



# The Bestowing of Blessing

*by*

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*(One Who is Drawn to God by Grace)*

Dedicated to Rabia A. Martin on her birthday, July 25, 1937

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls  
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

## Chapter 1 The Value of Praise

In preparing for a better life, in preparing a career of reform for themselves or others, man begins usually with a firm resolution. He may go before an altar and take an oath and it sometimes happens that the stronger and more resolute the oath, the less the fulfillment of it. This is because when too much magnetism, when too much will-power are directed upward to the field of thought, there is a lack of concentration upon action. Therefore, Jesus Christ has said, "Swear not at all."

The cause of this short-coming in human beings is due to ego, and the failure of the ego in keeping firm resolution has produced vagueness in the mind. This vagueness of mind is like a fog which interpenetrates the worlds of mind and matter. Sooner or later it gives rise to a condition which, if not causative of the troubles of earth, prepares to a degree the accommodation for ill, ill arising out of weakness. In other words, every resolution, even with the best intentions, driving will-power into speech and thought without carrying it into action produces weakness and is accompanied by loss of psychic power.

The opposite aspect to this, which avoids such mistakes, is seen in the life of the mystics whose firm resolution comes in silence. He does not always speak what they desire. Often when he does speak, others do not understand. Besides this, the failure to maintain action in concordance with words is a failing which, in the initiate, can produce endless trouble. The failure of the spiritual man to maintain this inner unity and harmony of himself, with himself, can produce more trouble even than the sins of the wicked who has not directed his or her footsteps to God. When we are given the power (siddhi) by God, and fail in the fulfillment of the law of the inner life, our failure is indeed great.

Some people pray very much, place great fidelity in God, say they trust in God, love God. They believe, perhaps, that God is all in all. Now if God be all in all, God must be the reality in man, He must be the reality in every person, the reality in ourselves, in others and in all things—else He is not all in all. To make God an Ideal is a step forward; a greater step would be to make God **the** reality.

We may read in the first chapter of the book of the Prophet Isaiah, "Bring no more vain oblations. It is an offering of abomination unto Me; new moon and Sabbath the holding of convocations; I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly... Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. Seek justice, relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

In the same spirit as Isaiah and Jesus Christ, some of the prophets of their time and before and some of the Sufis later on did not participate in public worship lest they take an oath and take it in vain. It is not necessary to go to that extreme. There is room in the world for all devotees and in this age a Universal Worship has been offered to those who can no longer be satisfied with narrow views. The next step would be for such devotees to seek God on the esoteric path (Tarikat), and to make living the words of the prayers so that the words and the prayers take wings of fire, so to speak, whether offered in public or private devotions.

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Realization is made possible when the ideal becomes a reality. There are people who seldom smile, who grumble often, who constantly find fault. Such persons really do not deserve the right to prayer. For the essence of prayer should be praise and in this spirit, Saum, the first great prayer of the Universal Worship and of modern Sufism begins, "Praise be to Thee." The words, the attitude and the motions—when these are made—are directed upward, away from self, toward God.

In offering words of praise one cultivates the optimistic attitude. There are those who seek God, say God is light, and look for the light even in this world. They believe that the light within is much greater than the physical light, redound with blessings and healing power, bestowing all manner of faculties (siddhis) upon the one on whom it shines. These persons are veritably blessed with intuition; they have the sign of the living heart.

How, then, can we keep the living heart from being veiled? The pessimistic person, the frowner, the one who is sour, bitter, the one who sees all the differences in the world and the shortcomings of everybody, creates a shadow across the mind. That person does not leave any accommodation for the God whom he or she claims to adore, and for him or her the utterance of the words, "Praise be to God" may be either a curse or a blessing.

The words of praise can even become a curse if, in uttering them one holds evil thoughts of any kind. The words of praise become a curse, if after uttering them or between repetitions, one finds fault with the people of the world, who are God's creatures. When one finds this fault, if the people are so wicked, whose fault is it? If it is God's fault, then we should not praise God. If it is not God's fault, it is man's fault, then one might ask, how is it that a just, perfect and all-powerful Deity has permitted so many shortcomings, so much weakness in man? How can God be what it is claimed He is, and even indirectly permit so much evil? Thus, the fault finder, by implication is worse than the atheist who denies the existence of God or who ignores God; the fault-finder will end by finding fault with God Himself.

If this be true, then the God whom the fanatic creates out of his mind, out of his thought-force, may be a veritable monster. Some have accused the ancients of having a tribal God, a thought-form God. Yes, ancient peoples have had such a God and modern peoples have had such a God; this is the God of Nufsaniat, for the unenlightened either follow an ideal or else follow an idea which is a thought-form.

The words of praise to the thought-god are not really spiritual for they cannot reach above the mind-world; in the terms of the aviators, their ceiling is low, they do not ascend, they have too much weight. And it has been unfortunate that many of these people, usually called theists, have had such power and prestige that they have driven the learned away from the God Ideal, an ideal which would be so valuable to the learned. These unenlightened ones try to impress others, make a show of their devotion and consider their piety a virtue. And to the mystic, they are hardly any better than the pessimists, although in their thought-world there may be a little light mixed with the darkness.

There is another attitude which is right and proper because it increases the capacity for light and life in the world. This is the optimistic attitude, and it is very natural for the optimist to praise God and be praising God continually. He does not find fault with everything and everybody; they enjoy the good they may derive out of their experiences, and when a person sees the good and enjoys the good, that person is receiving something of the divine magnetism, even if unconscious of it. It is such a one who makes accommodation for the God-Reality.

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Praise is something definite, something with a direction, it goes upward. The indefinite person has no direction, he gets nowhere; there is nothing spiritual in being indefinite and according to the mystic, that is a sign of purgatory (missal). No doubt there are times when it is unwise to come to a decision, when silence and meditation should be the rule. But the indefinite person actually creates a purgatory, a state of indecision, of lethargy, and this is called **tamas** by the Hindus.

Sometimes the state of indecision actually becomes insidious. Persons resolve to do better and all the resolution is of no avail for the magnetism gets into the thought and none of it goes into the action; there is no action. Such a person is to be pitied, not to be blamed, and should not be followed. The mystic prays, "Give me heaven or hell, O Lord, but not purgatory."

The beginning of exoteric as well as of esoteric religious feeling comes in repentance. The difference is that the exotericists depend much upon emotion, upon some state of mind while to the esotericist repentance means the melting of the heart. The "doing better" of the esotericist then is not to choose to do some acts and refrain from others; it is doing acts in accordance with heart-feeling and thinking in harmony with heart feeling, so that the heart may become alive. It is this attitude which leads to broadness of vision, to a greater horizon and purer conception of self, a conception which includes something of the not-self in it. In other words, spiritual betterment is concerned with the love-aspect of life and blooms in deeds of beneficence; it is greater than morality.

Yet resolution is not altogether wrong. Resolution to pray, to meditate, to study, often induces control of temper and control of tongue. In this sense even the exoteric ideal can become a reality. This may be seen in the lives of the multitudes who have love for their prophet, a love and adoration which may influence them to walk in the way of that prophet. It is when they follow a particular creed they place a thought-force before that prophet and hide the prophet from themselves and themselves from the prophet, so that many are called but few are chosen. Out of the many millions of worshippers, perhaps some few actually live the life, and the failure of the multitudes constitutes the cause and substance of the decay of Dharma.

If any ordinary oath, an oath which an ordinary person takes, does not always result in its accomplishment and besides is contrary to the teaching of the religion which he follows, the oath of a spiritual person, when one is taken, can become a very serious matter, as he sets the example before the world. When the spiritual person fails, all fail, and when he sets the example the whole world may follow.

To avoid degeneracy and hypocrisy the initiates are advised to face themselves, to pattern their lives after an ideal, to follow the prophet, and to consider the effect of thought, word and deed upon that prophet, and to think act and speak as if in the presence of the prophet.

Another way, which is used by the Sufis, has been called Tasawwuri Murshid, which is easier and better but which cannot be an example for the profane who would not accept it: this is to consider the spiritual teacher as being present. One does not always know about the mind of the prophet and one may fall into the error of confusing one's own thoughts with the ideal, calling them spiritual. But one usually knows about the teacher and can follow the teacher. The multitudes see that the prophet is higher than the teacher and therefore want to follow the prophet, for which they cannot be blamed, seeing that even the teachers follow the prophet. But they have their own thoughts and are divided thereupon, ignorant of the way of heart.

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The spiritual person may recognize the short-comings of others without blaming them. For one cannot do these two things together: praise and blame. Sooner or later the praise will reach God or the blame will reach Heaven, and they will fall back to earth bringing either gentle rain or destructive storm.

In the New Age, the wise are called upon to help and heal humanity and this cannot be done by blame. Surely there is sadness enough in the world. It is in times of prosperity that the note of warning is sounded; in times of grief the soothing sound of sympathy should be heard. Thus an optimistic, hopeful attitude is advisable, with words of praise, thoughts of praise, deeds of praise and by that means the Message of God which the world needs, will be given to the world.

## Chapter 2 Attitude

Although it may be unwise for travelers on the path to take oaths, at least ostensibly, the fixing of a firm resolution in the heart is always proper. It is always right to seek to do right. It is always right to turn to the way of the heart and to abandon acts which arise from egoism and egoicity. Yet if one were to ask, how can one help oneself and another in this, it may be stated that the sages have always used the method of calming the mind, holding thoughts of peace, until an atmosphere of peace is created, controlling their own desires and maintaining an attitude of composure.

A cheerful attitude is always a great asset. We cannot expect too much from the earth, which is a living body, not a spirit. Light and life come to us on this plane from the sun. It is the sun-aspect of life which brings cheerfulness and inspiration. We can see this with the passing of the seasons and most of all at the beginning of springtide.

The mystic has it within his power to create cheerfulness at all times without depending upon the seasons. It may rise out of his heart when the heart is light and free, unencumbered by self-thought. So cheerfulness may be contrasted with gloom metaphysically: cheerfulness is a state of brightness which comes from God, the Supreme, from the All-Light-Life-Love; gloom is an emotion of a shadow-state of heart, when the ego has veiled the personality, eclipsing the ever-present Spirit of Guidance.

Few things have stood in the way of God-understanding so much as the confusion between the personal-thought-of-God, and the Being-of-God. This thought has stood up before all thought, yet it is only a thought, while the **Being** is life itself. Still the thought-of-God as part of religion may take every human being a step forward, and that is well. But if one cannot take another step, cannot rise above one's own thought-of-God, he has set a limit to progress for the time being.

The thought-of-God is very valuable for self-purification, for morality, devotion, zeal, idealism and all the negative processes and virtues. The thought-of-God keeps the mind of people away from earth, although it does not always carry him very far upward above the denseness of earth. This can be seen that with all the millions of religious people we still have wars and strife and hatred; we still have all the problems for which the founders of religions gave solutions. The solutions are there and the problems are there and the acceptance of God is there, yet something is missing. This shows that while exoteric religion has its place it is not enough, something is lacking. Sufis say that this lack is the **realization of God**, which is necessary to complete the thought-of-God, the God-Ideal, and the worship of God.

A Sufi as a Sufi does not have to be more devout, more prayerful, more religious than another person, although he may be so out of love, he may be setting an example before the initiates or before the generality to improve their way of life. Yet Sufism does not consist of prayer, devotion, ceremonialism, because these belong even to the orthodox. A dead heart can repeat the prayers and a wicked person can go to church, but only a living heart can send its incense to heaven. So for those who walk in the light, cheerfulness is advocated, to preserve that light.

In dealing with others we have continual opportunity to express cheerfulness along with other spiritual qualities. We may take advantage of every opportunity that comes before us to do this. The

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more the living heart can give to humanity, the greater the capacity which will be created within it for the receptivity of the blessings from God.

It is not always easy to be assured that every person we meet is a beloved one of God, and yet if there is any spiritual merit it is in so doing. Spiritual merit is not moral merit and spiritual magnetism has nothing to do with psychic power, emotionalism, devotion, goodness, or intelligence. Spiritual magnetism can come only to the living heart with an attitude of selflessness.

Self-forgetfulness may lead to lessening nufs, the ego, provided one gives no thought to it. To think about the self even in the aspect of thinking about restraining the self only brings one back to the self; all thoughts of, in, about or relative to self are selfish and withhold the divine light. Especially when one associates himself with religion, preaches morality and then fails to give the light and life to humanity, the path becomes blocked. If one does not inspire others, one has no proof of having received God's favor.

Pure self-forgetfulness comes naturally with cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is positive, life-giving, most desirable, and the only way to forget self is: to forget self.

## Chapter 3

### Mental Attitude and Heart Attitude

This is a difficult subject which people will not always understand, especially those who are looking for the reasons of things, looking at the reasons, and by **reason** they mean the immediate cause, not the essence or fundamental.

The Sufi means by “attitude” any attitude which may have an opposite, such as friendliness and unfriendliness, favor and disfavor, interest and lack of interest, support and opposition. Each of these mental attitudes may have at least one opposite attitude, and perhaps there may be several variations and mixtures of them.

Heart attitude is spiritual attitude. Plato, the great philosopher and mystic of ancient Greece distinguished between them by calling a mental attitude **opinion** and a spiritual attitude **knowledge**. He taught that opinion is made up of a mixture of light and darkness, while the nature of knowledge is of the same genus as light. The Sufic view is nearly identical: mental attitudes and opinions find their source in Malakut, the mental region or mind-world, which is compounded of various grades of light, shadow and darkness. Djabrut, the spiritual sphere, from which the spiritual attitudes arise is the heart plane and is compounded only of various grades of light—there is no darkness there. (There is however, a shadow world of this plane, **missal**, which is called the lower astral or emotional plane).

Malakut, the mental world, is a plane of duality, while Djabrut, the heart world is a plane of relative unity. So spiritual attitude arising therefrom is attitude which does not, cannot have a complete opposite; there can only be more or less of it. Spiritual attitude is to regard a person, an event, an affair as being within oneself or else take on the attitude of indifference. That is to say, the sahib-i-dil, the gentleman-of-heart, either considers another person, event or affair as being within himself—or takes no attitude at all.

The way of heart is not easy to appreciate. One sees a wicked person. Spiritually you can recognize that one as being within, or you can refuse to take any cognizance of him at all. Why is this? Because by recognizing him within, one is really recognizing that other person in his relations with God, as being within God. With all his faults, he is a creature of God, and potentially a beloved one of God. Besides this, when you recognize the enemy as well as the friend as being within your heart, by that you are identifying yourself with God, making your heart the threshold of God, the abode of God.

When the wise do not desire to recognize a thing or person as being within, they take no thought at all (the teaching of the Gitas), and assume an attitude of indifference. This is for protection against unfavorable impressions. Not only that, but by this method one denies the nufs (ego) of the undesirable thing, event or person, and thereby denies the reality of the evil. By that means one may even bestow a blessing and a healing upon a sinful person. It is only when emphasis is given to evil that the evil assumes forcefulness.

In Zat or Absolute Essence, there are no differentiated qualities. In Sifat, the opposite pole, we consider the qualities as existent without direct attention to or reference to Essence. This is merely an accommodation whereby the mind may obtain metaphysical knowledge. In consideration of the Zat of Allah there is the absolute perfection of love, harmony, beauty and all qualities and facultatives.

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By an indifferent attitude of heart, maintaining equanimity and composure before a wicked person, one can aid in propelling the absorption of that wickedness, so to speak, in the Zat of Allah (God).

Coming to the relation between the mental attitude and spiritual attitude; the Sufi cannot say there is any particular relation for there is an infinite variety of relations. One who has obtained spiritual liberation may be **impelled** toward certain mental attitudes but is not **compelled**. The heart, in the pure state, controls the mind and directs it, but there is no law by which the heart is then governed, for heart is greater than law and law may be greater than mind.

Sometimes you find a spiritual teacher condemning something, and people will say that a spiritual person ought not to condemn, a spiritual person ought to bring peace, a spiritual person ought to be neutral. Now these are three states and if the state of condemning is not the state of peace, neither is neutrality peace. If neutrality brought peace, there would be no wars, and there could be no cowards.

The duty of spiritual teachers and prophets is to increase life in the world and to preserve Dharma. A warlike position is not necessarily unholy; many great prophets and initiates have gone to war, and fought on the battlefield. It is the inner attitude that is important, of keeping the mind calm and the heart pure. The prophets of humanity have never been passive but when they have condemned, it has not been a personal matter, it has been for a divine cause, for a cosmic purpose.

In studying further the relation between mental attitudes and attitudes of the heart, one can see how the condition of mind may be a reflection of a heart-condition. The heart reveals one's spiritual stage or spiritual station. To the heart, from the heart and through the heart inspirations come and each inspiration may give rise to a stream of thoughts even as a fountain gives rise to numerous drops of water. It would not be wrong to state that in a geometric sense the world of heart is four-dimensional and the world of mind three-dimensional; the heart transcends time and space as we have known them.

To the Sufi the cultivation of heart-attitude is all important, and the head-attitude is secondary. The world is full of many opinions, dividing and distinguishing men. The knowledge of unity is needed before all other knowledge so that amid endless conflicting differences the truth from which all opinions arise, can be perceived. When there is that perception, fault-finding diminishes.

Heart attitude is the sign of approaching wisdom. Man has been so constituted that his tendency is to look outward, to identify his ego with the experiences of his senses, with his thoughts and impressions. This is natural and need not be called evil. The unfortunate part about it is that with all their experiences and efforts, the average people find life incomplete. They seek for something to fulfill an emptiness the cause of which they cannot determine, and the satisfaction of which never seems to come.

The path to God has been called the path of initiation, meaning the process of becoming perfect, of being made whole. The Sufi, strictly speaking, is the person who has been purified by being completed or made whole. The emptiness within the initiate turns to fullness when he unites self with not-self and transcends both. This brings purification of qualities in the realization of essence, a higher state than supposed moral perfection.

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The problem before every man is how to become complete. People say God is completed and God is complete and yet in maintaining the completeness of God without having attained the essential knowledge thereof, man is apt to distinguish God in their thought as being different from God's creation, different from mankind, different from life. This mental attitude, although innocent, can become an obstacle preventing completion, and with all goodness, piety and purity, when wisdom is lacking, there is still a lack, and there is not complete understanding or satisfaction.

The orthodox have emphasized the virtues of God, the perfection of God; they have even disputed over such matters. Jesus Christ told his disciples that God alone is good in order to bring them to the Divine point of view: "If I am good, it is because I am at one with God; the Father and I are one. My apparent goodness is the reflection of God's real goodness."

Every Sufi can appreciate **baqa**, the real, the absolute existence, in a certain sense that "The Father and I are one." This might be expressed mathematically: that the total of the divine consciousness and the ego consciousness have a certain apparent relation, that if the one increases the other decreases. The greater the sway of ego, the less the sway of Allah. Christian scripture says: "The first Adam is of the earth, earthy; the second Adam is the Lord from Heaven." Sufis say: "Ani Haqq," that I-ness and Divine Truth are one; there is no reality but God.

So it is possible to approach the divine point of view and grow into the divine attitude. When this is done, man takes a great step towards perfection. To put this practically, how to attain completion or perfection in the everyday life, one might give some examples:

You may pick up the newspaper; there are many events described. You can take any event, each event, all events and ask: What is the sway of that event in space—that is to say, geographically? What is the sway of that event in time—that is to say, historically or biographically? What is the sway of that event in consciousness—that is to say, psychologically? What is the net result of that event—that is to say, cosmically?

Here nearness of an event need not be a sign of its insignificance any more than of its importance. There is a natural tendency of nufs to stress events near to hand and circumstances that affect the personality. The divine view does not exclude the human view. According to Sufism, God is both personal and unlimited, and He is not restricted to His transcendental aspects. Neither is spiritual indifference the opposite of interest; a very selfish person would lack interest because he thinks only of himself, while a very wise person may appear to have no interest because he has pierced the veils of maya, illusion. The wise person can behold the relation of things and events without any emphasis whatever.

People often become emotional about events near about. Others, seeing the smallness of this view, prefer to emphasize events far away. This is a step forward because it embraces a larger horizon and includes something of the not-self, although it does not always lead directly to higher morality. The sage also has the broad view but without emotion, knowing that by his calmness he can check human suffering and help to prevent the sowing of further undesirable karma.

Every person, even the Buddha, had to live in certain places. Therefore no one can rightfully deny the significance of place. It may also be asked, "Does the sage affect the circumstances and events or do the circumstances and events affect the sage?" No, circumstances and events do not affect the sage inwardly, and yet the sage recognizes the relation between persons and events and does

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not fit his life and teachings with any dream-world; he therefore keeps in view the outer circumstances without succumbing to them. By this means the sage's personality and atmosphere extend their influence and as they extend their influence, they bring peace and goodwill; and this may go on until the sage feels the whole world within and begins to act from the world point of view, considering the whole earth as his home.

The same principles hold true regarding events in time and events in space. How much influence can a person exert over events and how much influence have the events upon the person? Of course, there are munis and Sufis of the Khilvati School who, for practical purpose, have withdrawn from the world and who are not affected by events. There are others, especially those known as **rind**, whose influence may be unconscious. But the sage may also increase his time-vision, to go back and learn the lessons of earlier prophets and teachers and take examples from their lives.

In this one may take either of two attitudes. A person may regard the world as not-God, as not-spiritual, or even as the abode of darkness and limitation so that the earth-events can only mirror the divine and not be realities in themselves. Some schools have regarded the physical world as maya, illusion, and seek reality elsewhere. Others regard the earth as the scene of God-in-action, and as the stage where the unlimited appears under the guise of limitation.

It is the difference in impression and not in appearance which distinguishes the sage from the average man. The sage may read the newspaper, discuss politics, art, amusements, styles of dress, food, customs, even crimes and scandal, so he is hardly distinguishable. In truth, **it is not the least bit important if the generality distinguishes the sage or not, but is all important whether the sage distinguishes himself.**

That is to say, the Sufi should do everything possible to prevent outer affairs from disturbing his emotions, mind and personality. Yet there is no compulsion about it, only the calmer he can be, the more he removes himself and others from samsaric occurrences and influences and the more he will be assimilating himself into the essence of God.

Finally, coming to the cosmic point of view. In this it may be said that everything matters and yet nothing matters. There is no event so small or insignificant that it does not have its karmic effect. It is also true that events which may agitate the generality and cause amazement at one moment may be of little importance in the universe.

Many things which a person distinguishes have a different value in the life in God. At one place there may be a still-born babe and much publicity given to it, and elsewhere thousands may be starving and no report made thereof. People consider a prizefight, a kidnapping, a robbery, a conversion of a person from one religion to another important, and a sage may be born and live and die and be unnoticed for generations.

Whatever one may think about such matters, it should be easy to perceive the difference between the personal and divine view. Events in the lives of men are events in the lives of men; they may affect even the whole of humanity without disturbing the animals and trees and the inhabitants of the worlds unseen. So man's view may not be God's view and yet the nearer we approach the view of God, the nearer we come to perfecting our own minds.

## Chapter 4 The Need of the World

What is the greatest need of the world? This question may be answered in innumerable ways and yet a Sufi might say that the need is for more love and also for more life. Man, at least, with all his shortcomings, has come to recognize this need for love and both religion and science are trying to answer this great human craving. Yet neither religion nor science has come to feel the lack in life, a lack which may be evident after a little reflection, especially when we notice so much ill-health and imperfection of bodies and minds. And the metaphysical answer to this dilemma is that really these two needs are one, love is lacking and life is lacking, yet love and life being in essence one, there is only a single need.

The need for life can most easily be seen in the continuance of war on earth, that nations are fighting or preparing to fight, and often it is not clear what they are fighting about—there must be something within them which may be called the will-to-fight. The remarkable aspect of this will-to-fight is that there may be no hatred involved; the nations fight without hating. In the past, before going to war, it was necessary to stir up hatred and animosity even through falsehoods which all governments have justified. Now we have turmoil in Ethiopia and Spain and China and excepting in Spain, there is not the intense hatred.

There has been aggression into those territories because there is supposed to be need for expansion in order to accommodate the surplus population of certain countries. The mystic would say, it is not so much a need for the surplus population of those nations as for the expanded life of those nations; they have more life, want more life. This expansion is a movement of life even more than it is a movement of goods and gold and trade. All this shows that the problem of life is yet very far from being solved; there is perplexity, there is dilemma, there is confusion.

No doubt there is need for greater expansion of life. We see it in the growth of communication, in the steamship, in the telegraph, railroad, motor car and now the radio. The progress of science has helped to broaden man's vision so very much besides stimulating that impersonal view which is so desirable. Thus collectively no one can deny that humanity is growing and there are many compensations for the evils of the day.

In medicine and in healing there is also the desire to preserve life, to strengthen life and to lengthen life. Yet, while thousands may be interested in it, hardly anyone asks himself what life is. The question still remains, what is the life? To the Sufi life is very much more important than the forms under which it may be manifesting, and the phenomena to which it gives rise.

The Sufi does not deny the body nor decry its health. The difference between the mystic and the scientist may be described: The mystic may accept all that the scientist says and does, only he adds something to it and that something comes from his discernment of the relation of the life within and without; he can see the causes of things from the life within, and also from the outer affairs he can trace back to the causes of things and perceive their inner significance.

In Sufism all aspects of life are studied from the innermost to the outermost; only when it comes to the question of what life is, this is something which cannot be directly communicated in words. **Life is that which is to be felt**, not described; what is described is only a view of life, a part of life, a shadow-picture of life.

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For that reason there have been spiritual teachers. A Sufi Murshid is one who has created within himself a greater capacity for life, and who strives to increase within his pupils a greater and ever greater accommodation for a greater and ever greater degree of life. So the attunement of heart between seeker and teacher is stressed in order **That the Influx of Life Itself Be Increased**.

The purpose of teachings given to the pupil in Sufism (Tasawwuf) is to impress him deeply to the heart need, so that he strives for further cultivation of heart, which is to say, for a greater and greater cultivation of life; and this in turn opens the capacity for further expression. So there are these three stages in the manifestation of life as well as in the growth of the mureed. With such growth the mureed obtains one of the holiest of blessings: He feels the outflow of the love and life from God, through his teacher, into his very heart.

Then there is a question, how can a Murshid who is imperfect and incomplete, help another to perfection? It may be asked, who is complete? Who is perfect? It is not the personality of the Murshid which is perfect; even the great prophets have had their shortcomings. The Murshid is as the bridge to God for the mureeds, the disciples, and it is over this bridge that they themselves must walk to the further shore.

Besides, if Murshid were perfect, that perfection might not help the mureed. Murshid may be a perfect musician but all seekers are not necessarily musical. Murshid may be a poet, prime minister, engineer or craftsman and his perfection is such that of itself it may not help the mureeds. What is necessary for each soul is the accomplishment of his life's purpose and the perfection of the qualities and attributes which are present in his personality.

Sometimes it becomes a question as to how to increase life in order to bring perfection. There is way of breath, way of heart, way of silence, way of music, way of contemplation, and by many other ways that man has been raised from imperfection to perfection.

Pirs are those Murshids who have systematized spiritual training for mureeds and for humanity. The teacher strives to heal the pupil's heart and this healing of heart is far more than an ordinary healing. It leads to the increased capacity for life in the heart. From it come inspirations and mystical states (**ahwal**, pl. of **hal**) which take man in consciousness far above the denseness of earth. This spiritual attunement may reach to the very depths of one's being, and may expand to the universe. The teacher who is able to establish for the pupil that relationship and those states of being may be regarded as a perfect teacher, all other shortcomings notwithstanding. It is the spiritual ability, not the personal skill of the Sufi which counts for the glory of God and for the welfare of humanity.

## Chapter 5 Religion, Life and the Stages of Ego

The work of the Sufi in the world is to increase the life in the body and also to increase life in the world. If there is anything which may be called a Nirmanakaya body, which is a body replete with blessings yet made from material elements, it comes from the increase of life. Such a body can become even radiant, as Christ has said, "When thine eye is single, then is the body full of light." By means of the body and by speech and action it is possible to give forth the message of the living God.

From the several standpoints of the body, mind, heart and soul we can see the different God-concepts and God-ideals. For even people whose whole concentrations are concerned with the material life and with the physical body may have a God-ideal. Sufis call this type of ego **nufs ammara**.

Many people in the ammara stage have had the kind of religion which has been called fetish worship; also many idolaters are in the ammara stage. The worship of these people may be for them a step forward so such religions cannot be called entirely wrong—no religion can be entirely wrong, for the very concept and purpose of religion is something to lead man towards a state of betterment. So when the nufs ammara has a religion or worship it may spring out of the sense-life, containing a recognition that he is incomplete, imperfect and dependent upon another power, a power which he regards as being outside himself. Although the religions of the Beni Israel have strongly condemned such forms of worship, regarding them as low and unworthy, and although Islam in particular has condemned them, time has brought a softening attitude. In Islam this was due in part to the influence of the Sufis who have recognized the divine in the hearts of all and have seen in the strivings even of the savage something of the soul of man, however much it be veiled by the flesh. Child-souls and child-minds cannot be expected to comprehend higher forms and higher philosophies; the child is as it is and the people of ammara, limited in understanding, but not devoid of feeling, have had the forms of religion which are suitable to themselves.

The next stage of ego is **nufs lauwama**, and most of the problems that we find associated with religion, connected with religion are due to their influence. These people generally detest idolatry, they build churches and revere scriptures and pay tribute to the prophets. They also denounce those who have a different point of view, different forms, different scriptures. The lauwama people look outward, see outward and psychologically resemble each other, although otherwise they may be quite different. Seldom can they be reached by reason, although they have a kind of reasoning faculty which always follows the ego. In some instances they become narrow and fanatical as to religious and moral matters. They may be good people, they are often devout and pious, and it is only their extreme views and narrowness which stands in their way. They are unable to have deep feeling which comes to them mostly as the result of pain and suffering and in times of calamity.

The extreme attitude of some lauwama people, especially in the civilized countries where there is a degree of culture, has caused from time to time and in various places a reaction against this extreme and led to a certain amount of license, immorality, vice and hedonism, the seeking of pleasure. But it is also true that there are other times when the people of license and pleasure have the strongest influence and then there comes a reaction against them and the fanatical, pious type becomes predominant. These two extreme types have alternated in power, the one extreme type following pleasure but bringing beauty and little morality and the other type following duty and bringing no beauty but having devotion and some morality. Yet that these two types are the same grade of ego

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can be seen in the conversions: many pleasure seekers can easily be converted to the life of piety and many pious people, when they get prestige and power, have fallen before simple temptations.

Many lauwama people begin with belief in God and claim to have love for God without at the same time always showing compassion for humanity. They may talk about God, discuss the nature of God's being, and tell you all about God and God's purpose—they think they know that. Yet they do not always know their own wish at a particular moment and are not sure of the way to solve personal problems; the problems that are near they cannot solve, but for the problems that are far off, they think they have the solutions.

This comes in part from the confusion that has arisen between man's thought-of-God and the reality-of-God. There are many great believers, who are strong in their belief, pious, devoted, zealous and even kind and generous, but they do not understand thought, they are limited by their thought-forms. They belong to the world of belief, which as Plato has taught, is a mixture of light and darkness. According to the Unitarian view where there is mixture there is not purity, and while the way of belief may be best for the ignorant, it has only a limited value for the wise.

The God-concept has been held before the people who belong to the various sects and churches which bear the name of the religions. They hold forth different creeds and beliefs and have many differences. As a result of so many differences in the believers, there have come to be non-believers who will not believe, who doubt the existence of God, even deny it. They inquire: "Yes, God made everything and everybody, but who made God?" They do not understand, they may not want to understand and they are not always to blame for their failure to understand. They see all the shortcomings of the orthodox believers and of the priestcraft who have dominated religion, so they are afraid of it, hate it, deny and denounce it. Yet these people also may be in the lauwama stage. Judged by emotional, psychological and even by mental standards they may be no broader than the believers in the same evolutionary stage, and being negative rather than positive, without the faculty of belief, they do not contribute very much to the world's advancement.

It was in combating the thought-form-of-God that Buddha seemed to deny the reality of God. Yet no one can prove that Buddha was an atheist. He did not accept the Brahma concept of the time for he recognized it as a concept, as one of man's many concepts, coming out of man's fallacious discriminatory reasoning. He therefore considered it a particularly bad and dangerous concept for it veiled man's views of his own inner being and led him to depend upon outside power. It is the people of ammara and lauwama who depend mostly upon outside power, but a Buddha is so advanced that he can, by his inner light, kindle the light in others and raise them to a higher grade.

The true followers of the Dharma do not take refuge in any concepts, even in the concepts of ideals or in the ideal of concepts. An ideal is valuable when it leads man onward until he attains it; after that the ideal should be broken lest it become an idol. When you break the ideal after its attainment, you prepare yourself for another step forward in life.

The worship of a concept may be called theism, the devotee a theist. He does not worship the work of his hands, yet on the mental plane it appears as if he were worshipping the concept and concentration of his mind. This can be regarded as intellectual or imaginative idolatry. According to the Buddhist view, the God you can conceive and imagine and form and attributize, while not a hard, material ideal, is the effect of the same kind of false and limited reasoning which prevents the realization of Truth. This is not a denial of Divinity, it is not a denial of God the Creator or God the

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created in an absolute sense, but the proposal, which Sufis also accept, that that which has name has limitation. And who could create God?

One may thereby recognize that lauwama people, strictly speaking, worship their own thought-forms. Although it is still a state of ignorance, it does offer accommodation for further spiritual progress. Instead of denouncing these people, the initiates have used the terminology of the generality, and molded the concepts of the ordinary people, putting a deeper meaning into these concepts and ideals and thereby helping humanity advance towards the spiritual goal without impairing any idealism.

By such means the wise have avoided any necessity to fight anybody and by example have tried to prevent the different sects from antagonizing each other, thereby fostering tolerance and goodwill. So it is not necessary to expose the ignorant. One may say without flattery that believers are often good people. They may be concentrating upon goodness, and by that attitude bring out the goodness in themselves and others without knowing anything of the metaphysics of it. From the lower point of view this is important; from the higher point of view one may recognize the dualism in goodness, the tendency to divide the good from the bad, and the need for a greater life which would include the less fortunate as well as the pious and virtuous.

The next stage is **nufs mutmaina**. People who have advanced thereto depend more upon reason, intellect, judgment and goodwill; they are often tolerant and even universal in outlook. When they do go to extremes, these extremes are of entirely different type from the extremes of the am-mara and lauwama people. For instance a person of nufs mutmaina may accept God and call Him impersonal, say God is impersonal, and then picture Him as being formless even to the extent of being livingless. Such a one may go to church, accept a certain creed, and yet in the daily life accept another philosophy which has no special connection with their theological view. The tendency to over-intellectualize may dull the heart, but there are devotees of this grade of evolution who are worshipful without, however, being able to see far beyond their particular form of religion.

Nevertheless, where there is nufs mutmaina there is some intelligence. These people have built and maintained the civilizations of the world, accepting the inspiration of the wise, consciously or unconsciously. In the new age, the broadness which is innate in them and the broadness of the Sufi philosophy will attract each to the other. Therefore, Sufism has been presented in the West with an exoteric department which appeals to the intellectual, philosophical, artistic and social inclinations of persons of nufs mutmaina.

**Nufs salima** is regarded as higher than nufs mutmaina, and is very different because this indicates the person of heart, the sahib-i-dil. He is concerned with the living God, the conceptual God does not satisfy him. He does not want anything which has been created by hand or mind, or reflected in mind. To him religion is something far beyond the mental life. The heart of nufs salima is living, and it is this livingness rather than goodness which expresses spiritual progress. The Sufi Message has been brought in this day for all people of nufs salima, whatever may have been their views, their traditions, their past. When the heart becomes awake, the soul utters its cry and then the teacher appears to give the living instruction which forms the path to God.

The persons in the salima stage cannot be judged by the ordinary methods because the heart awakens the intuition and action is determined by wisdom and insight and is not dependent upon any limited personal judgment. If they are good, the goodness arises out of the life within them, and

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they delight in **Radiating this Light**. Nevertheless, there have been persons in this grade who have not always done so; in Sufism they are called **rind** and in Buddhism they are called Pratekya-Buddhas and arhats, who have purified themselves.

Sometimes persons of spiritual evolution do not radiate goodness as the ordinary man understands it. Prophet Mohammed organized the sahib-i-dil and has been their pattern, yet he did not always exhibit the same gentleness and meekness that has been found among his followers. The Sufi poet Jami stands out as an excellent example of nufs salima.

Mohammed, as well as Christ, Moses, Buddha and all Messengers of God belong to the grade **nufs alima**, and these people should be called sahib-i-ruh or sahib-i-zat, men of pure essence. It is not always their mission to dispense virtues. Their duty is to increase the life upon earth, to bring more livingness, to bestow blessing, to radiate living magnetism. That is the mission of Rassoul of which the Sufi Gayatri says: "Thou the Life Eternal, we take refuge in thy loving enfoldment." So, while nufs salima leads to sainthood or mastery, nufs alima, producing the men called Rassoul, Messiah, Avatar, includes all the perfect men and women who have ever appeared upon earth, who have passed through all grades of attribution to pure suchness, to Tat, Tathata, Zat, Pleroma, Ain-Soph, Zeruan Akerene.

## Chapter 6 Love and Selflessness

One of the most difficult accomplishments in the spiritual life is to refrain from all manner of thought. Thought, no matter what be its nature, utilizes vital energy on the mental plane and causes some psychic loss. There is this loss whether the thought be good or bad, beneficial or harmful, to oneself or to another. For every thought, whatsoever be its nature, is necessarily connected with the ego with the exception that inspirations and intuitions come from the non-ego.

Right-mindfulness does not mean thinking good thoughts. One need not hold a thought of anybody or anything. When a man holds a thought about somebody whether he thinks good of that person or ill of him, there is psychic loss, there is a loss of vital energy. However, thinking good thoughts brings one close to the atmosphere of goodwill and attracts goodwill and thinking of evil brings ill will, so that one's fate and fortune are affected thereby favorably or unfavorably. But right-mindfulness requires harmony with the universe; we live in an ocean of thought and we can swim in that ocean or walk above it. The heart-attitude with its concomitant faculties of life, love, light and inspiration produce the right-mindfulness and as the Hindu scriptures tell us, then we may "think of nothing at all," yet our very breaths will bring the thoughts we need.

The Sufi does not think good thoughts, even of his enemies. Whenever thought is upon a person or thing there is a contraction and every contraction interferes with calmness. By lulling the devil to sleep, by not thinking disagreeable thoughts or thinking at all about disagreeable persons and events, one can enter an atmosphere of peace. A vain person thinks he can help others; a holy person would never harbor such a thought.

Jesus has said, "Love ye your enemies." This is very different from saying, "Hold thoughts of goodness about them." The more attention paid to these enemies, the greater the difficulty in maintaining one's own peace of mind. There is psychic loss whether one holds thoughts of goodwill or of ill will; either kind of thought takes away the feeling of the Divine Presence.

Love expresses itself in feeling which may give rise to thought, and spiritual love includes the light of intelligence which often produces inspiration. So the mind benefits from the heart-attitude. To love an enemy or to love the enemy may be interpreted to mean to love so much, to have such a deep feeling of love that all thoughts of any enemy, all thoughts or ideas of enmity will find no room in the consciousness. When the heart is immersed in the ocean of love, there is no longer thoughts of an enemy, there is no longer even thought of self.

The wise depend upon insight and do not have to follow the positive or negative course in life. Commercial relations between sheikh and mureed, between guru and chela are to be discouraged for they produce the situation of duality. The sheikh or guru must preserve the atmosphere of unity and of unification; bargaining between teacher and pupil is therefore fraught with danger to both. Nevertheless, teachers have followed the positive or negative course because in the path of perfection, which is called Kemal by the Sufis, one can only act in the name of God, not in the name of self or of anything or anybody, for then destruction would ensue.

In spiritual monasteries, the whole group is considered as a unit in so far as possible. The disciple acts for the teacher in the mundane business and the teacher performs for the disciple in holiness. When, however, it is necessary for the teacher and pupil to have a transaction, a common

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meditation is advisable. Sufis practice Dum of Darood to produce unification between themselves and others. This consists in vocal or mental repetitions of a specially selected sacred phrase a given number of times while facing the direction or the person concerned in the transaction. In the supreme transaction of prayer, kibla is used, which in Islam is the Kaaba of Mecca toward which all devotees turn in prayer, thus producing the accommodation of unification.

The Bodhisattva, he who is led by the Spirit of Guidance, does not think of his own salvation; he thinks of the salvation in a universal sense, thus practicing unification. There are others, even among initiates, who do not hold this attitude, and they may be compared to the garden sprinkler which can only water a limited area, while the Bodhisattva and the devotees of the hierarchical path (which is beyond the path of initiation) are like the rain clouds, offering assistance far and wide. However, the correct attitude is not to consider near or far or narrow or wide; Dharma comes when one does not think of oneself, when one feels God or Unity, when one is contemplating on reality.

For many this appears a hard way, yet it is not so. The difficulty arises from the custom which has become a fixed habit of looking upon life from the standpoint of ego. The thought that man holds about God can be a help or a hindrance. What helps a child may harm a man, and the ideal which might raise a person in the ammara stage may lower a person of higher evolution. Yet the God-ideal almost always helps one to control passion, lust and greed. For that reason esotericists have adhered to religion and Unitarianism, even when departing far from orthodoxy and exotericism.

Love and self-sacrifice become real when realized. Then man can rise above his false ego and his limitations. He may feel the Presence everywhere. He thus not only brings himself blessings, he becomes the very channel for the bestowing of blessings. And this is what is meant by the increase in life, by means of which life can become more abundant.

Sufism is a philosophy of broadness and it is in this spirit of broadness that it has been re-presented to humanity in a new age. It opens up the highway of realization through the learning of the Message, and for humanity it opens the way of the spreading of the Message that all may come into the folds of salvation. When a man fulfills his compact with God, he prepares himself for the greatest possible mission.

## Chapter 7 The Beginnings of Religion

For many centuries religion has stood out against physical idolatry without being clear about the existence of mental idolatry. Men have been warned not to worship the works of their hands, or of other people's hands. They have not been so warned about not worshipping the works of their own minds, as has been said, "Your Maker like yourselves you make."

Actually there is a pure idolatry and an impure idolatry, and perhaps it would not be wrong to say there are many grades of idolatry. In the lowest man actually worshipped stones and figures. He thought that these stones and figures were imbued with magic, and that there was a special value in reverencing them, noting their sacredness. There was at least a partial basis for this because the very ancient peoples were like the children, the spirit of the genius was strong upon them and the spirit of humanity was not so awake. There is a tradition that at one far distant time people could actually see the earth-fairies and tree nymphs and nature spirits (Lemuria).

The wise of that time and of all times have arranged the religion in accordance with the faculties and abilities of the people and have not tried to offer them the metaphysics for which they were not yet prepared. Those ancient peoples, and some of more recent times who have not developed beyond that stage, could see the spirits. These spirits or jinns had a freedom which the human people who had become imprisoned in their dense earth-bodies did not have, and so they were called gods.

Stones were among the first places of refuge of these spirits or fairies. Men saw that the spirits went to the stones and from regarding the spirits as being sacred, they also came to regard the stones as supernatural, as holy. In order to gain the faculties of the spirits, men made images, and from these images they imagined also thought-forms and they relied upon the images and thought-forms to combat the evil spirits, the spirits which seemed to bring them harm, which accompanied the storms and the fire and came whenever there was destruction.

There is no doubt that these people were possessed of elementary psychic faculties. They saw the elementals actually, and some even among more advanced peoples, as in Ireland and other Celtic countries as well as in other parts of the world, had direct knowledge or experience. However, when the mind develops, this psychic power is drawn inward. It was in the eyes once to accustom the eyes to psychical sight, forming a bridge between mental sight and physical sight; it was in the ears once to form a bridge between the subtle hearing and the dense hearing; it was in all sense and faculties to help bring them into consciousness of man on the earth-plane and thus complete his involution before starting on his journey back to his origin.

But there came a time in human evolution when the psychic faculties diminished because they were no longer required. Especially when man began to reason he had to use the psychic power inwardly and he drew this force from the senses, from the extremities. Then the number of psychically clairaudient and clairvoyant people became less and less and the psychic magnetism no longer appeared on the surface. When fighting began it was used in fighting, when killing animals was necessary it was used in that way, when the sex-force was turned into a source of pleasure it was used again. And in this way the natural psychic powers seem to disappear.

Actually they have become latent and it is always possible to have them reappear, only those persons who want to develop psychic power or who do develop them, especially on the path of

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initiation, have to be very selfless as otherwise the psychic loss may be even greater than in the average man.

The wise in those early times divided the people into groups which in later times became castes. Young maidens who did not have to go to war shed blood or perform hard tasks, and were able to preserve their faculties and some were set aside for this purpose and served the community until marriage, or some remained virgins all their lives. The witch, which has come to mean a sort of mysterious wicked old woman was originally a wise woman, one who remained a virgin for life, or a widow who still had psychic faculties, and who trained the younger virgins in their work.

As man developed further he became more steeped in the denseness of earth until he lost the psychic magnetism as well as the direct psychic ability. When that condition became predominant a Messenger would appear—and there have been Messengers at all times—and he would turn humanity from the earlier idolatry which had lost its usefulness to something higher. So from that time there came a revolution after which the worship of the gods of the unseen gradually superseded the fetishism and the idolatry of ignorance.

Fetishism is not altogether false. The elementals no doubt frequent certain places and leave their magnetism and man can benefit from their magnetism. The extreme degree no doubt is seen in such places as Lourdes, which has collected so much magnetism and radiated so much power that multitudes are healed. When the magnetism takes this form, it is called Baraka (blessing) and becomes a source of blessing.

So there was at one time in the history of the race the rise, growth and decay of psychical spirit worship, and at a later time there was a corresponding rise, growth and decay of polytheism, although we may see even today peoples in various grades of both of these stages of worship. The gods of polytheism might be heroes of the past or thought-forms, or angelic spirits—they were generally propitiated and worshipped, and along with such worship some morality was taught and the science of metaphysics was first introduced to humanity (we can see this in the Brahmanas of the Hindus).

The rise of polytheism was a great advance over physical idolatry, although these two types of worship have sometimes been confused and criticized together. The more ignorant and superstitious of the ancient Egyptians themselves fell into this confusion. Many of their ancient cities and many tribes had their gods, gods which could be nothing but thought-forms. The worship of these gods in whatever form it might appear should be distinguished from the earlier fetish-idol worship because these gods served to unite their worshippers; they produced unity out of division and chaos and gave rise to the cult.

An early division between esotericism and exotericism can be seen in the polytheistic forms. The initiates taught the multitudes that the gods were spirits; they dwelt on Olympus, Brahma-loka, Shemayim, Heaven, in the transcendent empyrean. These gods were often removed from the affairs of men and perhaps were not all-powerful, themselves being subject to fate, destiny or karma.

If the gods were so limited, what value could there be in such worship? First there is the value of worship itself and the additional psychic values in ceremonials. Undeveloped people cannot understand the infinite; a child cannot understand it. The fetish-worshippers correspond rather to the grade of nufs ammara, and the polytheistic peoples represent the lauwama stage of development,

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which continues through many forms up to Unitarianism. Very few lauwama people comprehend the Unitarian doctrine, and it is not necessary for them.

The lauwama people gain through idealism; the growing child benefits from ideals. Through the worship of a certain god people began to assimilate the attributes assigned to that god or goddess: beauty, love, bravery, loyalty, devotion, household management, marriage, knowledge, duty, music, science, art; all these had their gods. In other words the perfection of life in its every aspect was to be attained through religion, and for the different aspects of life different forms of worship were given to humanity by the Messengers in those times in order to raise the moral and spiritual grade of the people, in order to bring them justice and happiness.

It was thus possible to teach concentration in the religion. By concentrating upon the appropriate god the devotee was able to advance in trade, occupation, profession and affairs. In one part of the world there was a divine smith called Vulcan or Hephaestos or Ptah, and in another part of the world the goddess of music Sarasvati. In Greece many gods, in India many gods and many incarnations of the Supreme Gods. By the attunement in concentration the attribute of the god came to man, and this form of worship culminated in the mysteries.

We find these mysteries in all the ancient civilized countries: in Egypt, Greece, Persia, Chaldea, India, China, Peru, Yucatan; wherever religion prospered and civilization advanced. Some of these mysteries were established by the wise in such ancient times that we have only the vaguest traditions about them. Through them skilled persons were enabled to preserve faculties which were brought to earth from the jinn world; they could go before the god and pray and meditate and learn their craft and perform duties as sacred tasks. In India, even as late as the Vedic times, which we now regard as quite ancient, altar-building, carpentry and all skilled trades were considered sacred occupations and connected with the religion. From that the later masonry developed.

For many, many centuries the mysteries were the center of all civilization including science, art and commerce. It was only when the priests began to arrogate to themselves certain rights, to proclaim that they were the intermediaries between the gods and men, when they collected the taxes and revenues, gave orders to the kings and warriors, and interfered with politics that the mysteries began to degenerate and decay. Priests even went so far as to encourage superstition so that the older teaching of direct communion or communication between gods and men was lost. Clairvoyant children, who might become oracles, were taken from their families, tempted, corrupted or enslaved. If docile or clever they could become priests and priestesses; if intractable they were made slaves of the temple, but they were always removed from the generality in times of corruption and decay, to prevent them from giving pure teachings, which would interfere with the machinations of priestcraft.

To this cause the destruction of Atlantis is said to be due according to tradition, but we can see it actually in the history of Egypt, India, Greece and many other countries when we read the records. And it was this corruption and decay of Dharma which brought into the world the greatest Messenger Reformers, those known to us as Rama, Krishna, Zarathustra and Abraham. Each was born in due season to purify the teachings. The purification took two directions.

In the one direction, as exemplified by Abraham and also in part by Zarathustra, it was taught that the gods were all really one God, and that He was not only greater than the gods or than any conceptions of man, but that He was high above even the heavens. Man was taught to look heaven-

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ward, and so would rise above mental idolatry as well as the physical idolatry, and that he would not need the multitude of priests of every description.

The other direction has been taught by Krishna, that there was the eternal Brahman, of which all gods were manifestations. This has led to Brahmanism and Hinduism, and has been called **pantheism**, which sees all gods as manifestations of One; in philosophy it has brought forth monism or advaitism, which denies the plurality of existence. The teachings of Abraham were called **monotheism** and they led to ethical culture rather than to philosophy or art for they emphasized the transcendent aspect of the deity. But the religion of Krishna ultimately produced Bhakti Yoga and gave rise to the highest artistic development.

## Chapter 8

### Religion Among the Beni Israel

The revelation of Abraham gave rise to many schools of thought, and was used everywhere to combat idolatry and decadent polytheism. It helped to purify the Mazdaznian religion of Persia, where he has been called Barman. In India he has been known as Brahma and elevated to the rank of deity, and although one speaks of the Trimurti—Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, each with supposedly different attributes and aspects, it is also true that these three names refer to the same Supreme Being in the tradition of three separate races, the Semites, Aryans and Dravidians, all of whom have contributed to the culture of India, or Aryavarta.

The followers and descendants of Abraham have been called Semites, of the children of Shem, meaning the pure, the holy, the upright, the heavenly. In other words, they were the Sufis of their time and were later called Hanifs when they adhered to the esoteric path. One of them whom we know, Orpheus, went into Greece to purify the mysteries there. Others—Aknaton or Amen-Hotep IV tried to do this in Egypt, but there the opposition was too great.

Abraham was the Rassoul of his time. He is said to have come from Ur, meaning the Supreme Light. He dwelt in Shams, which means the sun in the Semitic languages, which we call Syria, that word being derived from the Sanskrit translation of Shems, showing that the people of India also derived their teachings from the same land. This was called the land of the Kashdim or Kassites, and the Kassites were the same as the Brahmans, the people who followed Abraham but went into India. They were also called Mitanni and they brought the teaching of Krishna westward and those who remained in Syria have been called Midians by the Hebrews, and it was one of these Midians, Jethro, the guardian of the mysteries, who was father-in-law and spiritual mentor of Moses.

Thus in the time of Moses the two paths, positive and negative, Jelali and Jemali, Semite and Aryan, were brought together. These teachings were synthesized by Moses in his Berashith which combined the mystical traditions of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Aryans and then veiled them. It was necessary to preserve this work along with the later revelations which came to Moses and are included in the other portions of the Torah, the revealed exoteric law. Moses then looked for a people that would receive this work.

At that time the Beni Israel, the Hebrew people were wanderers without a tribal god and were therefore thought peculiar. All the other tribes in Arabia had their particular god, the god who was worshipped by all the tribes, who served to unite the tribe. The Beni Israel had no god, only the traditions of their ancestors or patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (or Israel). They did not remember that these men were great initiates. When Moses received his **amr** or spiritual command, to go forth and give a new and purer teaching of the One God, he beheld the Beni Israel with whom he was connected by blood and strove to unite them under the forgotten religion of monotheism, which had been the belief of their ancestors.

The multitudes did not understand Moses—they seldom understand the Messenger of their times. They wanted to objectify everything. When God was given to them under the name of Jehovah, the Infinite, the Transcendent Eternal, they could not comprehend its meaning. They set up a golden calf and gave it the name of God and wanted to bow before it. Then Moses saw that the people had to have something to focus their eyes and senses upon, so he had them build an ark or sanctuary (theba). The theba was the resting place of the Divine Spirit, the Shekinah, which can be

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symbolized by the Dot and Circle; for the Shekinah is so narrow it can be set in a coffer and so great that it contains the Universe. This is nothing but the Divine Breath, the Holy Spirit which unites and connects all planes of existence. This device gave scope to the devotional spirit of the materially minded Israelites and they rallied around the Shekinah and followed Moses.

Then Moses went up on the mountain to receive the revelation of God. This also means that he entered into hal, the spiritual state of communion and revelation. He went on to Mount Sinai, the Mountain of the Moon, which means that he received the doctrine, his mind was illuminated. He then came down and brought the commandments and other revelations.

The first words of the first commandment given to Moses are "Ani am the Lord," which has been translated "I am the Lord." This is a very high and pure teaching which has seldom been realized by a man and not being realized has remained mostly beyond man's conception and intelligence. The esoteric doctrine of Israel has been preserved in the books of Kabbalah which state, "Ani am the Lord," and which in Arabic is "Ani Haqq."

These words really mean "The Eternal, the Only being, I." These words have been re-presented in modern Sufism as "There is one God, the Eternal, the only Being; none exists save He." But the generality could understand neither the words nor the doctrine of Jehovah, and instead they accepted him as Adonai, the Lord or Master. In other words, they accepted the God-Ideal because they could not comprehend the God-Reality. Nevertheless, at that time it was a great step forward and the ignorant masses always preserved the exact words of Moses and so protected the prophets and initiates who were born in their midst from time to time.

The Hebrew people have not always understood the spirit of Moses or the deeper meanings of his teachings. However, both in ancient days after they entered Palestine, and at various later times, the esoteric schools flourished among them and gave out doctrines and literature so that we can trace much of the meaning of the original work of Rassoul-Nabi-Moses (Musa).

It was many centuries after the time of Moses before the Beni Israel came to appreciate properly the monotheism. They were hated by their neighbors because they had no material images of gods. These polytheistic peoples welcomed strangers and permitted them to worship their gods, thus becoming friendly with all; but this worship was often mixed with immorality or even with perversion. The Hebrew people began by hating the worship of these other peoples and also hating their immorality and perversion and this very hatred served to turn them to the path of morality. Yet they did not follow Moses until they were victorious in battle; then they called God a man of war (cp. Exodus), and it was only as they began to see that Moses and Joshua had many other qualities besides power in battle that they were willing to accept the faith.

This acceptance was followed by periods of relapse during the first centuries of their sojourn in Palestine after the time of Moses. Many wise men had to come and bring them back to the faith. It was only after the time of David, when the armies were victorious, that the generality came to feel that there was something magical about God. He was called Holy (Kodesh), meaning that He made magic and miracles possible, for in the beginning this holiness was associated with magic and miracles, and also with sacrificial ceremonies, many of which had psychic or occult import.

We can understand from this that the senses always make demands; they even demand a god, and it cannot be denied that the eyes have the right to worship, the ears have the right to pray.

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When there are no visible idols of stone or clay or wood, people who cannot have the idols made by themselves, want an idol made by God. Man has made the god-figures in his image and by his imagination, and when Moses taught that man was made in the divine image, thinking God was king, they wanted a man-king in His image, as His legate; they were not satisfied with initiate priests and prophets.

The Egyptian people who are neighbors of the Beni Israel and sometimes their friends, had gone through similar revolutions. When their priests lost spiritual power they depended upon psychic power and when they lost the psychic power also they began to lose material power. The kings grew weak and the empire fell. In Rome, at a later age, when the worship of the king began to supplant the worship of the many gods, this prepared the way for the unification of many peoples in a single worship and so led later to the worship of One Supreme God, following the Christian Message.

It was Rassoul (or Messiah) King Solomon who succeeded in preaching and teaching monotheism to Israel. He was not only king, he was a great initiate who completed his spiritual development even to Risalat. Before him and after him in Israel were many of great spirituality who followed the line of Nabi, the prophet, who listened to the Voice of God and then spoke; but Solomon, the Ras-soul, gave out teachings to humanity. Before him Eli, Samuel, and David had perfected the training for disciples in the esoteric school of the prophets which included instruction and practice in devotion, contemplation and music.

Now the mission of Solomon was to impress the whole populace that the knowledge which had hitherto been the monopoly of the initiates was for them also: that there was only One God; Heaven was His resting place, earth was His footstool. God was to be worshipped on earth as well as in heaven and for this worship a temple should be built. The temple was for the worship of those whose consciousness was on earth, who could not realize the Divinity within themselves, but by this God was to have His home on earth as well as in the heavens.

It became the Dharma of Solomon to teach the people all the arts and sciences of the times. He demonstrated that it was not necessary to invoke a different god for music, art, metal work of various sorts, weaving, woodcarving, agriculture, husbandry, etc. The same God was over all, in all and through all. Thus Solomon perfected what we call Transcendental Monotheism, an aspect of religion which the world has not entirely appreciated. The influence of Solomon spread far and wide beyond the Beni Israel and has greatly affected the traditions and folk-lore of many nations and peoples.

King Rassoul Solomon had schools established giving instruction in arts and crafts for the masses and offering inner teachings for the prophets. Between these two, the former of which we may call exoteric and the latter esoteric, was the partly esoteric, partly exoteric occult school which was opened to the skilled workers, Levites and priests and which in later times became the pattern for masonry, both operative and speculative. Here the students learned geometry, engineering, metal work, mineralogy, healing, astrology, geomancy, music, singing, ceremonialism and occult arts.

Much of the knowledge and wisdom has been lost since the time of Solomon. Many people have appeared making claims to the esoteric knowledge supposedly hidden in the symbol of the six-pointed star which has been called the "Seal of Solomon" and which is said to have appeared on the shield of King David, his father, and is therefore also called "The Shield of David." It is always easy to distinguish the charlatans and false claimants for they come pretending to have miraculous pow-

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ers, ability to produce weird phenomena and they misguide the people along the way of fantasy. This has gone on and on even until these days.

With all his ability Rassoul King Solomon did not revolutionize the nature of humanity. His mission was the opposite to that of Buddha. Buddha began as a king's son with all riches and everything he desired, and in the end he gave up everything attached to name and form. Yet the attainment of Buddha was such that it helped the people who came after him to lead better lives and this influence has remained down through many centuries.

Solomon also began as a king's son, who, being the youngest of the sons, did not expect to become king. Yet he gained both the throne and wisdom and had to stand before the world.

The path of Buddha may be called the path of perfection through emptiness, that man becoming naught becomes all. The path of Solomon may be called the path of fullness; wherein by perfection of even a single quality man attains that which leads to the same all. The path of Buddha, followed by many in the East, leads through zero to infinity, and the path of Solomon, which has been followed by the Sufis, leads from **one** to infinity. The difference between these two ways is in part an illusion, for by both methods arts and crafts and science and all learning and morality were encouraged, along with spiritual development.

After the time of Solomon the very reforms that he instituted were used by the selfish priests and artisans to seize the power. They alienated on the one hand many of the Beni Israel who refused to go to Jerusalem to worship, and on the other hand they alienated the prophets and mystics. The priests and scribes then wrote the books called "Samuel" and "Kings" (and Prophet Samuel could not possibly have written the books bearing his name), altering the records as they pleased and hiding or destroying the originals. They spread much false propaganda about the tribes which did not accept their yoke, giving it out in the Bible and by word of mouth that the Israelites were worshipping Baal and bowing down to idols.

From the time of Abraham the holy people had made it a custom to go to the top of the mountains to worship. This worship is reflected in several of the Psalms also, psalms written before the corrupt priests had attained power. The devotees built altars on mountain tops and hill tops and worshipped God therefrom, offering prayer and sacrifice. They communed with God directly, without any intermediary.

The priests attacked this worship and have written their criticisms in the Bible, especially in the book we call Deuteronomy, which they added to the four books of Moses. This was because they wanted everybody to come to Jerusalem, and once there, they could exact tribute. They began trafficking in doves and other sacrificial animals which they sold for profit and became wealthy thereby. They obtained control of the land around Jerusalem and the markets also where the pilgrims were victimized by them when they came for the annual pilgrimages, or when they came with the sin-offering after they had sinned.

In fact the priests even resorted to black magic and questionable arts. The memory of this is seen in the Arabic language where the Hebrew **cohen** or **cahen**, meaning a priest, has become kahin, meaning a wizard or soothsayer. Many of the prophets of the Beni Israel had to flee to Arabia from Palestine. Elijah was the chief among them, and he was welcomed and fed by the **Arabim**, the Arabs, which the scribes altered to read, by **Erebim**, the doves.

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Some remnants of the school of Abraham had continued in Arabia independent of the movement which followed the Mosaic reforms or the later reforms of Solomon. Two of the great prophets of the Hebrews, Job and Obadiah, were actually Arabs. But after this corruption of priestcraft and kings, kings who were receiving on earth that obeisance which Moses had intended only for God, the temple in heaven was destroyed, so to speak, and then the one on earth, deprived of its holiness and blessings, was doomed and fell.

## Chapter 9

### Later Development of Religion

The seventh century before this era was a time of great trial and tribulation all over the earth, bringing with it the destruction of the temple of Solomon and many other downward movements. It was almost a century of Kemal. Then came the sixth century in which there was a renovation all over the earth and many prophets appeared. There were prophets in the western world in Arizona, Mexico, Yucatan, Peru; there were prophets and holy men in Japan, China, India, Persia, Palestine, Greece. The empire of Japan was founded about that time.

Prophets or Sages, Confucius and Lao-Tse appeared in China. Confucius sought to establish material and physical unity and looked to the ancients for his ideals. These ancients included not only the people of the past, but those whom the people of India called pitris, which means patriarchs, fathers, ancestors and also fairies or peri. Thus the harmony which Confucius sought was one already established in the mind-world and this harmony he wanted to place on earth. Lao-Tse tried to establish unity and harmony on a more spiritual basis. Although Confucius **appeared** as an exoteric reformer and Lao-Tse as an esoteric reformer, both these men were high initiates with a common purpose and their spiritual attainment is in evidence by the influence they have had over people for many centuries.

Buddha came about the same time to end the political, philosophical and religious anarchy which was threatening the very life of India. The priests were doing there almost exactly what the priests of the Beni Israel had been doing, making themselves intermediaries between gods and men, trafficking with sacrificial rites, and trying to show short cuts to salvation. Buddha wiped all that out and presented the teachings of the direct Eight-fold Path in which and by which no priest or intermediary is necessary to attain the salvation.

Jeremiah appeared before Jerusalem at the time of its downfall and strove to revivify the spiritual traditions of his people. He warned them that the spiritual scepter would pass to an initiate-king not of their race, a prophecy which was fulfilled in the person of Cyrus of Persia. The Hebrew people had come to think that they were the special chosen people of God, that only from them and their near kindred would the prophets spring, and most especially Messiah, the Rassoul, and now was proclaimed Rassoul-Messiah Cyrus.

Cyrus was an initiate-pupil of the school of Zarathustra, whose inner teachings came from the line of Abraham in a different stream of patriarchs and sages from that of the Beni Israel. Yet the representatives of the inner schools continued to maintain friendly relations even when their nations were at sword's-point. So Jeremiah maintained friendly relations with the initiates of Chaldea, and Ezekiel, one of his successors, was instructed by them. Daniel, the Hebrew prophet and esotericist, also received Bayat in the school of Zarathustra, and Cyrus, the initiate-king was given the overlordship of the Holy Land. When his line failed, it was Alexander, another initiate-king, who received the command and rule over the country.

After the time of Cyrus, the temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt. It would appear that a kind and forgiving God had shown His Mercy to the Children of Israel, and the religion was restored. But in the next five centuries almost everywhere there was again increasing corruption in the esoteric schools. Foreign kings were initiated, after they had obtained political control, in order to win their favor, without regard to their character or ability. This resulted in caste-corruption in India and the

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gradual decadence of the mystery schools first in southern Europe, then in northern Africa and later in western Asia. It was time for another Rassoul.

This one was Jesus, also of the Beni Israel, who tried to restore and purify the teachings that had been given to his people, and also to add one more lesson for which the world was being prepared: this was the brotherhood of humanity. Christ added the doctrine of universal brotherhood to that of the Unity of God which had been given out by Moses. Jesus also taught the supreme value of love and explained its pre-eminence over morality and mentality. In other words, the God-concept could be raised from Malakut to Djabrut. Moses had given the people God as a Creator and God of Law, which He is; the next step was to proclaim Him as God of Love, which He is. After that it would be possible to teach that God was within man and that we were within Him—the esoteric teaching of the early followers of Christ.

No doubt the way for Jesus had been prepared in the initiatory schools of Greece and even in Egypt as well as among the Beni Israel. The teachings given out by Orpheus had descended first to Pythagoras and his school and thence to Plato and his school. But the Platonic God was mostly for initiates and philosophers: the generality could not grasp it. It was not until Paul, the disciple of Christ, came to Athens that this God-doctrine was preached openly to the multitudes. Thenceforth there was to be a purification and a revolution out of polytheism with its personal gods and goddesses over each moral attribute and faculty and over each department of the universe—to the acceptance of **one** personal God, with all attributes, Who was and is all-in-all.

The people of Greece did not understand Paul. They had long lost their Olympic polytheism and were accepting the gods of all peoples, thinking that the more gods they worshipped, the more they would be assimilating the very many virtues which these gods represented and were supposed to possess. By virtue, the ancients meant life-giving qualities and these included even “eating the god,” or communion in some form. When Paul came among them and preached, they mistook him for a prophet and wanted to worship him and add his religion to the many others. Some did that and prayed to Zeus and Apollo and Jesus together.

When Paul protested against this assimilation and amalgamation, he was martyred. After this martyrdom there came a reaction in his favor. Paul had warned the people against worshipping him, so his followers offered their devotions to Christ whom they had not seen and bestowed upon this thought-form-of-Christ whom they had not known in the flesh, some of the personal characteristics of Paul. Then, in turn, they began to identify the unseen Jesus, the Messiah, with the Personal God and ended by calling Jesus, God.

Now the Sufis have three practices which correspond to the three forms of worship: fana-fi-Sheikh, fana-fi-Rassoul and fana-fi-Lillah. The fana-fi-Sheikh of the early Christians would have been to merge their spirits in Paul whom they had seen; then in Christ whom they had never seen, and then in God, lastly. But those people, and many others have followed in this erroneous path, wanted to skip the first step and thought they were following Christ, giving Christ the Rassoul the attributes which really belonged to Paul, the sheikh, and so confused fana-fi-Sheikh and fana-fi-Rassoul; then they gave God, Who is beyond conception, the attributes personal and conceivable of Jesus and so confused fana-fi-Rassoul and fana-fi-Lillah. And from that time devotees who have not had the spiritual instructions, with all their merit, have not been able to go forward far on the path of holiness.

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So the doctrine of Trinity arose, and the little known Jesus of the Beni Israel was called the incarnation of God, which first step was not so different from what has been done in India. Then the missionaries took another step and said that God had two more aspects: Father and Holy Spirit. These are not entirely misconceptions; they are founded upon mystical knowledge. God the Father was really the Light of the Spirit; God the Holy Spirit the Light of Intelligence; God, the Son, as Jesus Christ was called, the Light of this World.

As early Christianity spread, it extended its way further and further away from Palestine and went entirely out of the Jewish aura, losing its Jewish characteristics. Thus morality became less and less important. The Law of the Hebrews which offered a direct system of morality as against the polytheistic methods was laid aside in part and a community of saints appeared. These saints took over the functions of the older Olympic and other deities, so for each attribute there was then a saint, and for each saint at least one attribute. Even Buddha was thus added to the Christianity hierarchy. Then a new morality arose which dispossessed alike the metaphysical speculation of the Greeks and the spiritual teachings of Jesus, as well as the morality and legal jurisprudence of Moses. A new priestcraft arose and obtained possession of the western world, and Dharma again decayed.

When the world had again become corrupt, it was the occasion for a new Rassoul, and this one was the Prophet Mohammed. He came at a time so black and terrible that all the world has called that period the "Dark Ages." Mohammed had a more difficult mission, therefore, than all those before him. He had to bring back the Divine Message to earth and he also had to live among ignorant people—**to escape martyrdom at the hands of the learned**. Wisdom and insight prompted him to avoid crucifixion early in life as had been the experience of Jesus. So Mohammed with all his learning was very humble and even when power and authority were in his hands, he was most scrupulous in his use of them.

The message of Mohammed was Islam and its purpose was the purification of the Divine Message, to bring mankind to the realization of truth without intermediation of either institution or personalities, and to carry on the work of human brotherhood. He taught in the two forms, esoteric and exoteric, and each of these had two forms.

The two forms of the esotericism were the mysticism of silence and the mysticism of sound. The mysticism of silence was delivered to Abu Bakr Siddiq, the first Khalif, and has been preserved by the Naqshibandis and Khilvatis among the Sufis; this is mostly for older persons. The mysticism of sound was transmitted to Ali, the close relative of the Prophet and the fourth Khalif, and has been transmitted in turn to and through many Sufi schools.

The exoteric doctrine was given in two forms also. The one was the orthodox Islam contained in the Qur'an and in the traditions called **Sunna**, which became the basis of Law and government as well as of religion. The other portion was in the Hadith or traditions which set down the rules of everyday life for the people, the Hadith supposing to emanate directly or indirectly from the private life of the Prophet.

By these means Mohammed tried to complete the work and mission of all the prophets and messengers before him. All the attributes which had led to polytheism and later to the reverence of saints, were ascribed to Allah, the One God, and known as Sifat. God was called first the Beneficent and Merciful (Er-Rahman Er-Rahim), and then He was given ninety-nine names which covered His principal attributes, and many of these names are easily recognizable in the Qur'an. By this means

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Mohammed taught that all virtue, all love, all goodness, all life came from the One God Who could not be limited even by the Attributes which, while they were His, were transcended also by Him. By such steps the whole world became prepared to be the receptacle of Truth.

## Chapter 10

### Sufism and Universal Religion

It cannot be said that there is any monopoly upon truth, and yet, until the appearance of Sufism there was a negative approach to truth (path of naughtness, **nothingness**) and a positive approach to truth (path of unity). By the negative approach we can include the way of quietism, monism, non-materialism, inaction, denial of self, denial of falsehood, and all the East Asiatic methods and schools based upon the passing into naughtness or emptiness and thence to fullness. There is Taoism which has opposed self-expression and positivism; Hinduism, which has denied the reality of Maya and sensual perception; Buddhism which came to the denial of self, and which has refused to recognize soul and finite gods. All these methods, however, led to the same goal which has been called Tao, Mukti, Nirvana, by the way of denial, from one to zero to infinity.

On the other hand we find Moses who preached the Unity of God, Jesus who taught the way of Love, Zarathustra who instructed the people in practical arts and gave the message of Purity—these were positive paths to realization. The followers of these prophets have accomplished much in history and have shown all the moral virtues while those of the negative path have stimulated art and commerce. Although Mohammed in general followed the positive method of his predecessors, he taught “La Illaha El Allahu,” thus combining the negative and positive, and from him Sufism took its cue for a newer line of development.

Sufism has been in existence at all times and has followed the general trend of the district where it has been taught, so as not to destroy the spirit of humanity. So we find Sufism hidden under positive aspects in positive countries and following negative aspects in the negative countries. The Mogul Emperors of India began as strong, positive rulers, but became softened by the atmosphere and feeling of the people around them.

King Akbar was almost a Sufi Solomon, resembling Solomon in many ways. He became wise, wealthy and benevolent; he was an excellent administrator and ruler, master of crafts and of all the known sciences esoteric and exoteric; and like Solomon he failed in one thing: to bring up children worthy of himself. The sons of each of these great men departed from the paths of their sires and sowed seeds of destruction.

In his time Akbar tried to establish a Universal Worship, following the lines of Sufism, and bringing together the devotees of all religions as seekers of a common truth and goal. It was too early, the world was not ready, people were still too attached to orthodoxies and accepted the dictates of priestcraft. With the coming of world communication through science and invention, and the recent decay of Dharma owing to the growth of materialism and skepticism, the accommodation was made for a new **delivery** of the Message, offering an opportunity to accomplish that in which Akbar was not so successful.

The new day was to bring not a new message—for there is nothing new under the sun—but a new **delivery** of the Message. By this new delivery it became possible to synthesize and amalgamate the way of the Hindus, the negative way of Arya Dharma, with the way of the Beni Israel, the positive way of justice, morality and prophesy. It is these elements **and not the personalities concerned** which constitute the Message. No doubt personalities carry the Message to humanity, but the Message has been there **for The Message Has Come Out of the Sphere Itself!**

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It is well to know and understand that while the ancient Sufism was negative in negative countries and positive in positive countries (as in the Chisti and Kadiria schools), the new Sufism will have to be **positive** in the negative countries and **negative** in the positive countries in order to bring fullness, balance and completion. It may even be that through the aid of the Message the peoples of Palestine will become more peaceful and reconciled to each other and the peoples of India more war-like and willing to struggle for justice. The Hindus cannot rightfully neglect their scriptures, in one of which Avatar Krishna has said, "Therefore fight, O Arjuna," and the Hebrews will have to learn to beat their metal swords into pruning hooks, and by such means the will of the Semite and the karma of the Hindu will become assimilated in the holy teachings and practice of the Message.

It is this great work which stands before the spiritual leaders of the future by which they may aid and guide humanity. This will produce perfection through completion, which is Risalat. It comes by bringing in the opposite pole, by inculcating appreciation of the point of view of another without necessarily abandoning one's own view. The ego-mind wants to perfect its own particular view and by becoming narrow it becomes destructive; by broadness one approaches mastery and ultimately attains it, a mastery which includes the union of opposites.

Sufism thus combines the perfection doctrine of negation, Monism, with the perfection doctrine of affirmation, Monotheism, and sees in God, **the One and Only Being**.

The Sufis of the new age will thus serve to bring together the various lines of teachings of the past, perhaps uniting them and offering them again in new and old forms to mankind. The Sufis will be receiving the ancient heritage of the Pirs of the various lines, and if the course of Sufism is properly pursued, the work of the Celestial Hierarchy will be carried on on earth by the people on the path to God.

The leading Sufis have always born great responsibility. Among them one has been the Kutub, known or unknown to the world, and perhaps more often unknown than known, who may become the protector of the whole earth for the generation of his time. In Sufism there is the line of Pirs which helps persons, the line of Nabi to bring the lesson needed at any particular time, and many other lines, all of which find their fulfillment in Rassoul, the incarnation of the Message, the Pagambar or Message-Bearer.

The complete Rassoul may also be a Nabi and even a Pir, yet it is possible for everyone to become Rassoul in the same sense that everyone is or can become Bodhisattva, the Buddha-to-be, the one possessed of Buddha-essence. For it is the same God, the same Divinity Who is in everyone, and not just in special persons or in gifted or favored ones.

Religion has taught to see people in God and has not always taught to see God in people, and Dharma has taught to see God in people and has not always taught to see people in God. Sufism presents both aspects, for every principle, to be complete, must be realized within and without to sustain the perfection. Some see God in vision so to speak, some see Him in thought, some in heart-feeling. Whatever be the approach, by the instructions in meditation, concentration and fana-fi-Sheikh, man may perfect his own way.

In fana-fi-Sheikh, an important element of Sufic training, the Sheikh or teacher stands up before the pupil for the moment or for the whole life as the pupil's ideal. It is not a question of whether the teacher is perfect, it is that by this method the pupil or talib learns to subdue his ego and obtain

the qualities or grace or blessings which have been given to the teacher. This is almost a spiritual idolatry which can stand side by side with the physical idolatry and mental idolatry. In the physical idolatry man bowed before the stones and in mental idolatry he had thought-forms and gods and later saints; now by this method one comes to the perfection of attributes by beholding the ideal in a living and loving personality and by the mureed's attunement he makes his own advancement. For the divine is in the teacher, even when hidden or revealed by the personality of the teacher, and the divine also is in the pupil whether hidden or revealed, and by this method of attunement the hidden is brought forth, the imperfection advances toward perfection.

Man has come to look for perfection in heaven, not always accepting it as possible upon earth. Yet the seer might say that such a view is superstitious. The one who does not see the perfection upon earth, being blind to the perfection, how would a change of body, a residence in a different plane of existence, revealing another aspect of manifestation, assure that he would see the perfection in it? No, things are not necessarily perfect in heaven; things and conditions are not necessarily perfect at all. If man is bound by conditions while in the body, he becomes condition-bound and the change of environment does not help much, for he has still himself to face.

No spiritual teacher has ever proclaimed that the best man is of necessity any nearer and dearer to God than the worst man. The story of the prodigal son offered by Jesus is an excellent example of it and in the Buddhist literature also we find some parallels showing the same common teaching. The differences between worst and best, the differences between imperfection and perfection are things that divide men—they do not divide God, they may not be of cosmic importance. It is a different approach which has been offered by the Sufis and mystics of all times.

When man is successful in this pursuit of the ideal as has been systematized in the disciplines and practices of fana-fi-Sheikh, and shows by his spiritual attainment and development of personality that he has the spirit of idealism, he is sometimes given the further practice of fana-fi-Rassoul, wherein he seeks deliverance by assimilation of his ego in Rassoul, the perfect man. Many think they are worthy of this practice from the beginning and if there is any sign of their unworthiness it is this very thought of worthiness. Not only that, but such persons have been unable to protect themselves before obsessions and thought-forms during the ages. The real devotee, the humble person, will pray "Use me for the purpose that Thy wisdom chooseth" and not try to consider his own worthiness or unworthiness. Attainment on the path of fana-fi-Sheikh, even in the slightest degree is far more meritorious than being in the stage of fana-fi-Rassoul where responsibility throws a heavy burden over both teacher and pupil after this practice is commenced. Besides, it is only by complete and loving surrender that **baqa**, the Divine Life, is experienced and absorbed.

We read in the Christian scriptures the question, "How can man love God Whom he has not seen when he does not love his brother whom he has seen?" He must express and demonstrate love to show that he has love and knows what love is. Many, ignoring this, conjure up their own forms of fana-fi-Rassoul and make before themselves a mental image or **shadow** around their picture or imagined conception of a real person. This is nothing but mental idolatry which leads to obsession, ignorance and even fanaticism. Then people with different views become intolerant, hateful of one another and have brought about religious wars.

For these reasons Sufism discourages the ordinary attempts at spirit communication. While Sufism proposes God-communication, it also says God is within man, and it is to become accustomed to the lesser light first that one is prepared for the greater light, lest having the experience of

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the greater light without first having had the lesser light, one becomes either blinded or intoxicated or both. God dwells within the human beings on earth; these are they who are the beloved ones of God, and these are they also who need love and should receive love. The Sufis and Bodhisattvas, therefore, look down toward earth to extend love and compassion and solace to the earth-dwellers. There is no merit in bowing before idols, praising the dead, seeing virtue in departed saints, prophets or angels, talking about a transcendental God. The orthodox person may do those things, but the initiate sees life by proving life, by living life.

Each time the Message is re-presented to the world, the less advanced among the hearers of the Message who are hearers without being receivers, bestow all kinds of titles and attributes upon Pagambar. They may worship the Messenger, offer prayers to him and hold him up as a rival, a superior rival or superior successor to other holy men. The public then becomes confused and may regard that messenger as merely one of the numerous false prophets who so often appear and this combined attitude of the public and the followers causes the formation of a new cult, a new sect, further dividing men.

Almost every advent of a Messenger brings with it the appearance of imitators, rivals and pretenders who may be called charlatans. The true lovers of the Messenger will love the Message and love God and love humanity; they are not exclusive in their love and this attitude alone justifies and sustains the Messenger and the Message. For an initiate any attitude of exclusion is poisonous to himself and to the cause to which he adheres or represents. By holding a Messenger to be a different Messenger, a Message to be a different Message, the ignorant further divide and confuse themselves and humanity, and depart further from the path of unity.

All spiritual advancement is in the direction of unity. Whatsoever divides, separates, sets apart, excludes, breaks away, no matter how apparently justifiable, is in the direction away from unity. For that reason the Sufis use an invocation in the hopes of impressing themselves and others with the need for this unity. The adepts of the future will have to be the examples before humanity; an initiate surrenders the right to demand superior morality in others than in himself. If there is anything a Sufi demands, it is the superior behavior of himself, not of others; so he prays "A torch in the darkness." Yes, the wise man may become a torch, a torch to illuminate the ignorant, to help remove the clouds of darkness and Samsara. This may become a holy duty for all initiates and it is for this reason these lessons are presented.

## Chapter 11

### Sacredness, Magic and Holiness

It has been stated that the Message is all important and the Messenger of relatively little importance, and that the study and practice of Tasawwuf are paramount and the personality of the teacher is secondary. Yet in Sufism there are practices such as fana-fi-Sheikh and tasawwuri Murshid, means by which the devotee merges his spirit in that of his ideal or follows the ideal in his daily life, so it may be asked whether the personality of the teacher be sacred.

We find people going on pilgrimages, visiting the tomb of some saint or teacher or master, and it is regarded by others as superstition. Some regard this form of pilgrimage as very sacred and it is sacredness from a certain point of view. For there are degrees of sacredness which may be distinguished one from the other and each studied by itself.

**Physical sacredness** presents a conception which is nearly identical with idolatry and it is not far from the older fetishism. This began originally, as has been stated, by noting places that were inhabited or visited by the elementals and subtle forces and beings and thus were regarded as **taboo**, as possessing some secret magic. Physical sacredness which sees holiness in things and places, when combined with suggestion, can also become magical. Many such places seem to have been used for healing and other beneficial purposes. All magic is not necessarily bad and the Sufis do not always oppose it; when magic is combined with sacredness it may be considered pure on its own plane.

**Psychic sacredness** also may lead to magic. It differs from physical sacredness in some respects, for with it memory and imagination are factors. In the physical sacredness a particular place of itself is revered, perhaps a city, a stream, tree, tomb or birthplace of some saint, etc. The psychic sacredness may have arisen because of some story or tradition about a place that has attracted to that spot a kind of magnetism, which magnetism may have been fed by the minds of the devotees or superstitions, and may not have been inherent in the place itself. In other words, this sacredness is largely a human creation, and not necessarily started by the supposed or real elementals, fairies, holy personalities, or saints.

The essential differences in the physical and psychic sacredness are two. Most important is that physical sacredness expresses itself in things, in places, which are congregations of atoms; psychic sacredness is the result of vibration, of thought-forces. Ceremonialism, dancing and rhythmic (as distinguished from melodic) music have strong psychic effects. All rhythms such as marching, walking, even rhythmical breathing, have psychic effects and when there is sacredness attached to the psychism these effects may be beneficial and uplifting. And the other differences between psychic and physical sacredness is in the magnetism; physical magnetism is mostly imparted by outward purifications such as come from water, wind, sunlight and sand, while psychic magnetism is obtained more through movement, suggestion and thought.

**Mental sacredness** and **mental magic** are much more important and involved than the physical and psychic aspects. There are all kinds of magic in the world, many of which operate through suggestion, through suggestion to oneself or to another. In Tantric Yoga, which has been practiced in parts of India and especially in Tibet and neighboring countries, the disciple builds up powers (siddhis) by which he can overcome physical forces and obstacles by mind, drawing upon the powers of mind. This Yoga is not necessarily spiritual or holy as it does not always involve love or special reverence for the teacher in the same degree as other Yogas; it appears more scientific, less devotion-

al. But it does require intense concentration and in the Buddhistic magic of Japan and Tibet, where the concentrations are fixed around the Buddha-concept, this mental magic is spiritualized and thus becomes mental sacredness.

Another form of mental sacredness is what we call orthodoxy. The orthodox religions have risen above the superstitions of simple people. However, they have taken refuge in creeds and formulas and it is not always easy to distinguish how far these creeds and formulas have been divinely inspired. The sacred scriptures are the chief sources of mental sacredness, and also churches, prayers, religious singing and most things connected with the religious groups of the world belong to this class, and among the exotericists we find forms of mental sacredness far removed from mental magic, even to the degree of being veiled by some materialism.

The Sufi practice of Tasawwuri Murshid has some resemblance to mental magic although its sacredness is partly mental, partly spiritual. The keeping of the conception of the teacher in the mind's eye, so to speak, at all times, has proven to be a very beneficial way of obtaining progress on the spiritual path. Persons who do not reach fana-fi-Sheikh may practice Tasawwuri Murshid, and both of these help cultivate the spirit of humility and selflessness. Besides, in conceiving the teacher as being the representative of the chain of illuminated souls, that one becomes a bridge for the mu-reed into the absorption in not-self, which ultimately leads to liberation.

Some spiritual traditions point to the danger of working against a teacher and of the merit of harmonizing with him, for he, although a single personality, is also to be regarded as personifying a multitude of virtues and powers. We can study this doctrine especially in the Pistis Sophia of the early Gnostic Christians and in the Saddharma-Pundarika of the northern Buddhists, but there is no doubt that a similar attitude has been preserved everywhere in the esoteric schools and we can also read in the Bible how the boys were punished, brought punishment upon themselves for mocking the prophet Elisha.

To protect the multitudes against this error, Christ constantly prayed for his enemies and Mohammed freely forgave those whom he had previously invoked a curse upon, for the retribution of remorse is without doubt the most terrible thing that can occur to any man. Even murderers, idolaters and vicious, wicked people do not always have to pass through worse hells than do the spiritual traitors, who in their remorse, feel very low indeed. All the artists and writers who have described hells, whatever be their conceptions, seem to agree on this point.

For that and other reasons the wise do not retain harsh feeling and try to exhibit compassion. It is not man's place to forgive until there is repentance and after that he should never fail to forgive. If one only knew the value of repentance, how important it is. Forgiveness is of God and man can only grant it, the Sufis say, when it is asked of him. Even the good people must pass the gate of Tauba (repentance) to enter the spiritual path, to travel the way of the heart.

**The sacredness of heart** can be regarded as a higher form of magic, and the sacredness of heart is **holiness**. In order to convey the conception of holiness in all its aspects, the prayer Salat has been given to humanity to repeat. It has been given in a certain form to the followers of Sufism and it has been given in another form for the generality, with the common purpose of increasing sacredness and holiness.

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Beyond the sacredness of heart there is the grade of **holiness of self, holiness of the soul** which comes only with realization. The Bible teaches that God is holy (khodesh; Ar. Khudus) and the soul of man being one with the soul of God, the holiness is in man, yet without realization this holiness is incomplete. The Gayatri **Pir** has been given by the Sufic author of *Vadan* as part of the Message of the day, in order to lead man toward this deservable realization.

The words **sacredness** and **holiness** are in common usage and are often regarded as synonyms, yet Sufism offers an explanation whereby each of these two words may have a complete connotation of itself. This difference may be expressed thus: that sacredness belongs to things, to places and areas, while holiness belongs to personalities. Sacredness is atomic in a certain sense, and of prakriti; holiness is of purusha and may be called vibrational.

In their aspects of perfection, which are called Kemalic by the Sufis, holiness and sacredness unite and become one. God is holy and God is sacred, for God is creator and God is also form; for nothing exists save He. The living teacher is holy because he is a man and because he is the representative of God; the living teacher may become a sacred personality when he creates around himself that atmosphere of calm which brings healing and peace and love to the disciples. When he does the same for humanity in general he is known as a saint. The memory of a teacher who has passed on is sacred, it is not holy. For holiness there must be life, form is not sufficient and the mind is not its creator. Sacredness without holiness can lead to superstition and holiness is most essential to make religion living. Holiness without sacredness sometimes leads to asceticism, celibacy and extreme views. The balance forms the middle path.

The proper feeling for the teacher is called reverence. While reverence begins in the heart it can be expressed mentally and may produce beneficial psychic effects. Such movements as rising in the presence of the teacher, sitting or standing in certain positions with relationship to the teacher, having a certain attitude and posture while the teacher is offering instruction or leading in meditation—all these have their values.

Every person has a certain psychic capacity and he may utilize a certain amount of psychic force without harm. If he expends more, he will probably be absorbing his life energy and this is one of the causes of sickness, old age and death. Now while reverence of itself does not necessarily increase psychic power, it enables one to receive from a more developed person. Jesus was able to give great psychic blessings to the people who had reverence for him, and we read in the Scriptures where the people called Him Master or Rabbi (which has been translated as “Lord”). Mohammed developed even more psychic power, and at first had to face all opposition, but in the last months of his life the people around him expressed the utmost reverence. For that reason this prophet performed no healing and paid little attention to phenomenal psychic activity.

Among the Sufis there is a line of development called Shafayat, which is very different from the line which leads to Murshidship. Shafayat has been called the healer and this healing is of two kinds, personal and impersonal. It brings healing to persons and can therefore be holy, and it also brings healing to places and areas and can thus be sacred. Shafayat may use psychic faculties and psychic powers, following certain lines of development. The teacher is not supposed to give out magnetism without first receiving respect, reverence and trust. Shafayat may expect goodwill or respect but not reverence. In the personal work Shafayat is concerned with sacredness, even in the healing of the body, and holy healing is possible only when the heart of another is touched. The healing of the teacher should be holy when it is performed.

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A Sufi not on the path of Shafayat is very circumspect in the use of psychic faculties especially for healing. The best work of the teacher comes when he offers his blessing. The blessing of the teacher can become so pure as to help a person by stimulating an inspiration which is a much higher form of activity than the psychic or psychological. Pupils may receive a healing as they pass from grade to grade in successive initiations, each stage of which brings blessing. The teacher also helps through leading in meditations by purifying and sanctifying the atmosphere.

The common meditation of teacher and pupils helps bring about closer attunement. By this attunement the ego of the disciple is subdued. For the teacher meditation is a means of stimulating holiness, and this holiness is transmitted. Group meditation even without the teacher is valuable because it helps to calm minds; the calm teacher, however, is able to establish a norm and the atmosphere so created can be beneficial to all.

When the Sufi teacher enters a meditation hall the pupils rise. This respect is a step toward reverence, which is shown in a psychic and physical form first. When the inner attitude is similar to the outward action, there is the accommodation for reverence, peace and blessing in turn. Even the form becomes valuable when it establishes a norm and rhythm.

If a question be asked, "are there spiritual uses of magic," it may be stated that there is a magical value in reverence and respect. We do not usually consider these qualities magical, but the highest and deepest magic is that which passes from heart to heart, which is connected with the universal love-fluid (ishk) and thus leads to holiness. A study of the origin of words shows that the ancients knew about the relation between these three things; sacredness, magic and holiness, and however much they may differ in our discriminatory studies, they are all based upon **sympathy**; in other words, upon heart. Holiness is therefore really the essence of magic and sacredness which belongs to life itself and which helps to increase livingness, the livingness which the collectivity is seeking.

Everyone is not impressed with the value of life. We use the word "life" so as to distinguish it mentally without being able to define it or comprehend its complete significance. It is human to eschew evil and seek goodness and praise it, but life is something which is greater than goodness, beyond good and evil. Hatred of evil and love of good, admirable as they seem, arise from the thought-world and may be expressions of vanity, even as good and evil themselves, when they stand out in contrast, are vanity-born. Infants and angels have no vanity, no goodness, no wickedness, and yet they can appreciate reverence and holiness, which belong to the heart-frame.

Now the spiritual teacher may be the representative of the embodiment of the living Master and the living God. The teacher may be representing life in its fullness and in its perfection beyond all qualitatives. Therefore, strictly speaking, the characteristics and actions of the teacher cannot always be classified as good or evil. A good and kind act of a teacher may prove to be a vain sentimentality and the harsh act of a teacher may prove to be a blessing to many. The acts of the teacher cannot be properly judged, and although humanity has been warned not to judge the teacher, yet there are many instances of it in the spiritual history of the world, and it is a trying thing for the teacher when the pupil continually adheres to goodness rather than to life and wisdom.

We may find many orthodox Christians, who study their scriptures scrupulously, and yet they have not the spirit of Jesus; their devotion has not increased their inner perfection. There are Mussulmans who know the entire Qur'an **by head**, which we call **by heart**; if they knew it **by heart**

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they would be having the spirit of the Prophet. They have learned the words, they can perform the ceremonies, but of the Waters of the true Zem-Zem they know nothing.

Sufis always deal gently with these orthodox persons, trying to be patient, generous and forgiving, without being confidential. It is possible to give the worthy orthodox and conservative persons the trust in deeds, while it is very inadvisable to tell them of the trust of heart or discuss with them about spiritual matters.

While the hearts of such persons may be delicate, the hearts of the mureeds who are the young initiates, awakening to sensitivity, are still more delicate. In the early stages in the spiritual life the pupil is like the little infant; he may become very sensitive while still weak in faith or weak in ability, and he does not even know it. The teacher may have to help pupils through every grade of **magic** as well as through occultism and mysticism.

This seems to place a tremendous load upon the teacher and indeed it is true that every time another person takes the pledge of Bayat or has the sign of inner initiation the teacher has a new responsibility. From the standpoint of the Holy Ones this responsibility is only placed upon those who have the capacity. It is only when a person falsely assumes a spiritual name, a spiritual post, a spiritual position that he may become condemned for his failure to uphold the duties concordant with his claims. If he leads others astray, he will have to repay in spiritual coin all that he has stolen from life.

## Chapter 12

### Baraka

It may be wondered why the subjects of magic and sacredness are associated. It has been stated that a study of the history of mankind, and especially of the words dealing with these subjects, prove the relationship between holiness, sacredness, magic and religion. All are connected through the faculty of sympathy, a heart-faculty.

The **magus**, from whom we get the word magic, was a wise man. He could read signs from phenomena and his ability seemed miraculous to the untrained and ignorant. Among the Persians, Greeks, Hebrews, Hindus and many other peoples the arts connected with religion were regarded as magical. The functions of the priest and soothsayer overlapped, and when they did not the priest often wanted to become a soothsayer and the soothsayer wanted the popularity of the priest. In the end the offices were united and the psychic power which came when there was purity was lost. The magic in the ceremonialism of the ancient mysteries had a sacred beginning; it was preserved for many centuries in Egypt, but mostly in Chaldea, the land of magic, and a little in northern Europe.

Anthropologists have given close study to the practice of taboo by uncultured races. These people regard certain places, persons, things, food, etc. as untouchable, which things are sometimes to be shunned, sometimes revered. This custom has no doubt been handed down from the ancient psychism when people knew more directly about the elementals.

Particular attention to such matters is paid in certain Islamic countries, notably Morocco. Although Islam has aided greatly in spreading world culture and in driving out idolatry, it did not destroy magic or the sacred traditions of the countries it invaded. Both Mussulmans and Christians, as well as other missionaries who propagated religion, have tried to assimilate these traditions and refashion them. This is probably for the best from every point of view unless we look upon them as superstition, and man has usually called practices superstitious when he did not know the reasons for them.

In Morocco most of all one hears considerably about "Baraka," which was originally applied to that which was blessed or was giving out blessing. Places received the epithet **Baraka** when blessings were supposed to emanate from them. This began with the holy places such as the site of the temple in Jerusalem, the tombs of Mohammed and his first Khalifs in Medina, the Kaaba at Mecca, the cave of Abraham and other places of sacred tradition. Later it came to include many tombs and haunts of holy people.

While taboo has been largely negative, Baraka is essentially positive and life-giving. From Baraka something is always added to life: strength, health, new faculties, new hopes—although in practice it has come to be associated with anything connected with psychic magnetism. The ignorant in Islam have regarded many Sufi saints and sages as "barak" and stood in awe of their persons, their possessions, their tombs and everything associated with their names. This has created a certain amount of opposition to Sufism and to Sufis who have been accused of fostering superstitions.

While Sufis do not condone superstition, they have never tried to deprive any people of their conceptions of what is sacred. To the Sufi the idea of sacredness is itself a sacred idea which has spiritual value, and perhaps has Baraka. If the lowly or the learned say a place is sacred, holy, revered, the Sufi accepts it as such and does not reveal his possibly superior knowledge. It is that the idea and

ideal of sacredness should be expanded rather than diminished. Therefore the Sufi constantly prays that he be raised above the differences and distinctions that divide, that he might attain the high plane of holy vision.

The personality of the true Murshid has reached a development that it emanates Baraka. This Baraka of the Murshid is sometimes hard to understand. There have been false Sufis who have assumed the possession of Baraka when they did not have it and there have been many pretenders who have not been satisfied until they have proclaimed themselves as Mahdi. This means that there have been men who have deceived themselves and others claimed that they were the representatives of God. Usually after a short career of success and indulgence wherein the attainment of power was followed by the exhibition of all the weaknesses of human nature, ruin followed in their wake. Terrible is the retribution to false claimants of Baraka, and unfortunately also to their followers and successors who have been drawn into the same psychic stream and maelstrom.

The talib who practices Tasawwuri Murshid may arrive at a true conception and appreciation of holiness. While many long for telepathy and miraculous powers and faculties, few realize that most blessings come from attunement to the teacher and the teachings. Many believe in democracy, are arrogant, have the tendency to criticize, lack faith, are proud or egotistical, cultivate false humility, or are sinful and they cannot comprehend the sacredness of the **relation** between teacher and pupil. When the teacher holds fast to his Divine Ideal and the pupil holds fast to the ideal which he is capable of holding both may advance together.

The teacher cannot perform the practices for the pupil nor can any soul tread the path for another. Even uttering words such as "Bless you" or "God bless you" does not always bestow Baraka. The false sheikh imparts no Baraka with many words, he does not possess the **life** from which all blessings emanate. The true Sheikh who is attuned to the chain of Masters gives out blessing naturally even without thought thereon. The pupil may receive these blessings as his heart is open and he is responsive. The pupil, however, is not the one to determine the nature of Baraka or the relation between the teacher and Baraka.

What the pupil can do, what every person can do is to expand the horizon of life and the depth of love. As man's feelings grow he grows and his tenderness also increases further capacity for spirituality. Spirituality in turn produces more tenderness and sensitivity. Only by two means has this growth been accomplished: by the way of sorrow and tribulation; or by the way or path of initiation.

Some people have considered themselves initiates who are not and some have considered their stations higher than they really are. This attitude prepares the way for false teaching. By false teaching is not meant false doctrine given to the generality, to the multitudes, to the exotericists, or contained in the creeds. False teaching arises out of the assumption of a person being what he is not; it is his acclaimed spirituality, not his philosophy which produces the falseness, for spirituality is not, can never be, based upon claim. It is a spiritually false teacher who claims to give out or to be able to give out what he cannot of spirituality, magnetism, Baraka, power or inspiration. Spirituality belongs to life and is beyond words, creeds, doctrines and thoughts.

The future danger as that of the past may not come from the dead or the slumbering. There is more danger to be feared from those who are psychically awake or sensitive, who delude themselves and others that they have the esoteric doctrine and the spiritual faculties. They often write long discourses, claim communication with spirits and lay special emphasis upon their "new revelation."

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The Sufi can easily guard against them by recalling the words of Solomon, "There is nothing new under the sun." What is all this pretense?

Now the problem before every initiate is how to increase Baraka. For this there must be a willingness to assume responsibility as well as love and regard for everybody. By building up Baraka, constructive movements and good-will follow and by withdrawing Baraka, Jerusalem was brought to its downfall and by Mohammed imparting Baraka to Mecca and Medina, those cities have remained as sacred places for many centuries.

With the spirit of the new age the need for Baraka becomes greater. That is why the prayer has been given, "May the Message of God reach far and wide." The repetition of the words of the prayer are indeed the first step. The motions which are performed with prayers increase physical and psychic magnetism. When the words are spoken in reverence and sincerity, there is an increased accommodation for Baraka, and the action may follow the accommodation.

Sufis also have two practices which help increase Baraka by the use of the eyes. When the power is concentrated upon a person, thing, place, affair, incident or thing—that which tends to a point, to contraction or kabz, it is called **sulp**. When the same power is radiated over a larger area, covering many persons, things, affairs, incidents, it is called **tawajjeh**. Sulp and tawajjeh are both used with effect, only we find that Shafayat may use sulp most, while the Sheikh will be employing tawajjeh because the consciousness of Sheikh must become an inclusive consciousness. But both these methods, use of magnetism through the eyes in contraction (sulp) and in expansion or bast (tawajjeh) are valuable. Then one should either hold the thought of the Sufic invocation in the mind as a silent Darood or repeat mentally a sacred phrase, among which the praise to God such as the hallelujah of the Hebrews and the **Subhan Allah, Alhamdu-lillah** of the Muslims are most efficacious.

## Chapter 13 Concerning Urouj

All evolution is really spiritual evolution. Even behind biological evolution there is the hand of Providence and some of the scientists with the keen sight have noticed it to a certain extent. The materialist assumes that the growth of mind is the result of natural forces and the Sufi would not contradict him on this point, only the mystic does not limit the natural forces to the terrestrial forces of Nasut; he does not confuse nature with matter, with the physical dense atoms of earth.

Study of the sciences physiology and biochemistry shows that people advanced intellectually do not always have the best physical bodies nor do persons with the best bodies always have the best minds. Yet the mystic and the scientist agree in accepting the contention that balance is best. Balance is the great secret and balance is the great safety valve. But balance is not a standing still, balance is equilibrium in motion, in action. Life is motion and stillness is death; the growth of spirituality in the world corresponds to the growth of life and livingness thereupon. Mystics therefore study the stages of activity to obtain the proper rhythm for every experience.

There are some people who overemphasize the Urouj aspects of life; that is to say they seek to increase the scope of activity, the power used, the rhythm, the motion. Then they may want to change conditions and institutions, and the desire for change may become so great as to blind and intoxicate them to the needs of the world. Others express Urouj in their craving for travel, excitement and speed.

We can see these various tendencies in the career of the famous dancer, Isadora Duncan. She could not stay in a place long, was not faithful to any man, and her dance movements were based upon accelerated rather than equilibrated rhythms. As the scientist-mystic Havelock Ellis has expressed it, the study of the dance reveals the inner psychological condition. And Miss Duncan was ever restless, never satisfied, never stable and passed away a victim of her own karma.

Such people need meditation, need peace, need relaxation, need quiet. Even Miss Duncan sensed that, and she sought the center of her being. Unfortunately she found it in the solar plexus which itself is the Urouj center and her continued concentrations only exaggerated her condition until her body could stand it no longer.

At the same time, Urouj is the cause of civilization. Because of Urouj the great inventions like the railroad and tram car, the speedboat and the motorcar and aeroplane have been given to the world. People have come to use the telephone, telegraph and radio, and this from the same Urouj tendency. Tendencies for new things, new views, rapid action, exciting stories, mysteries, desire to explore new lands, all have come from Urouj. Also the desire to go high into the stratosphere, deep into the ocean, to harness power and control the elements, these are signs of Urouj.

Because of Urouj and out of Urouj man has gained much knowledge and yet these increasing activities have brought forth hitherto unknown diseases. The body does not so readily accommodate itself to new changes nor the mind to new habits. Everything new produces a change in rhythm and a change in breathing. On the one hand constant Urouj may lead to egotism, selfishness, speed and nervousness and so bring on disease and disaster. On the other hand there are tendencies to rapid and impulsive thinking and overconfidence, the fruits of which are not good. All this shows also the absence of intuition, balance and meditation.

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Out of this has come the unrest, riots, mob rules and revolutions and wars which are again disturbing the earth. Man loses the self-control and ultimately gets out of harmony with others. The existence of starvation, injustice, selfishness and tyranny are made the excuses for destructive action. The tyrants and despots that have appeared on earth and seized power have come because of Urouj; they can be stopped when Urouj is stopped.

Just as Urouj represents the first stages of activity, with their vigorous growth, so Zaval represents the last stages of activity when there is diminishing **movement** (not stagnation). There are people of Zaval in India, capable of assimilating knowledge, but they have become old and lag behind the times, although neither stagnated nor still.

The Zaval state of slowing down rapid rhythms is excellent as a check upon excitement, frivolity and nervousness. Uncontrolled Zaval can be even worse than Urouj for it lacks the stamina to oppose, it is weak in resistance. It may lead to passivism and does not lead necessarily to justice, kindness or friendliness. Democracy in a country of the educated means liberty and in the country of the ignorant means tyranny. The less developed people may have more liberty with a king than without one; they need guidance.

As we live in an age of rapidity it becomes necessary to adjust ourselves to it, to maintain our rhythms in adjustment to the conditions. When this cannot be done we cannot always avoid ailments. It would not be wrong to say that great epidemics such as the influenza have risen from this cause, through lack of psychic adjustment. The student on the path may protect himself against such disturbances by carefully watching and guarding the breath.

The Urouj condition is dominant in childhood and youth when it is especially needed, also when there is excitement or change. People who have been rich become poor, people lose positions, rank, power, eat wrong foods, depend upon mechanical devices and otherwise lead artificial lives. Thus they pass through all sorts of Urouj conditions. Influenza may be defined as a disease, usually occurring in epidemic form, arising from an excess of Urouj particularly in the psychic stream.

Thought as well as habit sometimes diminishes resistances to disease. Guarding against a habit may bring too much concentration upon it and strengthen the habit instead of destroying it. It is better for the initiate to watch the breath. With proper breathing we can face all the vicissitudes of life without harm, and the Sufic instructions offer practical means therefore.

## Chapter 14 Mastery of Rhythm

The secret of the power of the Sufi comes in his control of the rhythms Urouj, Kemal and Zaval. Without Urouj life does not persist. Urouj comes at the birth of life, for first must come the birth and then the action. However, if the enthusiasms of action are not checked, the life may be wasted away.

Masters of Urouj can make or unmake it. If Urouj is not controlled, man wastes his sustenance and burns his candle at both ends, so to speak. Without Urouj there is no candle, no light, no life. Disease may arise from either source: too much Urouj or absence of it.

The steady mobile rhythm which has been called Kemalic is usually best and leads toward perfection (Kemal). There are different rhythms for sowing, plowing, planting, eating, reading, weaving, so each has its own Kemalic rhythm. The knowledge of mysticism and the science of breath enable one to discover and control these rhythms.

As one advances on the spiritual path his responsibility may grow and his influence may extend far and wide. The master of breath may affect the atmosphere equivalent to the horizon of his own thoughts. If he can control thought by feeling, that influence will be spiritually beneficent. And as he grows still more, his spiritual perfection may enable him to control affairs around him, even to affect the weather—although the initiate may seldom, if ever, consciously try that, for he seeks to maintain his attunement to the Divine Will.

To determine the weather may not be so difficult as it seems. Of course, one has to feel the universal rhythm, for by and through that rhythm the seasons come and go, the plants are nourished, and there are normal periods of cold and heat, rainfall and dryness. When the seasons are irregular, that may be due to irregularity in the lives of men. If we could lead natural lives, even the seasons might maintain more regular rhythms.

To try to influence the weather without feeling the universal rhythms may belong to science or to magic. However, if a magician be able to cause the rain to fall out of season, although in appearance that might show him to be master of the water element, he can thereby become indebted to all the elements, for he has interfered with the universal rhythms. On occasions prophets have, in the name of God apparently brought the rain and there are instances where the multitudes have done this through prayer.

There is a story where the Jews of Jerusalem accomplished this once many years ago. There had been a famine and dry spell and the people were complaining. They were beginning to be excited and to blame the Jews. The Jews have a custom of praying for rain beginning on the day of their celebration called “The Rejoicing of the Law” (Simchath Torah). On that day they went out on a pilgrimage to a holy mountain and were especially dressed for the occasion.

The people went to an official who was also a Sufi. He sent for the Chief Rabbi and said he would have to pray for rain. It was a very hot day and some weeks before the holy season of the prayers. The Rabbi was convinced that his people would be in danger, so he summoned them and he and the other Rabbis put on their winter clothing and went out in the heat on the pilgrimage. But they did not go far; clouds suddenly appeared and they returned home drenched. This is a well authenticated story.

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Beyond the universal rhythm there is the cosmic rhythm which can be reached only by adepts, prophets and sages. It requires prayer, meditation and mastery of breath, but most of all selflessness. It would appear that the universal rhythms have a certain relationship with the mind and the cosmic rhythm with the sphere of heart. By the opening of the heart man can become an instrument for the expression of cosmic rhythm.

Emperor Akbar tried to rule his great empire by maintaining rapport with the cosmic rhythm. In one sense cosmic rhythm is nothing but Dharma, spiritual harmony. This harmony does affect mankind; we live and move and have our being in God without always realizing it. We live in a ocean of air which has a pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch, often without even knowing it. When there is a storm we can feel the horizontal pressure of the wind, but we do not feel the vertical pressure of the air, we have become accustomed to it. So also man is living in mighty cosmic currents of which he is largely in ignorance.

The wise may be able to perceive the affairs of the world before their occurrence and even to soften the blows therefrom. That is why pure prayer may be successful. Ordinary prayer does not reach the highest plane, it may not touch the sphere of heart. Although sometimes the prayers of the generality have been successful, mostly it is not so, for there is something lacking. The initiate, however, does not oppose prayer for he knows its value even in the state of limitation. Even if it has no greater effect, prayer sometimes brings a calmness which enables the devotee to experience storms and difficulties without being overpowered by them.

There is one spiritual way by which weather may be controlled, although the sage may be unconscious of it because of his selflessness. This comes through calming the mind within. The calmer the breath, the calmer becomes the air which is the ocean of breath. This ocean of breath may be controlled from within by a great soul, and by such means the Kutub and Ghous help to pacify the world. By this means they spread Baraka into the breath and every breath taken with the praise of God on the lips or in the mind or in the heart may help to radiate Baraka.

By this same principle meditation halls can become the centers of inspiration and healing power, and therefore centers of radiating Baraka. The initiate is called upon to send Baraka in all directions to humanity for every holy purpose. Healing itself is a specialized art in this line, and in the greater sense, holding thoughts of praise for God and blessing for humanity enables the devotee to increase the Baraka in the world, and thereby to overcome the confusion of Nufsaniat (Samsara).

## Chapter 15 Magnetism

In bringing the Message of Sufism and of Universal Worship to the West, Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan declared that there are three stages: receiving the Message, assimilating the Message and delivering the Message. Without these three stages the work of the Message is incomplete. From another view, however, it may be said that there is no Message, only a need to bring mankind to praise God and glorify His name. Thus there are the two aspects, that there is a Message, and yet there is not a Message.

The idea of disseminating Baraka may be likened in a certain sense to the spreading of the Message although this work of Baraka does not include giving out any doctrine, it is not preaching or teaching any doctrine. It is only to help bring the blessings of God to humankind and this is really identical with the purpose of the Message, to bring man to praise and realize the Divinity. From the divine point of view there is the descent of Dharma and the delivery of the Message; from the human point of view there is the praise of God and all esotericism; from the standpoint of the universe, there is Baraka.

The teachings present many aspects. In concentration one becomes master of name and form until perfection is attained, and then pursues his course through the formless until he reaches a stage of assimilation into the Nameless-Formless. In esotericism one takes the road that leads directly to God. In psychology one studies the means by which the universal forces may be employed in everyday life for noble purposes and by this means spread life and livingness in the world.

The descent of Dharma, coming as it does mostly when there is spiritual ignorance and darkness, must touch all planes and all kingdoms to be complete. This is excellently illustrated in the artistic and scriptural descriptions of Buddha and his mission: how the elements and elemental beings and all groups and stages and kingdoms of sentient beings up to the very gods received Baraka through him. That illustrates the completion and perfection of a mission.

Initiates cover their teachings with the verbiage and knowledge of the age. Mankind has now learned something about cosmic energy in the forms of electricity, light and magnetism, as well as under different names and forms. So spiritual knowledge can now be presented as knowledge of vibrations. It is not that the Message needs to be put into any special form, only that it may be harmonized with the newest teachings of the age that have become accepted by the authorities, savants and generality.

It would not be wrong to say that all the esoteric sciences and practices help to impart Baraka. They do it through the instrumentality of magnetism: physical, psychic, mental, moral and spiritual.

The movements of prayers impart psychic magnetism. Moral magnetism comes partly through a direct effort of will. Morals have more to do with man's relation to man than with man's relation to God. Fervor without humanitarianism imparts only psychic magnetism (it belongs to Urouj), and we can see many people who go around seeking to convert others, how they dissipate psychic magnetism and thus arouse the emotions and leave them uncontrolled. Therefore initiates have avoided such methods, regarding them as wasteful and devoid of Baraka. And yet by Baraka one is able to help the ignorant and the learned, to assist the wise and the foolish.

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One might say that sentiment is psychic and sympathy is moral. Man is sentimental because of his own wish or desire, and this state may be regarded as either good or evil or as neither good nor evil; only it shows a certain tendency toward softness and without this softness one cannot advance far spiritually. Besides, sentiment with all its weaknesses shows the presence of some life; it is nothing dead, and it does help to link man to man and self to not-self.

Sympathy may be the further development of the same tendency when the nufs comes to rest in the heart. It is a living quality which does not regard distinctions and differences between self and not-self. Sympathy belongs to humanity, and it is not found among the lower creation.

Now we might distinguish five spheres of activity: physical, psychic, mental, moral and spiritual.

The physical sphere of activity belongs to the body. Its chief characteristic is action, which means vibrational movement directed at the gross atoms. It operates in the densest sphere and through it man is guided by instinct.

The psychic sphere comes from the interaction of mind and body, chiefly through the influence of the mind upon the body, operating through breath and movement. It may be called the shadow side of mind, the reactive side. The emotions come from the shadow-side of the heart in the same way, and man is guided through this by impulse and sentiment, which are not always pure because of the interference of nufs.

The mental sphere is that which belongs to the mind and includes thought, imagination, memory, reason, reflection and the ego-sense. It operates under three different qualities which correspond to the guna of the Hindus: *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. In its lower aspects its interests are sensual and external. Then it is influenced by all that comes from the world without, from sensation, activity and experience. In its sphere it is intellectual and it operates under the divisions of itself; then it depends upon reason mostly. In its third and highest sphere, it turns toward the heart receiving intuition (*kashf* or *buddhi*), inspiration and spiritual-vital magnetism (*Baraka*).

The moral sphere properly comes from the effect of the heart upon the mind, although it also includes the influence of heart upon all lower spheres. When the moral activity operates through the ego it tends toward goodness and when it operates through the emancipated spirit, it tends toward purity.

The moral activities also come under three lines: reciprocity, beneficence and renunciation. The law of reciprocity, which is the same as karma, operates when the moral magnetism is directed downwards. The law of beneficence operates when the activity is confined to its natural sphere, from the influence of heart upon mind, and this makes for the real human behavior. The law of renunciation operates when morality is abandoned for the sake of spirituality, when there is no selfhood in action, speech or thought.

The spiritual sphere includes all relations of heart to heart, whether heart acts upon itself or upon another heart. The spiritual activity becomes perfect when the light of the soul touches the heart and reaches all the planes. This results in wisdom, the natural quality of which is *kashf*, *buddhi*. This brings man to the spiritual knowledge and realization and love.

## Chapter 16

### Sufic Instruction and Baraka

Sufism can best be studied when we come to look at life as a whole instead of being concerned with phenomenal cross-sections. From the beginning the disciple, the talib or mureed, is given instructions in Morals and Metaphysics. Morality has to do with man's relationship to man and Metaphysics with man's relationship to himself, although both lead to man's relationship to God. Morality or Suluk helps one in his relation to the not-self in action, speech, thought and feeling.

Tasawwuf, Metaphysics, may be regarded as superior to morality. This study enables the disciple to increase spiritual magnetism in his development and the study of Morals enables man to increase moral magnetism in his development.

There are other studies for the mureeds in the first three grades. The study of Kashf or insight aids in the development of mental magnetism and in the increased capacity for the light of intelligence. The study of Etekad or superstition is for psychic magnetism and development. The study of Everyday Life and Breath begins with the study of the body, and helps the disciple to preserve his physical magnetism that he may live longer in the body and keep it pure, and that he also may learn to transmute his faculties and his magnetism to harmonize with the spiritual ideal and goal. Finally, there is instruction in Symbology which prepares one for the higher grades.

Most important of the more advanced teachings is Concentration (Murakkabah) which begins with the purpose of developing mental magnetism and carries one along until, through mergence of self with God, the spiritual magnetism comes. In Sadhana one learns how to use the magnetism in the daily life for practical or holy purposes. Through Amaliat or Psychology one utilizes magnetism in a scientific and holy manner in the psychic sphere and also develops body and mind as holy vehicles. In Shafayat one is able through Baraka to carry the mental and spiritual magnetism down to the lower spheres to help humanity. In Esotericism one is instructed so that he can rise in consciousness from plane to plane and obtain all the magnetism while his heart is filled with love and longing for its true home. Through Mysticism the disciple learns mastery of breath, and its functions on all planes.

All lines and movements of vital magnetism are consciously or unconsciously movements of Baraka. In the lowest form we see this in the magnetism of metals and in the emanations of material bodies. From this we learn there are two aspects of Baraka, the positive and the negative; there is blessing in giving and blessing in receiving.

From this view the different studies assist in the perfection of both forms of Baraka. To give purely, one must subdue the ego, and to receive purely one has to remove the ego also. If the bestower of Baraka is not pure in his intentions or is limited in ability, the pure receiver will receive the best that can be offered and no more.

The final consummation of Baraka comes when there is closest attunement and rapport between giver and receiver, when, as Jesus Christ has said, "The twain become one." This is always the ideal and is essential in the Bhakti development, for there is a station in Bhakti when the lover and beloved are one. We are apt to consider bhakti as negative and jnana yoga as positive and masculine, but the opposite may also be true. In bhakti all progress is due to oneself; there is a concentration of effort wherein will-power is transmuted into love on its own sphere. In jnana one is more dependent

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upon the teacher and therefore then the chela must be receptive; in other words, negative. In bhakti one passes from emptiness into fullness, while in jnana no particular attention is paid to any distinction between emptiness and fullness; ultimately the devotee of either path reaches the common goal.

## Chapter 17

### Jesus Christ and Baraka

Although we have not so many words of Jesus Christ as of other prophets, many of these words have been a source of inspiration to the initiate and of confusion to the uninitiate, and that is, perhaps, the main reason why many Christian people, with all worthiness and devotion, have not been able to follow closely in the footsteps of their master.

The Christian Churches have rendered a great service in their reverence for the beatitudes, the blessings offered by Christ to the multitudes. He even said, "Bless them that curse you" and this would appear not to have been followed. Some have said that when a man harms you, you should do him a favor. This interpretation assumed that man, the man who is hurt, is the source of blessing, that he can bless and that he does some good by blessing the evil doer. Some extremists have even counseled non-resistance which is not in harmony with the esoteric traditions for the sages say such an attitude might encourage the evil doer to more wrong doing.

Another way of translating this passage is, "Bless, when anybody curses you." Now, ordinarily, the devotee will be in a state of communion with God, be attuned to God, in unity or in harmony with the cosmos. Then one is not in a state of separation, and when one is not in separation or dualism, one has the control over the atmosphere and there is little likelihood of being cursed.

Yet there will come a time when you are cursed or hurt; why? You will find mostly that one is able to curse or hurt you because you are not in the state of union or communion; you have descended consciously or unconsciously into egotism, into vanity, and have thus laid aside for the moment the protection and guidance which is always there for your benefit. According to metaphysics, all things, states, conditions, divisions, numbers, multiplicities, qualities—every **thing** as Solomon has taught is vanity; vanity is the mark of Samsara (Nufsaniat) and Samsara is vanity.

Therefore, when the initiate is cursed or hurt he blesses, he employs **Baraka** and reenters into the state of union by Darood or other means. He realizes that he has not been in the state of **Godness** when he should have been. Now **Godness** does not mean thinking of God; the initiate strives to rise above that sphere of thought to the sphere of the reality of God. God is called living (Hayy) and truth (Haqq) and this stage of the spiritual journey is called Hakikat. By proper attunement you can create, cultivate and increase your atmosphere so much that when cursed or hurt you can tell at an instance that you have been neglecting your spiritual Dharma, which can be restored by the practice of issuance of Baraka.

This issuance of Baraka comes through God, by man's praising God within and offering blessings without. By praise, although it appears to be giving, we receive; while in blessing, we give. By both means we purify the atmosphere and protect ourselves and all with whom we have relations, over whom we have influence and over whom we are able to exert influence or protection. And this issuance of Baraka may enable us to disarm the enemy, to win him over, for one cannot oppose another long after that one has doffed his nufs. From this point of view, therefore, the teaching of Jesus shows wisdom, not weakness.

The other aspect of Baraka comes from the examination of the saying of Jesus, "Swear not at all." That is to say, do not consume Baraka unnecessarily. Baraka, to be pure, should be dissociated from the earth sphere when it can be (although there is a sort of Baraka in things), and be main-

tained upon the highest plane. Swearing by any object, man identifies the divinity with that object, and swearing by any ideal narrows the God-concept of the moment to that ideal. God should not be so limited, either to object or ideal. When God is narrowed to an object, that is equivalent to physical idolatry and when he is narrowed to an ideal, that is like mental idolatry.

Jesus also said, “Resist not evil” or “Resist not the evil person” — either translation of which is acceptable. Our duty is to increase Baraka, and that increase becomes a natural self-protection. People who practice non-resistance may be good people, but they do not increase life or livingness, they do not see God, El-Hayy. The initiate makes God the center of his universe and of his being and does not eschew any portion of life, as all come from God. The evils that he avoids may be those of wasteful living, of needless dissipation of vital energy, of misuse of the love and power and magnetism that God has given him — these things he always guards against. For the rest he has the spiritual freedom, so he treads as far as possible the path of affirmation, and removes himself from the path of negation except when in the silence.

Continuing with this subject, Sufis have two terms, **Yaqin** and **Riza**. Yaqin is trust, living trust and faith to the point of certainty even when there is no evidence, and Riza is complete satisfaction for which reason also is not needed. So the disciple is taught to trust in God as a living Presence, and to rely even on the guidance which is always there, as prayer says, “Open our hearts that we may hear Thy voice which constantly cometh from within.”

The attitude of non-resistance may be different. It prevents the loss of life without adding to life; in the spiritual way there should be an increase of life, prevention is not enough. Therefore the initiate is called upon to increase the capacity for life and spirituality in God, and not to follow passivism. Passivism confuses surrender to the conditions with surrender to God.

The Hindus have made a special worship to Vishnu the Preserver of Life, they want to preserve the life. Vishnu signifies the protector and preserver and in this aspect of Divinity he does not add to the life, He maintains it, He prevents loss. Yet in the Avatars and most especially in Rama and Krishna we find men of action, men who were great lovers and great warriors, men skilled in their own lines, adding to life and showing perfection.

Jesus has also been made the authority for the way of passivism, quietism, asceticism and all manners of incomplete living, as if avoiding sin were the purpose of life. According to the mysteries, ancient and modern, purgation is one part of life; it is needed in the beginning. When purgation becomes the goal, the way of affirmation becomes impossible; and the way of affirmation is the way of the abundance of life.

The Christian Scripture states, “Love ye your enemies.” The initiate says, “Allah is All in All and Allah being all, when you have an enemy you are at that moment separated from Allah.” Therefore, it becomes your duty to reunite with Allah, and repeat His Holy Name, cultivating all the love that is possible in your heart and mind and being.

The Christian Scripture states, “Bless them that curse you.” The initiate says, “In the right attitude of mind, in practicing the presence of God, in holding to unity, there can be no curse.” When Bajazid in hal uttered, “Ani Hayy, Ani Haqq,” his disciples attacked him therefore, and then their knives were turned upon themselves. It is not necessary to wait for the curse before delivering the blessing. Unite with God, receive the Holy Baraka and share with humanity!

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The Christian Scripture states, "Do good to them that hate you." The initiate says, "If anybody hates me and I do not know it, nor the cause thereof, yet am I to blame." Therefore the wise keep their hearts fixed upon God and have no thoughts of hatred, either of receiving hatred or sending forth hatred, and verily this of itself becomes a source of blessing, of bestowing Baraka and sharing it.

The Christian Scripture states, "Resist not evil." The initiate says that holding the thought of evil itself is an evil, and the heart must be freed even from the thought of "Resist not evil," so that the heart overflows with love and light and life.

The Christian Scripture states, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." The initiate regards this as a commandment of commandments. Those who practice non-resistance are more concerned with resistance than with God and to God they cannot go even on the day of Risalat. Those who practice the presence of God, verily they are blessed and they shall bestow blessings (Baraka).

Living is doing, life is action and there is a greater justification in Zat (Essence) than in all defense and offense. The words of Jesus Christ have not always been understood by the discriminating mind (citta) of the generality. The words are simple yet in their depths most profound. The Christian Scriptures themselves say, "Put on the mind of Jesus," which is to say, "Get into the buddhi." By the mind of Jesus only can the words of Jesus be fully comprehended.

And what was and is that spirit which was in Christ Jesus? What is this mind of Jesus? It is to seek perfection, to seek God, to rise above limitation unto the unlimited. Even all morals, all principles, all doctrines, all distinctions shall go and only Baraka remain. This is the heart-doctrine whereof the heart is the fountain, a flood of living waters. Man is justified in his attunement to the living God, and then although for the moment all humanity deserts him, yet a thousand or a koti of angels shall be at the side of the holy man, and all the beloved ones of God will sooner or later be his friends.

Thus in hierarchical understanding is the sage justified, and more than justified. Words of his will stand when all the thoughts and utterances of his enemies become as naught. For in him is the sign of life who has effaced the mark of Cain (nufs); he is the beloved one of God, who will not be deserted.

## Chapter 18

### The Fulfillment of Baraka

The great work of the initiates henceforth will be to spread Baraka. By so doing they will purify the general atmosphere, and by that the Message which belongs to the sphere itself will gradually touch the hearts and minds of all who pass through it, who breathe the air or go to the places where the seeds of Baraka have been sown. Thus is the selfless propagation of the Message.

The second work will come in the explanation of teachings, which, like in the Kabbalistic interpretations of old, come in four degrees.

The first is the literal method in which one studies the words and receives or imparts the instruction without comment or interpretation and then proceeds to the practice. This is a simple method, only as history does not repeat itself, it is quite limited in its application.

The second is the method of analogy. By this the initiate may utilize the complete body of holy writings, seeking parallel passages to throw light upon any situation or upon any instruction from either esoteric or other holy teachings. This method can be used at all times.

The third method is that of inference, whereby one makes use of logic and reason and sometimes of expediency. Few situations turn out exactly as expected, for who is there who can see with mirror-like precision! By meditation, intuition and insight one may perceive the spiritual background of any situation and profit under all circumstances. Besides the benefit gained thereby, the lessons become freed from rigidity and gain in livingness in their useful application.

Finally, there is another method of interpretation which may be entirely different from the ordinary ways of life, for by this method there is added opportunity for blessing and for growth. It is a method whereby the inner spirit can be expressed, that the real esotericism be practiced. By this sacred, inner method the mind and reason come second, they follow the intuition and inspiration of heart. The mystic who uses it neither avoids pleasure or pain nor seeks pleasure or pain; he neither follows the intellectual, rational way or the way of common sense, nor does he avoid them. He sees what he sees and does what he does and keeps Baraka foremost.

The teachings of the Message may be used as the basis of philosophy and of life. They may be the source-ground for customs, manners, habits and morals. They also can become the bases for new inspirations and instructions especially when carefully meditated upon. By such means one may even become a seer, a prophet, a master, a saint, a teacher.

There are problems beyond the scope of the generality, problems still to be solved. These are not solved when those in authority are lacking in insight and knowledge. Multitudes of problems remain unsolved because man does not face them, and yet these multitudes are only the facets of the one problem. When man faces himself and solves his own problems, the difficulties of the world will be lessened.

Spiritual persons have obtained high places in public affairs from time to time because they have seen what even the most clever man could not see, could not control, could not solve. A clever man with all his cleverness may be devoid of insight and wisdom, so his gifts are not sufficient. The closer the attunement to God, the greater the capacity for that Spirit of Guidance which is every-

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where, and when that guidance comes, it is possible to apply the wisdom in practical ways for human welfare.

There are always people looking for spiritual guidance. Perhaps they are more advanced than others or perhaps they have had great suffering or perhaps they have had rude awakening after following some false prophet. In the days of prosperity they may have turned to the false prophet rather than to God, and in the day of adversity they have known not where to turn.

These intelligent persons are needed to help with the work of spreading the Message just as they on their part need the help of the Message to accomplish their own life's purpose.

The spreading of Baraka upon earth will do much to heal the wounds of the earth, even to drive curses away, to destroy the obsessed places, haunted houses and all manner of physical, psychic and moral defilement. It is impossible for a few people to touch every spot upon the earth; it is possible for a few wise men and women to breathe Baraka into the atmosphere which touches every portion of the earth's surface and even penetrates into the earth's depths.

It is the increase of Baraka by which those bodies called Nirmanakaya, the body of transformation, and Sambhogakaya, the body of bliss, are properly formed. It is the increase of Baraka which makes possible the manifestation of the luminescent physical body. It is by this means that the spiritual phenomena are possible, phenomena which are divinely controlled and not psychic or occult. Thus through blessing comes all blessing, and this is the manifestation of the Grace of God and the entrance into the garden of Inayat.

The door to this garden stands open. The progress of the Message will be nothing but the progress of this Baraka. As suggestion comes from the minds of men, so Baraka comes from the heart of God. By this, wonders may come. This is the magnet of love which sooner or later draws everybody from the wheel of rebirth and the pit of sorrow to deposit them on the shores of life.

The teachings of Sufism, even in the most transcendental aspects, can become very practical for the intuitive people. Symbolism has the same meaning to all adepts, whether seen in spiritual art or worldly advertisements, in signs, in stories, or in pictures. The psychic interpretation of movements of prayers, of the superstitions of peoples, are not different when applied to the activities of civilized and cultured people. Movements have the same meaning in modern countries as in the ancient ones, or in the backward lands; even if performed without conscious knowledge, the same psychical analysis applies. There is no movement without significance.

Sufism can be highly theoretical and Sufism can be the most practical way of life, especially after the heart has been kindled into a living and loving flame. Thus, when the words are spoken, "The Message of the Living God," it should mean that life and spirituality are one. Without life there is no spirituality and without spirituality the life is incomplete.

The expression of life must be something more than the words that clothe it. Speech has voice and speech has sound; sound is what we hear, and yet in the tones of the voice there is spirit. The whole world is lacking today in life, and this is revealed in the absence of harmony, in the differences between people and in the preparations for war.

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From the spiritual point of view a war of life may be better than a peace of death. Peace without God, peace that is negative, that is passivistic, takes the very life from the earth, despiritualizes it, so to speak. Vishnu may be the God, the Preserver, and Vishnu may be the personification of the Holy Spirit which brings peace and also brings life. The followers of Krishna—who is regarded as an avatar of Vishnu—have been emotional and aesthetic, but they have not been insensitive to life. They do not make the mistake of intellectualizing and congealing the religion.

It may be better to face life and fail than to refuse to face it and apparently succeed. This success may be due to the weakness of conditions and not due to one's own strength and wisdom. It may be better to face war with determination than to regard earthly peace of itself as the supreme ideal. This peace may bring along with it all manner of evils, intolerance, hatred, and duality. And until the world understands this better and especially those who tread the path of initiation understand that life is needed even more than peace, the desire of nations will remain unsatisfied.

The initiate has before him the many examples of holy men and saints, so he need not want for an ideal. The higher life is always justifiable. The higher life means an increasing life, a growing life, an expanding consciousness, an augmentation of life, a development of sympathy, a broadness of spirit, an ever widening horizon and unlimited patience and consideration for human beings. These are the elements of the higher life, the spiritual life.

Offering praise to God and blessing for God—these are the ultimate duties of the devotee. May he be blessed in his doings.

By: Grace of God to A. Murad

This book was written in 1937.

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