

Sufi World Book -2

International Sufi Centre

Bangalore

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Aims and Objectives

1. To propogate the ideals and proctice 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.

Foreword

The 'Sufi-World' book -1 has evoked tremendous response in the readers interested in Sufi thought and practices. We are greatly moved by the response we have got from our well wishers in strengthening our hands both morally and materially.

We hope that in future too the readers will continue to encourage us in our pursuit of propagating Sufi thought.

Sufi-World, book-2, Contains Several Chapters throwing light on the lives and practises of very important Sufies who are more stores in the history of Sufism. Ibnul Arabi and Inan Ghazali are glittering stars amongst the galaxy of sufies. A brief note their lives and practices with definitely enlighten our readers about their achievement in the Sufi thought.

Shaikh Abdul Qader Gilani was not only a great Sufi but also a great scholar and orator. His book entitled 'Futuh al Bhaib' Contains the lectures which he delivered from time to time. His lectures not only illuminate the dark selves but also emotionally charges the person reading them.

Kashf al Matgub by Shaikh Ali Hejweri alias Data Gunj Baksh is the one of the first book ever written on Sufism. The excerpt of this book on Sufism is something which no reader can and should afford to miss.

We expect to have a whole hearted response from our readers again.

Khaleel Momoon
Syed Liaqath Peeran
Editors

Bangalore
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Excerpts from Holy Quran

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

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

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

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

By men whom neither
Traffic nor merchandise
Can divert from the Remembrance
Of God, nor from regular Prayer,
Nor from the practice
Of regular Charity :
Their (only) fear is
For the Day when
Hearts and eyes
Will be transformed
(In a world wholly new),

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

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

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

For any to whom God
Giveth not light
There is no light !

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

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

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

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

And God has created
Every animal from water :
Of them there are some
That creep on their bellies ;
some that walk on two legs ;

And some that walk on four.
God creates what He wills ;
For verily God has power
Over all things.

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

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

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

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

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

Ibn - al – Arabi

by Titus Burckhardt

THE Sufi Abu Bakr Muhammed ibn al-Arabi of the Arabic tribe of Hatim at-Tai was born in the years 560 of the Hegira (the year 65 of the Christian era) at Murcia in Andalusia ; he died in 638 (A.D. 1240) in Damascus. In esoteric circles of Islam he is called muhyi-d-din, 'the animator of religion', and 'ash-sheikh al-akbar', 'the greatest master'. His doctrinal work imposes itself by its depths and by its synthesis, as well as by the incisive form of certain formulations, which refer to the most elevated aspects of Sufism. The books and treatises of the master were very numerous ; most of them seem to be definitely lost; amongst those that survive the Fuiihat al-Makkiyah ('The revelations of Mecca') and the Fusus al-Hikam ("The Wisdom of the Prophets") are the most celebrated. The former of these two works constitutes a sort of sum of esoteric sciences; the latter, of which we present here a translation limited to the most important chapters, is often considered as the spiritual testament of the master, who drafted it in the year 627 of the Hegira (A.D.1229) in Damascus.

We must specify that the title 'Wisdom of the Prophets' is only a paraphrase, henceforth consecrated by the use of the Arab title of Fusus al-Hikam, which signifies literally 'the settings of the Wisdom'. This expression does not so much define the contents of the book but summarizes it symbolically, and could not be understood without the preliminary knowledge of the symbolism in question : al-fass-singular of fusus - is the setting which holds the stone or the seal (al-khatam) of a ring; by 'the Wisdom' (al-hikam), one must understand here the aspects of the Divine Wisdom. The 'settings' which hold the precious stones of the eternal Wisdom (al-hikmah) are the spiritual 'Forms' of different Prophets, their respective natures, both human and spiritual, which transport such or such an aspect of the Divine Knowledge. The incorruptible character of the precious stone corresponds to the unchanging nature of Wisdom.

The metaphor of the setting which encloses the precious stone of the Wisdom, and encircles its form, concerns the human nature of a prophet in so far as he is the recipient of the Divine Wisdom ; however, this aspect of symbolism, which corresponds to the human appearance of things, is to be found compensated and as if enlarged by the formula that Ibn 'Arabi adopts for the titles of the various parts of his book : 'The setting of the Divine Wisdom in the World of Adam', 'The setting of the Wisdom of the Divine Inspiration in the Word of Seth', 'The setting of the Wisdom of the Transcendence in the Word of Noah' etc. According to these expressions, the settings, that is to say the individual form of the prophet, is in its turn contained in the Word (al-kalimah), which is

the essential and Divine reality of this same prophet ; in fact by its 'active' identification with the Divine Wisdom, each prophet is an immediate determination of the eternal Word, which is the primordial 'enunciation' of god. It is the 'words' which contain the 'settings', for it is the individual who is contained by the universal and not inversely, in spite of human appearances. Every prophet, as Perfect Man, 'contains', then, himself, since he 'contains' the Divine Wisdom, and, in relation to his interior and 'supra-individual' reality he 'is' this Wisdom ; now, this latter contains the perfect humanity of the Man-God, and it is this aspect of things which corresponds to the ontological reality, without annulling, however, the 'reality' which is apparent from the human point of view. Finally, we must not forget to add that the humanity of the prophets, which, by definition, is perfect and 'without equal', reflects in its particularity - the 'setting' (fass) which has such or such a form - or such an aspect of a Divine Name, which comes back to saying that the prophet identifies himself in the final analysis to this Name, this latter 'opening the way' to the Divine Indifferentiated Essence.

This apparently contradictory complexity of aspects, integrated in a suprarational synthesis, is characteristic in the teaching of Ibn 'Arabi.

The connection between the 'setting' and the Wisdom which it contains, and which is in its turn the content, prefigures the fundamental theme of the Fusus al-Hikam, a theme which can be summarized in the following manner; the Divine revelation complies with the receptivity of the heart, the same as light, without the colour in itself, is coloured according to the crystal which refracts it ; the aspect that the Divinity assumes then, depends on its 'recipient'. On the other hand the Divine Reality being active and creating, whereas the 'recipient' is passive, all positive qualities by which God manifests Himself, must emanate from Him ; these are the real contents of the Divine Essence which determine the quality of a contemplative state. Finally, according to a point of view even more vast, the receptacle, that is to say the heart of man, or more exactly his essential and integral being, is itself a divine possibility ; it is this permanent and informal possibility, the archetype, which the most immediately receives the Divine Light.

The divine Reality, then, englobes at once the recipient of the revelation and its contents; one knows it only by the law itself of its manifestation, so that one distinguishes it from its receptacles without however separating, essentially and in all aspects, the receptacles and the Reality.

Man, who is the receptacle 'par excellence' of the Divine revelation, must, in order to know God, know himself, in his permanent possibility. But, he will know himself, only through God ; in so far as He is himself the object of the knowledge, God is the 'subject',

the transcendent Witness; in so far as God is the 'object' of the knowledge, He colours Himself according to the subject who contemplates Him.

If there is, in the doctrinal teaching of Ibn 'Arabi, some sort of system, it is the permutation of opposing and complementary terms. This methodical employ of paradox allows no truce to the spirit of the reader, naturally inclined to 'fix' himself on a definite, 'dogmatic' notion if you like, and it pushes him towards that which Ibn 'Arabi himself calls 'al-hayrah', that is to say 'perplexity' or 'astonishment' before that which surpasses rational order ; this hayrah, he says, must become a constant circular movement round a point mentally incomprehensible, an image which recalls the last verses of the Divine Comedy : '... Such was I at the time of this new vision ; I wanted to see how must the (human) image fitted to the (divine) circle, and how it integrated itself. But for that my own wings do not accomplished. Here at the highest spiritual degree of imagination, the forces were failing ; but already my desire and my will were turning, like a wheel which is uniformly putting motion by the Love which moves the sun and other stars'.

Certain statements of Ibn 'Arabi may appear incoherent not only for the reason which we have just indicated, but also because intellectual inspiration, evoking at once innumerable truths which are jointly and separately liable, exerts a sort of pressure on the too narrow recipient, which is discursive thought, and tends to break the 'horizontal' continuity ; for an analogous reason, the epistles of St.Paul may seem incoherent. The intrinsic plenitude of the contemplative perception, without common measure of reason, will produce formulas supersaturated with meanings, whereas it prevents in a certain manner the homogeneous and definite construction of a system, which in any case would be too limited to 'exhaust' an aspect of the divine Truth. The more the statements of Ibn 'Arabi are essential, the more they are discontinuous ; the completely nomad character of the Arab spirit, its power more plastic than incisive, seems there to be turned to profit by inspiration.

We will not return here to the terminology of which the master makes use, for we have talked of it in our study of Sufism which one can consider in this respect as an introduction on to the Fusus al-Hikam. We may also refer to our partial translation of al-Insan al-kamil of Jili which is presented as an expose, more constructive, and more explicit, of certain fundamental ideas contained in the Fusus al-Hikam. There is moreover, between the language of Ibn 'Arabi and Jili, the mental gap between the XII and the XIV centuries ; that which the former expresses implicitly, the latter makes precise in a manner more articulate, at the price of a certain delimitation of realities.

As we have just seen, each chapter of the *Fusus al-Hikam* is dedicated to a prophet, that is to say one of the prophets mentioned in the Koran, starting with Adam - considered in Islam as a prophet - until Muhammed who 'seals' the universal 'prophethood'. The Koranic chain of prophets includes also Christ and certain prophets of the ancient people of Arabia, like Salih and Hud, which the Judeo Christian writings do not know. The base and point of departure of each chapter is a passage of writing, the most often a word of the Koran attributed to one of the prophets.

Amongst the 27 chapters of the work, we have chosen those which, by their doctrinal content seem to us the most important. We have omitted the chapters or the parts of the chapters of which the content is more particular, or which contain exegesis too difficult to render into a European language ; for the Sufi interpretation of the Koran is often founded on a verbal symbolism belonging to the Arabic language. In a certain sense the first two chapters, on Adam and on Seth, summarize in themselves the metaphysical doctrine of Ibn 'Arabi in the double relationship of the universal manifestation of God and of the spiritual realization.

Amongst the books which have been written on Muhyi-d-din Ibn 'Arabi in European languages, the most important, and even the only work of merit, is *El Islam Christianizado* by Miguel Asin Palacios. This work passes in silence over the metaphysics of Ibn 'Arabi, but on the other hand it describes his life and his spiritual method, of which he gives some most precious glimpses, in spite of the general tendency, which is announced in the title itself of the book and which is at the base of abusive assimilations ; struck by the saintliness of certain Sufis, Palacios wishes to justify them before the Christian dogma, considering them as representatives of a Christian tendency in the framework of Islam. To this end he makes them derive their method of monastic traditions from Oriental Christianity. But, if, certainly, there have been contacts between the first Sufis and the Christian contemplatives - certain Islamic witnesses confirm it, - the most part of the analogies that Palacios invokes in favour of his thesis are those which are to be found in the most diverse civilizations. As for the fundamental role which the Koran plays in Sufism, Palacios is of the opinion that the 'Judeo - Christian elements' contained in the Koran compensate for the lack of authenticity, as if the truth could be transported by a lie or as if a spiritual way was not an organic total, wherein everything is to be found, so that the smallest element may have incalculable consequences. However it may be, the work in question gives an aspect on the spirituality of Ibn 'Arabi which a purely metaphysical work like the *Fusus al-Hikam* could make one lose sight of ; we must insist then, in stressing that our book will be unable to give a complete idea of the way of our Sufi. Ibn 'Arabi observes himself that the perfection of the spiritual virtues

may provoke the illumination of the heart, even without the man having a theoretical knowledge going beyond the elementary truths of the doctrine, whereas the comprehension of the metaphysical theory does not guarantee his effective realization. Let us add that there have been Sufis who taught only the 'polishing of the mirror of the heart' and remained silent on the transcendent Truths (al haqaiq), rather like certain Buddhist masters limited themselves to teaching the rejection of psychological limitations.

M. Asin Palacios has also published a Spanish translation of Risalat al-Quds (The Epistle of Sanctity) of Ibn 'Arabi, under the title of Vidas de Santones Andaluces; this book describes the lives of Sufis that Ibn 'Arabi knew in Spain and who were for the most part his own spiritual masters.

It is not surprising - in view of the obscurity of our author - that the number of his writings translated into European languages be so restricted. Let us mention the English translation - by Reynold A. Nicholson - of Tarjuman al-ashwaq (The interpreter of Desires) a collection of poems of love with esoteric commentaries. An excellent translation of 'Treatise of Unity' (Risalat al-Ahadiyah), attributed to Muhyi-d-din Ibn 'Arabi, has been published by Abdul Hadi in the review La Voile d'Isis. The Arabic text of three minor treatises of Ibn 'Arabi, under the title of Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-'Arabi has been edited by Nyberg, who has given a resume of it in German. As for the book of Khaja Khan : The Wisdom of the Prophets, it represents only a free paraphrase of the Fusus al-Hikam.

For our translation we have used the edition lithographed in Cairo, in the year of 1309 of the Hegira (A.D. 1891) made by Muhammed al-Baruni, with the commentary by 'Abd ar Razzaq al-Qashani and the typographic edition of 1304 (1887) , made by Jalal ad-din Uskubi, with commentaries by 'Abd al -Ghani an-Nabulusi and by 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Jami. These three commentators are well known Sufis ; an- Nabulusi lived at the end of the XII and beginning of the XIII century, al Qashani in the XIII and al-Jami in the XV century of the Christian era. We have not considered it useful to translate these commentaries, for the exigencies of the European reader with regard to a commentary differ a great deal to those of the oriental reader ; on the other hand, we have completed the translation by some notes and sometimes interpolations - given in brackets - where it has seemed to us indispensable ; all modern translation from an Arabic text written in an elliptical language of the XII century necessitates a certain amount of exigent work.

Excerpts from "A way of a Sufi"

by Idris Shah

THE twelfth-century philosopher and Sufi-El-Ghazali Quotes in his Book of Knowledge thisline from El-Mutanabbi : 'To the sick man, sweet water tastes bitter in the mouth.'

This could very well be taken as Ghazali's motto. Eight hundred years before Pavlov, he pointed out and hammered home (often in engaging parables, sometimes in startlingly 'modern' words) the problem of conditioning.

In spite of Pavlov and the dozens of books and reports of clinical studies into human behaviour made since the Korean war, the ordinary student of things of the mind is unaware of the power of indoctrination. Indoctrination, in totalitarian societies, is something which is desirable providing that it furthers the beliefs of such societies. In other groupings its presence is scarcely even suspected. This is what makes almost anyone vulnerable to it.

Ghazali's work not only pre-dates, but also exceeds, the contemporary knowledge of these matters. At the time of writing informed opinion is split between whether indoctrination (whether overt or covert) is desirable or otherwise, whether, too, it is inescapable or not.

Ghazali not only points out that what people call belief may be a state of obsession; he states clearly, in accordance with Sufi principles, that it is not inescapable, but insists that it is essential for people to be able to identify it.

His books were burnt by Mediterranean bigots from Spain to Syria. Nowadays they are not put into the flames, but their effect, except among Sufis, is perhaps less ; they are not read very much.

He regarded the distinction between opinion and knowledge as something which can easily be lost. When this happens, it is incumbent upon those who know the difference to make it plain as far as they are able.

Ghazali's scientific, psychological discoveries, though widely appreciated by academics of all kinds, have not been given the attention they deserve because he specifically disclaims the scientific or logical method as their origin. He arrived at his knowledge through his upbringing in Sufism, among Sufis, and through a form of direct

perception of the truth which has nothing to do with mechanical intellection. This, of course, at once puts him outside the pale for scientists. What is rather curious, however, is that his discoveries are so astonishing that one would have thought that investigators would have liked to find out how he made them.

'Mysticism' having been given a bad name like the dog in the proverb, if it cannot be hanged, can at least be ignored. This is a measure of scholastic psychology : accept the man's discoveries if you cannot deny them, but ignore his method if it does not follow your beliefs about method.

If Ghazali had produced no worthwhile results, he would naturally have been regarded as only a mystic, and a proof that mysticism is educationally or socially unproductive.

The influence of Ghazali on Western thought is admitted on all hands to be enormous. But this influence itself shows the working of conditioning ; the philosophers of medieval Christendom who adopted many of his ideas did so selectively, completely ignoring the parts which were embarrassing to their own indoctrination activities.

Ghazali's way of thought attempted to bring to a wider audience than the comparatively small Sufi one a final distinction between belief and obsession. He stressed the role of upbringing in the inculcation of religious beliefs, and invited his readers to observe the mechanism involved. He insisted upon pointing out that those who are learned may be, and often are, stupid as well, and can be bigoted, obsessed. He affirms that, in addition to having information and being able to reproduce it, there is such a thing as knowledge, which happens to be a higher form of human thought.

The habit of confusing opinion with knowledge, a habit which is to be met with every day at the current time, Ghazali regards as an epidemic disease.

In saying all these things, with a wealth of illustration and in an atmosphere which was most uncondusive to scientific attitudes, Ghazali was not merely playing the part of a diagnostician. He had acquired his own knowledge in a Sufic manner, and he realized that higher understanding - being a Sufi, in fact - was only possible to people who could see and avoid the phenomena which he was describing.

Ghazali produced numerous books and published many teachings. His contribution to human thought and the relevance of his ideas hundreds of years later are unquestioned. Let us partly repair the omission of our predecessors by seeing what he has to say about method. What was the Way of ElGhazali ? What does man have to do in order to be like him, who was admittedly one of the world's giants of philosophy and psychology ?

Ghazali on the Path

A human being is not a human being while his tendencies include self-indulgence, covetousness, temper and attacking other people.

A student must reduce to the minimum the fixing of his attention upon customary things like his people and his environment, for attention-capacity is limited.

The pupil must regard his teacher like a doctor who knows the cure of the patient. He will serve his teacher. Sufis teach in unexpected ways. An experienced physician prescribes certain treatments correctly. Yet the outside observer might be quite amazed at what he is saying and doing ; he will fail to see the necessity or the relevance of the procedure being followed.

This is why it is unlikely that the pupil will be able to ask the right questions at the right time. But the teacher knows what and when a person can understand.

The Difference between Social and Initiatory Activity

Ghazali insists upon the connection and also the difference between the social or diversionary contact of people, and the higher contact.

What prevents the progress of an individual and a group of people, from praiseworthy beginnings, is their stabilizing themselves upon repetition and what is a disguised social basis.

If a child, he says, asks us to explain to him the pleasures which are contained in wielding sovereignty, we may say that it is like the pleasure which he feels in sport ; though, in reality, the two have nothing in common except that they both belong to the category of pleasure.

Parable of the People with a Higher Aim

Imam El-Ghazali relates to tradition from the life of Isa, ibn Maryam : Jesus, Son of Mary.

Isa one day saw some people sitting miserably on a wall, by the roadside. He asked : 'What is your affliction?' They said : 'We have become like this through our fear of Hell.'

He went on his way, and saw a number of people grouped disconsolately in various postures by the wayside. He said : 'What is your affliction?' They said : 'Desire for Paradise has made us like this.'

He went on his way, until he came to a third group of people. They looked like people who had endured much, but their faces shone with joy.

Isa asked them : 'What has made you like this ?' and they answered : 'The Spirit of Truth. We have seen Reality, and this has made us oblivious of lesser goals.'

Isa said : 'These are the people who attain. On the Day of Accounting these are they who will be in the Presence of God.'

The Three Functions of the Perfected Man

The Perfected Man of the Sufis has three forms of relationship with people. These vary with the condition of the people.

The three manners are exercised in accordance with

- (1) the Form of belief which surrounds of Sufi ;
- (2) The capacity of students, who are taught in accordance with their ability to understand ;
- (3) A special circle of people who will share an understanding of the knowledge which is derived from direct inner experience.

Attraction of Celebrities

A man who is being delivered from the danger of a fierce lion does not object, whether this service is performed by an unknown or an illustrious individual. Why, therefore, do people seek knowledge from celebrities ?

The Nature of divine Knowledge

The question of divine knowledge is so deep that it is really known only to those who have it.

A child has no real knowledge of the attainments of an adult. An ordinary adult cannot understand the attainments of a learned man.

In the same way, an educated man cannot yet understand the experiences of enlightened saints or Sufis.

Love and Self-Interest

If one loves someone because it gives pleasure, one should not be regarded as loving that person at all. The love is, in reality, thought this is not perceived, directed towards the pleasure. The source of the pleasure is the secondary object of attention, and it is perceived only because the perception of the pleasure is not well enough developed for the real feeling to be identified and described.

You Must be Prepared

You must prepare yourself for the transition in which there will be none of the things to which you have accustomed yourself, says Ghazali. After death your identity will have to respond to stimuli of which you have a chance to get a fore test here. If you remain attached to the few things with which you are familiar, it will only make you miserable.

Ignorance

People oppose things because they are ignorant of them.

Ceremonies of Music and Movement

Such meetings must be held in accordance with the requirements of time and place. Onlookers whose motives are not worthy shall be excluded. The participants in audition must sit silently and not look at each other. They seek what may appear from their won 'hearts'.

The Sterile Woman

A man went to a doctor and told him that his wife was not bearing children. The physician saw the woman, took her pulse, and said :

'I cannot treat you for sterility because I have discovered that you will in any case die within forty days'.

When she heard this the woman was so worried that she could eat nothing during the ensuing forty days.

But she did not die at the time predicted.

The husband took the matter up with the doctor, who said :

'Yes, I knew that. Now she will be fertile.'

The husband asked how this had come about.

The doctor told him :

'Your wife was too fat, and this was interfering with her fertility. I knew that the only thing which would put her off her food would be fear of dying. She is now, therefore, cured.'

The question of knowledge is a very dangerous one.

The Dance

A disciple had asked permission to take part in the 'dance' of the Sufis.

The Sheikh said : 'Fast completely for three days. Then have luscious dishes cooked. If you then prefer the 'dance', you may take part in it.'

A Quality must have A Vehicle

Speed, which becomes a virtue when it is found in a horse, by itself has no advantages.

The Idiot Self

If you cannot find in a man an appropriate example of dedication, study the lives of the Sufis. Man should also say to him-self : 'O my soul ! You think yourself clever and are upset at being called idiotic. But what else are you in reality ? You make clothes for winter, but no provision for another life. You are like a man in winter who says: "I shall not wear warm clothes, but place trust in God's kindness to protect me from the cold." He does not realize that, in addition to creating cold, God placed before man the means to protect himself from it.'

Man was made for Learning

A camel is stronger than a man; an elephant is larger ; a lion has greater valour ; cattle can eat more than man ; birds are more virile. Man was made for the purpose of learning.

The Price of Knowledge

'Assuredly there is a price on this knowledge. It is to be given only to those who can keep it and not lose it.'

Book of Knowledge, quoting Ikrima

Commentary by Junubi :

This knowledge is of course the Sufi knowledge. It does not refer to book-knowledge, something which can be written down or preserved in factual form ; because such material would not be diminished by exposing it to someone who might fail to benefit from it. It is the knowledge given in the time and manner which verifies and makes live

the book-knowledge. 'Giving knowledge which will be lost' refers to allowing certain 'states' of recognition of truth to be engendered in an individual before that person is in a condition to preserve that state; hence he loses its advantage and it is lost.

Comment by Ahmad Minai :

Because of the difficulty of grasping this fact, and due to an understandable laziness, intellectuals have decided to 'abolish' any learning which cannot be contained in books. This is not to say that it does not exist. It makes it more difficult to find and teach, since the above-named types (intellectuals) have trained people not to look for it.

Possessions

You possess only whatever will not be lost in a shipwreck.

Gain and Loss

I should like to know what a man who has no knowledge has really gained, and what a man of knowledge has not gained.

Iman Ghazali on the Avoidance of Sins

Religion consists of two parts, the leaving undone of what is forbidden and the performance of duties. Of these the setting aside of what is forbidden is the weightier, for the duties or acts of obedience (as described in Part I) are within the power of every one, but only the upright are able to set aside the appetites. For that reason Muhammad (may God bless and preserve him) said : 'The true Flight or Hijrah is the flight from evil, and the real Holy War or Jihad is the warfare against one's passions'.

You disobey or sin against God only through the parts of your body. Yet these are a gift to you from God and a trust committed to you. To employ God's gift in order to sin against Him is the height of ingratitude ; to betray the trust which God committed to you is the height of presumption. The parts of your body are your subjects ; see to it, then, how you rule over them. 'Each of you is a ruler, and each of you is responsible for those he rules over'.

All the parts of your body will bear witness against you in the courts of the resurrection, with voluble and sharp, that is, eloquent, tongue, declaring your faults before the chiefs of the creatures. God most high says (Q.24, 25) : 'On a day when their tongues and hands and feet will bear witness against them for what they have been doing'; and also (Q.36, 65) : 'Today We shall set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will testify what they have been piling up.' Then guard all your body, and especially the seven parts, for Hell has seven gates, to each of which is allotted a portion of the people of Hell. To these gates are appointed only those who have sinned against God with these seven parts of the body, namely, the eye, the ear, the tongue, the stomach, the genitals, the hand, the foot.

The eye has been created for you solely in order that you may be guided by it in darkness, that you may be aided by it in respect of your needs, that by it you may behold the wonders of the realm of the earth and the heavens, and learn from the signs in them. Keep the eye from three things or four, from looking at women other than those you may lawfully look at or looking lustfully at a beautiful form, from looking at a Muslim with a contemptuous eye, from perceiving the disgrace or vice of a Muslim.

The ear you ought to keep from listening to heresy or slander or obscenity or vain conversation or accounts of men's wickedness. The ear was created for you solely that you might hear the word of God most high and the Traditions of the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) and the wisdom of His saints, and that by gaining knowledge thereby, you might attain to the realm enduring and everlasting bliss. If you

listen with your ear to anything of what is disapproved (sc.by God), what was for you (sc.in your favour) will become against you, and what would have been the cause of your success (or salvation) will be turned into the cause of your destruction. This is the greatest possible loss. Do not imagine that the sinfulness belongs only to the speaker and not to the hearer. Tradition says that 'the hearer shares (the guilt of) the speaker, and is like him a slanderer'.

The tongue was created for you chiefly that you might frequently engage in the mention (dhikr) of God most high (sc. in acts of adoration) and in the reciting of His book, that you might direct the creatures of God most high to His way, and that you might declare to God the religious and secular needs of which you are conscious, If you use it for some purpose other than that for which it was created, you deny the goodness of God most high in giving it to you. It is the part of your body with most power over you and over the rest of creation. It is, above all, the slanders of the tongue which throw men into Hell on their noses. So gain the mastery over it to the utmost of your ability, lest it throw you to the bottom of Hell. There is a tradition that 'the man who speaks a word to make his friends laugh is thereby hurled into the pit of Hell for seventy years'. A Muslim met the death of a martyring battle in the lifetime of the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) and someone said, 'May he enjoy Paradise', but Muhammad (God bless and preserve him) said : 'How do you know he is in Paradise? Perhaps he used to speak about what did not concern him and to be niggardly with what gained him nothing'.

With regards to your tongue there are eight things to be guarded against :

(1) Lying . Keep your tongue from lying, whether in earnest or in jest. Do not accustom yourself to lying in jest, for it may lead you to lying in earnest. Lying is one of the sources of the greater sins, and, if you come to be known as a liar, your uprightness becomes worthless, your word is not accepted, and (men's) eyes scorn and despise you. If you want to know the foulness of lying for yourself, consider the lying of someone else and how you shun it and despise the man who lies and regard his communication as foul. Do the same with regard to all your own vices, for you do not realize the foulness of your vices from your own case, but from someone else's. What you hold bad in another man, others will undoubtedly hold bad in you. Do not therefore be complacent about that in yourself.

(2) Breaking promises. Take care not to promise something and then fail to perform it. The good you do to people should rather be in deed without any word. If you are forced to make a promise, take care not to break it, except from inability to fulfill it or from compulsion. To do so is one of the signs of hypocrisy and wickedness. Muhammad (God

bless and preserve him) said : 'There are three things, which, if a man practises secretly, he is a hypocrite, even although he fasts and performs the Worship : if, when he relates something, he lies ; if, when he makes a promise, he break it; if, when he is given a trust, he betrays it.'

Backbiting . Backbiting within Islam (sc.in respect of Muslims) is more serious than thirty adulteries ; so it is reported in Tradition. The meaning of backbiting is the mention of matters concerning a man which he would dislike, were he to hear them ; the person who does this is a backbiter and wicked, even if what he says is true. Be careful to avoid the backbiting of devout but hypocritical persons, namely, by giving people to understand something without actually stating it, as when you say, 'May God made him a better man, seeing what he has done has harmed and grieved me'; and 'Let us ask God to make both us and him better'. This combines two evil things; firstly backbiting, for by it people come to understand ; and secondly justification of oneself and praise of oneself for freedom from sin and for goodness. Now, if your aim in saying, 'My God make him better,' was to intercede for him, intercede for him in secret; if you are grieved because of him (that is , for his sake), then the sin of it is that you do not want to criticize him and make public his wickedness; but in making public your grief at his wickedness, you make a public assertion that he is wicked. Sufficient to keep you from backbiting is the word of God most high (Q.49, 12): 'Do not go behind each other's back; would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when he is dead ? Ye loathe it.' Thus God compares you to one that eats carrion.' Thus God compares you to one that eats carrion. How fitting that you should guard against this (sc.backbiting)!

There is another thing which will keep you from backbiting the Muslims, if you reflect about in, namely, that you should examine yourself to see whether there is any open or hidden vice in you and whether you are committing a sin, secretly or publicly. If you find that this is so in your own case, you may be sure that the other man's inability to free himself from what you attribute to him is similar to your inability, and his excuse similar to your excuse. Just as you dislike being openly criticized and having your vices mentioned, so he dislikes that. If you veil him, God will veil your faults for you; if you criticize him openly, God will give sharp tongues power over you to impair your reputation in this world, and in the world to come God will criticize you before all creatures on the day of resurrection. If, however, on examining your exterior and interior life. you do not come upon any vice or imperfection in it, either religious or secular, you may be sure that your ignorance of your vices is the worst kind of folly, and no vice is greater than folly. If God desired good for you, He would make you see your vices. To regard oneself with approval is the height of stupidity and ignorance. If, on the other

hand, you are correct in your opinion, thank God for it (sc.your condition) and do not corrupt it by calumniating people and ruining their reputations, for that is the greatest of vices,

(4) Wrangling, arguing and disputing with people about matters of theology and metaphysics. That involves injuring and disparaging and other party and showing his ignorance, and likewise involves self-praise and self-justification on the grounds of having superior intelligence and knowledge. Moreover it disturbs one's life, since when you contend with someone who is a fool he annoys you, and when you contend with an intelligent person he hates and feels rancour against you. Muhammad (God bless and preserve him) said : 'If a man avoids disputing when he is in the wrong, God builds for him a mansion in the middle part of Paradise ; if a man avoids disputing when he is in the right, God builds for him a mansion in the highest part of Paradise'. The devil must not deceive you by saying to you, 'Make the truth evident, do not dissemble about it'. The devil is always trying to entice fools to evil, presented in the guise of good. Do not become a laughing-stock for the Devil and have him scoff at you. To make truth evident is good when there is someone who receives it from you, that is, by way of counsel in private, not by way of disputation. Counsel, however, has a distinctive form and character, and requires tact Otherwise it becomes criticism, and produces more evil than good. If a man associates with the theologians (mutafaqqihah) of this age, disputation and argument dome to dominate his nature, and it is difficult for him to be silent, since bad professors have suggested to people that such things constitute excellence and that what deserves praise is the power demonstrate and debate. Flee from them as from a lion. Assuredly disputing is the cause of hatred with God and man.

(5) Self-justification. God most high says (Q.53, 33) : 'So do not justify yourselves, He best knoweth those who show piety'. When one of the sages (or philosophers) as asked, 'What is wicked truthfulness ? he replied, 'A man's praise of himself'. So beware of falling into the habit of doing that. Such conduct assuredly lowers you in people's estimation, and leads to hatred of you in God. If you want to appreciate the fact that praise of yourself does not raise you in other men's estimation, consider what happens when your acquaintances make much of their own virtue, influence and wealth. Your heart refuses to acknowledge what they claim, and your nature finds it excessive ; when you have left their company, you blame them. Assuredly when you justify yourself, they likewise blame you in their hearts while you are present, and after you have left their company give tongue to there thoughts.

(6) Cursing. Beware of cursing anything that God most high has created, whether animal or food or man himself. Do not be categorical in bearing witness against any of

the people of the Qiblah (that is , any Muslim) to the effect that he is a polytheist or infidel or hypocrite. The One Who apprehends secrets is God most high ; do not interfere between God most high and His servants. On the day of resurrection you will certainly not be asked, 'Why did you not curse so and so ? Why were you silent about him? On the contrary, even if throughout your life you have never cursed Iblis and never employed your tongue in mentioning him, you will not be questioned about that or asked to give an account on the day of resurrection; but if you cursed anyone whom God created, you will have to give created. The Prophet (God bless and preserve him) would never criticize bad food; when he wanted anything, he ate it; otherwise he left it alone.

(7) Invoking evil on creatures. Guard your tongue from invoking evil on anyone whom God most high has created. Even if he has wronged you, yet the whole matter is in the hands of God most high. A Tradition says: 'Let the victim invoke evil on the wrongdoer until he requites him; if he does so, then the wrongdoer will be his creditor and he will have to give account on the day of resurrection'. A certain man said much against al-Hajjaj, whereupon one of the fathers remarked : 'As surely as God will take vengeance on al-Hajjaj for those he wronged, He will take vengeance for al-Hajjaj on those who attack him with the tongue'.

(8) Jestng, ridiculing and scoffing at people. Guard your tongue from that, whether in earnest or in play. It disturbs your reputation, as water in a pool is disturbed by a stone, destroys respect, induces isolation (or unsociability), and harms the heart. It is the source of contumacy, anger and estrangement, and implants rancour in men's hearts. Do not associate with anyone in jesting, even if they try to associate you in their jests ; do not reply to them but turn away from them until they talk about something else. Be one of those who, if they pass some idle joking, pass on with dignity.

This much about the various defects of the tongue. Nothing helps you against it except retirement and the preservation of silence wherever possible. Abu Bakr the Upright (may God be pleased with him) placed a stone in his mouth to prevent himself speaking except when necessary; he used to point to his tongue and say. 'This is what has brought all my troubles upon me.' Guard against it, for it is the chief cause of your destruction in this world and the next.

The stomach is to be guarded from partaking of what is unlawful or of doubtful legality. Try to obtain what is lawful, and when you have found it try to take less than your fill of it. Satiety hardens the heart (that is, makes the mind less receptive), impairs the intellect, and weakens the memory; it makes the limbs too heavy for piety and for

knowledge; it strengthens the desires and aids the hosts of Satan. Satiety arising from things lawful is the source of all evil; what then of satiety from things unlawful ? Likewise, to look for lawful food is a duty for every Muslim. Piety and knowledge, along with eating what is unlawful, are like building on dung. If you are content with a coarse shirt throughout the year, (or 'with one coarse shirt a year'), and two loaves of black bread in twenty-four hours, and give up delighting in the finest of delicacies. then you will never lack a sufficiency of what is lawful.

What is lawful is of many kinds. You are not required to be certain about the inner nature of things, but you must avoid what you know to be unlawful, or think to be so on the basis of some sign which is actually present and which by analogy implies unlawfulness. Now the things known to be unlawful are obvious: those thought to be so on the basis of a sign are: the property of the ruler and his deputies (or provincial governors), and the property of those who have no means of livelihood except (professionally) mourning for the dead or selling wine or practising usury or the playing of flutes or other instruments of pleasure. The unlawful includes even the property of the man of whom you know that the major part of his wealth is quite unlawful; while it is exceptionally possible in such a case that the actual things you receive are lawful (that is, lawfully come by), yet they must be regarded as unlawful, since that is more probable (sc. that they are unlawfully come by). Absolutely unlawful, too, is the consuming of any trust fund where that is done otherwise than in accordance with the provision of the testator. Thus for example, what a person not engaged in theological studies receives from the trust funds of the schools is unlawful; and if a person has committed a sin invalidating his giving evidence, what he receives as a Sufi from a trust fund or other source is unlawful. We have dealt with the bases of the doubtful, the lawful and the unlawful in a special book of *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* (sc. Book 14). You must seek it (sc. the lawful), then; for to know and seek the lawful is obligatory for every Muslim, just like the five Worships.

The genitals should be guarded from everything which God most high has made unlawful. Be as God most high said (Q.23, 51): '(Fortunate are...) those who their privy parts do guard, except in regard to their spouses and what their right hands possess. (sc. slave women), for they are not to be blamed'. You will not manage, however, to guard your genitals except by guarding your eyes from looking and by guarding your heart from thinking and by guarding your stomach from what is doubtful and from satiety, for these are the movers of desire and its seed-bed.

The hands should be guarded from beating a Muslim, from receiving unlawful wealth, from harming any creature, from betraying a trust or deposit, from writing what may not

be uttered- fro the pen is one of man's two tongues, so guard it from the same things as the tongue.

The feet should be guarded from going to an unlawful place and from hastening to the court of a wicked ruler. To go to wicked rulers where there is no necessity nor compulsion is a grave sin, for it means humbling oneself before them and honouring them in their sinfulness, and God most high has commanded us to keep away from them when He said (Q.11, 115): 'Lean yenot upon those who have done wrong, lest the Fire touch you...' to the end of the verse. If you do so, seeking their wealth, that is to hasten to what is unlawful. Muhammad (God bless and preserve him) has said : 'When a man humbles himself before an upright rich man, two thirds of his religion goes away'. That is in the case of a rich man who is wicked?

In general, when your members move and are at rest, these acts are some of the graces of God must high to you. Do not move any of your members at all in disobedience to God most high, but employ them in obeying Him. If you fall short, the evil consequences will come back upon yourself ; if you are diligent, the fruits of your activity will come back to yourself. God is rich enough to do without you and your work. It is only 'by what each one has piled up that he held in pledge' (Q. 74, 41) (that is, men's eternal destiny depends on their conduct in this life). Beware of saying. 'God is generous and merciful; He pardons the sins of the disobedient'. This is a true word, but what is meant by it in such a context is false, and the person who repeats it is to be dubbed a fool, according to the definition of the Messenger of God (God bless and preserve him) when he said : ' The shrewd man is he who masters (or abases) himself and works for what is after death; the fool is the man who makes himself follow his passions and desires things contrary to the command of God'. If you say such a thing, you clearly resemble the man who wants to be learned in the sciences of religion but spends his time in idleness and says. 'God is generous and merciful, able to fill my heart with that knowledge with which He filled the heart of His prophets and saints, without any effort on my part, any repetition, any learning from a teacher. Again, you resemble the man who wants wealth, yet does not engage in farming or commerce or any gainful occupation, but has no employment, and says, 'God is generous and merciful; 'His are the treasuries of the heavens and the earth' (Q . 63, 7) ; He is able to make me light upon some treasure which will make me independent of gaining a living ; He has in fact done that for some men'.

Now you, on hearing what these two men say, count them fools and scoff at them, even although their description of the power and generosity of God most high are true and correct. In exactly the same way men of insight in religion laugh at you when you try to obtain forgiveness without making any effort for it. God most high says (Q.53, 40);

'(Has he been told) that man gets exactly the result of his striving'? and again (Q.52, 16): 'ye are only being recompensed for what ye have been doing': and again (Q. 82, 13f.) : 'verily the virtuous are in delight, and verily the scoundrels are in a hot place'. So, if you do not, in reliance on His generosity, give up all effort to get knowledge and wealth, likewise do not give up making provision for the world to come and do not become remiss. The Lord of this world and of the next is one, and in both He is generous and merciful; His generosity does not increase through your obedience, but it consists in His making easy for you the way by which you arrive at the enduring and eternal realm through patience in setting desires aside for a few days. Such is His great generosity. Do not repeat to yourself these stupidities of the idlers, but imitate men of prudence and resolution, the prophets and the righteous. Do not long to reap what you did not sow. Would that all who fasted and performed the Worship and engaged in the Holy War and were pious had been forgiven!

These are all the things from which you must guard you external members. The acts of these members develop only through the attributes of the heart. If, then, you want to guard your members, you must purify your heart, that is, be inwardly pious and not merely outwardly. The heart is the 'morsel of flesh. (Q.22, 5; 23, 14; sc. second stage of the embryo) whose soundness leads to the soundness of the whole body; so see to its soundness in order that there by your members may be sound.

Excerpts from "The Kashf Al-Mahjub by Hazreth Data Gunj Baksh

ON SUFIISM

God, Almighty and Glorious, has said : "And those who walk meekly on the earth, and when the ignorant speak to them answer 'Peace'," (shall be rewarded with the highest place in Paradise). And the Apostle has said : "He that hears the voice of Sufis (ahl al-tasawwuf) and does not say Amen to their prayer is inscribed before God among the heedless." The true meaning of this name has been much discussed and many books have been composed on the subject. Some assert that the Sufi is so called because he wears a woolen garment (jama-i suf) ; others that he is so called because he is in the first rank (saff-i awwal); others say it is because the Sufis claim to belong to the Ashab-i Suffa, with whom may God be well-pleased ! Others, again declare that the name is derived from safa (purity). These explanations of the true meaning of Sufism are far from satisfying the requirements of etymology, although each of them is supported by many subtle arguments. Safa (purity) is universally praised, and its opposite is kadar. The Apostle on whom be peace! - said : " The safw (pure part, i.e. the best) of this world is gone, and only its kadar (impurity) remains." Therefore, since the people of this persuasion have purged their morals and conduct, and have sought to free themselves from natural taints, on that account they are called Sufis ; and this designation of the sect is a proper name (as asami-yi a'lam), inasmuch as the dignity of the Sufis is too great for their transactions (my amalnt) to be hidden, so that their name should need a derivation. In this age, however, God has veiled most people from Sufiism and from its votaries, and has concealed its mysteries from their hearts. Accordingly some imagine that it consists merely in the practice of outward piety without inward contemplation, and others suppose that it is a form and a system without essence and root, to such an extent that they have adopted the view of scoffers (ahli-hazl) and theologians (ulama), who regard only the external, and have condemned Sufiism altogether, making no attempt to discover what it really is. The people in general, blindly conforming to this opinion, have erased from their hearts the quest for inward purity and have discarded the tenets of the Ancients and the Companions of the Prophet. Verily, purity is characteristic of the Siddiq, if thou desirest a true Sufi- because purity (safa) has a root and a branch : its root being severance of the heart from "others" (aghyar), and its branch that the heart should be empty of this deceitful world. Both these are characteristic of the Greatest Siddiq, (the Caliph) Abu Bakr 'Abdallah b. Abi Quhafa, with whom may God be well-pleased ! He is the leader (imam) of all the folk of this Path.

(The author then relates how, on Muhammad's decease, when 'Umar threatened to decapitate anyone who asserted that the Prophet was dead, Abu Bakr stepped forth and cried with a loud voice : "Whoever worships Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead ; but whoever worships Muhammad's Lord, let him know that He is living and dieth not." Those who regarded Muhammad with the eye of mortality ceased to venerate him as soon as he departed from this world, but to those who regarded him with the eye of reality his presence and absence were alike because they attributed both to God; and looked, not at the particular change which had come to pass, but at the Author of all change ; and venerated Muhammad only in proportion as God honoured him; and did not attach their hearts to anyone (except God); and did not open their eyes to gaze upon mankind, inasmuch as "he that beholdeth mankind waneth, but he that returneth unto God reigneth" (man nazara ila 'l-khalq halak wa-man raja'a ila 'l haqq malak). And Abu Bakr showed that his heart was empty of this deceitful world, for he gave away all his wealth and his clients (mawall), and clad himself in a woollen garment (gilim), and came to the Apostle, who asked him what he had left for his family. Abu Bakr replied : " Only God and His Apostle." All this is characteristic of the sincere Sufi).

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

'shiarakd namudhaj min safa al-hubb wa l-tawhid idha shtabakd, "The combination of the light of the sun and moon, when they are in conjunction, is like the purity of Love and unification, when these are mingled together." Assuredly, the light of the sun and moon is worthless beside the light of the Love and Unification of God Almighty, and they should not be compared ; but in this world there is no light more conspicuous than those two luminaries. The eye cannot see the light of the sun and moon with complete demonstration. During the sway of the sun and moon it sees the sky, whereas the heart(dis) sees the empyrean (arsh) by the light of knowledge and unification and love, and while still in this world explores the world to come. All the Shykhs of this Path are agreed that when a man has escaped from the captivity of "stations" (maqamat), and gets rid of the impurity of "states" (ahwal), and is liberated from the abode of change and decay, and becomes endowed with all praiseworthy qualities, he is disjoined from all qualities. That is to say, he is not held in bondage by any praiseworthy quality of his own, nor does he regard it, nor is he made self-conceited thereby. His state is hidden from the perception of intelligences, and his time is exempt from the influence of thoughts. His presence (hudur) with God has no end and his existence has no cause. And when he arrives at this degree, he becomes annihilated (fani) in this world and in the next, and is made divine (rabbani) in the disappearance of humanity; and gold and earth are the same in his eyes, and the ordinances which others find hard to keep become easy to him.

[Here follows the story of Haritha, who declared that he had true faith in God. The Prophet asked : "What is the reality of thy faith?" Haritha replied : "I have cut off and turned myself away from this world, so that its stones and its gold and its silver and its clay are equal in my sight. And I have passed my nights in wakefulness and my days in thirst until methinks I see the Throne of my Lord manifest, and the people of Paradise visiting one another, and the people of Hell wrestling with one another" (or, according to an alternative reading : "making sudden attacks on one another"). The Prophet said, repeating the words thrice : "Thou knowest, therefore persevere."]

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

of no explanation, all the world are interpreters thereof, whether they recognize the dignity of the name or no at the time when they learn its meaning. The perfect, then, among them are called Sufi, and the inferior aspirants (Taliban) among them are called Mutasawwif ; for tasawwuf belongs to the form tafa'ul, which implies "taking trouble" (takalluf) and is a branch of the original root. The difference both in meaning and in etymology is evident. Purity (safa) is a saintship with a sign and a relation (riwayat), and Sufiism (tasawwuf) is an uncomplaining imitation of purity (hikayai li'l-safa. bild shikayat). Purity, then, is a resplendent and manifest idea, and Sufiism is an imitation of that idea. Its followers in this degree are of three kinds : the Sufi, the Mutasawwif, and the Mustaswif. The Sufi is he that is dead to self and living by the Truth; he has escaped from the grip of human faculties and has really attained (to God), The Mutasawwif is he that seeks to reach this rank by means of self-mortification (mujahadat) and in his search rectifies his conduct in accordance with their (the Sufis) example. The Mustaswif is he that make himself like them (the Sufis) for the sake of money and wealth and power and worldly advantage, but has no knowledge of these two things. Hence it has been said : Al-mustaswif 'inda 'l-Sufiyyat ka-l-dhubab wa-inda ghayrihim ka-'l-dhi'ab, "The Mustaswif in the opinion of the Sufis is as despicable as flies, and his actions are mere cupidity ; others regard him as being like a wolf, and his speech unbridled (be afsar), for he only desires a morsel of carrion," Therefore the Sufi is a man of union (sahib wusul), the Mutasawwif a man of principles (sahib usul), and the Mustaswif a man of superfluities (sahib fudul). and the Mustaswif a man of superfluities (sahib fudul). He that has the portion of union loses all end and object by gaining his end and reaching his object ; he that has the portion of principle becomes firm in the "states" of the mystic path, and steadfastly devoted to the mysteries thereof ; but he that has the portion of superfluity, is left devoid of all (worth having), and sits down at the gate of formality (rasm), and thereby he is veiled from reality (ma'ni), and this veil renders both union and principle invisible to him. The Shaykhs of this persuasion have given many subtle definitions of Sufiism which cannot all be if God will, who is the Author of success.

Dhu 'l-Nun, the Egyptian, says : Al-Sufi idha nataqa bana nuiquhu 'an-haqa'iq wa-in sakata nataqat 'anhu 'l-jawarih bi-qat' al-'ala'iq, "The Sufi is he whose language, when he speaks, is the reality of his state, i.e. he says nothing which he is not, and when he is silent his conduct explains his state, and his state proclaims that he has cut all worldly ties;" i.e. all that he says is based on a sound principle and all that he does is pure detachment from the world (tajrid); when he speaks his speech is entirely the Truth, and when he is silent his actions are wholly "poverty" (faqr). Junayd says : Al-tasawwuf na't uqima 'lO'abd fih qila na'l li-'l-'abd am li-'l-haqq fazala na't al-haqq haqiqai wa-na't al-'abd rasm, "Sufiism is an attribute wherein is Man's subsistence." They said : "Is it an

attribute of God or of mankind?" He replied : "Its essence is an attribute of God and its formal system is an attribute of mankind;" i.e. its essence involves the annihilation of human qualities, which is brought about by the everlastingness of the Divine qualities, and this is an attribute of God ; whereas its formal system involves on the part of Man the continuance of self-mortification (mujahadat), and this continuance of self-mortification is an attribute of Man. Or the words may be taken in another sense, namely, that in real Unification (tawhid) there are, correctly speaking, no human attributes at all, because human attributes are not constant but are only formal (rasm), having no permanence, of God is the agent. Therefore they are really the attributes of God. Thus (to explain what is meant). God commands His servants to fast, and when they keep the fast He gives them the name of "faster" (saim), and nominally this "fasting" (sawm) belongs to Man, but really it belongs to God. Accordingly God told His Apostle and said : Al-sawm li wa-ana ajzi bihi, "Fasting is mine," because all His acts are His possessions and when men ascribe things to themselves, the attribution is formal and metaphorical, not real. And Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri says : Al-tasawwuf tarku kulli hazz li-'l-nafs, "Sufiism is the renunciation of all selfish pleasures." This renunciation is of two kinds : formal and essential. For example, if one renounces a pleasure, and finds pleasure in the renunciation, this is formal renunciation ; but if the pleasure renounces him, then pleasure is annihilated, and this case falls under the head of true contemplation (mushahadat). Therefore renunciation of pleasure is the act of Man, but annihilation of pleasure is the act of God. The act of Man is formal and metaphorical, while the act of God is real. This saying (of Nuri) elucidates the saying of Junayd which has been quoted above. And Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri also says : Al-Sufiyyat humu 'lladhina safat arwahuhum fa-safu fi'l-saff al -awwal bayna yadayi 'l-haqq. "The Sufis are they whose spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from concupiscence, so that they have found rest with God in the first rank and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him." And he also says : Al-Sufi alladhi la yamlik wa-la yumlak, "The Sufi is he that has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything." This denotes the essence of annihilation (fana), since one whose qualities are annihilated neither possesses nor is possessed, inasmuch as the term "possession" can properly be applied only to existent things. The meaning is, that the Sufi does not make his own any good of this world or any glory of the next world, for he is not even in the possession and control of himself : he refrains from desiring authority over others, in order that others may not desire submission from him. This saying refers to a mystery of the Sufis which they-call "complete annihilation" (fana-yi kulli). If God will, we shall mention in this work, for your information, the points wherein they have fallen into error.

Ibn al-Jalla says : Al-tasawwuf haqiqai id rasm lahu, "Sufiism is an essence without form," because the form belongs to mankind in respect to their conduct (mu amalat) while the essence thereof is peculiar to God. Since Sufiism consists in turning away from mankind, it is necessarily without form. And Abu 'Amr Dimashqi says: Al-tasawwuf ru'yat al-known, bi-ayn al-naqs, bal ghadd al-tarf 'an al-known, "Sufiism is : to see the imperfection of the phenomenal world (and this shows that human attributes are still existent), nay, to shut the eye to the phenomenal world" (and this shows that human attributes are annihilated ; because the objects of sight are phenomena, and when phenomena disappear, sight also disappears). Shutting the eye to the phenomenal world leaves the spiritual vision subsistent, i.e. whoever becomes blind to self sees by means of God, because the seeker of phenomena is also a self-seeker, and his action proceeds from and through himself, and he cannot find any way of escaping from himself. Accordingly one sees himself to be imperfect, and one shuts his eye to self and does not see; and although the seer sees his imperfection, nevertheless his eye is a veil, and he is veiled by his sight, but he who does not see is not veiled by his blindness. This is a well established principle in the Path of aspirants to Sufiism and mystics (arbab-i ma'ani), but to explain it here would be unsuitable. And Abu Bakr Shibli says: Al-tasawwuf shirk li'annahu siyanai al-qalb 'an ru'yat al-ghayr wa-la ghayr, "Sufiism is polytheism, because it is the guarding of the heart from the vision of 'other', and 'other' does not exist." That is to say, vision of other (than God) in affirming the Unity of God is polytheism, and when "other" has no value in the heart, it is absurd to guard the heart from remembrance of "other". And Husri says : Al-tasawwuf safa al-sirr min kudurat al-mukhalafat, "Sufiism is the heart's being pure from the pollution of discord." The meaning thereof is that he should protect the heart from discord with God, because love is concord, and concord is the opposite of discord, and the lover has but one duty in the world, namely, to keep the commandment of the beloved ; and if the object of desire is one, how can discord arise? And Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abi Talib -may God be pleased with them all! - says : Al-tasawwuf khulq fa-man zada alayka fi'l-khulq zada alayka fi'l-tasawwuf, "Sufiism is goodness of disposition : he that has the better disposition is the better Sufi." Now goodness of disposition is of two kinds : towards God and towards men. The former is acquiescence in the Divine decrees, the latter is endurance of the burden of men's society for God's sake. These two aspects refer to the seeker (talib). God is independent of the seeker's acquiescence or anger, and these two qualities depend on consideration of His Unity. And Abu Muhammad Murtaish says : Al-Sufi la yasbiq himmatuhu khatwatahu, "The Sufi is he whose thought keeps pace with his foot," i.e. he is entirely present : his soul is where his body is, and his body where his soul is, and his soul where his foot is, and his foot where his soul is. This is the sign of presence without absence. Others say, on the contrary : "He is absent from himself and present with-God." It is not so: he is

present with himself and present with God. The expression denotes perfect union (jam al-jam), because there can be no absence from self so long as one regards one's self ; when self-regard has ceased, there is presence (with God) without absence. In this particular sense the saying closely resembles that of Shibli : Al-Sufi la yara fi 'l-darayn ma'allah ghayra 'llah, "The Sufi is he that sees nothing except God in the two worlds." In short, human existence is "other", and when a man does not see "other" he does not see himself ; and becomes totally void of self, whether "self" is affirmed or denied. And Junayd says : Al-tasawwuf mabniyy 'ala' thaman khisal al-sakha wa 'l-ridd wa 'l-sabr wa 'l-isharat wa 'l-ghurbat wa-labs al-suf wa 'l-faqr amma 'l-sakha fa-li-Ibrahim wa-amma 'li-ridd fa-li-Isma il wa-amma 'l-sabr fa-li-Ayyub wa-amma 'li-isharat fa-li-Zakariyya wa-amma. 'l-ghurbat fa-li-Isa wa -amma 'l-faqr fa-li-Musa wa-amma 'l-siyahat fa-li-'Isa wa-amma 'l-faqr fa -li-Muhammad salla 'llahu 'alayhi wa-sallama wa-alayhim ajma'in, "Sufiism is founded on eight qualities exemplified in eight Apostles : the generosity of Abraham, who sacrificed his son; the acquiescence of Ishmael, who submitted to the command of God and gave up his dear life ; the patience of Job, who patiently endured the affliction of worms and the jealousy of the Merciful ; the symbolism of Zacharias, to whom God said, 'Thou shalt not speak unto men for three days save by signs (Kor. iii, 36) and again to the same effect, 'When he called upon his Lord with a secret invocation' (Kor. xix. 2); the stranger hood of John, who was a stranger in his own country and an alien to his own kin amongst whom he lived ; the pilgrim hood of Jesus, who was so detached therein from worldly things that he kept only a cup and a comb - the cup he threw away when he saw a man drinking water in the palms of his hands, and the comb likewise when he saw another man using his fingers instead of a toothpick; the wearing of wool by Moses, whose garment was woollen ; and the poverty of Muhammad, to whom God almighty sent, the key of all the treasures that are upon the face of the earth, saying : 'Lay no trouble on thyself, but procure every luxury by means of these treasures ; and he answered : 'O Lord, I desire them not ; keep me one day full-fed and one day hungry." These are very excellent principle of conduct.

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

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

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

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

SECTION

Maxims of Conduct (mu'dmaldi)

Abu Hafis Haddad of Nishapur says : Al-tasawwuf kulluhu adab li-kulli waqi adab wa-li-kulli maqam adab wa-li-kulli has adab fa man lazima adab al - awqdi balagha moblagh al-rijal fa-man dayya'a 'l-adab fa-huwa baid min haythu yasunnu 'l-qurb wa-mardud min haythu yasunnu 'l-qubul, "Sufiism consists entirely of behaviour; every time, place, and circumstance have their own propriety; he that observes the proprieties of each occasion attains to the rank of holy men; and he that neglects the proprieties is far removed from the thought of nearness (to God) and is excluded from imagining that he is acceptable to God." The meaning of this is akin to the dictum of Abu 'l-Hasan Nuri : Laysa 'l-tasawwuf rusum wa-la ullum wa-lakinuahu akhlaq, "Sufiism is not composed of practices and sciences, but it is morals," i.e. if it consisted of practices, it could be acquired by effort, and if it consisted of sciences, it could be gained by instruction : hence it is morals, and it

is not acquired until you demand from yourself the principle of morals, and make your actions square with them, and fulfill their just claims. The distinction between practices (rusum) and morals (akhlaq) is this, that practices are ceremonial actions proceeding from certain motives, actions devoid of reality, so that their form is at variance with their spirit, whereas morals are praiseworthy actions without ceremony or motive, actions devoid of pretension, so that their form is in harmony with their spirit.

Murta'ish says : Al-tasawwuf husn al-khulq, "Sufiism is good nature." This is of three sorts : firstly, towards God, by fulfilling His commandments without hypocrisy; secondly, towards men, by paying respect to one's superiors and behaving with kindness to one's inferiors and with justice to one's equals, and by not seeking recompense and justice from men in general ; and thirdly, towards one's self, by not following the flesh and the devil. Whoever makes himself right in these three matters is a good-natured man. This which I have mentioned agrees with a story told of 'A'isha the veracious (siddiqa) - may God be well-pleased with her ! She was asked concerning the nature of the Apostle. "Read from the Koran," she replied, "for God has given information in the place where He says : 'Use indulgence and order what is good and turn away from the ignorant' (Kor.vii, 198) And Murta'ish also says: Hadha madhhab kulluhu jidd fa-la takhlituhu bi-shay min al-hazl, "This religion of Sufism is wholly earnest, therefore do not mix jest with it, and do not take the conduct of formalists (mutarassiman) as a model, and shun those who blindly imitate them." When the people see these formalists among the aspirants to Sufism in our time, and become aware of their dancing and singing and visiting the court of sultans and quarrelling for the sake of a pittance or a mouthful of food, their belief in the whole body of Sufis is corrupted, and they say : "These are the principles of Sufiism, and the tenets of the ancient Sufis were just the same." They do not recognize that this is an age of weakness and an epoch of affliction. Consequently, since greed incites the sultan to acts of tyranny, and lust incites the savant to commit adultery and fornication, and ostentation incites the ascetic to hypocrisy, and vanity incites the Sufi also to dance and sing - you must know that the evil lies in the men who hold the doctrines, not in the principles on which the doctrines are based ; and that if some scoffers disguise their folly in the earnestness of true mystics (ahrdr), the earnestness of the latter is not thereby turned to folly. And Abu Ali Qarmini says : Al-tasawwuf huwa 'l-akhlaq al-radiyyat, "Sufiism is good morals." Approves of God and is content and satisfied. Abu 'l Hasan Nuri says : Al-tasawwuf huwa 'l-hurriyyat wa-'l-fuiuwat wa-tark al-taklif wa-'l-sakha wa-badhu al-dunya, "Sufiism is liberty, so that a man is freed from the bonds of desire ; and generosity," i.e. he is purged from the conceit of generosity ; "and abandonment of useless trouble," i.e. he does not strive after appurtenances and rewards; "and munificence, " i.e. he leaves this world to the people of this world.

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

I have brought together and examined in this chapter on Sufiism a number of the saying of the Shaykhs, in order that this Path may become clear to you - God grant you felicity ! - and that you may say to the sceptics : "What do you mean by denying the truth of Sufiism ?" If they deny only the name it is no matter, since ideas are unrelated to things, which bear names ; and if they deny the essential ideas, this amounts to a denial of the whole Sacred Law of the Apostle and his praised qualities. And I enjoin you in this book -God grant you the felicity with which He has blessed His saints ! - to hold these ideas in due regard and satisfy their just claims, so that you may refrain from idle pretensions and have an excellent belief in the Sufis themselves. It is God that gives success.

Excerpts from "FutulAl-Ghaib by Ghouse ul Azam

And he said (may Allah be pleased with him)

When the servant of Allah is in a trail he first tries to escape from it with his own efforts, and when he fails in this he seeks the help of others from among men such as the kings and men of authority, people of the world, men of wealth, and in the case of illness and physical suffering, from physicians and doctors ; but if the escape is not secured by these he then turns towards his Creator and Lord the Great and Mighty and applies to Him with prayer and humility and praise. So long as he finds the resources in his own self he does not turn towards the people and so long as he finds resources in the people he does not turn towards the Creator.

Further, when he does not get any help from Allah he throws himself in His presence and continues in this state, begging and praying and humbly entreating and praising and submitting his neediness in fear and hope. Allah the Great and Mighty however, tires him out in his prayer and does not accept it until he is completely disappointed in all the means of the world. The decree of Allah and His work then manifest themselves through him and this servant of Allah passes away from all the worldly means and the activities and efforts of the world and retains just his soul.

At this stage he sees nothing but the work of Allah the Great and Mighty and becomes, of necessity, a believer in the unity of Allah (Towhid) to the degree of certainty, that in reality there is not doer of anything excepting Allah and no mover and stopper excepting Him and not good and no evil and no loss and no gain and no benefit and no conferring and no withholding and no opening and no benefit and no conferring and no withholding and no opening and no closing and no death and no life and no honour and no dishonour and no affluence and no poverty but in the hand of Allah.

He then becomes in the presence of Allah as a sucking baby in the hands of its nurse or a dead body in the hands of the person who gives it the funeral bath or a ball before the stick of the polo player - kept revolving and rolling and changing position after position and condition after condition and he feels no strength either in his own self or in others besides himself for any movement. He thus vanishes from his own self out into the work of his Master.

So he sees nothing but his Master and His work, and hears and understands nothing excepting Him. If he sees anything it is His work and if he hears and knows anything, he hears His word and knows through His knowledge and he becomes gifted with His gifts

and becomes lucky through His nearness and through his nearness he becomes decorated and honoured and becomes pleased and comforted and satisfied with His promise and is drawn towards His word and he feels aversion for the is repelled from those besides Him and he desires and relies on His remembrance and he becomes established in Him, the Great and Mighty, and relies on Him and obtains guidance from, and clothes and dresses himself with, the light of His knowledge and is apprised of the rare points of His knowledge and of the secrets of His power and he hears and remembers only from Him the Great, the Mighty, and then offers thanks and praise therefore and takes to prayer.

THE FOURTH DISCOURSE

Said he (may Allah be pleased with him):

When you are dead to the creation, it will be said to you :

"May Allah have mercy on you," and Allah will make you die out of the desires of the flesh. And when you die out of the desires of the flesh it will be said to you : "May Allah have mercy on you." Then He will give you death in your will and desires ; and when you are dead in your will and desires it will be said to you: "May Allah have mercy on you," and He will restore you to (a new) life.

Now you will be given a life after which there is not death, and you will be enriched with wealth after which there is no poverty; and you will be awarded a gift after which there will be no obstruction, and you will be made happy with happiness after which there will be no sorrow and misery, and you will be blessed with a blessing after which there will be no adversity; and ; you will be equipped with knowledge after which there will be no ignorance; and you will be given a security after which there will be no fear; and you will be made to prosper so as not to be unluckily; and will be honoured so as not to be dishonored; and you will be made near (to Allah) so as not to be kept away; and you will be exalted so as not to be lowered ; and you will be honoured so as not to be abused; and you will be purified so as not to be polluted any more; then you will be the fulfillment of all hopes and the (flattering) remarks (of people) will assume reality in your case; you will then become the philosopher's stone so much so that you will elude being recognised (in your elevated position), and you will be so exalted that you will have no like of yourself, unique that you will have no peer and no equal. You will become unique and peerless, most hidden and most secret.

You will then become the successor of every Messenger and Prophet of Allah and every Truthful man (siddiq) You will become the finishing point of all saintliness (wilayat) and the living saints will flock to you. And through you will the difficulties be

solved and through your prayers will be clouds, rain and the fields yield harvest; through your prayers will be removed the calamities and troubles of the ran; and file of people (in the country) of even those living in the frontiers, of the rulers and the subjects, of the leaders and the followers and of all creators. So you will be the police officer (so to speak) for cities and people.

The people will traverse distances and hasten towards you and they will bring gifts and offerings and render you service, in every condition of life, by the permission of the Creator of things. The tongues of people will (at the same time) be busy everywhere with applause and praise for you. And no two persons of faith will differ with regards to you. A! the best of those who live in populated areas and those who travel about, this is the grace of Allah and Allah is the Possessor of mighty grace.

THE MEANING OF KALIMAH : "THERE IS NO god BUT ALLAH, MUHAMMAD IS PROPHET OF ALLAH"

- Dr. S.L.Peeran

The first word of Kalimah is "la". The word "La" is denial. The denial is of the presence of any object of veneration or of a material source, which fulfills our worldly needs or of power of kings, who keeps us under subjugation, or of a system, of which a human being becomes, subjected to viz. the taboos, customs, superstitions, myths, mores or of human desires, ego and of animal elements in us. It is denial of external negative forces which are all useless and futile. The kalimah is denial of supremacy of material agencies, heavenly bodies and natural phenomena.

The denial is negativism. The positivism is the acceptance of the existence of the Creator of the universe, of heavenly bodies, and life surrounding us. The natural laws governing the existence of life should be realised through the Creator's will and a Muslim should subject himself to His Divine knowledge. In so doing, a Muslim is subjecting himself to the commands of his Creator. By surrendering his will, his desires, a Muslim leads a life of piety and goodness.

'There is no god', implies the futility in the powers bestowed on heavenly bodies and material sources and human ingenuity. They are not acting independently of themselves, so as to have a command on us, but they are acting in unison, in harmony at the command of the Divine being. A Muslim accepts the need and importance of these heavenly bodies as source of existence, but, yet deny their everlasting power and omnipotency. A Muslim expresses his gratitude and thanks to the All-powerful and the Almighty, who has appointed man as a vicegerent of this universe. He recognises and acknowledges that, however essential and powerful be the source of power of objects surrounding him, yet they have been created to serve man and it is not for the man to venerate and hold it as an object of terror or worship. It is to the Allah, the Creator, the Merciful and the Beneficent, the worship and veneration is reserved. A Muslim visualises Allah's attributes and His beauty, in all His creations and offers his praise to Him alone. As vicegerents of earth, Allah commands man to treat all his creations with humility and mercy and directs him to walk on this earth with grace and dignity. Before Allah the Almighty, all are equal and therefore, Allah, commands man to respect his fellowmen and live in harmony and peace, and to treat his fellowmen with kindness, with equality

and maintain at all times a spirit of brotherhood. He commands man to live justly and shun violence, accept peace and live with honour and dignity by treating aged, orphans, widows, parents, women and children with love and care. To live with purity of mind and thought, maintain clarity of vision, adopt correct behaviour and just actions by controlling passions, anger and lust. To be charitable and kind to one and all. He commands man to keep his promise, live truthfully and be fair in all his dealings. He has given him just laws and directs him to administer humanity with rule of law and commands him to stand against tyranny, oppression and unjust rule. To accept His will is to accept a daily routine of prayers, good deeds, good actions and to live within the bounds set forth by Him.

He created a model man, full of virtues, sobriety, personification of all kindness, mercy, good living and grace, with dignity and perfection in manners, character and that is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu 'Alaihi' Wasallam.) He commands man to accept his Prophet-hood, to follow him and respect him as a spiritual leader. Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam) was sent to humanity to convey His warnings and His good tidings. He sent through the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam), His messages, His Love and commended man to follow the same. These commandments and messages is the Holy Quran. Surely the virtuous and humble will follow His command. He guides man and grants him, His Mercy and judges him on the day of Judgment of all his actions. He rewards justly for his actions. Heaven for those who have followed His commands, respected, obeyed and loved Him, His prophets, His angels and His books. He has created hell, for those who have sinned and committed grave wrongs. He forgives those who seek His repentance and Mercy, Allah watches man's actions. His angels record his doings and His divine will and grace always protects those who are virtuous, humble, kind and good to their fellow beings and to those who lead a good virtuous life. His divine wrath befalls on those who go astray and who create violence, dissensions, killings, and commit wrongs, cause pain to their fellowmen and who follow the path of Satan, the accursed and on those who follow their passions and on those who do not control their anger, lust and tongue, on those, who are haste, spend-thrift, haughty and proud, hard-hearted and cruel.

Allah loves those who say their prayers regularly, who lead a clean life and are virtuous, who share their meals, give charity and keep fast in His name. He loves those who serve their, parents, kith and kin and are kind to neighbours, fellow travelers, countrymen, orphans, widows, disabled, to destitutes and serve humanity with piety, and upon those who seek rewards in the life hereafter. He loves those, who are forgiving, kind, patient and those who repose faith in Him and are persistent in seeking His grace and who accept all good, evil and hardship with prayers, patience and fortitude. He loves those who express their thanks at all times of joy and during adversity, during despondency and

abundance. He loves those who seek knowledge and spread the same without seeking worldly gains. Peace is for those who obey His laws. His Mercy is at all times for those who accept Him, and seek Him, by denying materialism, sensationalism authoritarianism, superstition and give up ego, anger and lust; and seek true knowledge, 'Oh Lord', lead us to straight path' Ameen.

A poem from Divane Shams Tabriz

Our desert hath no bound,
Our hearts and souls have no rest.
World in world has ta'en Form's image;
Which of these images is ours ?
When thou seest in the pathway a severed head,
Which is rolling toward our field,
Ask of it, ask of it, the secrets of the heart:
For of it thou wilt learn our hidden mystery.
How would it be, if an ear showed itself,
Familiar with the tongues of our songsters ?
How would it be, if a bird took wing,
Bearing the collar of the secret of our Solomon ?
What shall I say, what think? for this tale
Is too high for our limited and contingent being.
How keep silence, when every moment
Our anguish grows more anguished ?
Partridge and falcon alike are flying together
Mid the air of our mountain-land;
Mid an air which is the seventh atmosphere,
At the zenith whereof is our Saturn.
Are not the seven heavens below the empyrean ?
Beyond the empyrean is our revolution.
What place here for aspirations toward the empyrean and the sky ?
Our journey is to the rose-garden of union.
Leave this tale. Ask not of us,
For our tale is wholly interrupted.
Salahu 'lhaq u din will declare to thee

The beauty of our Sultan, the Kind of kings.

PRAAYER FOR TRANQUILLITY

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

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

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

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

THE LIGHTNING STRIKES

- Dr. S.L.Peeran

Fayaz was squatting on the mat and luxuriously puffing a beedi deeply inhaling and exhaling the smoke. The small tiled tenement was filled with smoke. The dwelling place belonged to Ateef. Ateef Saheb was a renowned Sufi fakir.

Fayaz was just 25 years old and having found no regular job to do found a few of his friends to join him in the business of "real estate agency". He knew that the expanding city of Bangalore needed new housing colonies owing to acute housing shortage.

Fayaz was a confident estate agent, who was luring people facing evictions or those who dreamt of owning their own house, to buy plots created by the newly sprung up 'housing co-operative societies'. He assured people of getting clear titles and showed them the site. His companion, an elderly person Rama Reddy posed as a land lord and advocate Chandraswamy as their most experienced expert legal advisor. A clever devise and a chain had been set up for the entire show business of "real estate agency".

Fayaz and his companion Khader Khan were in the house of Ateef for various reasons. Firstly, they knew that Ateef besides giving them "talisman" to ward off any blood suckers from cunning after them would also pray for their success in their venture. Secondly, several people were coming daily to Ateef with all sorts of problems. Fayaz came to this place to hunt for gullible people and luring them to by the sites.

Ateef was a good old man and had seen the changing times. At one time, he had attempted to do several odd jobs. He had seen the ups and downs of life and had had a rare opportunity in life to meet all sections of people in the various odd jobs, he had done. But, his days were of "milk and honey". It was a glorious time, as those were days of English Raj besides the benign rule of the Maharaja. The time were regal with royal patronage and with several men of letters around.

But Ateef could not cope with the changed times and found strangely that his whole life and turned upside down. Being from a highly religious, traditional and cultured family, he found it easy to retire in one such tenement to live and pass off his remaining days.

The hard times had left him high and dry and with chill penury befriending him. Now, he turned to his family traditions of helping people by giving talisman, sage and practical

counsel and to pray for them. He had lived a truthful and simple life and had been good to one and all. Thus, his place was a meeting ground for several old timers and new ones.

Rehman and seasoned lawyer from an old aristocratic family was one such visitor to Ateef's place not for taking any of the talisman, "dua" (blessings) or for Ateef's practical solutions but to maintain the good old relationship running down the generations. He was also a connoisseur of the good old aristocratic ways and was lamenting on the new changed times.

Rehman felt strange peace in meeting Ateef, as he conversed on those nostalgic times and recalled the memory, the tales from Nawab Hyder Ali's and Tippu Sultan's times. They talked of hundreds of saintly men who had donned the robes of fakirs and lived a peaceful life in the erstwhile Mysore State.

Rehman found in Ateef one such old saintly fakir, a wise man sitting sipping tea, which Ateef's wife offered to one and all in keeping with the age old customs.

As Rehman took his seat, his eyes fell on Fayaz and his cronies. Rehman at a glance gathered that these were the new flocks, who had corrupted the times and changed the very face of the pleasant old Bangalore and the ways of Bangaloreans.

A gush of blood rushed to his brain, when he found Fayaz puffing beedi and filling the small room with smoke. He could not bear it any more. Rehman in a commanding regal tone asked Fayaz to put off the beedi quickly and sit in a respectful posture.

Fayaz would have none of these sallies from old cronies. He could not bear the insult to his pride in being reprimanded before his "Chamchas". He questioned the beliefs of Rehman and continued to act in his own sacrilegious ways.

Rehman warned Fayaz of a calamity meeting him, if he didn't mend his ways and start behaving respectfully in front of elders, who were all 'good-intentioned men'. But Fayaz did not buy all these arguments and homilies. He kept misbehaving and challenging all the superstitious beliefs and started taunting Rehman, Ateef and the saintly old fakir sipping tea. Rehman could bear it no longer. He got up from the "Charpoy" of Ateef, having sat next to him and showing disgust at these young blokes, left the place.

It so happened that, one day Rehman had to stay back in the Court premises later than normal time. He generally did not work in the after-noons. It was only on rare occasions, he would stay late. All his mounting work was managed by a large contingent of his juniors. Rehman was also a Professor of Law and associated with umpteen number of

social and cultural organisations. Rehman was compelled to visit the criminal court complex. He rarely went there but he had to find Ranga, his old buddy, who was an expert criminal lawyer. Rehman knew that Ranga would be handling some sensational case in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court. He went looking for him. He had to climb several stairs, as there was no lift facility. On reaching the top floor, he was disappointed not to find his friend Ranga in the Court hall. As he felt tired he sat down in the Court, to catch his breath. The judge knew that Rahman was a noble and aristocratic person and rarely appeared in any matters before these courts. He was quite surprised to find him at the court at the fag end of the day and that too at an hour, when the police would be producing persons accused of heinous crimes for the purpose of seeking remand into their custody or for interrogation purpose. The Judge out of courtesy made enquiries through the court clerk, to know as to whether Rehman required any thing. Normally, senior respectable lawyers would draw the attention of young Magistrates, as in their eyes the Senior Advocates were highly respectable and noble ones. Rehman explained to the clerk that he had come looking for this old friend Ranga. He only sat in the Court hall to catch his breath.

Just as Rehman was talking to the Court Clerk, there was a commotion outside the court hall. A few persons sitting in the gallery rushed to see as to what was happening. Rehman knew that it was time for the police to produce persons accused in sensational cases and that it would fill the court hall with a large number of people, police and lawyers seeking for their clients relief from remand for bail.

Rehman got up from his chair and came out. He found, as rightly sensed by him, that police had brought in chains and handcuffs, several accused persons. The police were particularly harsh with one fellow. They pushed him roughly and with a thud the fellow fell down. He squatted on the floor and the police were holding the iron chain, as if they were holding a monkey; to prevent it from doing mischief.

Rehman peered at this fellow, while walking past him. The nasty criminal caught the glimpse of Rehman's eye and yelled that he was in this plight due to his curses. Rehman grew curious. He could not have harmed any one. He went close to the person in chains and was shocked and surprised to find Fayaz. Fayaz broke down and started yelling at Rehman. "You cursed me in Ateef's house and warned me of this calamity. Now I am in this deep trouble."

Rehman wondered as to what could have happened. It was not difficult for him to guess further as his hunch proved right. Fayaz's nefarious deeds had been exposed. He

was caught red handed, while affixing the false seals of the Registrar on the stamp papers.

Rehman grew pensive and reflective, as he slowly walked down the stairs. His belief in the holiness of saintly fakirs got strengthened. There was a good old saying that anyone showing wanton disrespect to saintly beings met with a cruel fate and those who respected them with humility and sincerity benefited by receiving their grace, as holiness resided in them. That evening, Rehman went at an odd hour to Ateef's house. Ateef was in a relaxed mood without any visitors. On seeing Rehman at this hour, Ateef and his wife came out to receive him, with a surprised look. Rehman just waved his hand and told them that he thought it would be nice for him to visit them at an hour when none were around. Ateef and his wife had a hearty laugh. Rehman grew pensive and in a philosophical mood mentioned to Ateef and his wife about Fayaz. Ateef and his wife broke into a big smile and chuckled. Ateef told that Rehman's "Bhabi" was about to be duped by Fayaz and that Rehman bhai had come at the right time to admonish Fayaz. When Rehman spoke and mentioned about the old wise saying of the holiness of fakirs ; Ateef laughed and mentioned jokingly that modern fakirs and saints were now to be found in buddies like Rehman.