmatuhu khatwatahu, "The Sufi is he whose thought keeps pace with his foot," i.e. he is entirely present: his soul is where his body is, and his body where his soul, and his soul where his foot is, and his foot where his soul is. This is the sign of presence without absence. Others say, on the contrary: "He is absent from himself and present with-God." It is not so: he is present with himself and present with God. The expression denotes perfect union (jam aljam), because there can be no absence from self so long as one regards one's self; when self-regard has ceased, there is presence (with God) without absence. In this particular sense the saying closely resembles that of Shibli: Al-Sufi la yara fi 'l-darayn ma'a'llah ghayra 'llah, "The Sufi is he that sees nothing except God in the two worlds." In short, human existence is "other", and when a man does not see "other" he does not see himself; and becomes totally void of self, whether "self" is affirmed or denied. And Junayd says: Al-tasawwuf mabniyy 'ala' thaman khisal al-sakha wa 'l-ridd wa 'l-sabr wa 'l-isharat wa 'lghurbat wa-labs al-suf wa 'l-faqr amma 'l-sakha fa-li-Ibrahim wa-amma 'li-ridd fa-li-Isma il wa-amma 'l-sabr fa-li-Ayyub wa-amma 'li-isharat fa-li-Zakariyya wa-amma. 'l-ghurbat fa-li-Isa wa -amma 'l-faqr fa-li-Musa wa-amma 'l-siyahat fa-li-'Isa wa-amma 'l-faqr fa -liMuhammad salla 'llahu 'alayhi wa-

sallama wa-alayhim ajma'in, "Sufism is founded on eight qualities exemplified in eight Apostles: the generosity of Abraham, who sacrificed his son; the acquiescence of Ishmael, who submitted to the command of God and gave up his dear life; the patience of Job, who patiently endured the affliction of worms and the jealousy of the Merciful; the symbolism of Zacharias, to whom God said, 'Thou shalt not speak unto men for three days save by signs (Kor. iii, 36) and again to the same effect, 'When he called upon his Lord with a secret invocation' (Kor. xix. 2); the stranger hood of John, who was a stranger in his own country and an alien to his own kin amongst whom he lived; the pilgrim hood of Jesus, who was so detached therein from worldly things that he kept only a cup and a comb - the cup he threw away when he saw a man drinking water in the palms of his hands, and the comb likewise when he saw another man using his fingers instead of a toothpick; the wearing of wool by Moses, whose garment was woollen; and the poverty of Muhammad, to whom God almighty sent, the key of all the treasures that are upon the face of the earth, saying: 'Lay no trouble on thyself, but procure every luxury by means of these treasures; and he answered: 'O Lord, I desire them not; keep me one day full-fed and one day hungry.'" These are very excellent principle of conduct.

And Husri says: Al-Sufi la yujadu ba'da adamihi wa-la yudamu bada wujudihi, "The Sufi is he whose existence is without non-existence and his non-existence without existence," i.e. he never loses that which he finds, and he never finds that which he loses. Another meaning is this, that his finding (yaft) has no not-finding (na-yaft), and his notfinding has no finding at any time, so that there is either an affirmation without negation or a negation without affirmation. The object of all these expressions is that the Sufi's state of mortality should entirely lapse, and that his bodily feelings (shawahid) should disappear and his connection with everything be cut

off, in order that the mystery of his mortality may be revealed and his various parts united in his essential self, and that he may subsist through and in himself. The effect of this can be shown in two Apostles: firstly, Moses, in whose existence there was no non-existence, so that he said: “O Lord, enlarge my breast and make my affair easy unto me” (Kor. xx, 26, 27); secondly, the Apostle (Muhammad), in whose non-existence there was no existence, so that God said: “Did not We enlarge thy breast?” (Kor.xciv, I) The one asked for adornment and sought honour, but the other was adorned, since he had no request to make for himself.

And ‘Ali b. Bundar al-Sayrafi of Nishapur says: Al-tasawwuj isqat al-ru yat li’-l-haqq zahir wa-batin, “Sufism is this , that the Sufi should not regard his own exterior and interior, but should regard all as belonging to God.” Thus, if you look at the exterior, you will find an outward sign of God’s blessing, and, as you look, outward actions will not have the weight even of a gnat’s wing beside the blessing of God, and you will cease from regarding the exterior; and again, if you look at the interior, you will find an inward sign of God’s aid, and, as you look, inward actions will not turn the scale by a single grain in comparison with the aid of God, and you will cease from regarding the interior, and will see that all belongs to God; and when you see that all is God’s you will see that you yourself have nothing.

Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Muqri says: Al-tasawwuf istiqamat al-ahwal ma’a ‘l-haqq, “Sufism is the maintenance of right states with God,” i.e. “states” do not seduce the Sufi from his (right) state, nor cast him into wrong, since he whose heart is devoted to the Author of states (muhawwil-i ahwal) is not cast down from the rank of rectitude nor hindered from attaining to the Truth.

Maxims of Conduct (mu'dmalidi)

Abu Hafs Haddad of Nishapur says: Al-tasawwuf kulluhu adab li-kulli waqi adab wali-kulli maqam adab wa-li-kulli has adab fa man lazima adab al - awqdi balagha moblagh al-rijal fa-man dayya'a 'l-adab fa-huwa baid min haythu yasunnu 'l-qurb wa-mardud min haythu yasunnu 'l-qubul, "Sufism consists entirely of behaviour; every time, place, and circumstance have their own propriety; he that observes the proprieties of each occasion attains to the rank of holy men; and he that neglects the proprieties is far removed from the thought of nearness (to God) and is excluded from imagining that he is acceptable to God." The meaning of this is akin to the dictum of Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri: Laysa 'l-tasawwuf rusum wa-la ullum wa-lakinuahu akhlaq, "Sufism is not composed of practices and sciences, but it is morals," i.e. if it consisted of practices, it could be acquired by effort, and if it consisted of sciences, it could be gained by instruction: hence it is morals, and it is not acquired until you demand from yourself the principle of morals, and make your actions square with them, and fulfill their just claims. The distinction between practices (rusum) and morals (akhlaq) is this, that practices are ceremonial actions proceeding from certain motives, actions devoid of reality, so that their form is at variance with their spirit, whereas morals are praiseworthy actions without ceremony or motive, actions devoid of pretension, so that their form is in harmony with their spirit.

Murta'ish says: Al-tasawwuf husn al-khulq, "Sufism is good nature." This is of three sorts: firstly, towards God, by fulfilling His commandments without hypocrisy; secondly, towards men, by paying respect to one's superiors and behaving with kindness to one's inferiors and with justice to one's equals, and by not seeking recompense and justice from men in general; and thirdly, towards one's self, by not following the flesh and the devil. Whoever makes himself right in these three matters is a good-natured man. This

which I have mentioned agrees with a story told of 'A'isha the veracious (siddiqa) - may God be well-pleased with her! She was asked concerning the nature of the Apostle. "Read from the Quran," she replied, "for God has given information in the place where He says: 'Use indulgence and order what is good and turn away from the ignorant' (Kor.vii, 198) And Murta'ish also says: Hadha madhhab kulluhu jidd fa-la takhlituhu bishay min al-hazl, "This religion of Sufism is wholly earnest, therefore do not mix jest with it, and do not take the conduct of formalists (mutarassiman) as a model, and shun those who blindly imitate them." When the people see these formalists among the aspirants to Sufism in our time, and become aware of their dancing and singing and visiting the court of sultans and quarrelling for the sake of a pittance or a mouthful of food, their belief in the whole body of Sufis is corrupted, and they say: "These are the principles of Sufism, and the tenets of the ancient Sufis were just the same." They do not recognize that this is an age of weakness and an epoch of affliction. Consequently, since greed incites the sultan to acts of tyranny, and lust incites the savant to commit adultery and fornication, and ostentation incites the ascetic to hypocrisy, and vanity incites the Sufi also to dance and sing - you must know that the evil lies in the men who hold the doctrines, not in the principles on which the doctrines are based; and that if some scoffers disguise their folly in the earnestness of true mystics (ahrdr), the earnestness of the latter is not thereby turned to folly. And Abu Ali Qarmini says: Al-tasawwuf huwa 'lakhlaq al-radiyyat, "Sufism is good morals." Approves of God and is content and satisfied. Abu 'l Hasan Nuri says: Al-tasawwuf huwa 'l-hurriyyat wa-'l-fuiuwat wa-tark al-taklif wa-'l-sakha wa-badhu al-dunya, "Sufism is liberty, so that a man is freed from the bonds of desire; and generosity," i.e. he is purged from the conceit of generosity; "and abandonment of useless trouble," i.e. he does not strive after appurtenances and rewards; "and munificence, " i.e. he leaves this world to the people of this world.

And Abu 'l-Hasan Fushanja - may God have mercy on him! -says: al-tasawwuf alyawma sm wa-la haqiqai wa-qad kana haqiqai wa-la sm, "To-day Sufism is a name without a reality but formerly it was a reality without a name," i.e. in the time of the Companions and the Ancients - may God have mercy on them! - this name did not exist, but the reality thereof was in everyone; now the name exists, but not the reality. That is to say, formerly the practice was known and the practice unknown.

**The Uncovering of The First Veil:
Concerning The Gnosis of God
(*ma'rifat Allah*).**

The Apostle said: "If ye knew God as He ought to be known, ye would walk on the seas, and the mountains would move at your call." Gnosis of God is of two kinds: cognitional (*ilmi*) and emotional (*hali*). Cognitional gnosis is the foundation of all blessings in this world and in the next, for the most important thing for a man at all times and in all circumstances is knowledge of God, as God hath said: "I only created the genii and mankind that they might serve Me" (Kor. li.56) i.e. that they might know Me. But the greater part of men neglect this duty, except those whom God hath chosen and whose hearts He hath vivified with Himself. Gnosis is the life of the heart through God, and the turning away of one's inmost thoughts from all that is not God. The worth of everyone is in proportion to gnosis, and he who is without gnosis is worth nothing. Theologians, lawyers, and other classes of men give the name of gnosis (*ma'rifat*) to right cognition (*ilm*) of God, but the Sufi Shaykhs call right feeling (*hal*) towards God by that name. Hence they have said that gnosis(*ma'rifat*) is more excellent than cognition (*ilm*), for right feeling (*hal*) is the result of right cognition, but right cognition is not the same thing as right feeling, i.e. one who has not cognition of God is not a gnostic (*arif*), but one may have cognition of God

without being a gnostic. Those of either class who were ignorant of this distinction engaged in useless controversy, and the one party disbelieved in the other party. Now I will explain the matter in order that both may be instructed.

You must know that there is a great difference of opinion touching the gnosis and right cognition of God. The Mu'tazilites assert that gnosis is intellectual and that only a reasonable person (aqil) can possibly have it. This doctrine is disproved by the fact that madmen, within Islam, are deemed to have gnosis, and that children, who are not reasonable, are deemed to have faith. Were the criterion of gnosis an intellectual one, such persons must be without gnosis, while unbelievers could not be charged with infidelity, provided only that they were reasonable beings. If reason were the cause of gnosis, it would follow that every reasonable person must know God, and that all who lack reason must be ignorant of Him; which is manifestly absurd. Others pretend that demonstration (istidlal) is the cause of knowledge of God, and that such knowledge is not gained except by those who deduce it in this manner. The futility of this doctrine is exemplified by Iblis, for he saw many evidences, such as Paradise, Hell, and the Throne of God, yet they did not cause him to have gnosis. God hath said that knowledge of Him depends on His will (Kor.vi.III) According to the view of orthodox Moslems, soundness of reason and regard to evidences are a means (sabah) to gnosis, but not the cause (illat) thereof: the sole cause is God's will and favour, for without His favour (inayat) reason is blind. Reason does not even know itself: how, then, can it know another? Heretics of all sorts use the demonstrative method, but the majority of them do not know God. On the other hand, whenever one enjoys the favour of God, all his actions are so many tokens of gnosis; his demonstration is search (talab), and his neglect of demonstration is resignation of God's will (taslim); but,

in reference to perfect gnosis, resignation is no better than search, for search is a principle that excludes the possibility of agitation (*idtirab*), and these two principles do not essentially involve gnosis. In reality Man's only guide and enlightener is God. Reason and the proofs adduced by reason are unable to direct anyone into the right way. If the infidels were to return from the place of Judgement to this world, they would bring their infidelity back with them (cf. Kor. vi. 28)

When the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali, was asked concerning gnosis, he said: "I know God by God, and I know that which is not God by the light of God." God created the body and committed its life to the spirit (*jan*), and He created the soul (*dil*) and committed its life to Himself. Hence, inasmuch as reason and human faculties and evidences have no power to make the body live, they cannot make the soul live, as God hath said: "*Shall he who was dead and whom We have restored to life and to whom We have given a light whereby he may walk among men ...?*" (Kor, vi,122) i.e. "I am the Creator of the light in which believers are illumined". It is God that opens and seals the hearts of men (Kor.xxxix,23; ii, 6): therefore He alone is able to guide them. Everything except Him is a cause or a means, and cause and means cannot possibly indicate the right way without the favour of the Causer. He it is that imposes the obligation of piety, which is essentially gnosis; and those on whom that obligation is laid, so long as they are in the state of obligation, neither bring it upon themselves nor put it away from themselves by their own choice: therefore Man's share in gnosis, unless God makes him know, is mere

helplessness. Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri says: "There is none to point out the way to God except God Himself: knowledge is sought only for due performance of His worship." No created being is capable of leading anyone to God. Those who rely on demonstration are not more reasonable than was Abu Talib, and

no guide is greater than was Muhammad (PBUH); yet, since Abu Talib was preordained to misery, the guidance of Muhammad (PBUH) did not avail him. The first step of demonstration is a turning away from God, because demonstration involves the consideration of some other thing, whereas gnosis is a turning away from all that is not God. Ordinary objects of search are found by means of demonstration, but knowledge of God is extraordinary. Therefore, knowledge of Him is attained only by unceasing bewilderment of the reason, and His favour is not procured by any act of human acquisition, but is miraculously revealed to men's hearts. What is not God is phenomenal (*muhdath*), and although a phenomenal being may reach another like himself he cannot reach his Creator and acquire Him while he exists, for in every act of acquisition he who makes the acquisition is predominant and the thing acquired is under his power. Accordingly, the miracle is not that reason should

be led by the act to affirm the existence of the Agent, but that a saint should be led by the light of the Truth to deny his own existence. The knowledge gained is in the one case a matter of logic, in the other it becomes an inward experience. Let those who deem reason to be the cause of gnosis consider what reason affirms in their minds concerning the substance of gnosis, for gnosis involves the negation of whatever is affirmed by reason, i.e. whatever notion of God can be formed by reason, God is in reality something different. How, then is there any room for reason to arrive at gnosis by means of demonstration? Reason and imagination are homogeneous, and where genus is affirmed gnosis is denied. To infer the existence of God from intellectual proofs is assimilation (*tashbih*), and to deny it on the same grounds is nullification (*ta'til*). Reason cannot pass beyond these two principle, which in regard to gnosis are agnosticism, since neither of the parties professing them is Unitarian (*muwahhid*).

Therefore, when reason is gone as far as possible, and the souls of His lovers must needs search for Him, they rest helplessly without their faculties, and while they so rest they grow restless and stretch their hands in supplication and seek a relief for their souls; and when they have exhausted every manner of search in their power, the power God becomes theirs, i.e. they find the way from Him to Him, and are eased of the anguish of absence and set foot in the garden of intimacy and win to rest. And reason, when it sees that the souls have attained their desire, tries to exert its control, but fails; and when it fails it becomes distraught; and when it becomes distraught it abdicates. Then God clothes it in the garment of service (khidmat) and says to it: "While thou wert independent thou wert veiled by thy faculties and their exercise, and when these were annihilated thou didst fail, and having failed thou didst attain." Thus it is the allotted portion of the soul to be near unto God, and that of the reason is to do His service. God causes Man to know Him through Himself with a knowledge that is not linked to any faculty, a knowledge in which the existence of Man is merely metaphorical. Hence to the gnostic egoism is utter perfidy; his remembrance of God is without forgetfulness, and his gnosis is not empty words but actual feeling.

Others, again, declare that gnosis is the result of inspiration (ilham). This also is impossible, because gnosis supplies a criterion for distinguishing truth from falsehood, whereas the inspired have no such criterion. If one says, "I know by inspiration that God is in space," and another says, "I know by inspiration that He is not in space," one of these contradictory statements must be true, but a proof is necessary in order to decide where the truth lies. Consequently, this view which is held by the Brahmans and the inspirationists (ilhamiyan), falls to the ground. In the present age I have met a number of persons who carried it to an extreme and who connected their own position with the doctrine of religious men, but they are altogether in error, and their

assertion is repugnant to all reasonable Moslems and unbelievers. If it be said that whatever conflicts with the sacred law is not inspiration, I reply that this argument is fundamentally unsound, because, if inspiration is to be judged and verified by the standard of the sacred law, then gnosis does not depend on inspiration, but on law and prophecy and Divine guidance. Others assert that knowledge of God is intuitive (*daruri*). This also is impossible.

Everything that is known in this way must be known in common by all reasonable men, and inasmuch as we see that some reasonable men deny the existence of God and hold the doctrines of assimilation (*tashbih*) and nullification (*ta'til*), it is proved that knowledge of God is not intuitive. Moreover, if it were so, the principle of religious obligation (*taklif*) would be destroyed, for that principle cannot possibly be applied to objects of intuitive knowledge, such as one's self, the heaven and the earth, day and night, pleasure and pain, etc., concerning the existence of which no reasonable man can have any doubt, and which he must know even against his will. But some aspirants to Sufism, considering the absolute certainty (*yaqin*) which they feel, say: "We know God intuitively," giving the name of intuition to this certainty. Substantially they are right, but their expression is erroneous, because intuitive knowledge cannot be exclusively restricted to those who are perfect on the contrary, it belongs to all reasonable men.

Furthermore, it appears in the minds of living creatures without any means or evidence, whereas the knowledge of God is a means (*sababi*). But Master Abu Ali Daqqaq and Shaykh Abu Sahl Suluki and his father, who was a leading religious authority at Nishapur, maintain that the beginning of gnosis is demonstrative and that its end is intuitive, just as technical knowledge is first acquired and finally becomes instinctive."Do not you perceive," they say, "that in Paradise knowledge of God becomes intuitive

?Why should it not become intuitive in this world too ? And the Apostles, when they heard the word of God, either immediately or from the mouth of an angel or by revelation, knew Him intuitively.” I reply that the inhabitants of Paradise know God intuitively in Paradise, because in Paradise no religious obligation is imposed, and the Apostles have no fear of being separated from God at the last, but enjoy the same security as those who know Him intuitively. The excellence of gnosis and faith becomes compulsory (jabr), and there is no longer any free will in regard to its visible substance (ayn), and the foundations of the religious law are shaken, and the principle of apostasy is annulled, so that Bal’am and Iblis and Barasisa cannot properly be described as infidels, for it is generally allowed that they had knowledge of God. The gnosis while he remains a gnosis, has no fear of being separated from God; separation is produced by the loss of gnosis, but intuitive knowledge cannot conceivably be lost. This doctrine is full of danger to the vulgar. In order that you may avoid its evil consequences you must know that Man’s knowledge and his gnosis of God depend entirely on the information and eternal guidance of the Truth. Man’s certainly in gnosis may be now greater and now less, but the principle of gnosis is neither increased nor diminished, since in either case it would be impaired. You must not let blind conformity enter into your knowledge of God, and you must know Him through His attributes of perfection. This can be attained only through the providence and favour of God, who has absolute control of our minds. If He so will, He makes one of His actions a guide that shows us the way to Himself, and if He will otherwise, He makes that same action an obstacle that prevents us from reaching Him. Thus Jesus was to some a guide that led them to gnosis, but to others he was an obstacle that hindered them from gnosis; the former party said, “This is the servant of God,” and the latter said, “This is the son of God.” Similarly, some were led to God by idols and by the sun

and moon, while others were led astray. Such guides are a means of gnosis, but not the immediate cause of it, and one means is no better than another in relation to Him who is the author of them all. The gnostic's affirmation of a means is a sign of dualism (zunnar), and regard to anything except the object of knowledge is polytheism (shirk). When a man is doomed to perdition in the Preserve Tablet, nay, in the will and knowledge of God, how can any proof and demonstration lead him aright? The most high God, as He pleases and by whatever means He pleases, shows His servant the way to Himself and opens to him the door of gnosis, so that he attains to a degree where the very essence of gnosis appears alien (ghayr) and its attributes become noxious to him, and he is veiled by his gnosis from the object known and realizes that his gnosis is a pretension (da'wa). Dhu 'l-Nun the Egyptian says: "Beware lest thou make pretensions to gnosis," and it has been said in verse- "*The gnostics pretend to knowledge, But I avow ignorance: that is my knowledge.*" Therefore do not claim gnosis, lest thou perish in thy pretension but cleave to the reality thereof, that thou mayest be save. When anyone is honoured by the revelation of the Divine majesty, his existence becomes a plague to him and all his attributes a source of corruption. He who belongs to God and to whom God belongs is not connected with anything in the universe. The real gist of gnosis is to recognize that to God is the kingdom. When a man knows that all possessions are in the absolute control of God, what further business has he with mankind, that he should be veiled from God by them or by himself? All such veils are the result of ignorance. As soon as ignorance is annihilated, they vanish, and this life is made equal in rank to the life hereafter.

Section

Now, for instruction's sake, I will mention some of the numerous sayings which the Shaykhs have uttered on this subject. 'Abdallah

b. Mubarak says: "Gnosis consists in not being astonished by anything," because astonishment arises from an act exceeding the power of the doer, and –in as much as God is omnipotent it is impossible that a gnosis should be astonished by His acts. If there be any room for astonishment, one must needs marvel that God exalts a handful of earth to such a degree that it receives His commands, and a drop of blood to such a eminence that it discourses of love and knowledge of Him, and seeks vision of Him, and desires union with Him. Dul 'Nun the Egyptian says: "Gnosis is in reality God's providential communication of the spiritual light to our inmost hearts," i.e., until God, in His providence, illuminates the heart of Man and keeps it from contamination, so that all created things have not even the worth of a mustard -seed in his heart, the contemplation of Divine mysteries, both inward and outward, does not overwhelm him with rapture; but when God has done this, his every look becomes an act of contemplation (mushahadat). Shibli says: "Gnosis is continual amazement (Hayrat.)" Amazement is of two kinds: (1) amazement the essence and (2) amazement at the quality. The former is polytheism and infidelity, because no gnostic can possibly be in doubt concerning the essential nature of God; but the latter is gnosis, because the quality of God lies beyond reason's scope. Hence a certain one said: "O Guide of the amazed, increase my amazement!" In the first place, he affirmed the existence of God and the perfection of His attributes, and recognized that He is the object of men's search and the accomplisher of their prayers and the author of their amazement; then he asked for increase of amazement and recognized that in seeking God the reason has no alternative between amazement and polytheism. This sentiment is very fine. It maybe, again, that knowledge of God's being involves amazement at one's own being, because when a man knows God he sees himself entirely subdued by the Divine omnipotence; and since his existence depends on

God and his non-existence proceeds from God, and his rest and motion are produced by the power of God. he becomes amazed, saying: “Who and what am I?” In this sense the Apostle said: “He who knows himself has come to know his Lord,” i.e. he who knows himself to be annihilated knows God to be eternally subsistent. Annihilation destroys reason and all human attributes, and when the substance of a thing is not accessible to reason it cannot possibly be known without amazement. Abu Yazid said: “Gnosis consists in knowing that the motion and rest of mankind depend on God,” and that without His permission no one has the least control of His kingdom, and that no one can perform any action until He creates the ability to act and puts the will to act in his heart, and that human actions are metaphorical and that God is the real agent. Muhammad b.Wasi’ says, describing the gnostic: “His words are few and his amazement perpetual,” because only finite things admit of being expressed in words, and since the infinite cannot be expressed it leaves no resource except perpetual amazement. Shibli says: “Real gnosis is the inability to attain gnosis,” i.e. inability to know a thing, to the real nature of which a man has no clue except the impossibility of attaining it. Therefore, in attaining ie, he will rightly take no credit to himself, because inability (ajz) is search, and so long as he depends on his own faculties and attributes, he cannot properly be described by that term; and when these faculties and attributes depart, then his state is not inability, but annihilation. Some pretenders, while affirming the attributes of humanity and the subsistence of the obligation to decide with sound judgment (taklif ba-sihhat-i khitab) and the authority maintained over them by God’s proof, declare that gnosis is impotence, and that they are impotent and unable to attain anything. I reply: “In search of what thing have you become so helpless?” Impotence (ajz) has two signs, which are not to be found in you: firstly, the annihilation of the faculties of search, and secondly, the manifestation of the glory of God

(tajalli). Where the annihilation of the faculties takes place, there is no outward expression (ibarat); and where the glory of God is revealed, no clue can be given and no discrimination is conceivable. Hence one who is impotent does not know that he is so, or that the state attributed to him is called impotence. How should he know this? Impotence is other than God, and the affirmation of knowledge of other than God is not gnosis; and so long as there is room in the heart for aught except God, or the possibility of expressing aught except God, true gnosis has not been attained. The gnostic is not agnostic until he turns aside from all that is not God. Abu Hafs Haddad says: "Since I have known God, neither truth nor falsehood has entered my heart." When a man feels desire and passion he turns to the soul (dil) in order that it may guide him to the lower soul (nafs), which is the seat of falsehood; and when he finds the evidence of gnosis, he turns to the soul in order that it may guide him to the spirit, which is the source of truth and reality. But when aught except God enters the soul, the gnostic, if he turns to it, commits an act of agnosticism. There is a great difference between one who turns to the soul and one who turns to God. Abu Bakr Wasiti says: "He who knows God is cut off from all things, nay, he is dumb and abject (kharisa wa-nqaman)," i.e. he is unable to express anything and all his attributes are annihilated. So the Apostle, while he was in the state of absence, said: "I am the most eloquent of the Arabs and non-Arabs" but when he was borne to the presence of God, he said: "I, know not how to utter Thy praise." Answer came: "O Muhammad, if thou speakest not, I will speak; if thou deemest thyself unworthy to praise Me, I will make the universe thy deputy, that all its atoms may praise Me in thy name.

**Excerpts from Tadhkirat Al-Auliya
("Memorials of The Saints")**

**HAZRETH FARIDUDDIN ATTAR,
THE CHEMIST (RAA)**

Hazreth Fariduddin(RAA) was born near Omar Khayyam's beloved Nishapur, and his father bequeathed him a pharmacy, which is one reason given for his surname and Sufi style Attar - the Chemist. Of his life, a great many stories are told - some of them involving miracles, others containing his teachings. He wrote a hundred and fourteen works for the Sufis, the most important of which is undoubtedly the Parliament of the Birds, a forerunner of Pilgrim's Progress. Still a classic of Sufism and Persian literature alike, the Parliament describes the Sufi experiences, and is itself based in plan on earlier Sufic quest themes. It unfolds meanings which become perceptible with the Sufic awakening of the mind. The story of Attar's conversion, which the Sufis use to illustrate the need for balance between material and metaphysical things, is given by Daulat - shah, in the classic Memoirs of the Poets. It is not accepted as literal reporting, but allegorical. Attar was in his shop one day, among his humorous and varied merchandise, when a wandering Sufi appeared at the door, gazing in with his eyes filled with tears. Fariduddin at once told theman to be gone. "It is not difficult for me," replied the traveler. "I have nothing to carry;nothing but this cloak. But you, you with your costly drugs?

You would do well to consider your own arrangements for going on your way.”

Hazrath Fariduddin (RAA) in his monumental work “Tadhkirat al-auliya” (“Memorial of Saints”) has collected the biographies of prominent saints, translated by A.J.Arberry and published in the end of 19th century. A few biographies of saints are extracted herein.

Hazreth Hasan of Basra (RAA)

Al-Hasan ibn Abi ʿl Hasan al-Basri was born at Medina in 21(642), the son of a slave captured in Maisan who afterwards became a client of the Prophet Mohammad’s secretary Zaid ibn Thabet. Brought up in Basra, he met many Companions of the Prophet including, it is said, seventy of those who fought at the Battle of Badr. He grew up to become one of the most prominent figures of his generation, being famous for his uncompromising piety and outspoken condemnation of worldliness in high places. Whilst the Moʿtazelite theologians claim him as the founder of their movement (and ‘amr ibn’Obaid and Wasel ibn ‘Ata’ are counted amongst his pupils), in Sufi hagiography he is revered as one of the greatest saints of early Islam. He died at Basra in 110 (728). Many of his speeches - he was a brilliant orator - and sayings are quoted by Arab authors and not a few of his letters have been preserved.

The Conversion of Hazreth Hasan of Basra (RAA)

The beginning of Hasan of Basra’s conversion was as follows. He was a jewel merchant and was called Hasan of the Pearls. He traded with Byzantium, and had to do with the generals and ministers of Caesar. On one occasion, going to Byzantium he called on the prime minister and conversed with him a while.

“We will not to a certain place,” the minister told him, “if you are agreeable.”

“It is for you to say,” Hasan replied. “I agree”.

So the minister commanded a horse to be brought for Hasan. He mounted with the minister, and they set out. When they reached the desert Hasan perceived a tent of Byzantine brocade, fastened with ropes of silk and golden pegs, set firm in the ground. He stood to one side. Then a mighty army, all accoutered in the panoply of war, came out; they circled the tent, said a few words, and departed. Philosophers and scholars to the number of nigh four hundred arrived on the scene; they circled the tent, said a few words, and departed. After that three hundred illumined elders with white beards approached the tent, circled it, said a few words, and departed. Thereafter more than two hundred moonfair maidens, each bearing a plate of gold and silver and precious stones, circled the tent, said a few words, and departed.

Hasan relates that, astonished and filled with wonder, he asked himself what this might be.

“When we alighted,” he went on, “I asked the minister. He said that the Caesar had a son of unsurpassable beauty, perfect in all the branches of learning and unrivalled in the arena of manly prowess. His father loved him with all his heart.”

Suddenly he fell ill—so Hasan related on the authority of the minister. All the skilled physicians proved powerless to cure him. Finally he died, and was buried in that tent. Once every year people come out to visit him. First an immense army circles the tent, and they say: “O prince, if this circumstance that has befallen thee had come about in war, we would have all sacrificed our lives for thee, to ransom thee back. But the circumstance that has befallen thee is at the hand of one against whom we cannot fight, whom we cannot challenge.” This they say, and then return.

The philosophers and the scholars come forward, and say: “This circumstance has been brought about by one against whom we cannot do anything by means of learning and philosophy, science and sophistry. For all the philosophers of the world are powerless before him, and all the learned are ignorant beside his knowledge. Otherwise we would have contrived devices and spoken words which all in creation could not have withstood.” This they say, and then return.

Next the venerable elders advance, and say: “O prince, if this circumstance that has befallen thee could have been set right by the intercession of elders, we would all have interceded with humble petitions, and would not have abandoned thee there. But his circumstance has been brought upon thee by one against whom no mortal man’s intercession profits anything.” This they say, and depart.

Now the moon-fair maidens with their plates of gold and precious stones advance, circle the tent, and say: “Son of Caesar, if this circumstance that has befallen thee could have been set right by wealth and beauty, we would have sacrificed ourselves and given great moneys, and would not have abandoned thee. But this circumstance has been brought upon thee by one on whom wealth and beauty have no effect. “ This they say, and return.

Then Caesar himself with his chief minister enters the tent, and says: “O eye and lamp of thy father, O fruit of the heart of thy father, O dearest beloved of thy father, what is in thy father’s hand to perform? Thy father brought a mighty army, he brought philosophers and scholars, intercessors and advisers, beautiful maidens, wealth and all manner of luxuries; and he came himself. If all this could have been of avail, thy father would have done all that lay in his power. But this circumstance has been brought about by one before whom thy father, with all this apparatus, this

army and retinue, this luxury and wealth and treasure, is powerless. Peace be upon you, till next year!” This he says, and returns.

These words of the minister so affected Hasan that he was beside himself. At once he made arrangements to return. Coming to Basra, he took an oath never to laugh again in this world, till his ultimate destiny became clear to him. He flung himself into all manner of devotions and austerities, such that no man in his time could exceed that discipline.

Hazreth Hasan of Basra (RAA) and Hazreth Abu Amr (RAA)

It is related that Abu Amr, the leading authority on the reading of the Quran, was teaching the Quran one day when suddenly a handsome boy arrived to join his class. Abu Amr gazed at the child improperly, and immediately he forgot the whole Quran, from the p of “Praise” to the n of “jinn and men”. A fire possessed him, and he lost all self-control. In this state he called on Hasan of Basra and described to him his predicament.

“Master,” he wept bitterly, “such is the situation. I have forgotten the whole Quran.”

Hasan was most distressed to hear of his situation.

“Now is the season of the pilgrimage,” he said. “Go and perform the pilgrimage. When you have done that, repair to the mosque of Khaif. There you will see an old man seated in the prayer-niche. Do not spoil his time, but let him be until he is disengaged. Then ask him to say a prayer for you.”

Abu Amr acted accordingly. Seated in a corner of the mosque, he observed a venerable elder and about him a circle of people seated. Some time passed; then a man entered, clad in spotless white robes. The people made way before him, greeted him, and conversed together. When the hour of prayer arrived,

the man departed and the people departed with him, so that the elder remained alone.

Abut Amr then approached and saluted him.

“In Allah’s name, help me,” he cried.

And he described his predicament. The elder, much concerned, raised his eyes to heaven.

“He had not yet lowered his head,” But Amr recounted, “when the Quran came back to me. I fell down before him for you.”

“Who recommended me to you?” the elder asked.

“Hasan of Basra,” Abu Amr replied.

“Anyone who has an imam like Hasan,” the old man commented, “what need has he of another? Well, Hasan has exposed me. Now I will expose him. He rent my veil, and I will rend his as well. That man,” he went on, “in the white robes who entered after the afternoon prayer and left before the rest, and the others did him reverence - that man was Hasan. Every day he prays the afternoon prayer in Basra and then comes here, converses with me, and returns to Basra for the evening prayer. Anyone who has an imam like Hasan, why should he ask me for a prayer?”

Hasan of Basra and the fire - worshipper

Hasan had a neighbour named Simeon who was a fire worshipper. Simeon fell ill and was at death’s door. Friends begged Hasan to visit him; he called, to find him in bed, blackened with fire and smoke.

“Fear God,” Hasan counseled him. “You have passed all your life amid fire and smoke. Accept Islam, that God may have mercy on you.”

“Three things hold me back from becoming a Muslim,” the fire-worshipper replied. “The first is, that you speak ill of the world, yet night and day you pressure worldly things. Secondly, you say that death is a fact to be faced, yet you make no preparation for death. In the third place, you say that God’s face shall be seen, yet today you do everything contrary to His good pleasure.”

“This is the token of those who know truly,” Hasan commented. “Now if believers act as you describe, what have you to say ? They acknowledge the unity of God; whereas you have spent your life in the worship of fire. You who have worshipped fire for seventy years, and I who have never worshipped fire—we are both carried off to Hell. Hell will consume you and me. God will not dare so much as to burn one hair of my body. For fire is a thing created by God; and the creature is subject to the Creator’s command. Come now, you who have worshipped fire for seventy years; let us both put our hands into the fire, then you will see with your own eyes the impotence of fire and the omnipotence of God.”

So saying, Hasan thrust his hand into the fire and held it there. Not a particle of his body was affected or burnt. When Simeon saw this he was amazed. The dawn of true knowledge began to break.

“For seventy years I have worshipped fire,” he groaned.

“Now only a breath or two remains to me. What am I to do?”

“Become a Muslim,” was Hasan’s reply.

“If you give it me in writing that God will not punish me,” said Simeon, “then I will believe. But until I have it in writing, I will not believe.”

Hasan wrote it down.

“Now order just witnesses of Basra to append their testimony.”

The witnesses endorsed the document. Then Simeon wept many tears and proclaimed the faith. He spoke his last testament to Hasan.

“When I die, bid them wash me, then commit me to the earth, with your own hands, and place this document in my hand. This document will be my proof.”

Having charged Hasan thus he spoke the attestation of faith and died. They washed his body, said the prayer over him, and buried him with the document in his hand. That night Hasan went to sleep pondering what he had done.

“How could I help a drowning man, seeing that I am drowning myself? Since I have no control over my own fate, why did I venture to prescribe how God should act?” With this thought he fell asleep. He saw Simeon in a dream glowing like a candle; on his head a crown, robed in fine raiment, he was walking with a smile in the garden of Paradise.

“How are you, Simeon?” Hasan enquired.

“Why do you ask? You can see for yourself,” Simeon answered. “God Almighty of His bounty brought me nigh His presence and graciously showed me His face. The favours He showered upon me surpass all description. You have honoured your guarantee; so take your document. I have no further need of it.”

When Hasan awoke, he saw that parchment in his hand.

“Lord God,” he cried, “I know well that what Thou doest is without cause, save of Thy bounty. Who shall suffer loss at Thy door? Thou grantest a Guebre of seventy years to come into Thy near presence because of a single utterance. How then wilt Thou exclude a believer of seventy years?”

Bibi Rabe'a Al-Adawiya (RAA)

Bibi Rabe'a bint Esma'il al-'Adawiya(RAA), born in humble circumstances and sold into slavery as a child, later settled in Basra where she attained great fame as a saint and a preacher and was highly esteemed by many of her pious contemporaries. The date of her death is given variously as 135(752) and 185(801). To her, a lifelong celibate, is attributed a large share in the introduction into Islamic mysticism of the theme of Divine love. Her tomb used to be pointed out near Jerusalem.

Bibi Rabe'a, her birth and early life

If anyone says, "Why have you included Rabe'a in the rank of men?" my answer is, that the Prophet himself said, "Good does not regard your outward forms." The root of the matter is not form, but intention, as the Prophet said, "Mankind will be raised up according to their intentions." Moreover, if it is proper to derive two-thirds of our religion from A'isha, surely it is permissible to take religious instruction from a handmaid of A'isha. When a woman becomes a "man" in the path of God, she is a man and one cannot any more call her a woman.

The night when Rabe'a came to earth, there was nothing whatsoever in her father's house; for her father lived in very poor circumstances. He did not possess even one drop of oil to anoint her navel; there was no lamp, and not a rag to swaddle her in. He already had three daughters, and Rabe'a was his fourth; that is why she was called by that name. "

Go to neighbor So-and-so and beg for a drop of oil, so that I can light the lamp," his wife said to him.

Now the man had entered into a covenant that he would never ask any mortal for anything. So he went out and just laid his hand on the neighbor's door, and returned.

The poor woman wept bitterly. In that anxious state the man placed his head on his knees and went to sleep. He dreamed that he saw the Prophet.

“Be not sorrowful,” the Prophet bade him. “The girl child who has just come to earth is a queen among women, who shall be the intercessor for seventy thousand of my community. Tomorrow,” the Prophet continued, “go to Isa-e Zadan the governor of Basra. Write on a piece of paper to the following effect. ‘Every night you send upon me a hundred blessings, and on Friday night four hundred. Last night was Friday night, and you forgot me. In expiation for that, give this man four hundred dinars lawfully acquired.’”

Rabe’a’s father on awaking burst into tears. He rose up and wrote as the Prophet had bidden him, and sent the message to the governor by the hand of a chamberlain.

“Give two thousand dinars to the poor,” the governor commanded when he saw the missive, “as a thanksgiving for the Master remembering me. Give four hundred dinars also to the shaikh, and tell him, ‘I wish you to come to me so that I may see you. But I do not hold it proper for a man like you to come to me. I would rather come and rub my beard in your threshold. However, I adjure you by God, whatever you may need, pray let me know.’”

The man took the gold and purchased all that was necessary.

When Rabe’a had become a little older, and her mother and father were dead, a famine came upon Basra, and her sisters were scattered. Rabe’a ventured out and was seen by a wicked man who seized her and then sold her for six dirhams. He purchaser put her to hard labour.

One day she was passing along the road when a stranger approached. Rabe’a fled. As she ran, she fell headlong and her hand was dislocated.

“Lord God,” she cried, bowing her face to the ground, “I am a stranger, orphaned of mother and father, a helpless I do not grieve; all I need is Thy good pleasure, to know whether Thou art well-pleased or no.”

“Do not grieve,” she heard a voice say. “Tomorrow a station shall be thine such that the cherubim in heaven will envy thee.”

So Rabe’a returned to her master’s house. By day she continually fasted and served God, and by night she worshipped standing until day. One night her master awoke from sleep and, looking through the window of his apartment, saw Rabe’a bowing prostrate and praying.

“O God, Thou knowest that the desire of my heart is in conformity with Thy command, and that the light of my eye is in serving Thy court. If the affair lay with me, I would not rest one hour from serving Thee; but Thou Thyself hast set me under the hand of a creature.”

Such was her litany. Her master perceived a lantern suspended without any chain above her head, the light whereof filled the whole house. Seeing this, he was afraid. Rising up, he returned to his bedroom and sat pondering till dawn. When day broke he summoned Rabe’a, was gentle with her and set her free.

“Give me permission to depart,” Rabe’a said.

He gave her leave, and she left the house and went into the desert. From the desert she proceeded to a hermitage where she served God for a while. Then she determined to perform the pilgrimage, and set her face towards the desert. She bound her bundle on an ass. In the heart of the desert the ass died.

“Let us carry your load.” the men in the party said.

“You go on,” she replied. “I have not come putting my trust in you.”

So the men departed, and Rabe'a remained alone. "O God," she cried, lifting her head, "do kings so treat a woman who is a stranger and powerless? Thou hast invited me unto Thy house, then in the midst of the way Thou hast suffered my ass to die, leaving me alone in the desert." Hardly had she completed this orison when her ass stirred and rose up. Rabe'a placed her load on its back, and continued on her way. (The narrator of this story reports that some while afterwards he saw that little donkey being sold in the market.) She travelled on through the desert for some days, then she halted. "O God," she cried, "my heart is weary. Whither am I going? I a lump of clay, and Thy house a stone! I need Thee here." God spoke unmediated in her heart. "Rabe'a, thou art faring in the life-blood of eighteen thousand worlds. Hast thou not seen how Moses prayed for the vision of Me? And I cast a few motes of revelation upon the mountain, and the mountain shivered into forty pieces. Be content here with My name!"

Anecdotes of Bibi Rabe'a (RAA)

One night Rabe'a was praying in the hermitage when she was overcome by weariness and fell asleep. So deeply was she absorbed that, when a reed from the reed-mat she was lying on broke in her eye so that the blood flowed, she was quite unaware of the fact. A thief entered and seized her chaddur. He then made to leave, but the way was barred to him. He dropped the chaddur and departed, finding the way now open. He seized the chaddur again and returned to discover the way blocked. Once more he dropped the chaddur. This he repeated seven times over; then he heard a voice proceeding from a corner of the hermitage. "Man, do not put yourself to such pains. It is so many years now that she has committed herself to Us. The Devil himself has not the boldness to slink round her. How should a thief have the boldness to slink round her chaddur? Be gone, scoundrel! Do not put yourself to

such pains. If one friend has fallen asleep, one Friend is awake and keeping watch.” Two notables of the Faith came to visit Rabe’a, and both were hungry. “It may be that she will give us food,” they said to each other. “Her food is bound to come from a lawful source.” When they sat down there was a napkin with two loaves laid before them. They were well content. A beggar arrived just then, and Rabe’a gave him the two loaves. The two men of religion were much upset, but said nothing. After a while a maidservant entered with a handful of warm bread. “My mistress sent these,” she explained. Rabe’a counted the loaves. There were eighteen. “Perhaps it was not this that she sent me,” Rabe’a remarked. For all that the maidservant assured her, it profited nothing. So she took back the loaves and carried them away. Now it so happened that she had taken two of the loaves for herself. She asked her mistress, and she added the two to the pile and returned with them. Rabe’a counted again, and found there were twenty loaves. She now accepted them. “This is what your mistress sent me,” she said. She set the loaves before the two men and they ate, marveling. “What is the secret behind this?” they asked her. “We had an appetite for your own bread, but you took it away from us and gave it to the beggar. Then you said that the eighteen loaves did not belong to you. When they were twenty, you accepted them.” “I knew when you arrived that you were hungry,” Rabe’a replied. “I said to myself, How can I offer two loaves to two such notables? So when the beggar came to the door I gave them to him and said to Almighty God, ‘O God, Thou hast said that Thou repayest tenfold, and this I firmly believed. Now I have given two loaves to please Thee, so that Thou mayest give twenty in return for them.’ When eighteen were brought me, I knew that either there had been some misappropriation, or that they were not meant for me.” One day Rabe’a’s servant girl was making an onion stew; for it was some days since they had cooked any food. Finding that she needed some onions, she said. “I will ask of next

door.” “Forty years now,” Rabe’a replied, “I have had a covenant with Almighty God not to ask for aught of any but He. Never mind the onions.” Immediately a bird swooped down from the air with peeled onions in its beak and dropped them into the pan. “I am not sure this is not a trick,” Rabe’a commented. And she left the onion pulp alone, and ate nothing but bread. Rabe’a had gone one day into the mountains. She was soon surrounded by a flock of deer and mountain goats, ibexes and wild asses which stared at her and made to approach her. Suddenly Hasan of Basra came on the scene and, seeing Rabe’a, moved in her direction. As soon as the animals sighted Hasan, they made off all together, so that Rabe’a remained alone. This dismayed Hasan. “Why did they run away from me, and associated so tamely with you?” he asked Rabe’a. “What have you eaten today?” Rabe’a countered. “A little onion pulp.” “You eat their fat,” Rabe’a remarked. “Why then should they not flee from you?” Once Rabe’a passed by Hasan’s house. Hasan had his head out of the window and was weeping, and his tears fell on Rabe’a dress. Looking up, she thought at first that it was rain; then, realizing that it was Hasan’s tears, she turned to him and addressed him. “Master, this weeping is a sign of spiritual languor. Guard your tears, so that there may surge within you such a sea that, seeking the heart therein, you shall not find it save in the keeping of a King Omnipotent.” These words distressed Hasan, but he kept his peace. Then one day he saw Rabe’a when she was near a lake. Throwing his prayer rug on the surface of the water, he called, “Rabe’a, come! Let us pray two rak’as here!” “Hasan,” Rabe’a replied, “when you are showing off your spiritual goods in this worldly market, it should be things that your fellow-men are incapable of displaying.” And she flung her prayer rug into the air, and flew up on it. “Come up here, Hasan, where people can see us!” she cried. Hasan, who had not attained that station, said nothing. Rabe’a sought to console him. “Hasan,” she said, “what you did fishes also do, and what I did

flies also do. The real business is outside both these tricks. One must apply one's self to the real business. One night Hasan with two or three friends went to visit Rabe'a. Rabe'a had no lantern. Their hearts yearned for light. Rabe'a blew on her finger, and that night till dawn her finger shone like a lantern, and they sat in its radiance. If anyone says, "How could this be?" I answer, "The same as Moses' hand." If it is objected, "But Moses was a prophet," I reply, "Whoever follows in the footsteps of the Prophet can possess a grain of prophethood, as the Prophet says, 'Whoever rejects a farthing's worth of unlawful things has attained a degree of prophethood.' He also said, 'A true dream is one-fortieth part of prophethood.'"

Once Rabe'a sent Hasan three things- a piece of wax, a needle, and a hair.

"Be like wax," she said. "Illumine the world, and yourself burn. Be like a needle, always be working naked. When you have done these two things, a thousand years will be for you as a hair."

"Do you desire for us to get married?" Hasan asked Rabe'a.

"The tie of marriage applies to those who have being," Rabe'a replied. "Here being has disappeared, for I have become naughted to self and exist only through Him. I belong wholly to Him. I live in the shadow of His control. You must ask my hand of Him, not of me."

"How did you find this secret, Rabe'a?" Hasan asked.

"I lost all 'found' things in Him," Rabe'a answered.

"How do you know Him?" Hasan enquired.

"You know the 'how'; I know the 'howless'," Rabe'a said.

Once Rabe'a saw a man with a bandage tied round his head.

"Why have you tied the bandage?" she asked.

“Because my head aches,” the man replied.

“How old are you?” she demanded.

“Thirty,” he replied.

“Have you been in pain and anguish the greater part of your life?” she enquired.

“No,” the man answered.

“For thirty years you have enjoyed good health,” she remarked, “and you never tied about you the bandage of thankfulness. Now because of this one night that you have a headache you tie the bandage of complaint!”

Once Rabe’a gave four silver dirhams to a man.

“Buy me a blanket,” she said, “for I am naked.”

The man departed. Presently he returned.

“Mistress,” he said, “what colour shall I buy?”

“How did ‘colour’ come into the business?” Rabe’a demanded. “Give me back the money.”

One spring day Rabe’a entered her apartment and put out her head.

“Mistress,” her servant said, “come out and see what the Maker has wrought.”

“Do you rather come in,” Rabe’a replied, “and see the Maker. The contemplation of the Maker pre-occupies me, so that I do not care to look upon what He has made”.

A party visited her, and saw her tearing a morsel of meat with her teeth.

“Do you not have a knife to cut up the meat?” they asked.

“I have never kept a knife in my house for fear of being cut off,” she replied.

Once Rabe’a fasted for a whole week, neither eating nor sleeping. All night she was occupied with praying. Her hunger passed all bounds. A visitor entered her house bringing a bowl of food. Rabe’a accepted it and went to fetch a lamp. She returned to find that the cat had spilled the bowl.

“I will go and fetch a jug, and break my fast,” she said.

By the time she had brought the jug, the lamp had gone out. She aimed to drink the water in the dark, but the jug slipped from hand and was broken. She uttered lamentation and sighed so ardently that there was fear that half of the house would be consumed with fire.

“O God,” she cried, “what is this that Thou art doing with Thy helpless servant?”

“Have a care,” a voice came to her ears, “lest thou desire Me to bestow on thee all worldly blessings, but eradicate from thy heart the care for Me. Care for Me and worldly blessings can never be associated together in a single heart. Rabe’a thou desirest one thing, and I desire another; My desire and thy desire can never be joined in one heart.”

“When I heard this admonition,” Rabe’a related, “I so cut off my heart from the world and curtailed my desires that whenever I have prayed during the last thirty years, I have assumed it to be my last prayer.”

A party of men once visited her to put her to the test, desiring to catch her out in an unguarded utterance.

“All the virtues have been scattered upon the heads of men,” they said. “The crown of prophethood has been placed on men’s heads. The belt of nobility has been fastened around men’s waists. Now woman has ever been a prophet.”

“All that is true,” Rabe’a replied. “But egoism and self worship and ‘I am your Lord, the Most High’ have never sprung from a woman’s breast. No woman has ever been a hermaphrodite. All these things have been the specialty of men.”

Once Rabe’a fell grievously sick. She was asked what the cause might be.

“I gazed upon Paradise,” she replied, “and my Lord disciplined me.”

Then Hasan of Basra went to visit her.

“I saw one of the notables of Basra standing at the door of Rabe’a hermitage offering her a purse of gold and weeping,” he reported. “I said, ‘Sir, why are you weeping?’ ‘On account of this saintly woman of the age,’ he replied. ‘For if the blessing of her presence departs from among mankind, mankind will surely perish. I brought something for her tending,’ he added, ‘and I am afraid that she will not accept it. Do you intercede with her to take it.’”

So Hasan entered and spoke. Rabe’a glanced up at him and said,

“He provides for those who insult Him, and shall He not provide for those who love Him? Ever since I knew Him, I have turned my back upon His creatures. I know not whether any man’s property is lawful or not; how then can I take it? I stitched together by the light of a worldly lamp a shirt which I had torn. For a while my heart was obstructed, until I remembered. Then I tore the shirt in the place where I had stitched it, and my heart became dilated. Ask the gentleman pray not to keep my heart obstructed.”

Abd al-Wahed -e Amer relates as follows.

I went with Sofyan-e Thauri to visit Rabe’a when she was sick, but out of awe for her I could not begin to address her.

“You say something,” I said to Sofyan.

“If you will say a prayer,” Sofyan said to Rabe’a, “your pain will be eased.”

“Do you not know who willed that I should suffer? Was it not God?” Sofyan agreed.

“How is it that you know that,” Rabe’a went on, “and yet you bid me to request from Him the contrary of His will? It is not right to oppose one’s Friend.”

“What thing do you desire, Rabe’a?” Sofyan asked.

“Sofyan, you are a learned man. Why do you speak like that? ‘What thing do you desire?’ By the glory of God,” Rabe’a asseverated, “for twelve years now I have been desiring fresh dates. You know that in Basra dates are of no consequence. Yet till now I have not eaten any; for I am His servant, and what business has a servant to desire? If I wish, and my Lord does not wish, this would be infidelity. You must want only what He wishes, to be a true servant of God, If God himself gives, that is a different matter. “Sofyan was reduced to silence. Then he said, “Since one cannot speak about your situation, do you say something about mine.”

“You are a good man, but for the fact you love the world,” Rabe’a replied. “You love reciting Traditions.”

This she said, implying that that was a high position.

“Lord God,” cried Sofyan, deeply moved, “be content with me!”

“Are you not ashamed,” broke in Rabe’a, “to seek the contentment of One with whom you yourself are not content?”

Malek-e Dinar relates as follows.

I went to visit Rabe’a, and saw her with a broken pitcher out of which she drank and made her ritual ablutions, an old

reed-mat, and a brick which she occasionally used as a pillow. I was grieved.

“I have rich friends,” I told her. “If you wish, I will get something from them for you.”

“Malek, you have committed a grievous error,” she answered. “Is not my Provider and theirs one and the same?”

“Yes” I replied.

“And has the Provider of the poor forgotten the poor on account of their poverty? And does He remember the rich because of their riches?” she asked.

“No,” I replied.

“Then,” she went on, “since He knows my estate, how should I remind Him? Such is His will, and I too wish as He wills.”

One day Hasan of Basra, Malek-e Dinar and Shaiq-e Balkhi went to visit Rabe’a on her sickbed.

“He is not truthful in his claim,” Hasan began, “who does not bear with fortitude the lash of his Lord.”

“These words stink of egoism,” Rabe’a commented.

“He is not truthful in his claim,” Shaiq tried, “who is not grateful for the lash of his Lord.”

“We need something better than that,” Rabe’a observed.

“He is not truthful in his claim,” Malek-e Dinar offered, “who does not take delight in the lash of his Lord.”

“We need something better than that,” Rabe’a repeated.

“Then you say,” they urged.

“He is not truthful in his claim” Rabe’a pronounced, “who does not forget the lash in contemplation of his Master.”

A leading scholar of Basra visited Rabe'a on her sickbed. Sitting beside her pillow, he reviled the world.

"You love the world very dearly," Rabe'a commented. "If you did not love the world, you would not make mention of it so much. It is always the purchaser who disparages the wares. If you were done with the world, you would not mention it either for good or evil. As it is, you keep mentioning it because, as the proverb says, whoever loves a thing mentions it frequently."

When the time came that Rabe'a should die, those attending her deathbed left the room and closed the door. Then a voice was heard saying, *O soul at peace, return unto thy- Lord, well-pleased!* A time passed and no sound came from the room, so they opened the door and found that she had given up the ghost.

After her death she was seen in a dream. She was asked, "How did you fare with Monkar and Nakir?" She replied, "Those youths came to me and said, 'Who is thy Lord?'"

I answered, 'Return and say to God, with so many thousand thousand creatures Thou didst not forget one feeble old woman. I, who have only Thee in the whole world, I shall never forget Thee, that Thou shouldst send one to ask me, Who is thy God?'"

Prayers of Bibi Rabe'a (RAA)

O God, whatsoever Thou hast apportioned to me of worldly things, do Thou give that to Thy enemies; and whatsoever Thou hast apportioned to me in the world to come, give that to Thy friends; for Thou sufficest me.

O God, if I worship Thee for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship Thee for Thy own sake, grudge me not Thy everlasting beauty.

O God, my whole occupation and all my desire in this world, of all worldly things, is to remember Thee, and in the world to come, of all things of the world to come, is to meet Thee. This is on my side, as I have stated; now do Thou whatsoever Thou wilt.

Hazreth Ebrahim ibn Adham (RAA)

Hazreth Abu Eshaq Ebrahim ibn Adham, (RAA) born in Balkh of pure Arab descent, is described in Sufi legend as a prince who renounced his kingdom (somewhat after the fashion of the Buddha) and wandered westwards to live a life of complete asceticism, earning his bread in Syria by honest manual toil until his death in c. 165 (782). Some accounts state that he was killed on a naval expedition against Byzantium. The story of his conversion is a classic of Muslim hagiography.

The legend of Hazreth Ebrahim ibn Adham (RAA)

Ebrahim ibn Adham's saintly career began in the following manner. He was king of Balkh, and a whole world was under his command; forty gold swords and forty gold maces were carried before and behind him. One night he was asleep on his royal couch. At midnight the roof of the apartment vibrated as if someone was walking on the roof. "Who is there?" he shouted. "A friend," came the reply, "I have lost a camel, and am searching for it on this roof." "Fool, do you look for the camel on the roof?" cried Ebrahim. "Heedless one," answered the voice, "do you seek for God in silken clothes, asleep on a golden couch?" These words filled his heart with terror. A fire blazed within him, and he could not sleep any more. When day came he returned to the dais and sat on his throne, thoughtful, bewildered and full of care. The ministers of state stood each in his place; his slaves were drawn up in serried ranks. General audience was proclaimed. Suddenly

a man with awful mien entered the chamber, so terrible to look upon that none of the royal retinue and servants dared ask him his name; the tongues of all clove to their throats. He advanced solemnly till he stood before the throne.

“What do you want ?” demanded Ebrahim.

“I have just alighted at this caravanserai,” said the man.

“This is not a caravanserai. This is my palace. You are mad,” shouted Ebrahim.

“Who owned this palace before you?” asked the man.

“My father,” Ebrahim replied.

“And before him?”

“So-and-so.”

“And before him?”

“So-and-so.”

“And before him?”

“The father of So-and-so.”

“Where have they all departed?” asked the man.

“They have gone. They are dead,” Ebrahim replied.

“Then is this not a caravanserai which one man enters and another leaves?”

With these words the stranger vanished. He was Khezr, upon whom be peace. The fire blazed more fiercely still in Ebrahim’s soul, and the anguish within him augmented momentarily. Visions by day followed the hearing of voices by night, equally mysterious and incomprehensible.

“Saddle my horse,” Ebrahim cried at last. ‘I will go to the hunt. I know not what this thing is that has come upon me

today. Lord God, how will this affair end?” His horse was saddled and he proceeded to the chase. Headlong he galloped across the desert; it was as if he knew not what he was doing. In that state of bewilderment he became separated from his troops. On the way he suddenly heard a voice. “Awake!” He pretended not to have heard, and rode on. A second time the voice came, but he heeded it not. A third time he heard the same, and hurled himself farther away. Then the voice sounded a fourth time.

“Awake, before you are stricken awake!”

He now lost all self-control. At that instant a deer started up, and Ebrahim prepared to give chase. The deer spoke to him.

“I have been sent to hunt you. You cannot catch me. Was it for this that you were created, or is this what you were commanded?”

“Ah, what is this that has come upon me?” Ebrahim cried.

And he turned his face from the deer. He thereupon heard the same words issuing from the pommel of his saddle. Terror and fear possessed him. The revelation became clearer yet, for Almighty God willed to complete the transaction. A third time the selfsame voice proceeded from the collar of his cloak. The revelation was thus consummated, and the heavens were opened unto him.

Sure faith was now established in him. He dismounted; all his garments, and the horse itself, were dripping with his tears. He made true and sincere repentance. Turning aside from the road, he saw a shepherd wearing felt clothes and a hat of felt, driving his sheep before him. Looking closely, he saw that he was a slave of his. He bestowed on him his gold-embroidered cloak and bejewelled cap, together with the sheep, and took from him

his clothes and hat of felt. These he donned himself. All the angelic hosts stood gazing on Ebrahim.

“What a kingdom has come to the son of Adham,” they cried. “He has cast away the filthy garments of the world, and has donned the glorious robes of poverty.”

Even so he proceeded on foot to wander over mountains and endless deserts, lamenting over his sins, until he came to Merv. There he saw a man who had fallen from the bridge and was about to perish, swept away by the river. Ebrahim shouted from afar.

“O God, preserve him!”

The man remained suspended in the air until helpers arrived and drew him up. They were astonished at Ebrahim.

“What man is this?” they cried.

Ebrahim departed from that place, and marched on to Nishapur. There he searched for a desolate corner where he might busy himself with obedience to God. In the end he hit upon the famous cave where he dwelt for nine years, three years in each apartment. Who knows what occupied him there through the nights and days? For it needed a mighty man of uncommon substance to be able to be there alone by night.

Every Thursday he would climb above the cavern and collect a bundle of firewood. Next morning he would set out for Nishapur and there sell the brushwood. Having performed the Friday prayers, he would buy bread with the money he had gained, give half to a beggar and use half himself to break his fast. So he did every week.

One winter’s night he was in that apartment. It was extremely cold, and he had to break the ice to wash. All night he shivered, praying through till dawn. By dawn he was in danger of perishing from the cold. By chance the thought of a fire entered his mind. He saw a fur on the ground. Wrapping himself up in the fur,

he fell asleep. When he awoke it was broad daylight, and he had become warm. He looked, and saw that the fur was a dragon, its eyes saucers of blood. A mighty terror came upon him.

“Lord God,” he cried. “Thou didst send this thing unto me in a shape of gentleness. Now I see it in a dreadful form. I cannot endure it.”

Immediately the dragon moved away, twice or thrice rubbed its face in the ground before him, and vanished.

Hazreth Ebrahim ibn Adham(RAA) goes to Mecca

When the fame of Ebrahim ibn Adham’s doings spread abroad amongst men, he fled from the cave and set out towards Mecca. In the desert he encountered one of the great men of the Faith, who taught him the Greatest Name of God and then took his departure. Ebrahim called upon God by that Name, and immediately he beheld Khezr, “that was my brother David who taught you the Greatest Name.” Then many words passed between Khezr and Ebrahim. Khezr was the first who drew Ebrahim out, by the leave of God. Ebrahim relates as follows concerning the next stage of his pilgrimage. “On reaching Dhat al-Erq I saw seventy men wearing the patchwork frock lying dead there, the blood gushing out of their noses and ears. Circling them, I found one who still had a spark of life in him.

“Young man,’ I cried, ‘what has happened here?’

“‘Son of Adham,’ he answered me, ‘keep to the water and the prayer-niche. Go not far away, lest you be banished; and come not too near, lest you be anguished. Let no man be overbold in the presence of Sultan. Have a lively fear of the Friend who slays pilgrims as if they were Greek infidels, and wages war upon pilgrims. We were a Sufi community who had set out into the desert trusting in God, resolved not to utter one word, to think

of naught but God, to move and be still only with God in view and to heed none but Him.

When we had crossed the desert and were come to the place where pilgrims robe themselves in white, Khezr, upon whom be peace, came to us. We greeted him, and he returned our salute, and we were very happy, saying, "Praise be to God, the journey was blessed, the quester has reached his quest, for such a holy person came out to meet us."

Forthwith a voice cried within us, "You liars and pretenders, such were your words and covenant! You forgot Me, and busied yourselves with another. Depart! I will not make peace with you until I snatch away your souls in recompense and shed your blood with the sword of jealous wrath." These brave men whom you see lying here are all victims of this retaliation. Beware, Ebrahim! You too have the same ambition. Halt, or depart far away!

"Why did they spare you, then?" I asked, deeply perplexed by his words.

"They told me, "They are ripe, you are still raw. Live on a few moments yet, and you too will be ripe. When you are ripe, you too will come in their wake." So saying, he gave up the ghost."

Ebrahim was fourteen years crossing the desert, praying and humbling himself all the way. When he drew near to Mecca, the elders of the Haram hearing of his approach came out to meet him. He thrust himself ahead of the caravan so that no one might recognize him. The servants preceded the elders, and they saw Ebrahim going ahead of the caravan; but not having seen him before, they did not recognize him. Coming up to him, they

cried, "Ebrahim ibn Adham is near at hand. The elders of the Haram have come out to meet him."

“What do you want of that heretic?” Ebrahim demanded.

Straightway they set upon him and beat him up.

“The elders of Mecca go out to meet him, and you call him a heretic?” they shouted.

“I say he is a heretic,” Ebrahim repeated.

When they left him, Ebrahim turned to himself.

“Ha!” he cried. “You wanted the elders to come out to meet you. Well, you have collected a few punches. Praise be to God that I have seen you get your wish!”

Ebrahim then took up residence in Mecca. A circle of companions formed around him, and he earned his bread by the labour of his hands, working as a carpenter.

Hazreth Ebrahim (RAA) at Mecca is visited by his son

When Ebrahim ibn Adham quitted Balkh he left behind him a suckling child. The latter, by now grown up, asked his mother one day about his father.

“Your father is lost,” she replied.

The son thereupon made proclamation that all who desired to perform the pilgrimage should assemble. Four thousand presented themselves. He gave them all their expenses to cover provisions and camels and led the party Mecca wards, hoping that God might grant him sight of his father. Reaching Mecca, they encountered by the door of the Holy Mosque a party of patchwork-frocked Sufis.

“Do you know Ebrahim ibn Adham?” the son enquired.

“He is a friend of ours,” they told him. “He is entertaining us, and has gone to hunt for food.”

The son asked them to direct him, and he went in his track. The party emerging in the lower quarter of Mecca, he saw his father unshod and bareheaded coming along with a load of firewood. Tears sprang to his eyes, but he controlled himself and followed in his father's wake to the market. There his father began to shout.

“Who will buy goodly things for goodly things?”

A baker called to him and took the firewood in exchange for bread. Ebrahim brought the bread and laid it before his companions.

“If I say who I am,” the son feared, “he will run away.”

So he went to take counsel with his mother as to the best way of recovering his father. His mother advised patience.

“Be patient until we make the pilgrimage.”

When the boy departed, Ebrahim sat down with his associates.

Today there are women and children on this pilgrimage. Mind your eyes,” he charged them. All accepted his counsel. When the pilgrims entered Mecca and made the circumambulation of the Kaaba, Ebrahim with his companions also circled the Holy House. A handsome boy approached him, and Ebrahim looked at him keenly. His friends noticed this and were astonished, but waited until they had finished the circumambulation.

“God have mercy on you!” they then said to Ebrahim. “You bade us not to glance at any woman or child, and then you yourself gazed at a handsome lad.”

“Did you see?” Ebrahim exclaimed.

“We saw,” they replied.

“When I left Balkh,” Ebrahim told them, “I abandoned there a suckling son. I know that the lad is that son.”

Next day one of the companions went out before Ebrahim to look for the caravan from Balkh. Coming upon it, he observed in the midst of the caravan a tent pitched all of brocade. In the tent a throne was set, and the boy seated on the throne, reciting the Quran and weeping. Ebrahim's friend asked if he might enter.

“Where do you come from?” he enquired.

“From Balkh,” the boy replied.

“Whose son are you?”

The boy put his hand to his face and began to weep.

“I have never seen my father,” he said, laying aside the Quran. “Not until yesterday – I do not know whether it was he or not. I am afraid that if I speak he will run away, as he ran away from us before. My father is Ebrahim-e Adham the King of Balkh.

The man seized him to bring him to Ebrahim. His mother rose and went along with him. Ebrahim, as they approached him, was seated with his companions before the Yemeni Corner. He espied from afar his friend with the boy and his mother. As soon as the woman saw him she cried aloud and could control herself no longer.

“This is your father.”

An indescribable tumult arose. All the bystanders and friends of Ebrahim burst into tears. As soon as the boy recovered himself he saluted his father. Ebrahim returned his greeting and took him to his breast.

“What religion do you follow?” he asked.

“The religion of Islam,” answered his son.

“Praise be to God,” cried Ebrahim. “Do you know the Quran?”

“I do.”

“Praise be to God. Have you studied the faith?”

“I have.”

Then Ebrahim would have departed, but the boy would not let go of him. His mother wailed aloud. Turning his face to heaven, Ebrahim cried,

“O God, succour me!”

The boy immediately expired in his embrace.

“What happened, Ebrahim?” his companions cried out.

“When I took him to my breast,” Ebrahim explained, “love for him stirred in my heart.

A voice spoke to me, ‘Ebrahim, you claim to love Me, and you love another along with

Me. You charge your companions not to look upon any strange woman or child, and you have attached your heart to that woman and child.’ When I heard this call, I prayed, ‘Lord of Glory, come to my succour! He will so occupy my heart that I shall forget to love Thee. Either take away his life or mine.’ His death was the answer to my prayer.”

Anecdotes of Hazreth Ebrahim ibn Adham(RAA)

One day Ebrahim ibn Adham was asked, “What befell you, that you quit your

kingdom?”

“I was seated on my throne one day,” he recalled. “A mirror was held up before me; I looked into that mirror and saw that my lodging was the tomb and therein was no familiar friend. I saw a long journey ahead of me, and I had no provision. I saw

a just judge, and I had no defence. I became disgusted of my kingship.”

“Why did you flee from Khorasan!” they asked.

“I heard much talk there of the true friend,” he replied.

“Why do you not seek a wife?” he was asked.

“Does any woman take a husband for him to keep her hungry and naked?” he countered. “No,” they replied.

“That is why I do not marry,” he explained. “Any woman whom I married would remain hungry and naked. If I only could, I would divorce myself. How can I bind another to my saddle?”

Then turning to a beggar who was present, he asked him, “Do you have a wife?”

“No,” the beggar replied.

“Do you have a child?”

“No,”

“Excellent, excellent,” Ebrahim exclaimed.

“Why do you say that?” asked the beggar.

“The beggar who marries embarks on a ship. When the children come, he is drowned.”

One day Ebrahim saw a beggar bewailing his lot.

“I guess you bought beggary gratis,” he remarked.

“Why, is beggary for sale?” the beggar asked in astonishment.

“Certainly,” Ebrahim replied. “I bought it with the kingdom of Balkh. I got a bargain.”

A man once brought Ebrahim a thousand dinars.

“Take,” he said.

“I do not accept anything from beggars,” Ebrahim replied.

“But I am wealthy,” the man retorted.

“Do you want more than you own already?” Ebrahim asked.

“Indeed,” the man exclaimed.

“Then take it back,” said Ebrahim. “You are the chief of the beggars. Indeed, this is not beggary. This is plain penury.”

Ebrahim was told of an ecstatic youth who had extraordinary experiences and disciplined himself severely.

“Bring me to him so that I may see him,” he said.

They took him to the youth.

“Be my guest for three days,” the youth invited him.

Ebrahim stayed there and observed the youth’s state attentively. It surpassed even what his friends had said. All night he was sleepless and restless, not reposing or slumbering for a single moment. Ebrahim felt a certain jealousy.

“I am so frigid, and he is sleepless and unresting the whole night through. Come, let us investigate his case,” he said to himself. “Let us discover if anything from Satan has invaded his state, or whether it is wholly pure and in all respects as it should be. I must examine the foundation of the matter. The foundation and root of the matter is what a man eats.”

So he investigated what the youth was eating, and discovered that it came from unhallowed sources.

“God is most great. It is Satanic,” Ebrahim exclaimed.

“I have been your guest for three days,” he said to the youth. “Now you come and be my guest for forty days.”

The youth accepted. Now the food Ebrahim ate was earned by the labour of his own hands. He took the youth to his home

and gave him of his own food. Immediately his ecstasy vanished. All his ardour and passion disappeared. That restlessness and sleeplessness and weeping of his departed.

“What have you done to me ?” he cried.

“Yes,” Ebrahim answered. “Your food was unhallowed. Satan was all the time going and coming in you. As soon as you swallowed lawful food, the manifestations he had been contriving in you became revealed for what they were, the Devil’s work.”

Sahl ibn Ebrahim tells the following story.

I was making a journey with Ebrahim-e Adham, and on the way I fell sick. He sold all that he possessed and spent it on me. I begged him for something, and he sold his ass and spent the proceeds on me.

“Where is the ass?” I enquired when I recovered.

“I sold it.” he replied.

“What shall I sit on?” I demanded.

“Brother,” Ebrahim answered, “come, sit on my back.”

And he lifted me on his back and carried me for three stages.

Every day Ebrahim went out to work for hire and laboured till night. All his earnings he expended on behalf of his companions. But by the time he had performed the evening prayer and bought something and had returned to his friends the night was far gone.

One night his companions said, “He is late in coming. Come, let us eat some bread and go to sleep. That will be a hint for him to return earlier in future. He will not keep us waiting so long.”

So they did. When Ebrahim returned he saw that they were asleep. Supposing that they had not eaten anything and had gone to sleep hungry, he at once lit a fire. He had brought a little flour

back with him, so he made dough to give them something to eat when they woke, then they would be able to keep fast next day. His companions awoke to see him with his bread on the floor, blowing on the fire; tears were streaming from his eyes, and he was surrounded by smoke.

“What are you doing?” they asked.

“I saw you were asleep,” Ebrahim replied. “I said to myself, perhaps you could not find anything and went to sleep hungry. So I am making something for you to eat when you awake.”

“See how he thought about us, and how we thought about him,” they exclaimed.

“Since you entered on this path, have you ever experienced happiness?” Ebrahim was asked. “Several times,” he replied. “Once I was on board ship and the captain did not know me. I was wearing ragged clothes, my hair was untrimmed, and I was in a spiritual ecstasy of which all on board were unaware. They laughed at me and ridiculed me.

There was a joker on the ship, and every now and then he would come and grab me by the hair and pluck it out and slap me on the neck. In those moments I felt that I had attained my desire, and was very happy to be so humiliated.

“Suddenly a great wave arose, and all feared that they would perish. ‘We must throw one of these fellows overboard,’ cried the helmsman. ‘Then the ship will be lighter.’ They seized me to throw me into the sea. The wave subsided, and the ship resumed an even keel. That moment when they took me by the ear to throw me into the water, I felt that I had attained my desire, and was happy.

“On another occasion I went to a mosque to sleep there. They would not let me be, and I was so weak and exhausted that

I could not get up. So they seized me by the foot and dragged me out. Now the mosque had three steps; my head struck against each step in turn, and the blood flowed forth. I felt that I had attained my desire. On each step that they dropped me, the mystery of a whole clime became revealed to me. I said, 'Would that the mosque had more steps, to increase my felicity!'

"On another occasion I was rapt in a state of ecstasy. A joker came and urinated on me. Then too I was happy.

"On yet another occasion I was wrapped in a fur jacket infested by fleas which

devoured me unmercifully. Suddenly I remembered the fine clothes which I had deposited in the treasury. My soul cried within me, 'Why, what pain is this?' Then too I felt that I had attained my desire."

"Once," Ebrahim related, "I was journeying in the desert putting my trust in God. For some days I found nothing to eat. I remembered a friend of mine, but I said to myself, 'If I go to him, my trust in God will become void.' I entered a mosque with the words on my lips, 'I have put my trust in the Living One who dies not. There is no God but He.' A voice out of heaven cried, 'Glory be to that God who has emptied the face of the earth of those who trust in Him.' I said, 'Why these words?' The voice replied, 'How should that man be truly trusting in God who undertakes a long journey for the sake of a morsel that

a profane friend may give him, and then declares, 'I have put my trust in the Living One who dies not?'" You have given the name of trust in God to a lie!

"Once I brought a slave," Ebrahim recalled.

"What is your name?" I asked.

"What you call me," he answered.

“What do you eat?”

“What you give me.”

“What do you wear?”

“What you clothe me withal.”

“What do you do?”

“What you command.”

“What do you desire?” I asked.

“What has a servant to do with desire?” he replied.

“Wretch that you are,” I said to myself, ‘all your life you have been a servant of God.

Well, now learn what it means to be a servant!’

“And I wept so long that I swooned away.”

No one had ever seen Ebrahim sitting cross legged.

“Why do you not sit cross legged ?” he was asked.

“I did sit that way one day,” he replied. “I heard a voice from the air saying, ‘Son of Adham, do servants sit so in the presence of their lords?’ I at once sat upright and repented.”

“Once I was travelling in the desert trusting in God,” Ebrahim related. “For three days I found nothing to eat. Then the Devil came to me.

“Did you abandon your kingdom and so much luxury in order to go on the pilgrimage hungry? ‘ the Devil taunted me. ‘You can also make the pilgrimage in style and not suffer so.’

“Hearing this speech of the Devil, I lifted my head on high.

“O God, ‘ I cried, ‘does Thou appoint Thy enemy over Thy friend to torture me? Come to my succour! For I cannot cross this desert without Thy aid.’

“‘Ebrahim,’ a voice came to me, ‘cast out what thou hast in thy pocket, that We may bring forth that which is in the Unseen.’

“I put my hand in my pocket. Four silver pennies were there which I had forgotten. As soon as I flung them away the Devil fled from me, and alimnt materialized out of the Unseen.”

“Once,” Ebrahim recalled, “I was appointed to look after an orchard. The owner of the orchard came and said to me, ‘Bring me some sweet pomegranates,’ I brought some, but they were sour.

“‘Bring me sweet ones,’ the owner repeated. I brought another dishful, but they were also sour.

“‘Glory be to God!’ the owner cried. ‘You have spent so long in an orchard, and you do not know ripe pomegranates?’

“‘I look after your orchard, but I do not know what pomegranates taste like because I have never sampled any,’ I replied.

“‘With such self-denial, I suspect you are Ebrahim-e Adham,’ the owner said.

“‘When I heard these words, I departed from that place.’”

“‘One night,’ Ebrahim related, “I saw Gabriel in a dream come down to earth out of heaven with a scroll in his hand.

“‘What do you want?’ I asked.

“‘I am writing down the names of the friends of God,’ Gabriel replied.

“‘Write down my name,’ I said.

“‘You are not of them,’ Gabriel answered.

“‘I am a friend of the friends of God,’ I rejoined.

“Gabriel pondered for a while. Then he said,

“ ‘ The command has come. Inscribe Ebrahim’s name the first of all. For on this Path hope materializes out of despair.”

Ebrahim was travelling in the desert one day when he was accosted by a soldier.

“What are you?” the soldier asked.

“ A servant,” replied Ebrahim.

“Which is the way to habitation?” asked the soldier.

Ebrahim pointed to the graveyard.

“ You are making fun of me,” shouted the soldier, lashing out at Ebrahim’s head. His head was broken, and the blood gushed forth.

The soldier put a rope round Ebrahim’s neck and dragged him along. People from the nearby town coming that way stopped at the spectacle.

“Ignoramus, this is Ebrahim-e Adham, the friend of God,” they cried.

The soldier fell at Ebrahim’s feet and implored him to pardon him and acquit him of the wrong he had done him.

“You told me you were a servant,” he pleaded.

“Who is there who is not a servant?” Ebrahim replied.

“ I broke your head, and you prayed for me,” said the soldier.

“I prayed that you might be blessed for the way you treated me,” was Ebrahim’s answer. “My reward for the way you treated me was Paradise, and I did not wish that your reward should be Hell.”

“Why did you direct me to the cemetery when I asked the way to habitation?” the soldier asked.

“Because every day the graveyard become more thronged, and the city more deserted,” answered Ebrahim.

Once Ebrahim passed by a drunkard. His mouth was foul, so he fetched water and washed the drunkard’s mouth.

“Do you leave foul the mouth that has mouthed the name of God? This is irreverence!”

Ebrahim said to himself.

“The ascetic of Khorasan washed your mouth,” they told the man when he woke.

“I too now repent,” the man declared.

After that Ebrahim heard in a dream, “Thou didst wash a mouth for My sake. I have washed thy heart.”

I was once on shipboard with Ebrahim (relates Raja) when suddenly a wind sprang up and the world grew dark.

“Alas, the ship is sinking!” I cried.

“Fear not that the ship will sink,” came a voice from the air, “Ebrahim-e Adham is with you.”

Immediately the wind subsided, and the darkened world became bright.

Ebrahim wished to embark on a ship, but he had no money. “Every one must pay a dinar,” came the announcement.

Ebrahim prayed two rak’as, and said, “O God, they are demanding money from me and I have none.”

Forthwith the whole sea was turned to gold. Ebrahim gathered a handful and gave it to them.

One day Ebrahim was seated on the bank of the Tigris stitching his threadbare robe.

His needle fell into the river.

“You gave up such a mighty kingdom. What did you get in return?” someone asked him.

“Give back my needle,” cried Ebrahim, pointing to the river.

A thousand fishes put up their heads from the water, each with a golden needle in its mouth.

“I want my own needle,” said Ebrahim.

A feeble little fish held up Ebrahim’s needle in its mouth.

“This is the least thing I have gotten by abandoning the kingdom of Balkh,” said Ebrahim. “The rest you know nothing of.”

One day Ebrahim came to a well. He let down the bucket, and it came up full of gold.

He emptied it and let it down again, and it came up full of pearls. In merry mood he emptied it once more.

“O God,” he cried, “Thou art offering me a treasury. I know that Thou art allpowerful, and Thou knowest that I shall not be deluded by this. Give me water, that I may make my ablution.”

Once Ebrahim was going on the pilgrimage in company.

“Not one of us has a camel or any provisions,” said his fellow-pilgrims. “Rely on God, to provide for you,” Ebrahim told them. Then he added, “Look at those trees! If it is gold that you desire, they will be turned to gold.”

All the acacias had turned to gold by the Power of Almighty God. One day Ebrahim was travelling with a party when they came to a fort. Before the fort was much brushwood. “We will pass the night here,” they said. “There is plenty of brushwood, so we can make a fire.” They kindled a fire and sat in the light of

the flames. All ate dry bread, whilst Ebrahim stood in prayer.” If only we had some hallowed meat to roast on this fire.” said one. Ebrahim finished his prayer. Then he said, “God is certainly able to give you hallowed meat.”

Saying this, he stood once more in prayer. Immediately came the roar of a lion. They watched as a lion approached dragging a wild ass. They took the ass, roasted it and ate it, whilst the lion crouched there watching them.

Hazreth Abu 1-Qasem al junaid (RAA)

Hazreth Abo ‘1-Qasem al-Jonaid ibn Mohammad al-Khazzaz al-Ne-hawandi (RAA), son of a glass-merchant and nephew of Sari al-Saqati, close associate of al-Mohasebi, was the greatest exponent of the ‘sober’ school of Sufism and elaborated a theosophical doctrine which determined the whole course of orthodox mysticism in Islam. He expounded his theories in his teachings: and in a series of letters written to various contemporaries which have survived. The head of a large and influential school, he died in Baghdad in 298 (910).

The early years of Hazreth Jonaid-e Baghdadi(RAA)

From childhood Jonaid was given to spiritual sorrow, and was an earnest seeker after God, well disciplined, thoughtful and quick of understanding and of a penetrating intuition.

One day he returned home from school to find his father in tears.

“What happened?” he enquired.

“I took something by way of alms to your uncle Sari” his father told him. “He would not accept it I am weeping because I have given my whole life to save these five dirhams, and then this offering is not meet for one of the friends of God to receive.”

“Give me the money: and I will give it to him. That way he may take it” said Jonaid.

His father gave him the dirhams: and Jonaid went off coming to his uncle’s house: he knocked at the door.

“Who is that?” came a voice.

“Jonaid” answered the boy. “Open the door and take this due offering of alms.”

“I will not take it,” cried Sari.

“I beg you to take it, by the God who has dealt so graciously with you and so justly with my father:” cried Jonaid.

“Jonaid how did God deal graciously with me and justly with him?” demanded Sari.

“God was gracious to you,” Jonaid replied, “in vouchsafing you poverty. To my father God was just in occupying him with worldly affairs. You are at liberty to accept or reject as you please. He whether he likes it or not must convey the due alms on his possessions to the one deserving of it.”

This answer pleased Sari.

“Child, before I accept these alms, I have accepted you.”

So saying, Sari opened the door and took the alms. He assigned to Jonaid a special place in his heart.

Jonaid was only seven years old when Sari took him on the piluimae. In the Mosque of the Sanctuary the question of thankfulness was being discussed by four hundred shaikhs. Each shaikh expounded his own view.

“You also say something_” Sari prompted Jonaid.

“Thankfulness,” said Jonaid “means that you should not disobey God by means of the favour which He has bestowed on you nor make of His favour a source of disobedience.”

“Well said consolation of true believers,” cried the four hundred. They were unanimous that a better definition could not be devised.

“Boy,” said Sari “it will soon come to pass that your special gift from God will be your tongue.”

Jonaid wept when he heard his uncle say this

“Where did you acquire this?” Sari demanded.

“From sitting with You,” Jonaid replied.

Jonaid then returned to Baghdad, and took up selling glasses. Every day he would go to the shop and draw down the blind and perform four hundred rak’as. After a time he abandoned the shop and withdrew to a room in the porch of Sari’s house: where he busied himself with the guardianship of his heart He unrolled the prayer rug of meticulous watchfulness: that no thought of anything but God should pass through his mind.

Jonaid put to the proof

For forty years Jonaid persevered in his mystic course.

For thirty years he would perform the prayer before sleeping, then stand on his feet repeating “Allah” until dawn saying the dawn prayer with the ablution he had made the previous night.

“After forty years had gone by,” he said “the conceit arose in me that I had attained my goal. Immediately a voice out of Heaven spoke to me_ ‘Jonaid,’ the voice cried, ‘the time has come for Me to show you the loop of your Magian girdle.’ When I heard these words I exclaimed ‘O God, what sin has Jonaid committed’ Do you look for a more grievous sin than this,’ the voice replied, that you exist?”

Jonaid sighed and lowered his head.

“He who is not worthy of union.” he murmured “all his good works are but sins.”

He continued to it in his room crying “Allah Allah” all night. The long tongues of slander were shot out against him, and his conduct was reported to the caliph.

“He cannot be inhibited without any proof” said the caliph.

“Many people are being seduced by his words,” they stated.

Now the caliph possessed a handmaiden of unrivalled beauty. He had purchased her for three thousand dinars: and loved her dearly_ The caliph commanded that she should be arrayed in fine raiment and precious jewels.

“Go to such a place:” she was instructed. “Stand before Jonaid and unveil your face, and display your jewels and raiment to him. Say to him ‘I am possessed of much wealth, and my heart has grown weary of worldly affairs. I have come so that you may propose to me, that in your society I may devote myself to the service of God. My heart finds repose in no one but You.’ Display Yourself to and strive your utmost to persuade him.”

She was despatched to Jonaid with a servant. The handmaiden came before Jonaid and carried out her instructions to the letter and more Involuntarily Jonaid’s glance fell upon her_ He remained silent and made no answer. She repeated her story. Jonaid hung his head; then he raised his head.

“Ah” he exclaimed and breathed on the the girl immediately fell to the ground and expired. The servant who had accompanied returned to the caliph and reported what had transpired. Fire fell upon the caliph’s soul and he repented of what he had done.

“He who acts towards others as he should not, sees what he ought not to see” he observed.

Rising up, he proceeded to call on Jonaid.

“Such a man one cannot summon to attend on oneself” he commented. “O master, how did your heart allow it,” asked the caliph, “to consume so fair a form?”

“Prince of the Believers,” Jonaid replied, “your compassion for the faithful was so great that you desired to cast to the winds my forty years of discipline, of keeping vigil and self-mortification_ Yet who am I in all this? Do not that you may not be done to!”

After that Jonaid’s affairs prospered. His fame reached to all parts of the world. However much he was persecuted, his repute increased a thousandfold. He began to preach. As he explained once “I did not preach to the public until thirty of the great saints indicated to me that it was proper for me to call men to God.”

“For thirty Years I sat watching over my heart,” he said “Then for ten years my heart watched over me. Now it is twenty years that I know nothing of my heart and my heart knows nothing of me.”

“For thirty years,” he said again, “God has spoken with Jonaid by the tongue of Jonaid, Jonaid not being there at all, and men were not aware.”

Jonaid preaches

When Jonaid’s tongue was loosened to utter great words, Sari-e Saqati urged him that it was his duty to preach in public. Jonaid was hesitant not desiring to do so.

“While the master is there, it is not seemly for the disciple to preach,” he demurred.

Then one night Jonaid saw the Prophet in a dream.

“Preach,” the Prophet said

Next morning he arose to go and report to Sari, but he found Sari standing at the door.

“Hitherto,” Sari told him, “you were inhibited waiting for others to tell you to preach. Now you must speak because your word have been made the means or a whole world’s salvation. You would not speak when the disciples asked you to You did not speak when the shaild-is of Baghdad interceded with you. You did not speak at my urging_ Now that the Prophet has commanded you you must speak.”

“God forgive me,” Jonaid replied. “How did you know that I saw the Prophet in a dream?”

“I saw God in a dream,” Sari explained. “God said, ‘I have sent the Messenger to tell Jonaid to preach from the pulpit’ “

“I will preach then,” consented Jonaid. “Only on one condition, that it be to no more than forty persons.”

One day Jonaid was preaching, and forty persons were present. Of these eighteen expired, and twenty-two fell to the ground unconscious. They were lifted up and carried to their homes.

Another day Jonaid was preaching in the cathedral. In the congregation there was a Christian lad, but no one knew that he was a Christian. He approached Jonaid and said, “According to the Prophet’s saying, ‘Beware of the insight of the believer, for he sees by the light of God.’”

The pronouncement is,” replied Jonaid, “that you should become a Muslim and cut your Christian girdle, for this is the time of Muslimdom.” The boy immediately became a Muslim.

After Jonaid had preached a number of times: the people cried out against him. He gave up preaching, and retired to his room. For all that he was urged to resume, he would not do so.

“I am content,” he replied. “I cannot contrive my own destruction.”

Some time later he mounted the pulpit and began to preach without any prompting.

“What was the inner wisdom in this?” he was asked.

“I came upon a Tradition,” he replied, “according to which the Prophet said, ‘In the last days the spokesman of the people will be he that is the worst of them. He will preach to them.’ I know that I am the worst of the people. I am preaching because of what the Prophet said so that I may not oppose his words.”

Anecdotes of Hazreth Jonaid (RAA)

Once Jonaid’s eye pained him, and he sent for the doctor.

“If your eye is throbbing, do not let any water get to it” the doctor advised.

When he had gone, Jonaid performed his ablutions and prayed, and then went to sleep. When he awoke, his eye was well again. He heard a voice saying, “Jonaid forsook his eye to gain Our good pleasure. If with the same intention he had begged of Tis all the inhabitants of Hell his petition would have been granted.”

The physician called and saw that his eye was healed.

“What did you do?” he asked.

“I performed the ablutions for prayer,” Jonaid answered.

Thereupon the physician, who was a Christian, declared his conversion.

“This is the Creator’s curse, not the creature’s,” he commented. “It was my eye that was sick, not yours. You were the physician, not I”

Whenever Jonaid spoke on the Divine Unity, every time he began with a different expression which no one could understand. One day Shebli was in Jonaid's audience and uttered the word Allah.

"If God is absent to mention the absent One is a sign of absence, and absence is a thing proscribed" Jonaid said. "If God is present to mention His name while contemplating Him present is a mark of irreverence."

* * * * *

A man brought five hundred dinars and offered them to Jonaid.

"Do you possess anything besides this?" Jonaid asked him. "Yes, a lot" the man replied. "Do you need more?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then take it away," Jonaid said "You have a better right to it. I possess nothing, and I need nothing."

* * * * *

A man rose up where Jonaid was preaching and began to beg.

"This man is perfectly healthy," thought Jonaid. "He can earn his living. Why does he beg and impose on himself this humiliation?"

That night Jonaid dreamed that a covered dish was set before him.

"Eat" he was bidden.

When he lifted the lid, he saw the man who had begged lying dead on the dish.

"I do not eat the flesh of men," he protested.

“Then why did you do so in mosque yesterday?” he was asked.

Jonaid realized that he had been guilty of slander in his heart and that he was being taken to task for an evil thought.

“I woke in terror,” Jonaid recollected. “I purified myself and said two rak’as, then I went out to search for the beggar.” I saw him on the bank of the Tigris, picking out of the water scraps of vegetables people had washed there and eating them. Raising his head, he saw me approaching and addressed me. ‘Jonaid,’ he said, have you repented of the thoughts you had concerning me?’ I have,’ I replied. ‘Then go. It is He Who accepts repentance from His servants. This time keep a watch over your thoughts.’”

* * * * *

“I learned sincere belief from a barber,” Jonaid recalled, and he told the following story. Once when I was in Mecca, a barber was trimming a gentleman’s hair. I said to him, “For the sake of God, can you shave my hair?”

“I can,” he said. His eyes filling with tears, he left the gentleman still unfinished.

“Get up,” he said “When God’s name is spoken, everything else must wait.”

He seated me and kissed my head and shaved off my hair. Then he gave me a screw of paper with a few small coins in it

“Spend this on your needs,” he said

I thereupon resolved that the first present that came my way I would give him in charity. Not long afterwards a bag of gold arrived from Basra. I took it to the barber.

“What is this?” he asked. “I made up my mind,” I explained,

“that the first present that came my way I must give to you. This has just arrived.”

“Man” he exclaimed “have you no shame before God? You said to me, ‘For the sake of God, shave my hair.’ Then you give me a present. Have you ever known of anyone doing a deed for the sake of God and taking payment for it?”

* * * * *

A thief had been hanged in Baghdad. Jonaid went and kissed his feet

“Why did you do that?” he was asked.

“A thousand compassions be upon him!” he replied. “He proved himself a true man at his trade. He did his work so perfectly, that he gave his life for it.”

* * * * *

One night a thief entered Jonaid’s room. Finding nothing there but a shirt he took that and fled. Next day Jonaid was passing through the bazaars when he saw his shirt in the hands of a broker who was selling it to a customer.

“I require an acquaintance who will testify that it is your property, before I buy it” the prospective purchaser said “I am ready to testify that it belongs to him,” said Jonaid, stepping forward

The man then bought the shirt.

* * * * *

An old woman came to Jonaid and said “My son is missing. Say a prayer that he may return.”

“Be patient” Jonaid told her

The woman waited patiently for several days. Then she returned.

“Be patient” Jonaid repeated.

This happened several times. At last the old woman came and announced, “My patience is exhausted. Pray to God.”

“If you speak the truth,” said Jonaid, “your son has returned. God says, *He who answers the constrained, when he calls unto Him.*”

Jonaid then offered up a prayer. When the woman returned to her house: her son had come.

* * * * *

A disciple formed the notion that he had attained the degree of perfection.

“It is better for me to be alone,” he thought.

So he withdrew into a corner and sat there for a space. It so fell out that ever, night he was brought a camel and told, “We will convey you to Paradise.” He would sit on the camel and ride until he arrived at a pleasant and cheerful spot thronged with handsome folk and abounding in choice dishes and running water. There he would remain till dawn; then he would fall asleep, and awake to find himself in his cell. He now became proud and very conceited.

“Every night I am taken to Paradise,” he would boast

His words came to Jonaid’s ears. He at once arose and proceeded to his cell, where he found him putting on the greatest airs. He asked him what had happened, and he told the whole story to the shaikh.

“Tonight when you are taken there” Jonaid told him “say thrice, ‘There is no strength nor power save with God, the Sublime: the Almighty.’”

That night the disciple was transported as usual. He disbelieved in his heart what the Shaikh had told him; nevertheless,

when he reached that place he uttered as an experiment “There is no strength nor power.” The company all screamed and fled and he found himself on a dunghill with bones lying before him. Realizing his error, he repented and repaired to Jonaid’s circle. He had learned that for a disciple to dwell alone is mortal poison.

* * * * *

A disciple of Jonaid’s was dwelling in seclusion in Basra. One night a sinful thought entered his mind. He looked in a mirror and saw that his face turned black. Stupefied, he tried every device he could think of, but I vain. He was so ashamed that he showed his face to no one. Three days went by, then the blackness gradually grew less.

Unexpectedly a knock came on his door.

“Who is it?” the disciple asked

“I have come with a letter from Jonaid,” said the caller.

The discipline read the letter

“Why do you not conduct yourself becomingly in the presence of Glory? For three days and nights I have had to work as a fuller, to change your face from black to white.”

* * * * *

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* * * * *

There was a certain disciple of Jonaid’s who was taken to task one day over a small matter. Shame faced, he fled and came no more to the convent. Several days later Jonaid was passing through the market with his companions when he suddenly espied that disciple. The disciple in shame took to his heels.

“A bird of ours has flown from the snare,” said Jonaid, turning back his companions, and following on the disciple’s heels.

Looking back, the disciple saw the shaikh coming, so he quickened his pace. Presently he reached a place where there was no exit and in shame he turned his face to the wall. Presently the shaikh appeared on the scene.

“Where are you making for, master?” the disciple asked.

“When a disciple is up against the wall, there the shallch can be of use,” replied Jonaid.

He then led the disciple back to the convent The disciple fell at his feet and begged God’s forgiveness. Those who witnessed the spectacle were deeply moved, and many repented.

* * * * *

Jonaid had eight special disciples who carried out his every thought. One day the notion occurred to them that they must go to the holy war. Next morning Jonaid ordered his servant to make all preparations for the wars. He then set out to fight together with those eight disciples.

When the lines of battle were drawn up, a champion stepped forth from the ranks of the infidels and martyred all eight.

“I looked up to heaven,” said Jonaid, “and I saw nine litters standing by .As each of the eight was martyred his spirit was lifted up on a litter, until one remained over empty. That one must be meant for me,’ I thought, and I joined the battle-ranks once more. Then the champion who had slain my eight companions came up and addressed me. ‘Abo ‘l-Qasem, that ninth litter is for me. You return to Baghdad, and be the Shaikh of the community. Offer me Islam.*

“So he became a Muslim. With the same sword with which he had slain the eight disciples, he slew a like number of infidels. Then he achieved martyrdom himself His soul” Jonaid concluded, “was also placed in that litter, and all vanished.”

* * * * *

There was a sayyid called Naseri who was on the pilgrimage intent. When he reached Baghdad he went to visit Jonaid.

“Whence comes the sayyid?” Jonaid enquired when greetings had been said.

“From Gilan,” he replied.

“Of whose sons are you?” asked Jonaid.

“I am descended from Ali the Prince of the Believers, God be well pleased with him” the man answered.

“Your forefather wielded two swords,” said Jonaid. “One against the unbelievers, the other against himself. Now, sayyid, you who are his son, which of these two do you employ?”

The sayyid wept bitterly when he heard these words and grovelled before Jonaid.

“Master, my pilgrimage is here,” he exclaimed. “Show me the way to God.”

“Your breast is the private sanctuary of God,” said Jonaid. “So far as you are able, admit naught unsanctified into the private sanctuary.”

“That is all I want to know,” said the sayyid.

The death of Junaid

When death was near at hand Jonaid bade them to lay the table and set out a meal.

“I wish to given up the gost whilst my companions are eating a bowl of soup”

The first agony assailed him.

“Give me the water of ablution,” he said.

By chance they forgot to let the water run between his fingers. At his behest this slip was made goods, and he then proceeded to the prostration, weeping.

“Chief of the Order,” his disciples protested, “with all the service and obedience to God which you have sent ahead of you what time is this for prostration?”

“Never was Joinaid more in need than now,” he replied.

Straightway he began to recite the Koran, and went on reciting.

“What, you recite the Koran?” asked a disciple.

“Who has the better right to than I, seeing that this hour the scroll of my life will be rolled up, and I shall see my seventy years’ obedience and service suspended in the air by a single thread? Then a wind will come and swing it to and fro, so that I shall not know whether it is a wind bringing separation or union. On one side of me will stretch the causeway between Heaven and Hell and on the other side the Angel of death. The Judge whose attribute is justice will be there awaiting me, unwavering in perfect equity.” Jonaid continued, “A road has been laid before me and I know not by which road I shall be taken.”

He completed the whole Koran, then he recited seventy verses of the Sura of the Cow. The second agony seized him.

“Say Allah” they prompted him.

“I have not forgotten,” he replied. He grasped the rosary until four of his fingers were crooked about it and one let it go.

“In the Name of God, the Merciful the Compassionate” he cried.

And he closed his eyes and yielded up the ghost

When the time for washing his body came, the one performing the the wished to bathe his eyes in water. A voice cried from Heaven, “Withhold your hand from the eyes of My friend. His eyes were closed upon My Name, and shall not be opened

save at the meeting with Me.” He then tried to open ionaid’s fingers. The voice cried, “The finger that has been crooked upon Niy Name shall not be opened save by My command.”

When they lifted up his body on the bier, a white dove perched upon a corner of the bier. For all that they sought to drive it away, it would not go. At last the dove cried, “Trouble not yourselves and me. My claws have been fastened to the corner of the bier by the nail of Love. That is why I am perched here. Do not trouble yourselves; today his body passes to the care of the cherubim. Were it not for your clamour, his body would have flown with us in the like a white falcon.”

**In The Name of Allah,
The Beneficent, The Merciful**

**A Life - Sketch of Ghauth
Al-Azam Hazreth Mohy-Ud-Din Sayyid
Abdul Qadir Gilani (RAA)**

Hazret Sayyid Abu Muhammad Abdul Qadir(RAA) was born in Naif in the District of Gilani in Persia in the month of Ramadan in the year 470 A.H. corresponding to 1077 of the Christian era or thereabout. His father's name was Abu Salih, a God-fearing man and a direct descendant of Hazrat Imam Hasan, the eldest son of Hazrat Ali, Karrammallahu Wajhu the Holy Prophet's first cousin, and of Bibi Fatima (may Allah's blessings be upon her) his beloved daughter. His mother was the daughter of a saintly person - Abdullah Sawmai who was a direct descendant of Imam Hussian, the younger son of Hazrat Ali and Bibi Fatima. Thus Hazreth Sayyid Abdul Qadir (RAA) was both Hasani and Husaini (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all).

He breathed his last in 561 A.H. (1166 C.E) , at the age of ninety-one. The day was the 11th of Rabiussani. This date is commemorated by his admirers up to this day and is known as Giarwin Sharif in the Indo-Pakistan sub - continent. His discourses has been collected as 'Futhu al Ghaib' The revelations

of the unseen. The first eleven, seventy fifth, seventy seven and seventy seventh discourses are extracted herein.

Futuh Al-Ghaib or The Revelations of The Unseen

**BY HAZRETH GHAUS - AL.AZAM HAZRETH SHAIKH
MOHINDDIN ABDUL QADIR GILANI (RAA)**

The First Discourse

Three things are indispensable for a believer in all conditions of life: he should keep the commandments of Allah; he should abstain from the forbidden things; and he should be pleased with the decree of Providence. Thus the least that is expected of a believer is that he should not be without these three things. So it is meant that he should make up his mind for this and talk to himself about this and keep his organs engaged in this.

The Second Discourse

Follow faithfully in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and do not create innovation and remain obedient to Allah and His Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and do not transgress; and uphold the Unity of Allah and do not ascribe any partner to Him; and conceive Him in His Holiness and do not ascribe any evil to Him;; and maintain His truth and do not give way to doubt; and remain patient and do not show impatience; and remain firm and do not run away, and apply to him for your needs but do not feel annoyed but wait; and be united in obedience and do not be disunited; love one another and do not bear spite towards one another; and keep free from vices and do not be contaminated or defied by them; and beautify yourselves with obedience to your

Lord; and do not remain away from the doors of your Master; and do not refrain from being attentive to Him; and do not delay your repentance and return to Him; and do not feel weary of making excuses to your Creator at any time during day and night: (if you do so) may be mercy will be shown to you and you will have good luck and be kept away from hell-fire and given a happy life in paradise and be united with Allah and enjoy the blessings of Allah together with the company of virgins in the Abode of Peace, and in that state abide for ever; and ride good horses and be happy with white - eyed Hurs and various kinds of scents and melodies of female slaves together with those other blessings; and be exalted in the company of Prophets and Siddiqs (perfected men of truth) and Shahids (i.e. dedicated witnesses to the cause of truth) and Salehs (i.e. ordinary men of piety free from glaring sins) in the high heaven.

The Third Discourse

And he said (may Allah be pleased with him)

When the servant of Allah is in a trial he first tries to escape from it with his own efforts, and when he fails in this he seeks the help of others from among men such as the kings and men of authority, people of the world, men of wealth, and in the case of illness and physical suffering, from physicians and doctors; but if the escape is not secured by these he then turns towards his Creator and Lord the Great and Mighty and applies to Him with prayer and humility and praise.

So long as he finds the resources in his own self he does not turn towards the people and so long as he finds resources in the people he does not turn towards the Creator.

Further, when he does not get any help from Allah he throws himself in His persence and continues in this state, begging and

praying and humbly entreating and praising and submitting his neediness in fear and hope. Allah the Great and Mighty however, tires him out in his prayer and does not accept it until he is completely disappointed in all the means of the world. The decree of Allah and His work then manifest themselves through him and this servant of Allah passes away from all the worldly means and the activities and efforts of the world and retains just his soul.

At this stage he sees nothing but the work of Allah the Great and Mighty and becomes, of necessity, a believer in the unity of Allah (Towhid) to the degree of certainty, that in reality there is not doer of anything excepting Allah and no mover and stopper excepting Him and not good and no evil and no loss and no gain and no benefit and no conferring and no withholding and no opening and no benefit and no closing and no death and no life and no honour and no dishonor and no affluence and no poverty but in the hand of Allah.

He then becomes in the presence of Allah as a sucking baby in the hands of its nurse or a dead body in the hands of the person who gives it the funeral bath or a ball before the stick of the poloplayer - kept revolving and rolling and changing position after position and condition after condition and he feels no strength either in his own self or in others besides himself for any movement. He thus vanishes from his own self out into the work of his Master.

So he sees nothing but his Master and His work, and hears and understands nothing excepting Him. If he sees anything it is His work and if he hears and knows anything, he hears His word and knows through His knowledge and he becomes gifted with His gifts and becomes lucky through His nearness and through his nearness he becomes decorated and honoured and becomes pleased and comforted and satisfied with His promise and is drawn towards His word and he feels aversion for the is

repelled from those besides Him and he desires and relies on His remembrance and he becomes established in Him, the Great and Mighty, and relies on Him and obtains guidance from, and clothes and dresses himself with, the light of His knowledge and is apprised of the rare points of His knowledge and of the secrets of His power and he hears and remembers only from Him the Great, the Mighty, and then offers thanks and praise therefore and takes to prayer.

The Fourth Discourse

Said he (may Allah be pleased with him):

When you are dead to the creation, it will be said to you:

“May Allah have mercy on you,” and Allah will make you die out of the desires of the flesh. And when you die out of the desires of the flesh it will be said to you: “May Allah have mercy on you.” Then He will give you death in your will and desires; and when you are dead in your will and desires, it will be said to you: “May Allah have mercy on you,” and He will restore you to (a new) life.

Now you will be given a life after which there is not death, and you will be enriched with wealth after which there is no poverty; and you will be awarded a gift after which there will be no obstruction, and you will be made happy with happiness after which there will be no sorrow and misery, and you will be blessed with a blessing after which there will be no adversity; and; you will be equipped with knowledge after which there will be no ignorance; and you will be given a security after which there will be no fear; and you will be made to prosper so as not to be unlucky; and will be honoured so as not to be dishonoured; and you will be made near (to Allah) so as not to be kept away; and you will be exalted so as not to be lowered; and you will be

honoured so as not to be abused; and you will be purified so as not to be polluted any more; then you will be the fulfilment of all hopes and the (flattering) remarks (of people) will assume reality in your case; you will then become the philosopher's stone so much so that you will elude being recognised (in your elevated position), and you will be so exalted that you will have no like of yourself, unique that you will have no peer and no equal. You will become unique and peerless, most hidden and most secret.

You will then become the successor of every Messenger and Prophet of Allah and every Truthful man (siddiq). You will become the finishing point of all saintliness (wilayat) and the living saints will flock to you. And through you will the difficulties be solved and through your prayers will be clouds, rain and the fields yield harvest; through your prayers will be removed the calamities and troubles of the rank and file of people (in the country) of even those living in the frontiers, of the rulers and the subjects, of the leaders and the followers and of all creators. So you will be the police officer (so to speak) for cities and people.

The people will traverse distances and hasten towards you and they will bring gifts and offerings and render you service, in every condition of life, by the permission of the Creator of things. The tongues of people will (at the same time) be busy everywhere with applause and praise for you. And no two persons of faith will differ with regards to you! The best of those who live in populated areas and those who travel about, this is the grace of Allah and Allah is the Possessor of mighty grace.

The Fifth Discourse

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

When you see the world in the hands of those who are of it, with its decorations and vanities, its deceptions and snares,

and its fatal poison of which the outside is soft to touch and the inside injurious and which is quick to destroy and kill whosoever touches it and deceives them with it and keeps them indifferent towards its evils and treacheries and breaches of promises- when you see all this, be like one who sees a man answering the call of nature, exposing his private parts and emitting bad smell thereby. As (in such circumstances) you refrain from looking towards his nakedness and shut your nose from the bad odour and foul smell, similarly you should act towards the world; when you see it, turn away your sight from its tinsels and close your nose against the foul smell of its sensualities and gross enjoyments, so that you may remain safe from it and its trails, while what is appointed as your portion will come to you all right and you will enjoy it. Allah said to His chosen Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):”And do not cast your-look of greed on what We have given certain classes of them to enjoy of the splendour-of this world’s life, that We may thereby try them and the sustenance given by Your Lord is better and more abiding” (The Holy Qur’an, xx-131)

The Sixth Discourse

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

Vanish from the people by the command of Allah and from your desire by His order, and from your will by His action, so that you may become fit to be the vessel of the knowledge of Allah. Now the sign of your vanishing from the people is that you should be completely cut off from them and from all social contacts with them and make your mind free from all expectations for what is in their control.

And the sign of your vanishing from your desires is that you should discard all efforts for and contact with worldly means in acquiring any benefit and avoiding any harm and you should not move yourself in your own interest and not rely on yourself in

matters concerning yourself and not protect yourself nor help yourself, but leave the whole thing entirely to Allah because He had the charge of it in the beginning and so will He have it till the end, just as the charge rested on Him when you were hidden in the womb (of your mother) as also when you were being suckled as a baby in the cradle.

And the sign of your vanishing from your will by the action of Allah is that you should never entertain any resolve and that you should have no objective, nor should any feeling of need be left in you nor any purpose, because you will not have any objective other than the one of Allah. Instead, the action of Allah will be manifested in you, so that at the time of the operation of the will and act of Allah you will maintain passivity of the organs of your body, calmness of your heart, broadness of your mind, and keep your face shining and your inside flourishing and you will be above the need of things because of your connection with their Creator. The hand of power will keep you in movement and the tongue of Eternity will be calling you and the Lord of the Universe will be teaching you and will clothe you with light from Himself and with spiritual dress and will install you in the ranks of past men of knowledge.

After this (experience) you will ever remain broken down so that neither any sensual desire nor any will stays in you, like a broken vessel which retains neither any water nor any dreg. And you will be devoid of all human actions so that your inner self will accept nothing but the will of Allah. At this stage miracles and supernatural things will be ascribed to you. These things will be seen as it proceeding from you whereas in fact they will be acts of Allah and His will.

Thus you will be admitted in the company of those whose hearts have been smashed and their animal passions have vanished, whereafter they have been inspired with Divine will and

new desires of the daily existence. It is in reference to this stage that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says: “Three things out of your world have been made dear time-perfume, women, and prayer, wherein has been reposed the coolness of my eyes” Indeed things have been ascribed to him after they have first gone out of and vanished from him, as we have already hinted. Allah says, “I am with those who are broken-hearted on account of Me.”

So Allah the Exalted will not be with you unless all your desires and your will are smashed. And when they are smashed and nothing is left in you are fit for nothing but Him, Allah will create you afresh and will give you a new will-power where with to will. And if in the newlycreated will there is found again even the slightest tinge of yourself, Allah the Exalted will break this one also, so that you will always remain broken-hearted. In this way, He will go on creating new wills in you and on yourself being found in it, He will smash it every time, till at last the destiny reaches its end and the meeting (of the Lord) takes place. And this is the meaning of the Divine words: “I am with those who are broken-hearted on My account.” And the meaning of our words: “Yourself being found in it” is that you get fixed up and satisfied in your new desires.

Allah says in one of His unofficial revelations to the Holy Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) (called *Hadithe Qudsi*): “My faithful servant constantly seeks My nearness through optional prayers till I make him my friend and when I make him my friend, I became his ear with which he hears, and his eyes with which he sees, and his hands with which he holds(things), and his legs with which he walks, i.e. he hears through Me, sees through Me, holds through Me and understands through Me.” This is undoubtedly the state of *fana* (or selfannihilation). And when you are annihilated in respect of;

yourself and the creation and since the creation is good or bad, as you yourself are good or bad, you will be in no expectation of any good from them nor fear any evil from them. All that will be left will be now of Allah alone, as it was before He started creation, and in His ordination lie good and evil.

So He will give you safety from the evil of His creation and will submerge you under the ocean of His good; thus you will become the focussing point of all that is good and the springhead of all blessings and happiness and pleasure and light and peace and tranquility. So fana or self-annihilation is the aim and object and the final end and base of the journey of the saints. All the previous saints in their different stages of development have been asking for persistent efforts for changing their own will to the will of Allah. All of them unto the end of their life annihilated their own will and transformed in into the will of Allah. This is why they are called Abdal (a word derived from Badala meaning “change”). Thus in the veiw of these personages it is a sin to associate their own will with the will of Allah.

And in the event of forgetfulness and overwhelming emotion and fear, Allah the Great comes to their help with His mercy by reminding and awakening them, so that they return from their forgetfulness and seek the protection of their Lord because there is no one absolutely free from the blemish of will excepting the angels. The angles are maintained in the purity of their will and the Prophets are maintained in their freedom from the desires of the flesh and the rest of the creation among the Jinn and the Human beings charged with the responsibility of more behaviour are not protected in either way. Of course, the saints are protected from the desires of the flesh and the Abdal from the impurity of will or motive. But even these cannot be regarded as free from these two respective evils because it is possible for them to be inclined towards these two weaknesses at

times, but Allah overtakes them with His mercy and brings them to their senses.

The Seventh Discourse

He (Allah be pleased with him) said:

Get out from your own self and be away from it and be a stranger to your sense of self and surrender everything to Allah and become His gatekeeper at the door of your heart and keep His commandments by admitting whomever he permits to be admitted and honour His prohibition by keeping out everything which He forbids so as not to allow the desire of the flesh to get into your heart after it has gone out of it. And to expel the desire of the flesh from the heart one has to put up resistance to it and refuse subordination to it in all conditions, and to admit it into the heart means to acknowledge subordination to it and to make alliance with it. So do not will anything which is not the will of Allah. Any will of yours which is not the will of Allah is a desire of the flesh, which is, so to say, the wilderness of the fools and it is death for you and a cause of falling away from the sight of Allah and of screening Him away from yourself, if you are in this wilderness. Always guard the commandment of Allah and abstain from His prohibitions and surrender to Him always in all that He has ordered and do not associate with Him anything from His creation. Thus your will and your desire and your passions are all His creations. So do not will anything nor desire anything nor indulge in any passion so that you may not prove to be a polytheist, Allah says:

“Whoever hopes to meet his Lord he should do good deeds, and not join anyone in the service of his Lord.” (xviii-110)

Polytheism consists not merely in idol-worship. It is also polytheism to follow the desire of the flesh and to adopt

anything of this world and of the hereafter in association with Allah. Because whatever is, besides Allah is not the Master. Thus when you are engaged in anything which is besides Him you are undoubtedly associating that other thing with Allah. Therefore beware and do not rest, and fear and do not feel secure, seek and do not remain indifferent; then alone will you attain security. And do not ascribe any condition and position of yours to your own self and do not claim anything among these for yourself. Thus if you are placed in any condition or raised to any position do not speak of it to anyone. Because in the changing of circumstances from day to day, the glory of Allah manifests itself in an ever-new aspect: and Allah intervenes between His servants and their hearts. It may be that the things about which you speak may be removed from you and the thing which you think to be permanent and abiding may undergo a change so that you will be put to shame before those to whom you spoke about them. You should rather reserve the knowledge of this within your own self and should not communicate it to others. Then if the thing continues to existence know it to be the gift of Allah and ask for power to be thankful and for an increase in the favours of Allah, But if the thing ceases to exist it will bring progress in knowledge and light and wakefulness and regard. Allah says:

“Whatever communication we abrogate or cause it to be forgotten, we bring one better than it or like it. Do you; not know it that Allah has power over all things? (ii 106)

So do not consider Allah to be powerless in anything and do not ascribe any shortcoming to His decree and His procedure and do not entertain doubt about His promise. In this matter let there be an example for virtuous conduct in the Holy Prophet of Allah. Verses and chapters that were revealed to him and were adopted in practice were recited in the mosques and written in books, even these were taken up and changed and replaced by others and

attention of the Holy Prophet (may Alla's peace and blessings be upon him) was directed towards these new revelations which replaced the old ones. This happened in the external law.

As for the inner things and knowledge and spiritual state which obtained between him and Allah, he used to say that his heart used to be clouded and he used to seek the protection of Allah seventy times each day, and it is also narrated that a hundred times a day the Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) used to be taken from one condition to another and from this to still another and thus he would be made to attain higher and higher stages in the nearness of Allah and stages in his match in the unseen and the robe of light with which he was clothed used to be changed accordingly, every progressive step making the previous stage appear dark and defective in comparison and comparatively faulty in respect of obedience to the commandments. So he used to receive instructions for the asking of protection from Allah because the best of all states in a servant is the state of seeking protection and of turning to Allah. This is because in it there is acknowledgement of his sin and fault and these are the two qualities which are found in a servant in all conditions of his life and which belong to him as a heritage from Adam (peace be on him) who was the father of mankind and the chosen one of Allah. When the darkness of forgetfulness to the promise and covenant besmirched to clearness of his spiritual condition and he manifested the desire to abide in the abode of peace and in the neighbourhood of the Beneficent and Benevolent Friend (Allah), and he wished for the coming of honoured angels to him with blessings and peace, at that time his personal desire manifested itself and the will of Adam was found mixed up with the will of Allah. So this will of his was smashed and the first state was made to disappear and the nearness to Allah then existing was taken away and his the then position slipped away from him and the light of faith that was with him

was changed into darkness and the purity of his spirit was thereby darkened. Then this chosen one of Allah was reminded (of his fault) and was made to acknowledge his sin and mistake and was instructed to admit his fault and imperfection.

Then said Adam (peace be on him), “Our Lord! we have been unjust to our own souls and if Thou will not forgive us and have mercy on us we shall most surely be among the loser.” Then came to him the light of guidance and the knowledge of repentance and the knowledge of reality consequent thereon; and the knowledge of the wisdom that was hidden in the incident before this and would not be revealed but for this incident, then Allah turned towards them mercifully so that they might repent. Then that purpose of his (Adam’s) was changed for another and his previous condition also and there came to him the higher state of saintliness (Wilayat) and he was given a station in this world and in the hereafter. Thus did this world become a living place for him and his progeny and the hereafter the place for their return and eternal rest.

Thus thou shouldst take the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) who is His friend and the chosen one, and his great ancestor Adam the chosen of Allah, both of whom were among the friends of Allah, as your example in the confession of your fault and in seeking His protection from sins and in the adoption of humility and meekness in all conditions of life.

The Eighth Discourse

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

When you are in a particular condition do not wish for another condition either higher or lower. Thus when you are at the palace gate of the King do not wish for an entrance into the

palace unless you are made to enter it by compulsion and not of your own accord. And by compulsion I mean a stern order which is repeated. And do not consider it enough to have the mere permission for entrance, because this may just be a trick and a deception from the King. You should rather hold your patience till you are compelled to enter the house by the sheer force of command from and action of the King. For then you will not be overtaken by any chastisement from the King on account of this action of His own. If, however, you meet with any punishment it will be on account of the evil of your liking and greed and impatience and unmannerliness and want of contentment with the condition of life you were in. Then when it so happens that you enter the palace under such a compulsion, enter it in all silence and with your looks cast down, observing proper manners and being attentive to whatever you are commanded to do by way of any service and occupation, without asking for any promotion in the station of life. Allah said to His Prophet Muhammad, His chosen one (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him):

“And do not stretch your eyes after that with which We have provided different classes of them, of the splendour of this world's life, that We may thereby try them; and the sustenance (given) by your Lord is better and more abiding”.(xxx-131).

Thus by His words, “The sustenance (given) by your Lord is better and more abiding.” Allah administers an admonition to His Holy Prophet, the chosen one (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) to make him regardful of the existing condition and to remain contented with the gifts of Allah. To put this commandment in other words, “Whatever I have given you of good things and prophethood and knowledge and contentment and patience and kingdom of religion and fighting for the sake of religion - all these are better and worthier than what I have given to others”. Thus all good lies in being regardful of the existing

condition and in being contended with it and in warding off all desires for anything which is besides it, because such a thing must be either one that is allotted to you or one which is allotted to another person or the one which is allotted to nobody, but has been created by Allah as a trial. So if it is destined for you, it is bound to come to you, whether you like it or dislike it, It is not proper, therefore, that any unmannerliness should be manifested from you or any greed in your desire for it, because it is disapproved by another man, why should you bear hardships for a thing which you cannot get and which is never to reach your hands. And if it is a thing which is not to fall to the lot of anyman that is only a trial; how can an intelligent person like and approve that he should ask for himself a trial and actively seek for it? Thus it is proved that good and safety lies wholly in paying regard to the existing condition. Then when you are made to climb up to the upper storey and from there to the roof of the palace you should observe, as we have already stated, respectfulness, silence and good manners. Nay you should do more than this because you are now nearer the King and closer to dangers. So do not desire any change from your existing state to any other state, higher or lower, nor should you desire either for its continuity and permanence or for any change in it. Nay, you should have no option whatsoever in the matter because that will amount to ingratitude in respect of the existing blessings and such a sense of ingratitude, of necessity, renders him, who is guilty of this, abased in this life and the hereafter. So keep on acting as we have told you, until you are raised to a position where you will be granted a fixed status wherefrom you will not be removed, you should then know that it is a gift of Allah accompanied as it is with the manifestation of its indications and signs. You should, therefore, stick to it and not allow your-self to be removed from it. The Ahwal (states of spiritual changes) being to the Awliya (ordinary saints) whereas Muqamat (stations of spiritual establishment) to Abdal (or advanced saints).

The Ninth Discourse

He (Allah be pleased with him) said:

Such acts of Allah are manifested to the *Awliya* and the *Abdal* in the course of *Kashf* (spiritual vision) and *Mushahida* (spiritual experience) as overwhelm the reasoning power of man and shatter into pieces all habits and customs. This manifestation is of two other kinds – one of them is called *Jalal* (majesty and glory), and the other *Jamal* (gracefulness). The *Jalal* produces a disquieting fear & creates a disturbing apprehension and overpower the heart in such an awful manner that its symptoms become visible on the physical body. Thus it is narrated of the holy prophet *Muhammad* (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that during prayer a simmer very much like that of a boiling cauldron could be heard from his heart and this on account of the intensity of fear caused by his observing the majesty of *Allah*, an experience which also revealed to him his glory. And similar things are reported from prophet *Ibrahim (Abraham)* alaihissalam the friend of Allah and Caliph Hazrat Umar (peace of Allah be on both).

The experience of Allah's graceful manifestation however, is His reflection on the heart of man producing light, joy, elegance and sweet words and loving conversation and glad tidings with regard to great gifts and high position and closeness to Himself, where to all their affairs are eventually to return, and in the allotment of which in the beginning of time the pen of destiny became dried which were appointed in the remote past. This is a favor from Him and mercy and a confirmation meant for them is this world till the completion of time which is appointed this is done so that they may not exceed the limits of appropriate love in the sheer intensity of their desire for it and thereby their hearts may not break and they meet with destruction or become weakened by their standing in servitude till the time there comes to them certainly by which we mean death. He does this with

them just out of Kindness and mercy and regard also by way of training their hearts out of affection because he is Wise, Knowing, gentle towards them and kind. So it is that it is related to the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he used to say to Hazrath Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) who used to sound the call for prayers: “Cheer our heart, O Bilal.” What he meant was that he should sound the call of prayers so that the Holy Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) might enter the state of prayer to experience those graceful manifestations of Allah which we have already discussed. This is why the Holy Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said. “ and the coolness of my eyes has been reposed in prayer.

The Tenth Discourse

He (Allah be pleased with him) said:

Verily there is nothing expecting Allah and your self and you are the addresser, and the self of man is opposed to Allah and inimical to Him and all things are subordinate to Allah and the self of man really belongs to Allah as a creation and as a possession and the self of a man entertains presumptions wherefrom arise false hopes and passions and sensual pleasure. So if you ally yourself with truth by opposing your self and becoming hostile to it you will belong to Allah and become inimical to your self. Thus Allah said to Prophet Dawood (David) (peace be on him); “O Dawood (David), I am your unavoidable resort, so hold firmly to this resort; true servitude consist in your becoming inimical to your own self for My sake.” It is then that your friendliness towards Allah and servitude of Him will become a proved fact. And it is then that you will get your share of things holy, wholesome and pleasant. You will then become dear and honorable and everything will become your servant and

render you homage and will be afraid of you, because all of them are subordinate to their Allah and in harmony with Him, since He is their Creator and Originator and they acknowledge their servitude to Him. Allah says:

“And there is nothing that does not glorify Him with His praises, but you do not understand their prayer”.

This means that everything in this universe is conscious of His presence and obeys His commands. And Allah of might and glory said: Then He said to it and to the world: “Come you both willingly and unwillingly and they both said: “We come willingly”.

Thus all servitude consists in opposing your self and your carnal desires. Allah says:

“Do not follow your low desires because they will lead you astray from the path of Allah. (Xxxviii-26).

He has also said:

“Shun your low desires because there is nothing that contends with Me in My kingdom expecting the carnal desire of man.”

And there is a famous incident related of Abu Yazid Bustami (may Allah’s mercy be upon him) that when he saw Allah the Almighty in his dream, he asked Him, “How is one to get to You?” Allah said, “Discard your-self and come to Me.” “Then,” continues the saint, “I got out of my self as a snake gets out of its slough.” Thus, all good lies in fighting one’s self in everything and in all conditions of life. If therefore, you are in a state of piety oppose your self so much so that you may keep away from the forbidden things of the people and their doubtful things and from their acts of help and from depending on them and putting any reliance on them or from any fear from them or from coveting what they possess of the vanities of the world.

Thus you should not expect any gift from them by way of present or alms or charity or by way of redemption for certain lapses in a fulfillment of some vow. You should, therefore, free your self from all concern about the means of the world in all their various aspects so much so that if you have for a relation who is wealthy do not desire his death with a view to inheriting his wealth. Thus you should get out of the creation with a strenuous effort and consider them like a gate that closes and opens and like tree which sometimes yields fruit and at other times remains barren and (know that) every such event is the doing of a doer and planned by a planner and He is Allah, so that you may be believer in the oneness of Allah.

And do not forget at the same time the position of human efforts so as not to fall a victim to the creed of the fatalists (Jabariyya), and believe that no action attains its fulfillment but in Allah, the Exalted. You should not, therefore, worship them and thus forget Allah nor should you say that the actions of men proceed from anything but from Allah because if you say so you will become an unbeliever and belongs to the category of people known as Qadriya (believers in the doctrine that men have absolute control over the origin and cause of actions). You should rather say that actions belong to Allah in points of creation and to men in point of efforts, and this is the view that has been handed down to us by traditions which relate to the discussions on rewards and punishments.

And execute the commandment of Allah pertaining to them (people) and set apart your own share from them by His commandment and do not exceed this limit because the order of Allah will stand and it will judge you as well as them; do not be the judge yourself. And your being with them (people) is a decree of Allah and this decree of Allah is in darkness, so enter this darkness with a lamp which is also the judge and this is the

Book of Allah and the practice of His Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Do not go beyond these two. But if there arises in your mind any thought or you receive any revelation, submit them before the Book of Allah and the practice of His Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).

And if you find in these (authorities) a prohibition against what has occurred to you or been received by you through revelation, such as if it is revealed to you that you should commit fornication or take to usury to keep company with immoral people or something else in the line of sinfulness, keep away from such a course of action and abstain from it and do not accept it and do not act upon it and remain firm in your conviction that this must be from devil the accursed and if you find in these two authorities just an allowance for the things revealed to you such as fulfillment of lawful desires like eating, drinking, dressing or marrying, etc. abstain from it likewise and do not accept it and know that it is a suggestion of your animal self and its desires and that you are commanded to oppose it and be hostile to it.

And if you find in the Book of Allah and in the practice of the Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) neither any prohibition nor a mere permission for the thing received through revelation but is a thing which you cannot understand, such for instance as that you are asked to go to a certain place or meet such and such a righteous person whereas through the blessings of Allah bestowed on you in the form of knowledge and illumination you do not stand in need of going to that place or meeting the person mentioned, hold your patience in the matter and do not be in any hurry about it, so as to ask yourself: "Is it a revelation from Allah and should I act upon it?" Rather wait to decide on any step in the matter. And it is practice of Allah of power and glory to repeat such a revelation and to

command you to be quick in your efforts in the matter or to reveal such a sign which is revealed to the people of knowledge of Allah – a sign which is understandable only by the intelligent among the Awliya and the confirmed among the Abdal, and you should by no means be in any hurry matter and the ultimate purpose of the affair, nor are you aware of where lies a trail and a path of ruin, and subtle planning converted by Allah and an examination for you.

So you should be patient till Allah Himself becomes the doer of the thing in you. So when the act becomes distinctively of Allah and you are carried to such a position, if now any trail confronts you, you will be safely carried through it because Allah the Exalted will not chastise you for an action which is His own and it is certain that chastisement comes to you for your active participation in the happening of a thing.

And if you are in the state of reality and it is the state of *wilayat* (saintliness), then stand opposed to your passions and obey the commandments fully. And obedience to commandments is of two Kinds. One is that you should take from the world means subsistence to the extent of the just demands of yourself and that you should avoid indulging in sensual pleasure and performs your duties and engages yourself in warding off sins, open and secret. And the second kind relates to the hidden commandment; and it is the commandment of Allah with which He either enjoins His servant to do or forbids him doing anything. And this hidden commandment applies to things permissible, for which there is no positive injunction in the law, in the sense that they neither belong to the class of prohibited things, are nor to the class of things specified as obligatory, but are rather of an obscure nature where in the servant is given complete freedom to act, and these are called *Mubah*. In these the servant should not take any initiative, but wait for an order concerning them. When he

receives an order he obeys it. Thus all his movements and restful conditions become dedicated to Allah. If there is an injunction in law with regard to a certain thing, he acts in accordance with it, but if there is no injunction in the law, he acts on the hidden commandment. It is through these that he becomes confirmed as a man attaining reality.

And where there is not (even) this hidden commandment, and is just an act of Allah, it entails a state of resignation. And if you have attained the truth of truth which is otherwise called the state of immersion (mahw) or annihilator (fana) it is the state of the Abdal – who are brokenhearted on account of Him, a state belonging to pure monotheists, to men of spiritual enlightenment; to men of knowledge and (higher) intelligence (who are) chief of the chiefs, the wardens and protectors of people, the vicegerents of the beneficent, and his friends and confidants, peace be on them. To pay obedience to the commandment in such matters is to go against your own self and to be free from reliance on any ability and power and to be absolutely devoid of all will and purpose with regard to anything of this world and the hereafter. Thus you will become the servant of the king, and not of the kingdom of divine commandment and not of the desires of the flesh and will become like a baby in the care of a nature or a dead body at the time of funeral wash in the hands of the washer or an unconscious patient lying before the physician, in all matters that are outside the range of injunctions and prohibition.

The Eleventh Discourse

Said he (may Allah be pleased with him):

When the desire for marriage arises in your mind while you are poor and needy and you find yourself unable to afford it and you hold yourself in patience in expectation of relief from Allah whose power created in you such a desire, or who found

the desire in you. He himself will help you (either by removing the desire from you) or sustain you in bearing the burden of the same by making its resources accessible to you by way of gift, together with his blessings for sufficiency and making it light for you in this world and easy in the other. Then Allah will call you patient and grateful because of your patience in the matter and contentment with his providence towards which he has driven you with his blessings of sufficiency, your patience will change into gratitude and the Mighty and Glorious has promised the grateful ones increase in his gifts, as He says: “If you are grateful, I would certainly give you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe “. (xiv-7) towards it. and drive it away from your heart whether your animal self likes it or not. You should thus hold your patience and oppose your desire and hold fast to the commandment of the law. Be contented with the degree of providence and hope in this condition for the favor and gift of Allah. Indeed Allah Himself has said: “Only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure.”

The Seventy-Fifth Discourse

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

I admonish you to fear Allah and to obey Him and to adopt the externals of law and purity of heart and self-control and cheerful appearance and the habit of making gifts of useful things and removal of suffering and poverty and the guarding of the sanctity of spiritual people and good dealing with the fellow members of society and good counsel for the youngsters and to discard enmity with companions and to refrain from hoarding and to discard the companions of those who do not belong to the class of spiritual pilgrims and to render help in matters religious and worldly. And the reality of religious poverty is that you should not convey your needs to one who is like you and the reality of

affluence is that you should be above the need of creatures like yourself, *Tasawwuf* (spiritual culture) is obtained not through discussion and talk but through hunger and giving up of things liked and approved of. And do not keep your knowledge in the forefront while approaching a *Darwish*; rather keep gentleness as the leading demeanour, because a display of knowledge will make him uncomfortable whereas gentleness will make him feel at home. And *Tasawwuf* is based on eight qualities: (1) Generosity like that of Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) (2) Cheerful submission like that of Hazrat Ism'ail (Ishaq-Issac) (3) Patience like that of Hazrat Yaqub (Jacob) (4) Prayer like that of Hazrat Zakariyya (Zachariah) (5) Poverty like that of Hazrat Yahya (John) (6) Wearing of woollen clothes like that of Hazrat Musa (Moses) (7) Travelling about like that of Isa (Jesus) and (8) a life of poverty with resignation and content like that of Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and all the rest).

The Seventy-Sixth Discourse

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

I admonish you that you should associate with the rich with dignity and with the poor with humility. And it is incumbent on you to adopt humility and sincerity and this latter quality amounts to perpetual vision of the Creator. And do not blame Allah in respect of worldly means and be humble before Him in all conditions and do not damage the right of your brother relying on the fact that between you and him there is a friendship. And you should keep company with the *darwishes* with humility and good manners and liberality and kill yourself till you regain your life in spirituality. And the people who are nearest to Allah, the Mighty, the Glorious, are those who are most large-hearted in their behaviour. And the best of deeds is to guard one's own self from being inclined to what is besides Allah, the Great. And you

should keep on exhorting people to stick to truth and patience. And it is enough for you to keep company with the *darvishes* and to serve the *Awliya*.

And a *darvish* is he who is indifferent to everything besides Allah. And to attack one who is beneath you is cowardice and to do the same thing with one who is above you is shamelessness; whereas to attack one who is equal to you is bad manners. To adopt the life of a *darvish* and of a *sufi* needs an effort; and do not mix it up with anything which is in the nature of a joke. May Allah give us strength and you too. *O Wali!* it devolves on you to keep on remembering Allah in all conditions because it brings together all the good things and it is also your duty to adhere to the covenant of Allah because it wards off all injurious things. And it is also a duty of yours to remain prepared to meet all the events decreed by Allah, because they are bound to happen.

And know that you will be asked about your movements and your restful conditions; so keep yourself engaged with what is most suitable for a particular time and save your organs from useless occupations. It is further your duty to obey Allah and His Prophet and those who rule in the latter's place. Give them their dues and do not ask from them what is due from them and pray too for them in all conditions.

It is also necessary that you should think well of Muslims and bear good intentions in respect of them and try to secure for them everything that is good and that you should not spend any night while entertaining anything evil for any of them in your heart, nor any grudge nor any enmity. It is also necessary that you should pray for him who has been unjust to you and should fear Allah, the Mighty the Glorious. And it is also your duty to eat the lawful things only and to inquire from people possessed of the knowledge of Allah in matters which you do not know. You should also cultivate modesty in respect of Allah, the Mighty, the

Glorious, and keep company with Allah and keep company with what is besides Allah only to the extent of your requirements of the companionship of Allah.

And give in charity from your wealth every morning, and in the night offer the funeral prayer for everyone who has died among the Muslims on that day. And when you have finished your *Maghrib* (early evening) prayer, invoke a prayer of *istikbara* (seeking good in one's affairs). And you should repeat morning and evening seven times: *Allahumma ajirnaminan nar*, meaning: "O Allah! protect us from fire." And to stick to the prayers: *Anzubillah-is-smai-al-Alim minash Shaitan-ir-Rajim*, meaning: "I seek the refuge of Allah, the Hearing, the Knowing from Satan the accursed."

And then proceed to the glorification of Allah with the concluding words of Sura "Hashr," (lix.22-24) viz.

"He is Allah besides Whom there is no God: Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful; besides whom there is no God; the King, the Holy, the Author of peace, the Granter of security: Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness. Glory be to Allah, from what they set up (with Him).

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most excellent names; Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. Allah alone is the giver of strength and the helper, because there is no might and power excepting in Allah, the High, the Great

Excerpts from 'The Secret of Secrets'

HAZRETH GHOUSE-UL AZAM (RAA)

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and Merciful

Introduction

ALL PRAISE is due to Allah, as He is a magnificent, gracious in and compassionate Lord. Who has gathered all knowledge in His Essence and Who is the Creator of all knowledge for eternity. The cause, the reason of all existence is from His existence. All praise is due to Allah, as He has sent the Glorious Quran that bears in its essence the reason for its revelation, which is to remind men of Allah; He sent it to the guide who leads men on the path of truth with the mightiest of all religions. All peace and blessings be upon His beloved prophet Muhammad, who was not taught by man, but by Him. He is His last prophet, the last link in the chain of prophethood who was brought to a world gone astray, the most honoured among His prophets, honoured by the most honoured of divine books. His progeny are guides for seekers, his companions were chosen among the good and benevolent. May abundant peace and blessings be upon their souls.

Certainly the most honourable of valuable things, the highest, the priceless jewel, the most profitable object of trade among men, is knowledge. Only with wisdom can we attain the

unity of Allah, Lord of all the universes. Only with wisdom can we understand and follow His messengers and His prophets, peace and blessings be upon them. The men of knowledge, the wise men, are the pure servants of Allah whom He has chosen to receive divine messages. He has preferred them to other men by virtue of the grace He has poured upon them. They are the heirs of His prophets, their deputies, whom His messengers chose to be masters of men. They are connected to His prophets with the finest of feeling and with the wisest of intelligence.

Allah Most High praises the possessors of wisdom in His Quran:

The We have given the Book as an inheritance to those whom We have chosen from among Our servants: So some of them are those who wrong themselves and some of them are those who take the middle course (whose errors and good deeds are equal), and some of them are those who are foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's will. That is the greatest grace.

(Sura Fatir,32)

Then our Master, the Prophet of Allah (God bless him and grant him peace) praisethem, saying, ‘The holders of wisdom are the heirs of the prophets. The inhabitants of the heavens love them, and upon this earth even the fishes in the seas praise them until Domsday’. In another verse, Allah Most High credits the men of knowledge, describing them thus:

Certainly those of His servants who are possessed of knowledge fear Him.

(Sura Fatir,28)

Our Master the Prophet, says, ‘On the day of the Last Judgement Allah will gather men together, then separate the wise men from among them; and say to them, “O people of knowledge, I gave you My knowledge because I know you. I did not give you wisdom to punish you on this day. Enter My Paradise; I have forgiven you”’.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the universes, for He has given high stations to His devout servants to protect them from sin and to spare them punishment. He has blessed the wise by drawing near to them.

Some of our students asked us to prepare a book which would suffice them. In compliance with their wish and their need we have prepared this short book: may it heal and satisfy them and others. We named this book *Sirr al-asrar fi ma yabtaju ilaybi alabar* - "The Secret of Secrets of which the Righteous are in Need,. In this work the realities within our faith and our path are divulged. Everyone is in need of them.

In presenting this work we have divided it into twenty-four chapters because there are twenty-four letters in the sacred confession of Unity *La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammadan rasulullah* (There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah)_ and there are twenty-four hours in a day and a night.

On The Beginning of Creation

May Allah accord you success in acts which please Him and meet with His approval.

Think, impress upon your mind and understand what I say. Allah Most High first created, from the divine light of His own Beauty, the light of Muhammad. He declares this in a divine tradition related from Him by the Prophet.

I have created the soul of Muhammad from the light of My Manifestation (*wajb*).

This is declared by our Master the Messenger of Allah in his words, 'Allah first created my soul. He first created it as a divine light;' 'Allah created the Pen first;' 'Allah first created the Intellect.' What is meant by all that is mentioned as having been created first is the creation of the truth of Muhammad, the hidden reality of

Muhammad. He is also (like his Lord) called by many beautiful names. He is called Nur, the Divine Light, because he was purified of the darkness hidden under the attribute of the might and wrath (*jalal*) of Allah. Allah Most High says in His Holy Qur'an:

There has come to you from Allah a light and a perspicuous Book.
(*sura Ma'idah, 15*)

He is called the 'Total Intellect (*aql al kull*) because he saw and understood everything. He is called the Pen (*al-qalam*) because he spread wisdom and knowledge, and he poured knowledge into the realm of letters.

The soul of Muhammad is the essence of all beings, the beginning and the reality of the universe. He indicates this with the words, 'I am from Allah and the believers are from me'. Allah Most High created all souls from his soul in the realm of the first created beings, in the best of forms. 'Muhammad' is the name of all humanity in the realm of souls (*alam al-arwah*). He is the source, the home of each and everything.

Four thousand years after the creation of the light of Muhammad, Allah created the Heavenly Throne (*arsh*) from the light of the eye of Muhammad. He created the rest of creation from the Heavenly Throne. Then He sent the souls to descend to the lowest levels of creation, to the realm of this material world, to the realm of matter and bodies. Then We make him descend to the lowest of the low. (*Sura Tin, 5*) He sent that light from where it was created, from the Ultimate Realm (*alam al-lahut*) - which is the realm of the manifestation of Allah's Essence, of unity, of absolute being - to the realm of the divine Names, the manifestation of the divine attributes, the realm of the causal intelligence of the Total Soul. There He dressed the souls in robes of light. These souls are called 'sultan-souls'. Clothed in light they descended to the realm of the angels. There He clothed them

with the brilliant robes of angels, there they were called 'spiritual souls'. Then He caused them to descend to the world of matter, of water and fire, earth and ether, and they became human souls. Then from this world He created the bodies of flesh.

From it We created you and into it We shall return you, and from it raise you a second time.

(Sura Ta Ha, 55)

After these stages, Allah ordered the souls to enter into their bodies, and by His will they entered.

So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My soul ...

(Sura Sad 72)

A time came when these souls started binding themselves to the flesh and forgo their source and their covenant. They forgot that when Allah created them in the realm of souls He had asked them Am I not your Lord? and they had answered, Indeed! They forgot their promise, they forgot their source, their way to return home; but Allah is merciful, the source of all help and security for His creation. He had mercy upon them, so He sent divine books and messengers to them to remind them of their origin.

And certainly We sent Moses with Our messages (saying): Bring forth the people from darkness into light, and remind them of the days of Allah...

(Sura Ibrahim, 5)

That is 'Remind the souls of the days when they were in union with Allah.'

Many messengers have come to this world, fulfilled their duties, and passed away. The purpose of all was to bring men the message and awaken people to heedfulness. But people who remembered Him, who turned toward Him, people who wished to return to their divine origin, people who arrived at their origin, became fewer and fewer with time.

The prophets kept coming and the divine message continued until there appeared the great spirit of Muhammad, the last of the messengers who saved people from distraction. Allah Most High sent him to open the eyes of the hearts of the heedless. His purpose was to awaken them from the sleep of unconsciousness and to unite them with the Eternal Beauty, with the Cause, with the Essence of Allah. Allah says in His Holy Qur'an:

Say: This is my way. I call to Allah with the certainty of insight - I and those who follow me...

(Sura Yusuf. 108)

to indicate the path of our Master the Prophet.

The Messenger of Allah, to indicate our goal to us, says, 'My companions are like the stars in the sky. Whichever of them you follow, you will find the true path.'

This insight comes from the eye of the soul. This eye opens in the heart's heart of those who are close to Allah, who are Allah's friends. Allah the knowledge in the material world will not provide this insight: one needs a knowledge that comes from the hidden realms, a knowledge which overflows from divine consciousness:

... whom We hadtaught knowledge from Our Divine Presence.

(Sura Kahf.65)

What is necessary for man is to find those who have insight, whose eyes of the heart are open, and to be inspired by them. Such a teacher who inculcates knowledge into one has to be close to Allah and able to see into the Ultimate Realm.

O children of Adam, brothers and sister, wake up, repent, for through repentance you will be asking your Lord for His wisdom. Make an effort and strive! Allah commands you:

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for the righteous (who fear and love Allah):

Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others).

(Sura Al 'Imran, 133 -34)

Enter the path, join the spiritual caravan to return to your Lord. Soon the road will become impassable, and no travelling companion will be left. We did not come to this base, ruined world to rest; we were not sent here to eat, drink and defecate. The spirit of our Master, the Prophet of Allah, is watching you. He is pained, seeing your state. He knew what would come when he said, 'My pain is for my beloved people who will come in later times.'

Whatever comes to us comes in one of two forms, either evident or hidden: evident in the form of the precepts of the religion or hidden in the form of wisdom. Allah Most High orders us to render our exterior being harmonious by following the religious precepts and to put our inner being in order through acquiring wisdom. When the outer and the inner become one and wisdom and religion unite, one reaches the level of truth, like the fruit tree that first produces leaves, then buds, and then flowers that become fruit.

He has made two seas to flow freely - they meet: Between them is a barrier that they cannot pass.

(Sura Rahman 20)

The two must become one. Truth cannot be attained only through the tangible knowledge of the senses, of the material universe. One cannot in that way reach the goal, which is the origin, the Essence. True worship necessitates both religion and wisdom. Allah Most High says about worship:

And I have not created the jinn and men except that they should worship Me.

(Sura Dhariyat, 36)

In other words, ‘they are created so that they might know Me.’ When One does not know Him, how can one truly praise Him, ask His help and serve Him?

The wisdom which one needs in order to know Him can only be attained by lifting the black curtain covering the mirror of one’s heart, cleaning that mirror and shining it. Then the hidden treasures of divine beauty may begin reflecting in the secret of the heart’s mirror.

Allah Most High, speaking through His beloved Prophet, says: ‘I was a hidden treasure, I willed to be known, therefore I created Creation.’ Consequently, the divine purpose in the creation of man is for him to acquire wisdom, to know his Lord.

There are two levels of divine wisdom. One is to know Allah’s attributes and manifestation and the other is to know Allah’s Essence. In knowing Allah’s attributes the material man tastes both this world and the hereafter. But the wisdom which leads to the knowledge of the Essence of Allah is in the holy spirit in man knowing the mysteries of the hereafter. Allah confirms this, saying... *and We strengthened him (Jesus) with the holy spirit...* (Sura Baqara, 87). Those who know the Essence of Allah find this power through the holy spirit that has been given to them.

Both these knowledge are obtained by a wisdom that must have two aspects: the inner spiritual wisdom and the outer knowledge of manifest things. One is in need of both to attain the good. The Prophet of Allah explains them thus: ‘Knowledge is of two parts. One is in man’s tongue, which is a proof of Allah’s existence. The other is in man’s heart. This is what is necessary for the realization of our hopes.’

Man is first in need of religious knowledge. This is the education in which one is taught the exterior manifestation of Allah's Essence reflected in this world of attributes and names. After one becomes accomplished in this, it is the turn of the inner education in the secrets whereby one enters into the realms of divine wisdom and comes to know the truth. At the first stage one must leave everything that is not in accordance with religious precepts. In fact, errors - mistakes in good behavior and character - must be eliminated, as the Sufis require. To achieve this one must practice doing things against the wishes of one's ego, acts which are difficult for the desires of the flesh to accept. But in these efforts one must be attentive, so that they are not made for others to see and hear about. One must do these things for Allah's sake, seeking only His pleasure. Allah says:

*..... so whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds and
associate none other in the service of his Lord*

(Sura Kabf,110)

The realm described as the realm of wisdom is the first-created Ultimate Realm. That realm is the origin, the home to which one aspires to return. That is where the holy spirit was created. What is meant by the holy spirit is the human spirit. It was created in the best of forms.

That truth has been planted in the centre of the heart as Allah's trust, entrusted to you for safekeeping. It becomes manifest with true repentance and with the true effort to learn religion. Its beauty shines on the surface when one remembers Allah continuously, repeating the Confession of Unity *La ilaha illa Liah* - There is no god but Allah's. At the first stage one recites the Confession of Unity with one's tongue; then when the heart becomes alive one recites internally with the heart.

The Sufis refer to the spiritual states by the name *tifl*, 'babe', because that baby is born in the heart and is reared and grows

there. The heart, like a mother, gives birth, suckles, feeds rears the child of the heart. As worldly sciences are taught to children, the child of the heart is taught the inner wisdom. As an ordinary child is not yet soiled with worldly sins, the child of the heart is pure, free from heedlessness, egotism and doubt. The purity of a child appears often as physical beauty; in the world of dreams the purity of the heart's child appears in the shape of angels. One hopes to enter Paradise as a reward for good deeds, but gifts of Paradise come here through the hands of the child of the heart.

In Gardens of bliss..... round about them will go youths never altering in age.

(Sura Waqia, 12-17)

And round them go boys of theirs, as if they were hidden pearls

(Sura Tur, 24)

These are the children of the heart, the inspired states of the Sufis, called 'children' for their beauty and purity. Yet they are beauty and purity personified in flesh, in the shape of human beings. Due to their sweet and gentle nature they are the children of the heart, yet is he the true man who is able to change the appearance of creation because he is connected to the Creator. He is the representative of humanity. According to him there is no matter, neither does he consider himself matter. There is no veil, no hindrance, between his being and the Essence of Allah.

Our Master the Prophet explains this state, 'I have a time with Allah. At that moment nothing can come between, neither the angel closest to Him nor a prophet.' The 'prophet' who cannot enter between our Master and Allah is the material, temporal existence of the Prophet himself. The angel closest to Allah is the divine Light of Muhammad, the first creation. In that inspired state he is so close to his Lord that neither his material existence nor even his soul can come between them. The Prophet describes the time of that inspired state, saying, 'There is a paradise of Allah

where there are no palaces, no gardens, nor rivers of honey and milk, a paradise where one gazes only at the divine countenance.' Allah confirms this: [some] *faces that day will be bright, looking to their Lord, (Sura Qiyama, 22-23)* and the Prophet says, 'On that day you will see your Lord as clear as the full moon.' But this is a state that, if any created being, even an angel, should approach, his material being would burn to ashes. Allah speaks through His Prophet.

*If I parted the veils of My attribute of Might a mere crack,
all would burn as far as My eye can see.*

The archangel Gabriel, who accompanied the Prophet in his Ascension to the seventh heaven said that if he took one step further he would be set aflame.

Man'S Return Home to The Original Source

Man is considered from two points of view: his material being and his spiritual being. In the appearance of Material being everyone is more or less equal. Therefore, in this respect, one may apply to humanity general laws. In his spiritual being, hidden behind his appearance, each person is different. Therefore special private laws apply to him.

Man, in accordance with general laws, by following certain steps can return to his origin. To take these steps, he follows the evident ordinances of our religion as a guide; following them, he advances. Rising from level to level he may reach the stage of the spiritual path, passing into the realm of wisdom. That is a very high state. The Prophet (PBUH) praises this state, saying, 'There is a state in which all and everything is gathered - and it is the divine wisdom.'

To reach that level, one first has to abandon false appearances and the hypocrisy of doing things so that others might see or hear. Then one must set for oneself three goals. These three

goals are actually three paradises. The first is called *Ma'wa* - the paradise of the security of home. That is the earthly paradise. The Second is called *Na'im* - the garden of the delight of Allah's grace upon His creatures, which is the paradise within the angelic realm. The third is called Firdaws - heavenly paradise. That is the paradise in the realm of the unity of the causal mind, home of the souls, of the divine Names and attributes. These are the rewards, the beauties of Allah which the material man will taste in his efforts in the three successive stages of knowledge: efforts in following the religious precepts (*shuria*) efforts in eliminating the multiplicity in himself, fighting the cause of this multiplicity which is his ego, in order to reach the state of unity and come close to his Creator (*tariqa*) and finally, in his efforts to reach the state of divine wisdom (*marifa*) whereby he will come to know his Lord.

The Prophet (PBUH) at the conclusion of the previously mentioned tradition, 'There is a state in which all and everything is gathered and it is the divine wisdom,' says: With it one learns the truth, which gathers within itself all causes and all good. Then one must act upon this truth. One must also know falsehood and act upon it, abandoning all of it.' And he says, 'O Lord, show us the truth and make it our lot to follow it, and teach us that which is false and make it easy for us to avoid it.' And, 'He who knows his self and opposes its wrong desires truly, comes to know his Lord, and follows His wishes.'

These are the general rules which apply to the material being of man. Then there is the spiritual being of man, or the spiritual man, who is called the pure man. His goal is total closeness to Allah. The only way to this end is the knowledge of truth (*haqiqa*). In the first-created realm of the absolute being of oneness, this knowledge is called Unity. One may hope to reach the goal of this path in this worldly life. In that state there is no difference

between being awake and being asleep, since in sleep the soul may find occasion to escape to its true home, the realm of the souls, and come back and bring news. This we call the true dream. This event can be partial, as in the case of dreams; it can also be total, as in the case of the Ascension of the Prophet (PBUH). Allah confirms this:

Allah takes (men's) souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death, and sends the others back till an appointed term. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

(Sura Zumar 42)

The Prophet (PBUH) indicates this state by saying, 'The sleep of the wise is more worthy than the worship of the ignorant.' The wise are those who have acquired the knowledge of truth that has no letters, no soul. That knowledge is received through the continuous repetition of the divine Name of Unity with the secret tongue. The wise are those whose core is turned into divine light by the light of unity.

Allah speaks through His Prophet(PBUH) and says:

Man is My secret and I am his secret. The inner knowledge of the spiritual essence (ilm al-batin) is a secret of My secrets. Only I put this into the heart of My good servant, and none may know his state other than Me.and:

I am as My servant knows Me. When he seeks Me and remembers Me, I am with him. If he seeks me inwardly, I seek him with My Essence. If he remembers and mentions Me in good company, I remember and declare him as My good servant in better company.

In all that is said here, the only way to satisfy one's wish is meditation - that means of knowledge which the common man uses so seldom. Yet the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, 'A moment's

reflection is worth more than a year of worship'. 'A moment's reflection is worth more than seventy years of worship'. 'A moment's reflection is worth more than a thousand years of worship.'

The value of every action is hidden in the essence of truth. The act of a moment's meditation here appears to have three different values:

Whoever contemplates an affair and seeks its cause finds that each of its parts has many parts of its own, and finds that each of these is the cause of many other things. This is a contemplation that is worth a year's worship.

Whoever contemplates his devotions and seeks the cause and reason and comes to know it, his meditation is worth seventy years of worship.

Whoever contemplates the divine wisdom with a strong wish to know Allah Most High, his meditation is worth a thousand years of worship, for this is the true knowledge.

True knowledge is the state of unity. The wish lover unites with his Beloved. From this material realm, flying with spiritual wings he soars to the realm of attainment, for the devout walk to Paradise while the wise fly to the realms close to their Lord.

Lovers have eyes in their hearts.

They see, while others are staring blind.

Such wings they have, not of flesh and blood.

They fly towards angels, their Lord to find!

This flight occurs in the inner world of the wise. They receive the honour of being called true men, the beloved ones of Allah, His intimates, His brides. The saint Bayazid al-Bistami, may Allah sanctify his servant, says, 'The holders of wisdom are the brides of Allah Most High.' Others as well describe them by saying that those who come close to Allah become the brides of Allah.

Only the loving possessors of brides know them intimately. These wise servants who become intimates of Allah, though beautiful, are covered by the appearances of ordinary men. Allah speaks through His Prophet (PBUH), saying: 'My intimates are hidden under My domes. None can recognize them but Me.' The domes under which Allah hides His friends are their undistinguished, ordinary appearances. When one looks at a bride covered by her wedding veil, what can one see but the veil?

Yahya ibn Mu'adh al-Razi, may Allah sanctify his secret, says, "The beloved of Allah are the perfume of Allah upon this world, but only the true, sincere believers have noses to smell them. They smell that beautiful perfume; they follow that smell. That perfume creates a yearning in their hearts for their Lord. Each in his own way increases his pace, his efforts, his devotion. The degree of his yearning, his wish and the speed of his pace are in proportion to his lightness, to his having shed the weight of his worldly self. For the more one takes off the coarse clothing of this world, the more one feels the warmth of one's Creator and the closer to the surface inner being comes. Closeness to the truth is in relation to the amount of false materiality one has thrown away. In giving away one's multiple aspects one comes closer to the only truth.

The intimate of Allah is he who has brought himself to nothingness. Only then can he see the existence of the truth. There is no will left in him to choose. There is no 'I' left other than the only existence, which is the truth. Although all manner of miracles have come through him to prove this state, he has nothing to do with them. In his state there is no disclosure of secrets, because divulging the secret of divinity is infidelity.

In a book called *Mirsad* it is written, 'All men through whom miracles appear are veiled from and unconcerned about their states. For them, the times when miracles appear are considered

to be like the periods of menstruation for women. Saints who are intimate with Allah have to travel through at least a thousand stages, the first of which is the door of miracles. Only those who are able to pass through this door unharmed can reach the other stages. If they become involved, they will get nowhere.'

The Descent of Man to the Lowest of the Low

Allah Most High created the holy spirit as the most perfect creation in the first -created realm of the absolute being of His Essence; then He willed to send it to lower realms. His reason in that was to teach the holy spirit to seek the way back to the truth on the level of the All-Powerful, to seek its previous closeness and intimacy with Allah. He sent the holy spirit to the station of His messengers and saints and lovers and friends. On its way Allah sent it first to the realm of the Causal Mind, of unity, of the Total Soul, the realm of His divine Names and attributes, the realm of the truth of Muhammad. The holy spirit had with it the seed of unity. As it passed through this realm it was given the clothing of divine light and was named the sultan-soul. As it passed through the realm of angels, which is the medium of dreams, it received the name 'moving soul'. When it finally descended to this world of matter it was dressed in the clothing of flesh that Allah created to fit its being. It was clothed with coarse matter in order to save this world, because the material world, if it had direct contact with the holy spirit, would burn to ashes. In relation to this world, it came to be known as life, the human soul.

The purpose of the spirit's coming to this lowest of created realms is that it should seek to return to its previous closeness while in its actual form of flesh and bone: that it should come to this realm of coarse matter and, by means of the heart which is inside this corpse, plant the seed of unity and grow the tree of unity therein. (The roots of that tree are where they have always been; its branches

fill the void of bliss, and there, for the pleasure of Allah, bear the fruits of unity). Then in the earth of the heart the spirit planted the seed of religion and wished to grow the tree of religion, in order to obtain fruits, each of which would raise it to levels closer to Allah.

Allah Made bodies for the souls to enter, and for these souls, each of which has a different name, He built fitting spaces within the bodies. He placed the human soul, the soul of life, between the flesh and the blood. He placed the holy spirit within the centre of the heart, where he built a space of fine matter to keep that secret between Allah and His servant. These souls are in different parts of the body, with different duties, with different business; each, as if by buying and selling different goods, obtains different benefits. Their business always brings them plenty in the form of Allah's bounty and blessings.

Out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, (they) hope for commerce that will never fail.

(Sura Fatir, 29)

It befits every human being to know his business within this universe of his own existence, and to understand its purpose. He must understand that he cannot change whatever is judge right for him and hung around his neck. Of the one who wishes to change his lot, who is tied to this world and ambitious for it, Allah asks:

Knows he not when that which is in the graves is raised, and that which is in the breasts is made manifest?

(Sura Adiyat,9-10)

And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck..

(Sura Bani Isra il, 13)

On Knowledge

Outer knowledge of things that are self-evident is divided into twelve sections, and inner knowledge is also in twelve sections.

These portions are divided among the common people and the special, pure servants of Allah in proportion to their potential.

For our purposes these sciences are in four sections. The first concerns the precepts of the religion regarding obligations and interdictions related to things and actions of this world. The second concerns the inner meaning and reason for these precepts, and is called the science of the conceptual knowledge of things that are not self-evident, the mystical sciences. The third concerns the hidden spiritual essence itself, which is called wisdom. The fourth concerns the inner essence of this essence, which is the truth. The perfect man must learn and know all of these and find paths leading to them.

Our Master the Prophet (PB UH) said, The religion is a tree : mysticism is its branches, wisdom is its foliage, truth is its fruit. The Holy Qur'an with its commentaries, explanations, interpretations and analogies, contains them all. 'in the book al-Majma' the words tafsir, 'commentary', and ta'wil, 'interpretation through analogies,' are defined thus : 'Commentary on the Qur'an is clarification and elaboration for the understanding of the common people, while interpretation through analogy is clarification of the inner meaning through inspired reflections experienced by the true believer. Such interpretation is for those special servants of Allah who are firmly established, constant in their spiritual state and well-grounded in the knowledge that enables them to form true judgements. Like the date-tree whose roots are firm in the ground, their feet are firm in this material world; and again like the date-tree, whose fronds reach high into the sky, their hearts and minds are raised to heavenly knowledge.' By the grace of Allah this constancy that contains no doubts is placed in the centre of their hearts. The heart from in this state is likened to the second half of the Confession of Unity *La ilaha illa ilah*, 'There is no god but Allah' - *ilaha Llah*, 'only Allah', is the final confirmation of unity.

He it is Who revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive - they are the basis of the Book- and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. And none knows its interpretation save Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge (al-rasikhun). They say : We believe in it, it is all from our Lord. And none are mindful except men of understand-ing.

(Sura Al 'Imran, 7)

The writer of a great commentary on the Qur'an says about this verse, 'If the door in this verse would open, all the doors of the inner secret realm would open too'.

The true servant of Allah is obliged to fulfill Allah's orders and to abstain from what He forbids. He is also obliged to oppose his ego and the lower dictates of his flesh. The basic opposition of the ego to religion is in the form of imagination and illusions contrary to reality. On the level of mysticism, the treacherous ego encourages one to agree with and to follow causes and propositions that are only close to truth, even to follow prophetic messages and declarations of saints that have been distorted and to follow false teachers and ideas. On the level of wisdom, the ego tries to push one to claim sainthood, even divinity the worst sin of setting oneself up as a partner to Allah.

Allah says : Seest thou such a one as taketh for his god his own passion (or impulse)...

(Sura F'urqan , 43)

But the level of truth is different. Neither the ego nor the Devil can reach there- not even the angels set foot there. Anyone but Allah who approached there would burn to ashes, as the angel Gabriel said to the Prophet (PBUH) at the edge of that level, when he declared, 'If I take another step, I will burn to ashes'.

The true servant of Allah is free from the opposition of his ego and the Devil, because he is protected by a shield of sincerity and purity_

He (the accursed Devil) said : Then by Thy Might I I will surely lead them astray, except Thy servants from among them who are sincere and pure.

(Sure Sad, 82- 83)

Man cannot attain the truth unless he is pure, because his worldly attributes will not leave him until the essence is mani-fested in him. This is true sincerity. His ignorance will only leave him when he receives the knowledge of Allah's Essence. One cannot obtain this with education ; only Allah, without interme-diaries, can teach it. When Allah Most High is Himself the teacher, He gives one knowledge from Himself, as He did for the prophet Khidr. Then man, with the consciousness of what he has received, reaches the level of divine wisdom, where he knows his Lord and worships Him Whom he knows.

One who reaches this state has the vision of the holy spirit and comes to see the Beloved of Allah, Muhammad (PBUH). He talks with him about all and everything from the beginning to the end, and all the other prophets give him the good tidings of the promise of union with the Beloved. Allah describes this state

And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the faithful and the righteous, and a goodly company are they,'
(Sura Nisa, 69)

One who cannot find this knowledge in his being will not become wise even if he reads a million books. The benefit for which one may hope in acquiring the outer knowledge of self-evident things is perhaps Paradise : there all that will be seen is the manifestation of divine attributes in shapes of light. No matter how perfect his knowledge of the visible and conceivable may be, it will not help man to enter into the sanctity of the sacred place, the place close to Allah, for one has to fly to that place and to fly one needs two wings. The true servant of Allah is the one who flies to

that realm with the wings of the outer and the inner knowledge, never stopping on the way, never being distracted by anything in his flight. Allah, speaking through His Prophet (PBUH) says

My servant, if you wish to enter the sanctuary of My intimacy, do not pay attention either to this world or to the higher world of the angels, not even to the higher realms where you may receive My divine attributes.

This material world is the temptation, the devil, of the man of knowledge. The angelic realm is the temptation of the wise, and the realm of the divine attributes is the temptation of the one who is cognizant of the truth. Whoever is satisfied with one of them is rejected from Allah's grace of bringing him close to His Essence. If they give in to these temptations, they stop, they do not advance, they soar no higher. Though their goal was to be close to their Creator, they cannot reach there any longer. They become distracted ; they are the ones with a single wing.

The one who becomes aware of truth receives such grace, such gifts from Allah that no worldly eye has seen the like, nor any worldly ear heard it, nor worldly heart known its names. This is the paradise of intimacy. There are neither palaces of jewels, nor ever-beautiful maidens as companions there. May man know his own worth and not want nor claim that which is not his due ! Hadrat 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, says : 'May Allah shower His Beneficence upon the one who knows his worth, who knows to stay within his bounds, who watches his tongue, who does not spend this life in idleness.'

The man who knows must be aware that the child of the spirit which is born in his heart is the meaning of true humanity : that is the true human being. He should educate the child of the heart, teaching unity through constantly being aware of unity - leaving this world of matter and of multiplicity, seeking the spiritual world, the world of mysteries, where there is none other

than the Essence of Allah. In reality there is no other place but that place, which has no end, no beginning. The child of the heart soars over that infinite field seeing things that none have seen before, none could tell of, none could describe. That place-is the home of those who left themselves behind and found unity with their Lord, who saw what they saw with the same eye as their Lord, the eye of unity. When they see the beauty and the grace of their Lord there is nothing of their temporal being left in them. If one looks at the sun one-can see nothing else, neither can one see oneself. When Allah's beauty and grace are manifest, what could be left of oneself ?Nothing.

Jesus (PBUH) said, 'Man has: to be born twice to reach the realm of the angels, like the birds who are born twice.' It is the birth of the meaning from the act., the birth of the spirit from the flesh. That possibility is in man. That is the mystery, the secret of man. It is born of the intercourse of man's knowledge of the religion and man's awareness of the truth, as all children are born of the union of two drops of water.

*Verily We created man from a drop of seminal fluid, in order to try him.
So We gave him (the gifts) of hearing and sight.*

(Sura Insan,2)

When meaning becomes manifest in being, it becomes easy to pass through the shallows into the sea of creation and to immerse oneself in the depth of Allah's commandments; All of the material universes are but a drop in comparison to the sea of the spiritual world. It is only when all this is understood that the spiritual power and light of the mysteries of divine nature, the real truth, emanate into the world without words and without sound.

On Islamic Mysticism and the Sufis

The name sufi is an expression derived from the Arabic word Saf, Pure'. The reason that the Sufies are called by this name is

that their inner world is purified and enlightened with the light of wisdom, unity and oneness.

Another meaning for this appellation is that they are spiritually connected with the constant companies of the Prophet who were called 'the companions with the woollen grab'.

They may also have worn the customary garb of rough-woven sheep's wool (*suf*) when they were novices, and have spend their life in old patched clothes.

As their exterior is poor and humble, so is their worldly life. They are frugal in eating, drinking and other pleasures of this world. In the book called *al-Majma'* it is said, 'What is becoming to the pious ascetic is the most ordinary and humble clothing and way of living'. Although they may appear unattractive to the worldly, their wisdom is manifested in their gentleness and delicate manner, which make them attractive to those who know. In reality they are an example to mankind. They follow divine prescriptions. They are, in the sight of their Lord, in the first rank of humanity; in the eyes of those who seek their Lord they are beautiful despite their humble appearance. They must be distinguished and distinguishable and they must be that way one and all, for they are all on the level of unity and oneness and must appear as one.

In Arabic the word *tasawwuf*, Islamic mysticism, consists of four consonants, t, s, w and f. The first letter, t, stand for *tamba*, repentance. This is the first step to be taken on the path. It is as if it were a double step, one outward and one inward. The outward step in repentance is in words and deeds and feelings: to keep one's life free from sin and from wrongdoing and to incline towards obedience; to flee from revolt and opposition, to seek agreement and harmony. The inner step of repentance is taken by the heart. It is the cleansing of the heart from conflicting

worldly desires and the heart's total affirmation of the wish for the divine. Repentance-to be aware of the wrong and to abandon it, to be conscious of the right and to strive for it- brings one to the second step.

The second stage is the state of peace and joy, *safa'*. The letter **S** is its symbol. In this stage there are similarly two steps to take: the first is towards purity in heart and the second towards its secret centre.

Peace of heart comes of a heart free of anxiety. Anxiety is caused by the weight of all that is material- the weight of food, of drink, of sleep, of idle talk. All this, like the gravity of the earth, pulls the ethereal heart downwards, and to free itself from this weight tires the heart. Then there are ties - desire, possessions, love of family and children - which bind the ethereal heart to the earth and keep it from soaring.

The way to free the heart, to purify it, is to remember Allah. At the beginning this remembrance can only be done outwardly, by repeating His divine Names. Pronouncing them aloud so that you yourself and others can hear and remember. As the memory of Him becomes constant, remembrance sinks to the heart and becomes inward, silent, Allah says.

Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they [see and] hear His manifestations their faith is strengthened.

(Sura Anfal,2)

'Tremor' means the awe, fear, and love of Allah. With this remembrance and recitation of Allah's Name the heart wakes up from the sleep of heedlessness, is cleansed, is shined. Then forms and shapes from the hidden unseen realm are reflected in that heart. The Prophet says, 'The men of knowledge outwardly visit and inspect things with their minds, while the wise are inwardly busy cleaning and shining their hearts.'

The peace of the secret centre of the heart is achieved by cleansing the heart of each and every thing and preparing it to receive Allah's Essence alone, which enters the heart when that heart is beautified with the love of the divine. The means of this cleansing is the constant inward remembrance and recital with the secret tongue of the divine Confession of Unity *La ilaha illa Llah - there is no god but Allah*'. When the heart and its centre are in a state of peace and joy, then the second stage, represented by the letter *s*, is complete.

The third letter, *w*, stands for *wilaya* , which is the state of sanctity of the lovers and friends of Allah. This state depends upon inner purity. Allah mentions His friends in The Holy Qur'an:

Be heedful; verily upon the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor do they grieve.

For them there are glad tidings in this life and in the hereafter..

(Sura Yunus, 62 and 64)

The one in this state of sanctity is totally conscious of, in love with and connected to Allah. As a result he is beautified with the best of character, morals and manners. This is a fine gift bestowed upon him. Our Master the Prophet said, 'Observe divine morals and behave in accordance with them'. At that stage the conscious man sheds his worldly, temporal characteristics and appears clad in divine attribute. Allah says through His Prophet

When I love my servant I become his eyes, his ears, his tongue, his hands and his feet. He sees through Me, he hears through Me, he speaks through My name, his hands become Mine and he walks with Me.

Cleanse yourself of everything and keep only Allah's Essence in you, for:

the Truth has come and falsehood vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.

(Sura Bani Israil, 81)

When the truth comes and falsehood has vanished, the level of Wilaya is complete.

The fourth letter, f, stands for fana, the annihilation of self, the state of nothingness. The false self melts and evaporates with divine attributes and personalities leave, their place is taken by the single attribute unity.

In reality, the truth is always present. It neither disappears nor declines. What happens is that the believer realizes and becomes one with that which has created him. In being with Him, the believer receives His pleasure: the temporal being finds its true existence by realizing the eternal secret.

Everything will perish but His Countenance

(Sura Qasas, 88)

The way to realize His truth is through His pleasure, through His agreement. When you do deeds for His sake which meet with His approval you come close to His truth, His Essence. Then all disappears except the One Who is pleased and the one with whom He is pleased, united. Good deeds are the mother that bears the child of truth: the conscious life of a true human being. The good words and the good deeds rise to Allah. (Sura Fatir, 10) If one acts and exists for anything but Allah's sake alone, one is setting up partners to Allah, putting oneself or others in the place of Allah - the unforgivable sin that sooner or later destroys one. But when the self and selfishness are annihilated, one reaches the stage of union with Allah. The level of union is in the realm of Allah's proximity. Allah describes this realm thus:

Surely the righteous will be in the place of truth, in the presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent.

(Sure Qamar, 5455)

That place is the place of the essential truth, the truth of all truths, the place of unity and oneness. It is the place reserved

for prophets, for the ones who are loved by Allah, for His friends. Allah is with those who are true. When a created existence is united with the eternal existence, it cannot be conceived as a separate existence. When all earthly ties are abandoned and one is in union with Allah, with the divine truth, one receives eternal purity, never to be blemished, and becomes one of the *companions of the garden, therein to dwell (forever)*. (Sura A'raf, 42). *They are: Those who believe and work righteousness, (Sura A'raf,42). However, no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear. (sura A' raf 42) But one needs a great deal of patience. And Allah is with those who patiently persevere. (Sura Anfal 66)*

On Remembrance

Allah Most High Himself shows the way to those who seek to remember Him. Remember Allah as He has guided you This means to remember that your Creator has brought you to a certain level of consciousness and faith and that you can only remember Him in accordance with this ability. Our Master the Prophet (SAS) says, "The best declaration of remembrance is the one which I and all the prophets before me recite. It is in the divine phrase *La ilaha illallah* " there is no god but Allah."

There are different levels of remembrance and each has different ways. Some are expressed outwardly with audible voice, some felt inwardly, a silently, from the centre of the heart. At the beginning one should declare in words what one remembers. Then stage by stage the remembrance spreads throughout one's being descending to the heart, then rising to the soul; then still further it reaches the realm of the secrets; further to the hidden; to the most hidden of the hidden. How far the remembrance penetrates, the level it reaches, depends solely on the extent to which Allah in His bounty has guided one.

Remembrance pronounced in words is but a declaration that the heart has not forgotten Allah. The inward silent remembrance is a movement of the emotions. The remembrance of the heart is through feeling in oneself the manifestation of Allah's might and beauty, while the remembrance of souls is through the enlightenment of the divine light generated by Allah's might and beauty. The remembrance of the level of the secret realm is through the ecstasy received from beholding the divine secrets. The remembrance of the hidden realm brings one to: *the place of truth in the presence of a sovereign omnipotent. (Sura Qamar,55)*. The remembrance at the final level that is called Khafi al akhfa 'the most hidden of the hidden' brings one to a state of annihilation of the self and unification with the truth. In reality none other than Allah knows the state of the ^{one} who **has** penetrated into that realm containing all knowledge, which is the end of all and everything. *Surely He knows the secret and what is yet more hidden. (Sura Taba,)*

When one has passed through these stages of remembrance, a different state of spirit, as if a different state of spirit, as if a different soul, is born in one. That soul is purer and finer than all other souls. It is the child of the heart, the child of truth. While in the form of seed, this child invites and attracts man to seek and find the truth; and after it is born this child will urge man to seek the Essence of Allah Most High. Neither this new soul called the child of the heart, nor its seed and potential, it is every man. *It is found only in the pure believer: He places the soul with His decree in the hearts of those whom He chooses. (Sura Mu'min, 15)*

This soul is sent from the realm of the All-powerful and is placed in the universe of the visible worlds where the attributes of the Creator are manifest in the creation, but it belongs to the realm of truth. It does not favour nor pay any attention to anything

but the Essence of Allah. Our Master the Prophet explains: 'This world is undesirable and unlawful for those who wish for the hereafter. The hereafter is undesirable for those who wish for this world, and it will not be given to them. But for the souls who seek Allah's Essence, neither this world nor the hereafter has any attraction.' This soul is the child of truth. It is that within one which will seek, find and be with its Lord.

Over and above anything you do, the material being in you must allow the straight path. That is only possible through preserving and following the procepts of religion. To do this one has to be conscious, to remember Allah, night and day, inwardly and outwardly, continuously. For those who see the truth, to remember Allah is an obligation. As Allah orders:

Remember Allah standing and sitting and lying down.

(Sura Nisa, 103)

those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides, and who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. Our Lord Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to thee

(Sura AL Imran, 190)

The Necessary Conditions for Remembrance

One of the conditions that prepare one to remember is to be in a state of ablution; washed and cleansed bodily and purified inwardly. At the beginning, a condition for the effectiveness of remembrance is to pronounce aloud the words and phrases of what is to be remembered the Confession of Unity, the attributes of Allah. When these words are recited, one should use all one's effort to be in a conscious state. In this way the heart hears the word and is enlightened with the light of that which is remembered. It receives energy and becomes alive not only alive in this world, but alive forever in the hereafter. Allah Most high describes this eternal life:

They taste not therein death, except the first death

(Sura Dukhan, 56)

Our Master the Prophet (PBUH) describing the state of the believer who achieves truth through remembrance, says, 'Believers do not die. They only pass from this temporal life to the everlasting life.' And they do there what they did here. As he says, 'The prophets and the ones close to Allah continue their worship in their graves as they did in their houses.' The worship he mentions is inward supplication of Allah, not the prayer obligatory five times a day in this world, with its standing, bowing and prostration. Inward silent supplication is one of the principal qualities identifying the true believer. Wisdom is not obtained by man, but is given to him by Allah. After having been elevated to that state, the wise become intimate with the secrets of Allah. Allah brings one to His secrets only if one's heart is alive and conscious with the remembrance of Him, and if that conscious heart has the wish to receive the truth. As our Master the Prophet (PBUH) says, 'My eyes sleep, but my heart is ever awake.'

The importance of wishing in obtaining wisdom and truth is explained in the words of our Prophet (PBUH). 'If a person wishes to learn and act upon his wish and studies, but dies before attaining his goal, Allah assigns him two angels as teachers who teach him divine wisdom until the Day of Judgement. That person is raised from his grave as a wise man who has obtained the truth.' The two angels here represent the spirit of our Prophet and the light of love and sanctity which connects man with Allah. The importance of which and intention is further mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH): 'Many who wish to know die ignorant, but they are raised from their graves on the Day of Judgement as wise; and many a man of knowledge is raised on that day deprived, having lost everything, and totally ignorant.' Those men who are proud of their knowledge, whose seek knowledge in order to obtain the goods of the world and to sin, are warned:

You received your good things in the life of the world and you took your pleasure from them, but today shall you be recompensed with a penalty of humiliation, for that you are arrogant on earth without just cause and that you (even) transgressed.

(Sura Abqaf,20)

The Prophet (PBUH) says, 'Action are conditioned by and tied to intentions. The wish and intention of the faithful are better and more worthy in the sight of Allah than are his actions. The intention of the unfaithful is worse than what appears in his actions. For Allah, the good intention of the believer is more worthy than the best deed of the unfaithful.' Intention is the foundation of action. Our Master the Prophet (PBUH) says, 'It is good to build a good deed upon a good foundation, and a sin is a deed built upon bad intentions.'

Who so desires the cultivation of the hereafter We give him increase in his cultivation, and who so desires the cultivation of this world We give him thereof and he has no portion in the hereafter.

(Sura Shura, 20)

The best course is to find a true spiritual teacher who will bring your heart to life. This will secure you the eternal life of the hereafter. This is urgent; it has to be done immediately in this life before the time is spent. This world is the field of the hereafter. He who does not plant here will not reap there. So plant your field upon this earth with both the subjective seeds of a good life here and the objective seeds that will yield a good harvest in the hereafter.

On the Vision of Allah: Arriving at the Level of Seeing the Manifestation of the Divine Essence

The vision of Allah is of two kinds: one is seeing the manifestation of Allah's attribute of Perfect Beauty directly in the hereafter, and the other is seeing the manifestation of the divine attributes

reflected upon the clear mirror of the pure heart, in this life, in this world. In such a case the vision appears as the manifestation of light emanating from the Perfect Beauty of Allah and is seen by the eye of the essence of the heart.

Allah describes the vision seen by the eye of the heart: The heart did not deny what it saw.

(Sura Najm, 11)

On seeing the manifestation of the divine through an intermediary the Prophet ö says, ‘The faithful is the mirror of the faithful’. What is meant by the first ‘faithful’, the mirror in this phrase, is the pure heart of the believer, while the second ‘faithful’ Who sees His reflection in that mirror is Allah Most High. Whoever arrives at the level of seeing the manifestations of Allah’s attributes in the world will certainly see the Essence of Allah in the hereafter without shape or form.

The reality of this has been confirmed by many of the beloved and the lovers of Allah. Hadrat ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, ‘My heart saw my Lord by the light of my Lord’. And Hadrat ‘All, may Allah be pleased with him, said, ‘I will not pray to Allah unless I see Him’. They both must have seen the manifestation of divine attributes. If someone sees sunlight coming through the windows and says, ‘I see the sun!’ he is telling the truth.

Allah gives the most beautiful example of the manifestation of His attributes.

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there

were a niche and within it a lamp, the lamp enclosed in glass, the glass as it were a

brilliant star lit from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, -whose

oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touches it; light upon light!

Allah doth guide whom He will to His light

(Sura Nur, 35)

The meaning of the niche is the faithful heart of the believer. The lamp enlightening the niche of the heart is the essence of the heart, while the light that it sheds is the divine secret, the sultan-soul. The glass is transparent and does not keep the light within, but protects it and allows it to spread, which is why it is likened to a star. The source of the light is a divine tree. That tree is the state of unity reaching out with its branches and its roots, inculcating the principles of faith, communicating without any intermediary in the language of purity.

It is directly in this language of purity that our Master the Prophet ö received the Qur'anic revelations. In reality, the angel Gabriel brought the divine messages only after they had already been received - this for our benefit, so that we might hear in human language. This also made clear who were the hypocrites and nonbelievers by giving them the occasion to deny, as they would not believe in angels.

The proof that the Holy Qur'an was revealed directly to the Prophet ö is in the Qur'an itself.

And thou art surely made to receive the Qur'an from the All-Wise, the All-Knowing,

(SuraNaml, 6)

Since the Prophet received revelation before the angel Gabriel brought it to him, each time Gabriel delivered the holy verses, the Prophet found them in his heart and recited them before they were given. That is the reason for the verse:

And make not haste with the Qur'an before its revelation is made complete to thee . . .

(Sura Ta Ha, 114)

This situation is made clear by the fact that when Gabriel accompanied the Prophet ö on the night of his ascension, he could not go any further than the seventh heaven, and saying, 'If

I take another step I will burn to ashes', he left our Master ö to continue on his own.

Allah describes the blessed olive tree, the tree of unity, as being neither of the East nor of the West. In other words, it has neither a beginning nor an end, and the light of which is the source has no rising or setting. It is eternal in the past and never-ending in the future. Both Allah's Essence and His attributes are ever-existent, because His attributes are light generated from His Essence. Both the manifestation of His Essence and the manifestation of His attributes are dependent on His Essence.

True worship can only be performed when the veils hiding the heart are lifted so that that eternal light shines upon it. It is only then that the heart is enlightened by the divine light. It is only then that the soul sees the truth through that celestial niche.

The purpose of the creation of this universe is to discover, to see that hidden treasure. Allah says through His Prophet ö 'I was a hidden treasure, I willed to be known. I created the creation so that I would be known.' That is to say, that He would be known in this material world through His attributes manifested in His creation. But to see His very Essence is left to the hereafter. There, the vision of Allah will be direct, as He wills, and it will be the eye of the child of the heart that sees Him.

On that day some faces will beam (with joy and beauty), looking at their Lord.

(Sura Qiyama, 22-3)

Our Master the Prophet says, 'I have seen my Lord in the shape of a beautiful youth.' Perhaps this is the manifestation of the child of the heart. The image is the mirror. It becomes means, rendering visible that which is invisible. The truth of Allah Most High is exempt from and free of any kind of description or any kind of image or form. The image is the mirror, though what is seen is neither the mirror, nor the one who is looking into

the mirror. Ponder on that and try to understand, because that is the essence of the realm of secrets.

Yet all this is happening in this world of attributes. In the realm of the Essence all means disappear, burn into thin air. The ones in that realm of Essence themselves do not exist, but they feel the Essence and nothing else. How well the Prophet explains this when he says, 'I knew my Lord by my Lord'. In His Light, by His Light! The truth of man is the secret of that light, as Allah says through His Prophet: 'Man is My secret and I am his secret'

The place of the Prophet Muhammad whose light is the first of Allah's creation, is described in his own words, 'I am from Allah and the believers are from me'. And Allah, speaking through His Prophet says: 'I have created the light of Muhammad from the light of My own existence'. The meaning of Allah's own existence is His divine Essence manifested in His attribute of the Most Compassionate. This He declares through His Prophet ﷺ, saying: 'My compassion far surpasses My punishment'. The beloved Messenger of Allah ﷺ is the light of the Truth, for Allah says, *We sent thee not but as a mercy to the whole creation. (Sura Anbiya', 107)* and

Indeed Our Messenger has come to you, making clear to you much of that which you concealed of the Book and passing over much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light.

(Sura Ma'ida 15)

The importance of the beloved Prophet of Allah is made clear when Allah speaks to him and says: 'But for you, I would not have created creation'.

The Veils of Light and Darkness

ALLAH says: Whoever is blind in this world, he will be blind in

the hereafter. (Sura Banisrail, 72) It is not the blindness of the eyes in one's head but the blindness of the eyes of one's heart that will prevent one from seeing the light of the hereafter. As Allah says: For surely it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts. (Sura Hajj, 46) The only cause of the heart becoming blind is heedlessness, which makes one forget Allah and one's function, one's purpose, one's promise to Him, while one is in this world. The principal cause of heedlessness is ignorance of the reality of the divine laws and orders. What keeps one in this stage of ignorance is a darkness that completely covers one from the outside and fully invades one's inner being. Some of the properties of this darkness are arrogance, pride, envy, miserliness, vengeance, lying, gossiping, backbiting and so many other hateful traits. It is these traits that reduce the best creation of Allah to the lowest of the low.

To rid oneself of these evils one has to cleanse and shine the mirror of the heart. This cleansing is done by acquiring knowledge, by acting upon this knowledge, by effort and valour, fighting against one's ego within and without oneself, by ridding oneself of one's multiplicity of being, by achieving unity. This struggle will continue until the heart becomes alive with the light of unity-and with that light of unity, the eye of the clean heart will see the reality of Allah's attributes around and in it.

Only then will you remember the true home from which you come. Then you will have the yearning and longing to return to the true home, and when the time comes, with the help of the Most Compassionate, that spirit which is pure in you will go to join Him.

When the attributes of darkness lift, light takes its place, and the one with the eye of the soul sees. He recognizes what he sees with the light of the Names of divine attributes. Then he himself is flooded by light and becomes light. These lights are still

veils hiding the light of the divine Essence, but the time comes when they too are drawn back, leaving only the light of the divine Essence itself.

The heart has two eyes, one lesser, the other greater. With the lesser eye one may be able to see the manifestation of Allah's attributes and Names. This vision continues all through one's spiritual evolution. The greater eye sees only that which is rendered visible by the light of unity and oneness. Only when one comes to the regions of Allah's intimacy does it see, in the ultimate realm of the manifestation of Allah's Essence, the unity of the Absolute.

In order to reach these levels on this earth in this life you must cleanse yourself from your worldly attributes, which are egoistic and egotistical. The distance you must travel in your ascent towards these levels depends on the distance that you have put between yourself and the low desires of your flesh and your ego.

Your attainment of the goal you wish for is not like a material thing's arriving at a material place. Neither is it like knowledge leading one to a thing that becomes known, nor like reason obtaining that which is rational, nor like the imagination joining with that which it fancies. The goal that you wish to attain is the realization of your emptiness of all else except the Essence of Allah. This attainment is a becoming. There is no distance, nor closeness nor farness, nor reaching, nor measure, nor direction, nor dimension.

He is All-glorious, all praise is due to Him, He is Most Merciful. He becomes visible in what He hides from you. He manifests Himself as He puts veils between Himself and you. His being known is hidden in His not being known.

If any of you reach that light which is suggested in this book while you are here in this world, try to balance your book

of deeds. It is only under light that you can see what you have done, what you are doing; do your accounting, make it balance. You will have to read your book in front of your Lord on the day, of Last Judgment. That is final. You will not then have the chance to balance it. If you do that here, while you have the time, you will be of those who are saved. Otherwise pain and disaster is your lot in this world and in the hereafter. This life will end. There is the pain of the grave, there is the day of Last Judgment, there is the balance that will weigh the smallest sin and the tiniest of good deeds. Then there is the test of that bridge, thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword, at the end of which is the Garden, under which is the Fire and so much hardship, and for so long, when this short life ends.

The Dervishes

THERE is a group of people called the Sufis. Four interpretations are given for this name. Some see, looking at their exterior, that they wear rough woollen garb. In Arabic the word for wool is *suf*, and they call them Sufis from this. Others, looking at their way of life free from the anxieties of this world, and at their ease and at peace, which in Arabic is *saf*, call them Sufis on that account. Yet others, seeing deeper, look at their hearts, which are purified of everything other than the Essence of Allah. Because of the purity of those hearts, in Arabic soft, they term them Sufis. Others who know call them Sufis because they are close to Allah and will stand in the first row, in Arabic *saff*, before Allah on the day of the Last Judgment.

There are also four realms, four worlds. The first is the world of matter, of earth, water, fire and ether. The second is the world of spiritual beings, of the angels, of jinn and dreams and death, of the rewards of Allah—the eight paradises, and the justice of Allah—the seven hells. The third is the world of the Word, the

Beautiful Names of Allah's attributes, and the Hidden Tablet which is the source of all of Allah's messages. The fourth is the realm of Allah's pure Essence, a realm indescribable because at that level there are no words, names, attributes or likenesses. None except Allah knows it.

There are also four kinds of knowledge. The first is knowledge of Allah's precepts, and is concerned with the outer aspects of the life of this world. The second is mystical knowledge, the inner knowledge of causes and effects. The third is the knowledge of the spirit, self-knowledge, and through it, knowledge of the divine. Finally, there is the knowledge of the truth.

The souls are also of four kinds: the material soul, the enlightened soul, the sultan-soul and the divine soul.

Appearances, the manifestations of the Creator, are also of four kinds. The first is the manifestation in forms and shapes and colour, as if in His artwork. The second. manifestation is in actions and interactions, in things that happen. The third is His manifestation in attributes, qualities, the character of things. Finally there is the manifestation of His Essence. The intellect, or reasoning power, is also of four kinds: the intelligence which deals with worldly affairs of this life: the intelligence which considers and thinks of the hereafter; the intelligence of the soul, spiritual wisdom; and finally the total Causal Mind.

The subjects just discussed are also four: the four kinds of knowledge, the four souls, the four kinds of manifestation and the four intellects. Some men stay at the first level of knowledge, soul, manifestation and intellect. They are the inhabitants of the first paradise called 'the paradise of the security of home', that is, the earthly paradise. Those who are at the second level of knowledge, soul, manifestation and intellect belong to a higher level of Paradise, the garden of the delight of Allah's

grace upon His creatures, which is the paradise within the angelic realm. Those among men who have reached the third level of knowledge, soul, manifestation and wisdom are in the third level of Paradise, the heavenly paradise, the paradise of the divine Names and attributes in the realm of unity.

Yet those who seek and attach themselves to the rewards of Allah, even if they are in Paradise, cannot see the true reality within themselves and within the things around them. Those men of wisdom who seek the truth, those who have achieved the true state of the dervish, the state of total need-not the need of anything but Allah, the need of Allah alone-leave everything and seek nothing but truth. They find what they seek and enter the realm of truth, the realm which is closest to Allah, and live for nothing except the Essence of Allah.

These abide with the divine order, 'Take refuge in Allah', and follow the advice of the Prophet 'Both this world and the hereafter are unlawful for the one who seeks Allah'. Our Master does not mean that the world and the hereafter are unlawful. He means that the ones who wish for and seek Allah's Essence deprive their flesh and their egos of their needs, loves and demands of the world and the worldly.

The seekers of truth reason this way: this world is a created being; we are also created beings, we are both in need of a Creator, of an Owner. How could one in need ask for what he needs from another who is in need himself? What way is there for a created being other than seeking his Creator?

Allah says through the lips of His beloved Prophet, 'My love, My existence is their for Me'

Our Master the Prophet, says: 'My state of utter need, my poverty, is my pride.' The utter need and love of Allah is the basis for the search of the dervish. The state of poverty which is the

pride of our Master is not the poverty of the lack of the worldly. It is the abandonment of everything but the wish for the Essence of Allah. It is to leave 'all the goods -not only those of this world, but those promised in the hereafter-and thus in total need to present oneself to one's Lord.

This is a state of bringing oneself to nothingness, of disappearing in the Essence of Allah. It is to empty one's being of everything which is for one's being and to empty one's heart of everything but His love. Then that heart becomes worthy to receive the promise of Allah, do not fit My heavens nor My earths, but I fit into the heart of My faithful servant'.

The faithful servant is he who excludes all other than the One from his heart. When a heart is thus purified, Allah enlarges it and fits Himself into it. Hadrat Bayazid al-Bistami, may Allah sanctify his secret, describes the greatness of such a heart, saying,

'If all that exists in and around the Throne of Allah, that vastest of all of Allah's creations, were to be placed in a corner of the perfect man's heart, he would not even feel the weight of it.'

Such as these are the beloved of Allah. Love them and be around them, for those who truly love will be with their beloved in the hereafter. The sign of this love is to seek their company, to wish to hear their words, and with their sight and their words to feel longing for Allah Most High.

Allah, speaking through the lips of His Prophet says: 'I feel the yearning of the faithful, of the righteous, of the true servants, for Me, and I too long for them.'

These lovers of Allah appear different from others, and their actions are different from those of others. At the beginning, when they are novices, their actions appear balanced between good and bad, When they are advanced and reach the median level their actions are full of beneficence. In all cases the good which comes

through them is not only in their following the precepts of Allah and of the religion, but in actions which contain beatitude and shine with the light of the meaning within appearances.

They are as if clad in clothing of coloured light which generates from them in accordance with they levels.

As they overcome their egos and the tyranny of the lower desires of their flesh with the blessing of the divine phrase LA ILAHA ILLA LLAH - there is no god but Allah and reach the level of beings who can discriminate between right and wrong, condemn the wrong within themselves and wish for the right, a sky-blue light emanates from them.

When, from that state, with the help and inspiration of ALLAH they opt for the good and leave the bad, a red colour engulfs them.

With the blessing coming from the Name of Allah, Hu, that Name which none other than the Truth can describe, they reach the level that is cleansed of all harmful attributes and bad actions and find a state of peace and serenity. Then a green light emanates from them.

When all ego and its wishes, when all personal will is left behind through the blessing of HAQQ, the Truth, and when they submit their wills to the will of Allah and are pleased with all that comes from Allah, their colour turns to white light.

These are the descriptions of dervishes from their novitiate at 'the beginning of the path until they reach a median stage. But the one who reaches the limits of this path has neither form nor shape nor colour. He becomes as if a ray of sunshine. The sunshine is colourless. Its light does not resemble any colour. The dervish who has reached the highest level has no being to reflect light or colour. If anything, his colour would be black, which absorbs -all light. This is the sign of the state of annihilation.

For others who look at him, this colourless, dark appearance becomes a veil over the light of wisdom which he possesses, just as the night is a veil over the sunshine. Allah says that He

made the night as a covering, and made the day as a means of subsistence.
SuraNabr, io-i.i)

For those who have reached the essence of the mind and of knowledge, there is a sign in this verse.

Those people who have come close to truth in the life of this world feel as if they are imprisoned here in a dark dungeon. They spend their life in pain and misery. They suffer great hardships, pressure of circumstances, in a world of total darkness. The Prophet says, 'This world is a dungeon for the faithful'. As he points out, calamities fall first upon the prophets, then upon those who are the closest to Allah, then in descending scale upon those who are trying to come close to Him. Therefore it is appropriate for the dervish to wear black and to tie the black turban around his head, for it is the clothing of the one who is prepared to suffer the pains of the path.

In reality, black is the appropriate clothing for those who should mourn for having lost their humanity and their possibility. Many men carelessly lose that great gift, proper only to mankind, of being conscious, of being able to see the truth, thus killing with their own hands their eternal life. Putting out the divine love yearning in their hearts, separating themselves from the holy spirit, they lose the possibility of returning to the origin, to the cause. Although they do not know it, they are the ones who suffer the greatest of calamities. If they were aware that they had lost all the benefits of the hereafter, the eternal life, they would indeed wear the clothing of mourning. A widow who has lost her husband mourns for four months and ten days. This is a mourning for the loss of that which belongs to this world. The mourning for the one who has lost the good of the eternal life should be eternal.

Our Master the Prophe says: 'Those who are sincere are always at the edge of a great danger'. How well this description fits the one who has to walk on tiptoe with the greatest of care! But this is the state of the dervish who has left his being and is in the realm of annihilation. His poverty of this world which he has left behind and his total need for Allah is great, and he burns as a great beauty over and above human kind.

Our Master says, 'Poverty is a blackened face in both worlds'. He means that the one who has purposefully chosen to be poor in this world, disappearing to this world, does not reflect any of the colours of this world, but absorbs only the light of the divine truth. The dark of his face is like a beauty spot which further enhances his beauty.

Those who have come in sight of the truth, after beholding the beauty of the truth, do not care to see anything else. They cannot look with love and yearning at anything else. For them Allah becomes the only beloved, the only thing that exists. That is their state in both worlds. That is their only purpose. Finally, they have become Men, and Allah has created Man in order that he know Him, in order that he reach His Essence:

It behoves all men to seek and know the reason for their creation and to feel the meaning of this reason, the duties which befall them in this world and in the hereafter, so that they do not spend their life here' in vain, so that they do not regret forever in the hereafter-engulfed, drowned in the yearning which they will finally realize in eternal remorse.

On the Purification of the Self

PURIFICATION is cleansing oneself. There are two kinds of cleanliness. One, exterior, is ordained by the precepts of the religion and is carried out by washing one's body with pure water.

The other, inner purification, is obtained through the realization of the dirt in One's being, being aware of one's sins and sincerely repenting for them. This inner purification necessitates taking a spiritual path and is taught by a spiritual teacher.

According to the religious rules and precepts, one becomes impure and one's ablution is broken when certain bodily matter such as faeces, urine, vomit, pus, blood, semen, etc., is expelled. This necessitates the renewal of the ablution. In the case of semen and menstrual bleeding a total washing of the body is necessary. In other cases the exposed extremities of the body- the hands and forearms, the face and feet -must be washed. Concerning renewing one's ablution our Master the Prophet said: 'At each renewal of ablution Allah renews the belief of His servant whose light of faith is repolished and shines brighter,' and 'Repeated purification by ablution is light upon light'.

Inner purity can also be lost, perhaps more often than outer purity, by bad character, low behaviour, harmful acts and attitudes such as pride, arrogance, lying, gossiping, slandering, envy and anger. Conscious and unconscious acts by one's senses soil the spirit: the mouth which eats unlawful food, the lips which lie and curse, the ear which listens to gossip and slander; the hand which strikes, the feet which follow the tyrant, Adultery, which is also a sin, is not performed only in bed; as the Prophet says, 'The eyes also commit adultery'.

When inner purity is thus soiled and spiritual ablution broken, the renewal of ablution is by sincere repentance, which is performed by realizing one's faults by painful regret accompanied by tears (which are the water washing the dirt from the spirit), by intending never to repeat this fault, by wishing to leave all faults, by asking the forgiveness of Allah, and by praying that He prevent one from committing such a sin again.

To pray is to present oneself in front of one's Lord. To have ablution, to be in a purified state, is a prerequisite for prayer. The wise know that the cleanliness of one's exterior being is not sufficient, for Allah sees deep into one's heart, which has to be given the ablution of repentance. Only then is prayer accepted. Allah says

This is what was promised for you -for every one who turned (to Allah) ,in sincere repentance, who kept ails (away).

(Sura Qat: 3 2)

The purification of the body and exterior ablution in accordance with religious precepts is also bound by time, for sleep cancels ablution as well. This cleanliness is tied to the day and the night of the life of this world. The cleanliness of the inner world, the ablution of the invisible self, is not limited by time. It is for the whole of life-not only for the temporal life of this world, but also for the eternal life of the hereafter.

On the Meaning of Ritual Worship and Inner Worship

FIVE times a day, at specific times, prayer is ordained for every adult and able Muslim. This is ordered by Allah: Guard the prayers, especially the middle prayer... • (Sure tiagara, 238) Ritual worship consists of standing, reciting from the Qur'an, bowing, prostrating, kneeling and audibly repeating certain prayers. The movements and actions involving the members of the body, recitations spelled out and heard involving the senses, are the worship of the material self. Because these actions of the material self are multiple and are repeated many times in each of the five prayers during the day, the first part of the order of Allah, Guard the prayers, is in the plural.

The second part of Allah's order, especially the middle prayer, refers to the prayer of the heart, because the heart is in the middle, in the centre of the being. The purpose of that

worship is to obtain peace of heart. The heart is in the middle, between the right and the left, between the front and the back, between the upper and the lower, and between righteousness and rebellion. The heart is the centre, the point of balance, the median, Our Master the Prophet said, "The hearts of the children of Adam are between the two fingers of the All-Merciful, He turns them whichever way He wills: The two fingers of Allah are His attributes of the irresistible power of punishment and the loving and delicate beauty of beneficence.

True worship is the worship of the heart, if one's heart is heedless of true worship, the ritual prayer of the material self is in disorder. When this happens, the peace of the material self that one hopes to obtain from his prayer is not realized. That is why the Prophet says, 'Ritual worship is only possible with a quiet heart'.

Prayer is the supplication of the created to the Creator. It is a meeting of the servant and the Lord. The place of this meeting is the heart, if the heart is closed, heedless, and dead, so is the meaning of worship. No good comes to the material being from such a prayer- For the heart is the *essence* of the body; the rest is dependent upon it. As the Prophet says, There is a piece of meat in man's body-when it is in a good state, the whole being improves, and when it is in a bad state, the whole being falls apart. Beware; that piece of meat is the heart.

Prayer prescribed by the religion is to be performed at specific times. Within a day and a night there are five such specific times of prayer. The best way of doing them is to perform them in a mosque, in congregation, turning toward the direction of the city of Iviakka, following the one who leads the prayer without hypocrisy, not for the approval of others, and without ostentation.

The time for inner worship is timeless and endless, for the whole time here and in the hereafter. The mosque for this prayer is

the heart. The congregation is the inner faculties, which remember and recite the Names of the unity of Allah in the language of the inner world. The leader of this prayer is the irresistible wish. The direction of prayer is toward the oneness of Allah-which is everywhere - and His eternal nature and-His beauty

The true heart is the one which can perform such a prayer. A heart like this neither sleeps nor dies. A heart and soul like this are in continuous worship, and a being with such a heart, whether he appear awake or asleep, is in constant service. The inner worship of the heart is his whole life. There is no longer the sound of recitation nor standing, bowing, prostrating or sitting. His guide, the leader of his prayer, is the Prophet himself, He speaks with Allah Most High, saying, 'Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help. (Sura Fat iha, 4) These divine words are interpreted as a sign of the state of the perfect man, who passes from being nothing, being lost to material things, into a state of oneness, Such a perfect heart receives great blessings from the divine, One of these blessings is mentioned by our Master the Prophet: 'The prophets and those who are beloved by Allah continue their worship in their graves as they did in their houses while they were of this world.' In other words, the eternal life of the heart continues its supplications to Allah Most High.

When the ritual worship of the material being and the inner worship of the heart unite, the prayer is complete. It is perfect worship, and its rewards are great. It brings one spiritually to the realms of the proximity of Allah, and physically to the highest level of one's possibility. In the world of appearances one becomes the devout servant of Allah. inwardly one becomes the wise one who has attained the true knowledge of Allah. If ritual worship does not unite with the inner worship of the heart, it is lacking. Its reward is only

On the Purification of the Perfect Man, who has Isolated Himself from, and Stripped Himself of, All Worldly Concerns

THE purpose of this purification 'Tis of two kinds: one is 'to gain access to the divine attributes, and the .other is to reach the realm of the Essence, Purification to gain *access* to divine attributes necessitates a teaching that will instruct one in the process of cleansing the mirror of the heart from animal and human images by the invocation of the dilkine Names. This invocation becomes the key, the password opening the eye of the heart. Only when that eye is opened can one see the true attributes of Allah Most High. Then that eye sees the reflection of the divine mercy, grace, beauty and kindness on the purified mirror of the heart. The Prophet or Allah says, 'The faithful sees by the light of Allah', a.id 'The faithful is the mirror of the faithful'. He also says, 'The man of knowledge males images while the wise man polishes the mirror tipon which truth is reflected'. When the mirror of the heart is completely cleansed by being polished with continuous invocation of the divine Names, one has access to and knowledge of the divine attributes. The witnessing of this vision is only possible in the mirror of the heart.

Purification for the purpose of attaining the divine Essence is through continuous remembrance and the invocation of the Confession of Unity. There are three Names of Unity, the last three of the twelve divine Names. They are:

*LA ILAHA ILA LLAH -There is no goal but Allah ALLAH-
The proper name of God*

HU-The transcendent Allah HAQQ-The Truth

HAYY-The everliving divine Life

QAYYUM-The Self-existing One upon Whom all existence depends

QAHHAR-The All-compeller Who overwhelms all WAHHAB-The

limitless Donor of all
FATTAH-The Opener
WAHID-The One AHAD-The Unique
SAMAD - The Source

These Names must be invoked not by the ordinary tongue, out with the secret tongue of the heart. It is only then that the eye of the heart sees the light of unity. When the sacred light of the divine Essence becomes manifest, all material valities disappear, all things become nothing. This is the state of total consumption of all and everything, a void beyond all voids. The manifestation of divine light extinguishes all other lights.

Everything will perish but Him.

(Sura Qasas, 88)

Allah effaces what He pleases and establishes what He pleases, and His is the essence of the Book.

(Sura Raid, 39)

When all is gone; what is left forever is the holy spirit. It sees with the-light of Allah. It sees Him, He sees it It sees by Him; it sees in Him; it sees for Him. There are no images, no likenesses in His seeing. *Nothing is like Him, and He is the Hearing and the Seeing.* (Sura Shura, 11)

What is left is a pure and absolute light. There is nothing to know beyond it. That is the realm of self-annihilation. There is no longer a mind to give any news. There is no one else but Allah to whom to give news. Our Master the Prophet & describes it saying, 'I have a time when I am so close to Allah that no one, neither an angel nor a messenger nor a prophet, can come between us,' That is the state of isolation, where one has stripped oneself of everything except Allah's Essence. That is the state of union, as Allah ordains from the lips of His Prophet, 'Isolate yourself from all and find union'.

The isolation proceeds from all that is worldly becoming nothing. It is only then that you will receive the divine attributes. That is what our Master the Prophet *means when he says, 'Adorn yourself with the divine disposition'. Purify yourself, submerging yourself in the divine attributes.

* * * * *

Excerpts from
‘The Purification of the Soul’
Collected and Arranged by
HAZRETH AHAMAD FARID (RAA)

Sincerity

Sincerity is the freeing of one’s intentions from all impurities in order to come nearer to Allah. It is to ensure that the intentions behind all acts of worship and obedience to Allah are exclusively for His pleasure. It is the perpetual contemplation of the Creator, to the extent that one forgets the creation.

Sincerity is a condition for Allah’s acceptance of good deeds performed in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Allah has commanded this in the Qur’an:

(And they have been commanded to worship only Allah, being sincere towards Him in their deed and true. (98:5))

Abu Umama has related that a man once came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and said, “What of a man who joined us in the fighting, his intention being for fame and booty?” The Prophet said, “He receives nothing.” The man repeated the question three times and each time the Prophet said,

“He receives nothing”. Then he said, “Allah only accepts actions that are intended purely for His pleasure.”

Abu Sa’id al-Khudri related that the Prophet said in his khutban during the farewell pilgrimage, “Allah will bless whoever hears these words and whoever understands them, for it may be that those who pass on this knowledge are not those who will understand it the best. There are three things concerning which the heart of a believer should feel no enmity or malice: devoting one’s actions to Allah, giving counsel to the Imams of the Muslims, and being loyal to the majority.”

What is meant here is that these three things strengthen the heart, and whoever distinguishes himself in them will have a heart purified from all manner of deceit, corruption and evil.

A servant can only free himself from Shaytan through sincere devotion, for Allah tells us in the Quran that Iblis said to Him:

(Except those of Your servants who are sincere. (38:83))

It has been related that a righteous man used to say, “O self, be devout and you will be pure”. When any worldly fortune, in which the self finds comfort and towards which the heart inclines, intrudes upon our worship, then it impairs the purity of our efforts and ruins our sincerity. Man is preoccupied with his good fortune and immersed in his desires and appetites; rarely are his actions or acts of worship free of temporary objectives and bad desires of this kind. For this reason it has been said that whoever secures a single moment of pure devotion to Allah in his life will survive, for devotion is rare and precious, and cleansing the heart of its impurities is an exacting undertaking.

In fact, devotion is the purifying of the heart from all impurities, whether few or many, so that the intention of drawing nearer to Allah is freed from all other motives, except that of

seeking His pleasure. This can only come from a lover of Allah, who is so absorbed in contemplation of the next world that there remains in his heart no place for the love of this world. Such a person must be devout and pure in all his actions, even in eating, drinking and answering the calls of nature. With rare exceptions, anyone who is not like this will find the door of devotion closed in his face.

The everyday actions of a person who is overwhelmed by his or her love for Allah and the akhira are characterised by this love and they are, in fact, pure devotion. In the same way, anyone whose soul is overwhelmed by love for and preoccupation with this world, or status and authority, will be so overwhelmed by these things that no act of worship, be it prayer or fasting, will be acceptable, except in very rare cases.

The remedy for love of this world is to break the worldly desires of the self, ending its greed for this world and purifying it in preparation for the next world. This will then become the state of the heart and sincere devotion will become easier to attain. There are a great many actions where a man acts, thinking they are purely intended for Allah's pleasure, but he is deluded, for he fails to see the defects in them.

It has been related that a man was used to praying in the first row in the mosque. One day he was late for the prayer, so he prayed in the second row. Feeling embarrassment when people saw him in the second row, he realised that the pleasure and satisfaction of the heart that he used to gain from praying in the first row were due to his seeing people seeing him there and admiring him for it. This is a subtle and intangible condition and actions are rarely safe from it. Apart from those whom Allah has assisted, few are aware of such delicate matters. Those who do not realise it only come to see their good deeds appearing as bad ones on the Day of Resurrection; they are the ones referred to in Allah's words:

(And something will come to them from Allah which they had never anticipated, for the evil of their deeds will become apparent to them. (39:47-48)

And also:

(Say: Shall We tell you who will lose most in respect of their deeds ? Those whose efforts were astray in the life of this world, while they thought that they were doing good works. (18:103-104)

Yaqub said: "A devout person is someone who conceals things that are good, in the same way that he conceals things that are bad.

"As-Sousi said: "True devotion is to lose the faculty of being conscious of your devotion; for someone who identifies devotion in his devotion is a person whose devotion is in need of devotion." To contemplate devotion is to admire it, and admiration is an affliction; and that which is pure is whatever is free of all afflictions. This means that one's deeds should be purified from any self-admiration concerning the actions they entail.

Ayyab said: "It is much harder for the people of action to purify their intentions than it is to execute any of their actions".

Some people have said: "To be devout for a short while is to survive for ever, but devotion is rare."

Suhail was asked: "What is the most difficult thing for the self?" He said "Devotion, when the self does not have the good fortune of being endowed with it."

Al-Fudayl said: "Forsaking action for the sake of other people is to seek their admiration. To act for the sake of their admiration is to associate others with Allah. Devotion is when Allah frees you from both of these states."

Notes

1. Sahih, an-Nisa'i, Kitab al-jihad, 6/25; al-Hafidh ibn Hajar, Fath al-Qadir, 6/28.
2. Sahih, Ibn Ma'jah; also Ibn Hibban, mawarid adh-Dham'an, p.47, on the authority of Zaid ibn Thabit.

Types of Heart

Just as the heart may be described in terms of being alive or dead, it may also be regarded as belonging to one of three types; these are the healthy heart, the dead heart, and the sick heart.

The Healthy Heart

On the Day of Resurrection, only those who come to Allah with a healthy heart will be saved. Allah says:

(The day on which neither wealth nor sons will be of any use, except for whoever brings to Allah a sound heart.)

In defining the healthy heart, the following has been said: "It is a heart cleansed from any passion that challenges what Allah commands, or disputes what He forbids. It is free from any impulses which contradict His good. As a result, it is safeguarded against the worship of anything other than Him, and seeks the judgement of no other except that of His Messenger. Its services are exclusively reserved for Allah, willingly and lovingly, with total reliance, relating all matters to Him, in fear, hope and sincere dedication. When it loves, its love is in the way of Allah. If it detests, it detests in the light of what He detests. When it gives, it gives for Allah. If it withholds, it withholds for Allah. Nevertheless, all this will not suffice for its salvation until it is free from following or taking as its guide, anyone other than His Messenger".

A servant with a healthy heart must dedicate it to its journey's end and not base his actions and speech on those of any other

person except Allah's Messenger. He must not give precedence to any other faith or words or deeds over those of Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Allah says:

(Oh you who believe, do not put yourselves above Allah and His Messenger, but fear Allah, for Allah is Hearing, Knowing.)

The Dead Heart

This is the opposite of the healthy heart. It does not know its Lord and does not worship Him as He commands, in the way which He likes, and with which He is pleased. It clings instead to its lusts and desires, even if these are likely to incur Allah's and its loves and its hatreds, and its giving and its withholding, arise from its whims, which are of paramount importance to it and preferred above the pleasure of Allah. Its whims are its simam. Its lust is its guide. Its ignorance is its leader. Its crude impulses are its impetus. It is immersed in its concern with worldly objectives. It is drunk with its own fancies and its love for hasty, fleeting pleasures. It is called to Allah and the akhira from a distance but it does not respond to advice, and instead it follows any scheming, cunning shaytan. Lifeangers and pleases it, and passion makes it deaf and blind to anything except what is evil.

To associate and keep company with the owner of such a heart is to tempt illness: living with him is like taking poison, and befriending him means utter destruction.

The Sick Heart

This is a heart with life in it, as well as illness. The former sustains it at one moment, the latter at another, and it follows whichever one of the two manages to dominate it. It has love for Allah, faith in Him, sincerity towards Him, and reliance upon Him, and these are what give it life. It also has a craving for lust and pleasure, and prefers them, and strives to experience them. It is

full of self-admiration, which can lead to its own destruction. It listens to two callers: one calling it to Allah and His Prophet and the *akhirah*; and the other calling it to the fleeting pleasures of this world. It responds to whichever one of the two happens to have most influence over it at the time.

The first heart is alive, submitted to Allah, humble, sensitive and aware; the second is brittle and dead; the third wavers between either its safety or its ruin.

Notes

1. It has been related on the authority of Abu'd-Darda' that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Your love for something makes you blind and deaf." Abu Daw'ud, *al-Adab*, 14/38, Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, 5/194. The hadith is classified as *hasan*.

Symptoms of The Heart'S Sickness and Signs of Its Health

The Signs of a Sick Heart

A servant's heart may be ill, and seriously deteriorating, while he remains oblivious of its condition, It may even die without him realising it. The symptoms of its sickness, or the signs of its death, are that its owner is not aware of the harm that results from the damage caused by wrong actions, and is unperturbed by his ignorance of the truth or by his false beliefs. Since the living heart experiences pain as a result of any ugliness that it encounters and through its recognising its ignorance of the truth (to a degree that corresponds to its level of awareness), it is capable of recognising the onset of decay- and the increase in the severity of the remedy that will be needed to stop it- but then sometimes it prefers to put up with the pain rather than undergo the arduous trial of the cure!

Some of the many signs of the hearts' sickness is its turning away from good foods to harmful ones, from good remedies to shameful sickness. The healthy heart prefers what is beneficial and healing to what is harmful and damaging the sick heart prefers the opposite. The most beneficial sustenance for the heart is faith and the best medicine is the Qur'an.

The Signs of a Healthy Heart

For the heart to be healthy it should depart from this life and arrive in the next, and then settle there as if it were one of its people; it only came to this life as a passer-by, taking whatever provisions it needed and then returning home. As the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to Abdullah ibn Umar, "Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a passer-by." *The more diseased the heart is, the more it desires this world; it dwells in it.* until it becomes like one of its own people.

This healthy heart continues to trouble its owner until he returns to Allah, and is at peace with Him, and joins Him, like a lover driven by compulsion who finally reaches his beloved. Besides his love for Him he needs no other, and after invoking Him no other invocations are needed. Serving Him precludes the need to serve any other.

If this heart misses its share of reciting the Qur'an and invoking Allah, or completing one of the prescribed acts of worship, then its owner suffers more distress than a cautious man who suffers because of the loss of money or a missed opportunity to make it. It longs to serve, just as a famished person longs for food and drink.

Yahya ibn Mu'adh said: "Whoever is pleased with serving Allah, everything will be pleased to serve him, and whoever finds pleasure in contemplating Allah, all the people will find pleasure in contemplating him."

This heart has only one concern: that all its actions, and its inner thoughts and utterances, are obedient to Allah. It is more careful with its time than the meanest people are with their money, so that it will not be spent wastefully. When it enters into the prayer, all its worldly worries and anxieties vanish and it finds its comfort and bliss in adoring its Lord. It does not cease to mention Allah, nor tire of serving Him, and it finds intimate company with no-one save a person who guides it to Allah and reminds it of Him.

Its attention to the correctness of its action is greater than its attention to the action itself. It is scrupulous in making sure that the intentions behind its actions are sincere and pure and that they result in good deeds.

As well as and in spite of all this, it not only testifies to the generosity of Allah in giving it the opportunity to carry out such actions, but also testifies to its own imperfection and shortcomings in executing them.

The Causes of Sickness of the Heart

The temptations to which the heart is exposed are what cause its sickness. These are the temptations of desires and fancies. The former cause intentions and the will to be corrupted, and the latter cause knowledge and belief to falter.

Hundhayfa ibn-al-Yamani, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, Temptations are presented to the heart, one by one. Any heart that accepts them will be left with a black stain, but any heart that rejects them will be left with a mark of purity, so that hearts are of two types: a dark heart that has turned away and become like an overturned vessel, and a pure heart that will never be harmed by temptation for as long as the earth and the heavens exist. The dark heart only

recognizes good and denounces evil when this suits its desires and whims”?

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, placed hearts, when exposed to temptation, into two categories:

First, a heart which, when it is exposed to temptation, absorbs it like a sponge that soaks up water, leaving a black stain in it. It continues to absorb each temptation that is offered to it until it is darkened and corrupted, which is what he meant by “like an overturned vessel”. When this happens two dangerous sicknesses take hold of it and plunge it into ruin:

The first is that of its confusing good with evil, to such an extent that it does not recognise the former and does not denounce the latter. This sickness may even gain hold of it to such an extent that it believes good to be evil and vice-versa, the sunnah to be bida’ and vice-versa, the truth to be false and falsity to be the truth.

The second is that of its setting up its desires as its judge, over and above what the Prophet (PBUH) taught, so that it is enslaved and led by its whims and fancies.

Second, a pure heart in which the light of faith is bright and from which its radiance shines. When temptation is presented to pure hearts such as this, they oppose it and reject it, and so their light and illumination only increase.

Notes

1. Al - Bukhari, Kitab-ar-Riqaq, 11/2332. Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 2/170 (with different wordings)

The Four Poisons of The Heart

You should know that all acts of disobedience are poison to the heart and cause its sickness and ruin. They result in its will running

off course, against that of Allah, and so its sickness festers and increases. Mil al-Mubarak said :

I have seen wrong actions killing hearts,
And their degradation may lead to
Their be coming addicted to them.
Turning away from wrong actions
gives life to the hearts.
And opposing your self is best for it.

Whoever is concerned with the health and life and his heart, must rid it of the effects of such poisons, and then protect it by avoiding new ones. If he takes any by mistake, then he should hasten to wipe out their effect by turning in repentance and seeking forgiveness from Allah, as well as by doing good deeds that will wipe out his wrong actions.

By the four poisons we mean unnecessary talking, unrestrained glances, too much food and keeping bad company. Of all the poisons, these are the most widespread and have the greatest effect on a heart's well-being.

Unnecessary Talking

It is reported in al-Musnad, on the authority of Anas, that the Prophet (PBUH) said : “The faith of a servant is not put right until his heart is put right, and his heart is not put right until his tongue is put right.”¹ This shows that the Prophet (PBUH) has made the purification of faith conditional on the purification of the heart, and the purification of the heart conditional on the purification of the tongue.

At- Tirmidhi relates in a hadith on the authority of Ibn Umar: “Do not take excessively without remembering Allah, causes the heart to harden, and the person furthest from Allah is a person with a hard heart_”²

Umar Ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said : “A person who talks too much is a person who often makes mistakes, and someone who often makes mistakes, often has wrong actions. The Fire has a priority over such a frequent sinner.”³

In a hadith related on the authority of Mu' adh, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “Shall I not tell you how to control all that ?” I said, “Yes do, O Messenger of Allah.” So he held his tongue between his fingers, and then he said : “Restrain this.” I said, “O Prophet of Allah, are we accountable for what we say?” He (PBUH) said, “May your mother be bereft by your loss! Is there anything more than the harvest of the tongues that throws people on their faces (or he said ‘on their noses’) into the Fire?”⁴

What is meant here by ‘the harvest of the tongues’ is the punishment for saying forbidden things. A man, through his actions and words, sows the seeds of either good or evil. On the Day of Resurrection he harvests their fruits. Those who sow the seeds of good words and deeds harvest honour and blessings; those who sow the seeds of evil words and deeds reap only regret and remorse.

A hadith related by Abu Huraira says, “What mostly causes people to be sent to the Fire are the two openings : the mouth and the private parts.”⁵

Abu Huraira also related that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “The servant speaks words, the consequence of which he does not realise, and for which he is sent down into the depths of the Fire further than the distance between the east and the West.

The same hadith was transmitted by at- Tirmidhi with slight variations : “The servant says something that he thinks is harmless, and for which he will be plunged into the depths of the Fire as far as seventy auturrins.”⁷

Uqba ibn Amir said: “I said : ‘O Messenger of Allah, what is our best way of surviving?’ He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied : ‘Guard your tongue, make your house suffice for sheltering your privacy, and weep for your wrong actions.’”⁸

It has been related on the authority of Sahl ibn Sa’d that the Prophet (PBUH) said, “Whoever can guarantee what is between his jaws and what is between his legs, I guarantee him the Garden.”⁹

It has also been related by Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “Let whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day either speak good or remain silent.”¹⁰

Thus talking can either be good, in which case it is commendable, or bad, in which case it is haram.

The Prophet (PBUH) said : “Everything the children of Adam say goes against them, except for their enjoining good and for-bidding evil, and remembering Allah, Glorious and Mighty is He. “This was reported by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Ma’jah on the authority of Umm Habiba, may Allah be pleased with her.”¹¹

Umar ibn al-Khattab visited Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with them, and found him pulling his tongue with his fingers, Umar said “Stop ! may Allah forgive you!” Abu Bakr replied: “This tongue has brought me to dangerous places.”¹²

Abdullah ibn Mas’ud said: “By Allah, besides Whom no god exists, nothing deserves a long prison sentence more than my tongue.” He also used to say: “(C) tongue, say good and you will profit ; desists from saying evil things and you will be safe; otherwise you will find only regret”

Abu Huraira reported that Ibn al-Abbas said : “A person will not feel greater fury or anger for any part of his body on the

Day of Judgement more than what he will feel for his tongue, unless he only used it for saying or enjoining good.”

Al-Hassan said : “Whoever does not hold his tongue cannot understand his deen.”

The least harmful of a tongue’s faults is talking about whatever does not concern it. The following hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) is enough to indicate the harm of this fault : “One of the merits of a person’s Islam is his abandoning what does not concern him.”¹³

Abu Ubaida related that al-Hassan said: “One of the signs of Allah’s abandoning a servant is His making him preoccupied with what does not concern him.”

Sahl said, “Whoever talks about what does not concern him is deprived of truthfulness.”

As we have already mentioned above, this is the least harmful of the tongue’s faults. There are far worse things, like back-biting, gossiping, obscene and misleading talk, two-faced and hypocritical talk, showing off, quarrelling, bickering, singing, lying, mockery, derision and falsehood; and there are many more faults which can affect a servant’s tongue, ruining his heart and causing him to lose both his happiness and pleasure in this life, and his success and profit in the next life. Allah is the One to Whom we turn for assistance.

Unrestrained Glances

The unrestrained glance results in the one who looks becoming attracted to what he sees, and in the imprinting of an image of what he sees in his heart. This can result in several kinds of corruption in the heart of the servant. The following are a number of them :

It has been related that the Prophet (PBUH) once said words to the effect : “The glance is a poisoned arrow of shaytan. Whoever lowers his gaze for Allah, He will bestow upon him a refreshing sweetness which he will find in his heart on the day that he meets Him.”¹⁴

Shaytan enters with the glance, for he travels with it, faster than the wind blowing through an empty place_ He makes what is seen appear more beautiful than it really is, and transforms it into an idol for the heart to worship_ Then he promises it false rewards, lights the fire of desires Within it, and fuels it with the wood of forbidden actions, which the servant would not have committed had it not been for this distorted image_

This distracts the heart and makes it forget its more important concerns. It stands between it and them; and so the heart loses its straight path and falls into the pit of desire and ignorance. Allah Mighty and Glorious is He, says:

(And do not obey anyone whose heart We have made forgetful in remembering Us- who follows his own desires, and whose affair has exceeded all bounds.) (18:28)

The unrestrained gaze causes all three afflictions.

It has been said that between the eye and the heart is an immediate connection ; if the eyes are corrupted, then the heart follows. It becomes like a rubbish heap where all the dirt and filth and rotteness collect, and so there is no room for love for Allah, relating all matters to Him, awareness of being in His presence, and feeling joy at His proximity - only the opposite of these things can inhabit such a heart.

Staring and gazing without restraint is disobedience to Allah:

(Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their modesty ; that is more purifying for them. Surely Allah is aware of what they do,(24:30)

Only the one who obeys Allah 's commands is content in this world, and only the servant who obeys Allah will survive in the next world.

Furthermore, letting the gaze roam free cloaks the heart with darkness, just as lowering the gaze for Allah clothes it in light. After the above ayah, Allah, the Glorious and Mighty, says in the same surah of the Qur'an:

(Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth : the likeness of His light is as if there were a niche, and in the niche is a lamp, and in the lamp is a glass, and the glass as it were a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it. Light upon light. Allah guides whomever He wants to His Light. Allah strikes metaphors for man; and Allah knows all things (24:35)

When the heart is a light, countless good comes to it from all directions. If it is dark, then clouds of evil and afflictions come from all directions to cover it up.

Letting the gaze run also makes the heart blind to distinguishing between truth and falsehood, between the sunnah and innovation; while lowering it for Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, gives it a penetrating, true and distinguishing insight.

A righteous man once said : "Whoever enriches his outward behaviour by following the sunnah, and makes his inward soul wealthy through contemplation, and averts his gaze away from looking at what is forbidden, and avoids anything of a doubtful nature, and feeds solely on what is halal - his inner sight will never falter."

Rewards for actions come in kind. Whoever lowers his gaze from what Allah has forbidden, Allah will give his inner sight abundant light.

Too Much Food

The consumption of small amounts of food guarantees tenderness of the heart, strength of the intellect, humility of the self, weakness of desires, and gentleness of temperament. Immoderate eating brings about the opposite of these praiseworthy qualities.

Al-Miqdam ibn Ma' d Yakrib said : “I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) say: ‘The son of Adam fills no vessel more displeasing to Allah than his stomach. A few morsels should be enough for him to preserve his strength. If he must fill it, then he should allow a third for his food, a third for his drink and leave a third empty for easy breathing.’”¹⁵

Excessive eating induces many kinds of harm. It makes the body incline towards disobedience to Allah and makes worship and obedience seem laborious - such evils are bad enough in themselves. A full stomach and excessive eating have caused many a wrong action and inhibited much worship. Whoeversafe-guards against the evils of overfilling his stomach has prevented great evil. It is easier for shaytan to control a person who has filled his stomach with food and drink, which is why it has often been said : “Restrict the pathways of shaytan by fasting.”¹⁶

It has been reported that when a group of young men from the Tribe of Israel were worshipping, and it was time for them to break their fast, a man stood up and said: “Do not eat too much, otherwise you will drink too much, and then you will end up sleeping too much, and then you will lose too much.”

The Prophet (PBUH) and his companions, may Allah be pleased with them, used to go hungry quite frequently Although this was often due to a shortage of food, Allah decreed the best and most favourable conditions for His Messenger. may Allah bless him and grant him peace. This is why Ibn Umar and his

father before him - in spite of the abundance of food available to them - modelled their eating habits on those of the Prophet (PBUH). It has been reported that Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said: "From the time of their arrival in Madina up until his death (PBUH), the family of Mohammed (PBUH) never ate their fill of bread made from wheat three nights in a row."17

Ibrahim ibn Adham said : "Any one who controls his stomach is in control of his deen, and anyone who controls his hunger is in control of good behaviour. Disobedience towards Allah is nearest to a person who is satiated with a full stomach, and furthest away from a person who is hungry."

Keeping Bad Company

Unnecessary companionship is a chronic disease that accuses much harm. How often have the wrong kind of companionship and intermixing deprived people of Allah's generosity, planting discord in their hearts which even the passage of time - even if it were long enough for mountains to be worn away - has been unable to dispel. In keeping such company one can find the roots of loss, both in this life and in the next life.

A servant should benefit from companionship. In order to do so he should divide people into four categories, and be careful not to get them mixed up, for once one of them is mixed with another, then evil can find its way through to him :

The first category are those people whose company is like food : it is indispensable, night or day. Once a servant has taken his need from it, he leaves it be until he requires it again, and so on. These are the people with knowledge of Allah- of His commands, of the scheming of His enemies, and of the diseases of the heart and their remedies-who wish well for Allah, His Prophet (PBUH) and His servants. Associating with this type of person is an achievement in itself.

The second category are those people whose company is like a medicine. They are only required when a disease sets in. When you are healthy, you have no need of them. However, mixing with them is sometimes necessary for your livelihood, business, consultation and the like. Once what you need from them has been fulfilled, mixing with them should be avoided.

The third category are those people whose company is harmful. Mixing with this type of person is like a disease, in all its variety and degrees and strengths and weaknesses. Associating with one or some of them is like an incurable chronic disease. You will never profit either in this life or in the next life if you have them for company, and you will surely lose either one or both of your deen and your livelihood because of them. If their companionship has taken hold of you and is established, then it becomes a fatal, terrifying sickness.

Amongst such people are those who neither speak any good that might benefit you, nor listen closely to you so that they might benefit from you. They do not know their souls and consequently put their selves in their rightful place. If they speak, their words fall on their listeners' hearts like the lashes of a cane, while all the while they are full of admiration for and delight in their own words.

They cause distress to those in their company, while believing that they are the sweet scent of the gathering. If they are silent, they are heavier than a massive millstone too heavy to carry or even drag across the floor.¹⁸

All in all, mixing with anyone who is bad for the soul will not last, even if it is unavoidable. It can be one of the most distressing aspects of a servant's life that he is plagued by such person, with whom it may be necessary to associate. In such a relationship, a servant should cling to good behaviour, only presenting him with his outward appearance, while disguising his inner soul,

until Allah offers him a way out of his affliction and the means of escape from this situation.

The fourth category are those people whose company is doom itself. It is like taking poison : its victim either finds an antidote or perishes. Many people belong to this category. They are the people of religious innovation and misguidance those who abandon the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and advocate other beliefs. They call what is the sunnah a bid'a and vice-versa. A man with any intellect should not sit in their assemblies nor mix with them. The result of doing so will either be the death of his heart or, at the very best, its falling seriously ill.

What Gives the Heart and Sustenance

You should know that acts of obedience are essential to the well being of the servant's heart, just in the same way that food and drink are to the of the body. All wrong actions are the same as poisonous foods, and they inevitably harm the heart

The servant feels the need to worship his Lord, Mighty and Glorious is He, for he is naturally in constant need of His help and assistance.

In order to maintain the well being of his body, the servant carefully follows a strict diet. He habitually and constantly eats good food at regular intervals, and is quick to free his stomach of harmful elements if he happens to eat bad food by mistake.

The well being of the servant's heart, however, is far more important than that of his body, for while the well being of his body enables him to lead a life that is free from illnesses in this world, that of the heart ensures him both a fortunate life in this world and eternal bliss in the next.

In the same way, while the death of the body cuts the servant off from this world, the death of the heart results in everlasting

anguish. A righteous man once said, “How odd, that some people mourn for the one whose body has died, but never mourn for the one whose heart has died and yet the death of the heart is far more serious.”

Thus acts of obedience are indispensable to the well being of the heart. It is worthwhile mentioning the following acts of obedience here, since they are very necessary and essential for the servant’s heart.

Dhikr of Allah ta’Ala, recitation of the Noble Qur’an, seeking Allah’s forgiveness, making du’as, invoking Allah’s blessings and peace on the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and praying at night.

Notes

1. Da’if hadith, Al-Mundhari, 3 /234; and al-Iraqi in allhya, 8/1539.
2. Da’if hadith, at-Tirmidhi, Kitab az-Zuhud, 7/92, gharib; no one else has transmitted it other than Ibrahim ibn Abdullah ibn Hatib, whom ath-Thahabi mentions, 1/43, stating that this is one of the gharib hadith attributed to him.
3. Da’ if hadith, Ibn Hibban and al-Baihaqi, and al-Iraqi in his edition of al-Ihya, 8/1541.
4. Sahih hadith, at-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, ath-Thahabi.
5. Sahib hadith, at-Tirmidhi and Ahmad ; also al-Hakim and ath-Thahabi.
6. Al-Bukhari in Kitab ar-Riqaq, and Muslim in Kitab az-Zuhud.
7. At-Tirmidhi, Kitab az-Zuhud ; he said the hadith is hasan gharib.
8. At-Tirmidhi in Kitab az-Zuhud with a slightly different wording, he said the hadith is hasan. This wording is reported by Abu Na’im in al-Hilya.
9. Al-Bukhari, Kitab ar-Riqaq, 11/308 and Kitab al- Hudud, 12/111
10. Al-Bukhari, Kitab ar-Riqaq, 11/308 ; Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 2/18. The complete hadith is : “Let whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day either speak good or remain silent; and let whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his neighbour; and let whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest.”
11. The hadith is hasan and is reported by at-Tirmidhi in Kitab az-Zuhud

and by Ibn Majah in *Kitab al-Fitan*. At Tirmidhi classified it as *hasan gharib*. We have no report of it other than from Muhammad ibn Yazid ibn Khanis.

12. Hasan according to Abu Ya'la, Baihaqi and as-Suyuti.
13. Sahih, at-Tirmidhi, *Kitab az-Zuhud*, 6/607; Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, 1/201 ; as-Sa'ati, *al-Fath ar-Rabbani* 19/257; hadith number 12 in an-Nawawi's *Forty Hadiths*.
14. Da'if, at-Tabarani, 8/63; al-Hakim, *al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak*, 4/314; Ahmad; *al-Musnad*, 5/264.
15. Sahih, Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, 4/132; as-Sa'ati, *al-Fath ar-Rabbani*, 17/88; at-Tirmidhi, *Kitab az-Zuhud*, 7/51.
16. Da'if; it does not appear in most of the sources of the sunnah, but is mentioned in al-Ghazzali's *al-Ihya*, 8/1488.
17. Al-Bukhari, *Kitab al-At Ima*, 9/549 ; and Muslim, *Kitab az-Zuhud*, 8/105.
18. Ash-Shafi', may Allah be pleased with him, is reported to have said, "Whenever a tedious person sits next to me, the side on which he is sitting feels lower down than the other side to me."

Hazreth Imam Ghazali (RAA)

Hazreth Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali (RAA) (1058-1111) was a man of intellect and was master of law and mystical lore. His encyclopaedic work is "The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Ihla' Ulum ad-Din) and Alchemy of Happiness (Kimiya e Saadat) . The present chapter is an extract from this work.

On The Sins of The Heart

The blameworthy qualities in the heart are many, the purification of the heart from its vices is lengthy, and the means of treating these is obscure. People are so lacking in concern for themselves and so occupied with the vain pomp of the world that the knowledge and practice of that treatment have altogether disappeared. We have dealt fully with all that in our work on "The Revival of the Religious Sciences", in the parts about Things Destructive and Things Salutory, (the third and fourth 'quarters') but here we warn you against Three of the evil dispositions of the heart - the most prominent among the religious scholars of our time - so that you may be on your guard against them; for they are both destructive in themselves and the roots of all other evil dispositions. They are envy; hypocrisy and pride (or self - admiration). Endeavour to purify your heart from them. If you master these, you know how to guard against the others mentioned among the things destructive; if you are unable to deal with them, you will be all

the more unable to deal with others. Do not imagine that you will preserve a sound intention in your pursuit of learning while there is any envy, hypocrisy or pride in your heart. Muhammad (God bless and preserve him) said; 'Three things are destructive, sordid avarice, desires given rein to, and admiration of oneself.' Eavy. This is a form of avarice, for the miser is the man who is niggardly towards others with his possession; the grudging person is the one who is niggardly towards the servants of God most high with the favour of God where that is in the treasuries of His might and not in his own treasuries - so his avarice is greater. The envious man is the onewho is pained when God most high out of the treasuries of His might bestows on one of His servants knowledge or wealth or popularity or some piece of good fortune, and whotherefore wants that favour taken away from the other person, even though he himself will not obtain any advantage from its removal. This is the depths of evil.

Hence the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) said: 'Envy eats up good deeds as fire eats up wood'. The envious man suffers punishment and receives no mercy. He is continually suffering punishment in this world, for the world never lacks among his contemporaries and acquaintances many on whom God has bestowed knowledge or wealth or influence, and thus he continually suffers punishment in this world until his death. And the punishment of the world to come is even greater and more severe. Indeed a man does not arrive at true faith so long as he does not want for the rest of the Muslims what he wants for himself. Indeed, he must be equal to them in weal and woe. The Muslims are like a single building, one part of which supports the other; they are like a single body, in which, if one member suffers, the rest of the body is affected. If you do not find this state of affairs in your heart, then it is more important for you to busy yourself with seeking deliverance from destruction than to busy yourself with recondite questions of casuistry and science of litigation.

Hypocrisy. This is latent polytheism, one of the two forms of polytheism. It consists in your quest for such a place in the hearts of people that you thereby obtain influence and respect. The love of influence is one of the 'desire given rein to', and through it many people go to destruction. Yet people are destroyed only by themselves. If people really judged objectively, they would realize that it is only people's hypocrisy which is the motive of most of their intellectual pursuits and acts of Worship, not to mention their customary activities; and his hypocrisy renders their acts of no avail. Thus we find in Tradition, 'On the day of resurrection orders will be given to take the martyr to the Fire, and he will say, "O Lord, I was martyred fighting in Thy path", and God most high will say to him, "You wanted it to be said that so and so is brave; that has been said, and that is your reward"'. The same will be said of the scholar, the man who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the reciter of the Qur'an.

Pride, arrogance, boastfulness. This is the chronic disease. It is man's consideration of himself with the eye of self-glorification and self-importance and his consideration of others with the eye of contempt. The result as regards the tongue is that he says, 'I... I...'; as accursed Iblis said (Q.38, 77): 'I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, but him Thou hast created of clay'. The fruit of it in society is self-exaltation and self-advancement and the endeavour to be foremost in discussion and resentment when what one says is contradicted. The arrogant man is he who, when he gives advice, mortifies, but, when he receives it, is rude. Every one who considers himself better than one of the creatures of God most high is arrogant. Indeed, you ought to realize that the good man is he who is good in God's sight in the mansion of eternity; and that is something unknown to man, postponed to the End. Your belief that you are better than others is sheer ignorance. Rather you ought not to look at anyone without considering that he is better than you and superior to

you. Thus, if you see a child, you say, ‘This person has never sinned against God, but I have inned, and so he is better than I’; and if you see an older person, you say, ‘This man was a servant of God before me, and is certainly better than I’; if he is a scholar you say, ‘This man has been given what I have not been given and reached what I did not reach, and knows what I am ignorant of; then how shall I be like ‘him’? and if he is ignorant, you say, ‘This man has sinned against God in ignorance, and I have sinned against him knowingly, so God’s case against me is stronger, and I do not know what end He will give to me and what end to him’; if he is an infidel, you say, ‘I do not know; perhaps he will become a Muslim and his life will end in doing good, and because of his acceptance of Islam something of his sins will be taken away, as a hair is taken from dough; but as for me _ God is our refuge (sc. God grant it does not happen) _ perhaps God will lead me astray so that I become an infidel and my life ends in doing evil, and then tomorrow he will be among those brought near to God and I shall be among the punished.

Arrogance will not leave your heart except when you know that the great man is he who is great in the sight of God most high. That is something which cannot be known until the end of life, and there is doubt about that (sc. tue end and whether it will be good or bad). So let fear of the end occupy you and keep you from making yourself out, despite the doubt about your end, to be above the servants of God most high. Your certitude and faith at present do not exclude the possibility of your changing in the future; for God is the disposer of hearts; He guides whom He will and leads astray whom He will.

The Traditions about envy, arrogance, hypocrisy and pride are numerous. A single comprehensive Tradition about them will suffice you. Ibn al-Mubarak related, with a chain of authorities going back to a certain man that this man said to Mu’adh, ‘O

Mu'adh, tell me a Tradition you heard from the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him). "The man continued " "Mu'adh wept until I thought he would never cease, but at length he ceased; then he said: 'I heard the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) saying to me: 'I am going to tell you a Tradition (or tell you of a happening), Mu'adh; if you remember it, it will benefit you before God, but if you forget it and do not remember it, your plea of defence before God on the day of resurrection will be removed. O Mu'adh, God (may He be blessed and exalted) before creating the heavens and the earth created seven angels, and to each of the heavens He appointed one of these seven angels as keeper. Now the guardian angels are ascending with man's work from morning to evening; and the work has a light like the light of the sun. When they bring it up to the lowest heaven, they increase and multiply it, and the angel at the gate says to the guardians. With this work strike the face of the doer of it; I am in charge of backbiting; my Lord has commanded me not to allow the work of anyone guilty of backbiting to pass beyond me.'" He continued: "Then the guardians bring one of man's good works and increase and multiply it, until they reach the second heaven with it. The angel responsible for it says, 'Stand and with this work strike the face of the worker of it, for in his work he sought worldly honour; my Lord has commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me; he boasted in men's society of his superiority; I am the angel dealing with boastfulness.' "He continued: "The guardians ascend with a man's work, so bright with light from alms and Worship and fasting that the guardians were astonished. They passed with it to the third heaven, and there the angel in charge says to them. 'Stand and with this work strike the face of the worker of it; I am the angel dealing with arrogance; my Lord has commanded me not to let his work pass beyond me for he has treated people arrogantly in society'. "He continued: "The guardians ascend with a man's work shining brightly like a star

and ringing from the acts of adoration and Worship, from fasting and from the greater and lesser pilgrimages, and they pass with it to the fourth heaven. Then the angel responsible for that says to them, 'Stand and with this work strike the face and back and front of the doer of this work; I am in charge of pride; my Lord has commanded me not to let this act pass beyond me; whenever this man performed any work pride entered into it.' 'He continued: 'The guardians ascend with a man's work and pass with it to the fifth heaven; it is like a bride being conducted to her husband. The angel responsible for it says to the guardians, 'Stand and with this work strike the face of the doer of it. and carry him away and place him on his shoulder; I am the angel dealing with envy; this man used to envy whoever studied and performed a work like his and all who were superior to men in some way; he used to envy them and slander them; my Lord has commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me.' 'He continued: 'The guardians ascend with a man's work, radiant as the moon from Worship and almsgiving and the and lesser pilgrimages and the holy war and fasting and they pass with it to the sixth heaven, where the angel responsible for that says to them, 'Stand and with this work strike the face of the doer of it; he never had mercy on any of God's servants who had met with misfortune or sickness, but rejoiced at that; I am the angel of mercy; my Lord commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me.' He continued: 'The guardians ascend with a man's work consisting of Worship and fasting and the spending of money (in good causes, or otherwise as alms) and the holy war and continence; it had a sound like that of bees and a radiance like that of the sun; along with it were three thousand angels and they passed with it to the seventh heaven. The angel responsible for that said to them, 'Stand and with that work strike the face of the doer of it and with it strike his limbs and lock up his heart; I veil from my Lord; every work that is not done for the sake of my Lord; this work was done for the sake of something

other than God most high; he did it for the sake of honour among the religious scholars (‘ulama) and fame among the intellectuals and renown among the cities; my Lord commanded me not to allow his work to pass beyond me; every work not done purely for God is hypocrisy, and God does not receive the work of the hypocrite.’ He continued: ‘The guardians ascend with a man’s work consisting of Worship almsgiving, fasting the greater and lesser pilgrimages, a good character, observance of silence and recollection of God most high. It is accompanied by the angels of the seven heavens until they have passed through all the veils to the presence of God most high. Then they stand before Him and bear witness to Him of the good work, performed solely for the sake of God most high; and God most high says,

“You are the guardians over the work of My servant, but I am the Watcher over his heart; this act was not done for My sake, but for the sake of something else; so My curse is upon him.” Then the angels all say, “Thy curse and our curse be upon him’; and the seven heavens and those in them curse him.” At that Mu’adh wept; and then continued: “I said: O Messenger of God, you are the Messenger of God, and I am Mu’adh; how shall I have purity of intention and salvation? Muhammad said: ‘Imitate me, even if you fall short somewhat in what you do. O Mu’adh, guard your tongue from slandering your brothers who know the Qur’an by heart; attribute your sins to yourself and not to them; do not justify yourself and blame them; do not exalt yourself about them; do not mingle the work of this world with the work of the world to come; do not act arrogantly in society so that men avoid you because of your bad character; do not whisper to one man while another is also present; do not magnify your importance above other men so that you lose the good things of both this world and the world to come; do not tear to pieces people’s characters so that on the day of Resurrection the dogs of Hell tear you to pieces in Hell.

God most high says (Q.79. 2); “By those who draw forth”; do you know what these are, O Mu’adh? I said: ‘What are they, O Messenger of God (may you be ransomed by my father and mother)?’ He said: ‘The dogs in Hell drawing the flesh from the bones’. I said: ‘O Messenger of God (may you be ransomed by my father and mother) who is able to acquire these good qualities, and who will escape from these dogs?’ He said: ‘O Mu’adh, it is indeed easy for him for whom God makes it easy.’ “ Khalid b. Mi’dan said: ‘I never saw anyone more assiduous in reading the noble Qur’an than Mu’adh on account of this noble Tradition’. So, you who desire knowledge, reflect on these (sc-bad) qualities. Undoubtedly the greatest cause of these vices becoming established in the heart is the pursuit of knowledge in order to dispute with others and outshine them. The ordinary man is far removed from these bad qualities, but the scholar or theologian is in the way of them and is exposed to destruction because of them. consider, then, which of your affairs is most important - to learn how to guard against these ‘things destructive’ and to occupy yourself with the improvement of your heart and the preparation of your eternal life - or whether it is more important to engage along with the others in the pursuit of such knowledge as will increase your arrogance, hypocrisy, envy and pride, until along with the others you perish.

Undoubtedly, these three qualities are the roots of the vices of the heart, and they have a single field of operation, namely, the love of this world. For that reason the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) said, ‘The love of this world is the fount of all sin’. At the same time, this world is a field sown for (reaping in) the world to come. If a man takes from this world only as much as is necessary, to help him with regard to the world to come, then this world is for him a field that has been sown; but if he wants this world to enjoy it, then this world is his ruination.

The above is a small part of the science of piety in its exterior aspects and it is the Beginning of Guidance. If you try it out on yourself in practice and find it acceptable to you, then you must turn to The Revival of the Religious Sciences and become acquainted with piety in its interior aspect. When you have built up the interior of your heart in piety, at that the veils between you and your Lord will be removed, the light of mystic knowledge will be revealed to you, there will burst forth from your heart the springs of wisdom, and the secrets of the supernal realm will be made clear to you. Such sciences will become familiar to you that you will hold of no account these new-fangled sciences of which there was no whisper in the days of the Companions (may God be pleased with them) and the Followers. If, however, you pursue the science of argument and counter argument, of contradiction and dispute, how great will be your misfortune, how protracted your toil, how great your disappointment and your loss! Do what you will. This world, to the pursuit of which you make your religion a means, will nevertheless not be vouchsafed to you, and the world to come will be kept from you. The man who makes his religion a means to the gaining of this world, will lose both worlds alike; whereas the man who gives up this world for the sake of religion, will gain both worlds alike.

This is all the Guidance to the Beginning of the way in respect of your dealings with God most high by performing what He commands and avoiding what He forbids.

Excerpts from “Fawaid-UL-Fuwad”

HAZRATH MAHBOOB -E- ELAHI NIZAMUDDIN
AULIYA (RAA)

Introduction

In the subcontinent the Muslim era began with the blessed personalities of the Auliya’Kiram. Through those self less and pure hearted human beings Allah Almighty revived the fields of the dead hearts and selves and granted health to the spiritual patients. Through these sincere men of God and the persons disciplined by them Islam was vastly propagated in the far off areas and corners of the sub-Continent and millions of mankind were favoured with guidance. By their training such men of action came to the scene that in their respective periods blew the spirit of faith, certitude, and good action and played a leading role in the field of struggle. The usefulness of this group of the puritans, its services, and its impacts upon the society are preserved in the chronicles of the history of Islam.

Among these selfless, pure hearted darwayshes (fuqara’ salihin) and the men of truthfulness there was a saint Sultan al-Masha’ikh Mahbub-i-Ilahi Hadrat Khawajah Nizamuddin Auliya’ who was born in the year 636 AH and died in the year 725 AH. He was of the highest rank of the perfect saints. The Chishtiyah Mystic Order

was founded by Hadrat Khawajah Mu`inuddin Chishti Ajmeri but its real popularity is on account of Hadrat Khawajah Nizamuddin Auliya'. He was the murid-ikhass and Khalifah of Hadrat Baba Fariduddin Ganj Shakar..He appointed many of his khulafa' in various areas of the country whereby the propagation of Islam was made throughout the country. Undoubtedly, Khawajah Sahib has the pivotal role in the matter of spread of Islam and tasawwuf in India.

Among those who were spiritually disciplined under the direct accepted by the people as the big saints were the personalities like Hadrat Amir Khusro, Shaykh Nasiruddin Chiragh Dehlawi, and Amir Hasan `Ula Sanjari fa`To get awareness of the teachings of Hadrat Khawajah Nizamuddin Auliya' his malfuzat are available in the following collections, namely:

1. Fawa'idul-Fuwad compiled by Amir Hasan `Ula Sanjari
2. Afdalul-Fawa'id, attributed to Amir Khusro,
3. Halat Hadrat Chishtiyah, though most of its contents are only malfuzat and aqwal.
4. Khayr-ul-Majalis compiled by Hayder Qalandar, it also contains a huge quantity of the malfuzat of Khawajah Sahib.

The collection before us is Urdu translation of the FAWA'IDUL-FUWAD (Persian) written by Amir Hasan `Ula Sanjarani. This is the most famous book and Amir Khusro used to envy its compilation. These malfuzat consist of 188 Assemblies w.e.f. 3 Sha`ban 702 H to 20 Sha`ban 722 AH which shows that Hadrat Khawajah Nizamuddin Auliya' was a spiritual healer, a guide of the spiritual way, and a salik of the path of haqiqat and was on a high pedestal in those faculties. His history speaks of the depth of his knowledge and thought. According to him a Sufi must be a scholar. He stressed upon the significance of the reason and planning. He gave the lesson of love and affection towards the

people at large. He taught sacrifice for and service to the people. He was moderate in the matter of the world and seclusion. There was special arrangement to abide by the Shari`ah and following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. He declared the company of the Sheikh necessary to get spiritual benefit. According to him six things were essential for a salik, namely:

1. Seclusion;
2. Remaining in wudu constantly;
3. Remaining constantly observing fasts;
4. Constancy on observing silence;
5. Continuous link of the heart with the Shaykh; and
6. Removal of all thoughts besides Allah Almighty.

Volume 1

This is a Scripture that has been collected. It is a gift to the friends. Hasan `Ula Sanjari (the collector) is one of those who are hopeful (of the blessings of these Scriptures).

1st Majlis

Sunday: 3rd Sha`ban al-Mu`azzam, 707 AH

May Allah make the blessings of this sacred month on all.

(Today) this humble and sinful servant of Allah but ever hopeful of the Mercy of Allah, (who is called) Hasan `Ula Sanjari, and who has edited these subjects and gathered their meanings, got the blessing of paying a visit to the high ranking and angels like king of the spiritual world. At the same moment by the majesty of a glance of that Pole, that had no parallel, for whose luminous inner-secret the sun is the heart, the inner self (batin) of this sinful servant adopted separation from the pollution of all the four dispositions (taba'i') [2] and his head was blessed with the honour of a cap which is symbol of leaving four things (kulah-i-

chahar tarki)[3] bestowed upon him by the chief of the people of purity. Al-hamdu lillahi `ala zalik.

On that day he after directing (the audience) to necessarily offer the Fard prayers, Chasht prayer[4] and six rak`ats[5] after maghrib prayer and to observe fast in ayyam bid[6], said : The repentant and the pious are equal. As a pious is he who had not drunk wine throughout his life or had not committed any sin while the repentant is he who committed sin and then repented and his repentance was accepted. Thereafter he said : These both persons are equal on the authority of this Hadith :

“Atta`ibu minazzanbi Kaman la zanba lahu”

(A repentant from sins is like a person who has not committed any sin.).

At that occasion he also said: A person who committed a sin and got taste of that sin when he became repentant of it and will become an obedient person then certainly he will get taste of obedience. May be the satisfaction he will get after such obedience its single particle may burn a heap of sins.

He also spoke on the subject that the men of God[7] have always concealed themselves and God Almighty has been making them known.

After that he said; Khawajah Abul-Hasan Nuri (Nawwarallahumadja`ahu) while supplications used to say: O God! Keep me hidden in your city among your servants.

He heard an unseen voice: Ya Aba'l-Hasan! Al-Haqqu La yaturuhu shay'an. [O Abul-Hasan! Nothing can cover the truth and the truth never remains hidden.].

At that very occasion he narrated the anecdote: A saint, by the name of Hamiduddin Sawali (Allah's Mercy and Pardon be on him) lived in the area of Nagor[8]. He was asked that some big

saints die and no body remembers them thereafter while somebig saints die and their fame reaches far of places in the world. What is the cause behind this discrimination? He said: Amongthe saints who tries to popularize him during his own lifetime his name is forgotten after his death and his fame vanishes while a person who conceals himself during his life time, after his deathhis name and fame spreads throughout the world.

For a while the big masha'ikh and abdal[9] and their progress remained discussed. He said: A person had came to the Khanqah of Hadrat Shaykh `Abdul Qadir Jilani (May Allah sanctify his secret)[10] and saw a man lying on the gate of the Khanqah while his hands and feet were fractured and in a bad condition. The visitor reached to the Shaykh and referred the said person who was lying on the gate of the Khanqah and made a request for prayer. Hadrat Shaykh said:

Keep silent, he has committed disrespect. The visitor asked:What disrespect had he committed?

The Shaykh said: He is from among the Abdals. Yesterday, according to the faculty to fly bestowed upon abdals he was flying in the air alongwith his two companions, and when they reached this khanqah, a companion of his became aside fromthis khanqah and as a mark of respect passed from the right side of the Khanqah while the second companion also passed from the left side of the Khanqah. But this man as a mark of disrespect intend to fly over the Khanqah and he fell down.

On that occasion, the observance of the Pir-o-Murshid and to have good belief concerning him, he said: On the night of `Id Khawajah Junayd Baghdadi[11] (May Allah sanctify hissecret) was staying in his Khanqah and four persons who were rijal-ul-ghayb[12] were in attendance there.Hadrat Junayd became attentive to one of them and asked him where would he offer

the `Id Prayer the next day. He said: In Makkah al-Mu`azzamah. The same question was put to the second and he replied: In al-Madinah al-Munawwarah. Then he asked the same from the third and he said: In Bayt al-Maqdas. Then the same question was put to the fourth. He observing all marks of respect due to the Shaykh submitted: Here in Baghdad Sharif.

To this fourth person the Shaykh said: You are the most ascetic, the most scholarly and the most learned person.

For a few moments the purity of the self (tazkiyah nafs) remained the topic and then he said: perfection comes in a person by these four things, namely, less eating, less speech, less sleep and less being in the company of people.

For some time, the effort and struggle remained under conversation and he read the following two poetical compositions:

Agar cheh Ayzad dehad hidayat-i-din

bandah ra ijtehad bayad kard

namah k`an ba bashr khawabi khawanad

ham azin ja sawad bayad kard.

Although it is God Almighty who guides towards the Religion

but the man must do effort and struggle.

The Deed sheet you will read on the Day of Resurrection

Some thing must be written down on it in this world.

The 2nd Majlis

Friday: the 8th of Sha`ban al-Mu`azzam, 707 AH.

After offering the prayer I had the privilege to see the Shaykh. A bondman of me was, by the name Malih, whom I took with me due to my attachment and devotion with the Shaykh (May Allah make his remembrance with excellence) and freed him there. The Shaykh prayed for his well being. At that very moment the said

freed person showed great respect to the Shaykh and was blessed with being taken into allegiance. Al-hamdu lillahi `ala zalik.

At that occasion Hadrat Khawajah (May Allah make his blessings to continue) said: In this way the being a master or a servant is not a barrier. Whoso reached in the world of love, he succeeded. In this behalf he said: There was a pir in Ghazni. He had a bondman whose name was Zirak and who was occupying a high rank in truthfulness and ability. When the time of death of the said Pir arrived the muridin asked him as to who is to succeed him. He replied: Zirak. On that Zirak submitted: O myPir! Your sons will not permit me to sit at your place and will dispute with me. The Pir said: You should occupy my seat with satisfaction of your heart. If they quarrel with you I shall remove the evil of them. After the death of the Pir, Zirak sat at his place. The sons of the Pir raised disputation and said: You are one of the bondmen of us. How you dared to occupy this seat of our father. When the enmity reached its climax, Zirak went to the grave of the Pir and submitted: O my master! You had said that in case your sons quarreled with me you would remove their evil from me. Now they are after me and you should fulfill your promise. Making this submission Zirak came back to his place. After a few days the disbelievers attacked the city of Ghazni. People came out to fight with them along with all the four sons of the said Pir and joined in the battle and were martyred. Thus the seat of the Pir remained exclusively with Zirak.

After the said Malih had become murid, the Shaykh said to him: Offer two rak`ats of nafl prayer.

At that occasion the Shaykh said: What should be the niyyat for these two rak`ats prayer. Malih said: To intend negation of all besides Allah. [In other words, whatever is besides Allah is transitory and the same merits to be negated and to declare that in this universe only Allah's Being exists.]

The 3rd Majlis

Friday: the 15th of Sha`ban al-Mu`azzam, 707 AH.

After the offering of the Prayer I had the privilege to pay a visit to him (Khawajah Sahib). A devotee absorbed in himself came. Sat for an hour then stood up and went away. Hadrat Khawajah Sahib (May Allah increase his name in excellence) said: Such people had a little access to Shaykh baha`uddin Zakariyya (Allah's Mercy be on him). However, in the company of Shaykhul Islam Fariduddin (Allah's mercy be on him, an expansive mercy) people of all kind, the darwaysh and the nondarwaysh, had an excess.

Thereafter he (Khawajah Sahib) said: In every gathering of commons there is some one special.

In this behalf he (Khawajah Sahib) narrated the anecdote that Shaykh Baha`uddin Zakariyya had extensively toured and once he reached in an assembly of absorbed persons (malang) and sat there. A light appeared in the Assembly. On careful observation it was seen that there was among them a person from whom the light was coming out. Shaykh Sahib went near him and asked him as what business he had to be with them. He said: O Zakariyya! I have included myself in them to make you known that in every assembly of commoners there is some one special as well.

In this behalf he (Khawajah Sahib) narrated this anecdote that once a saint (buzurg) reached in the company of such absorbed persons (malang) and he found one of them who completely recited the Holy Qur'an in one rak`at of the prayer. The saint was wonderstruck and thought in his own mind that the mystic order to which that person belonged such a power seemed strange. Anyhow, if it has been so shown by him now he would not be in a position to maintain it. In short, the said saint departed from that assembly. After a period of ten years he again

came to that assembly and found that the same was the action of the said Darwaysh. On that occasion the said saint remarked: I have come to know the reality that in every assembly of common people there is always some special person among them.

The 4th Majlis

Friday: the 22nd of Sha`ban al-Mu`azzam, 707 AH.

May Allah Almighty bless permanence to the respect of this month.

I have had the privilege to pay respect to Khawajah Sahib after the prayer.

Khawajah Sahib Said: I had directed you to offer six rak`ats of Awwabin between Maghrib and

`Isha prayers. Are you acting upon that direction by offering them?

I submitted: Yes, your Excellency.

Then he (Khawajah Sahib) asked me about my observance of the fasts of the AYYAM BID.

I submitted: Yes, your Excellency.

Then he (Khawajah Sahib) asked me about my offering of the prayer of the Sunrise Time

(Chasht) .

I submitted: Yes, your Excellency.

Then he (Khawajah Sahib) directed me to offer four rak`ats of Namaz Sa`adat.

On that day this was the bliss added to the earlier bliss.

Wal-hamdu lillahi `ala zalik.

Bismillah

The 5th Assembly

Friday: the 13th of Ramadan al-Mubarak, 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay a respect to Khawajah Sahib prior to the offering of the prayer.

Khawajah Sahib asked the cause of my coming against the routine before prayer.

I submitted: I am offering Tarawih prayer behind Mualana Zahiruddin Hafiz (May he live in peace) who completes three parts of the Holy Qur'an each night and this humble servant wanted to offer the Tarawih behind him for full ten nights to get the reward of listening to the whole Holy Qur'an. Hence, if Your Excellency be pleased I may leave just after the offering of the Friday prayer (Jumu'ah) so that I may join the Tarawih prayer there. His Excellency Khawajah Sahib said: This is well.

Thereafter, relevant to this topic Khawajah Sahib narrated that one night Shaykh Baha'uddin Zakariyya paid his kind attention towards the audience present there and said: Who is among you to offer two rak'ats of prayer and complete the Holy Qur'an in one Rak'at. None was ready to offer himself for that task. Shaykh Baha'uddin himself went forward and led the congregation and completed the recitation of the Holy Qur'an in the single rak'at and even recited four parts more in the first rak'at. In the second rak'at he recited Surah al-Ikhlās and completed the prayer.

Of the same topic he narrated an other event and said: Shaykh Baha'uddin used to say: Whatever has come to me it has come through the offering of prayer. I did recite the 'aurad and wada'if of the masha'ikh and zahidin but I could not do one thing and that thing was that I was conveyed that a certain saint during the period in between the starting of the morning till the

sunrise completed the recitation of the whole Holy Qur'an. I ever tried my level best but could not do so.

At that very occasion he also narrated that once Qadi Hamiduddin Nagori was circumambulating the Ka`batullah Sharif and saw a saint also circumambulating. He in that process started following the said saint and put his own foot where the saint put his foot. The saint, who was fully enlightened in his innerself, became informed of the circumstance and said: Why are you following me only in my external actions. It would have been excellent if you do the same that I do. Qadi Hamiduddin asked: What was that? The saint disclosed : I completely recite the Holy Qur'an seven hundred times in a day. Qadi Hamiduddin was wonderstruck and thought in his heart that he might be considering the meaning of the Holy Qur'an and reciting in his heart and that he might be doing so in his imagination. The saint became attentive towards him and said: I read the words and not read by fancy or imagination.

When Khawajah Sahib completed this narration, one of his special murid, A`izzuddin `Ali Shah (May he live in peace) asked: Can this affair be termed a Kiramat (miracle).

Khawajah Sahib said: Yes, it can be declared a kiramat. Every action that appeals to reason and every affair where there is no scope for reason can be called a Kiramat.

For a few moments the obedience and acts of worship of the masha'ikh remained under conversation.

Thereafter Khawajah Sahib told that Shaykh Abu Sa`id Abu'l-Khayr (Allah's mercy be on him) used to say: Whatever I gained I gained by offering prayers following the way of praying of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I offered all those prayers that were offered by the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

So much so that when I learnt that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had once offered the namaz ma`kus I tied my feet with a string and made myself fall down into a well and offered in that state the namaz ma`kus.

After completing this narration Khawajah Sahib paid attention towards this humble servant and said: Every person has reached some station through good deeds. Though there is descending of divine blessing (nuzul-i-fayd) but it is necessary for a person to struggle himself.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The 6th Assembly

Friday: the 5th of Shawwal al-Mukarram, 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay my respects to Khawajah Sahib. The topic of the talk was: Tark and Tajrid.

Khawajah Sahib said: A Darwaysh was in a state of extreme poverty and need. His belly had constricted due to severy hunger. He was going on a path that Khawajah Mahmud Tapoh said that a friend of us had given him a dang (a small coin). He said: Today I have taken the khali of Oil and need no food and I do not need this dang. Thereafter, on that kind of the highest degree of Truthfulness (sidq) and Certitude (yaqin) of that fellow Khawajah Sahib expressed much wonder and said: Greeting be to him for observance of such contentment and having been bestowed by observing such patience and perseverance.

On that occasion concerning Contentment and non expectation of any kind from any one besides Allah, Khawajah Sahib narrated that there was a saint called `Ali. Once he was sewing his own torn cloth (kharqah) and had spread his feet. He had kept a part of the cloth on his loin and patching it. People informed him that the Caliph was coming but he did not change his

posture and said: Let the Caliph come. The caliph came. Offered salutation and sat down. The shaykh replied. The body guard of the Caliph asked the Shaykh to compose his feet properly. The Shaykh paid no heed to the advise of the bodyguard. The body guard repeated this request but with no effect. When the Caliph wanted to go back the Shaykh put one hand of the Caliph and one hand of the bodyguard and said: I have constricted my hands hence it is permissible for me not to constrict my feet. N That is neither I expected any thing from you earlier nor now nor I take anything from you. As I have withdrawn my hands I have the option no to withdraw my feet.

For some time the conversation continued on the subject of the fundamental principles and the crux of the mystic way (suluk). In that connection he (Khawajah Sahib) said: A person came to Khawajah Ajal Shirazi (May Allah's mercy and forgiveness be on him) and became his murid and waited for his direction as to the prayer, fasting and aurad-o-wada'if. The Khawajah Shirazi said to him only this much: What that you do not like for yourself never like to do that for another. And you desire for another only that thing which you desire for your ownself. The said person went away. After a sufficient long period he again paid a visit to him (Khawajah Shirazi) and submitted that he had previously come and awaited for some direction as to offering of prayer, reciting of aurad and wada'if but you had not given any such direction in that behalf. Today, again I am awaiting the same. Khawajah Shirazi asked him: What was the lesson given to you that time? The murid wondered and remained silent. Khawajah Shirazi smiled and said: On that day I had said to you: "What that you do not like for yourself never like to do that for another. And you desire for another only that thing which you desire for your ownself." You have not remembered that lesson how the next lesson can be given to you.

After completion of this narration Khawajah Sahib said: There was a God fearing saint who often used to say: Prayer, fasts, tasbih, and aurad-o-wada'if are the necessary elements for the food to be cooked in the cauldron. The main thing is the meat. When the cauldron has no meat in it there is no use of other materials. People asked the saint to explain this thing often said by him to them. The saint explained: The meat refers to the abandonment of the material world and the Prayer fasting, aurad-o-wada'if are its necessary elements. A man should first leave the world and have no attachment with any worldly desire thereafter the existence or non existence of other matters makes no difference. Where the heart is in full friendship with the world the prayer and such other things will not benefit him.

After that Khawajah Sahib said: If Ghee, garlic, black pepper, onions are put and roasted in the cauldron and by putting water a soup is prepared people will call it a false soup. The true soup will be that of the meat even if there is no other thing with it.

After that he explained: Abandonment of the world does not mean that a person should remove all his clothes and become naked or wears and underwear and sits aloof. Abandonment of the world means to wear the clothes, to eat the food and whatever comes to him to spend it on others and should not go on piling it with him. He should not make him inclined towards it nor attach his heart with anything.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The 7th Assembly

Friday: the 19th of Shawwal-al-Mukarram, 707 AH.

After the offering of the Prayer I have had the privilege to see and pay respect to Khawajah Sahib.

The topic of talk was the manners of the mystic way, the indications and allegories of the masha'ikh and their terminology. Khawajah Sahib said: Shaykhul-Islam of Delhi Shaykh Jamaluddin Bustami (Allah's mercy be on him) was well aware of the manners of the (Sufiya' of) Suffah. Once a cup of water was brought to him with four handles to hold it. A saint was present there who disclosed that it is called Kuza-i-Luqmani. Shaykh Jamaluddin Bustami (Allah's mercy be on him) asked him: Why was it so called? The said saint became silent. And did not give any answer. On that Shaykh Jamaluddin Bustami (Allah's mercy be on him) narrated that there was a saint called Shaykh Luqman Sarakhsi who was gifted with many good qualities. It is narrated that he missed Jumu`ah prayer or some other external symbol of Islam (Allah knows best) and the leading scholars (a`immah) of that city came out to put to him to accountability. He was informed that the `ulama'were coming there with that intention. The Shaykh asked: Are they on foot or on rides? He was informed that they were on rides. At that time the Shaykh was sitting on a wall. He asked the wall to walk by the leave of Allah. The wall instantaneously started moving onward.

Shaykh Luqman, once asked a cup of water from his murid. The murid brought a cup without a handle. The Shaykh directed the murid to bring a cup having a place to hold. The murid went back and put a handle to it and came to the Shaykh while holding himself the handle. The Shaykh smiled and said to the murid: The said handle is held by you. From where should I hold it? Go back and fix two handles to the cup and then come to me. The murid went back and put two handles to the cup and brought hold one handle in one hand and the other handle in his other hand. The Shaykh said: You have held the cup from both handles from where should I hold it? Go back and make a cup of three handles. The murid went back and added three handles to the cup but when came to the Shaykh he was holding two handles with

his two hands and the third handle was towards his chest. The Shaykh smiled and directed him to go back and prepare a cup of four handles. the murid went back and prepared such cup and presented it to his Shaykh. In short, this was the reason to call this cup Kuza-i-Luqman.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The 8th Assembly

Friday: the 26th of Shawwal-al-Mukarram, 707 AH.

After the offering of the Prayer I have had the privilege to see and pay respect to Khawajah Sahib.

The topic of talk was the prayer, the presence of heart of the Imam and the muqtadis.

Khawajah Sahib said: The beginning of the presence of heart (hudur-i-qalb) is this that whatever is recited by the person offering prayer its meanings penetrate in his heart.

After that he said that there was a person from among the muridin of Shaykh Baha'uddin Zakariyya who was called Hasan Afghani. He was Sahib-i-wilayat and of high access. Shaykh Baha'uddin Zakariyya used to say: If on the day of Judgment Allah Almighty asks me as to what You have brought in my Court. I will answer: I have brought Hasan Afghani.

Once this Hasan was passing through a street and reached near a mosque. The Mu`azzin proclaimed Takbir. Imam went a head and people stood behind him in line. Khawajah Hasan also entered the mosque and stood behind the Imam. When the prayer was complete and people left the mosque Khawajah Hasan came near the Imam and said to him: When you started the prayer I was behind you in the first row. You went to Delhi from here while you were offering prayer and purchased male and female bondsmen and then came back and took them to Khurasan and from there you

came back to Multan and then to this Mosque. I was going after you in such situation. What was this way of offering the prayer by You?

After that Khawajah Sahib mentioned his high rank and said that once the people constructed a mosque at some place. Khawajah Hasan Nizami reached there and asked the builders to keep the mihrab on a certain direction as the Qiblah (direction of ka`bah towards which face is to be turned by all Muslims while offering any prayer any where in the world) is on that side. And he pointed out towards that direction. A wise person was present there. He started argumentation and insisted that the Qiblah was not on that side. When he was not to believe it correct Khawajah Hasan asked that man to face to the side Khawajah Hasan was pointing and to see carefully. He turned his face to that side and observed the Ka`bah Sharif on that very side.

After that he described the events of Khawajah Hasan Nizami in detail. Khawajah Sahib disclosed that Khawajah Hasan Nizami was illiterate. People used to come to visit him and put the pen and board before him with certain lines written on it. Some lines were of prose and poetry and some of Arabic and Persian and within them some verses of the Holy Qur'an were written and asked him to point out the verses of the Holy Qur'an and he correctly pointed out towards the verses of the Holy Qur'an. People asked him that he was an illiterate person how he identified the Holy Qur'an. He replied: I recognize the line containing the words of the Holy Qur'an from the light coming out of them. Such light was not coming out of the other lines.

With reference to this saint the State of Absorption during taste of prayer came under discussion. Khawajah Sahib said that there was a person called Khawajah Karim. Earlier he was calligrapher in Delhi and in later period of his life he opted a secluded life and joined the company of those who were wasilan-i-haqq. He often used to say: Till my grave is in Delhi no disbeliever can occupy it.

While describing the presence of heart available to Khawajah Karim during offering of prayer Khawajah Sahib told that once he was offering Maghrib prayer outside Kamal Gate. It was the period when Mewatis had created disturbances and no body could come near or in the vicinity of that Gate. Khawajah Karim was busy in his prayer and his friends and the Guard of the Gate were calling him standing in the Gate to come hurriedly inside the city. Khawajah Karim completed his prayed with full devotion and then came inside the gate. People asked him as to whether there calls were not heard by him. He replied: No. People said: It is strange that we called him so loudly and he did not hear any voice. He remarked: The more strange thing is that a person who is engaged in prayer and yet he hears the voice of any other.

After that Khawajah Sahib said: When Khawajah Karim turned his face towards his Lord Almighty thereafter he never took dirham or dinar in his hand.

After that he (Khawajah Sahib) talked on the subject of abandonment of the world and its tastes. He said: One should keep his courage high and should not indulge himself in the pollution of the world and should remain aloof from desires of the self. At that moment Khawajah Sahib uttered the following two poetical lines:

yak lahzah zi shahwatay keh dari barkhayz

ta bi nashinad hazar shahid payshat

For a single moment (leave) the lust that you have, and stand up,

So that a thousand favourites sit before you.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The 9th Assembly

Thursday: the 10th of Ziqā`d, 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay my respects.

Khawajah Sahib asked: What is that you have come today while the routine was to come on Friday. I submitted: I am blessed today. Certainly, it is with the Grace of Allah as to when it is to shower on a servant. Khawajah Sahib remarked: You did well. Whatever comes from the Unseen is always well come.

Thereafter the talk ensued on the topic of "Impact of the respect observed for elders". Khawajah Sahib said: The impact of company is strong. Thereafter he extremely stressed on the abandonment of the world and in this behalf remarked: Who is there who had not saved his skin from a mean thing and the best had not made an advance towards him?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The 10th Assembly

Tuesday: the 15th of Ziqā`d, 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay my respects.

A team of elders comprising Maulana Wajihuddin Pa'ili, Maulana Hisamuddin Jami, and their friends Tajuddin, Maulana Jamaluddin and others were present there. Food was put before them and they were asked to have it if those were not observing fast. As those were Ayyam Bid [13], hence most of them were observing fast, the food was served to them alone. At that moment Khawajah Sahib said: When the friends come, the food must be put before them and no one should be asked if he was observing a fast. This is so because a person who is not observing a fast will himself take the food. The wisdom behind not asking as to whether a person was observing fast is that if such a person tells that he is observing fast, there is no exhibition in such statement. Further, if he tells that he is observing fast his internal obedience and act of worship will be called external in his Sheet Deed. But if , in such a circumstance, he states that he is not observing fast

he will be telling a lie. Further, (if on asking) heremains silent he commits disrespect to the questioner.

Bismillah

The 11th Majlis

Friday: the 20th of Ziqā`d, 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay my respects.

The blessing of the footsteps of the righteous persons was mentioned. Khawajah Sahib said: Every such place that which is joyful is by the blessing of the footsteps of such (righteous) persons as is the Jami` Mosque, Delhi. After that Khawajah Sahib said: It is not known as to how many auliya`-i-kiram and saints had reached this place that on account of their blessing it got so much joyfulness (rahat) in it.

In this behalf Khawajah Sahib said: I heard from Mahmud Kabir who used to say: I saw a saint at morning time coming and going from one corner to the other without any apprehension and quickly like a bird on the golden tips of the Jami` Mosque, on the taqs of which is the Arch. I saw this scene from a distance. When the dawn time approached the said saint came down. I went to him and offered my salutation. He remarked: You have seen! I submitted: Yes Sir. He directed: Do not tell it further to anyone.

Meanwhile this humble servant asked Khawajah Sahib as towhat is the wisdom behind it that most of the saints keep concealed their states. Khawajah Sahib said: If they made the secret open they do not remain deserved to keep the secrets of others. As a person who discloses a secret to another person and the listener makes that secret open. Such person will never disclose any secret to such a person (in future).

I submitted: Your Excellency! What was the wisdom that Khawajah Abu Sa'id al-Khayr (Allah's mercy be on him) repeatedly brought on his tongue the unseen things. Khawajah Sahib said: During the period the Auliya kiram are dominated by fondness they utter some unseen secret in a state of Sukr (ecstasy). But one who is perfect never discloses any secret. After it Khawajah Sahib uttered this poetical line twice:

Mardani -hunar ar darya khurdand-o-tishnah raftand

Men of skill even if drank the whole river they went thirsty.

After that Khawajah Sahib said: Vast courage befitting the secrets is required. People of such capacity (isti'dad) are People of Soundness (Ashab-i-Sahw).

This humble servant asked: Who are higher in rank, the People of Ecstasy (Ashab-i-Sukr) or People of Soundness (Ashab-i-Sahw)?

Khawajah Sahib said: The rank of Ashab-i-Sahw is higher (than the rank of Ashab-i-Sukr).

Allah knows best.

The 12th Majlis

Wednesday: the 14th of Zi'l-Hajj , 707 AH.

I have had the privilege to see and pay my respects.

The topic of talk was the acceptance of the self (qabuliyat-i-nafs).

Khawajah Sahib said: The worship and the joy of engagement in aurad-o-wada'if due to the blow (self) of a person blessed with favours have no parallel.

After that Khawajah Sahib said: There are some such wurd (formulae) that I have made myself obligatory for me while there are some wurd (formulae) that I have obtained from my Pir Hadrat Shaykh Faridul-Haqq Waddin Mas`ud Ganj Shakar (Allah's mercy be on him). The joys gained during the reciting of these 'aurad have poles difference.

After that he talked about abandonment of option (tark-i-`ikhtiyar).

Abandonment of option (tark-i-`ikhtiyar) means that no affair should be performed by ones own option.

Khawajah Sahib said: A person who is subordinate to another is better than a person who is himself the commander.

After that Khawajah Sahib said: Shaykh Abu Sa`id al-Khayr came out on Friday for Jumu`ah prayer and asked the path going to the Jami` Mosque and how should he go. From among those who were present there a person said: This is the way. He was questioned that he had himself gone a number of time to offer the Jumu`ah and therefore was not knowing the way. He replied: I knew but I asked to be a subordinate to some other for a moment.

After that Khawajah Sahib advised to abandon the love for homeland, family and other things and recited the following poetical composition

Dasht-o-Kohsar gir hamchu wuhush
 Khanman ra bisan ba gurba-o-mush
 Qut-i-`Isa chu `az `asman sazand
 ham bidan jash khanah pardazand
 khanah ra gar bara`ay qut kunanad
 mor-o-zanbur-o-`ankabut kunand

Live in the deserts and mountains like the wild beasts and leave the House for the cats and rats. As the food for Hadrat `Isa (Peace be upon him) is prepared in the heaven hence his home is also made there. (Those whose food comes from heavens why should they build a House on the earth).

If the houses are built to store food, then such houses are built by the ant, wasp and spider (and not men).

Excerpts from “The Hundred Letters”

**HAZRETH SHARUFUDDIN B.
YAHYA MANERI (RAA)**

Letter 8: Sainthood

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Dearest brother Qazi Sadruddin, may the blessing of God and the love of the saints be yours! [A depiction of sainthood with reference to Arabic grammar is set forth.] A saint, then, is a person who continuously enjoys the divine favor in all his activities and becomes one of those protected by God. In general, the states of his soul are free from troubles, but the difficult state for him to sustain is sinlessness. God Almighty continues to keep him free from base and serious sins! Just as a prophet is “preserved from sin, so too is a saint “ protected. The difference between a “preserved” and a “protected” one consists in this: The preserved one [i.e., a prophet] is completely preserved from committing sins, but a protected one [i.e., a saint] may commit a sin from time to time, without, however, persisting in that sin. Surely repentance with God is intended only for “those people who sin out of ignorance and immediately repent” (Q4:17).

Every quality needed for giving counsel and explaining things is granted to the saint. Indeed, all these qualities necessarily

are present in him, just as there is necessarily absent from him, defects in his relationship with God, or in his constancy in interceding before God on behalf of His creation. The saint is also obedient, but not out of fear of the next world, or due to hope for reward in paradise. He has no regard for his own soul nor does he measure his own actions.

Those who have seen the path to the world of divine Unity
Have unconsciously been running toward It!

When in denial they see the ultimate meaning of affirming,
They abandon affirmation altogether, and embrace negation!

The hints of the sheikhs in this connection contain the following. According to Khwaja Abu Usman Maghribi, “Even if a saint becomes famous, he will not be seduced by fame!” Another sheikh has observed that a saint should remain hidden; but if he happens to become famous, then the saying that “he abstained from publicity” should be taken to mean that publicity could lead toward a temptation to find glory in fame but, of itself, it is not sinful, since by means of his sanctity a saint can resist temptation and remain just. It is related that Khwaja Ibrahim Adham said to someone: “Do you want to be one of God’s saints;” When the man replied that he did, the sheikh exclaimed: “Then don’t go hankering after this world or the next! Free your heart for the sake of friendship with God, and turn your heart toward Him. You will become a saint when these conditions are present within you!”

Go beyond yourself. And then
Journey in My world toward Me!
Shut your eyes tightly, and then,
In My Presence, look at Me!
Give up that precious soul of yours
And then, O Khwaja, learn from Me!
Whatever you prize in your little world,
Bring it forward and place it at My door!

The aim of this is to enable you to experience God Almighty Himself! It is fitting that the lives of saints are changed into ones of special friendship and sanctity. The saints of His kingdom realize that they are His chosen ones. By means of a variety of special miracles, they become both signs and the radiant manifestation of His own activity. He frees them from natural calamities and from dependency on the natural inclinations of their souls, thus demonstrating that neither their courage nor their love exists apart from Him. This is what has put them ahead of us and that is where they will be on the Day of Resurrection. In this matter, we have two opposing groups. One is the Mutazilites,²⁰ and the other is the common people. The Mutazilites deny that anyone has a privileged position among the faithful, while the common people allow room for special favors, but at the same time allege that no such privileged people now exist. (Others say that saints have an influence in this world.)

Place your steps manfully on this Way,
 Since the heavens themselves revolve in your service.
 You are blissfully asleep, while those upon His Way
 All kiss the dust that marks His threshold!
 They proceed in silence, with their heads bowed low,
 Their tongues cut out and strewn along the Way!
 In comparison to that mine where souls are His jewels,
 The firmament has always been but dust upon His threshold!

Among them are four thousand "concealed ones" who do not recognize one another and who do not know the beauty of their own state. In all their states they remain hidden from both themselves and the people. News comes from this and the saying of the sheikhs is understood in this, that there are those who are authorized to loose and to bind and are the guards at the gateway to God. [A description of the sufi hierarchy follows]

In their activities, all of these both recognize and depend on one another. The speakers who relate this Tradition are

unanimous in affirming its correctness. At this stage someone might dissent saying, “You claim that they recognize one another and know each other to be saints. If this is so, then it would be necessary to postulate that they are at peace concerning their future life—but this is inappropriate.” The answer to this objection is that knowledge of one’s sanctity does not imply complete reassurance, just as a believer who becomes Sufi as a result of his own deep faith cannot thereby be perfectly at ease about the future. In a similar way, it is fitting that a saint should be aware of his own sanctity, yet not completely at ease. It is good, nonetheless, if, by way of a miracle on the part of the Almighty, he can be assured of his end and remain secure in God, experiencing both the correctness of the state of his soul and his protection from opposition. There are examples of such people, namely, the ten people about whom the Prophet testified that they are among the people of paradise. Because of his assertion, they were at peace and not at all anxious about their end. They are among the group of saints. Yet their contention about their final end did not impair their religious practice.

You might object that they claim this knowledge from the Prophet, but revelation, by which himself had this knowledge, came to an end with him. How can people nowadays know without revelation? The answer is that they are aware of their own saintliness by means of the fact that God Almighty has put within them a very fine sense, a special gift that, except for the saints, is not found elsewhere, and certainly not in His enemies. It is proper that God Almighty should effect this peace within them, and that they should discover His own secret, in order that they might realize that it is a miracle and a gift from Him, and that which it purports to predict really will come about. In such people there is no deception, pretext, or vacillation.

On the other hand, a person who is beguiled and deceived would be one, as soon as any thing of a miraculous nature comes to light, is content with the miracle itself, and considers himself a miracle worker. Anyone who considers that he is a temple of sanctity, however does not rest content with what is miraculous, nor does he pride himself with being a miracle worker. The two attitudes are contradictory, and we know that a mutual contradiction cannot be sustained, since the nature of one would highlight the contradictory demands of the other. This is the way the venerable Sufies look at miracles, as one of them has said: "There are many idols in the world, one of which is miraculous concurrences. "Just as infidels, because of their attachment to some idol, are enemies of God but can become saints by cutting themselves off from their idols, so too do Sufies have their idols, namely miracles! If they become satisfied with miracles, they will be put to shame and dismissed from divine Presence, but if they cut themselves off from miracles, they move closer to God and become united in Him!

For the ascetics, heaven and paradise are places to be reached;
 For lovers, there is no delight but in the depths of a prison.
 The common and the elect, good and bad, all enjoy His grace,
 But to confront His violence is the work of the manly.

From this it is clear that when God Almighty confers something miraculous upon them, submission and humility increase in their hearts at the same time that docility and courtesy, along with dread and fear, are also enhanced. The king of mystics, Abu Yazid Bistami, at one stage on his journey came to the edge of a large expanse of water that needed a boat to be crossed. He did not have one, but he began to experience that he was crossing it without a boat. In this state, he traversed a path that appeared in the water until coming to his senses, he exclaimed, "Fraud! Fraud!" and returned. There is a delicate mystery here, and it is this: Genuine sanctity is connected with rejecting all that is not the

Friend. Every thing must be abandoned for the sake of God. Abandoning and seizing are opposites, as are acceptance and rejection. Whenever a person accepts miracles, allowing himself to be captivated by them, and putting in trust in them, he is not rejecting but accepting something other than the Friend! There can be no sanctity without rejection.

O brother, there is no room for despair! As Quran testifies, “Say, O My servants who have dissipated your souls,, look at God’s mercy and do not despair! (Q 39:53). O you who gaze reverentially on the sanctity and the purity of the prophecy, look at some of those immersed in the impurities of sins in the water of forgiveness. “Pardon them, and ask God to forgive them and accept their repentance” (Q3:159) so that they might not turn aside from the door on account of shamefulfulness of their sins but, with all the strength of their hearts, grasp the rope of hope. Then they will know that the waves of the ocean of His mercy purify sinners from the impurities of their sinfulness as well as from the attraction of things prohibited. These waves of forgiveness both purify them and enable them to attain the wealth of His vision. “Surely God forgives all sins” (Q39:53) A tested saint has hinted at this condition in the following quotation:

If you are caught in the harness of love,
 Yet manage to pass beyond desire, you will be happy
 Your being will be purified from its garment of sin,
 And you will become fit to receive the divine secrets!

Listen to what is said in the Psalms of David: “O David, warn the righteous ones that I am very sensitive, but give sinners the good news that I forgive sins!” This divine fire consumes the root of hopelessness and destroys the young shoots of despondency and pessimism, bringing to light the secret of “Don’t despair of the mercy of God”(Q39:53).

Peace!

Letter 9: Saintliness

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Dear brother Qazi Sadruddin, may you be honored by God! You should know that commonplace saintliness is rooted in faith. Every person who embraces the Muslim faith becomes a member of the congregation of God's saints! Often, however, there is more than a suspicion that, along with this type of saintliness, there is sin and the commission of forbidden things. There are others who fulfill what is commanded and shun what is prohibited. People doing this should be counted among the saints. The various groups are like the squadrons of an army—a special one in front, ordinary troops to the side, and a very special one in the center! These hand-picked troopers not only obey commands and shun prohibited things, they also bring to heel their own desires. Their regard is not on what is due them; instead, whatever their Friend wants is the very thing they themselves desire! Giving priority to what He wants, they disregard their own desires. They understand what is idolatrous, since they know that the basis of all idolatry is connected with yielding to our own selfish desires. The Quran hints at this when it says: "Have you seen him who makes a god of his own desires?" (Q25:43). Here it is necessary to understand exactly what idolatry is in order to avoid falling into some fault in this matter.

One kind of idolatry is called "manifest"; it occurs when a person substitutes something else for God. This form of idolatry is forbidden by the very principles of the faith. May God preserve us from it! The second type is called "covert"; it occurs when a person considers something other than God as necessary, and seizes upon that thing as desirable. Some say that, for Sufis, idolatry is to take note of the existence of anything but God! Others say that covert idolatry is tantamount to relying upon oneself in all circumstances; desiring with one's own power; and

accepting advice and stratagems in any under-taking that comes up. Such covert idolatry is prohibited by the per-fection of divine Unity, if not by the explicit principles of the Law!

When I fell into the abyss of Your Unity,
The thought of no other came to me,
Neither of men nor angels, in Your Unity:
I, a slave, gazed on You and became free!

Everyone knows that you need friends if you want to become great! It is fitting that there are groups of the elect, of common people and of those who observe “command and prohibition.” Beyond these, however, there is a special group worthy of becoming boon compan-ions. And beyond these is the class that is fit for divine secrets. And beyond these comes the group of those on terms of intimate friend-ship with God. Here, if either party wants anything that belongs to the other, his inclination will be simply to give it, for the mutual us-age of goods is such that everything is considered common. In this way, any trace of mistrust departs from them. There is an example of this in the Law. The venerable Sufis have said: “There are commands for common people and matters of license for the elect, since the Prophet²³ himself has condoned the latter.” For example, he said to an Arab who had broken his fast in the month of Ramzan: “Eat and also feed your wife and children! It is lawful for you, but not for any-one else.” This was clearly an abrogation. For ordinary people, he paid attention to the actual extent to which things are commanded or prohibited. But for foreigners he amended the Law, giving them per-mission to keep some of their customs, even in face of the claims of the Law and thus showing, in a special way, his friendship toward them. “I am one of that elect who can do as he sees fit with respect to their possessions.” [A poem of Khwaja Sanai is then quoted.]

There is no doubt that all prophets are equal in respect to proph-ecy, yet they differ from one another in the matter

of grace, just as all believers, though on the same level with respect to faith, vary in virtue. One group has attained only the common level, while others rise to a privileged rank. Anyone who denies this is denying what can be plainly seen. Consider an earthly king who has soldiers in abundance, men who are bound completely to his orders and dependent on him for their sustenance. Among them some are grooms, while others are carpet layers, doorkeepers, chamberlains, treasurers, cupbearers, army commanders, ministers, and boon companions. Still others reach such privileged positions that the king entrusts the seal of the kingdom to them, so that whatever such a person commands becomes the command of the king himself. The same is true of any prohibition or appointment he makes. All this is clear to an intelligent man. Similarly, believers, with respect to their faith, occupy graduated, orderly ranks. When they are in these grades we have described, then each, in his position, is "special," since there are people below him, but, at the same time, he is "ordinary," for there are others above him. The particular rank of the saints becomes apparent when they have become the elect of God. This stage is attained when the apparent merges with the hidden and they become one. The elect neither oppose, think, nor discuss things with their inner selves. In seeing the Master, they forget about their own needs. They would not exchange their Friend even for both worlds. They are so immersed in gazing upon Him that the question of hope no longer arises, so immersed in fear of Him that they are afraid of nothing else, so immersed in love of Him that his absence makes them desolate, so immersed in remembering Him that nothing except Him enters their memory. Everything about them, visible and hidden, within the sphere of their spiritual powers, becomes so absorbed in the Friend that nothing remains in them except Him!

If, in love, you are despoiled of your qualities,
 You will go beyond your self and become a lover!

Some quality may appear and then disappear,
So do not put any stock in it, lest you be ashamed!

When a person reaches this stage with respect to his desires for himself, the hold of his self, and even his spiritual and personal qualities, he becomes utterly lost to himself; he is rooted and fixed in the qualities and desire of his Friend! Everything he wishes is fulfilled, not because the desire of something other than his Friend has arisen in him, but because his own desire has become the desire of his Friend. Indeed, it is in him that the friend manifests His own desire and whatever makes its appearance is really the Friend's desire, not his own. People might judge that he wants something or other but as far as he himself is concerned, it would mean that his Friend desired something in a special way. This privileged rank cannot be denied; and yet some say, "It's your groundless boasting! It is not genuine!" When they reach the stage under discussion, saints become aware that they are God's elect in accord with the famous saying "The absence of any desire is the precondition of saintliness," and they see themselves as desireless. If saintliness requires a lack of self-ego then they consider themselves to have no say in their actions. All desires come from their Friend while they, of themselves, desire nothing, as the King of the Prophets has testified: "If they swear by God, then what they want will surely be granted." But the presupposition of this is that they do not swear, yet if they do they will get what they ask for in God's name. The Prophet was also indicating that although the saints get whatever they want, they actually do not want anything! [A poem follows.]

The regard of the saint is always on his Lord. "The saint is protected from self-interest; therefore pride does not enter him." In other words, all those who attain this stage do not become self-seekers since, at this stage, their attention is not on themselves. If the foundation of this stage is lost, however, then the whole work disintegrates.

As long as anything remains with you, you are in your own,
 essence;
 The Kaaba, due to your worship, becomes a tavern!
 If anything emanates from your essence, you are at ill far off:
 You are like a temple facing the Kaaba!"

"Saints have been despoiled of human qualities." A saint should withdraw from human company, for weeping is an idol, to farm! "May they not be put to the test!" In other words, let the people find nothing to reprove in them that might make them stumble! Dependency on other people comes from two things, their reproach or their praise, both of which are inimical to true religion. There is a mystery in the fact that anybody who venerates, as the sign of the soundness of his worship, becomes blind to any other than the One venerated. If pride is interwoven in this veneration, then a person has really seen his own soul not God. He is venerating that, not God. When ever hypocrisy is found along with veneration, mankind has been seen, not God. The person is venerating them, not God. Since he worships his own soul and man kind and desires things other than God, It is all deceit. "A saint is protected from the evils of human nature and yet the form of his human nature remains rooted within him." Keeping himself untainted by earthly things does not occur simply by the fact that the desire of something is no longer in him. Nor is it sufficient reason for praising and blessing him for, if such were the case—that is, that he had no desire for anything unseemly—this could simply mean that, from the beginning, he had been impotent and bereft of the means required for acquiring such things. Strictly speaking, it would not be an instance of something prohibited but of something precluded. How could he be praised, blessed, or given a reward for refraining from doing something he was unable to do in the first place?

For men, there is a reward for obedience to God and a punishment for rebellion against Him. Angels, on the other

hand, do not have the means of disobeying: For them there is no question of abandoning rebellion or of practicing obedience. They can neither reward nor punish. Man, however, has a human nature and takes pleasure in the things he wants. For the common man this would mean that he prefers what he wants to what God commands. Saints, however, prefer the command of God to what they themselves desire. The difference, O brother, consists in this: You should not remain unaffected by the pain of this human condition and the impulse to escape it, but should not, at the same time, be without hope, for justice and grace are His qualities. He is just. He keeps watch over what He commands. He knows our weakness. And since His justice makes Him interested in His own commands, it is He who does the work of the people, from the first to the last! Since He also insists on showering his grace-filled glances upon our helplessness, our work gets done, our sins are transformed into good deeds, and our faults become virtues. What place is there for lack of hope? A destitute creature has said:

Do not be without hope today, O heart, for
Tomorrow His glance will be on His own command!

O brother, whoever among us has been stained by the impurities of sin or has consented to forbidden things will be cleansed by water from the cloud of grace and benevolence Himself! Who can disgrace us tomorrow in the presence of the prophets and the saints, and the whole host of God's creation? A mature saint has said:

Even if a lover be captured by sin, Or become enamored of
the
cup of intoxication, still Why should he fear a multitude of
blunders, For the Beloved is One who keeps secrets and veils
sins!

Peace!

Letter 10 The Miracles of Saints

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

[N.B. For the sake of convenience, the word used to denote a prophetic miracle (*majīzāt*) is translated with a capital M, whereas the word for the miracle of a saint or the miraculous in general (*karamat*) is translated with a small *m*.]

Dearest brother Shamsuddin, may God's blessings be upon you! The orthodox doctors of the Law agree with the mystics that the miracles of the saints are admissible, even if they occasionally attain the status of Miracles. The Mutazilites, however, do not admit them, except as something that could be common to both sinners and obedient Muslims. They say it could be an answer to prayer, for example, if someone in a desert, perishing with thirst, finds a spring of water; or if someone gives him a glass of water to drink; or if a host offers bread to a ravenous person. They maintain that when one of God's slaves acquires faith, he advances from the stage of hostility to that of holiness, and since holiness can lay claim to miracles—on the argument that equality is implicit in the meaning of holiness then it should be that all have equal power to command!

The answer to the Mutazilite position is that the holiness that comes with faith does embrace all, and at this stage, both he who sins and he who submits are equal, as are the prophet and the nonprophet. But real sanctity is something different, and it requires special miracles. Just as a king has an army and all are equal insofar as they have postings, yet the prime minister and the chamberlain will have a thousand miracles to display, while a doorkeeper or a carpet layer will not. One could say that if God Almighty wants a prophet to display his prophethood, he should do so by a miracle. Yet if a non-prophet were also capable of such Miracles, doubt would arise. How could genuine prophethood be

displayed? The net result would be that a prophet would not be distinguishable from a nonprophet. The answer to this difficulty is that a genuine saint says exactly the same thing as a prophet and desires the same thing he desires. In addition to this, he states clearly, "In whatever I have discovered, I have found confirmation of Him, but note, I myself am not a prophet!" The display of miraculous powers on the part of a saint is a confirmation of the Prophet; the truth of his claim is thus borne out, and no doubt should arise. [A legal example is cited.]

One might say: "How can it be that a saint can perform miracles? It is a forcible breach of the natural order for him to reach the very boundary of Miracles! Will he then make a claim to prophethood?" But this is impossible, since truthfulness of speech is a precondition of saintliness. A claim against what is genuine would be a lie, and no liar can be a saint! Someone might say, "How can you assert that a Miracle goes contrary to the laws of nature and yet is an indication of the genuineness of a prophet? If you admit the same thing for a non-prophet, its occurrence would become routinized and it would no longer remain the sign of a genuine prophet."

I would not agree with your persistent concern, namely, that the miracles of the saints could usurp the proper role of the Miracle of the prophet, which is defined as an act contrary to the natural course of affairs. The reason is that the miracles of the community are The Miracle of the Prophet. Just as the Law continues to remain, so should the proof of its authenticity! We can say that the saints bear witness to the genuineness of the gift of prophecy that the Prophet exercises until the very Day of Resurrection. If you ask what the difference between a Miracle and a miracle is, it should be stated that in a Miracle, one finds the revelation of the condition, whereas in a miracle, it remains bidden. Also, the prophets know that a Miracle is to

occur and give news of it in advance, whereas saints do not have information about a miracle before it comes to pass.

This is the basis for saying that there is really no proof that a saint has acquired saintliness until he considers himself the lowliest of all creatures." If he sees himself in this fashion, how could he go around claiming to perform miracles? Since there can be no such claim, a fortiori how could he give news of the coming occurrence of such? It is also said that those who seek an*•i* , from God except God Himself can never attain genuine saintliness. If a person claims to be a miracle worker, it means that he has sought something other than the Friend. This would banish saintliness rather than prove its existence.

When you have grasped so much, ponder it carefully! It is not fitting for God to grant Miracles, which He reserves for just men, to any liar who lays claim to prophethood. A prophet is a just man and a confirmer of the truth. It is therefore necessary to put one's faith in him, whereas a false prophet is a liar and a mutilator, in whom it is not proper to put one's faith. A speaker of the truth should be separated from one who defaces it, and that would be by a Miracle. If, however, Miracles were to emanate from both, nothing would remain by which to distinguish the mutilator, nor would it be clear to the people whom they should trust. Thus a resemblance would arise between the truthful man and the liar. What a dreadful prospect! Moreover, the sheikhs of this group²⁶ and all the Sunnis agree that it is appropriate that any act that constitutes a forcible breach of what normally occurs, like a Miracle of the prophets or of the saints, even if it occurs at the hands of an infidel, should produce no doubt in anyone's mind that might lead to deception. (The example of Pharaoh is cited: Though he laid claim to divinity through his miraculous deeds, any intelligent man could perceive that he was not God.)

Deception means that someone pretends to save, but actually destroys. The deceiver confers honor, but brings subjection. He points out the way, but induces error. With enemies there is this defect: No matter what they give, it is all obstinacy and deceptions. Thus we have three forms of behavior: For the prophets, there are Miracles; for the saints, miracles; for enemies, deception and obstinacy. An obstinate and fraudulent sinner prides himself on what he does and places his trust in it. He considers himself deserving of praise and displays arrogance toward others. A genuinely good man, however, flees from miracles and is afraid of them. He cries out to God for help, and even holds his own body in contempt. The venerable Sufis have noted that in most cases, preoccupation with miracles indicates the extent to which a person is satisfied with what is not God. Eventually a withdrawal from God Himself will appear.

Consider, for instance, the mother who wants her child to get away from her or to go outside. She gives him some sweet to eat. If the child is intelligent, he prefers to cling to his mother's skirt; but if he is foolish, he takes the sweet, rejoices, and goes outside, where he either falls into the water or under the feet of some passing animal. His attention is only on the sweet and not on how far away from his mother he is. Taking the sweet, the foolish child left his mother; but if he had continued holding on to her skirt, the sweet would also have been his.

A group of venerable Sufis has said that miracles are simply color and decoration, meant to help people a little. Every camel that people look after carefully, decorate and parade around the town, is honored by the people during this display, at the same time that the knife for the sacrifice is being quietly honed. If its throat were not destined to be cut, then all this preparation would be for nought. A sheikh has said: "There are many idols²⁷ in the world. A miracle is one of these." As long as infidels are

associated with idols, they remain God's ene-mies. When they turn away from idols and sever all connections with them, they become saints. In the same way, a miracle can become the idol of a mystic! If he is content with miracles, he will one day be filled with shame! By not turning away from miracles, he makes idols of them. Thus he cannot come close to the God who has been re-vealed to him!

May it never happen, O dearest "idol" of mine,
 That love of You should depart my heart, or thought of You,
 my mind!
 Even if You seek my death there will remain
 That taste for You in my rotting bones.
 [Further elaboration, a story of Bayazid, and a couplet follow.]
 God forbid that my heart should ever become separated from
 You,
 Or that it should grow intimate with anyone other than You.
 Diverted from love of You, whom would it love?
 If it were to quit your lane, where would it go?

To conclude, O brother, have you not heard that "there is life at the beginning of love, but death at the end?" And also that "there is deceit at the beginning, but death at the end!" and again, that "in the beginning there are miracles, but grief at the end!" It is with refer-ence to such a situation that someone has said, "Misfortunes are re-quired for love, just as salt is needed in the cauldron."

Comforting it is to experience pain on account of the friend who is also a physician daily visiting the home of his sick.

Do you know who such a person is? It is everyone endowed with beauty who is not a lover of himself, and does not usurp, on account of his own beauty, the praise due to God, for he should be such that, if tomorrow there were to come an announcement, "Look at Me!" he would say, "It is impossible! How could such Beauty be seen by eyes such as mine?" Someone has said:

No matter how much you try, you will never describe that union.

It is beyond the reach of the tongue or the power of utterance.

O brother, on that day that the carpet of love will be spread, all will throw their preconceived desires into the fire, for it has been de-creed that they all belong to the Beloved! Total absence of desire is the lot of the lover. Hence it is that they say: “He is merciful and compassionate toward ordinary slaves; but with lovers He is a King who accomplishes whatever He wants!” [The sufferings of Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph are briefly reiterated.]

He does all these things yet, out of godly fear,
The true man does not utter even a single sigh!
For His face is like a mirror:
One sigh would cloud it over!

Peace!

Letter 14: Manifestation

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Brother Shamsuddin, may God deign to manifest Himself to you. Manifestation occurs through revelation of the divine essence and attributes. The soul also has its own glory. Many travelers grow proud at this stage and think that they have attained the divine glory. If one does not have access to a perfect sheikh, a man experienced in mystical matters, then it would be difficult to escape this danger. Everyone who sincerely seeks God should catch hold of the skirt of a mature master so that he may benefit from the blessing conferred on him by the spiritual wealth of that sheikh and thus attain what he desires and yearns for! As the (Quran informs us: “Enter a house through the door!” (Q2:189). There is a hint contained here!

If you travel the Way without benefit of any intermediary,
You will fall headlong from the Way into a pit!

Follow a spiritual guide that, by his bounty,
Sooner or later you may reach the realm of the King.

For the moment, grasp the difference between divine illumination and illumination from the soul. When the mirror of the soul is cleansed of the impurities of human existence, it becomes polished in relation to God and its purity becomes perfect. It becomes like the rising sun of the divine beauty, and like Jamshed's cup it reveals the essence of the Lord, as well as His attributes. But not everyone who acquires the luster of polishing is also granted the boon of witnessing. "That is God's grace, which he bestows on whomever He wishes" (Q62:4). Note everyone who runs catches a wild ass, but only a person who is actually running can hope to catch one!

Among travelers there should be a spiritually endowed teacher who purifies the heart not only of deficiencies common to human nature but also of the rust accumulated by each traveler's particular nature. Many spiritual qualities illumine the heart. This is due to the experience of spiritual lights. The soul, in effect, has been illuminated with the beauty of its own attributes. But its full illumination requires the effacement of the effects deriving from the unruly characteristics of human nature. It sometimes happens that the essence of the soul, which is the vicar of God on earth, becomes manifest and claims, "I am God!" Sometimes it happens that a person sees all creatures bowing down before the throne of the vicegerency of his soul and falls into error. He thinks that he is God himself! The situation can be compared to that described in a Tradition: "When God manifests himself to anyone, everything becomes dependent on him." He falls into many faults of this kind and, unless he receives divine grace and assistance from a spiritual guide, he cannot avoid making such errors. Now we come to the difference between divine illumination and illumination from the soul.

Let us first consider the manifestation or illumination that proceeds from the soul itself: It has a tendency to appear as something novel. It does not have the power to do away with unruly tendencies completely, even though at the time of illumination a person is far from their pull. The human soul does not annihilate them, since this kind of manifestation is still veiled. Human inclinations remain. When divine illumination occurs, one is no longer encumbered since, of necessity, the divine illumination leads one to refrain from acting in response to the soul and to suppress all purely human tendencies. “And say: God has come forward, and the existence of what is false has been removed. What is false does not endure” (Q17:81). Illumination from the soul does not bring peace to the heart, neither does it cleanse the heart of impurities or liberate it from doubt and suspicion, nor is the bliss of complete understanding bestowed upon it. Divine illumination, on the other hand, does cleanse and liberate and inform *totally*. Also, illumination from the soul causes pride and self-esteem to appear; haughtiness and preoccupation with self increase; the quest for God is harmed; fear of God and supplication grow less. But divine illumination does away with all these. Instead of preoccupation with self, self forgetfulness is found; both yearning for God and fervor in seeking Him increase, as does the thirst for God. Above all, a person genuinely experiences himself as a mirror of the essence and attributes of the Exalted Friend! When the mirror becomes clean, it can reflect whatever the Lord wishes to manifest in it, for example, the attributes of speech “And God spoke to Moses”(Q19:25). And if it is a question of creative power, then reflect on these words concerning Jesus: “And if You, by My command, make birds of clay and breathe into them, they will fly away by My command” (Q5:110) and so on for the other attributes and their manifestation in man. [The story of a disciple of Abu Turab Nakhshabi follows.]

There is a very subtle difference between witness, display, and illumination. This cannot be perceived without perception and clear insight. God willing, what is here explicated at length may be experienced instantaneously. You should know that *illumination* and *concealment* are two words commonly found among the Sufis. The former means "to be revealed," while the latter means "to be hidden." What this group means to say is that, through illumination, God discloses Himself; whereas by concealment, He hides Himself.

There is no question here of God's essence since variability and alteration are incompatible with the divine essence. It is instead like light, which, once it has been shed on some problem, causes people to say that the problem has been solved. The problem has not really been solved, but one's mind has been illuminated and the problem comprehended. Knowledge is called the solution of the problem, while ignorance is called its obfuscation. When a person becomes engrossed in himself, he finds that vision of the invisible world remains hidden from him. This is called "concealment." When, however, he sees from the divine perspective rather than his own, doing away with his human ego, he then sees what is hidden. This is called "illumination".

O brother, on the day that men were brought into existence, God said: "Come along the Way of seeking, and never despair of finding me!" Man gradually discovers that the meaning of "seeking" is not to seek one's own glory! This is the secret, but how difficult it is to attain! Realize what all this means! Wherever there is beauty, there is both enticement and debasement, as the following quatrain indicates:

Here am I accepting grief suffered for Your sake as happiness,
Crying out as I endure oppression for Your sake.
Despite all this, were I to become dust on Your path,
I would still not be worthy of being touched by Your feet!

God will give everyone who sets out faithfully along the Way even what was never requested. Yet, if anyone does not direct his feet along this Way, even though he has desires, he will get nothing. A great man related this story: Someone was asked, “Do you wish to see the Lord?” “No.” “Why not?” “Because Moses desired to see God, but did not; whereas Muhammad had no such desire and yet saw Him.” Is not this garment of mud merely transitory, like all the work of Adam and men? Of the innumerable host of created beings not one is involved in accomplishing the work that is being done in you. If one were, then one could talk about a cause. Reflect for a moment on those spiritual substances called angels who are clothed with the vesture of sinlessness, submission, sanctity, and purity! Not everyone capable of service is necessarily capable of love! Not everyone who exists on the fringes of the wide Expanse can traverse the Expanse itself!

Peace!

Letter 15: Union With God

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Brother Shamsuddin, may God Almighty grant you the blessing of union with Him! Realize that union with the Lord is not of the same kind as when your body is joined to another, nor your accidents with others, or your substance with your body, or knowledge with the thing known, or willing with the thing willed. “God Almighty is more exalted than that!” [ref. to Q17:4, 43]. This word *union* occurs in the Law and public discourse, and is also well known among the Sufis. It means “being joined to the Lord.” What does it mean to be joined to the Lord? It means that, for the sake of God, one is cut off from what is in any way base. Being closely united would mean becoming lost in the very depths of God! To this corresponds a great freedom from preoccupation with things other than God. On the other hand, to

the extent that a person becomes free from preoccupation with God, to the same extent he becomes separated from Him.

One can learn from this saying of Harisa: "Surely I see the throne of my Master." It so happened that, to the extent that Harisa was not united to this world, he was closely united to the Hidden One. Muhammad the Chosen One was detached from both worlds in order to be intimately united with God. If his secret leaked out, he would say, "I take refuge in You from You!" When he said these words, it was clear that nothing remained in his secret thoughts that was other than God.

Separation from this world restores union with God. Again there is the saying of Abdullah ibn Umar. As he was performing the circumambulation of the Kaaba, he said: "I was lost in the vision of the Lord in that place." This means that his personality was lost in the Law, while his secret thoughts were immersed in the Truth. Absorption in the Law is superseded by absorption in the Truth. A person is no longer aware of either house or greeting. So engrossed does he become in God that he hears no greeting, and his veneration of the Lord of the house reaches such a stage that there remains no memory of even the house! This is the sense of "I see God Himself in that house!" But when the person who had greeted him and not been vouchsafed a reply came, he was full of complaints and reproaches against him. When Umar came to the place, he said nothing. This became an argument in favor of the claim made by Abdullah, since the masters of jurisprudence argue that when it is necessary to speak, no reply becomes the reply. In short, every spiritually endowed person arrives at the point of return to the Lord. "Surely the ultimate point of return is to your Lord" (Q53:42). In the beginning, the first covenant was "Am I not your Lord?" (Q7:171). Just as spiritual nature was prepared for a lump of clay, so on the pinnacle of human nature was showered the leaven of everything leavened! "God created

the universe in darkness, but then sprinkled his light upon it.” One gulp from the cup of “Am I not” gives so much pleasure to his palate that throughout his entire lifetime it can never be erased from his soul. Indeed, his life consists of that delight and the desire of that Light is like the center and treasure of his own being. He is not inclined toward this world and is unable, even for a moment, to abandon that wine!

Your lovers have been intoxicated from eternity.
They have come, their heads swaying with “Am I not?”
Imbibing this wine and savoring its fragrance,
They become spiritual sots due to “Am I not?”

Those people are like moths sacrificing their lives out of love—for the yoke of yearning for God- himself has fallen upon their necks in the covenant of “Am I not?” Here, many feathers and wings strain after Him. The veils of the beauty of the glorious Candle are shed, so that “whoever comes even a hand’s breadth toward Me, toward him do I advance a yard” takes him by the hand! From the many stirrings of a heart, yearning for God Himself is like a rope between the two worlds, for it draws a person to the very edge of union and says, “How far could one reach with these weak wings and feathers? You have drawn-aside the veils of My beauty, but you cannot fly in the atmosphere of My divine substance with these paltry wings and feathers!” Those required there are earned on the battlefield by “those people who struggle on Our behalf” (Q29:69). As the Quran goes on to promise, “Certainly I shall show them the way!” Wings and feathers of another hue shall I bestow upon you by scattering my own illuminations—”God guides by His own light whomsoever He wishes” (Q24:35).

If the most exalted of angels, jinn, and men were gathered together, they could not confer on a single slave the enjoyment of the illumination of the Lord God, nor even enough desire for Him to enable a slave to venture a few footsteps upon the Divine

Expanse. Undoubtedly this is a better desire than any concerned with creatures, and a form of slavery that is really a liberation from slavery and from oneself. Such people have the habit of directing all their desires toward the Divine World. One breath of theirs is equivalent to all the affairs of both worlds. The following verse hints at the intensity of their renunciation:

In one breath the Sufis celebrate two feasts,
While spiders tear flies to pieces!

At every moment a Sufi dies, only to obtain a new form of existence, coming further under the control of the desire of self-effacement and absorption in God. From that effacement one goes for a different type of stroll in the Divine World, under the influence of a strong yearning. "God effaces or establishes whatever He pleases" (Q13:39). At every step absorption and affirmation are obtained, so that the Sufi celebrates two feasts there: one that of absorption, and the other a feast of affirmation. At this stage, it is fitting that he should be called "the Spirit of God" or "the Word of God"; such a title will become like a robe that fits him perfectly.

O brother, this work is scarcely compatible with having the sash of lordship tied to one's turban! For when that beloved one, Adam, came to heaven, he looked around and said: "These itching feet of mine cannot remain in the bonds of a stirrup. And this head of mine, filled with the effects of love, cannot bear the weight of the crown. I have been given an erect stature, that I may stand upright and alone, just like the letter *alif*. Causes and effects are fit only for the fire. He said "Here am I!" to love, and bade adieu to the eight heavens. While he was passing through heaven, along with his crown and robe of honor, Adam was in the rank of those near to God. When he entered upon the Way of seeking, he was not aware of things that still lay concealed. Hence it has been said:

Do you know the precondition for entering a tavern?
First lay aside your crown, your belt, and your turban!

Every particle of the being of Adam raised this primeval slogan
of love:

I will sorely try your heart with the anguish of love;
Even today I shall demand your very life's blood!

Peace!

Letter 22: The Origin of Sufism

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Brother Shamsuddin, may God bless you! The foundation of Sufism is quite ancient, having been practiced by the prophets and the righteous. The fact of the matter is that the predominance of evil habits in our times makes the Sufis themselves appear evil in the eyes of people. Those associated with this Tradition are divided into three groups: The Sufis, the seekers, and the dissemblers. A Sufi is a person who is completely lost to himself, exists only in God, is freed from the hold of his lower self, and is conjoined to the Truth of all truths. The seeker is one who engages in the struggle with self, undergoes austerities, and disciplines himself by means of various practices. The dissembler is one who, for the sake of position and success, makes himself out to be one of the above, but is devoid of any of their qualities. He is also ignorant of them! Despite all this, there is some hope that he might become one of them and, in the shadow of their riches, pass beyond bothworlds, becoming a combatant in the army of God and not merely a camp follower. Each city has one vicegerent and one sultan, while others pass their time in the shadows of these two. Among various peoples there are only a few who affirm the whole truth. When, however, someone begins to resemble others in one particular thing, he finds himself imitating them in other things as well. There is an injunction of the Law that

says: "Everyone who makes himself similar to a people in both behavior and belief will end up by becoming one of them."

It has been said that the first Sufi in the world was Adam: God Almighty drew him forth from clay and placed him in the stage of choice and purity. He prepared the royal edict of vicegerency for him. For the first time, between Mecca and Taif, he made a forty-day retreat, thus becoming the inspiration for novices to undertake this practice. "I kneaded the mud of Adam for forty days with My very own hands." When he had completed the forty days of solitude, God Almighty gave him the fullness of spirit, lit the lamp of intelligence in his heart, and brought the light of wisdom from his heart to his tongue. He trembled and said, "Thanks be to God!" The Prophet also hinted at the efficacy of this practice when he said: "Anyone who dedicates forty days to God, God, in turn, will order streams of wisdom to issue forth continuously from his heart and upon his tongue!" Adam resolved to acquire sanctity. At the beginning of his vicegerency, he received the gift of the homage and prostrations of angels. He stood up and, like an intrepid traveler, resolved to reach heaven. He journeyed through all the climes of heaven. He passed far beyond the secrets of these kingdoms. He was told, "Keep control over all your senses! Do not yield to your own inclinations!"

Still a novice, he did not yet have the requisite control. Impelled by boldness and mirth he displayed a grasping attitude. From a hidden ambush he was smitten with this rebuke: "Adam has disobeyed his Lord!" (Q20:121). He was brokenhearted. He became immersed in begging forgiveness for his sins. Tradition dates the repentance of the Sufis from this occasion. He said: "O Lord, we have wronged ourselves"(QZ:23). All his dominion and vicegerency were withdrawn from him. He stood there naked, full of repentance. It was said: "Adam, journey in the world in

order to discharge this debt! “The condition of discipleship is that a disciple who commits a fault should go on a journey. Adam resolved on journeying over the earth, alone and naked. Since his body was naked, it was said to him: “Adam, beg!” He begged a leaf from each tree, and receiving three leaves, he sewed them together and made a patched garment with which he covered himself. He then set out on his earthly journey.

For three hundred years he sighed with grief until he was thoroughly exonerated. “Undoubtedly God chose Adam!” (Q3:32), that is, He thoroughly purified him and made him a Sufi. He greatly esteemed the patched garment that he had made from the leaves begged from the trees. At the end of his life, he clothed the prophet Shish with it and conferred viceregency upon him. This became the Way of Muhammad and the means for conveying the wealth of Sufism to descendants of the prophets.

Sufis should be travelers who belong to some group in this world, that they might be able to assemble for companionship and relate what has occurred to them. Thus the Kaaba made its appearance. It was the very first religious sanctuary. Before that time, there had been no such thing. It appeared in the time of Adam. All that the prophet Noah required of the world was a blanket. The prophet Moses himself always wore the blanket that the prophet Shuaib had conferred on him the first day that he entered his [Shuaib’s] service. And this is a very important condition in the Way, that there should be a spiritual guide who clothes the novice with the Sufi garb. Jesus always used to wear a woolen garment. Similarly, both Moses and Jesus themselves built Jerusalem as a place of spiritual trust.” Then, in every country and region Sufis built meeting places for themselves, and made fixed abodes for periods of solitude where they could practice inner converse with God. Fellow travelers could also come there and recount the traditions of the exalted, divine secrets. When

the time for the foremost of the prophets and the King of the saints, the blessed Muhammad—may the peace of God be upon him and his family—arrived, he himself donned such a blanket. “It was the practice of your father, Abraham” (Qa2:78). He also yearned for the religious sanctuary of the Kaaba. The Pride of the world set aside a special corner in his own mosque and from his companions he selected a group of about seventy people who were travelers on the Path. They used to converse there together, while the Arab chiefs and ordinary people were not allowed to enter that space. When the Pride of the world bestowed great honor and dignity upon any of the companions, he would give him his own cloak or shirt. That person would then become a Sufi.

The beginning of this Way came from Adam, and its completion was found in Muhammad, the Apostle of God. It remains in the midst of believers and their community. It requires strength of heart, above all else. One should not pay too much attention to one’s unworthiness, for this particular work is dependent on the divine favor and grace, not on the actions of any person!

O brother, many thousands are prostrate in adoration, and many more thousands recite God’s praises and laud Him; thousands of others are amazed at His secrets, while others are swept along by His works. He created a fearless people out of mere dust. He chose all these servants and submissive ones even though they had not rendered any previous service to Him. He spoke without introduction of any kind, saying, “O handful of dust, am I not your Lord?” (Q7:172). In a single hour, an intoxicated one is lifted up on the couch of bliss as he witnesses the glory of the Lord. At every moment there are signs that he has become attuned to God and accepted by Him. The exquisite gift of divine union is conferred upon him, together with a

certain repulsion, veiling, and a hundred rebukes. Every moment is devoted to silent converse with God, yet grief and anger still have their place. Every moment someone is brought forth from the temple of idols and honored by having the garment of acceptance conferred on him, while another is taken outside a mosque and the rope of the pain of banishment is fixed around his neck—for thee is need to experience both His kindness and His rage!

* * * * *

**Excerpts from The Bustan
or Orchard of Hazrath Sadi (RAA)
Sheikh Saadi of Shiraz**

He who sleeps on the Road will lose either his hat or his head.

(Nizami, Treasury of Mysteries)

The Gulistan (Rose Garden) and Bustan (Orchard) of Saadi of Shiraz (1184 - 1291) are two classics of Sufism which provide the moral and ethical basis of the reading the millions, in India, Persia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Saadi was at times a wandering dervish, was captured by the Crusaders and made to dig ditches until ransomed; visited the centers of learning of the East and wrote poetry and literature which has not been surpassed. He was educated in Baghdad at the great college founded by Nizam, the friend of Khayyam and Minister of Court of the Shah. His affiliation was with the Naqshbandi Order of Sufis, and he was closely associated with Sheikh Shahabudin Suhrawardi, the founder of the Suhrawardi School, and also Najmuddin Kubra, the "Pillar of the Age", one of the greatest Sufis of all time.

Benevolence

If you are wise, incline toward the essential truth, for that remains, while the things that are external pass away.

He who has neither knowledge, generosity, nor piety resembles a man in form alone. He sleeps at peace beneath the ground who made tranquil the hearts of men.

Give now of your gold and bounty, for eventually will it pass from your grasp. Open the door of your treasure today, for tomorrow the key will not be in your hands.

If you would not be distressed on the Day of Judgment, forget not them that are distressed.

Drive not the poor man empty from your door, lest you should wander before the doors of strangers.

He protects the needy who fears that he himself may become needful of the help of others.

Are you not also a supplicant? Be grateful, and turn not away those who supplicate you.

Story 1

A woman said to her husband, "Do not buy bread from the baker in this street. Make your purchases in the market, for this man shows wheat and sells barley, and he has no customers but a swarm of flies."

"O light of my life," the husband answered, "pay no heed to his trickery. In the hope of our custom has he settled in this place, and it would not be humane to deprive him of his profits."

Follow the path of the righteous, and, if you stand upon your feet, stretch out your hand to them that are fallen.

Story 2

The wife of an officer of a king said to her husband, "Arise, and go to the royal palace, that they may give you food, for your children are in want."

“The kitchen is closed today,” he answered. Last night the Sultan resolved to fast a while.”

In the despair of hunger, the woman bowed her head and murmured, “What does the Sultan seek from his fasting when his breaking the fast means a festival of joy for our children?”

One who eats so that good may follow is better than a Mammon worshipper who continually fasts. Proper it is to fast with him who feeds the needy in the morning.

Story 3

A certain man had generosity without the means of displaying it; his pittance was unequal to his benevolence. (May riches never fall to the mean, nor poverty be the lot of the generous) His charity exceeding the depth of his pocket, therefore was he always short of money.

One day a poor man wrote to him saying, “O. you of happy nature! Assist me with funds, since for some time have I languished in prison.”

The generous man would have willingly acceded to the request, but he possessed not so much as the smallest piece of money. He sent someone to the creditors of the prisoner with the message, “Free this man for a few days, and I will be his security.” Then did he visit the prisoner in his cell and say, “Arise, and fly with haste from the city.”

When a sparrow sees the door of its cage open, it tarries not a moment. Like the morning breeze, the prisoner flew from the land. Thereupon, they seized his benefactor, saying, “Produce either the man or the money.”

Powerless to do either, he went to prison, for a bird escaped is never recaptured. Long there did he remain, invoking help from none, nor complaining, though he slept not at nights through restlessness.

A pious man came to him and said, “I did not think that you were dishonest; why are you here imprisoned?”

“No villainy have I committed,” he replied. “I saw a helpless man in bonds and his freedom only in my own confinement. I did not deem it right that I should live in comfort while another was fettered by the legs.” Eventually he died, leaving a good name behind.

Happy is he whose name dies not! He who sleeps beneath the earth with a heart that lives is better than he who lives with a soul that is dead, for the former remains forever.

Story 4

In a deserts a man found a dog that was dying from thirst. Using his hat as a bucket, he fetched water from a well and gave it to the helpless animal. The prophet of the time stated that God had forgiven the man his sins because of his kindly act.

Reflect, if you are a tyrant, and make a profession of benevolence.

He who shows kindness to a dog will not do less toward the good among his fellows.

Be generous to the extent of your power. If you have not dug a well in the desert, at least place a lamp in a shrine.

Charity distributed from an ox’s skin that is filled with treasure counts for less than a dinar given from the wages of toil.

Every man’s burden is suited to his strength heavy to the ant is the foot of the locust.

Do good to others so that on the morrow God may not deal harshly with you.

Be lenient with your slave, for he may one day become a king, like a pawn that becomes a queen.

Story 5

A poor man complained of his distressed condition to one who was rich but ill-tempered. The latter refused to help him, and turned roughly upon him in anger. The beggar's heart bled by reason of this violence. "Strange!" he reflected, "that this rich man should be of such forbidding countenance! Perhaps he fears not the bitterness of begging."

The rich man ordered his slave to drive the beggar away. As a result of his ingratitude for the blessings that he enjoyed, Fortune left him, and he lost all that he possessed. His slave passed into the hands of a generous man of enlightened mind, who was as gladdened at the sight of a beggar as the latter is at the sight of riches.

One night a beggar asked alms of the latter, and he commanded his slave to give the man to eat. When the slave involuntarily uttered a cry, and went back weeping.

His master asked, "Why these tears?"

"My heart is grieved at the plight of this unfortunate old man," the slave replied. "Once was he the owner of much wealth, and I his slave."

The master smiled and said, "This is not cause for grief, O son. Time, in its revolutions, is not unjust. Was not that indigent man formerly a merchant who carried his head high in the air through pride? I am he whom that day he drove from his door. Fate has now put him in the place that I then occupied. Heaven befriended me and washed the dust of sorrow from my face. Though God, in His wisdom, closed one door, another, in His mercy, did He open."

Many a needy man has become sated, and many a rich man has gone unsatisfied.

Story 6

Someone saw a fox that was bereft of the use of its legs. He was wondering how the animal managed to live in this condition when a tiger drew near with a jackal in its claws. The tiger ate the jackal, and the fox finished the remains. The next day also did the Omnipotent Provider send the fox its daily meal.

The eyes of the man were thus opened to the light of true knowledge. “After this,” he reflected,, “I will sit in a corner like an ant, for the elephant’s portion is not gained by reason of its strength.”

So did he sit in silence, waiting for his daily food to come from the Invisible. No one heeded him, and soon was he reduced to skin and bones. When, at last, his senses had almost gone through weakness, a voice came out from the wall of a mosque, saying:

“Go, O false one! Be the rending tiger and pose not as a paralytic fox. Exert yourself like the tiger, so that something may remain from your spoil. Why, like the fox, appease your hunger with leaving? Eat of the fruits of your own endeavors; strive like a man, and relieve the wants of the needy.”

Seize, O youth, the hand of the aged; fall not yourself, saying, “Hold my hand.” In the two worlds does he obtain reward who does good to the people of God.

Story 7

In the remote regions of Turkey, there lived a good and pious man, whom I and some fellow-travellers once visited. He received us cordially, and seated us with respect. He had vineyards, and wheat-fields, slaves and gold, but was miserly as a leafless tree. His feelings were warm, but his fireplace was cold. He passed the night awake in prayer, and we in hunger. In the morning he girt

his loins and recommenced the same politeness of the previous night.

One of our party was of merry wit and temper.

“Come, give us food in change for a kiss,” he said, “for that is better to a hungry man. In serving me, place not your hand upon my shoe, but give me bread and strike your shoe upon my head.”

Excellence is attained by generosity, not by vigils in the night.

Idle words are a hollow drum; invocations without merit are a weak support.

Story 8

Hatim Tai possessed a horse whose fleetness was as that of the morning breeze. Of this was the Sultan of Turkey informed.

“Like Hatim Tai,” he was told, “none is equal in generosity; like his horse, nothing is equal in speed and gait. As a ship in the sea it traverses the desert, while the eagle, exhausted, lags behind.”

“From Hatim will I request that horse.” The king replied. “If he is generous and gives it to me, then shall I know that his fame is true; if not, that it is but the sound of a hollow drum.”

So he dispatched a messenger with ten followers to Hatim. They alighted at the house of the Arab chief, who prepared a feast and killed a horse in their honor.

On the following day, when the messenger explained the object of his mission, Hatim became as one mad with grief. “Why,” he cried, “did you not give me your message before? That swift-paced horse did I roast last night for you to eat. No other means had I to entertain you; that horse alone stood by my tent, and I would not that my guests should sleep fasting.”

To the men he gave money and splendid robes, and when the news of his generosity reached to Turkey, the king showered a thousand praises upon his nature.

Story 9

One of the kings of Yemen was renowned for his liberality, yet the name of Hatim was never mentioned in his presence without his falling into a rage. “How long,” he would ask, “will you speak of that vain man, who possesses neither a kingdom, nor power, nor wealth?”

On one occasion he prepared a royal feast, which the people were invited to attend. Someone began to speak of Hatim, and another to praise him. Envious, the king dispatched a man to slay the Arabian chief, reflecting, “So long as Hatim lives, my name will never become famous.

The messenger departed, and traveled far seeking for Hatim that he might kill him. As he went along the road a youth came out to meet him. He was handsome and wise, and showed friendliness toward the messenger, whom he took to his house to pass the night. Such liberality did he shower upon his guest that the heart of the evil-minded one was turned to goodness.

In the morning the generous youth kissed his hand and said, “Remain with me for a few days.”

I am unable to tarry here,” replied the messenger, “for urgent business is before me.”

“If you will entrust me with your secret,” said the youth, “I will spare no effort to aid you.”

“O generous man!” was the reply, “give ear to me, for I know that the generous are concealers of secrets. Perhaps in this country you know Hatim, who is of lofty mind and noble qualities. The king of Yemen desires his head, though I know not

what enmity has arisen between them. I shall be grateful if you will direct me to where he is. This hope from your kindness do I entertain, O friend!”

The youth laughed and said, “I am Hatim, see here my head! Strike it from my body with your sword. I would not that harm should befall you, or that you should fall in your endeavor.”

Throwing aside his sword, the man fell on the ground and kissed the crust of Hatim’s feet. “If I injured a hair on your body,” he cried, “I should no longer be a man.” So saying, he clasped Hatim to his breast and took his way back to Yemen.

“Come,” said the king as the man approached, “what news have you? Why did you not tie his head to your saddle-straps? Perhaps that famous one attacked you and you were too weak to engage in combat.”

The messenger kissed the ground and said, “O wise and just king! I found Hatim, and saw him to be generous and full of wisdom, and in courage superior to myself. My back was bent by the burden of his favors; with the sword of kindness and bounty he killed me.”

When he had related all that he had seen of Hatim’s generosity, the king uttered praises upon the family of the Arab chief and rewarded the messenger with gold.

Story 10

A certain man, in the ceiling of whose house some bees had built their hives, asked his wife for a butcher’s knife so that he might destroy them. “Do not do so,” the woman said, “for then the poor creatures will be greatly distressed when turned out of their homes.

Accordingly, the foolish man left the bees in peace.

One day the woman was stung by one of the insects and stood wailing on the doorstep. Hearing her cries the husband left his shop and hurried toward the house. Angered, he said, "O wife! Show not such a bitter face to the world; remember you did say to me, 'Kill not the poor bees.'"

How can one do good to the evil? Forbearance with the wicked but increases their iniquity.

What is a dog that a dish of viands should be set before him? Command that they should give him bones. A kicking animal is best well-burdened.

If the night watchman displays humanity, no one sleeps at night for fear of thieves.

In the battlefield, the spear shaft is worth more than a hundred thousand sugarcanes.

When you rear a cat, she destroys your pigeons; when you make fat a wolf, he rends one who is dear to you.

Raise not a building that has not a strong foundation; if you do, beware.

Discourse

Protect him whose father is dead; remove the dust from his raiment, and injure him not. You know not how hard is his condition; no foliage is there on a rootless tree. Give not a kiss to a child of your own in the sight of a helpless orphan. If the latter weep, who will assuage his grief? If he is angered, who will bear his burden? See that he weeps not, for the throne of God trembles at the orphan's lament. With pity, wipe the tears from his eyes and the dust from his face. If the protecting shadow of his father's care is gone, cherish him beneath the shadow of your care.

Upon my head was a kingly crown when it reposed upon the bosom of my father. Then, if a fly settled upon my body, many were distressed on my behalf. Now, should I be taken in captivity, not one among my friends would come to aid me. Well, do I know the orphan's sorrow, for my father departed in my childhood.

Love

Happy are the days of those infatuated by love for Him, whether sorrowed by separation from Him or made joyous by His presence.

They are mendicants who fly from worldly sovereignty; in the hope of meeting Him they are patient in their mendicancy. Often have they drunk of the wine of anguish; if bitter, they remain silent. In the remembrance of Him patience is not bitter, for wormwood is sweet from the hand of a friend.

Those captive in the coils of His love, seek not to escape; they suffer reproach, but are monarchs in the seclusion of their mendication, and their way is not known. They are like the temple of Jerusalem, splendid of which is the interior, but whose outer wall is led in ruin.

Like moths, they burn themselves in the fire of love. Their Beloved is in their breasts, yet do they seek Him; though near a fountain, their lips are parched.

Discourse

Your love renders you impatient and disturbed. With such sincerity have you placed your head at her feet that you are oblivious to the world.

When in the eyes of your beloved riches count not, gold and dust are as one to you.

You say that she dwells in your eyes—if they are closed she is in your mind.

If she demands your life, you place it in her hand; if she holds a sword to your neck, you stretch your head forward.

When earthly love produces such confusion and such obedience, do you wonder if

travelers on the road of God remain engulfed in the Ocean of Reality?

In the remembrance of their Friend they have turned their backs upon the world; they are so fascinated by the Cup-bearer that they have spilled the wine.

No medicine can cure them, for no one has knowledge of their pains.

With their cries of longing do they root up a mountain; with their sighs they dismember a kingdom.

Such is their weeping at dawn that the tears wash the sand of sleep from their eyes. Night and day are they immersed in the sea of love; so distracted are they that they know not night from day.

So enamored are they of the beauty of the Painter that they care not for the beauty of His designs.

He drinks of the pure wine of Unity who is forgetful of both this world and the next.

Story 1

I have heard that, at the singing of a musician, one of fairy-face began to dance. Surrounded by distracted hearts, the flame of a candle caught her skirt. She was distressed and angered.

One of her lovers said, “Why agitate yourself? The fire has burned your skirt—it has entirely consumed the harvest of my life.”

Story 2

One who loved God set his face toward the desert. His father, being grieved at his absence, neither ate nor slept.

Someone admonished the son, who said, “Since my Friend has claimed me as His own, no other friendship do I own. When He revealed to me His beauty, all else that I saw appeared as shadows.”

They that love Him care for no one else; their senses are confused and their ears are deaf to the words of them that reproach.

They wander through the desert of Divine Knowledge without a caravan.

They have no hope of approbation from their fellow-men, for they are the chosen of the elect of God.

Story 3

An old man begged at the door of a mosque. Someone said to him, “This is not the place to beg; stand not here with impudence.”

“What house is this,” the man inquired, “from which no pity comes upon the condition of the poor?”

“Silence!” was the reply. “What foolish words are these! This is the house of our Master!”

The beggar raised a cry, “Alas,” he said, “that I should be disappointed at this door. I have not gone hopeless from any street; why should I go thus from the door of God? Here will I stretch forth my hand of want, for I know that I shall not depart empty handed.”

For a year he remained devoutly employed in the mosque. One night, through weakness, his heart began to palpitate, and at

daybreak his last breath flickered like a morning lamp. Thus did he exclaim with joy; “And whoever knocked at the door of the Bounteous One, it opened.”

He who seeks God should be patient and enduring; I have not heard of an alchemist being sad. Much gold he reduces to ashes so that he may one day turn copper into gold. Gold is good with which to buy—and what could you wish to buy better than the face of your Friend?

Story 4

An old man spent the night in worship and the morning in prayer. A guardian angel whispered to him, “Go, take your way, for your prayers are not acceptable at this door.”

The next night again he passed the night in devotion, and a disciple, being informed of his circumstances said, “When you see that the door is shut, why do you thus exert yourself?”

Weeping, he replied, “O. my son! Do you suppose that although He has torn my reins I shall keep my hands from off His saddle-straps? When a supplicant is repelled at one door, what is his fear if he knows of another?”

While thus he spoke, with his head upon the ground, the angel uttered this message in his ears, “Although there is no merit in him, his prayers are accepted, for except Me, he has no refuge.”

Story 5

Some one found fault with the king of Ghazani, saying, “Ayaz, his favorite slave, possesses no beauty. It is strange that a nightingale should love a rose that has neither color nor perfume.”

This was told to Mahmud, who said, “My love, O sir, is for virtue, not for form or stature.”

I have heard that in a narrow pass a camel fell and a chest of pearls was broken. The king gave the signal for plunder, and urged on his horse with speed. The horsemen did likewise, and, leaving the king behind, gathered up the pearls. Not one of them remained near the king except Ayaz.” O you of curly locks!” said Mahmud, “What have you gained of the plunder?”

“Nothing,” he replied. “I walked in haste behind you, I do not occupy myself with riches away from your service

If an honorable place in the court is yours, be not neglectful of the king because of gain elsewhere.

Story 6

A village chief passed with his son through the center of the imperial army. In the presence of such pomp and splendor the man displayed humility and fled, through fear, into a corner.

“After all,” observed the son, “you are a village chief, and of higher position than the nobles. Why do you tremble like a willow tree?”

“True,” replied the father. I am a chief and a ruler, but my honor lies as far as my village.”

Thus, are the saints overwhelmed with fear when they stand in the court of their King.

Story 7

Perhaps you have seen the firefly shine like a lamp in the garden at night.

“O night-illuminating moth” someone said, “Why do you not come in the daytime?”

The firefly gave an answer full of wisdom “Because I am not visible before the sun.’,

Story 8

Someone said to a moth, “Go, you contemptible creature, and make friendship with one worthy of yourself. Go where you see the path of hope. How different is your love from that of the candle! You are not a salamander hover not around the fire, for bravery is necessary before combat. It is not compatible with reason that you should acknowledge as a friend one whom you know to be your enemy.”

“What does it matter if I burn?” The moth replied. “I have love in my heart, and this flame is as a flower to me. Not of my own accord do I throw myself into the fire; the chain of her love is upon my neck. Who is it that finds fault with my friendship of my friend? I am content to be slain at her feet. I burn because she is dear to me, and because my destruction may affect her. Say not to the helpless man from whose hands the rein have fallen, ‘Drive slowly’.

Story 9

One night, as I lay awake, I heard a moth say to a candle, “I am your lover; if I burn, it is proper. Why do you weep?”,

The candle replied, ‘O, my friend! Love is not your business. You fly from before a flame; I stand erect until I am entirely consumed. If the fire of love has burned your wings, regard me, who from head to foot must be destroyed.’”

Before the night had passed, someone put the candle out, exclaiming, “Such is the end of love!”

Grieve not over the grave of one who lost his life for his friend; be glad of heart, for he was the chosen of Him.

I you are a lover, wash not your head of the sickness of love; like Sa’di, wash your hands of selfishness.

A devoted lover holds not back his hand from the object of his affections though arrows and stones may rain upon his head.

Be cautious; if you go down to the sea, give yourself up to the storm.

Contentment

He knows not God nor performs His worship who is not contented with his lot.

Contentment makes a man rich—tell this to the avaricious.

O irresolute one! Be tranquil, for grass grows not upon revolving stones.

Pamper not your body if you are a man of sense, for in sodoing do you seek your own destruction.

The wise acquire virtue, and they that pamper their bodies are devoid of merit.

Eating and sleeping is the creed of animals; to adopt it is the manner of fools.

Happy is the one who, in meditation, prepares for the last journey by means of the knowledge of God.

To him who knows not the darkness from the light, the face of a demon is as that of a Hourī.

How can the falcon fly to the sky when the stone of avarice is tied to its wing?

If you pay less attention to your food than to worship you may become an angel. 'First, cultivate the qualities of a man, then reflect upon the character of angels.

Eat in proportion to your hunger; how can he give praises whom scarce can breathe by reason of his gluttony?

He whose stomach is full is void of wisdom. The prey is entrapped in the snare because of its greed.

Story 1

A covetous man paid an early morning visit to the king of Khwarazm, and twice prostrated himself to the ground before him.

“Tell me, O father,” his son inquired, “did you not say that Mecca was your place of worship? Why did you today repeat your prayers before the king?”

Contentment exalts the head; that which is full of avarice comes no higher than the shoulder.

He who has wrapped up the volume of his avarice needs not to write to anyone, “I am your slave and servant.”

By begging will you be driven from every assembly; drive it from yourself, so that no one may drive you away.

Story 2

Some said to a pious man who was stricken with fever,

“Ask for some medicine from such a one.”

“O friend!” He replied, “It were better to die in bitterness than to endure the affliction of his sour face.”

A wise man does not take medicine from the hand of one whose face has been soured by pride.

Pursue not that which your heart desires, for the pampering of the body destroys the fires of life.

The gluttonous man bears the weight of his corpulence; if he obtains no food, he bears the weight of grief. It is better that the stomach should be empty than the mind.

Story 3

In company with some religious mendicants I entered a date-grove in Basra. One of the party was a glutton. He, having girt his loins, climbed up a tree, and falling headlong, died.

The headsman of the village asked, “Who killed this man?”

“Go softly, friend,” I answered, “he was thrown from the branch by the weight of his stomach.”

Story 4

The Amir of Tartary presented a silken robe to an elderly recluse, who, putting it on, kissed the hand of the messenger, and said, “A thousand praises to the king! Excellent is this splendid robe, but I prefer my own patched habit.”

If you have relinquished the world, sleep upon the bare ground—kiss it not before any one for the sake of a costly carpet.

Story 5

To a poor man who had nothing to eat but bread and onions, a foolish man remarked, “Go, wretched man, and bring some cooked meat from the public feast. Ask boldly and be not afraid of anyone, for he who is modest must go without his share.”

Acting on this advice, the beggar put on his cloak and started off. The servants of the feast tore off his clothes and broke his arm.

Weeping, he cried, “O, my soul! What remedy is there for one’s own actions? One seized by avarice becomes the seeker of his own misfortunes. After this, the bread and onions are good enough for me.”

A barley loaf procured by the exertions of one’s own arm is better than a loaf of flour from the table of the liberal.”

Story 6

A cat who lived in the house of an old woman of humble circumstances wandered to the palace of a noble, whose slaves repulsed the animal with arrows.

Bleeding from many wounds, the cat ran off in terror, thus reflecting, “Since I have escaped from the hands of those slaves, the mice in the ruined hut of the old woman are good enough for me.”

Honey is not worth the price of a sting; better it is to be content with the syrup of dates than expose oneself to that.

God is not pleased with him who is not contented with his lot.

Story 7

A certain child having cut its teeth, the father bent his head in anxious thought and said, “How can I obtain the bread and food of which the child will now have need?”

“Be not alarmed,” his wife replied, “for until our child shall die, He who gave him teeth will send him bread. A rich man provides for his slave; why should not He who created the slave do likewise? You have no trust in God that the purchased slave reposes in his master.”

I have heard that in olden times stones became silver in the hands of saints. Think not that this is contrary to reason—when you have become contented, silver and stones will be as one to you.

Say to the devotee who worships kings that a king is poorer than a dervish.

A dinar satisfies a beggar; Feridun was but half content with the whole of the kingdom of Persia.

A beggar free from care is better off than a troubled king.

The villager and his wife sleep more happily than the king ever did in his palace.

Though one be a king and the other a cotton-carder, when they sleep in death the night of both becomes day.

When you see a rich man filled with pride, go and give thanks, O you who are poor, that you, praise be to God, lack the power to inflict injury upon anyone.”

Story 8

A holy man built a house as high as his own stature. Someone said to him, “I know you are able to erect a better house than this.”

“Enough,” he cried, “what need have I of a lofty roof? This that I have built is high enough for a dwelling which I must leave at death.”

Set not your house in the path of a flood, O slave, for never will it be perfected.

Story 9

A certain king died, and, having no heir, bequeathed the throne to a vulnerable dervish. When the recluse heard the roar the drums of empire, he desired no longer the corner of seclusion. He led the army to left and right, and became so strong and valiant that he filled the hearts of the brave with fear.

After he had slain a number of his enemies some others combined together against him and reduced him to such straits in his fortified town that he sent a message to a pious man, saying,

“Aid me with your prayers, for the sword and arrow do not avail.”

The devotee laughed and said, “Why did he not content himself with half a loaf and his vigils? Did not the wealth worshipping Korah know that the treasure of safety lies in the corner of retirement?”

Discourse

The generous man may attain to perfection although he possesses not gold.

Do you think that if a mean man became as rich as Korah his sordid nature would be changed?

If he who trades in liberality obtains not bread, his nature remains yet rich.

Generosity is the soil, and riches the seed that is sown; give, that the root may not be destitute of a branch.

Exert not yourself in the amassing of wealth, for evil is the smell of stagnant water; strive rather, to be generous, for running water becomes a flood.

The miser who falls from position and wealth, seldom stands a second time upon his feet.

If you are a precious jewel, grieve not, for Time will not pass you by; it is the stone by the wayside that goes unheeded. Shavings of gold that fall from the scissors are searched for with a candle.

Humility

You, O creature of God, were created of the dust; therefore, be humble as the dust. Be not covetous, nor oppressive, nor headstrong. You are from the dust; be not like fire. When the terrible fire raised his headed pride, the dust prostrated himself in humility.

And since the fire was arrogant and the dust was meek, from the former was formed Iblis, and from the latter Adam.

Story 1

A raindrop fell from a spring cloud, and, seeing the wide expanse of the sea, was shamed. “Where the sea is,” it reflected, “where am I? Compared with that, truly I am extinct.”

While thus regarding itself with an eye of contempt, an oyster took it to its bosom, and Fate so shaped its course that eventually the raindrop became a famous royal pearl.

It was exalted, for it was humble. Knocking at the door of extinction, it became existent.

Story 2

A sagacious youth of noble family landed at a seaport of Turkey, and, as he displayed piety and wisdom, his baggage was deposited in a mosque.

One day the priest said to him, “Sweep away the dust and rubbish from the mosque.”

Immediately, the young man went away and no one saw him there again. Thus, did the elder and his followers suppose he did not care to serve.

The next day, a servant of the mosque met him on the road and said, “You did act wrongly in your perverse judgment. Know you not, O conceited youth, that men are dignified by service?”

Sorrowfully, the youth began to weep. “O soul-cherishing and heart-illuminating friend!” he answered. “I saw no dirt or rubbish in that holy place but my own corrupt self. Therefore, I retraced my steps, for a mosque is better cleansed from such.”

Humility is the only ritual for a devotee. If you desire greatness, be humble; no other ladder is there by which to climb.

Story 3

When Bayazid was coming from his bath one morning during the Eid festival, someone unwittingly emptied a tray of ashes from a window upon his head. With his face and turban dirtied, he rubbed his hands in gratitude and said, "I am in truth worthy of the fires of hell. Why should I be angered by a few ashes?"

The great do not regard themselves; look not for godliness in a self-conceited man. Eminence does not consist in outward show and vaunting words, nor dignity in hauteur and pretension.

On the Day of Judgment you will see in Paradise him who sought truth and rejected vain pretension.

He who is headstrong and obdurate falls headlong; if you desire greatness, abandon pride.

Discourse 1

Expect not he who is possessed of worldly vanities to follow the path of religion, nor look for godliness in him who wallows in conceit.

If you desire dignity, do not, like the mean, regard others with contemptuous eyes.

Seek no position more honorable than that of being known to the world as a man of laudable character.

You think him not great who, being of equal rank, is haughty toward you; when you make a similar display before others, do you not appear before them as the arrogant appear before you?

If you are eminent, laugh not, if you are wise, at them that are lowly. Many have fallen from high whose places have been taken by the fallen.

Though you may be free from defect, do not revile me for my blemishes.

One holds the chain of the Ka'ba temple in his hands; another lies drunken in the tavern. If God calls the latter, who can drive him away. If He expels the former, who can bring him back? The one cannot implore the divine help by reason of his good deeds, nor is the door of repentance closed upon the other.

Story 4

A poorly clad doctor of law and divinity sat one day in the front row of seats in a Ghazi's court. The Ghazi gave him a sharp look, whereupon the usher took the man by the arm and said, "Get up; do you not know that the best place is not for such as you? Either take a lower seat, or remain standing, or leave the court altogether. Be not so bold as to occupy the seat of the great. If you are humble, pose not as a lion. Not every one is worthy of the chief seat; honor is proportionate to rank, and rank to merits

He who sits with honor in a place lower than that of which he is worthy falls not into ignominy from eminence.

Fuming with anger, the doctor moved to a lower seat. Two advocates in the court then entered into a spirited discussion, and flew at each other with their tongues like fighting-cocks with beak and claw. They were involved in a complicated knot that neither could unravel. From the last row of seats the tattered doctor roared out with the voice of a lion in the forest:

"It is not the veins of the neck that should stand out in argument," he said, "but the proofs, which should be full of meaning. I, too, have the faculty of argument."

"Speak on," they answered.

With the quill of eloquence that he possessed, the doctor engraved his words upon the minds of his listeners like

inscriptions on a signet; and, drawing his pen through the letters of pretension, he invoked applause from every corner. So hard did he drive the steed of speech that the Ghazi lagged behind like an ass in the mire. Removing his cloak and turban, the latter sent them to the doctor as a token of his respect.

“Alas!” he said, “I did not discern your merit, nor welcome you on your arrival. I regret to see you in the condition with such a stock of knowledge.”

The usher then approached the stranger courteously in order that he might place the Ghazi’s turban upon his head. But the doctor repelled him with his hands and tongue, saying:

“Place not upon my head the fetters of pride, for tomorrow this fifty-yarded turban would turn my head from those in jaded garb. Those who called me ‘lord’ and ‘chief’ would then appear insignificant in my eyes. Is pure water different whether it is contained in a goblet of gold or an earthen ewer? Aman’s head requires brain and intellect, not an imposing turban. Abig head does not make one worthy; it is like the gourd, void of kernel. Be not proud because of your turban and beard, for the one is cotton and the other grass. One should aim at the degree of eminence that is comfortable with one’s merit. With all this intellect, I will not call you man, though a hundred slaves walk behind you. How well spoke the shell when a greedy fool picked it out of the mire: ‘None will buy me for the smallest price; be not so insane as to wrap me up in silk.’ Aman is not better than his fellows by reason of his wealth, for an ass, though covered with a satin cloth, is still an ass.”

In this way the clever doctor washed the rancor from his heart with the water of words. Thus do those who are aggrieved speak harshly. Be not idle when your enemy has fallen. Dash out his brains when you are able, for delay will efface the grudge from your mind.

So overcome was the Ghazi by his vehemence that he exclaimed, "Verily, this day is a hard one." He bit his fingers in amazement, and his eyes stared at the doctor like the two stars near the pole of the lesser bear. As for the latter, he went abruptly out and was never seen there again. They in the court clamored to know whence such an impertinent fellow had come. An official went in search of him, and ran in all directions, asking whether a man of that description had been seen. Someone said, "We know no one in this city so eloquent as Sa'di."

A hundred thousand praises to him who said so; see how sweetly he uttered the bitter truth!

Story 5

A man of smiling countenance sold honey, captivating the hearts of all by his pleasant manner. His customers were as numerous as flies around the sugar cane—if he had sold poison people would have bought it for honey.

A forbidding looking man regarded him with envy, being jealous of the way his business prospered. One day he paraded the town with a tray of honey on his head and a scowl on his face. He wandered about crying his wares, but no one evinced a desire to buy. At nightfall, having earned no money, he went and sat dejectedly in a corner, with a face as bitter as that of a sinner fearful of retribution. The wife of one of his neighbors jokingly remarked, "Honey is bitter to one of sour temper."

It is wrong to eat bread at the table of one whose face is as wrinkled with frowns as the cloth on which it is served.

O sir! Add not to your own burdens, for an evil temper brings disaster in its train.

If you have not a sweet tongue like Sa'di, you have neither gold nor silver.

Story 6

I have heard that a debased drunkard caught a pious man by the collar. The latter received his blows in silence, and in forbearance lifted not his head.

A passerby remarked, “Are you not a man? It is a pity to be patient with this ignorant fellow.”

The pious man replied, “Speak not thus to me. A foolish drunkard collars one by the neck in the thought that he is fighting with a lion; there is not fear that a learned man will contend with an inebriated fool.”

The virtuous follow this rule in life when they suffer oppression they display kindness.

Story 7

A dog bit the leg of a hermit with such violence that venom dropped from its teeth, and the poor man could not sleep all night through pain.

His little daughter chided him, saying, “Have you not teeth as well?”

The unfortunate parent wept and then smilingly replied, “Dear child! Although I was stronger than the dog, I restrained my anger. Should I receive a sword blow on the head, I could not apply my teeth to the legs of a dog.”

One can revenge oneself upon the mean, but a man cannot act like a dog.

Story 8

An eminent man, famous for his many virtues, possessed a slave of evil disposition, who in ugliness of feature surpassed every one in the city. He closely attended his master at meal times, but

he would not have given a drop of water to a dying man. Neither reproof nor the rod influenced him; the house was in a constant state of disorder through him. Sometimes, in his bad temper, would he litter the paths with thorns and rubbish; at other times, throw the chickens down the well. His unhappy temperament was written on his face, and never did he perform a task successfully.

Someone asked his master, “What is there that you like in this slave his agreeable manners, or his skill, or beauty? Surely, it is not worth while to keep such an unruly knave and burden yourself with such an affliction. I will procure for you a slave of handsome appearance and good character. Take this one to the slave-market and sell him. If a piece is offered for him, do not refuse it, for he would be dear at that.”

The good natured man smiled and said, “O friend! Although the character of my slave is certainly bad, my character is improved by him, for when I have learned to tolerate his manner I shall be able to put up with anything at the hands of others. It was not humane to sell him and thus make known his faults. And it is better to endure his affliction myself than to pass him on to others.”

Accept for yourself what you would accept for others. If distressed yourself, involve not your fellows.

Forbearance is at first like poison, but when ingrained in the nature it becomes like honey.

Story 9

No one follows the path of Maruf Karkhi who does not first banish the idea of fame from his head.

A traveler once came to Maruf’s house at the point of death his life was joined to his body by a single hair. He passed the night in wailing and lamentation, sleeping not himself nor permitting

any one else to sleep by reason of his groans. His mind was distressed and his temper was vile; though he died not himself, he killed many by his fretting. Such was his restlessness that every one fled from him. Maruf Karkhi alone remained. He, like a brave man, girt his loins and sat up many nights in attendance at the sick man's bedside. But one night Maruf was attacked by sleep how long can a sleepless man keep up? When the invalid saw him asleep he began to rave, "Cursed be your abominable race." He cried, "What knows this glutton, intoxicated with sleep, of the helpless man who has not closed his eyes?"

Maruf took no notice of these words, but one of the women of the harem, overhearing them, remarked, "Did you not hear what that wailing beggar said? Turn him out, and tell him to take his abuse with him and die elsewhere. Kindness and compassion have their occasions, but to do good to the evil is evil; only a fool plants trees in barren soil. A grateful dog is better than an ungrateful man."

Maruf laughed, "Dear woman," he replied, "Be not offended at his ungracious words. If he raves at me through sickness, I am not angered. When you are strong and well yourself, bear gratefully the burdens of the weak. If you cherish the tree of kindness, you will assuredly eat of the fruits of a good name."

They attain to dignity who rid themselves of arrogance.

He who worships grandeur is the slave of pride; he knows not that greatness consists in meekness.

Story 10

An impudent fellow begged of a pious man, but the latter had no money in his house. Otherwise, would he have showered gold upon him like dust. The infamous rascal, therefore, went out and began to abuse him in the street.

The eye of the fault-finder sees no merits. What regard has he who has acted dishonorably for the honor of another?

Being informed of his words, the pious man smiled and said, "It is well; this man has enumerated only a few of my bad qualities only one out of a hundred that are known to me. The evil that he has supposed in me I know for certain that I possess. Only one year has he been acquainted with me; how can he know the faults of seventy years? None but the Omniscient knows my faults better than myself. Never have I known one who has attributed to me so few defects. If he bear witness against me in the Day of Judgment, I shall have no fear. If he who thinks ill of me seeks to reveal my faults, tell him to come and take the record from me."

Be humble when the veil is torn from off your character. If a pitcher were made of the dust of men, the calumnious would shatter it with stones.

Story 11

A certain man knew something of astronomy and his head, in consequence, was filled with pride. Journeying far, he visited Kushyar, their sage, who turned his eyes from him and would teach him nothing. When the disappointed traveler was on the point of leaving, Kushyar addressed him with these words:

"You imagine that you are full of knowledge. How can a vessel that is full receive more? Rid yourself of your pretensions, so that you may be filled. Being full of vanity, you go empty."

Story 12

Someone heard the barking of a dog in the ruined hut of a pious man. Reflecting upon the strangeness of the fact, he went and searched, but found no traces of a dog. In truth, the devotee alone was in the house.

Not wishing his curiosity to be revealed, the man was departing, when the owner of the house cried out, “Come in, why stand you upon the door? Know you not, O friend, that it was I who barked? When I discerned that humility was acceptable to God, I banished pride and vanity from my heart, and clamored with barks at the door of God, for I saw none more lowly than a dog?”

If you desire to attain to dignity, let humility be your path.

Behold, when the dew lies low upon the earth, the sun raises it to the skies.

Story 13

The slave of a king escaped, and though a search was made, was not discovered. Later, when the fugitive returned, the king in anger, ordered that he should be put to death.

When the executioner brought out his scimitar, like the tongue of a thirsty man, the despondent slave cried out:

“O, God!” I forgive the king the shedding of my blood, for I have ever enjoyed his bounty and shared in his prosperity. Let him not suffer for this deed on the Day of Judgment, to the delight of his enemies.”

When the king heard these words his anger was appeased, and he appointed the slave to be an officer of the standard.

The moral of this story is that soft speech acts like water on the fires of wrath. Do not the soldiers on the battlefield wear armor consisting of a hundred folds of silk?

O friend! Be humble when you deal with a fierce foe, for gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.

Story 14

Many writers alarm the falsity of the idea that Hatim was deaf.

One morning this attention was attracted by the buzzing of a fly, which had become ensnared in a spider's web. He observed, "O you, who are fettered by your own avarice, be patient. Wherever there be a tempting bait, huntsmen and snare are close at hand."

One of his disciples remarked, "Strange it is that you could hear the buzzing of a fly that hardly reached our ears. No longer can they call you deaf."

The Sheik replied, "Deafness is better than the hearing of idle words. Those that sit with me in private are prone to conceal my faults and parade my virtues; thus, do they make me vain. I feign deafness that I may be spared their flattery. When my assumed affliction has become known to them they will speak freely of that which is good and bad in me; then, being grieved at the recital of my faults, I shall abstain from evil.

Go, not down a well by a rope of praise. Be deaf, like Hatim, and listen to the words of them that slander you.

Story 15

A certain man, whose heart was as pure as Sa'di's, fell in love. Although taunted by his enemies in consequence, he showed no anger.

Someone asked him, "Have you no sense of shame? Are you not sensible to these indignities? It is abject to expose oneself to ridicule, and weak to endure patiently the scoffs of enemies. To overlook the errors of the ignorant is wrong, lest it be said that you have neither strength nor courage."

How elegantly did the distracted lover make reply! His words are worthy to be writ in letters of gold:

"Alone is my heart there dwells affection for my loved, thus, it contains no room for malice."

Story 16

I have heard that Luqman was of dark complexion and careless of his appearance. Someone mistook him for a slave, and employed him in digging trenches at Baghdad. Thus, he continued for a year, no one suspecting who he was. When the truth was known the master was afraid, and fell at Luqman's feet, offering excuses.

The sage smiled and said, "Of what use are these apologies? For a year my heart has bled through your oppression. How can I forget that in one hour? But I forgive you, good man, for your gain has caused to me no loss. You have built your house, my wisdom and knowledge have increased. I, too, possess a slave, and frequently set him to arduous labor. Nevermore, when I remember the hardships of my toil, will I afflict him."

He who has not suffered at the hands of the strong grieves not at the frailties of the weak.

If you are sorrowed by those above you, be not harsh with your inferiors.

Gratitude

I cannot give thanks to that Friend, for no expression of thanks is sufficient. Every hair of my body is a gift from Him; how could I thank Him for every hair?

Praise be to the very generous Lord, Who from nonexistence brought His creatures into being. Who can describe His goodness? All praises are encompassed by His glory.

See how from childhood to old age he has endowed you with a splendid robe!

He made you pure. Therefore, be pure; it is unworthy to die impure with sin.

Let not the dust remain upon the mirror, for once grown dull it never again will polish.

When you seek to gain the means of life, rely not upon the strength of your own arms.

O self worshipper! Why look you not to God, Who gives power to your hand?

If by your striving you do good, take not the credit to yourself; know it to be by the grace of God.

You stand not by your own strength—from the Invisible are you sustained each moment.

Story 1

Sorrowed at the conduct of her son, who gave no ear to her advice, a woman brought to him the cradle in which he once slept and said, “O weak in love and forgetful of the past! Were you not a weeping and helpless child, for whom through many nights I sacrificed my sleep? You had not then the strength you have today; you could not ward the flies from your body. A tiny insect gave you pain; today you excel amidst the strong. In the grave will you again be thus, unable to repel the onslaughts of an ant. How, when the grave worms eat the marrow of your brain, will you rekindle the Lamp of Intellect? You are as a blind man: who sees not the way, and knows not that a well lies in-as-path. If you are grateful for your sight, this is good; if not, then surely you are blind. Your tutor gave you not the power of wisdom; by God was it implanted in your nature. Had He withheld this gift from you, truth would have appeared to you as falsehood.”

Discourse 1

For you is set the bright moon in the sky by night, the worldilluminating sun by day.

Like a chamberlain, the heavens spread for you the carpet of Spring.

The wind and snow, the clouds and rain, the roaring thunder and the lightning glittering as a sword—all are His agents, obedient to His word, nourishing the seed that you have planted in the soil.

Let thirst not trouble you; the clouds bear water upon their shoulders.

From the bee He gives you honey, and manna from the wind; fresh dates from the date tree and the date tree from a seed.

For you He fashioned the sun and moon and the Pleiads; they are as lanterns upon the roof of your house.

He brings rose from the thorn and musk from a pod; gold from the mine and green leaves from a withered stick.

With His own hands did He paint your eye and eyebrows—one cannot leave one's bosom friends to strangers.

Omnipotent is He, nourishing the delicate with. His many bounties.

Render thanks each moment from your heart, for gratitude is not the work of the tongue alone.

O God, my heart is blood, my eyes are sore when I behold your indescribable gifts.

Discourse 2

He knows not the value of a day of pleasure who has not seen adversity. Hard is the winter for the beggar—the rich man heeds it not. If you are swift of foot, be thankful when you look upon the lame.

What do they know of the value of water who dwell upon the banks of the Jayhun? Ask it of them who are parched in the heat of the sun. What cares the Arab by the Tigris for the thirsty ones of the desert?

He knows—the value of health who lost his strength in fever. How can the night be long to you reclining in ease upon your bed? Think of him who is racked with fever—the sick man

knows the tediousness of night.

At the sound of the drum the master awakens— what knows he how the watchman passed the night?

Story 2

One night in winter Tughral passed by a Hindu sentinel, who was shivering like the star Canopus in the icy rain. Moved to pity, he said, “You shall have my fur coat. Wait by the terrace and I will send it by the hand of a slave.”

On entering his palace he was met by a beautiful slave, at the sight of whom the poor sentinel passed from his mind. The fur coat slipped through the latter’s ears; through guard’s ill-luck it never reached his shoulders.

The king slept through the night devoid of care, but what said the chief watchman to him in the morning?

“Perhaps you forgot that lucky man’ when your hand was upon the bosom of your slave. By you the night was spent in tranquility and joy; what know you how the night has gone with us?”

They with the caravan bend their heads over the cauldron; what care they for them that toil on foot through the desert sand?

Tarry, O active youths, for old and feeble men are with the caravan. Well have you slept in the litter while the driver held

the nose-string of the camel. What of the desert and mountains? What of the stones and the sand? Ask how it fares with them that lag behind.

Story 3

Athief was arrested by a night watchman and bound by the hands. Thus, crestfallen and afflicted, he remained. During the night he heard someone cry out in want.

“How long will you bewail your lot?” he asked. “Go sleep,

O wretched man! Give thanks to God that the watchman has not tied you by the hands.”

Bemoan not your own misfortune when you see another more wretched than yourself.

Story 4

Someone passed by a pious man whom he took for a scoundrel, and, therefore struck him on the neck. The latter bestowed his robe upon the aggressor, who, becoming ashamed, remarked “I acted wrongly and you have forgiven me. But what occasion is this for a gift?”

“I stood without anger” was the reply, “being thankful that I was not a scoundrel, as you supposed.”

Story 5

One left behind on the road wept, saying, “Who in this desert is more distressed than I?”

A pack donkey answered, “O senseless man! How long will you bewail the tyranny of fate? Go, and give thanks that, though you ride not upon a donkey, you are not a donkey upon which men ride.”

Story 6

A theologian passed by a drunkard who had fallen by the wayside. Filled with pride at his own piety, he disdained even to regard him.

The young man raised his head and said, “Go, old man, and give thanks that enjoy divine favor—misfortune comes from pride. Laugh not when you see one in bonds lest you likewise became bound. After all, tomorrow you may fall, like me, by the roadside.”

If with a mosque the heavens have befriended you, revile not them that worship in the fire temple.

Muslim! Fold your hands and render thanks that He has not bound the idolater’s thread about your waist.

Turn to Him who guides the hand of Fate; blindness it is to look for help elsewhere.

Story 7

At Sumanat I saw an ivory idol. It was set with jewels like the Manat, and nothing more beautiful could have been devised. Caravans from every country brought travelers to its side; the eloquent from every clime made supplication before its lifeless figure.

“Why,” I pondered, “does a living being worship an inanimate object?”

To a fire-worshipper, who was a fellow lodger and friend of mine, I said with gentleness, “O Magi! I am astonished at the doings of this place. All are infatuated with this feeble form; they are imprisoned in the well of superstition. No power has the idol to move its hands or feet; if you throw it down, it cannot rise from its place. Do you not see that its eyes are of amber? It is folly to seek faithfulness from the stony-eyed.”

The Magi was angered at my words. He became my enemy, and informed the idolaters of what I had said. Since to them the crooked road appeared straight, they saw the straight one crooked. Though a man be wise and intelligent, he is a fool in the eyes of the ignorant.

Like a drowning man, I was destitute of help; save in politeness, I saw no remedy. When the fool bears malice toward you, safety lies in gentleness and resignation.

Therefore, I praised aloud the chief of the Magis, saying, “O old man! Expounder of the Zend Avista! I, too, am pleased with the figure of this idol. Its appearance was strange in my sight—of its nature I have no knowledge. Only recently have I arrived in this place, and a stranger can seldom distinguish between the evil and the good. Devotion by imitation is superstition, what reality is there in the form of this idol, for I am foremost among the worshippers?”

The face of the Magi glowed with joy as he said, “Your question is reasonable and your actions are good—whoever seeks for proofs arrives at his destination. Who but this idol can raise his hands to God? If you will, stay here tonight, so that tomorrow the mystery of this may become known to you.” The night was as long as the Day of Judgment; the fire-worshippers around me prayed without ablution. In the morning, they came again into the temple, and I was sick with anger and confused from lack of sleep. Suddenly, the idol raised its arm; and later, when the crowd had left, the Magi looked smilingly toward me saying:

“I know that now you will have no doubts; truth has become manifest, falsehood remains not.”

Seeing his ignorance thus increased, I shed hypocritical tears and cried, “I am sorry for what I said.”

At the sight of my tears the hearts of the infidels were softened; they ran toward me in service and led me by the arms

to the ivory idol, which was seated upon a golden chair set on a throne of teak. I kissed the hand of the little god—curses upon it and upon its worshippers! For a few days I posed as an infidel and discussed the *Zend Avista*, like a Magi. When I became a guardian of the temple, my joy was such that I could scarce control my feelings.

One night, I closed fast the door of the temple and searching, discovered a screen of the jewels and gold that went from the top of the throne to the bottom. Behind this screen the Magi high priest was devoutly engaged with the end of a rope in his hand. Then did it become known to me that when the rope was pulled the idol of necessity raised its arm.

Greatly confused at my presence, the Magi ran away in haste. I followed in hot pursuit and threw him headlong down a well, for I knew that, if he remained alive, he would seek to shed my blood. When the purpose of an evil man is revealed to you, pull him up by the roots, otherwise will he not desire that you should live. The alarm being raised, I fled quickly from the land. When you set fire to a forest of canes, beware of the tigers, if you are wise.

Whenever I supplicate at the shrine of the Knower of Secrets, the Indian puppet comes into my recollection—it throws dust on the pride of mine eyes. I know that I raise my hand, but not by virtue of mine own strength. Men of sanctity stretch not out their hands themselves the Fates invisibly pull the strings.

Resignation

Happiness comes from the favor of God, not from the might of the powerful.

If the heavens bestow no fortune, no valor can obtain it.

The ant suffers not by reason of its weakness; the tiger eats not by virtue of its strength.

Since the hand cannot reach the sky, accept as inevitable the fortune it brings.

If your life is destined to be long, no snake or sword will harm you; when the fated day of death arrives, the antidote will kill you no less than the poison.

Story 1

In Isfahan I had a friend who was warlike, spirited, and shrewd. His hands and dagger were forever stained with blood. The hearts of his enemies were consumed by fear of him; even the tigers stood in awe of him. In battle he was like a sparrow among locusts; in combat, sparrows and men were alike to him. Had he made an attack upon Feridun, he would not have given the latter time to draw his sword. Neither in bravery nor magnanimity had he an equal.

This warrior formed a liking for my company, but as I was not destined to remain in Isfahan, fate transferred me from Iraq to Syria, in which holy land my staying was agreeable. After some time the desire for my home attracted me, so I returned to Iraq.

One night, the memory of the warrior passed through my mind; the salt of his friendship opened the wounds of my gratitude, for I had eaten salt from his hand. To meet him, I went to Isfahan and inquired as to where he lived.

I chanced upon him. He who had been a youth had become old; his form, once erect as an arrow, had become as a bow. Like a hoary mountain, his head was covered with snowy hair. Time had conquered him and twisted the wrist of his bravery. The pride of his strength had gone; the head of weakness was upon his knees.

“O tiger-seizer!” I exclaimed. “What has made you decrepit like an old fox?”

He laughed and said, “Since the day of the battle of Tartary, I have expelled the thoughts of fighting from my head. On the field I saw the earth arrayed with spears like a forest of reeds. I raised like smoke the dust of conflict, but when fortune does not favor, of what avail is fury? I am one who, in combat, could take with a spear a ring from the palm of the hand, but as my star did not befriend me, they encircled me as with a ring. I seized the opportunity of flight, for only a fool strives with fate. How could my helmet and cuirass aid me when my bright star favored me no more? When the key of victory is not in the hand, no one can break open the door of conquest with his arms.

“The enemy were a pack of leopards, and as strong as elephants. The heads of the heroes were encased in iron, as were also the hoofs of the horses. We urged on our Arab steeds like a cloud, and when the two armies encountered each other, you would have said they had struck down the sky to the earth. From the raining arrows that descended like hail the storm of death arose in every corner. Not one of our troops came out of the battle, but his cuirass was soaked with blood. Not that our swords were blunt it was the vengeance of stars of ill fortune. Overpowered, we surrendered, like a fish which, though protected by scales, is caught by the hook in the bait. Since fortune averted her face, our shield was useless against the arrows of fate.”

Story 2

One night a villager could not sleep owing to a pain in his side. A doctor said, “This pain is caused by his having eaten the leaves of the vine. I shall be astonished if he lasts through the night, for the arrows of a Tartar in his breast were better for him than the eating of such indigestible food.”

That night the doctor died. Forty years have since passed and the villager yet lives.

Story 3

The ass of a villager died, so he set the head upon a vine in his garden in order that it might ward off the Evil Eye.

A sage old man passed by and laughingly remarked, “Do you think, O friend, this will effect the purpose? In life, the ass could not protect itself from blows; so, in weakness, did it die.”

What knows the physician of the condition of the sick, when, helpless, he himself will die through illness?

Story 4

A poor man dropped a dinar in the road. He searched much, but at last, despairing, abandoned the attempt.

Someone came along and found the coin by chance.

Good and ill fortunes are predestined. Our daily portion depends not upon our strength and efforts, for those who are strongest and strive the most stand often in the direst need.

Story 5

There was once a rich and prosperous man named Bakhtyar. The wife of one of his neighbors, who was in the other extreme of poverty, upbraided her husband one night when he went to her empty-handed, saying, “No one is so poor and unfortunate as you. Take a lesson from your neighbors, who are wealthy. Why are you not fortunate like them?”

The man replied, “I am incapable of anything; quarrel not with fate. I have not been endowed with the power to make myself a Bakhtyar.”

Story 6

A dervish remarked to his wife, who was of ill-favored countenance, “Since fate has made you ugly, do not encrust your face with cosmetics.”

Who can attain good fortune by force! Who, with collyrium, can make the blind to see?

Not one among the philosophers of Greece or Rome could produce honey from the thorn. Wild beasts cannot become men; education is wasted upon them. A mirror can be freest from stain, but it cannot be made from stone. Roses do not blossom on the branches of the willow; hot baths never yet made an Ethiopian white. Since one cannot escape the arrows of fate, resignation is the only shield.

Story 7

A vulture said to a kite, “No one can see so far as I.”

“Possibly,” replied the kite, “but what can you see across the desert?”

Gazing down, the vulture exclaimed, “Yonder do I see a grain or wheat.”

Thereupon, they flew to the ground. When the vulture settled upon the wheat he became caught in a trap. He had not known that, through his eating the grain, fate would ensnare him by the neck.

Not every oyster contains a pearl, not every archer hits the target.

“Of what use,” the kite inquired, “Was it to see the grain when you could not discern the trap of your enemy?”

“Caution,” said the captive vulture, “avails not with destiny.”

When the decrees of past eternity are brought to action, the keenest eyes are rendered blind by fate.

In the ocean, where no shoreline appears, the swimmer strives in vain.

Story 8

A young camel said to its mother, “After you have made a journey, rest awhile.”

“If the bridle were in my hands,” was her reply, “no one would ever see me in the string of camels with a load upon my back.”

Fate is the helmsman of the ship of life, no matter though the owner rend his clothes.

O, Sa’di! Look not for aid from any man. God is the giver, and He alone. If you worship Him, the door of His mercy suffices you; if He drives you away, no one will ease you. If He made you to wear a crown, raise your head; if not, bow your head in despair.

Story 9

Who knows that you are not pledged to God even though you stand in prayer without ablution?

That prayer is the key to hell which you perform only before the eyes of men.

If the high-road of your life lead to anything but God, your prayer mat will be thrown into the fire.

He whose heart is good and makes no outward show of piety is better than one of outward sanctity whose heart is false.

A night-prowling robber is better than a sinner in the tunic of a saint.

Expect not wages from Omar O son, when you work in the house of Zaid.

If in private I: am bad and mean, of what avail is it to pose before the World with honor? How much will the bag of hypocrisy weigh in the Scales of Justice?

The outside of the hypocrite's coat is neater than the lining,
for the one is seen and the other is hidden.

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Excerpts from Mathnawi, Book I
MOULANA JALALUDDIN RUMI (RAA)

*IN THE NAME OF GOD THE COMPASSIONATE, THE
MERCIFUL.*

This is the Book of the Mathnawi, which is the roots of the roots of the roots of the (Mohammedan) Religion in respect of (its) unveiling the mysteries of attainment (to the truth) and of certainty; and which is the greatest science of God and the clearest (religious) way of God and the most manifest evidence of God.

The likeness of the light thereof is as a niche in which is a candle shining with a radiance brighter than the dawn. It is the heart's Paradise, having fountains and boughs, one of them a fountain called Salsabil amongst the travellers on this path; and in the view of the possessors of (mystical) stations and (Divine) graces, it (the Mathnawi) is best as a station and most excellent as a (spiritual) resting-place. Therein the righteous eat and drink, and thereby the (spiritually) free are gladdened and rejoiced, and like the Nile of Egypt it is a (pleasant) drink to them that endure patiently, but a grief to the people of Pharaoh and unbelievers, even as God Hath said. He lets many be misled thereby and He lets many be guided thereby. It is the cure for (sick) breast, and the purge of sorrows, and the expounder of the Qur'an, and

the (source of) abundance of (Divine) gifts, and the (means of) cleansing(Sordid)dispositions: (written) by the hands of noble righteous scribes who forbid (with the words) None shall touch it except the purified. Falsehood doth not approach it either from before or behind, since God observes it and watches over it, and He is the best guardian and He is the most merciful of them that show mercy. And it hath other titles of honour. which God hath bestowed upon it.

We have confined ourselves to this little (that has been mentioned), for the little is an index to the much, and a mouthful (of water) is an index to the (quality of the) pool, and a handful a great threshing-floor (granary).

Saith the feeble slave who hath need of the mercy of God most High, Mohammad son of Mohammad son of al-Husayn of (the city of) Balkh --may God accept (this offering) from him: "I have exerted myself to give length to the poem in Rhymed Couplets, which comprises strange tales and rare sayings and excellent discourses and precious indications and the (religious) path of the ascetics and the (spiritual) garden of the devotees -- (all this being) brief in expression but manifold in meaning-- at the request of my master and stay and support, (who holds) the place of the spirit in my body, and(who is) the treasure of my to-day and my to-morrow, namely, the Shaykti, the exemplar for them that know God and the leader of them that possess right guidance and certainty, the helper of humankind, the trusted keeper of (their) hearts and consciences, the charge desposited by God amongst His creatures, and His choice amongst His creation, and (the object of) His injunction to His Prophet and (of) His secrets (imparted) to His chosen one, the key of the treasuries of the empyrean, the trustee, of the riches stored in the earth, the father of virtues, the Sword (Husam) of the Truth and Religion. Hasan son of Muhammad son of al-Hasan, generally known as

Ibn Akhi Turk, the Abu Yazid of the time, the Junayd of the age, the entirely veracious son of an entirely veracious sire and grandsire -- may God be well-pleased with him and with them -- a native of Urmiya, tracing his descent to the Shaykh who is honoured for having said, 'In the evening I was a kurd, and in the morning, I was an Arab.' May God sanctify his soul and the souls of his successors! How goodly is the ancestor and how goodly the successor!

His is a lineage upon which the sun hath cast its mantle, and a renown of ancestry before which the stars have dimmed their beams. Their (his family's) courtyard hath ever been fortune's cynosure (Qibla) whither turn the sons of the (spiritual) rulers, and Hope's Ka'ba which is circumambulated by deputations of the suitors for bounty; and may it never cease to be thus, so long as a star rises and an orient sun appears above the horizon, to the end that it may be a fastness for the godly, spiritual, heavenly, super-celestial, illuminated ones who possess (mystical) insight, the silent ones who behold, the absent ones who are present, the kings beneath threadbare garments, the nobles of the nations, the owners of the excellences, the luminaries who display the (Divine) evidences, Amen, O Lord of all created beings! And this is a prayer that will not be rejected, for it is a prayer that will not be rejected, for it is a prayer that includes (in its benefits) all classes of the creation . Glory be to God, the Lord of all created beings, and God bless the best of his creatures, Mohammed, and his kin, the noble the pure!"

In The Name of God The Merciful, the Compassionate

Listen to the reed how it tells tale. complaining of separations.--

Saying, "Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament bath caused man and woman to-moan.

I want a bosom torn by severance, that I may unfold (to such a one) the pain of love-desire.

Every one who is left far from his source wishes back the time when he was united with it.

In every company I 'uttered my wailful notes, I consorted with the unhappy and with them that rejoice.

Every one became my friend from his own opinion; none sought out my secrets from within me.

My secret is not far from my plant, but ear and eye lack the light (whereby it should be apprehended).

Body is not veiled from soul, nor soul from body, yet none is permitted to see the soul.

This noise of the reed is fire, it is not wind: whoso bath not this fire, may he be naught!

'Tis the fire of Love that is in the *reed*, 'tis the fervour of Love that is in the wine.

The reed is the comrade of every one who has been parted from a friend: its strains pierced our hearts.

Who ever saw a poison and antidote like the reed? who ever saw a sympathiser and a longing lover like the reed?

The reed tells of the Way full of blood and recounts stories of the passion of Majnun.

Only to the senseless is this sense confided: the tongue hath no customer save the ear.

In our woe the days (of life) have become untimely; our days travel hand in hand with burning griefs.

If our days are gone, let them go! -- 'tis no matter. Do Thou main, for none is holy as Thou art!

Whoever is not a fish becomes sated with His water;
whoever is without daily bread finds the day long.

None that is raw understands the state of the ripe: therefore
my words must be brief. Farewell.

O son, burst thy chains and be free! How long wilt thou be a
bondsman to silver and gold?

If thou pour the sea into a pitcher, how much will it hold?
One day's store.

The pitcher, the eye of the covetous, never becomes full:
the oyster-shell is not filled with pearls until it is contented.

He (alone) whose garment is rent by a (mighty) love is
purged of covetousness and all defect.

Hail, O love the bringest us good gain -- thou that art the
physician of all our ills.

The remedy of our pride and vainglory, our Plato and our
Galen!

Through Love the earthy body soared to the skies: the
mountain began to dance and became nimble.

Love inspired Mount Sinai, O lover, (so that) Sinai (was
made) drunken and Moses fell in a swoon.

Were I joined to the lip of one in accord with me, I too, like
the reed, would tell all that may be told;

(But) whoever is parted from one who speaks his language
becomes dumb, though he have a hundred songs.

When the rose is gone and the garden faded, thou wilt hear
no more the nightingale's story.

The Beloved is all and the lover (but) a veil; the Beloved is
living and the lover a dead thing.

When Love hath no care for him, he is left as a bird without wings. Alas for him then!

How should I have consciousness (of aught) before or behind when the light of my Beloved is not before me and behind?

Love wills that this Word should be shown forth: if the mirror does not reflect, how is that?

Dost thou know why the mirror (of thy soul) reflects nothing? Because the rust is not cleared from its face.

How the Caliph accepted the gift and bestowed largesse, notwithstanding that he was entirely without need of the gift (the water) and the jug.

When the Caliph saw (the gift) and heard his story, he filled the jug with gold and added (other presents).

He delivered the Arab from penury, he bestowed donations and special robes of honour.

Saying, “ Give into his hand this jug full of gold. When he returns (home), take him to the Tigris.

He has come (hither) by way of the desert and by travelling (on land): it will be nearer for him (to return) by water.”

When he (the Arab) embarked in the boat and beheld the Tigris, he was prostrating himself in shame and bowing (his head), Saying, “Oh, wonderful is the kindness of that bounteous King, and ‘tis (even) more wonderful that he took that water.

How did that Sea of munificence so quickly accept from me such spurious coin as this?” Know, O son, that everything in the universe is a jug which is (filled) to the brim with wisdom and beauty.

It (everything in the universe) is a drop of the Tigris of His beauty, which (beauty) because of its fullness is not contained

under the skin (that should enclose it). 'Twas a hidden treasure: because of its fullness it burst forth and made the earth more shining than the heavens.

'Twas a hidden treasure: because of its fullness it surged up and made the earth (like) a sultan robed in satin. And if he (the Arab) had seen a branch of the Divine Tigris, he would have destroyed that jug, destroyed it.

They that saw it are always beside themselves: like one beside himself, they hurled a stone at the jug (of their self-existence). O thou who from jealousy hast hurled a stone at the jug, while the jug has (only) become more perfect through being shattered, The jar is shattered, (but) the water is not spilled from it: from this shattering have arisen a hundred soundnesses.

Every piece of the jar is in dance and ecstasy, (though) to the partial (discursive) reason this seems absurd.

In this state (of ecstasy) neither the jug is manifest nor the water. Consider well, and God knoweth best what is right.

When you knock at the door of Reality, it will be opened to you: beat the pinion of thought, in order that you may be made a king-falcon.

The pinion of your thought has become mud-stained and heavy because you are a clay-eater: clay has become to you as bread.

Bread and meat are (originally) clay: eat little thereof, that you may not remain in the earth, like clay.

When you become hungry, you become a dog: you become fierce and ill-tempered and ill-natured.

When you have eaten your fill, you have become a carcass: you have become devoid of understanding and without feet (inert), like a wall.

So at one time you are a carcass and at another time a dog: how will you run well in the road of the lions (follow the saints)?

Know that your only means of hunting is the dog (the animal soul): throw bones to the dog but seldom.

Because when the dog has eaten its fill, it becomes rebellious: how should it run to the goodly chase and hunt?

Want of food was leading the Arab to that (exalted) court, and (there) he found his fortune.

We have related in the (foregoing) story the kindness shown by the King to that needy one who had no refuge.

Whatsoever the man, in love (with God) speaks, the scent of Love is springing from his mouth into the abode of Love.

If he speak (formal) theology, it all turns to (spiritual) poverty: the scent of poverty comes from that man of sweet and beguiling discourse.

And if he speak infidelity, it has the scent of (the true) religion, and if he speak doubtfully, his doubt turns to certainty.

The perverse froth that has risen from a sea of sincerity that turbid (froth) has been set out by the pure source.

Know that its froth is pure and worthy: know that it is like revilement from the lips of the beloved, Whose unsought reproaches have become sweet (to the lover) for the sake of her cheek which he desires.

If he (the lover of God) speak falsehood, it seems (like) the truth. O (fine) falsehood that would adorn (even) the truth!

If you cook (a confection) of sugar in the form of a loaf of bread, it will taste of candy, not of bread, while you are sucking it.

If a true believer find a golden idol, how should he leave it (there) for the sake of a worshipper ?

Nay, he will take it and cast it into the fire: he will break (destroy) its borrowed (unreal) form, In order that the idol-shape may not remain on the gold, because Form hinders and waylays (those who seek Reality).

The essence of its gold is the essence of Lordship (Divinity): the idol-stamp on the sterling gold is borrowed (unreal).

Do not burn a blanket on account of a flea, and do not let the day go (to waste) on account of every gnat's headache.

You are an idol-worshipper when you remain in (bondage to) forms: leave its (the idol's) form and look at the reality.

If you are a man (bound) for the Pilgrimage, seek a pilgrim (as your) companion, whether he be a Hindoo or a Turcoman or an Arab.

Do not look at his figure and colour, look at his purpose and intention.

If he is black, (yet) he is in accord with you: call him white, for (spiritually) his complexion is the same as yours.

This story has been told up and down (confusedly), like the doings of lovers, without foot (end) or head (beginning).

It hath no head, inasmuch as it existed before eternity; it hath no foot: it has (always) been akin to everlastingness.

Nay, it is like water: every drop thereof is both head and foot, and at the same time without both.

This is not a story, mark you! God forbid! This is the ready money (presentation, here and now) of my state and yours. Consider (it) well, Because the Sufi is grand and glorious (in his spiritual vision): whatever is past is not remembered (does not enter his mind).

We are both the Arab and the jug and the King; we are all: he that has been turned away from it (the Truth) shall be turned away.

Know that the husband is Reason, and the wife is greed and cupidity: these twain are dark and deniers (of Reason); Reason is the (bright) candle.

Now hear the origin of their denial, whence it arose: (it arose) from the fact that the Whole hath various parts.

The parts of the Whole are not parts in relation to the Whole (they are) not like the scent of the rose, which is a part of the rose.

The beauty of (all) green herbs is a part of the Rose's beauty, the coo of the turtle-dove is a part of that Nightingale.

If I become occupied with a difficulty (difficult question) and the answer (explanation), how shall I be able to give water to the thirsty?

If you are wholly perplexed and in straits, have patience: patience is the key to joy.

Abstain from (distracting) thoughts, abstain: thought is (like) the lion and the wild ass, and (men's) hearts are the thickets (which they haunt).

Acts of abstinence are superior to medicines, because scratching is an increase (aggravation) of the itch.

Assuredly abstinence is the first principle of medicine: abstain, and behold the strength of the spirit.

Receive these words, like the (open) ear, that I may make for you an earring of gold: (Then) you will become a ring in the ear of (devoted to) the Moon that works in gold, you will ascend to the moon and the Pleiades.

First, hear (and learn) that the diverse created beings are spiritually different, from ya(Y) to alif (A).

Amongst the various letters there is a confusion and uncertainty, though from one point of view they are (all) one from head (beginning) to foot (end).

From one aspect they are opposites, and from one aspect they are unified: from one aspect they are jest, and from one aspect they are earnest.

Therefore the Resurrection is the day of the supreme inspection: inspection is desired by him (only) who is glorious and splendid.

Whoever is like a fraudulent Hindoo, for him the day of inspection is the time of exposure.

Inasmuch as he hath not a face like the sun, he desires nothing but night (to cover him) like a veil.

Since his thorn hath not a single rose-leaf, Spring is the enemy of his conscience, While to one that is roses and lilies from head to foot Spring is (welcome as) a pair of bright eyes.

The unspiritual thorn wishes for autumn, for autumn, in order that it may jostle with (contend as a rival with) the rose-garden, And that it (autumn) may hide the beauty of that (the rose) and the shame of this (the thorn), so that you may not see the colour of that and the colour of this.

Therefore autumn is its (the thorn's) Spring and life, (for then) the (worthless) stone and the pure ruby appear one.

The Gardener knows that (difference) even in autumn, but the One's sight is better than the world's sight.

Truly that One Person is (essentially) the (whole) world: he is unaware of evil (does not know evil as such). The stars, every one, are all part of the Moon.

Therefore every fair form and shape (in the world) is crying,
“Good news! good news! Lo, here comes the Spring.”

So long as the blossom is shining like a coat of mail, how
should the fruits display their knobs?

When the blossom is shed, the fruit comes to a head: when
the body is shattered, the spirit lifts up its head.

The fruit is the reality, the blossom is its form: the
blossom is the good news, the fruit is the bounty (given as a
reward) for it.

When the blossom was shed, the fruit became visible: when
that diminished this began to increase.

How should bread give strength until it is broken ? How
should uncrushed clusters (of grapes) yield wine ?

Unless myrobalan is pounded up with medicines, how
should the medicines by themselves become health-increasing
(act as tonics)?

***Concerning the qualities of the Pir (Spiritual Guide) and
(the duty of) obedience to him.***

O Splendour of the Truth, Husamu'ddin, take one or two sheets
of paper and add (them to the poem) in description of the Pir.

Although thy slender body hath no strength, yet without the
sun (of thy spirit) we have no light.

Although thou hast become the lighted wick and the glass
(lamp), yet thou art the heart's leader (the Spiritual Guide): thou
art the end of the thread (which serves as a clue).

Inasmuch as the end of the thread is in thy hand and will,
the beads (of spiritual knowledge) on the heart's necklace are
(derived) from thy bounty.

Write down what appertains to the Pir (Guide) who knows the Way:- Choose the Pir and regard him as the essence of the Way.

The Pir is (like) summer, and (other) people are (like) the autumn month; (other) people are like night, and the Pir is the moon.

I have bestowed on (my) young Fortune (Husamu'ddin) the name of Pir (old), because he is (made) old by the Truth, not (made) old by Time.

So old is he that he hath no beginning: there is no rival to such a unique Pearl.

Verily, old wine grows more potent; verily, old gold is more highly prized.

Choose a Pir, for without a Pir this journey is exceeding full of woe and affright and danger.

Without an ascort you are bewildered (even) on a road you have travelled many times (before):

Do not, then travel alone on a Way that you have not seen at all, do not turn your head away from the Guide.

Fool, if his shadow (protection) be not over you, then the cry of the ghoull will keep you (wandering about) with your head in a whirl.

The ghoull will (entice you) from the Way (and) cast you into destruction: there have been in this Way many craftier than you (who have perished miserably).

Hear (learn) from the Qur'an the perdition of the wayfarers, what the evil-souled Iblis did unto them:

He carried them far - a journey of hundreds of thousands of years - from the Highway, and made them backsliders and naked (devoid of good works).

Behold their bones and their hair! Take warning, and drive not your ass towards them!

Seize the neck of your ass (the flesh) and lead him towards the Way, towards the good keepers and knowers of the Way.

Beware! do not let your ass go, and do not remove your hand from him, because his love is for the place where green herbs are plentiful.

If you carelessly leave him free for one moment, he will go (many) leagues in the direction of the herbage.

The ass is an enemy to the Way, (he is) madly in love with fodder: oh, many is the attendant on him that he has brought to ruin!

If you know not the Way, whatsoever the ass desires, do the contrary thereof: that, surely, will be the right Way.

(The Prophet said), “Consult them (women), and then oppose (them in what they advise): he that disobeys them not will be ruined.”

Be not a friend to (sensual) passion and desire, since it leads you astray from the Way of God.

Nothing in the world will break (mortify) this passion like the shadow (protection) of fellow - travellers.

How the prophet, on whom be peace, enjoined ‘Ali-may God make his person honoured -saying, “When every one seeks to draw nigh to God by means of some kind of devotional act, do thou seek the favour of God by associating with His wise and chosen servant, that thou mayst be the first of all to arrive (to gain access to Him).”

The Prophet said to ‘Ali, “O ‘Ali, thou art the Lion of God, thou art a courageous knight, But do not even rely upon thy lion-heartedness; come into the shade of the palm -tree of hope.

Come into the shade (protection) of the Sage whom no conveyer can carry off from the Way.

His shadow on the earth is like Mount Oaf, his spirit is (like) the Simurgh taht circles (soars) exceedingly high.

If I should tell of his qualities until the Resurrection, do not seek (expect) any conclusion and end to them.

The (Divine) Sun has veiled Himself in Man: apprehend (this mystery), and God knows best what is right.

O ‘ Ali, above all devotional acts in the Way (God) do thou choose the shadow (protection) of the servant of God.

Every one took refuge is some act of devotion and discovered for themselves some means of deliverance.

Go thou, take refuge in the shadow of the Sage, that thou mayst escape from the Enemy that opposes (thee) in secret.

Of all acts of devotion this is the best for thee: (thereby) thou wilt gain precedence over every one that has outstripped (the rest).”

When the Pir has accepted thee, take heed, surrender thyself (to him): go like Moses, under the authority of Khizr.

Bear patiently whatever is done by a Khizr who is without, hypocrisy, in order that Khizr may not say, “ Begone, this is (our) parting.”

Though he stave in the boat, do not speak a word; though he kill a child, do not tear thy hair.

God has declared that his (the Pir’s) hand is as His own, since He gave out (the words) the Hand of God is above their hands.

The Hand of God causes him (the child) to die and (then) brings him to life. What of life? He makes him a spirit everlasting.

If any one, by rare exception, traversed this Way alone (without a Pir), he arrived (at his goal) through the help (and favour) of the hearts of the Pirs.

The hand of the Pir is not withdrawn from the absent (those who are not under his authority): his hand is naught but the grasp of God.

Inasmuch as they give such a robe of honour to the absent, (what must they give their disciples?): undoubtedly the present are better than the absent.

Since they are bestowing (spiritual) food on the absent, see what bounties they must lay before one who is present.

Where is one that girds himself (for service) before them to (i.e. how far superior is he to) one that is outside the door ?

When thou hast chosen thy Pir, be not faint-hearted, be not weak as water and crumbly as earth.

If thou art enraged by every blow, then how wilt thou become a (clear) mirror without being polished?

*How the man of Qazwin was tattooing the figure of a lion in blue on his shoulders,
and (then) repenting because of the (pain of the) needle-pricks.*

Hear from the narrator this story about the way and custom of the people of Qazwin.

They tattoo themselves in blue with the point of the needle on body and hand and shoulders, so as to suffer no injury.

A certain man of Qazwin went to a barber and said, “Tattoo me (and) do it charmingly (artistically).”

“O Valiant sir,” said he, “what figure shall I tattoo ?” He answered , “Prick in the figure of a furious lion.

Leo is my ascendant: tattoo the form of a lion. Exert yourself, prick in plenty of the blue dye.”

“On what place,” he asked, “shall I tattoo you ?” Said he, “Prick the design of the beauty on my shoulder-blade.”

As soon as he began to stick in the needle, the pain of it settled in the shoulder, And the hero fell a -moaning- “O illustrious one, you have killed me: what figure are you tattooing ?”

“Why, “ said he, “you bade me do a lion.” “What limb (of the lion),” asked the other, “did you begin with?”

“I have begun at the tail,” said he. “O my dear friend”, he cried, “leave out the tail! My breath is stopped by the lion’s tail and rump: his rump has tightly closed (choked) my windpipe.

Let the lion be without a tail, O lion-maker, for my heart is faint from the blows of the prong (the tattooer’s needle).”

That person commenced to prick in (the blue) on another part (of the man’s shoulder) without fear, without favour, without mercy.

He yelled - “Which of his members is this ?” “This is his ear, my good man,” the barber replied.

“O Doctor,” said he, “let him have no ears: omit the ears and cut the frock short.”

The barber began to insert (his needle) in another part: once more the man of Qazwin set out to wail.

Saying, “What is the member (you are pricking in) now on this third spot ?” He replied, “This is the lion’s belly, my dear sir.”

“Let the lion have no belly,” said he: “what need of a belly for the picture that is (already) sated ?”

The barber became distraught and remained in great bewilderment: he stood for a long time his fingers in his teeth;

Then the master flung the needle to the ground and said,
“Has this happened to any one in the world ?

Who (ever) saw a lion without tail and head and belly? God himself did not create a lion like this.”

O brother, endure the pain of the lancet, that you may escape from the poison of your miscreant self (nafs),

For sky and sun and moon bow in worship to the people who have escape from selfexistence.

Any one in whose body the miscreant self has died, sun and cloud obey his command.

Since his heart has learned to light the candle (of spiritual knowledge and love), the sun cannot burn him.

God hath made mention of the rising sun as turning aside like that from their cave.

The thorn becomes entirely beautiful, like the rose, in the sight of the particular that is going towards the Universal.

What is (the meaning of) to exalt and glorify God ? To deem yourself despicable and (worthless) as dust.

What is (the meaning of) to learn the knowledge of God’s unity? To consume yourself in the presence of the One.

If you wish to shine like day, burn up your night-like self-existence.

Melt away your existence, as copper (melts away) in the elixir, in the being of Him who fosters (and sustains) existence.

You have fastened both your hands tight on (are determined not to give up) “I” and “we”: all this (spiritual) ruin is caused by dualism.

How the wolf and fox went to hunt in attendance on the lion.

A lion, wolf, and fox had gone to hunt in the mountains in quest (of food), That by supporting each other they might tie fast the bonds and fetters (of captivity) on the hunted animals.

And all three together might seize much and great quarry in that deep wilderness.

Although the fierce lion was ashamed of them (the wolf and fox), yet he did them honour and gave them his company on the way.

To a king like this the (escort of) soldiers are an annoyance, but he accompanied them : a united party is a mercy (from God).

A moon like this is disgraced by the stars: it is amongst the stars for generosity's sake.

The (Divine) command, Consult them, came to the Prophet, though no counsel is to be compared with his own.

In the scales barley has become the companion of gold, (but that is) not because barley has become a substance like gold.

The spirit has now become the body's fellow-traveller: the dog has become for a time the guardian of the palace-gate.

When this party (the wolf and fox) went to the mountains at the stirrup (side) of the lion majestic and grand, They found a mountain-ox and goat and fat hare, and their business went forward (prosperously).

Whoever is one the heels of him that is a lion in combat, roast-meat does not fail him by day or by night.

When they brought them (the animals which they had caught) from the mountains to the jungle, killed and wounded and dragging along in (streams of) blood, The wolf and fox hoped that a division (of the prey) would be made according to the justice of emperors.

The reflexion of the hope of both of them struck the lion: the lion knew (what was) the ground for those hopes.

Any one that is the lion and prince of (spiritual) mysteries, he will know all that the conscience thinks.

Beware! Guard thyself, O heart disposed to thinking, from any evil thought in his presence.

He knows and keeps riding on silently: he smiles in thy face in order to mask (his feelings).

When the lion perceived their bad ideas, he did not declare (his knowledge), and paid (courteous) regard (to them) at the time, But he said to himself, "I will show you what (chastisement) ye deserve, O beggarly villains!

Was my judgement not enough for you? Is this your opinion of my bounty, O ye whose understanding and judgement are (derived) from my judgement and from my world-adorning gifts?

What else (but good) should the picture think of the painter, since he bestowed thought and knowledge upon it?

Had ye such a vile opinion of me, O ye who are a scandal to the world?

I will strike off the hypocritical heads of them that think ill of God.

I will deliver the Sphere (of Time) from your disgrace, so that this tale shall remain in the world (as a warning).

While thus meditating, the lion continued to smile visibly: do not trust the smiles of the lion!

Worldly wealth is (like) the smiles of God: it has made us drunken and vainglorious and threadbare (deprived of the means of salvation).

Poverty and distress are better for thee, O lord, for (then) that smile will remove its lure.

How the lion made trial of the wolf and said, "Come forward, O wolf, and divide the prey amongst us."

The lion said, "O wolf, divide this (prey): O old wolf, make justice new (give it new life by thy example).

Be my deputy in the office of distributor, that it may be seen of what substance thou art."

"O King," said he, "the wild ox is thy share: he is big, and thou art big and strong and active.

The goat is mine, for the goat is middle and intermediate; do thou, O fox, receive the hare, and no mistake!"

The lion said, "O wolf, how hast thou spoken? Say! When I am here, dost thou speak of 'I' and 'thou' ?

Truly, what a cur the wolf must be, that he regarded himself in the presence of a lion like me who am peerless and unrivalled!"

(Then) he said, "Come forward, O thou self-esteeming ass!" He approached him, the lion seized him with his claws and rent him.

Inasmuch as he (the lion) did not see in him the kernel of right conduct, he tore the skin off his head as a punishment.

He said, "Since the sight of me did not transport thee out of thyself, a spirit like this (thine) must needs die miserably.

Since thou wert not passing away (from thyself) in my presence, 'twas an act of grace to smite thy neck (behead thee)."

Everything is perishing except His face: unless thou art in His face (essence), do not seek to exist.

When any one has passed away (from himself) in my face (essence), (the words) everything is perishing are not applicable (to him).

Because he is in except, he has transcended not (nonentity): whosoever is in except has not passed away (perished).

Whosoever is uttering 'I' and 'we' at the door (of the Divine Court), he is turned back from the door and is continuing in not (nonentity).

The story of the person who knocked at a friend's door: his friend from within asked who he was: he said, "T is I," and the friend answered, "Since thou art thou, I will not open the door: I know not any friend that is T".

A certain man came and knocked at a friend's door: his friend asked him, "Who art thou, O trusty one?"

He answered, "I," The friend said, "Begone, tis not the time (for thee to come in): at a table like this there is no place for the raw."

Save the fire of absence and separation, who (what) will cook the raw one? Who (what) will deliver him from hypocrisy?

The wretched man went away, and for a year in travel (and) in separation from his friend he was burned with sparks of fire.

That burned one was cooked: then he returned and again paced to and fro beside the house of his comrade.

He knocked at the door with a hundred fears and respects, lest any disrespectful word, might escape from his lips.

His friend called to him, "Who is at the door?" He answered, "Tis thou art at the door, O charmer of hearts."

"Now," said the friend, "since thou art I, come in, O myself: there is not room in the house for two I's.

The double end of thread is not for the needle: inasmuch as thou art single, come into this needle.”

‘Tis the thread that is connected with the needle: the eye of the needle is not suitable for the camel.

How should the existence (body) of the camel be fined down save by the shears of ascetic exercises and works ?

For that, O reader, the hand (power) of God is necessary, for it is the Be, and it was (bringer into existence) of every (seemingly) impossible thing.

By His hand every impossible thing is made possible; by fear of Him every unruly one is made quiet.

What of the man blind from birth and the leper ? Even the dead is made living by the spell of the Almighty, And that non-existence which is more dead than the dead non existence is compelled (to obey) whom He calls it into being.

Recite (the text), Every day He is (engaged) in some affair: do not deem Him idle and inactive.

His least act, every day, is that He dispatches three armies: One army from the loins (of the fathers) towards the mothers, in order that the plant may grow in the womb; One army from the wombs to the Earth, that the world may be filled with male and female; One army from the Earth (to what is) beyond death, that every one may behold the beauty of (good) works.

This discourse hath no end. Come, hasten (back) to those two sincere and devoted friends.

Description of Unification

His friend said to him, “Come in, O thou who art entirely myself, not different like the rose and thorn in the garden.

The thread has become single. Do not now fall into error if thou seest that the letters K and N are two.

K and N are pulling like a noose, that they may draw nonexistence into great affairs.

Hence the noose must be double in (the world of) forms, though those two (letters) are single in effect.

Whether the feet be two or four, they traverse one road, like the double shears (which) makes (but) one cut.

Look at those two fellow-washermen: there is apparently a difference between that one and this:

The one has thrown the cotton garments into the water, while the other partner is drying them.

Again the former makes the dry clothes wet: tis as though he were spitefully thwarting his opposite;

Yet these two opposites, who seem to be at strife, are of one mind and acting together in agreement.

Every prophet and every saint hath a way (of religious doctrine and practice) but it leads to God: all (the ways) are (really) one. When slumber (heedlessness) over took the concentration (attention) of the listener, the water carried the millstones away.

The course of this water is above the mill: its going into the mill is for your sakes.

Since ye had no further need of the mill, he (the prophet or saint) made the water flow back into the original stream.

The rational spirit (the Logos) is (coming) to the mouth for the purpose of teaching: else (it would not come, for) truly that speech hath a channel apart:

It is moving without noise and without repetitions (of sound) to the rose-gardens beneath which are the rivers.

O God, do Thou reveal to the soul that place where speech is growing without letters, That the pure soul may make of its head a foot (fly headlong) towards the farstretching expanse of non-existence An expanse very ample and spacious: and from it this fantasy and being (of ours) is fed.

(The realm of) fantasies is narrower than non-existence (potential existence): on that account fantasy is the cause of pain.

(The realm of actual) existence again, was (ever) narrower than (the realm of) fantasy : hence in it moons become like the moon that has waned.

Again, the existence of the world of sense and colour is narrow (than this) for 'tis a narrow prison.

The cause of narrowness is composition (compoundness) and number (plurality): the senses are moving towards composition.

Known that the world of Unification lies beyond sense: if you want Unity, march in that direction.

The (Divine) Command KuN (Be) was a single act, and the (two letters) N and K occurred (only) in speech, while the (inward) meaning was pure (uncompounded). This discourse hath on end. Return, that (we may see) what happened to the wolf in combat (with the lion).

How the lion punished the wolf (who had shown disrespect in dividing the prey).

That haughty one tore off the head of the wolf, in order that two-headedness (dualism) and distinction might not remain (in being).

'Tis (the meaning of) So we took vengeance on them, O old wolf, inasmuch as thou wert not dead in the presence of the Amir.

After that, the lion turned to the fox and said, "Divide it (the prey) for breakfast."

He bowed low and said, "This fat ox will be thy food at breakfast, O excellent King, And this goat will be a portion reserved for the victorious King at midday.

And the hare too for supper - (to be) the repast at nightfall of the gracious and bountiful King.

Said the lion, "O fox, thou hast made justice shine forth: from whom didst thou learn to divide in such a manner ?

Whence didst thou learn this, O eminent one?" "O King of the world," he replied, " (I learned it) from the fate of the wolf."

The lion said, "Inasmuch as thou hast become pledged to love of me, pick up all the three (animals), and take (them) and depart .

O fox, since thou hast become entirely mine, how should I hurt thee when thou hast become myself?

I am thine, and all the beasts of chase are thine: set thy foot on the Seventh Heaven and mount (beyond)

Since thou hast taken warning from (the fate of) the vile wolf, thou art not a fox: thou art my own lion.

The wise man is he that in (the hour of) the shunned tribulation takes warning from the death of his friends."

The fox said (to himself), "A hundred thanks to the lion for having called me up after that wolf.

If he had bidden me first, saying, 'Do thou divide this,' who would have escaped from him with his life ?"

Thanks be to Him (God), then, that He caused us to appear (be born) in the world after those of old, So that we heard of the chastisements which God inflicted upon the past generations in the preceding time, That we, like the fox, may keep better watch over ourselves from (considering) the fate of those ancient wolves.

On this account he that is God's prophet and veracious in explanation called us "a people on which God has taken mercy."

Behold with clear vision the bones and fur of those wolves, and take warning, O mighty ones!

The wise man will put off from his head (lay aside) this self existence and wind (of vanity), since he heard (what was) the end of the Pharaohs and 'Ad; And if he do not put it off, others will take warning from what befell him in consequence of his being misguided.

How Noah, on whom be peace, threatened his people, saying, "Do not struggle with me, for I am (only) a veil: ye are really struggling with God (who is) within this (veil), O God-forsaken men!"

Noah said, "O ye headstrong ones, I am not I: I am dead to the (animal) soul, I am living through the Soul of souls.

Inasmuch as I am dead to the senses of the father of mankind (human senseperceptions), God has become my hearing and perception and sight.

Since I am not I, this breath (of mine) is from Him: in the presence of this breath if any one breathes (a word) he is an infidel."

In the form of this fox there is the lion: 'tis not fitting to advance boldly towards this fox.

Unless thou believe in him from his exterior aspect (accept him in the form in which he appears), thou with not hear from him the lions' roar.

If Noah had not been the Eternal Lion, why should he have cast a whole world into confusion?

He was hundreds of thousands of lions in a single body; he was like fire, and the world (like) a stack.

Forasmuch as the stack neglected (to pay) the tithe due to him, he launched such a flame against that stack.

Whosoever in the presence of this hidden Lion opens his mouth disrespectfully, like the wolf,

That Lion will tear him to pieces, as (he tore) the wolf, and will recite to him (the text) So we took vengeance upon them.

He will suffer blows, like the wolf, from the Lion's paw: foolish is he that waxed bold in the presence of the Lion.

Would that those blows fell upon the body, so that it might be that (the sinner's) faith and heart would be safe!

My power is broken (fails me) on reaching this point: how can I declare this mystery?

Make little of your bellies, like that fox: do not play fox's tricks in His presence.

Lay the whole of your "we" and "I" before Him: the kingdom is His kingdom: givethe kingdom to Him.

When ye become poor (selfless) in the right Way, verily the Lion and the Lion's prey are yours,

Because He is holy, and Glory is His attribute: He hath no need of good things and kernel or rind.

Every prize and every gift of grace that exists is for the sake of the servants of that King (God).

The King hath no desire (for anything): He hath made all this empire for His creatures. Happy is he that knew!

Of what use should the possession of empires be to Him who created (all) empire and the two worlds?

In the presence of His Glory keep close watch over your hearts, lest ye be put to shame by thinking evil.

For He sees conscience and thought and quest (desire) as (plainly) as a thread of hair in pure milk.

He whose clear breast has become devoid of (any) image (impression) has become a mirror for the impressions of the Invisible.

He becomes intuitively and undoubtingly aware of our inmost thought, because the true believer is the mirror of the true believer.

When he rubs our (spiritual) poverty on the touchstone, then he knows the difference between faith and doubt.

When his soul becomes the touchstone of the coin, then he will see (distinguish) the (true) heart and the false money (of hypocrisy).

How kings seat in front of them the Sufis who know God, in order that their eyes may be illumined by (seeing) them.

Such is the custom of kings: you will have heard of this, if you remember.

The paladins stand on their left had, because the heart (the seat of courage) is fixed on the left side (of the body).

On the right hand are the chancellor and the secretaries, because the science of writing and book-keeping belongs (in practice) to this hand.

They give the Sufis the place in front of their countenance, for they (the Sufis) are a mirror for the soul, and better than a mirror,

(Since) they have polished their breasts (hearts) in commemoration (of God) and meditation, that the heart's mirror may receive the virgin (original) image.

Whoever is born beautiful from the lions of Creation, a mirror must be placed before him.

The beautiful face is in love with the mirror: it (such a face) is a polisher of the soul and (a kindler) of the fear of God in (men's) hearts.

Poems from Divani Shamsi Tabriz
MOULANA JALALUDDIN RUMI (RAA)

Poem 1

If thou art Love's lover and seekest Love,
Take a keen poniar and cut the throat of bashfulness.
Know that reputation is a great hindrance in the path;
This saying is disinterested: receive it with pure mind.
Wherefore did that madman work madness in a
thousand forms,
That chosen wild one display a thousand wiles ?
Now he rent robe, and now sped o'er mountain,
Now sipped poison, and now chose death.
Since the spider seized prey so large,
Behold what the snare of My Lord the Supreme will do!
Since the love of Laila's face had such value,
How will it be with "He took His servant by night"?
Hast thou not seen the divans of Waisa and Ramin ?
Hast thou not read the tales of Wamiq and 'Adra ?
Thou gatherest up thy garment lest the water should wet it:
Needs must thou plunge a thousand times in the sea.
Love's way is all lowliness and drunkenness:
For the torrent runs down: how should it run upward ?
Thou wilt be as the bezel in the ring of lovers
If thou art the bezel's thrall, O master.
Even as, this earth to the sky is thrall,
Even as the body to the spirit is thrall.
Come, say, what did the earth lose by this connexion ?

What kindnesses has not the reason done to the limbs ?
 It behoves not, son, to beat a drum under a quilt;
 Plant, like braven men, thy banner in the midst of the desert.
 Hark with the soul's ear to the sounds innumerable
 In the hollow of the green dome, rising from lovers' passionate
 cry.
 When the strings of thy robe are loosed by the intoxication
 of love,
 Behold heaven's triumph and Orion's bewilderment!
 How the world, high and low, is troubled
 By love, which is purified from high and low!
 When the sun goes up, where stayeth night ?
 When the joy of bounty came, where lagged affliction ?
 I am silent. Speak thou, O soul of soul of soul,
 From desire of whose face every atom grew articulate.

Poem 2

Divid Said: 'O Lord, since thou hast no need of us,
 Say, then, what wisdom was there in creating the two worlds?'
 God said to him: 'O temporal man, I was a hidden treasure;
 I sougth that that treasure of loving kindness and bounty
 should be revealed.
 I displayed a mirror - its face the heart, its back the world -
 Its back is better than its face - if the face is unknown to thee.'
 When straw is mixed with clay, how should the mirror be
 successful ?
 When you part the straw from the clay, the mirror becomes
 clear.
 Grape-juice does not turn to wine, unless it ferment awhile in
 the jar;
 Would you have your heart grow brightly, you must take a little
 trouble.
 The sould which issued forth from the body-my king saith to
 it:
 'Thou art come even as thou wentest: where are the traces of
 my benefactions ?'
 'Tis notorious that copper by alchemy becomes gold:
 Our copper has been transmuted by this rare alchemy.
 From God's grace this sun wants no crown or robe:
 He is cap to a hundred bald men and cloak to ten naked.

Child, Jesus sate on an ass for humility's sake:
 How else should the zephyr ride on the back of an ass?
 O spirit, make thy head in search and seeking like the water of
 a stream,
 And O reason, to gain eternal life tread everlastingly the way
 of death.
 Keep God in remembrance till self is forgotten,
 That you may be lost in the Called, without distraction of
 caller and call.

Poem 3

A garden - may its rose be in flower to Resurrection!
 An idol-may the two worlds be scattered o'er his beauty!
 The prince of the fair goes goes proudly forth to the chase at
 morning;
 May our hearts fall a prey to the arrow of his glance!
 From his eye what messages are passing continually to mine!
 May my eyes be gladdened and filled with intoxication by his
 message!
 I broke an ascetic's door: with a prayer he banned me,
 Saying, 'Go may all thy life be without peace!'
 No peace, no heart is left me, on account of his prayer, by the
 Friend
 Who thirsts for our blood - may God befriend him!
 My body is like the moon which is melting for love,
 My heart like Zuhra's lute - may its strings be broken!
 Look not on the moon's waning nor on Zuhra's broken state;
 Behold the sweetness of his affliction - may it was a
 thousandfold!
 What a bride is in the soul! By the reflection of her face
 May the world be freshened and coloured like the hands of the
 newly - married!
 Look not on the fleshly cheek which corrupts and decays;
 Look on the spiritual cheek - may it be sweet and agreeable!
 The dark body resembles a raven, and the body's world winter;
 Oh, in spite of these two unpleasants may there be eternal
 spring!
 For these two unpleasants subsist by the four elements:
 May the subsistence of thy servants depend on something
 other than these four!

Poem 4

O thou who art my soul's comfort in the season of sorrow,
 O thou who art my spirit's treasure in the bitterness of dearth!
 That which the imagination has not conceived,
 that which the understanding has not seen,
 Visiteth my soul from thee; hence in worship I turn toward
 thee.
 By thy grace I keep fixed on eternity my amorous gaze,
 Except, O king, the poms that perish lead me astray.
 The favour of that one, who brings glad tidings of thee,
 Even without thy summons, is sweeter in mine ear than songs.
 In the prostrations of prayer thought of thee, O lord,
 Is necessary and binding on me as the seven verses.
 To thee belongs mercy and intercession for the sin of infidels:
 As regards me, thou art chief and principal of the stonyhearted.
 If a never ceasing bounty should offer kingdoms,
 If a hidden treasure should set before me all that is,
 I would bend down with my soul, I would lay my face in the
 dust,
 I would say, 'Of all these the love of such an one for me!
 Eternal life, methinks, is the time of union,
 Because time, for me, hath no place there.
 Life is the vessels, union the clear draught in them;
 Without thee what does the pain of the vessels avail me ?
 I had twenty thousand desires ere this;
 In passion for him not even (care of) my safety remained.
 By the help of his grace I am become safe, because
 The unseen king saith to me, 'Thou art the soul of the world.'
 The essence of the meaning of "He' has filled my heart and
 soul;
 The body, at the time of union with him, paid no regard to
 the spirit;
 Tho' incorporeal, he became visible unto me.
 I aged with his affliction, but when Tabriz
 You name, all my youth comes back to me.

Poem 5

That moon, which the sky ne'er saw even in dreams, has
 returned

And brought a fire no water can quench.
 See the body's house, and see my soul,
 This made drunken and that desolate by the cup of his love.
 When the host of the tavern became my heart-mate,
 My blood turned to wine and my heart to kabab.
 When the eye is filled with thought of him, a voice arrives:
 'Well done, O flagon, and bravo, wine!
 Love's fingers tear up, root and stem,
 Every house where sunbeams fall from love.
 When my heart saw love's sea, of a sudden
 It left me and leaped in, crying, 'Find me.'
 The face of Shamsi Din, Tabriz's glory, is the sun
 In whose track the cloud-like hearts are moving.

Poem 6

The man of God is drunken without wine,
 The man of God is full without meat.
 The man of God is distraught and bewildered,
 The man of God has no food or sleep.
 The man of God is a kind 'neath darvish-cloak,
 The man of God is a treasure in a ruin.
 The man of God is not of air and earth,
 The man of God is not of fire and water.
 The man of God is a boundless sea,
 The man of God rains pearls without a cloud.
 The man of God hath hundred moons and skies,
 The man of God hath hundred suns.
 The man of God is made wise by the Truth,
 The man of God is not learned from book.
 The man of God is beyond infidelity and religion,
 To the man of God right and wrong are alike.
 The man of God has ridden away from Not-being,
 The man of God is gloriously attended.
 The man of God is concealed, Shamsi Din;
 The man of God do thou seek and find!

Poem 7

Every moment the voice of Love is coming from left and right.
 We are bound for heaven: who has a mind to sight-seeing?

We have been in heaven, we have been friends of the
 angels;
 Thither, sire, let us return, for that is our country.
 We are even higher than heaven and more than the angels;
 Why pass we not beyond these twain? Our goal is majesty
 supreme.
 How different a source have the world of dust and the pure
 substance!
 Tho' we came down, let us haste back - what place is this ?
 Young fortune is our friend, yielding up soul our business;
 The leader of our caravan in Mustafa, glory of the world.
 This gale's sweet scent is from the curl of his tresses,
 This thought's radiance is from a cheek like "by the
 morning bright."
 By his cheek the moon was split: she endured not the sight of
 him;
 Such fortune the moon found - she that is an humble beggar.
 Behold a continual "cleaving of the moon" in our hearts,
 For why should the vision of that vision transcend thine eye?
 Came the billow of "Am I not ?" and wrecked the body's ship;
 When the ship wrecks once more is the time of union's
 attainment.
 Mankind, like waterfowl, are sprung from the sea - the sea of
 soul;
 Risen from that sea, why should the bird make here his home?
 Nay, we are pearls in that sea, therein we all abide;
 Else, why does wave follow wave from the sea of soul ?
 "Tis the time of union's attainment, 'tis the time' of eternity's
 beauty,
 'Tis the time of favour and largesse, 'tis the time of eternity's
 beauty,
 'Tis the time of favour and largesse, 'tis the ocean of perfect
 purity.
 The billow of largesses hath appeared, the thunder of the sea
 hath arrived,
 The morn of blessedness hath dawned. Morn ? No, 'tis the
 light of God.
 Who is this pictured form, who is this monarch and this prince?
 Who is this aged wisdom? They are all veils.
 The remedy against veils is ecstasies like these,

The fountain of these draughts is in your own head and eyes.
 In the head itself is nought, but ye have two heads;
 This head of clay is from earth, and that pure head from
 heaven.

O the many pure heads scattered beneath the clay,
 That thou mayst know the head depends on that other head!
 That original head hidden, and this derived head manifest,
 Forasmuch as behind this world lies the infinite universe.
 Tie up the skin, O cup-bearer, fetch wine from our jar:
 The vessel of perceptions is straiter than a strait pass.
 From Tabriz-ward shone the Sun of Truth, and I said to him:
 "Thy light is at once joined with all things and apart from all".

Poem 8

What pearl art thou that none possesseth the price of thee?
 What does the world possess that is not thy gift?
 Is there a worse punishment than his who lives away
 from thy face?
 Punish not thy servant tho' he is unworthy of thee.
 He that is fallen amid the surge of accidents
 Escapes not by swimming, since he is no friend of thine.
 The world has no permanence, and if it have,
 Deem it perishable, because it is unfamiliar with thy
 permanence.
 How happy the king that is mated by thy rook!
 How fair company hath he who lacks not thine!
 I desire continually to fling heart and soul at thy feet;
 Dust on the head of the soul which is not the dust of
 thy feet!
 Blessed to all birds is desire of thee;
 How unblest the bird that desires thee not!
 I will not shun thy blow, for very crude
 Is the heart ne'er burned in the fire of thy affliction.
 To thy praise and praisers there is no end;
 What atom but is reeling with thy praise?
 Like that one of whom Nizami tells in verse,
 Tyrannise not, for I cannot endure thy tyranny.
 O Shamsi Tabriz, beauty and glory of the horizons,
 What king but is a beggar of thee with heart and soul?

Poem 9

This house wherein is continually the sound of the viol,
 Ask of the master what house is this
 What means this idol-form, if this is the house of the Ka'ba?
 And what means this light of God, if this is a Magian temple?
 In this house is a treasure which the universe is too small to hold;
 This house and this master is all acting and pretence.
 lay no hand on the house, for this house is a talisman;
 Speak out with the master, for he is drunken overnight.
 The dust and rubbish of this house is all musk and perfume;
 The roof and door of this house is all verse and melody.
 In fine, whoever has found that way into this house
 Is Sultan of the world and Solomon of the time.
 O master, bend down thy head once from this roof,
 For in thy fair face is a token of fortune.
 I swear by thy soul that saves the sight of thy countenance
 All, tho' twere the kingdom of the earth, is fantasy and fable
 The garden is bewildered to know which is the leaf, and which the
 blossom;
 The birds are distracted to know which is the snare and which
 the bait.
 This is the Lord of heaven, who resembles Venus and the
 moon,
 This is the house of Love, which has no bound or end.
 Like a mirror, the soul has received thy image in its heart;
 The tip of thy curl has sunk into the heart like a comb.
 Forasmuch as the women cut their hands in
 Joseph's presence,
 Come to me, O soul, for the Beloved is in the midst.
 All the house are drunken - none has knowledge
 Of each who enters that he is so-and-so or so-and-so.
 Do not sit intoxicated at the door: come into the house quickly;
 He is in the dark whose place is the threshold.
 Those drunk with God, tho'they be thousands, are yet one;
 Those drunk with lust-tho' it be a single one, he is a double.
 Go into the wood of lions and reckon not of the wound,
 For thought and fear - all these are figments of women.

For there is no wound: all is mercy and love,
 But thy imagination is like a bar behind the door.
 Set fire to the wood, and keep silence, O heart;
 Draw back thy tongue, for thy tongue is harmful.

Poem 10

Show thy face, for I desire the orchard and the rose -garden
 Open thy lips, for I desire sugar in plenty.
 O sun, show forth thy face from the veil of cloud,
 For I desire that radiant glowing countenance.
 From love for thee I hearkened to the sound of the falcon-
 drum;
 I have returned, for the sultan's arm is my desire.
 'Vex me no more,' thou saidst capriciously, 'begone!
 I desire that saying of thin, 'Vex me no more.'
 And thy bidding off with 'Depart, he is not at home,'
 And the airs and pride and harshness of the door-keeper I
 desire.
 O sweet Zephyr, that blowest from the flower -plot of the
 Friend,
 Blow on me, for I desire news of the basil.
 The bread and water of destiny is like a treacherous flood;
 I am a great fish and desire the sea of 'Oman.
 Like Jacob I am uttering cries of grief,
 I desire the fair face of Joseph of 'Canaan.
 By God, without thee the city is a prison to me,
 O'er mountain and desert I desire to wander.
 In one hand a wine-cup and in one hand a curl of the Beloved:
 Such a dance in the midst of the market-place is my desire.
 My heart is weary of these weak-spirited companions;
 I desire the Lion of God and Rustam, son of Zal.
 Filings of beauty are in the possession of every one that exists;
 I desire that quarry and that mine of exquisite loveliness.
 Bankrupt tho' I be, I will not accept a small carnelian;
 The mine of rare tremulous carnelian is my desire.
 Of this folk I am full of complaint, weeping and weary;
 I desire the drunkards' wailing and lamentation.
 My soul is grown weary of Pharaoh and his tyranny;
 I desire the light of the countenance of Moses, son of 'Imran.
 They said, ' He is not to be found, we have sought Him long,'

A thing which is not to be found—that is my desire.
 I am more eloquent than the nightingale, but because of
 vulgar envy
 A seal is on my tongue, tho' I desire to moan.
 Yesterday the Master with a lantern was roaming about the city,
 Crying, 'I am tired of devil and beast, I desire a man,' My state
 has passed even
 beyond all yearning and desire;
 I desire to go from Being and Place toward the Essentials. He
 is hidden from our eyes,
 and all objects are from Him; I desire that hidden One whose
 works are manifest. Mine,
 ear listened to the tale of faith and was intoxicated;
 Say, 'The limbs and the body and the form of faith are my
 desire,'
 I myself am Love's rebeck, and Love is a rebeck to me;
 I desire the band and bosom and modulation of 'Othman.
 That rebeck is saying, 'Every moment passionately
 I desire the favours of the mercy of the Merciful.'
 O cunning minstrel, con the rest of this ode
 After this fashion, for after this fashion I desire.
 Display, O Sun who art Tabriz's glory, the dawning of
 Love;
 I am the hoopoe: the presence of Solomon is my desire.

Poem 11

At morning-tide a moon appeared in the sky,
 And descended from the sky and gazed on me.
 Like a falcon which snatches a bird at the time of
 hunting,
 That moon snatched me up and coursed over the
 sky.
 When I looked at myself, I saw myself no more,
 Because in that moon my body became by grace
 even as soul.
 When I travelled in soul, I saw nought save the
 moon,
 Till the secret of the eternal Theophany was all
 revealed.
 The nine spheres of heaven were all merged in that

moon, The vessel of my being was completely
bidden in the sea. The sea broke into waves, and
again Wisdom rose And cast abroad a voice; so it
happened and thus it befell. Foamed the sea, and at
every foam-fleck Something took figure and
something was bodied forth.

Every foam-fleck of body, which received a sign
from that sea,
Melted straightway and turned to spirit in this ocean.
Without the power imperial of Shamsu 'I Haqq of
Tabriz One could neither behold the moon nor
become the sea.

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**Golden Saying of
Sufies-Pearls of Wisdom
... Collected by S.L. PEERAN**

1. Love and Affection are the most beautiful flowers in the Garden of Life
2. Humility is the first lesson of wisdom
3. No one takes a stranger seriously more so his advice, talk or philosophy. One needs to be highly merited, talented, and prominent to make a mark
4. Some being in the company of famous make it to the post but they are not taken seriously for their statements and philosophy
5. One needs to establish his long credentials to make a mark and become acceptable among his people and comrades
6. A donkey doesn't get glamorized in occupying a high status, position or job
7. Exceptional and smart ones should not be seen in the company of duds, fools and scoundrels. It will take away their sheen and prominence
8. One should maintain his dignity in dress, manners and speech

9. A person with malice and prejudice sees the whole world as yellow and looks down upon a merited person
10. Borrowed plumes does not bring prominence nor it lasts forever
11. It is only zeal, enthusiasm and deep involvement that can take one to dizzy heights
12. Feed a bone to a faithful dog, he will be your slave forever
13. Even if you shower gold and silver on a hypocrite, you cannot win him, so also on a gambler and a drunkard
14. You need exceptional talents and merits to make a mark
15. Those who slip and fall again and again do not learn lessons from their past mistakes
16. Prophets and Saints are endowed with deep sincerity, humility, compassion and goodness
17. Without constant repentance, there is no 'Ibadat' prayers to Lord
18. We need to pray with all our heart with all our mind and with all our soul, with sincerity and humility to seek blessings from the Lord
19. So also we need to love Lord with all our heart, with all our mind and with all our soul
20. It is fear of Lord that keeps one away from the Sin
21. Happiness, solace, enjoyment, you get by obstructing and avoiding all negativity, moroseness, dullness and painful things
22. Worrying about unconcerned things, lack of faith, trust will destroy happiness, joy and entertainment.

23. A Japanese saying:
If you want to be happy for a moment – Feast
If you want to be happy for a day - Marry
If you want to be happy for a lifetime - be a Gardner
24. Always remaining in the state of sorrow destroys happiness and joy and health
25. Saying from Bible - You need to be childlike to enter Heaven
26. Be in company for a moment with children, you will feel the lost innocence in you
27. Be friendly, courteous, smiling with all to remain happy
28. Criticism is a poisonous sting to destroy goodwill, friendship, joy and happiness
29. Humor and being humorous in talk brings happiness
30. Sharp tongue will loose friendship
31. Too much talkativeness will create mental stress, tension
32. Silence is sweet and brings peace
33. Loving talk and behavior brings joy
34. Being always jovial avoids tension
35. We can do nothing with the waywardness, cruelty of the world except to sympathize and pray
36. Entertain yourself with goodness and good deeds
37. Giving up your selfish desires for someone's good would bring satisfaction and elevate your soul
38. Social work for someone's good would also be elevating
39. Self realization should be the goal of life
40. Eschew selfishness, self centerdness

41. Always remain in calm mind by avoiding stressful things and tension
42. Keep praying for the goodness of mankind
43. Accept the weakness and shortfall of others with whom we deal. Deal with them with kindness and gracefulness
44. Ignore sharp criticism
45. Cruelty and wickedness will drive away peace and humor
46. Pure and good intention is basic for any action
47. Avoid and be careful of people excessively praising you
48. Do not befriend sinful people and criminals
49. Involve Allah in all your good deeds
50. A Sufi should seek for purity of mind, heart and soul. He should have generosity of Sun, tranquility of moon, forgiveness for erring and love for all
51. Do not share your knowledge and experience with mischievous scoundrels and also those who have no mind & heart to receive it
52. Treat one based on his IQ, status and achievement
53. Every one & anyone cannot be treated alike
54. In our own nature is hidden the nature of God
55. Understanding our nature will help in understanding God. Hence feed you nature with good deeds
56. Be simple, charming and humble
57. Avoid extravagance, be thrifty and save for a rainy day
58. Feed goodness with gooddeeds
59. Remember the good done by others, forget the bad and evil done to you and forgive the wrong doers

60. Patience is mother of virtue
61. Be always thankful to Lord for blessings received
62. You have to play the game, safe and sure with all you skills, talent and win the same. You cannot expect divine help from above, while in the midst of the game except on your self confidence and inner strengths, You have to strictly follow rules of the game.
63. Reality is light and truth. You cannot deceive yourself with false beliefs, taboos and superstitions
64. Freedom in thought, expression and action does not mean you become an outlaw
65. You have to enrich your thoughts and mind with good classical reading and prayers
66. Righteous and blind anger leads to evil consequences
67. Anger and jealousy are twin sisters of inner Tsunami
68. To seek peace of mind (salamat) then the violence in mind and heart has to be brought to naught.
69. To seek false sympathy is to degrade yourself.
70. Life is like going to a war. Be prepared for loss and gain.
71. Life is full of compromises and adjustments without sacrificing truth, integrity and honesty.

Poems of S.L.Peeran
A Glimmer of Hope

The darkness grows and grows into eerie silence
Without the Cold Silent Moon in the dark sky
Twinkling stars are covered with a blanket of dark clouds
Even an owl cannot hoot nor a vampire move.
There is not a glimmer of light
Not even a candle or a smoke in chimney
The hearths are all choked with ashes
The electricity has failed, it is so dark.
The fauna, forest, beast and man in deep slumber
The stillness in the air is scary and somber
Even a ghost in the night is scared to walk
The batteries of the earth cannot throw light.
The sun, the golden sun that round one
With its might and power, burning and churning
Slowly and steadily peeps, but, before, heralds
Its trumpet to end the gloom of darkness.
Wakes up the crow, the dark one, the dirty one
The owl, the koel, the Cuckoo, to siren
That the king and mighty is on his way
Up, up, you sloth and gluttons.
The muezzin in his shrill voice
Raises, alarm, awake, awake O faithful ones
For the 'Great one's arrival has ended the darkness
The world is aglow with the light of Mercy.
Kindness, Compassion, Glory and Warmth
Light begets light, candle lights candle
A mighty soul, a Prophet of Light

Trumpets for all the uniqueness.
To be up and sing in chorus and harmony
Rejoice, in the light of wisdom
In the learning, in the elevation of mind and soul
The dark one, accursed devil vanishes in thin air.

Who Am I ?

Is there a world beyond the five senses
Beyond perception, thoughts, ideas-
Beyond imaginations and fantasies
Beyond your own consciousness ?
What is it you ought to know by this -
“Who am I - discover your own self”
Is your self, a complex inner psyche?
Of conglomeration of composite cultures?
Learning to meet situations of life
Learning to live a successful life.
Are you to discover your inner strength
Inner weakness, inner potential
Youth mirth, pleasures and joys
Yours sorrows, platitudes and griefs ?
Is it to raise yourself by deep meditation
Seeking release from attachments
A composed mind sans sensations
Transcending frontiers of time and space
And see universe in a grain sand
And raise yourself above your selfish self!

O Chosen One

O chosen one! I place my loving heart
At thy holy feet, my fierce loyalty
My burning faith, my zeal, my sincerity
My enthusiasm, my sound mind.

O chosen one! I shall not waver
In my duty's call, in my devotion

In my supplication from the commands
Of the Holy Book: in thy pleasure.

O chosen one! The springs of Love
Have purified me: the burning
Spirits have cleansed me
Now, I am ready to soar, to fly.

O the perfect one ! Thou shall forsake Me not, on the day of
the judgement ! Thou shall grant me thy grace

May Heavenly blessings shower on thee
(Amen)

Soar Higher and Higher

The dreadful sermons from dingy pulpits
The piteous pleas of the muezzin
The mutterings of the dreary faithful
Unenthused prayers of drowsy devotees.
Awake, arise from the sleepy slumber
Instill your breath with glowing warmth
Enliven your spirit with love's pangs
Let your soul sing beloved's paeans.
Let not the temporal desires
Flesh's longings drown you
Be enamoured with glittering wealth
Or chill penury belittle you.
Fly, fly, soar higher and higher
Let love's glory engulf you.

Let My Soul Gleam

Let me circumambulate thee
Sing paeans in love of thee
Like a moth, burn my wings
In my mad love for ever.
My eyes have wept and wept
Slept little, sung thy praise
Glorified Heaven and cursed Satan
Quenched longing's temporary desires.
My every breath is charged

My every throb is grief

Open thy doors to the yearning soul
Embrace my spirit with both thy arms.
O Heaven ! Shelter this being
With light and glory for sould to gleam.

Praise - Worthy

I have roamed and roamed
In all four quarters of the globe.
And found to my dismay and grief
That all the beauties are to wane.
Take away all my treasures and wealth
My glories and achievements.
My eminence, name and fame
Leave me alone with my soul's yearnings.
My grieves are many and sorrows aplenty
With simple dwelling and humble living
But my soul's yearning have never waned
My beloved's name is always on lips.
Let me sing paecans for thee
Send glories and praise for thee.

Soul Outpourings

When the soul gets entangled
In webs of sharp wires, in tenterhooks
In pangs of conscience
When the soul gets caught
Between the evil's delight
And body's pleasures
When the soul gets entrapped
In the guilt of grave sins
And in the troubled mind
When the soul gets anguished
At the sorrows and pains
At the destruction of good
It is the time for the soul
To sing, pray and meditate
On the Higher Being for solace and grace.

A Distant Call

A distant call from the unknown
Emanating from deep within
To lift you from mire and mirth
And inspire you to deep meditation.
Expanding moments stretching themselves
Beyond the boundaries of space and time
Touching the horizon and infinity
Mind with lighting speed, illuminating.
Consciousness awakened soul enlightened
Spreading colourful wings of all hues
Like a peacock dance and charm
And to sing like a nightingale.
You float like a lovely butterfly
Like pleasant lotus unfolding petals
Like rose to spread fragrance
And like banyan tree to spread its branches.

O' Spirit

The spirit blown into muddy clay
Brought to life by a command !
To glow in the heart and mind
To illumine the being with wisdom.
Ah ! what a difference a spirit makes ?
A lowly creature with faults many
With the characteristics of the fauna
Now, raised to the pedestal of the heavenly.
The wretchedness of the world around
Sways the wayward from the straight path
To stray in the jungle, to fall prey,
To get lost for ever and go astray.
O ' spirit ! glow, glow like a candle
Flicker not in the stormy winds
Let your light spread all around
Keep straight the balance of the mind.

Total Surrender

I love HIM, respect HIM and honour HIM ;
Each breath of mine is spent in His service.

Day and night merge and I slave forever
Out of dedication, love of labour.
Neither vagaries of weather, ill health
Nor desires, nor slumber can dater me.
With deep devotion, I burn the Candle
Of my life at His feet in total surrender.
I have no complains, demands, compulsions,
No grievances, grief, or pain.
Undoubtedly, I am captured by HIM ;
I am now left with no will of my own.
My Master's service is my main motto
I wish I were a dog to befriend HIM.

Bless Me

Oh ! if only I could dream of thee
And see thy beauty and effulgence,
Thy charm, thy benign look, thy smile,
To relieve me of my pain and anguish,
My despondency and perplexity,
That have left my life so shattered !
O Sweet one ; O thou deliverer
From all miseries and calamities !
O thou most compassionate one,
O haven of peace and tranquility !
Bless me, enlighten my dark soul,
Redeem me from all vicissitudes,
Guide me to a life of bliss,
Of solace and contentment.
I have heard, O Eternal Lord,
Thou showerest Thy choicest blessings
Upon all Thy chosen ones.
Let me, then, be one of them.

His Grace

With His Grace I could have a glance
At His effulgence, which left me in a trance.
His face radiates His Divine Glory,
His beneficence, His Might and Mercy.
My beings is enveloped with His Compassion,

Every particle in me is His creation.
He dwells in me serenely,
Life glows in me sweetly & calmly.
Songs flow from my lips in praise of His love,
Which He showers on us from Heaven above.

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