

Book - 9

MAY - JUNE 2006

**Issue dedicated to Bibi
Rabia Basri (RAA)**

**A Journal on Sufi Culture
Philosophy and Literature
(Islamic Spiritualism)
Tasawwuf**

International Sufi Centre (R)

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**Book 9. Rabi ul Awal- Rabiul Akhir 1427 Hijri
May - June 2006**

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Aims and Objectives

1. To propagate the ideals and practice of Sufism
2. To achieve cosmic harmony through preachings of Sufi Tradition and Culture.
3. To carry out publications of books on Sufies, their lives and preachings.
4. To hold lectures, seminars on Sufi thought.
5. To unite Sufies and members of Sufi orders all over India and abroad for achieving universal love and brother-hood.

FORE-WORD

Dear Reader, you have, "Masha Allah" Book 9 in your hand. Due to printing error, the Fore-word to Book - 8 was missed. Book - 8 as you have seen is dedicated to Khwaja Garibun Nawaz (RAA). Some of readers have liked the issue immensely and have been appreciative of our efforts. We thank our readers for the encouragement and continued support in continuing activities.

We have released our Urdu Version "Anware Sufia", edited by our Managing Trustee. The journal was released in our monthly meeting on 26.3.06. The journal has received spontaneous acceptance. We again thank our readers.

This issue is dedicated to an eminent lady saint Bibi Rabia Basri (RAA) with regular features.

Dr. Syed Liaqath Peeran

Editor

Excerpts from The Holy Quran

Sura XXX.

Rum, or The Roman Empire

In the name of God, Most Gracious,

Most Merciful

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.

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 see
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 HisBounty: 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, the they 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 memoriais 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.

Rabe'a al-Adawiya

by Hazreth Fariduddin Attar (RAA)

Rabe'a bint Esma'il al-'Adawiya, 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.

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 neighbour 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 neighbour'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 or 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; 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 Rabe'a

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 Shaqiq-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," Shaqiq 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 sent one to ask me, Who is thy God?"

Prayers of Rabe'a

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 Thyeverlasting 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.

Excerpts from Futuh Al-Gnaib

by Hz Ghouse - e -pak (RAA)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent and Merciful

He (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

It is a parting advice of mine that you should never complain about any mishap that may befall you to anyone whether it be a friend or a foe and should not blame your Lord for what He does to you, and for His causing the trial for you. You should rather give publicity to what good happens to be with you and to your thankfulness on that account. Your telling a lie in expression of your gratitude without any blessing is better than your stating a true fact and giving publicity to any grievance for your external circumstances. Who is there that is devoid of the blessings of Allah ? Allah the Mighty and Glorious says:

"And if you count the blessings of Allah you will not be able to enumerate them (xiv 34)

How many blessings there are with you and you do not recognise them! Do not feel comforted with anything in the creation and do not be in love with it and do not communicate to anyone the state of your affairs. Your love should rather be for the sake of Allah, the Mighty, the Glorious, and your comfort should be in him and your grievance against Him should be communicated only to Him.

You should look to nobody else, because in nothing else there is any harm or good or any appropriation and renunciation or any honour or dishonour or any elevation or fall or any poverty or affluence or any movement or pause. All things are the creation of Allah and in the hand of Allah lies the source of their movement by His command and permission. They continue to exist up to a time appointed by Him. And everything exists according to a measure fixed by Him. Whatever He has made posterior can be no means be prior and whatever He has made prior can by no means be made posterior. If Allah intends any harm to you no one can avert it excepting He. And if He intends any good, no one can withhold His favour.

Thus if you complain against Him while you are in comfort and enjoying some blessings, just desiring an increase in them and shutting your eyes to what is with you of blessing and comfort, considering them very poor, Allah will be angry with you and take these two things away from you and make your complaint real and double your trouble and intensify His chastisement and anger and hatred for you; and He will make you fall off in His sight.

Therefore, beware of complaint with utmost effort even if your flesh be cut into pieces by means of scissors. Save yourself ! Fear Allah ! Fear Allah! Fear Allah! Make good your escape! Make good your escape ! Beware ! Beware !

Verily most of the various calamities that befall the son of Adam are due to complaint against his Lord. How can one complain against Him, and He is the most merciful of the merciful ones and the best of all judges, Patient, Aware Compassionate, Merciful, Kind towards His servant; He is not unjust to His servants and is like a patient, affectionate, loving, kind, physician who is also a kinsman (to the patient). Can any fault be found in an affectionate kind-hearted father or mother?

The Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said:

"Allah is more merciful towards His servant than a mother is towards her son".

O poor man ! show the utmost of good manners. Exhibit patience at the time of calamity, even if you become exhausted by patience. Hold on to patience even if you get exhausted through your cheerful submission to and harmony with Allah, Hold on to cheerful resignation to and concord with Him. Still remain pleased and get reconciled.

If you are still found in existence vanish out of it. When you are thus lost, O, you philosopher's stone ! where will you be obtained ? Where will you be found? Have you not heard the word of Allah :

"Fighting is enjoined on you and it is an object of dislike to you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you and it may be that you love a thing while it is bad for you, and Allah knows and you do not know." (ii-216)

The knowledge of the reality of things has been kept rolled away from you and you have been screened away from it. So do not show bad manners in disliking or liking it. Follow the Law in all that may happen to you if you are in a state of piety (Salih) which is the first step, and follow the commandment in the state of Wilayat and in the state of dying out of the existence of desire and do not go beyond this and this is the second step. And be pleased with the action of Allah and be reconciled to it and vanish into the state of Abdal and Ghauth and Siddiq and these are the final stages Keep clear out of the way of destiny and do not stand in its way and turn yourself and your desire, and restrain your tongue from complaint.

Then when you have done this if the destiny is good, your Lord will give you more good, and an enjoyable and happy life. And if it be a bad one Allah will protect you in the course of it through your obedience to Him and will keep away from you all blame and will keep you lost in it until the time it passes away from you and the point of the ripeness of time also passes; just as the night passes into the day and the coldness of winter passes and merges into the summer. Here is an example for you and you should take lesson from it.

Again in the self of man there are various kinds of sins and faults and blemishes on account of which is is unworthy of the company of Allah, unless he becomes purged of impurities of sins; and no one can kiss His threshold except those who are purified from the dirt of self-conceit, just as no one can be worthy of the company of kings except those who are cleansed of impurities and bad smell and dirt. Thus the calamities are atonements and purifiers. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said : "The fever of one day is an atonement for the sins of a whole year."

Excerpts from The Secrets Secret''

by Hz Ghouse ul Azam (RAA)

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)

A letter of Hz Ghouse ul Azam (RAA) to his disciple Hz Alibin Husamuddin al - Muttaqi (RAA)

The Third Letter

Concerning fear and hope, and the fruits thereof.

My dear friend !

Be afraid of a day when a man will flee from his brother, from his mother and his father, from his consort and his children. Reflect on the reckoning of :

*And whether you publish what is inside
yourselves, or keep it hidden, Allah
will call you to account for it. (2:284)*

Do not concern yourself with the fortunes of :

Those they are like cattle. (7:179)

Lower your head in the contemplation of :

*So remember Me,
and I will remember you. (2:152)*

Open the eye of your heart in the witnessing of :

*That day will faces be resplendent,
looking toward their Lord. (75:22,23)*

- and recollect some of the bliss of :

*There you will have all that your souls
desire, and there you will have
all that you pray for. (41:31)*

Then maybe you will hear, with the ear of your heart, the call of the crier of :

And Allah summons

to the Abode of Peace. (10:25)

- and wake up from the sleep of the heedlessness of :

The life of this world is nothing

but a sport and a pastime. (47:36)

-and stride forth, on the foot of your head, in pursuit of the degrees of :

And the frontrunners, the frontrunners:

those will be the ones brought near,

in the Gardens of Delight. (56:10-12)

- and strike the racehorse of your aspiration with the whip of your firm resolve.

Then maybe the harbinger of the tender kindnesses of :

Allah is Ever-Gentle

to His servants. (42:19)

- will come to meet you, with trays containing the presents of :

For them there are good tidings. (10:64)

- and you will triumph, with reinforcement from the armies of:

And to Allah belong the hosts

of the heavens and the earth.

- over the hostile forces of :

Surely Satan is to the human being

an obvious enemy. (12:5)

You will escape from the snare of the passion of :

Surely the self is always

inciting to evil. (12:53)

- and then the imprints of the tender mercies of the secrets of :

Observe your duty to Allah,

and Allah will teach you. (2:282)

- will appear on the tablet of your heart.

The bird of your spirit (ruh) will remember the groves of Paradise (haza ir al-quds). It will soar into the vast space of :

*And follow the ways of your Lord,
(which are) smooth to travel. (16:69)*

- on the wing of ardent longing, and you will gather some of the fruits of intimate friendship (uns) in the orchards of :

(Then) eat of all the fruits. (16:69)

- so the envious will say, with the tongue of blame:

*By Allah, you are surely
in your ancient error.(12:95)*

- but when they see the effect of :

*He laid it on his face, and he
became able to see again. (12:96)*

- they will plead with you, in pathetic and humble entreaty, to:

*Ask forgiveness of our sins
on our behalf, for we
have certainly been guilty. (12:97)*

- and they will say, from a feeling of honesty (sidq) and sincerity (ikhlas):

*Allah has indeed preferred you
over us (12:91)*

- and you will say, in the stations of intimate converse (munajat):

*O my lord, You have given me
some sovereignty,
and You have taught me something
of the interpretation of tales.
O Creator of the heavens
and the earth, You are
my Protecting Friend in this world
and the hereafter. Let me die as one
who is truly submissive (to You), and*

join me with the righteous. (12:101)

The mirror of your innermost being (sirr) will reflect the luminous rays of the (divine) manifestations (tajalliyat), so that you are allowed to discover the secret of :

*You cause the night
to pass into the day.(3:27)*

The garden of your heart will soon be made verdant by the showering rains of the mercies of :

*And down from the sky We have sent
blessed water, and so produced
gardens and the grain of crops. (50:9)*

- and so the whole of it will come to be like the garden of Iram.

You will understand the enigmatic indications of:

*And (thereby) We revived
a land that was dead.(50:11)*

- and removed from your eyes will be the curtains of :

*But now We have removed from you
your covering, and so today
your sight is piercing.(50:22)*

You will thus become immersed in the perfection of direct experience (mushahada). There will be a time when you plunge deep into the ocean of the independence (istighna) of:

*Allah is indeed Independent
of all the words. (3:97)*

There will be a time when you stagger in bewilderment, caught in the sandstorm (samum) of the awe-inspiring impact of :

*Do they then feel secure
against Allah's devising ? (7:99)*

There will also be a time when ardent yearning sets you singing like the nightingale (andalib) in the orchard of glorification (tamjid), in tune with the gentle breeze of :

*And do not despair
of the Spirit of Allah. (12:87)*

Moved by the raptures of ecstasy (ghalabat al-wajd), you will then raise your voice in the joyful delight of:

I do indeed detect
the scent of Joseph.(12:94)

Excerpts from 'The Kashf Al Mahjub'

by Mazreth Ali bin Usman Al Hujwiri alias Data Fanj Baksh (RAA)

On Poverty

Know that Poverty has a high rank in the Way of Trust, and that the poor are greatly esteemed, as God said : "(Give alms) unto the poor, who are kept fighting in God's cause and cannot go to and fro on the earth; whom the ignorant deem rick forasmuch as they refrain (from begging). "And again: "Their sides are lifted from their beds while they call on their Lord in fear and hope" (Kor . xxxii, 16). Moreover, the Prophet chose poverty and said : "O God, make me live lowly and die lowly and rise from the dead amongst the lowly!" And he also said : "On the day of Resurrection God will say, 'Bring ye My loved ones nigh unto Me;' then the angels will say, 'Who are Thy loved ones?' and God will answer them, saying, 'The poor and destitute.'" There are many verses of the Koran and Traditions to the same effect, which on account of their celebrity need not be mentioned here. Among the Refugees (Muhajirln) in the Prophet's time were poor men (fuqara) who sat in his mosque and devoted themselves to the worship of God, and firmly believed that God would give them their daily bread, and put their trust (tawakkul) in Him. The Prophet was enjoined to consort with them and take due care of them; for God said: "Do not repulse those who call on their Lord in the morning and in the evening, desiring His favour" (Kor.vi, 52). Hence, whenever the Prophet saw one of them, he used to say: "May my father and mother be your sacrifice since it was for your sakes that God reproached me."

God, therefore, has exalted Poverty and has made it a special distinction of the poor, who have renounced all things external and internal, and have turned entirely to the Causer; whose poverty has become their pride, so that they lamented its going and rejoiced at its coming, and embraced it and deemed all else contemptible.

Now, Poverty has a form (rasm) and an essence (haqiqat). Its form is destitution and indigence, but its essence is fortune and free choice. He who regards the form rests in the form and, failing to attain his object, flees from the essence; but he who has found the essence averts his gaze from all created things, and, in complete annihilation, seeing only

the All-One he hastens towards the fullness of eternal life (ba-fana-yi kull andar ruyat-i kull ba-baqa-yi kull shitaft). The poor man (faqir) has nothing and can suffer no loss. He does not become rich by having anything, nor indigent by having nothing : both these conditions are alike to him in respect of his poverty. It is permitted that he should be more joyful when he has nothing, for the Shaykhs have said: "The more straitened one is in circumstances, the more expansive (cheerful and happy) is one's (spiritual) state, " because it is unlucky for a dervish to have property: if he "imprisons" anything (dar band kunad) for his own use, he himself is "imprisoned" in the same proportion. The friends of God live by means of His secret bounties. Worldly wealth holds them back from the path of quietism(rida).

Story: A dervish met a king. The king said : "Ask a boon of me." The dervish replied : "I will not ask a boon from one of my slaves." "How is that ?" said the king. The dervish said : "I have two slaves who are thy masters : covetousness and expectation."

The Prophet said : "Poverty is glorious to those who are worthy of it." Its glory consists in this, that the poor man's body is divinely preserved from base and sinful acts, and his heart from evil and contaminating thoughts, because his outwards parts are absorbed in (contemplation of) the manifest blessings of God, while his inward parts are protected by invisible grace, so that his body is spiritual (ruhani) and his heart divine (rabbani). Then no relation subsist between him and mankind : this world and the next weight less than a gnat's wing in the scales of his poverty : he is not contained in the two worlds for a single moment.

SECTION.

The Sufi Shaykhs differ in opinion as to whether poverty or wealth is superior, both being regarded as human attributes for true wealth (ghina) belongs to God, who is perfect in all His attributes. Yahya b. Mu'adh al-Razi, Ahmad b. Abi. 'l-Hawari, Harith al-Muhasibi, Abu l-Abbas b. 'Ata, Ruwaym, Abu 'l-Hasan b. Sim'un, and among the moderns the Grand Shaykh Abu' Sa'id Fadlallah b. Muhammad al-Mayhani, all hold the view that wealth is superior to poverty. They argue that wealth is an attribute of God, whereas poverty cannot be ascribed to Him : therefore an attribute common to God and Man is superior to one that is not applicable to God. I answer : "This community of

designation is merely nominal, and has no existence in reality: real community involves mutual resemblance, but the Divine attributes are eternal and the human attributes are created; hence your proof is false." I, who am 'Ali b. 'Uthman al-Jullabi, declare that wealth is a term that may fitly be applied to God, but one to which Man has no right ; while poverty is a term that may properly be applied to man, but not to God. Metaphorically a man is called "rich", but he is not really so. Again, to give a clearer proof, human wealth is an effect due to various causes, whereas the wealth of God, who Himself is the Author of all causes, is not due to any cause. Therefore there is no community in regard to this attribute. It is not allowable to associate anything with God consists in His independence of anyone and in His power to do whatsoever He wills : such He has always been and such He shall be for ever. Man's wealth, on the other hand, is, for example, a means of livelihood, or the presence of joy, or the being saved from sin, or the solace of contemplation; which things are all of phenomenal nature and subject to change.

Furthermore, some of the vulgar prefer the rich man to the poor, on the ground that God has made the former blest in both worlds and has bestowed the benefit of riches on him. Here they mean by "wealth" abundance of worldly goods and enjoyment of pleasures and pursuit of lusts. They argue that God has commanded us to be thankful for wealth and patient in poverty, i.e. patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity ; and that prosperity is essentially better than adversity. To this I reply that, when God commanded us to be thankful for prosperity He made thankfulness the means of increasing our prosperity. He made thankfulness the means of increasing our prosperity ; but when He commanded us to be patient in adversity He made patience the means of drawing nigh unto Himself. He said: "Verily, if ye return thanks, I will give you an increase" (Kor.xiv,7) and also, "God is with the patient" (Kor.ii.148).

The shaykhs who prefer wealth to poverty do not use the term "wealth" in its popular sense. What they intend is not "acquisition of a benefit" but "acquisition of the Benefactor", to gain union (with God) is a different thing from gaining forgetfulness (of God). Shaykh Abu' Sa'id- God have mercy on him ! - says : "Poverty is wealth in God" (al-faqr huwa l-ghina billah), i.e. everlasting revelation of the Truth. I answer to this, that revelation (mukashafat) implies the possibility of a veil (hijab); therefore, if the person who enjoys revelation is veiled from revelation by the attribute of wealth, he either

becomes in need of revelation or he does not ; if he does not, the conclusion is absurd, and if he does, need is incompatible with wealth ; therefore that term cannot stand. Besides, no one has "wealth in God" unless his attributes are permanent and his object is invariable ; wealth cannot coincide with the subsistence of an object or with the affirmation of the attributes of human nature, inasmuch as the essential characteristics of mortality and phenomenal being are need and indigence. One whose attributes still survive is not rich, and one whose attributes are annihilated is not entitled to any name whatever. Therefore "the rich man is he who is enriched by God" (al-ghani man aghnahu illah), because the term "rich in God" refers to the agent (fa'il), whereas the term "enriched by God" denotes the person acted upon (maf'ul) ; the former is self-subsistent, but the latter subsists through the agent; accordingly self subsistence is an attribute of human nature, while subsistence through God involved the annihilation of attributes. I, then, who am 'Ali b. 'Uthman al-Jullabi, assert that true wealth is incompatible with the survival (baqa) of any attribute, since human attributes have already been shown to be defective and subject to decay; nor, again, does wealth consist in the annihilation of these attributes, because a name cannot be given to an attribute that no longer exists, and he whose attributes are annihilated cannot be called either "poor" or "rich" ; therefore the attribute of wealth is not transferable from God to Man, and the attribute of poverty is not transferable from Man to God.

All the Sufi Shaykhs and most of the vulgar prefer poverty to wealth for the reason that the Koran and the Sunna expressly declare it to be superior, and herein the majority of Moslems are agreed. I find, among the anecdotes which I have read, that on one occasion this question was discussed by Junayd and Ibn Ata. The latter maintained the superiority of the rich. He argued that at the Resurrection they would be called to account for their wealth, and that such an account (hisab) entails the hearing of the Divine Word, without any mediation, in the form of reproach (itab) : and reproach is addressed by the Beloved to the lover. Junayd answered: "If He will call the rich to account, He will ask the poor for their excuse; and asking an excuse is better than calling to account." This is a very subtle point. In true love excuse is "otherness" (biganagi_ and reproach is contrary to unity (yaganagi). Lovers regard both these things as a blemish, because excuse is made for some disobedience to the command of the Beloved and reproach is made on the same

score; but both are impossible in true love, for then neither does the Beloved require an expiation for the lover nor does the lover neglect to perform the will of the Beloved.

Every man is "poor" even though he be a prince. Essentially the wealth of Solomon and the poverty of Solomon are one. God said to Job in the extremity of his patience; and likewise to Solomon in the plenitude of his dominion : "Good servant that thou art!" When God's pleasure was accomplished, it made no difference between the poverty and the wealth of Solomon.

The author says: "I have heard that Abu 'I-Qasim Qushayri -God have mercy on him! - said: 'People have spoken much concerning poverty and wealth, and have chosen one or the other for themselves, but I choose whichever state God chooses for me and keeps me in; if He keeps me rich I will not be forgetful, and if He wishes me to be poor I will not be covetous and rebellious.'" Therefore, both wealth and poverty are Divine gifts : wealth is corrupted by forgetfulness, poverty by covetousness. Both conceptions are excellent, but they differ in practice. Both conceptions are excellent, but they differ in practice. Poverty is the separation of the heart from all but God, and wealth is the preoccupation of the heart with that which does not admit of being qualified. When the heart is cleared (of all except God), poverty is not better than wealth nor is wealth better than poverty. Wealth is abundance of worldly goods and poverty is lack of them: all goods belong to God: when the seeker bids farewell to property, the antithesis disappears and both terms are transcended.

SECTION

All the Sufi Shaykhs have spoken on the subject of poverty. I will now cite as many of their sayings as it is possible to include in this book.

One of the moderns says: *Laysa l-faqir man khald min al-zad: innama l-faqir man khala min al-murad*, "The poor man is not he whose hand is empty of provisions, but he whose nature is empty of desires." For example, if God gives him money and he desires to keep it, then he is rich; and if he desires to renounce it, he is rich no less, because poverty consists in ceasing to act on one's own initiative. Yahya b. Mu'adh al-Razi says: *Al-faqr khawf al-faqr*, "It is a sign of true poverty that, although one has reached the perfection of saintship and contemplation and self-annihilation, one should always be

dreading its decline and departure." And Ruwaym says: Min na't al-faqir hifzu sirrihiwasiyatanu nafsihi wa-ada'u faridatihi, "It is characteristic of the poor man that his heart is protected from selfish cares, and that his soul is guarded from contaminations, and that he performs the obligatory duties of religion:" that is to say, his inward meditations do not interfere with his outward acts, nor vice versa; which is a sign that he has cast off the attributes of mortality. Bishr Hafi says: Afdal al-maqamat i'tiqad al-sabr 'ala 'l-faqr ila 'l-qabr, "The best of 'stations' is a firm resolution to endure poverty continually." Now poverty is the annihilation of all "stations" : therefore the resolution to endure poverty is a sign of regarding works and actions as imperfect, and of aspiring to annihilate human attributes. But in its obvious sense this saying pronounces poverty to be superior to wealth, and expresses a determination never to abandon it. Shibli says: Al-faqir man la'yastaghni bi-shay duna 'l-lah, " The poor man does not rest content with anything except God," because he has no other object of desire. The literal meaning is that you will not become rich except by Him, and that when you have gained Him you have become rich. Your being, then, is other than God; and since you cannot gain wealth except by renouncing "other", your "you-ness" is a veil between you and wealth : when that is removed, you are rich. This saying is very subtle and obscure. In the opinion of advanced spiritualists (ahi-haqiqat) it means : Al-faqr an la yustaghna 'anhu, "Poverty consists in never being independent of poverty." This is what the Pir, i.e. Master 'Abdallah Ansari - may God be well-pleased with him!- meant when he said that our sorrow is everlasting, that our aspiration never reaches its goal, and that our sum (kulliyat) never becomes non-existent in this world or the next because for the fruition of anything homogeneity is necessary, but God has no congener, and for turning away from Him forgetfulness is necessary, but the dervish is not forgetful. What an endless task what a difficult road! The dead (fani) never become living (baqi), so as to be united with Him ; the living never become dead, so as to approach His presence. All that His lovers do and suffer is entirely a probation (mihnat) ; but in order to console themselves they have invented a fine-sounding phraseology ('ibarati musakhraf) and have produced "stations" and "stages" and a "path". Their symbolic expressions, however, begin and end in themselves, and their "stations" do not rise beyond their own genus, whereas God is exempt from every human attribute and relationship. Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri says: Na't al-faqir al-sukun 'inda 'l-'adam wa 'l-badhl 'inda 'l-wujud.; and he says also: Al-idthirab 'inda 'l-wujud, "When he gets nothing he is silent, and when he gets something he regards

another person as better entitled to it than himself, and therefore gives it away." The practice enunciated in this saying is of great importance. There are two meanings: (i) His quiescence when he gets nothing is satisfaction (rida), and his liberality when he gets something is love (mahabbat), because "satisfied" means "satisfied" means "accepting a robe of honour" (qabil-i-khil at), and the robe of honour is a token of proximity (qurbat), whereas the lover (muhibb) rejects the robe of honour inasmuch as it is a token of severance (furqat) ; and (2) his quiescence when he gets nothing is expectation of getting something, and when he gets something is expectation of getting something, and when he has got it, that "something" is other than God: he cannot be satisfied with anything other than God; therefore he rejects it. Both these meanings are implicit in the saying of the Grand Shaykh, Abu 'l-Qasim Junayd : Al-faqr khuluww al-qalb 'an al-ashkal, "When his heart is empty of phenomena he is poor." Since the existence of phenomena is "other" (then God), rejection is the only course possible. Shibli says: Al-faqr bahr al-bald wa-bald'uhu kulluhu 'izz", "Poverty is a sea of trouble, and all troubles for His sake are glorious." Glory is a portion of "other". The afflicted are plunged in trouble and know nothing of glory, until they forget their trouble and regard the Author thereof. Then their trouble is changed into glory, and their glory into a spiritual state (waqt), and their spiritual state into love, and their love into contemplation, so that finally the brain of the aspirant becomes wholly a centre of vision through the predominance of his imagination : he sees without eye, and hears without ear. Again, it is glorious for a man to bear the burden of trouble laid upon him by his Beloved, for in truth misfortune is glory, and prosperity is humiliation. Glory is that which makes one present with God, and humiliation is that which makes one absent from God : the affliction of poverty is a sign of "presence", while the delight of riches is a sign of "absence". Therefore one should cling to trouble of any description that involves contemplation and intimacy. Junayd says: Ya ma'shar al-fuqard innakum tu'rafuna biliah wa-tukramuna lillah fa-nsuru kayfa takununa ma'a llah idha khalawtum bihi, "O ye that are poor, ye are known through God, and are honoured for the sake of God: take heed how ye behave when ye are alone with Him," i.e. if people call you "poor" and recognize your claim, see that you perform the obligations of the path of poverty; and if they give you another name, inconsistent with what you profess, do not accept it, but fulfil your professions. The basest of men is he who is thought to be devoted to God, but really is not; and the noblest is he who is not thought to be devoted to God, but really is. The former resembles an ignorant physician,

who pretends to cure people, but only makes them worse, and when he falls ill himself needs another physician to prescribe for him; and the latter is like one who is not known to be a physician and does not concern himself with other folk, but employs his skill in order to maintain his own health. One of the moderns has said: Al-faqr 'adam" bild wujud, "Poverty is not-being without existence." To interpret this saying is impossible, because what is not-existent does not admit of being explained. On the surface it would seem that, according to this dictum, poverty is nothing, but such is not the case; the explanations and consensus of the Saints of God are not founded on a principle that is essentially non-existent. The meaning here is not "the not-being of the essence", but "the not-being of that which contaminates the essence", and all human attributes are a source of contamination : when that is removed, the result is annihilation of the attributes (fana-yi sifai), which deprives the sufferer of the instrument whereby he attains, or fails to attain, his object ; but his not-going to the essence (adam-i rawish ba-ayn) seems to him annihilation of the essence and casts him into perdition.

I have met with some scholastic philosophers who failing to understand the drift of this saying, laughed at it and declared it to be nonsense ; and also with certain pretenders (to Sufiism) who made nonsense of it and were firmly convinced of its truth, although they had no grasp of the fundamental principle. Both parties are in the wrong: one ignorantly denies the truth, and the other makes ignorance a state (of perfection). Now the expressions "not-being" ('adam) and "annihilation" (fana), as they are used by Sufis, denote the disappearance of a blameworthy instrument (alat-i madhmum) and disapproved attribute in the course of seeking a praiseworthy attribute; they do not signify the search for non-reality (adam-i-ma'ni) by means of an instrument which exists.

Dervishhood in all its meanings is a metaphorical poverty, and amidst all its subordinate aspects there is a transcendent principle. The Divine mysteries come and go over the dervish, so that his affairs are acquired by himself, his actions attributed to himself, and his ideas attached to himself. But when his affairs are freed from the bonds of acquisition (kasb), his actions are no more attributed to himself. Then he is the Way, not the wayfarer, i.e. the dervish is a place over which something is passing, not a wayfarer following his own will. Accordingly, he neither draws anything to himself nor puts anything away from himself : all that leaves any trace upon him belongs to the essence.

I have seen false Sufis, mere tonguesters (arbab al-lisan), whose imperfect apprehension of this matter seemed to deny the existence of the essence of poverty, while their lack of desire for the reality of poverty seemed to deny the attributes of its essence. They called by the name of "poverty" and "purity" their failure to seek Truth and Reality, and it looked as though they affirmed their own fancies but denied all else. Every one of them was in some degree veiled from poverty, because the conceit of Sufiism (pindar-i in hadith) betokens perfection of saintship, and the claim to be suspected of Sufism (tawally-yi tuhmat-i hadith) is the ultimate goal, i.e. this claim belongs only to the state of perfection. Therefore the seeker has no choice but to journey in their path and to traverse their "stations" and to know their symbolic expressions, in order that he may not be a plebeian ('dmmi) among the elect. Those who are ignorant of general principles ('awamm-i usul) have no ground to stand on, whereas those who are ignorant only as regards the derivative branches are supported by the principles. I have said all this to encourage you to undertake this spiritual journey and occupy yourself with the due fulfilment of its obligations.

Now in the chapter on Sufiism I will explain some of the principle and allegories and mystic saying of this sect. Then I will mention the names of their holy men, and afterwards elucidate the different doctrines held by the Sufi Shaykhs. In the next place, I will treat of the Verities, Sciences, and Laws of Suffism. Lastly, I will set forth their rules of discipline and the significance of their "stations", in order that the truth of this matter may become clear to you and to all my readers.

Excerpts from Kitab Adab al Muridin

by Alz. Abu at -Najid al- suhrawardi (RAA)

(Continued from the previous issue)

120. (Various Sufi saying are quoted expressing the idea that the Sufi habit in itself does not reflect the real worth of the person who wears it.)

121. The ethics and manners of eating. (Quran 7:31 is quoted.) One should give the poor to eat from what one is eating. One should say at the beginning of the meal "In the name of God." If one forgets to say "In the name of God" at the beginning, he should say this when he remembers. One should eat from the sides of the bowl and not from the middle "because the baraka (mana) descends in its middle."

122. One should not be concerned about the provisions of livelihood nor should one be occupied in seeking, gathering, and storing them. (Quran 29:60 quoted). The Prophet did not store anything for the morrow. One should not talk much about food because this is gluttony. A saying by Ruwaym on his being unconcerned with what he ate. In eating one should intend to satisfy hunger and give one's soul its due but not its pleasure. The Prophet said : "You owe your soul its due." Food should be taken like medicine (as an unpleasant necessity). Gluttony should be avoided. One should not find fault in any food nor should praise it. The Prophet said: "Dissolve your food by reciting God's name (dhikr allah) and by prayer, and do not go to sleep right after the meal lest your heart become hardened." God revealed to David that those hearts which were bound to their desires were screened from Him.

123. The Sufis should not have a set time for eating, they should not make much ado about it and should not prefer plenty of food which is unclean over little which is clean (Quran 18:19 quoted). They should not feed each other nor should anyone of them say to the other "Eat!" except the shaykh, who may say so the those below his rank in order to cheer them up and encourage them to overcome their shyness.

However, the custom of the common people is to bring forth the food and invite those who are present to eat.

124. Sufis eat only food whose source they know. They avoid eating the food of unjust and sinful people. A Hadith: "The Prophet forbade us to accept an invitation to dinner by sinful persons." The Sufis refuse to accept the gifts of women and to eat at their meals.

125. The Sufis do not disapprove of conversation during the meal. More of their rules of conduct in eating : to sit on the left leg, to use the formula "In the name of God, " to eat with three fingers, to take small bites and chew well, to lick the fingers and the bowl. One should not look at the morsel taken by a friend. When he finishes his eating, he should say: "Praise be to Allah who has made the provisions of our livelihood more plentiful than our needs." It is not polite to dip one's hand in the food because one can get soiled with it, (one should dip only three fingers).

126. (On eating in company) A sufi saying : "Eating with brethren should be with informality (inbisat) ; with foreigners, with nice manners; and with the poor (fuqara), with altruism." Junayd said: "Eating together is like being nursed together, so you should carefully consider the persons with whom you eat. "The Sufis prefer to eat in company. (Three Hadiths on the merit of eating in company.) When one eats in company, he should not withdraw from eating as long as the others are eating, especially if he is the head of the group. When the Prophet was eating in company; he would be the last one to finish.

127. One Sufi shaykh was asked what kind of eating was not harmful, and he answered : "For thirty years now I have not eaten anything in compliance with my desire."

128. (On the merit of fasting.) The Prophet rebuked a man who burped in his presence, saying : "Those of you who are the most sated in this world will be the most hungry on the day of resurrection." Hasan (al-Basri) said: "The temptation of Adam was in eating, and this is also your temptation until the day of resurrection." (Some sayings in praise of hunger are adduced here. A Hadith on the religious merit of being hungry.) It is the advice of the Prophet to consume the strength of the lower soul by hunger and thirst. It is reprehensible to look at food by way of examination. It is also blameworthy to waste time in eating. One Sufi used to have for his breakfast some sips of soup and he used to say, "Time is too precious to be spent on eating."

129. Most Sufis believe that a Sufi should not return any of the food which has been presented to him to the person who serves him; this is especially the rule for a guest, because a guest is not entitled to dispose freely of the food which is given him except by eating it. There are different views of scholars on the question : at what moment precisely does the guest obtain legal possession of the food which is given him. Junayd said : "Baraka descends upon the Sufis at their meals because they eat only by way of altruism (ithar)"

130. Three obligations of the host and three of the guest. The host should present only licit food, keep the times of prayer, and should not withhold from the guest whatever food he is able to give. The guest should sit where he is told by the host, be pleased with what is given to him, and should not leave without asking permission of the host. The Prophet said : "It is a commendable custom (sunna) to accompany the guest to the door of the house."

131. Their ethics in sleep. The Prophet disapproved of prolonged sleep.

One should not sleep in the company of people who are sitting. One should not get used to sleeping in a prostrate position. Whoever tends to snore should get used to sleeping on his side and not on his back.

132. The Sufi should strive to make his sleep for God or in God and not away from God. He who sleeps for God is that person who wants to strengthen himself by his sleep for the performance of the ritual duties (fara'id) and the supererogatory prayers (nawafil). The nawafil are particularly efficacious in the latter part of the night (a Hadith on this point). He who sleeps in God is the arif (knower) who is occupied by the remembrance of God and is not overtaken by sleep or slumber, and he would sleep only when sleep comes to him not by his own choice. He who sleeps away from God is the one who is heedless of Him.

133. It is one of their rules to go to sleep in a state of ritual cleanliness and to lie down on the right side. One should then say : "In Your name, O God, I lay down my body and in Your name I raise it up. O God, if You withhold my soul, have mercy on it, and if You release it, guard it as You guard Your upright servants. O God, spare me Your punishment on the day of Resurrection."

One should remember God whenever one wakes up. It is preferable to perform the ritual washing and to pray two rak'as before going to sleep. It is objectionable to sleep after the morning prayer and after the maghrib (sunset) prayer. He who wishes to have only a little sleep should not drink water except to calm his thirst. If you are with a company of people who go to sleep, you should either do as they do or leave them.

Siesta is recommended to enable one to stay up during the night. "To sleep at the beginning of the day is clumsiness, at the middle of the day, praiseworthy behaviour, and at the end of the day, stupidity."

(Two accounts of Sufis who did not lie down for thirty years or more.)

134. Abu Yazid (al-Bistami) once stretched out his leg in his cell. A heavenly voice announced to him : "He who sits in the presence of royalty without good manners (bila adab) risks being executed."

135. The rules concerning the Sufi audition (sama). (Quran 5:83, 39:18, 30:15 quoted). The Prophet said : "God did not listen to anything as He listened to dhikr recitation by a prophet who has a nice voice." It is told that the Prophet uttered a cry when Quran 73:12 was read before him. In another instance, when Quran 4:41 was recited before him, he wept. A Hadith is told by 'A'isha, that the Prophet, Abu Bakr, and 'Umar once listened to the singing of her slave girl.

136. Dhu al-Nun on sama : "It (sama) is truthful inspiration which stirs the heart toward the truth, so he who listens to it in a truthful manner will realize the truth, while he who listens to it with (the lust of his) lower soul will become a heretic. Sari (al-Saqati) mentions three different emotional responses to sama on the part of different classes of people. The sama stirs or reveals that which is in the heart.

137. Sama is beneficial to him whose heart is alive and whose lower soul is dead. One of the Sufis said that he had seen al-Khidr in his dream and al-Khidr said : "Sama" is a slippery stone on which only the feet of the learned men can stand firmly."

138. It is one of their rules not to behave in an affected manner in the same and not to have a fixed time for it. They should not listen for the purpose of enjoying or diverting

themselves. They should listen to such things that will prompt them to pious actions and will rejuvenate their aspiration.

The Sufis must learn the rules pertaining to sama. Abu 'Amr b. Nujayd said : "To make one mistake in sama is worse than to slander people for years."

139. It is improper to induce deliberately the state of ecstasy or to constrain oneself to rise up (to dance), except if one is overcome by ecstasy or in order to help by way of solidarity a fellow who is in a state of ecstasy.

One may also do this by way of cheering himself without pretending to be intoxicated or affecting ecstasy, but it is better to avoid this. (A Hadith is adduced against showing the emotions which are stirred by listening.)

140. It is disapproved for young men to rise up at the presence of shaykhs and show their ecstasy. A young disciple of Junayd used to get into ecstasy whenever he listened to sama. Junayd forbade him to give vent to his ecstatic emotions and the young man controlled himself, but one day he died in a moment of rapture. There is no dispensation (rukhsa) whatever permitting adolescents to rise up and move (to dance) in sama sessions, and most shaykhs disapprove all together of their being present at sama sessions. (to be continued)

These verses are obviously quoted here to prove that it is lawful to give vent to one's emotions upon hearing a recitation of the Quran. The two traditions about the Prophet in this section are also adduced for this purpose.

Translation hardly given the full range of meaning suggested by the Arabic. The key word in this saying is haqq, (truth) which is repeated four times : haqq also means "what is rightfully yours," and in this sense it is the opposit of haz (desire or sensual pleasure) which connected with the lower soul. Used with the definite article, al-haqq is one of the names of God, the Rea One.

OUR TRUE FIREND, GUIDE AND OUR SWORN ENEMY

By S.L.Peeran

Now, we are all living during disjointed times, when globalization's effect is felt by all of us. The doors of communication have been opened wide and we are bombarded with a new evolution of ideas through media, T.V. Advertisements, films and through other ways. It has become incumbent for us to discover as to what is good and beneficial and what is evil, bad and harmful for us. It is extremely necessary to discover and realize, who is our "Sworn Enemy", and to expose his activity. His enimical tendencies are so apparent that unless we are shortsighted and won over by him by his tricks and fancies, we will deliberately ignore him, like an overindulgent mother, who overlooks the nonsensical whimsicalities of her pampered child.

Who is an enemy and who is a friend is a primary question to be asked ? Even a child discovers who a friend is and who is not? A friend is discovered by his open compassionate nature. The nature is all embracing, overlooking all the inherent weaknesses both apparent and inherent. Always smiling, charming, over-flowing with sympathy, kindness and always ready to help in all our adverse and good circumstances. A friend sacrifices his time, money and energy for us and is always and at all moments a true well wisher. As goes the saying "a friend in need is a friend in deed." A friend is a gentleman to the core never hurting and causing ill-feeling, not bearing any malice, prejudice, hatred and jealousy. A friend gives his helping hand unasked, showers with gifts and is more closer than a blood relative. He is prepared to share his dime, time and is open-hearted, willing to share our woes, pains and goes out of way to help us in all our circumstances. "Birds of same feather flock together". So also, a friend is having same healthy airs and combinations which makes two persons to be indulgent and be always happy at all times. A friendship is lasting and looks to travel together till the eternal shores with truth as the vehicle.

Now let us look at who is an open enemy? An enemy is deadly, who wishes to place all sorts of discomforts, misleads, lays traps and thinks always of our destruction. An enemy adopts all our means to destroy our existence. He chooses stratagem, tricks and is

always full to deceptive means to cause our living a misery. An enemy wishes to lead us to mire and abyss of fire. An enemy always and at all time carries ill feelings, and is looking for a slightest of error to belittle us and cause deep irreparable hurt. Our very existence is enigma to our enemy. He is unwilling to spare us and give us a moment of happiness. Anyone trying to lay trust on such a sworn and open enemy is nothing short of being called a big bloody fool.

Our Creator calls our Himself as a 'Moula' and a Friend. Ever Compassionate and Merciful, ever indulgent and Forgiving, over looking all our shortcoming, mistakes and showering every moment and second His unlimited bounties. We cannot thank Him at all for all the good taking place all the time. He is concern of our well being and knows every thought passing through our mind. He is closer than our jugular vein. If we remember Him in our heart, he remembers us in His heart. If we remember Him in open Company, He remembers us in better Company. If we take one step towards Him, He put ten steps forward towards us. He is seventy times more loving than our mothers. He has created seven heavens, the nature, Sun, Moon and Stars and made them subservient to us. He has made us his Vicegerent (Khalifa) on this earth in His own nature and commands us to walk on this earth with humility and be ever thankful and grateful to Him for the never diminishing bounties showered on us. He expects us to be in ever true submission to him with all our humility in total surrender as a slave to the master, as a patient to the nurse, as a dead to the 'gazzal' (one who gives bath to the dead) so that He can increase His bounties both in this world and in the world hereafter. He wants us to look into ourselves deeply and discover our true nature totally in tune with His Compassion and Mercy and place our brow on the glimmering threshold of His Tremendous Power at every changing moment of the day and night which are five in the meridian (i) Predawn, (ii) After mid day (iii) When Sun climbs down (iv) after dusk and (v) at beginning of night fall. As thanks giving, part just a fraction ($2\frac{1}{2}\%$) of our wealth with us for a whole year to the poor and indigent; be introspective for a month by abstaining from the pleasures of food, water, vain talk, pleasure seeking from pre-dawn till dusk by observing fasting (ROZA). As a final act of surrender to make a pilgrimage (Haj) to His first House (Kaaba) built by his dear surrendered friend, who dedicated himself to His cause and was ever prepared to sacrifice any thing for Him, his person, when thrown in fire by king Namrood; when asked to sacrifice his son (Ismaeel) by

abandoning him in the desert with his wife Hajira, and ultimately to sacrifice himself with abundant love.

Our Friend is ever Gracious, so He expects us to be so with one and all especially with our kith and kin, parents, brothers, sisters, neighbors, wife and children, relatives poor and indigent with travellers and way farers, to those who ask for help and to the needy.

Now, our Friend has disclosed to us who our sworn enemy is ? Our enemy who came into existence even before our creation, who having discovered our nature, of all our weaknesses and good points, has taken permission from our Friend to lay trap for us with strategies, stratagem, deception and tricks, frauds, and by cheating to destroy us and leads us to the eternal abyss (Hell, a place of fire for wrong doers),

Our enemy is embedded right in our heart; Our Friend, Our Rub, Our Malik, our Elahi calls upon us to seek His refuge by shunning the Company of our sworn enemy. The Devil, the Satan, the Iblis; by revealing to us the last sura in the Holy Quran (CXIV).

- 1) Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of Mankind.
- 2) The king of mankind,
- 3) The God of Mankind,
- 4) from the evil of the sneaking whisperer,
- 5) who whispereth in the hearts of mankind
- 6) Of the Jinn and of Mankind

(Last Sura Mankind of Holy Quran (CXIV))

When our True Moula (Master) and Friend (Naseer) proclaimed of our creation, to the angels, our sworn enemy felt the pangs of jealousy and hatred for us. Please note that it is the feeling of jealousy which is the 'FIRST SIN', in the presence of our Lord. It is the root of all evils. Beware of it and be ever prepared to discover it in our heart and purify it with all our Herculean efforts. Now our enemy could not see the Light of our Friend in our being. He just could not bear us. He refused to bow before us at our Master's command

and prepared himself to be thrown out of His presence for ever. Our sworn enemy took permission from our Lord to remain our ever sworn enemy. At the same time our enemy has declared openly at the outset, that he will not ever be able to come near those who are in ever true submission to our Lord.

"40. Save such of them as are your perfectly devoted slaves" (Chapter XV Al-Hijr)

"80. Save Thy single minded slaves among them"

(Sura Sad XXVIII)

Now, who are those who are in the submission of our Lord, our Friend and our Guide. Those are the people who are always humble and seek His refuge, His Mercy, His forgiveness, who are repentant of wrongs committed and accept our Lord's lordship over us by accepting His commands implicitly like an ever obedient slave and a soldier, perform all our duties cheerfully with deep devotion and love. Love and Love alone should encompass our being. Love for our Rub, our Malik, our King, our Creator, Allah, to His Last Prophet Hazreth Mohammad Mustaffa (Sal) and all His true companions, saints, all our brother sisters and His mankind.

Let us look into the dangers, tricks, stratagems that our open enemy who is embedded in our heart and flows in our veins has promised to ruin us, from which, our Lord has promised to protect us, if we surrender truthfully and be ever in His submission as a totally surrendered person, submitting our will and seek peace in HIM.

Our sworn enemy is always giving false promises, as against True promise of our friend. Takes advantage of our desires and increases it and our attachments for it, increases the greed by creating glamour and glitter before our eyes by all means (T.V. media, radio, music, dance etc), makes us also one like him. He increases our ego, makes us arrogant and puffed up with pride. He makes us to promise to our brothers and break it. Our sworn enemy by allowing us to do this makes us liars. Thus, we are trapped in his tricks. We are shunned by our brothers and he exposes us to the draconian laws of the Nation, to its penal code. Thus, we are allowed to fend for ourselves, to fight legal battles and face imprisonments, dishonours and defames us.

Our enemy exposes our lust by increasing the libido and exposing the shame. Thus makes us prey of our sexual desires and its fantasies, thus leading us to sexually transmitted diseases, AIDs etc. Our sworn enemy robs us of our peace of mind and tranquility by creating discord between our brothers, sisters, parents, friends, neighbors, wife and children. Our family Courts get filled with divorce petitions and maintenance claims. Our juvenile courts are flooded with delinquent children from broken homes, our hospitals are full of hypertension and diabetic cases, our mental hospitals are with ever increasing insanity cases. He takes us to the world of fantasy and fun and miles away from reality and Truth. Our enemy takes us to alcohol, drugs, cheap dancing halls, extra marital relations, quarrels, fights, terrorism credit cards, hotels and restaurants for self-indulgence, extravagancy, cheap sensations, makes us loud mouth, abusive, vulgar and debasing; ever increasing our temptations. Be ever cautions of our sworn enemy. The IBLIS, THE SATAN. THE SATAN.



A poem from Divani shams Tabriz

By Moulana Rumi (RAA)

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".

TREASURE OF DEVICES

By Dr. Shujaat Hussain

A light to make the day bright
Just as the sun in the sky,
Travelers' guide in the night
Give guts to make us fly.

Rhythmic flavour fabulours
With lofty contents in each verse
Poetic beauty stupendous
An amazing feature without curse.

Spark and spiritual charm
Beyond the brilliant's brain
Keep us invariably warm
Balmy splendour of strain.

Thresure of beauty, truth and wisdom
Fiery fervour and frenzy endeavour
Soon we find on horizon of stardom
Firm faith fishes fathomless favour.

Mirror of virtues and evils
Assured of measure for measure,
Are they prophets, satans, angels,
Or human beings of any calibre?
Promise of judicious justice
Eternal abode is hell or heaven
A little bit delay in practice
Will deprive glimpses of heaven

Human rights at the top of its voice
Take the rulers like the soul of belief,
Utmost duty, let the subjects rejoice.
A must to attain and feel relief.

'Faith' a matter extremely of conviction

Not to adjust any exigencies of situation
No compromise nor there to be any compulsion
Co-existence of religions is a lesson.

The insistence on being just and impartial
No consideration of love or enmity
Infuses such spirit as the essential
Probability of growing peace and equity.

Emphasis on education
Rather than offering prayers,
Is invaluable suggestion,
On the earth to the stayers.

To the weak and the sick
Teach them to be gaily
One always keep stick
To faith and feel zesty.

Not a human being ever disappointed
In fourteen hundred years of its existence
Ranks of Chisti and Nizamuddin that granted
Who had kissed its words in persistence.

Millions of men with mighty mind,
Experienced thousands of eclipses.
Too daunting the Qur'an, they find.
The smallest verse therein perplexes.

Reading of its verses
Grace knowledge to soar high,
Cosmic glory blesses
Distance may cause us sigh.

Honesty, humility, humanity,
Generosity, loyalty, fraternity,
Pity, virtuosity and civility
Are assured of astonishing bounty.

Warned against cruelty, hostility,
Hegemony, greed, infidelity,
Usurp, pride, wrath and complicity
With dire consequences inevitability.

Available devices of problems
That the beings face in diurnal course
Till the last day will remain emblem
To be reckoned as insurmountable force.

That the vicissitude of the fortune
Depends on the human action
Believe in His bounties-an opportune
May be graced even in a fraction.

Since ship still wrecks in the vast seas
Issues around the world have great intense
Heart fails, brain hemorrhage, posing danger disease
Hence relevance of the Holy Qur'an is immense.

As along as wind blows, rivers flow,
Twinkling of stars and fragrant flowers,
Pulpy fruits in the garden grow
Spiritual strength of cosmic verse showers.

TOTAL SURRENDER

By S.L.Peeran

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.