

Fana-fi-Rassoul

by

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(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

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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.

1. The nature of fana-fi-Rassoul is such that one who is privileged to go upon this higher grade of development must give over to others all that is bestowed upon him. The one who seeks the individual perfection, for him fana-fi-Sheikh is required, and he need not share with others the blessings that are given to him, but there is no blessing or accomplishment in fana-fi-Rassoul unless in some respect one shares with others. Thus all the sheikhs and teachers of Sufism must be accomplished in fana-fi-Rassoul.
2. The first requisite is that one knows how to attune himself to somebody on earth. If he has not been able to attune to one on earth, how does he know that he can attune to one in the heavens? In Murakkabah, in the earliest stages, the concentration is upon material things, that which is in

name and form. It is success in this only which privileges one to advance to the higher accomplishments. This goes on without regard to thought of self. Now fana-fi-Rassoul is the same, for even if man dares to presume his readiness for it, there is no assurance that God has accepted this claim, there is no sign of success therefore.

3. There are many personalities who have been called Savior, Rassoul, Messiah, Pagambar, Avatar. Their followers are not necessarily in fana-fi-Rassoul, for fana-fi-Rassoul assumes oneself of spirit, that the devotee is a lover of such a nature that not only is he the servant or slave of the Ideal, but that he becomes the very embodiment of the Ideal. This is not so easy, and it is not profitable for one who cannot accomplish it to try that. The one who is successful in fana-fi-Sheikh, even after only a little time with only a little effort, or successful after a long time after a long effort, he is to be regarded as more advanced than the one who wants to be in fana-fi-Rassoul and who may think he is in fana-fi-Rassoul the whole life but who has no accomplishments, who can show no results.

4. As fana means effacement or self-sacrifice, any sign of assumed worthiness of self or any thought of self proves the unworthiness. It is the ease by which one falls back, so to speak, into the heart of Rassoul and feels the love of Rassoul which is the most important thing, together with concentration and action. The concentration based upon love is the means and the action perfects the blessing which comes in this state.

5. It is not to be supposed that Rassoul desires to hold himself back, for even Christ has said, "Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest." The principle is that people must avoid the thought-forms which they label the ideal and come to the personality. If there is not the capacity in their hearts for the lesser love, there will be even less capacity for the greater love. It is not that love is divided, but to enjoy the blessing to the full capacity may have to increase step by step, stage by stage, grade by grade.

6. In Sufism it is possible to have practices in fana-fi-Rassoul and fana-fi-Sheikh at the same time, which means that in the concentrations one may have the ideal of Rassoul and in the daily practical life one may have before him the living teacher to establish a path for him in practical affairs. It may be that before this, one has the concentration upon the teacher on earth, and may continue that a long time before being placed in fana-fi-Sheikh, or one may have a concentration upon Rassoul for a long time even before being placed in fana-fi-Sheikh, but one must be warned at all times that the thought or thought-forms have nothing to do with fana. In fana there is heart blending.

7. Those who are not ready for fana are nevertheless not held back. Some pupils desire such a concentration and it is not wrong to give it to them. Sometimes only their failure in it may make them realize that another practice will be of greater advantage. Sometimes success in it traces the way to the right concentration. Often a person who desires a concentration upon Rassoul and practices will not see Rassoul, or not see the ideal but some other form, some other personality. This generally indicates success in Murakkabah, but inappropriateness of fana-fi-Rassoul.

8. The words of the invocation indicate that all the illuminated souls constitute the embodiment of a single master. Therefore when one is given either a general concentration upon Rassoul or is placed in fana-fi-Rassoul it does not always mean that the personality who appears before one is identically the same personality who is at that moment Rassoul to the devotee. Yet in Murakkabah the change of form may indicate an advance but in fana-fi-Rassoul it can even indicate unsteadiness. Thus given a concentration on Rama, if the form of Christ appears, it does not matter, but in fana-fi-Rama one must continue until his inner consciousness is wrapped in that of Avatar Rama. This may require a long process even though the reward comes at last.

9. Many mureeds studying together may unite in fana-fi-Rassoul, having a concentration at the same time with beneficial effects. In the healing service the idea is presented that the communicants are united with the angels and archangels. Talibs in the higher stages of development may have a common concentration on Rassoul, or at the same time they may all be placed in appropriate concentrations of the same grade and their synchronized efforts will help purify the atmosphere and to elevate each other.

10. The general object in fana-fi-Rassoul is to lose oneself in the World Teacher or Ideal Personality until one feels the spirit of Rassoul in and round and about and through oneself and in all that he strives to do he will want to perform the will of Rassoul. For this the guidance is always love and never compulsion. There must be a sort of free will even though the will be surrendered; one does it gladly or not at all.

11. In fana-fi-Rassoul there is the union of selfishness and unselfishness. There is the unselfishness for otherwise there would be no surrender and in the elevation of consciousness and spiritual striving this is the most important thing. But to bring the blessings into action there must be some centering of effort. So even in effacement the personality remains, there is no real loss of anything.

12. The hierarchical law can be seen in the mineral kingdom, that there are the different elements which stand apart from each other and are different things and yet the scientists say they are all composed of one and the same essence which manifests as the electron, neutron and positron. In other words energy is fundamental. And what is the source of this energy? They say it is nothing but light originally, which has altered its form of manifestation. The atoms group themselves according to certain rhythms and qualities and they behave as unit-measurements on the physical plane but all are modes of one ultimate substance.

13. When we make a study of the geological history of the earth we can also perceive the hierarchical law. One aspect is seen in the formation of the igneous rocks and their disintegration and the later formation of other kinds of rocks. There are certain orders and relations between the various rocks, and there is a certain homogeneity of material, so that in one place there is a mass of granite and in another place of limestone, sandstone, quartz, mineral deposits. Through the study of geology we can see the working of the law of attraction. Also in the formation of mountains and valleys we can see the principle of rhythm at work although it may seem very slow as to time.

Also in the beautiful crystals we see already the signs of beauty and perfection.

14. In the vegetable and animal kingdoms the hierarchical law is most in evidence as we see many cells unite to form a body, a body integrating various parts and coordinating them, the parts not necessarily being equal but working together to form a unity. In the plants there are trunk or stem, branches, leaves, flowers, fruit and seeds and each does not have an equal function, but in the life process of the plant all combine to make a living whole.

15. Reference is made in the Bible and in many scriptures of the tree of life. While to some this is a conception it gives the idea of the relationship between all the kingdoms of the universe, both those in outer manifestation and those in the unseen. It is interesting to note that the tree has been used as a symbol also by the biologists in depicting the relationship between different genera of plants and animals. The same idea that they have in their respective fields the mystics have for the whole universe. Christ said, "I am the vine and ye are the branches thereof."

16. The bloodstream in animals and man has been the basis of the hierarchical formation of the body, the physical body. There are various organs and cells, each with specialized function, yet all working together to form a unity. Thus man has been called a microcosm. It is said that he has been made in the image of the Divine—that is to say, God. There are apparently many parts of him and yet one whole. And if one examined man further, this unity would extend beyond this plane, combining the physical and subtler bodies.

17. The same relation between the parts of the body in man, that same relation we find for the cosmic man, which combines all people, all unite to form a unity, the spiritual aspect of which is the Hierarchy.

18. Among the ten Sufi Thoughts one suggests that spiritual progress consists of assimilation of the human ego in the spirit of God in which resides all life and immortality. While we speak of mortality it is only death that dies, life lives. That which is subject to decay passes on, while that which is not subject to decay persists. The breath of man continues and it is not dependent upon the physical organism, and there is an underlying breath which may be regarded as the very soul of man.

19. We cannot come to the realization of God so long as we hold on to the self whether as concept or as focus of consciousness. In love we grow out of the ego by assimilating some of the spirit of another ego, and however little this assimilation be it nevertheless breaks down the walls of the old ego. In fana-fi-Sheikh this becomes the conscious endeavor. One continues this conscious endeavor until one passes through the cycles of fana-fi-Sheikh although it is wrong to consider the various grades of fana as separate or to suppose that one has to pass gradually through them all. One may experience several at one time. In the Miraj experience Mohammed passed through all grades as if simultaneously in a single adventure. In his attainment of enlightenment Buddha passed through many grades to the highest in one single long meditation.

20. One may sit before a picture of a spiritual teacher who has passed on or one may hold in concentration the ideal of his Savior before him for years and not be in fana-fi-Rassoul. It is only when the heart is opened to the degree that he assimilates directly the spirit of Rassoul that one gets the full benefit of it. Therefore it is no shame to go step by step, grade by grade. Often the gradual progress proves best because otherwise there may be disappointment and loss of hope.

21. When one is given for his concentration the teacher in the unseen he may be given the practice of fana-fi-Pir. This has been common among certain schools of Sufis. One may have before himself a saint or master, or one may have the Pir of his own school or another school, and particularly if such a one has already appeared to him in vision and offered a blessing. Then to assimilate that blessing one may have before himself the Pir and sit in contemplation and keep attuned to him and by that way benefit, his character will change, he may perfect one of his personal qualities and advance in skillfulness along some line which he has chosen in life or which has been placed before him as a need from this spiritual fulfillment.

22. It is a mistake to offer any preferment for a practice in fana-fi-Sheikh, fana-fi-Pir, or fana-fi-Rassoul. It is our success and happiness in life which is important and which the teacher wishes for us. People have prayed to God for centuries and very few have come to the realization. So prayer does not constitute fana-fi-Lillah; this is a practice in which the mind has little direct part. One may be in it for years without success, but if one has been prepared and gone through the various grades, the attainment may be much easier.

23. The appearance of a Pir before the talib is generally a mark of Grace. One should consider himself blessed if he has such a vision and even more blessed if the heart goes out to the Pir and the Pir's heart goes out to him. This will indicate his line of development and often what has to be done to fulfill his purpose along this line.

24. The Sufism of the day is founded upon the work of five Pirs, namely Moin-ed-din Chisti, Abdul Kadir-i-Jilani, Omar ibn Shabudin Sohrawardi and the Pir Naqshiband. They formulated the various schools of Sufism with their different emphasis on different aspects of development; then Inayat Khan came and assimilated all the teachings and brought them to the West, so he may be regarded as the Pir of the West although he was born in India.

25. One cannot say that in the future many holy beings of other schools may not appear before disciples, but unless there is heart love, their appearance is most likely either to confirm the pupil's progress or to bring some special message or to give a blessing and it is not necessary in the line of Sufism to concentrate further on them. Fana-fi-Rassoul and fana-fi-Pir are not to be used as means of spirit communication no matter how glorified they may appear to be.

26. There are other spiritual teachers who may come from time to time before a talib who are gifted along a certain line, such as Tansen, the Lord of Music, or Maulani Rumi, who was most gifted in poetry and music or many of the great Sufi poets. In all likelihood they will appear only once or twice with their blessing. Such experiences do not always indicate a change in the spiritual

practices or grade of the pupil. He should praise God for the blessing but should not hold himself high therefore.

27 In the prayer of Union the idea is to be linked with all the murshids and prophets in chain. Sometimes an ancient prophet appears before a talib, and sometimes he will be recognized and sometimes not recognized. This also belongs in the grade of visions and dreams and does not mean the practice of fana-fi-Pir. For in fana-fi-Pir the heart's union is desired and not any vision or dream as of another personality, no matter how great. It is the heart assimilation which marks the spiritual progress.

30. Not every person has to go through the grade—if such it can be called—of fana-fi-Pir. But without ability to love fully one on earth, love for a being of the unseen has limitations, and until one loves fully one in the subtler worlds who can be seen easily, it is very difficult to be sure of the love for one of greater degree who may be harder to hold in vision, and whose love may even be beyond our comprehension.

[Fana-fi-Rama](#)

31. The one who is given the way of fana-fi-Rama should profit by the life of Rama. It is not to hold a concept of Rama or precept of Rama, or even to follow the religion of Rama. The religion of Rama is for those who are unable to absorb directly the Baraka of Rama, but fana-fi-Rama is for those who can derive benefit from the Divine Spirit which manifested in Rama. Therefore one may read the life of Rama, study the Ramayana, learn all about Rama from tradition. Or without reading, without studying, through heart absorption, one may feel the presence of Rama, only once doing this Rama alone must be the ideal and none else.

32. Gatheka: "Rama was not only an ideal for the Hindus of that particular age, but was a model to mold the character of those who tread the spiritual path in any age." Thus the ideal of Rama may be before any disciple who treads the spiritual path. He need not have any East Indian ancestry nor any belief, for as the Gatheka also states, "Rama, the great Prophet and ideal of the Hindus, was at the same time the example of Godhead."

33. Gatheka: "He was not only taught to read and write, but he was trained in athletic exercises, in sports, and had training in all manner of warfare." Those who aspire to fana-fi-Rama therefore have before themselves the ideals of practical wisdom, athletic prowess, muscular development and war. Although some regard war as horrible and that it is not for spiritual persons, all things in life are before the spiritual person and nothing need be forbidden him. It is only that he seek perfection in it.

34. Gatheka: "Rama lived a simple life; he had not yet known what princely life means, for he was being trained under a Saint, where he ate the same food as the Sage did, wore the simple clothes

as the Sage, and lived in the woods in the solitude.” Those in fana-fi-Rama therefore at some time, and preferably in the earlier stages of their endeavors, should retire into the solitude and feel the presence of the Lord and be benefited by him. Following the sacred rules, the devotee will receive the blessings and instructions which will help him for the next stage.

35. Gatheka: “The life of Rama suggests that, spiritual strife apart, the struggle in the world is the first thing to face; and if one keeps to one’s own ideal through every test and trial in life, one will no doubt arrive at a stage when he will be victorious. It does not matter how small be the struggle but victory won at the end of every struggle is the power that leads man farther on the path toward life’s goal.” Thus the preparation in the silence is really for the practical life afterwards. This brings the balance between seclusion and society, solitude and activity.

36. In fana-fi-Rama one must be willing to face every obstacle to gain the object of his love as did Rama before Sita, whether that love be spiritual or the person who is the heart’s desire. When the heart of man opens to Rassoul, the spirit of Rassoul captivates it and all life is filled with blessing.

[Fana-fi-Krishna](#)

37. Gatheka: “The life of Krishna is an ideal which gives the picture of the life of a perfect man.” By perfect man is meant Rassoul, and before Krishna one can practice fana-fi-Rassoul, even as the Bhaktis, and yet in Sufism maintain sobriety, for to be perfect means to be perfect and balanced on all planes.

38. The devotee in fana-fi-Krishna must be willing to go out to battle, to battle in the worldly affairs and to stand up before the world. According to the Gatheka: “One aspect teaches us that life is a continual battle, and the earth is the battlefield where every soul has to struggle, and the one who will own the kingdom of the earth must know very well the law of warfare. The secret of the offensive, the mystery of the defense, how to hold your position, how to retreat, how to advance, how to change position, how to protect and control all that has been won, how to let go what must be given up, the manner of sending an ultimatum, the way of making an armistice, the method by which peace is made—all this is to be learned. In this life’s battle man’s position is most difficult, for he has to fight on two fronts at the same time: one is himself, and the other is before him.”

Now in fana-fi-Krishna one receives the divine spirit through the ideal in such a way that the spirit of Krishna seems to be guiding one even in the daily life. Thus every soul in fana-fi-Krishna is Arjuna. It is not as many of the people of India would have it, that there must be an absolute, lifeless, non-resistance; nor is the opposite necessarily true. But the ideal and perfect way is to permit one’s own spirit to be absorbed in the spirit of the Ideal and to be led by the spirit and thus one receives the wisdom.

39. Gatheka: “The other outlook of Krishna on life is that every soul is striving to attain God, but

God, not as a Judge or a King, but as a Beloved.” Thus fana-fi-Krishna combines wisdom and love. Some people have tried to point out a path of wisdom and a path of love and say they are two paths. Sufis say there is the way of sobriety and the way of intoxication and the best is to combine and balance both. For sobriety without intoxication may deaden progress and intoxication without sobriety leads to a sort of madness and deprives even the ecstatic of blessing. Thus there are two lines of traditions of Krishna, that of the Mahabharata, which shows the way of wisdom, and that of the Gita-Govinda which shows the way of love.

40. Gatheka: “At first sight it surprises a stranger to think that God is worshipped in the man’s form, and God is considered so small as to be rocked in a cradle, and to picture God Most High standing with his wife, and then to see God going to war, which any kind-hearted person would refuse to do. But to a Sufi it gives a different impression since he sees God in every form.” There can be no understanding of fana-fi-Rassoul by mind. The practices in Murakkabah enable the disciple to absorb the spirit of the Ideal and this stage sometimes takes a long time. Nor is it necessary for anyone to take two lines of development in fana-fi-Rassoul although in Concentration he may travel on more than one path.

41. Fana-fi-Krishna promotes manly grace and beauty but the same thing can be gained through Murakkabah on Krishna or by calling upon God or through the suitable spiritual practices given to the disciple by the teacher. It is a mistake in this to assume any idea of reincarnation. What the Sufis call **tanasukh** which has been misinterpreted as metempsychosis, really means the re-descent of the same ray. There is a very divine ray which comes to manifestation only when Dharma decays in Rassoul, and there are many lesser rays. Jesus Christ said that after him came the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. This is the same as **tanasukh**, the re-descent of the ray of personality which is then absorbed by the devotees until it becomes, so to speak, part of their nature.

42. To be a follower does not mean to be an imitator. A white ray falling upon a yellow room reveals yellow walls and the same ray falling upon a red room reveals red walls. What the ray of light does is to bring out the beauty and perfection that is already there. It does not mean to make one like another or either like the ideal. The violin and clarinet players are different but both are attuned so as to follow the orchestra leader.

43. The spirit of love and refinement has been known in the East for centuries but has not been absorbed by the West. There is too much emphasis on non-resistance, which is negative, too little upon love, which is life and which is positive.

44. To see God in all means one must act as if God really were in all. Sri Rama Krishna, the Hindu ecstatic of the nineteenth century actually practiced this, but his followers became too philosophical. Now by the right absorption in Krishna that spirit of Krishna may descend at any time upon humanity. This is the real tanasukh.

45. Gatheka: “The image of Krishna with a sword and going to war shows that it is God Who is in

Heaven, it is God Who is most kind, but it is the same God Who stands with a sword; that there is no name, no form, no place, no occupation, which is void of God." Thus there will be no practice of exclusion when there is a realization.

46. The divine union is a union of heart and heart when practiced in fana-fi-Rassoul. If the devotee is a woman she may see Krishna as a man; if it is a man he may see Krishna as himself or he may have another feeling. The love and beauty that is in the cosmos will shine through his being, so long as he does not hold it as self possession.

[Fana-fi-Shiva](#)

47. This may be practiced as a form of fana-fi-Rassoul and also as a form of fana-fi-Lillah. According to the Hindus Shiva is God Himself, only perhaps in a certain aspect. Yet Shiva is depicted in form and not being formless, and he is held in concept and therefore is not the inconceivable nor transcendental being; he is considered by the Sufis as one of the Sacred Names and Forms, and is the Lord of the Yogis.

48. Fana-fi-Shiva is particularly for those who travel the highway of perfection through breath, through yoga, and also through music and dancing. Fana-fi-Shiva in this is not to be separated from fana-fi-Parvati, his consort.

49. Shiva is pictured as the Lord of Destruction, Assimilation and Change. The one who takes this path therefore must be willing to recognize that there may be no stability in the earthly life. That one may go on and on with change of place, time, circumstances, friends and relations to people and conditions, that behind all there is constancy, and before all there is fluidity. This makes for Divine Indifference.

Shiva is Nataraja, the Lord of the Dance, the Lord of rhythm and movement. The spiritual devotion must be more than a concentration. We see in Nayaz a practice which brings to us the all pervading power in Space. When that all-pervading power is personalized we may identify with Shiva, and yet surely there may have been on earth some first Lord of the Yogis who taught them the basic science and to whom the name was given, Rudra or Shiva, and which we may regard as Rassoul.

50. Fana-fi-Shiva leads to great expression of magnetism in form or movement, so that the body becomes very living, so that the divine spirit is absorbed more into the atomic form. This is accomplished through the currents of breath. In Bhakti too much intellectualization is not necessary nor a thousand exercises and postures, for the awakening of heart brings all blessing and all movement, and by this one becomes a yogi before humanity.

51. Those who are masters of Yoga must of necessity be in fana-fi-Lillah. But there should be

complete purification of the body as well as of heart and soul so Shiva is the Great Purifier before all things are pure. Therefore those who may be horrified before Kali, which is the shadow aspect of Parvati, the Holy Spirit personalized, the consort of Shiva, they themselves still need the purification.

52. One who perfects himself in this line, his body becomes the abode of Parvati, the Holy Spirit, thus the temple of God.

[Fana-fi-Buddha](#)

53. This is a practice which is most difficult to understand and although many millions have proposed to go along this path, it is only those who have divested themselves of the garb of ego that have made any progress. For Buddha from the very beginning denied the permanence of ego or form, and posited the principles of pain, transience and clinging. He told his disciples that wherever there was clinging there was ego and wherever there was ego there was pain. So divested of its religious garb the teaching of Buddha was to show man how to rise above the turmoil of Nufsaniat or Samsara.

54. Gatheka: "It may not be forgotten that among Hindus idealism had reached its zenith, and it did not remain for Buddha to teach a greater idealism than they already had. In order, therefore, to bring about a balance, he had to give a pill of disillusion." Thus in the simplest aspect of Buddhism the disciples are taught to face life as it is without any philosophizing and all abstract thinking which has no bearing upon the life about is to be disregarded. Therefore, to those who aspire to the path of Buddha, speculation and abstract thinking must be foregone.

55. The purpose of fana-fi-Buddha is to obtain that enlightenment which was Buddha and to avoid any concentration upon name and form, even the name and form of Buddha. Therefore this may be regarded in a certain sense as among the most advanced types of fana-fi-Rassoul which are on the border line of fana-fi-Lillah, but the fact remains that there is still a name or a word before one, even when one denies it. Of course the most advanced Buddhists pass this stage, and in their enlightenment they arrive at the same goal as the Sufic devotee of fana-fi-Lillah.

56. Strictly speaking this is a form of fana-fi-Dharma, or assimilation in the Message. The accomplishment of this brings one to the stage of Bodhisattva, which is the same as the Spirit of Guidance in Sufic terms. The Gatheka states: "In this higher reason the Spirit of Guidance is conceived, and from that fountain of reason all the great prophets have drunk." Therefore, the Sufic practice of fana-fi-Buddha does not make one a Buddhist at all, it may have little or nothing to do with Buddhism.

57. Gatheka: "Worshipping Buddha does not mean that the Buddhist worships the personality of his spiritual Master. He only means by this worship that if there is any object that deserves worship

most, it is the human being; it is the person from whose heart the essence of reason, **Buddhi**, has risen as a spring.” Keeping the name-form there in an idealistic sense is really a practice in Murakkabah, not in fana, for then the mind of the devotee is greater than the form or image being held, but in fana the objective is to awaken the consciousness which is beyond mind, through heart-merging into the greater personality of not-being-limited-self. It takes one beyond limitation toward perfection.

58. Gatheka: “By this knowledge he recognizes the possibility for every soul, whatever be his grade of evolution, of attaining that bliss, trusting in that, that the innermost being of every soul is divine.” Although the Buddhists deny the word “soul” in the concept of a separated entity, they do not deny the all-pervading life, and some schools give it a name, others do not. But in the absorption into Buddha-light (Amida) one realizes that the same light is in all and around all and through all and all are in that light and that without that light nothing can be. Also that that light has certain qualities and brings to one love, wisdom, insight, and ability to extend compassion and mercy to others.

59. Gatheka: “The true aim of the disciples of Buddha has not been only to adhere to Buddha, his name or his ideal, but by taking Buddha as an example before them, their idea was to become Buddha some day. And the same idea is the secret of Sufism.” It is not to be forgotten that there is the same goal for all, through the loosening of the hold of self, to become absorbed into the unlimited, to which some have given a name, others have not. The technique of meditation, the pursuit of the ideal, the action as if vows have been taken (without necessarily taking them) and all other means which lead to the opening of the inner being and the awakening of understanding and insight, are important.

60. Gatheka: “Why should it be regarded as any worse if the Buddhists have the statue of their Inspirer before them, whose very image elevates their soul toward the highest ideals, and the life of renunciation and self-denial that their Teacher led? Thus the devotee on this path may keep statues and forms around himself, and he does not have to sit before them or meditate around them or concentrate around them. It is only to give the magnetism and inspiration that may help him in his daily efforts, spiritual or practical. And the more he absorbs the light of Dharma, the nearer is he to attainment.

61. The idea of attainment and the attainment itself is not necessarily different in essence in fana-fi-Rassoul than from other forms of absorption in the ideal. It will be found that all the streams enter into the one ocean of life, and the progress of fana-fi-Rassoul is the same in fana-fi-Lillah which is the stage toward which all humanity tend whether consciously or unconsciously. What is important always is the loss of ego-identity.

62. The old Buddhism will go and in its place will be the dharma that Buddha taught, whereby not through philosophical denial of self, but living as if the self and another were not separate and watching oneself every moment of one’s life to prove this—this will ultimately take its place. But instead of it being a monastic discipline and teaching, it will be related to the everyday life of the

new civilization and nothing that has ever been offered or revealed to mankind will thus be lost.

Fana-fi-Abraham

63. This was an ancient practice of the Beni Israel who had preserved the mysticism of Egypt and of many ancient peoples in a very pure form, although in the Bible and other records it is covered over with the spirit of nationalism and exclusion. The idea of Abraham coming from Ur meant that the origin of man is in the world of Light, from Light all come and to Light all return.

64. Gatheka: "Abraham was the first to bring the knowledge of mysticism from Egypt, where he was initiated in the most ancient Order of esotericism." This path therefore is only for those who will devote themselves to mysticism and esotericism, who are willing to forego much of what the world ordinarily offers, for a pearl of Great Price. In the pursuance of this path the talib becomes absorbed in the knowledge of the other worlds, and so he must protect himself, and be protected by others.

65. Gatheka: "With his great knowledge of esotericism, he has been a great patriarch among his people." So must one on this path protect others, guide others, assist others, whether in the garb of a teacher or in another guise or in no guise. He may even have to practice a form of harmlessness before everybody as if he were the father or grandfather of everybody. So sometimes it is not wise for those younger in age to attempt it. The teaching of the Sepher Yetzirah, the great mystical book of the Hebrews, is supposed to have been originated by Abraham and peoples of tender years and lack of spiritual development were discouraged from studying it.

66. Gatheka: "He was interested in everybody's trouble and difficulty." This indicates that one in fana-fi-Abraham must be willing to fill the post of Wali. Not everybody can be a Wali and not every tender hearted person may aspire to it. But if one is willing to keep the spirit of Abraham before himself, he must regard the name "Ab-Raham", Father of Mercy.

67. Gatheka: "He was thrown in the midst of worldly responsibilities, to learn all that he might learn from it, and then to teach his knowledge and experience to those who looked to him for the bread of knowledge." The awliya (saints) in Sufism do not retire from the world, they remain in it and offer comfort to people. For that, first they must have experienced the world's hardships themselves. Those who live continuously in the monasteries, protected, are not able to guide the people; it is only those who have suffered who can be of most help.

68. "Abraham's life does not only make him a Prophet, but a Murshid as well." Abraham did not stop at the stage of Wali, but continued his progress. But in order to become Rassoul one practices fana-fi-Lillah, one becomes absorbed in God. Murshid also practices fana-fi-Lillah. But the one who performs fana-fi-Rassoul does not become Rassoul, he learns through the spirit of Rassoul that which will bring his own life to perfection and fulfillment. So we keep before ourselves one of

greater development and we can become guided by his spirit.

69. Gatheka: "He examined them, treated their minds, healed their souls according to their needs." This is the work of Murshid. One preparing to be a Murshid may be given the task of absorption in the spirit of Abraham. When Mohammed completed his nocturnal flight he arrived at what had been called the heaven of Abraham, which may be identified with Brahma-lok, Sukhavati or Djabrut, the realm of all-pervading light. But that also meant that the realm of all-pervading light had reached Mohammed, who became its embodiment. The Murshid represents on earth the hierarchical chain.

70. Gatheka: "The most remarkable thing one notices in Abraham is that, besides being a Prophet and a mystic, he lived the life of an ordinary human being, one with his fellow-men in their times of pleasure and sorrow." It has been explained that to really help others one must have gone through all the vicissitudes of life. The Sufis have refrained from asceticism except in a few cases and have even discouraged it. The blessings of Allah are for all and the way of attainment is opened to all that feel they should seek the path of Wisdom. But the inner life is an addition to the daily life, not its abrogation.

71. Gatheka: "As sacrifice is necessary in life, it is made by everyone in some form or other, but when it is made willingly, it turns into a virtue." This is the essence of fana in any form from the lowest to the highest. When one can step out in any direction and give up anything that he has regarded as dear, even one whom he has regarded as dear, and do it for the sake of a still higher ideal, then he is making progress in fana. The reward of this is baqa, realization, but it is only man who can tread fana; for baqa is the way of God and fana the way of man. In fana-i-baqa, manhood and Godhood are united.

72. Gatheka: "The greater the ideal, the greater the sacrifice it demands, and if one saw wisely the process of advancement through life in any direction, it is nothing but a continual sacrifice." This may mean the abandonment of goods or pleasures, but in fana-fi-Rassoul, when there is abandonment of self, the spiritual guidance which comes is the reward of the devotee and for this no price is really too great. Only spiritual reward is not any theory, something actually happens in the life of the man.

73. Gatheka: "And happiness comes from the understanding of this nature of life, and not being hurt or troubled by it, but knowing that it is by sacrifice, made to the end, that man attains to the desired goal." So while we may look upon it as sacrifice, it is really the path to happiness or bliss. The one who holds the ideal in the heart, living for it and through it and in it, he has the happiness that the world can never know.

76. Although Solomon has not been regarded by the generality as Rassoul, and was not the founder of a religion in an ordinary sense, nevertheless through the Semitic nations he has been regarded with the highest veneration. The path of idealism before him is for those with certain needs, but if it is traversed selfishly it will bring sorrow and destruction even as it is said that King Solomon in later life became selfish and this led to the dismemberment of his empire.

77. Persons who have certain needs are given the Murakkabah on Rassoul King Solomon for all the blessings that he has received from God are before mankind, whether wisdom, justice, riches, executive ability, prowess in engineering and architecture, reform in religion and education, the unifying of unassimilated or separated peoples, and many other kingly gifts. Only whatever the goal sought it must be in unselfishness.

78. The double triangle has been regarded as the Seal of Solomon and this may be used in Concentration. Also none who see Solomon see him without it which is protection. And if one has any experience, thinking it to be Solomon who appears with blessing and there is not the double triangle, then there is not Solomon either.

79. To be absorbed in King Solomon means to be absorbed in the way of practical wisdom and then one must do whatever one feels one must do. It is not a path of contemplation in silence; it is a path of contemplation in action. But it is not necessarily the practice of a single individual either. It may be a common concentration, a common absorption of men who are uniting in a great accomplishment. Although every one may have his ideal, his Savior, if there is to be a common effort and especially one in the spiritual life such as the erecting of a temple, a common absorption in fana-fi-Solomon will be most beneficial.

80. If there is any esoteric masonry it is this: to apply the laws of esotericism in a constructive effort. As Solomon was a king and very few people come to be kings, there is no need for fana-fi-Solomon to perfect one's purpose of life as an individual, but in group attainment, to harmonize many, a common concentration, even a common absorption, or a common guidance will bring blessing to many.

81. The work of Rassoul is never ended even though he is withdrawn from earth. There is the temple of the human body to be perfected and there are temples on the unseen and this work of constructing beautiful things and doing great things is always before us. And Jachin and Boaz, the doors of the temple of Solomon are the same as Jelal and Jemal, the balance between which brings perfection.

[Fana-fi-Zarathustra](#)

82. Gatheka: "The life and teaching of Zarathustra give an example to those who tread the spiritual path of the manner in which to bring the spiritual journey." This does not necessarily mean

that fana-fi-Zarathustra is a lower grade in fana-fi-Rassoul, but it does mean that those who are called upon to prepare people for the spiritual life, who may have to deal with the generality rather than with devotees and initiates, can follow the path of Zarathustra, not only in Murakkabah, but in fana. It is a mistake to assume that there is any real distinction or difference between the great world teachers, other than perhaps in quality.

83. Gatheka: "It has been a great error of some religious people that out of their devotion for their Master they placed him, through their imagination, on a pedestal, where they themselves could not ever prove him to be when it came to reasoning." In fana-fi-Rassoul and indeed everywhere on the path to enlightenment it is the self-realization that brings the proof and not imagination, speculation, reasoning or mental activity. In fana the heart of the devotee is drawn to the heart of Rassoul and those who are given the great privilege and blessing of absorption in Rassoul Zarathustra will find all the nobility, compassion and all qualities needed for their own perfection.

84. Gatheka: "The purpose of this whole creation is fulfilled in attaining that perfection which is for a human being to attain. All the Saints, Sages, Prophets, and Masters of Humanity have been human beings and they have shown divine perfection in fulfilling the purpose of being human." So in fana-fi-Rassoul there is before one the ideal of the perfection of self, and at the same time there is perfection through the assimilation of what one has thought to have been oneself, which is not oneself, but only the thought of oneself or the stage of thought at any time.

85. Gatheka: "Zarathustra's spiritual attainment came by his communication with Nature first." This has been called pantheism to behold God in nature but really it is spiritual communion. Many desire this feeling for nature and some few attain it. If one have before him always the great personality of Zarathustra, and walk with him in the fields and woods, in the gardens and by the streams, and talk with him, commune with him, then after a while he will be blessed with that spirit which enables him to perceive the sublimity in nature and to commune with all things, from plants to stars.

86. Gatheka: "He learned and recognized from that the being of the Creator, acknowledged His perfect wisdom, and then devoted his whole life to glorifying the Name of God." For each aspect of fana-fi-Rassoul is a step toward the ultimate practice of fana-fi-Lillah. We begin with name and form and end with the formless. To this formless there is a single limitation, its Name, and yet in absorption in that Name we come even to the door of the formless.

87. Gatheka: "He pointed out to his followers that the form and line and color and movement that they saw before them, and which attracted them so much, must have been accomplished by an expert artist." Some who are scientists and artists cannot do better than to become absorbed in the spirit of Spitama Zarathustra. All things have their significance and even a little insight may not be enough. It is the absorption of the divine spirit which increased that insight, and beginning with Murakkabah and continuing through love and devotion until one becomes the very self of the Prophet and the Prophet becomes, so to speak, the very self of oneself, there is still work to be accomplished along this line.

88. Gatheka: "Therefore he showed to them that God is not an object which the imagination has made, though He is molded by man's imagination outwardly. In reality God is the Being: such a perfect Being that, if compared with other living beings of this world, He is beyond comparison. He is the Only Being." Thus all forms of fana-fi-Rassoul lead to fana-fi-Lillah in which one's own spirit is absorbed in the divine spirit. Then it is that one can say when coming to the celestial gates, "It is Thy self, O Lord." No prophet brought any message for any other motive. No prophet ever came to be venerated and regarded with high degree by anybody.

89. One on the path of fana-fi-Zarathustra does not thereby become a worshipper of Zarathustra. Firdausi was in many ways an Orthodox Muslim, though of ancient Iranian ancestry. He practiced fana-fi-Zarathustra while recognizing Mohammed as Rassoul. He received great blessings and uncovered much of the ancient history of Persia and many legends and traditions which have been of great value, but more than that, he had the inspiration which only comes to a great poet, and this through his spiritual zeal, although it is not always outwardly evident.

90. One in fana-fi-Zarathustra need not adopt any of the customs of the so-called followers of Zarathustra, although especially if it is revealed to them they are not forbidden to do so. It would be foolish to appear like a Parsi or Guebre when living in a distant land, and yet the spirit of

Spitama may appear anywhere, for it is not limited by geography or otherwise. It is only that one in this degree and in this grade should recognize God in all sounds and under all forms.

91. The only dualism that is before one in fana-fi-Zarathustra is between nufs and God, the same dualism which is before anybody, which is no more dualism than that light and shadow are dualism. The nufs has no real existence although it seems so. But the wisdom of the grade cannot be put into words. It is the feeling and heart accommodation that mark progress and success along this path.

[Fana-fi-Moses](#) (Musa, Moshe)

92. Many students who have been followers of the Hebrew religion or members of the Jewish race may prepare this path, which is excellent for those who would excel in jurisprudence and in the accomplishment of justice. But one who would surrender must realize that the love and devotion come foremost and any particular advantages must always be secondary. When one has love for the Master that love may be its own reward.

93. The influence of Moses is greater than the acclamation he has received. Of all the great spiritual teachers he has received the most criticism, which is very unfortunate. Even some Sufis have dared to criticize him.

94. Gatheka: "Many think that spiritual attainment can be achieved by a great labor. No, labor is necessary for material attainment; for spiritual attainment, what one needs is the seeking soul like that of Moses." Moses, on whom be peace, was an initiate in all the grades of the Egyptian mysteries and also in the same teachings as came to India. In his time he brought the two streams of East and West together, the same as is being done again. So although in a certain sense Moses is venerated by the Hebrew people most, when one engages in absorption it is different, one follows the spirit of Nabi Moses, and not the followers of him.

95. Gatheka: "Moses' falling down upon the ground may be interpreted as the Cross, which means: 'I am not; Thou art.' In order to be, one must pass a stage of being nothing. In the Sufi terms it is called **Fana**." So Moses himself has laid the example for many practices of the later times although in the records he was making the accomplishment of fana-fi-Rassoul. We can all imitate his movements, some of which have been incorporated in the Sufi exercises, as well as those of various religions, but this is not enough. It is the absorption in the Spirit which is really important.

96. Gatheka: "It is the annihilation of the false self, which gives rise to the true self; once this is one, from that moment man approaches closer and closer to God, and stands face to face with his Divine Ideal, with whom he can communicate at every moment of his life." This is the awakening into fana-fi-Lillah which is the most glorious of practices. Only to be sure one must have a guide, that every step of the way be a step forward, a step toward universal realization and away from ego-expressing.

97. Gatheka: "The Law of God is endless, as limitless as God Himself." The Hebrew Kabbalists, who have preserved the esoteric traditions do not teach differently from the Sufis although some of their approaches may be different and the background different. But they show that the ordinary law is for those who dwell within the realm of time, and that everyone is destined to become Messiah and that the Law as we know it is only the shadow of the Eternal Law which can never be expressed in words.

[Fana-fi-Jesus](#)

98. Gatheka: "The Christ spirit is unexplainable in words." In this sense there is no particular merit in the Christian religion in so far as it separates man from man and man from God. Jesus Christ has said, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold." In fana-fi-Jesus it is the one who has been universally regarded with devotion and not the concept of the Orthodox of the Christian sects, who is to be followed. He is not a concept of men or a name. In the spirit of devotion one finds his spirit very near.

99. Jesus said, "When two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst." This means that several together may enter into the practice of fana-fi-Jesus, which is really a

communion, or one alone may have the practice for his development and perfection. When he enters this path he must be willing to leave all in the spirit of self-sacrifice, and more than all else ideas in philosophy, religion, science, art or anything. When these accumulate about the ego, they prevent realization of the ultimate.

100. Gatheka: "No man has the right to claim this stage of development, nor can anyone very well compare two persons recognized by their followers as the perfect Spirit of God. For a thoughtless person it is easy to express his opinion and compare two people, but a thoughtful person first thinks whether he has arrived at that stage where he can compare two such personalities." Now in fana-fi-Rassoul it is possible to compare two personalities, but what will he compare them with? He cannot compare them as two ordinary persons are compared. One may compare one stone with another; one cannot easily compare one solar system with another, especially when both may be subject to change. One who wants to know the spirit of Rassoul and enters into fana-fi-Rassoul, he himself is constantly changing. If he performs his devotions rightly and keeps before himself at every moment the spirit of Rassoul he will be growing and he will not be exactly the same personality (at least in development and achievement) as at the beginning of his quest. And how can he compare, being absorbed in the Spirit of One, with the spirit of another? There is no way by which it can be done. Those who are on fana-fi-Rassoul have their beloved before them and when they complete it they find that all the Perfect Ones form the embodiment of a single Master.

101. Gatheka: "However, the wise man understands all beliefs, for he is one with them all." This is not a matter of intellectual assent. The wise man cannot make agreement or disagreement. Before Rassoul he is as nothing and he cannot place his views in evidence and before the people, although they do not know it, he is a mighty being who must conceal himself. Besides, if he has performed Murakkabah before all, or the meditation on Salat, he will not compare or contrast and he will agree in assent.

102. Gatheka: "And the question, if a person was destined to be a complete personality, may be answered that there is no person who is not destined to be something." So each one has his path of spiritual attainment and some go before and some come afterward, and it is a duty and a privilege to strive toward perfection, but it is of no value to compare and contrast except to help those who are in need.

103. Gatheka: "The soul who realized, before he claimed to be Alpha and Omega, is Christ." That is to say, every perfect soul may be given this name which is identical with Messiah and Rassoul. To picture some historical character in that role is excellent for it brings humanity to it, whereas otherwise it would be a concept. But it is no exclusive personality and those who say "Only Jesus" do not really know the meaning of Christ. Besides, God being the Only One, every aspect of fana-fi-Rassoul is really an aspect of fana-fi-Lillah.

104. Gatheka: "To know intellectually that life is eternal, or that the whole life is one, is not sufficient, although it is the first step in the direction toward perfection." This is really part of the instruction of Shariat. When one is impressed sufficiently with it he finds the realization easier

because then there will be no conflict between the inner and outer parts of his personality. But it is the self-surrender which brings the contact with eternity. When one is merged into Rassoul in love, although from the earthly point of view it is in the here and now, it is also out of the here and now. The time and space are part of the earth-life and condition, the eternity is beyond them; time is the projection of eternity into the sphere of mind and matter.

105. Gatheka: "The actual realization of this comes from the personality of the God-conscious soul as a fragrance in his thought, speech and action, and proves in the world as incense put on the fire." This is the work of fana-fi-Rassoul, holding the ideal before one until one unites with the ideal. We see this as between lovers in the story of Leila and Majnun. Among the Christians many have been able to reproduce the stigmata. Whether it is an impression or an actualization does not matter for it is a step toward unity with Christ. If the pain remains that is a sign of only partial progress for the one who advances in this grade will certainly experience the resurrection and then will follow that state of which the Master gave the instruction: "Feed my lambs." This is the true duty of the disciple in fana-fi-Rassoul. He gives the blessings from Rassoul to the multitude; he stands between them as a battery of transmission but not as a mediator.

106. There can be no mediator between the devotee and his ideal, but for the ideal to reach the devotee who cannot hear him or see him or notice him an instrument may be used, which may be a bird or a beast or any creature, but the highest one is the human being whose heart is in Rassoul. When Jesus Christ was in that state it is said that he was a priest after the Order of Melchizedek; that meant he was in fana-fi-Lillah.

107. Gatheka: "There are beliefs such as that of salvation through the Christ; and the man who is agitated against religion, closes the doors of his heart before having the patience to understand what it really means." It has no particular meaning if looked at intellectually; then everyone will interpret it according to his evolution. But from the heart view, when one has the realization, one will not deny it, one will see it that way, it will be true for him, it will have been actualized by him.

108. Gatheka: "There are others who cannot conceive the thought of Christ's divinity. The truth is that the soul of man is divine, and that divine spark, when with the unfoldment of the soul it reaches the point of culmination, then deserves being called divine." Rassoul is one who has completed fana-fi-Lillah. Then he lives in the state of fana-fi-baqa, which is to say, assimilation or absorption into realization. He continues in the state of realization which is the divine union. Now these are words which tell us nothing about the state of baqa nor about the consciousness of Rassoul, and if there are people lacking in conceptual powers they may be pitied or one may suspend judgement. But it is the heart-state of perception which is important and in the actual love of Christ, when one feels and experiences what has been called the "sacred heart," then no more learning is needed.

109. The teaching of Christ was that his disciples should be like him, that his disciples should emulate the perfection of God, that his disciples should attain the same mind, the same vision and the same heart that he had; that his disciples should enter into the stream of consciousness and become one with him. Without these teachings, there is nothing very marvelous in the lessons he

gave, and with these teachings there is no end to marvels. But teachings are not to be taken as intellectual discourses between a speaker and hearers who are separated from him in consciousness; spiritual teachings are the gifts one is able to bestow upon those who are able to receive and unite with him in consciousness. The end of the teaching of Christ was Christ-consciousness, the aim of true Christianity would be that same Christ-consciousness.

110. Gatheka: "And the question of the crucifixion of Christ, apart from its historical aspect, may be explained in that the life of the wise is on the cross all the time. The wiser the soul will become, the more it will realize the cross." Those who would tread the path of fana-fi-Rassoul in Jesus must be willing to sacrifice all to follow him. That was the meaning of his lifetime, that is his teaching now that he functions in the empyrean. But the one who has the love will be blessed and if he does not reflect upon it all the blessings and gifts which were the Grace of God to Christ will become as his possessions while he fulfills his dharma on earth.

111. Gatheka: "And there is another question: That Christ gave his life to save the world. It only explains sacrifice—that no man in this world, going toward the goal, will escape from the test to which life will put him. And that test is sacrifice." So the whole life of Jesus Christ shows progress from stage to stage in fana; he did not attain the full baqa until after he had left the body and had resurrection. It was his willingness to forego bliss which stands as an outstanding merit of his.

112. Gatheka: "And it is that by which man proves that realization of divine truth." And the proof of success in fana-fi-Rassoul comes in the willingness by which one helps others, encourages others, blesses others.

[Fana-fi-Mohammed](#)

113. Gatheka: "The Prophet became an orphan in his childhood, and had known what it is to be without the tender care of the mother and without the protection of the father, when a child." This has meant that many who have gone through the stages of fana-fi-Rassoul with respect to Mohammed have received a solace and tenderness and care that they would not have realized otherwise, and they in their turn are able to bestow the blessings of mercy and compassion upon all. Once a person's heart touches that of the Prophet it knows the fire of love and extends that love to all the world. It is like a miracle.

114. Fana-fi-Mohammed has been such a common practice among those that have tread the path of Sufism that it has become identified with fana-fi-Rassoul. Indeed many even now who are known as Sufis would understand nothing else. But if they were asked in what form did Mohammed practice fana-fi-Rassoul, they would have to admit, that it was before Abraham or Moses or Jesus or all of them. Now in the world all those who have been known or unknown to the world unite to bestow the blessings of the Grace of Allah upon humanity and it is the recognition of advancement and not the exact form of esotericism which will matter.

115. Gatheka: "All manner of prejudice, hatred, bitterness, in the form of envy and jealousy, are the small expressions of this poison which is hidden in the heart of man. And when this poison is taken away in some form or other, then there is the serpent with its beauty and wisdom, without its poisonous teeth; and so it is with man." These are the signs of this state. One cannot remove these things by speech nor by ordinary correction. Lectures have the tendency to hold the thought-forms of evil even when combating it. All the teachers have said that love drives out ignorance but it becomes a question as to how this is done. By the constant heart-contemplation upon the Perfect Man, one imbibes the spirit of perfection. Mohammed has been called Kemal-i-insaan, the perfect man.

116. Gatheka: "The heart of man which is the shrine of God, once purified of that poison, becomes the holy abode wherein God Himself resides." Now a question may be asked, does not the same thing result no matter what the mode of fana-fi-Rassoul, and the answer is that it is so. More important, perhaps, than the character, nature or name of Rassoul is the response of the mureed and when the heart is open and the living light of Allah floods it, then there is no more poison of nufs.

117. Gatheka: "Then came the time of contemplation, that time of the fulfillment of that promise which his soul has brought in the world." We see in Mohammed the living example of a personality passing through all the grades of spiritual unfoldment. We have a more complete record of him than of anybody else, and he typifies therefore the life of the Sufi in all departments. For that reason he has been retained as the Ideal Man because the mind as well as the heart could join in the adoration.

118. Gatheka: "There came moments when life began to seem sad, with all the beauty and comfort it could offer. He then sought refuge from that depression in the solitude." This example stands before all those in fana-fi-Rassoul whether their hearts go out to Mohammed or to any other Name which they regard as the Messenger of Allah. There are the constant flows of bast and kabz, expansion and contraction and in the contraction there is sadness. When we say "Give sustenance to our bodies, hearts and souls," we may wonder how the soul can receive sustenance. It is in this, that there are certain tendencies in these two directions, so to speak, and by going into prayer, contemplation, solitude, one is able to receive sustenance. Sometimes this may be because one is reflecting a world condition, sometimes it may seem to be because of oneself, often there is no explanation.

119. Gatheka: "He tried to see if there was anything else to be seen. He tried to hear if there was anything to be heard. He tried to know if there was anything to be known." In this form of Fana-fi-Rassoul, whether in society or solitude receptivity is necessary, to seek for God in name and form and beyond name and form and not to reject anything that might be from God whether it is offered by one's friend or by one's enemy. This seems to be a hard path, but it is not necessarily so. One may make it hard, God does not make it hard.

120. Gatheka: "In the end he began to hear a word of inner guidance." This is the reward of all

devotees who listen. If there is a God-concept before them, the development may be limited by that concept. That is why Sufism is the way of love and surrender; not these words, but the actual linking of heart and heart and the actual surrender. That is why fana-fi-Sheikh is suggested first because then one can know the way of surrender, and one extends that surrender to others in name and form and others beyond name and form until there arrives a time when that surrender which one thought may have been for one's discipline and growth—and it was so—but that same surrender is the source of all blessing and ultimately all revelation. One can never receive the revelation while being positive.

121. Gatheka: "And as he began to follow that advice, he found the re-echo of the word his heart repeated, in all things of nature; as if the wind repeated the same name as he did; the sky, the earth, the moon, and the planets, all said the same name that he was saying." Mohammed repeated the word "Allah" of which it is said, "Say Allah, and Allah thou shalt become." Only it must be said continually and even more with the breath and the heart than with the mind. One becomes absorbed in it. Only as we have the practical life and must keep the balance the practice of fana-fi-Rassoul is easier, more comfortable and safer, and it is the accomplishment of it which brings us to fana-fi-Lillah when no more we need a name and form for our guidance, but the heart is opened directly to Allah Himself.

122. Gatheka: "The day when Mohammed gave his Message, to his surprise, not only the enemies, but the friends who were near and dear to the Prophet, turned against, would not listen to a new gospel taught." This has been the way of all those who tread the higher stages of the path. For many follow to a certain point and then turn back. They reach a certain realization and at that point cannot surrender and then turn away, and it is very hard to cast one's light upon them and protect them and love them and at the same time fulfill one's duty to the Supreme. This is the real stage of crucifixion.

123. Gatheka: "Through the insults and the harm and the injury they caused him and those who listened to him, he still continued, in spite of being exiled from home three times; and proved in the end, as every real Prophet must prove, that Truth alone is the conqueror, and to Truth belongs all victory." As many have followed on the path of holiness, and as they must need some protection and as this protection does not come from below, it comes, so to speak, from above. For once one has learned to listen to the Voice from the silence, he cannot help listening, he listens to it always.

124. The practice of fana-fi-Rassoul with respect to Mohammed is not to be abrogated in the new day. There are cycles on earth but these are not the same as the cycles in heaven and the position of Mohammed in the hierarchy is not affected in the least by anything man may say or think. Saying or thinking have nothing to do with fana; in fana one does not say or think, or saying, says perhaps what may not be taken in its most obvious meaning. The Sufis and the Zen Buddhists have used the language in different ways from the generality and even the ancient Hebrew prophets recognized and taught that others could not understand their language if taken literally. One speaks, but one means much more than what one says.

125. Rassoul Mohammed taught that to every age there was a prophet and a book, but he did not abrogate those who came before. It was his followers who elevated him publicly but at the same time this was also true within, that he had become the perfect man and in one's heart, on the spiritual path, one could attest the truth to it. What the muezzin said in words, the Sufi realized in his devotion.

126. As the heart turns to heart more and more the living light of Allah pours down in increase. This is true even in marriage, in physical and personal and celestial love, all open the way to the Divine Light. When we get above the words into feeling and action, we feel this all-pervading love which penetrates our very being and transcends our state of consciousness, takes us beyond ego, fills us with supreme vitality, brings glow into every cell of our body, brightens our countenance, makes us different and yet the same. This is the proof of fana, whether in the low grade or the high grade, this takes us from kabz, the sadness, and brings us the living bliss.

127. All the names of the Messengers of God are not known to us and one may have the experience without these names of history which have been handed down, but mostly these will come in momentary blessings for the great ones of long ago, whose names have been forgotten, also their contact with those on earth is weak. In Buddhism it is true, there are relics of the most ancient Buddhas, and there are Prophets named in Qur'an of whom the Bible has no record. But the grades of inner development are the same, the same growth in life, the same opening of heart, the same realization, the same zeal to bestow blessings upon others, the same ability to help and encourage others, the inner effects are substantially the same, only the qualities may seem different.

128. Blessed is he to whom comes Khidr in any guise, the great guardian of the threshold of Sufism. And of this path there is a silence until one's works reflect the blessing that God has given. Him to whom he comes he is the outstanding one, he is the select of Allah, and he is the gate of the mysteries, whether he stands known or unknown before the world.

129. Blessed is he to whom Elijah comes with blessing or with robe, at any time, in any guise, for any purpose. He gives the key to the direction the life on earth must take, where humanity must be led and how and though his blessing be followed by a thousand evils, yet in the end it will not be so, in the end comes bliss.

130. Fana-fi-Rassoul, what is it? It is a mode of fana-fi-Lillah, to prepare the soul so that it can reach a stage where it will depend no more on name and form, when it can surrender in the absolute sense, always keep in the state of surrender and recognize the divine in the least even as in the most. For man's elevation there must be an ideal, but to sustain that state, one must find God universally, exclude him in no wise from no one.

131. While in the world we deal with names and forms and things, we have the work to do in the world. If we seek fana-fi-Lillah because we consider it a higher state, a more noble state, we recognize neither the sacrifices we must make to sustain nor the neglect we offer our brethren

whom sometimes we can help most by pursuing the path before us. Ever remember all is fana-fi-Lillah: Fana-fi-Sheikh, fana-fi-Murshid, fana-fi-Pir, fana-fi-Rassoul, love of mother, father, child, friend, love in any form in which there is self-surrender, self-sacrifice, this is the key to all real and holy spiritual development.

132. One must feel the not-I, to become the not-I, to breathe and live for the not-I, but this is not a compulsion and if there is a note or sound of it, all is failure. It is by becoming and being it, and finding bliss in it that the gateless gate, so to speak, is opened and one standing before the Lord, answering his cry, "Who is there?", may answer, "Thy Self, O Lord."

Amin