

**Akibat: Life after Death**  
*of*  
**Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan**  
**with Commentary**  
*by*  
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**(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)**

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## Editor's Note:

When a portion of the text of Hazrat Inayat Khan's words is put inside a bracket that indicates it was part of the original published manuscript, but for whatever reason was omitted by Murshid Samuel Lewis when the commentary was written.

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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](#)

### Death

AKIBAT: We love our body so much and identify ourselves with it to such an extent that we are very unhappy to think that this body, which is so dear to us, will be some day be in the grave. No one likes to think that it will die and be destroyed.

TASAWWUF: Identification of self with the body is largely a habit. It is impressed upon us from infancy. When the infant cries the parent will offer it food. Often the child does cry for food, but it

has other wants and longings. It offers no resistance to impression and so it comes to accept parents' thoughts that its cries can be satisfied with food and material things.

From the metaphysical view, consciousness is infinitely greater than the body, the body being only a receptacle for life. The Scriptures teach that we live and move and have our being in God, and this life manifests through consciousness. The esoteric practices and disciplines of all religions tend to elevate the disciple above bodily consciousness. One does not neglect the body, nor cease to enjoy life through the body which is really the temple of God. The spiritual life may be fulfilled in the flesh and even by the flesh and through the flesh.

Actually the body is being destroyed every minute. Every moment, every breath, every pulsation of the heart has its life and death, so to speak. But we are more aware of our impressions of breath and heartbeat than of breath and heartbeat themselves. If the body were our ultimate reality there would be resistance to destructive processes; or there would not be rebuilding going on at the same time. The ego, or Nufs, wishes to hold on to forms and appearances, to preserve everything in the state which it finds things.

AKIBAT: But the soul is our true self. It existed before our birth and will exist after our death.

TASAWWUF: In different religions there are different teachings about soul, but generally the term refers to the real self, the abiding personality. In Sufism the term is ruh which means also the activity of infinite light. In Hinduism the term purusha is used, which also means the essential personality which is beyond the phenomenal universe.

The general teaching is that this essence was created in God's image and therefore cannot be subject to destruction. If it were subject to change and destruction it would not be in God's image.

AKIBAT: That which holds the conception of "I," a living entity, is not the body but the soul deluded by the body. The soul thinks that it is the body; it thinks that it walks, sits, lies down when the body does, but it does not really do any of these things. A little indisposition of the body makes it think, "I am ill." A slight offence makes it dejected. A little praise makes it think itself in heaven. In reality it is not in heaven nor on earth; it is where it is.

TASAWWUF: This theme is continued in other writings of Hazrat Inayat Khan, especially in *The Soul Whence and Whither* and *Metaphysics*. *Gayan* commences: "When a glimpse of Our Image is caught in man, when heaven and earth are sought in man, then what is there in the world that is not in man? If only one explores him, there is a lot in man."

It cannot be emphasized too much that the soul is really the divine breath and that God alone exists. The self is like a delusion due to the interposition of **nufs**, the seeming self which shuns peace. What is called "Islam" means the pacification of nufs so the man can live in, through, and with, Ruh.

As soon as the intellect interposes there will be a doctrine and as soon as there is a doctrine there may be other doctrines and all of these belong to the mind-world, and are not the activities of soul itself. This interpretation of mind drags man away from identity with the body but does not lead to emancipation from nufs. In the Hebrew Bible, when Moses wanted to know the real name of God, he received the answer “**Ani asher Ani**” which usually translated as “I am that I am,” but it really means the eternal movement of the one and only being.

AKIBAT: The soul’s dwelling in the material body deludes it so much that it thinks, “I can live only on material food, can stand only on earth, can enjoy only material surroundings. Without these I am nowhere, I am nothing.”

TASAWWUF: This is the ego-delusion which sets up the supposition of selves which are independent of each other and of life as a whole. When this delusion overcomes us, we are subject to constant growth, decay, and change and this is what makes death evident, momentarily or cyclically. Spiritual training is for the purpose of emancipating one from these delusions and especially under the practice of **ryazat**, one first emphasizes and then comes to realize to a greater or lesser extent the universal life in which we live and which also penetrates us. Or as the Prophet said, “God is nearer than the neck-vein.”

Nimaz has the purpose of making man consider his smallness before divinity, his dependence on divinity, and then to actualize the divinity before whom he has been praying.

AKIBAT: There is a Persian saying: “Do not build a house on the ground of another.” This is what the soul does. Whatever it sees, the consciousness recognizes as itself. Its purity makes it reflect whatever is before it, and then it thinks, “This is I,” just as clear water reflects our image.

TASAWWUF: The soul really sees, and it has its own light with which to see. Without this light there would be no sight at all. In the Hindu Bhagavad Gita, it is taught that sight, seer, and seeing are the same and the same conclusion was reached by Sufis because they have gone through the same spiritual enlightenment. The purpose of spiritual practices is to take the disciple from darkness to the realization of this light.

Sufis also have practices called **Murakkabah** and **Mushahida** which cover the same stages of unveiling, and by this one knows what is said in the teaching. The great Sheikh, al-Hujwiri, in his “Kashf al-Mahjub” also presents the teaching of unveiling.

AKIBAT: The soul then wants everything to be very nice and pleasant for its comfort and vanity. It wants to see its objective self well dressed; then it wants very good things about it. It sets up a good house, and all through this life it is in pursuit of these things.

TASAWWUF: The soul itself being perfect seeks perfection. The difficulty arises because it is deluded into looking into the world about one instead of looking into its very nature. The soul, being in the divine image, really has control of everything. In the delusion it does not know it. Beginning

with the false satisfaction of the crying infant receiving food and attention and toys, so all through life one seeks food and attention and toys. Only they never completely satisfy.

Then sometimes people go into asceticism and deny themselves everything. They deny things but they do not deny the ego or nufs. The nufs then has its satisfaction in non-acquisition. Yet it has been taught that the creation was for the benefit of man and that from the light of man was this world made. So it is not wrong for the person to have food and comfort and clothes, but not to be possessed by possession.

The difficulty in the world is the blindness that has been produced because of the craving for things. With or without possession the craving goes on (Sanskrit **Tanha**). Feeling oneself incomplete the person seeks to possess power or fame or wealth, and these do not satisfy.

AKIBAT: Then when death comes this building raised on sand is blown away. Its collected property is taken from it. This is a very, very great disappointment.

TASAWWUF: Jesus Christ taught to work for possessions that are lasting, not the things of the world, but love and character and magnanimity and delight-in-God. This has been wrongly interpreted to seek to build in some heaven the same pride in possessions and ownership and fame and power. The Sufi therefore disengages himself from both these worlds, that of heaven and that of earth, to seek the bliss which is everlasting and yet can be enjoyed here and now.

There has been a cinema picture, *You Can't Take it With You*, which had a temporary effect in making people accept that Jesus was right and the ways of the world are not right. But when the effects of that picture went away, the whole world continued in its rash madness for fame and power, and this not only produced the second world war, but has continued the unrest ever since. In our prayers, we ask for the Divine Grace and Glory and Wisdom and Joy and Peace which alone are endless.

AKIBAT: It loses all that it took interest in. Its withdrawing into its pure self, and the scattering of all earth's deluding environment from its sight impresses it with the idea of death, to its greatest horror. This horror and disappointment are the only death there is, for the body is nothing but a covering put over our soul, and when it is gone we are not dead; just as we do not think we are dead when our coat is worn out, or if someone tears our shirt.

TASAWWUF: Despite all the teachings of all prophets of God and the persistence of many holy men who have succeeded to the same functions earlier performed by Prophets, the whole world is caught in the delusion of seeking what is ephemeral. When the great Junaid was about to die, he realized that he possessed nothing but a few prayers. Not only was the possession of things useless, but much of the knowledge as well, including the ordinary religious knowledge which was supposed to help man live a proper life on earth. He found that no actions on earth by man of himself could predetermine the after-life.

The attitude of non-accumulation, of giving, bestowing, blessing, does not preclude the opposite but enables man to prepare for a more lasting life than that of the earth (Nasut). God is the Lord of All the worlds. Prayer should make man realize that there is more than this on earth, this appearance.

But through the ages the generality, even when adhering to faith, has continued in its persistence of pursuit for the things of the earth. Fear is natural when one cannot see ahead. The development of the faculty of **kashf** or insight, and of trust (**tawakkul**) in the living God, act like beacon lights which help us on every step of our way.

AKIBAT: The moment when a person dies is the only moment when he feels that he is dead. The impression of his dying condition, the hopelessness of the doctor, the sorrow and grief of the family, all make up this impression.

TASAWWUF: Sleep has been called the brother of death. We readily resign to sleep, and in sleep the active ego is no longer aroused and rousing. We do not fear this, indeed we welcome it. We trust and this trust itself is of great assistance.

Impressions are the weeds of the mind. We are caught up in them, with them, by them, and they keep us in perpetual agitation (**Nufsaniat**). It is only when we can master impression that we can come to calmness and peacefulness which is the true Islam. Anything else that bears this name is not Islam, which means Peace.

Each impression or agitation sets up a chain-movement, and on and from this chain-movement and its complication we establish self-satisfying logics and philosophies, but in the end find no satisfaction. One should prepare for death as one prepares for sleep, trusting in the Lord of Life and Death.

AKIBAT: After death, as he recovers from this impression, he gradually finds himself alive; for the life which kept him alive in his physical garb, of course feels strange in the absence of that garb. Yet is not dead; it is even more alive, for that great burden has been removed which for a time had made him think that the physical garb was his life.

TASAWWUF: Mystics do not agree with scientists and philosophers who deny the validity of death and after-life. There are too many legends, too much folklore which considers existence after the life leaves the body. And when it comes to studies of heat, electricity, energy, we accept that energy can and does pass from body to body, from form to form, that it can be transmuted or changed, but not destroyed.

There are said to be two types of spiritual development which in India are called **Vedanta** and **Siddhanta**. In the former the goal of mankind is considered and in the latter the changes which take place on the way to the goal are considered, which means the coming into prominence of faculties and abilities not usually found in society.

Spiritualism has many different interpretations, but in the Orient it has been found that communications between this world and the next do not depend upon mediums or even entering into a trance state, i.e., lowering the consciousness. The relation between a disciple and his teacher in Sufism is not altered by the disappearance of either from the body, for the tie is beyond the material.

*Editor's note: On occasion the previous sentences of Hazrat Inayat Khan are repeated by Murshid SAM in this work. As additional commentary is given in these instances, we have included all these repeated words along with the new commentary.*

AKIBAT: The moment when a person dies is the only moment when he feels that he is dead. Then the impression of his dying condition, the hopelessness of the doctor, the sorrow and grief of the family, all make up this impression.

TASAWWUF: In sleep or in fainting all also passes from recognition of life in the body, and there is no fear. In both it is like relaxing into a state where the ego is not prominent. In such cases there is no harmful impression and when one recovers sobriety life may continue as before.

Impressions are the hazards that must be combated. In Sanskrit they are known as **samskaras**. As long as they exist there will be the action and reaction, the activities known as **karma**. It is these which throw shadows over the soul, which the soul regards as real and which bring all misery. The purpose of meditation and other purifying disciplines is to rid the soul of these impressions which cover it and keep man away from the blessings of grace, glory, wisdom, joy and peace.

But there is nothing so difficult to combat as these impressions. One of the great purposes of practicing the presence of God either as Zikr or in other ways, is to use the will-power to dominate these impressions to keep the heart and consciousness at peace and to come to the comprehension of Oneness.

AKIBAT: After death he recovers from this impression, he gradually finds himself alive; for the life which kept him alive with his physical garb, of course feels strange in its absence. Yet is not dead; it is even more alive, for its great burden has been removed which for a time had made him think that the physical garb was his life.

TASAWWUF: This theme has been continued in *The Soul, Whence and Whither*, but it is also presented in *The Inner Life*. When we say we can live our immortality here and now, it means we can complete our jinn or genius existence, our devic or angelic existence, without even leaving the body. The body is a hindrance to the freedom of the soul and yet it is also possible to achieve this freedom without leaving the body. In India such a person is called **Jivan-Mukti**. In Sufism where love has priority over philosophy, the life of the devotee is wrapped in that of His Maker.

But for the average person there is another experience. Dominated by the impressions (samskaras) which make him more aware of his shortcomings than of his true nature, for some

time he cannot realize there are grades of freedom impossible to attain while in the earthly, physical body. Besides, the light of each plane of the universe is much greater than the light of the planes below it. So upon release from the flesh, the soul begins to experience a joy it had not known before. This is why the world is called "heaven."

In one sense it can be said as some poets have put it, that heaven is around us. And indeed in another sense all the planes of the universe may be said to occupy the same space or spaces (**Akasha**) divisioned by ranges of vibrations so that when one is conscious of some of these ranges, he is usually not conscious of others. This theme is also presented in *Cosmic Language*.

AKIBAT: The soul by its power has created the elements from itself, and has attracted them from outside. It has collected them and it holds them, but through use they are gradually worn out and last for only a certain period.

TASAWWUF: The word "**ruh**" means a ray of infinite light, a subject touched upon in *The Mysticism of Sound*. Creation is the manifestation of this light which steps down from grades of infinite illumination to those of lesser degree, enabling the appearance of individual beings and things which in the separated existence form the worlds. These worlds are actually gradations in impressions which in one sense arise from God and in another sense from the soul itself.

In the inner sciences devotees learn to create and assimilate, but this process actually goes on with every heart pulsation and every breath, though we are not aware of it. St. Paul said, "I die daily," but the Zen Buddhist says that every moment is an eternity with birth, growth, decay and death, and yet it continues on to the next, so to speak, without any break in the continuation.

Elements refer to both those known to modern science and to the activities of earth, air, fire, and water, known to the ancients and this knowledge still continues in many parts of the world.

AKIBAT: The soul holds the body composed of all these elements as long as it has interest in the body, and as long as the magnetism of the body holds it and its activity keeps it engaged.

TASAWWUF: The subject of magnetism is also given full consideration in the literature. This body is a blessing and the temple of God, which means it can accommodate spiritual vibrations. In this respect it is different from the animals. The animal-body may not seem too different from the human body biochemically, but even now it has been discovered that many more trace chemical elements appear in the flesh; more differences will be discovered.

The akasha can abide in the human form only and this is the great difference, in another sense, between man and animals. For by this the body can be a temple or vehicle for the spiritual magnetism; and so for the love and light and grace of divinity.

The infant is born with a delicate body. Yet this body has little resistance to the finer vibrations. So we see something of the angelic kingdom in infants, but later on this resemblance disappears. One



can also notice it in the breath of infants, that it is much finer than that of older people. It does not have resistance. On the other hand, this lack of resistance makes it more susceptible to impressions of all sorts. So one can train little infants through impressions without speech, and one can help them with fine feelings without speech.

If little children are given the spiritual training they hold the finer vibrations, and they become more susceptible to finer vibrations as they grow older. In the Islamic world Sufis continue to teach children Zikr which by both its content and its feeling of the presence of God, purifies the consciousness and keeps the children nearer to a state of bliss than is common with those who do not have this training.

In an analogous way, the continuance of Zikr, the remembrance of the presence of God, enables one to preserve magnetism even at the moment of death, to leave this world more easily, to recover consciousness after death and to have continual life—from one plane to the next without any great shock.

AKIBAT: As soon as its interest in the body is lessened, or the elements that form the body have lost their power, by feebleness or some irregularity in the system, the body loosens its hold, and the soul, whose innate inclination is to free itself, takes advantage of this opportunity given to it by bodily inability. The result of this is death.

TASAWWUF: Thus death seems to take on two forms which might be called voluntary and fatal. Death is fatal when the activities of earth, air, fire and water diminish; or when the organs of the body do not perform their functions properly. And it is voluntary when one gives up his attachment to earth, makes no effort to maintain health or vigor, and feels that he might do better in another and fresher body.

Those who indulge in sexual activities, alcoholism, gluttony and other vices are often quite attached to the physical form and yet these habits weaken the physical form more than anything else. These are the experiences of disintegration. Now it is being found that even slight unwholesome habits may start to destroy the well-being of the body early in life. Yet if one can control and increase the magnetism, one can also avoid the harmful effects of bad habits which ordinary people are subject to. The practice of the presence of God is the practice of immortality and the practice of immortality may make every moment of life more fruitful.

Death, in this sense, is only for the body; or as it is put elsewhere, it is death that dies. The body is always dying from the first catabolic activity in the newborn infant.

AKIBAT: The elements begin to disperse even before death, but after the death of the body they return straight to their affinity, earth to earth, water to water, and so on, each to its affinity. And they are very glad to return.

TASAWWUF: This principle is preserved in the funeral services of those faiths which rely on the

Hebrew Bible. But they do not examine these functions closely and it is only a ritual. Actually each disease shows that already some element is not being properly used by the body. The diseases of lungs show the misuse of air; of the digestive system, of earth; of the kidneys, of water; of the circulation, of fire; and of the sexual activities, of ether. So when man is sick he is not entirely alive and therefore is partially dead.

In the study of **Health** Sufis learn how to preserve this body as the divine temple and it being a divine temple, they may keep it in a proper state for its spiritual as well as earthly functions. Some abandon the body to the elements and make no attempt to maintain health and others make a fetish of health. For the Sufi there is a middle path and the practice of the divine Presence may keep the body in that state which gives the soul maximum enjoyment and minimum confusion.

AKIBAT: Each thing is glad to be with its like. If there is gas near the fire, the flame will go out to the gas, because there is much of the fire element in the gas.

TASAWWUF: We may regard the body as alive and the elements as accidental, or we may regard the elements as alive and the body as accidental. In *Masnawi*, Rumi teaches us that the elements also are the servants of God.

All the calamities of earth come when the elements are uncontrolled as forest fires, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and tidal waves. These things which seem so powerful are also controllable by man when he understands the nature of things, and of himself. Scientists may be discovering that everything is found also in some sense, in the human body, that it is veritably the temple of God, and that it has within it elements and forces, chemical and non-chemical, physical and non-physical, all of them derived from the spirit of the universe.

AKIBAT: One might think that this is all, and that after death there will be nothing left for the ordinary person who has thought of himself as this body, so tall, so broad, so heavy, so many years old; that when the physical body is gone all is gone. But it is not so; when the body is gone the mind remains, the finer part of man's self, composed of vibrations. The elements exist in the vibrations as well as in the atoms, otherwise a person who is angry would not get red and hot.

TASAWWUF: Students of Bhagavad Gita learn first about the immortality of the seeming self, that the destruction of the body is nothing but transformation. When we die in fear, the body dies but the fear remains. We cannot destroy the fear. It has been impressed upon us and it is impressed on us when we are too much under the control of the earth element; as we go into rages when we are too much under the control of the fire element.

This is a subject given much consideration by Sufis, more perhaps than by other mystics, for they inherited the ancient sciences also from the Egyptians and Greeks as well as assimilating those from the Arabs, Hebrews and other people. And we can tell from both physical and psychological types when man is of the fire, earth, water and air temperaments as was taught by the ancients in many parts of the world. The neglect of this knowledge has made it difficult to control emotions, to

control the shortcomings of man which lead to vice, crime, unhappiness and misery. The happy man is he who is not under the control of the elements; who controls the elements.

Sometimes the knowledge of the elements becomes most important, as among the Tibetans who could not live in their world if they did not know about the inner fire and the activity of the fire-element. In these days a Western woman offered “Agni Yoga” which is union of God through and with fire, but she received it in trance and in the waking state of consciousness was not aware of it. So this form of yoga never became established in the western world. It would not be of much use to those who live in warmer climates or have other means to keep warm.

AKIBAT: In dreams, when the body is asleep, we see ourselves walking, speaking, acting, in certain surroundings with certain people. It is only in contrast with the waking condition that we call it a dream.

TASAWWUF: Which does not mean it is unreal. It may be real, it may be unreal according to our definitions and recognitions. Sometimes the dreamlife might be more real than the physical life. There are some novels which bring out this theme and there is no way to disprove them. The study of dreams has been of interest to all the schools of symbology, to psychologists, occultists, mystics and others. It is unusual that the dream state is one of receiving impressions, receiving them more clearly than what we see ordinarily on earth. But dreams may also be born of confusion and either confuse us or have no importance.

As one grows in the spiritual disciplines and controls the elements as the impressions, he may be receiving visions which are of greater import and clarity than the dreams. But it is not necessarily wise or useful to see directly into the heaven worlds by ordinary means, though this may be more or less true with clairvoyants.

AKIBAT: This self still exists after the body is gone, the exact counterpart of what we are now, not of what we were when we were five years old, or ten years old, but of what we are now.

TASAWWUF: This has been made the theme of an interesting story of Mark Twain called “Captain Stormfield’s Visit to Heaven,” where he found his best friend functioning as he last appeared on earth at death, but with restored vitality and full functions. Sometimes a clear mind of a person who is not otherwise a mystic can picture exactly what occurs in the unseen.

When it comes to communication with the Masters, often we feel them or hear them, rather than see them. But the effect is the same.

AKIBAT: It is sometimes said that the soul is that which remains after the death of the physical body, and that it is then in heaven or hell; but that is not so. The soul is something much greater.

TASAWWUF: The theosophical tradition behind all religions proclaims that there are seven planes in this universe, and that some aspects of this universe are aspects of wholeness, and some are

aspects of separateness. And each plane shows an ever-diminishing activity of light until we reach the earth-plane, which in the original sense meant the finality of activity of light.

Man is the creature who has the willpower to direct the light and not merely to respond to it. When the heat is greater than the light, we have Hell and when the Light is greater than the heat, we have Heaven. But that is only one way of putting it. It has been said that "Heaven is the fulfillment of the heart's desire and Hell the shadow of a soul on fire." And from another point of view, increase of happiness (Sanskrit **Sukka** or **Sukha**) produces the heavens; and increase of misery (**dukka** or **dukha**) constitutes the hells.

AKIBAT: How can that be burned with fire which is itself light, Nur, the light of God? But owing to its delusion, it takes upon itself all the conditions that the mind has to go through after death.

TASAWWUF: The soul is of Nur, and infinite, and is called Ruh which is the activity of Nur. Pure Light does not gather dust; it is the dust which constitutes the light-ray which can be measured. Pure life of itself is not measurable in any sense, because everything that has been made comes from this light as the Bible teaches. The measurable comes from the immeasurable.

At the same time, the light, being infinite, could have of itself no particular experience. God created the universe, it is said, so that He could enjoy Himself. Then man was made in the divine image, and **man** operates through **manas**, the mind which is also the measurer. But by measuring one divides, one crystallizes our separations and in that we have the good and the evil. The mind sees the creation as composed of separate and measurable things and vibrations.

AKIBAT: Therefore the experience after death of the soul that has not attained to liberation is very depressing. If the mind is not much attached to the earthly life and has gathered up the satisfaction of its deeds, it enjoys heaven; if the contrary is the case, then it experiences hell.

TASAWWUF: Sufis speak of **barzakh**, an intermediate region and no doubt when the soul leaves the body, it seems to be in a state of coma. Then when it awakens, whatever impressions the mind has, it takes as its own. The laws of reciprocity bring each one to the gravitational level in accord with his own actions, his own thoughts, his own impressions. Sometimes one becomes aware of what he has done because he no longer has the power to do it. Whether it was good or evil, he has lost the command, the authority he had on the earth and he may feel ashamed from the loss of power, or he may be contrite. In either case he is in his shadow instead of being in his light. He is not aware of light, he is aware of power, fame, faculties that have been associated with the physical body or his social position. He no longer has them, he feels incapable, hopeless and Dante has put it concerning Hell: "Abandon all hope ye who enter here." But it is the abandonment of hope that constitutes the hell; when there is hope one finds his way out.

The experience and training in religion at one level and of Tarikat, the esoteric path, at another, are to make man aware of his continuity, in the universe, that the death of the body is not all. The Sufi, more than others, prepares his way to a continual life beyond the mere physical existence. There is

a Hadith of Jesus Christ preserved by Muslims that he said, "The world is a bridge; pass over it and come quickly to the place where you belong."

Spiritualists, who are concerned mostly with communication with the departed, place themselves under the authority of those who are themselves subject to the laws of the universe. When one practices the presence of God, he enters into the eternity. Self-communication is far superior to communication with spirits; at the same time self-communion raises one to the level where he can commune and communicate with even the saints.

Some religions place faith over good deeds. It is not so. There are good deeds performed for the sake of reward and they will gain the reward, the exact reward consummate with those deeds. And there are those who perform good deeds because it is in accord with religion, and their reward will be immeasurably greater. And there are those who perform good deeds because they have become selfless; it is their nature. These become the masters even of heaven.

It is curious that with so many Scriptures, so many religions, man has become more concerned with the differences between them than with their common teachings. All prophets have come, all religions have been given to rescue man from misery both in this life and the life to come.

AKIBAT: The mind that is more involved in earthly cares and attachments cannot let the soul be in the light. If you throw a balloon into the air it will go up and then it will come down again. It goes up because of the air that is in it; it comes down because of the earth substance in it. The tendency of the soul is to go to the highest spheres, to which it belongs; that is its nature.

TASAWWUF: While in the body, it is the flesh that holds the soul, and when it is released from the body, it is the impressions that hold it. These are created by mind. People who have studied the teachings of Buddha learn that he taught the whole of life is produced by the thoughts and impressions of the ego-mind. If these thoughts are sweet, we have the Heaven, and if heavy, we have the Hell; but the purpose of spiritual life is to raise man above impressions, above the samskara, above the world of turmoil which he (Buddha) called samsara and which the Sufis call nufsaniat.

The Christian Bible speaks of the light that lightens every man that comes into the world and it is so. Meditation and practice of the presence of God mean in the first place to remove the shadows and in the second place to become more greatly aware of the presence of light. When we are calm, quiet, we are free from impressions. In meditations, impressions may continue, but they are blown away as by the wind. After the calmness we can see, as the Japanese Zen Buddhists beautifully put it, the moonlight at the bottom of the well, or even in the bucket of water. As long as there are waves, we cannot see it so well. The same is after death, that so long as the soul remains free of earthly impressions, so long as it is concerned with the joy of the light, and seeks the light, so much greater the enjoyment of the heavens.

AKIBAT: The earthly substance it has gathered around it weighs it down to earth. The kite goes up,

but the string in a person's hand brings it back to earth. The earthly attachments are the string that draws the soul downwards.

TASAWWUF: The cyclic law was at one time well known, especially in India during the Gupta period where it became the basis of art. We find it in another form in the gas laws known to physicists, and also in the Carbon and Nitrogen cycles in biology.

Some religions posit an afterlife of heaven and hell where a small cause, sin or virtue, leads to an interminable great reward or punishment. This is not reconcilable either to the laws of nature or to the existence of an All-Wise, All-Just Deity. Those who accept reincarnation in any form, base it on laws of compensation, adjustment and equilibrium, and indeed some of these explanations seem to cover all phenomena. The popular sayings that "whatever goes up must come down" is operative in many planes and aspects of existence. And whether the "soul" seems to appear on earth one or a multitude of times, there is no doubt it is brought here by accepting weightiness, the denseness of earth.

AKIBAT: We see that smoke goes up and on its way it leaves in the chimney its earth substance. All the rest of its earth substance it leaves in the air, and until it has left all behind, it cannot go up to the ether. By this simile we see how the soul cannot rise from the lower regions until it has left behind all earthly longings and attachments.

TASAWWUF: In the Christian Bible the term "pneumatikos" is used, which is translated as "spiritual" and at the same time it means that which behaves like the air. There was no word for "gas" in those days, but the term "spirit," which is Latin, has been applied to the breath, the wind, the atmosphere and the air element at times. Confusion arises when words are used which do not come from direct experience, but from traditional thought and conventions. The struggle that seems to have taken place between theology and science is largely one of the acceptance or non-acceptance of traditional over living experiences. Therefore Al-Ghazzali taught that Sufism was based on experience, not on premises. This whole subject is discussed at length in the various writings of Hazrat Inayat Khan.

AKIBAT: People have a great fear of death, and especially the simple, tender, and affectionate people, and those who are very much attached to their father and mother and brothers and sisters and friends, to their positions and possessions.

TASAWWUF: In contradiction to other faiths, as they have been practiced, Buddha taught that ultimately we possess nothing, so that we should learn to free ourselves from possessions and entanglements. He said that it was craving (**Tanha** or **Trishna**) that was at the root of all sorrow. Actually every messenger of God has taught the same thing, but as soon as religion falls into the hands of the priestcraft, attention is drawn to the personality of the teacher, not to the teachings. There is no religion that has taught attachment to this world or things of this world. Suffering arises from attachment and detachment. It is natural to love. If we study the lives of the Sufi Saints, many stories are told that one cannot love Allah and human beings. Whether this is true or not, it helped

to produce that detachment, that single-heartedness which made the true love possible. The true love comes in self-sacrifice, not in self-attachment.

Jesus Christ has taught to build treasures in heaven, but the tendency of the world has been to build the treasures on earth, or to conceive a heaven where these earthly wants can be satisfied. On leaving this world, the yearnings are ultimately satisfied by each one being drawn by universal gravitation to the place (**Makamo**) of maximum satisfaction without destruction of equilibrium. So most people find a "heaven," but in the end that heaven is not satisfying. If it does not bring peace, glory, wisdom, joy, and grace, it cannot be satisfying. So people live longer or shorter periods in construct-accommodations which are called "heavens," yet in another sense they could hardly be called heaven; they are not Paradise, the abode of joy. Fear itself is a great deterrent. It comes from uncertainty, lack of faith. Blind faith, which is seen on every side, does not usually remove the fear. He who trusts in God will not have fear, either of death or of new or strange experience.

AKIBAT: But those who are unfortunate in life also fear death. A person would rather be very ill than dead. He would rather be in the hospital than in the grave with the dead people. When the thought comes to a man, "Some day I must leave all this and go in the grave," a great sadness comes upon him. With some people this fear lasts for a part of their lives; with some it lasts the whole life.

TASAWWUF: Therefore many state that religion has arisen out of this fear, that to compensate for it man thought up the idea of gods and heavens and creatures which whether seen or unseen, do not dwell in bodies on earth. But there is evidence—and here one can not use the gross material evidence—to indicate that there are creatures other than those on earth, that there are existences other than those of earth.

The esoteric practices, including most of all that of the presence of God (Allah) do more than anything else to encourage the faith, the assurance that not only can fear be overcome, but that the passage of life from this world to another phase need not cause any dismay or harm.

AKIBAT: The proof of how great the fear of death is, is that death has been made out to be the worst punishment, although it is not nearly so bad as the pains, sorrows, and worries of life.

TASAWWUF: Pains, sorrows and worries are the evils to be combated. We have to face them here, and when we leave the body, we carry our whole emotional structure and mental being. When a gas is released from a solid body, it continues its existence but as a gas; it is released, leaving the solid phase behind. So the soul, in a sense, may leave this body—and there are other means of leaving the body too, without any change in the characteristics of personality, which is the outer phase.

The capital punishment which is administered after crimes may help society. It does not help personality, though it may produce a great shock. This shock can be accompanied by fear and even hatred. What are called karmic accumulations are not changed, they are even enhanced.

Every semblance of emotional disturbance prevents the manifestation of Islam, the Divine Peace. What justice there is in it is for society, not for the individual.

This does not mean that certain legal steps are not to be taken in dealing with criminals and delinquents. It means that so long as we do not study, do not examine man in all his phases, all his aspects, we can not help deliver him from the wrath of society, from the wrath of cyclic justice, from the proper activity of the laws of reciprocity.

AKIBAT: Death is the great examination to which one goes prepared, another unprepared; one with confidence, another with fear. However much anyone may pretend to be spiritual or virtuous in life, at the sight of death he is tested and all pretense falls away. It is said in the Qur'an, "Then, when the crushing calamity shall come, on that day shall man remember what he has striven after."

TASAWWUF: Therefore the Sufi practices remembrance (Zikr) often or always and this brings him under the scope and grace of eternity. Then the fear disappears, for he has within his grasp the keys to eternity, the keys to that which is beyond the perturbation of reciprocity (karma). He may go forward in joy for he has been accepting the joy, not the fear.

Once man grasps the divine presence, or the feeling of eternity, even in each minute, he is constantly living and dying so that neither the life nor the death have much significance. But there is also the phase that people go to shrines where saints are buried and the saints communicate and commune with the living (earth-bound) devotees and this brings a realization that what we call death is not a finality.

AKIBAT: There was an old man who was always crying and lamenting, saying, "I am so unhappy, my life is so hard, every day toil and labour! It would be better if I were dead!" Every day he lamented in this way and called upon death to come and take him. One day Azrael, the angel of death, appeared and said to him, "You have called me so often, now I am come to take you with me." The old man said, "Not yet! I am an old man, pray grant me only a few days more of life." The angel of death said, "No. You have so often asked to die, and now you must come to Allah." The old man said, "Wait a little while. Let me stay here a little longer." But the angel of death said, "Not one moment more," and he carried him off.

TASAWWUF: This death came as a result of the activity of human will, which once set into motion strongly, cannot restrict itself. While we pray for the Will-of-God, while we say we submit, actually it is not so. We do not submit, we just use the words. So long as there is fear, hatred, ignorance, uncertainty, clinging, not only will death be difficult, but the life on this earth before the death and the life in the afterworld after the soul is released from the body.

What is called the "spirit" is the personality after the release from the body. And when one is released from the body, the chief change is that one is no longer bound by the denseness of earth. But character does not change, excepting that sometimes a shock may produce a change, or even an awakening. And sometimes the moment of death is also the moment of **tauba**, which is



translated “repentance.” Actually it means becoming aware that the ego-self is not the true self; that one must change his direction and this change is away from the self-centered activity one has followed on earth, toward a more unselfish trend.

The old man of the story represents nufs, the ego. And sometimes as people age, their bodies become more dense and this makes their egos more dense, more stony, more unchangeable. This of itself is a sort of death of another kind. And this person must pass through the fires of purification which form what we call Naar, Hell-fire.

AKIBAT: What thought should the mind hold at the moment of death? The thought should be, in accordance with the evolution of the person, either of God or of the object of his devotion, or of pleasant surroundings and whatever he likes and has idealized.

TASAWWUF: The Indian philosophies propound the cosmic evolution while the people of the Bible and Qur’an, influenced by the Greeks, have come to posit the individual entity, making the self real, and giving it no other choice but between what is known as “heaven” and what is known as “hell.” Prophet Mohammed, coming to such people, had to deal with them as they were, to elevate them from the conditions in which he found them. Muslims call this the “period of ignorance” but despite that they have accepted many institutions and traditions of people who were in ignorance. Such “Islam” is not surrender to Allah but surrender to mankind, to ancestry, to a conservation which retains the ignorance.

The Prophet himself propounded Ilm at every step and even in Fateha where Allah is presented as “Lord of all the Worlds” these are not just worlds-of-things, they are worlds-of-vibrations, worlds-of-accumulations. The relation between Ilm and Alamin is fundamental. Knowledge increases as we pass from world to world. This earth is not a verisimilitude of that which is to come, for the unseen is not bound by the denseness of this sphere. The use of Ryazat, the spiritual disciplines, is to remove the vestiges of ego-preponderance and enable man to view the universe as it is. Science has progressed because there man is free to examine the world around him and report from his experience. Qur’an will be better understood from the world of experience than from the continuance of tradition, called “traditional knowledge,” even when it is not knowledge but opinion.

AKIBAT: If he is an earthy person then the thought of pleasant surroundings will make a heaven for him. If he is in a state of devotion, he will unite with the object of his devotion. If he is godly, the thought of God will be right for him. “Verily death is the bridge which unites friend to friend,” one finds in the Sayings of Mohammed.

TASAWWUF: Life insurance is a modern institution which takes heed of the morrow. Spiritual insurance is quite different and like Jesus Christ it cares nothing of the morrow, only for the eternity. Life insurance brings attachment to things, with things. Spiritual insurance promotes attachment to God and to eternity. Therefore the Sufi may care nothing even for the heavens of reward and punishment but for the paradise of Allah.

We live and move and have our being in Allah, yet we do not know it. If we practice as if we knew it, when the moment of death comes and releases us from denseness, we are accommodated much more quickly to the light and to the blessing of which we have been unaware. Therefore we must accept what Jesus Christ said, not to take thought of the morrow, but to take thought of Allah who is beyond all morrows. The marvelousness of the Kalama of Islam is that both in its vibration and in its meaning, it brings deliverance. Mohammed has taught that he who says, “La illaha El Il Allah” at the moment of death will arise to the true heavens by his own gravitation; while he who says “Ashhadu Mohamedar Rassoul-Lillah” will rise by the help of the spirit of the Prophet. Either of these brings deliverance from the chains of reciprocity, into the grace which is Sempiternal.

AKIBAT: Those of whom it is said that they are in the presence of God, are those who hold the vision of their divine Beloved whom they have idealized all their life, and they rejoice for a very, very long time in the presence of their idealized One.

TASAWWUF: Beyond this is the Mind-world which is in steadiness beyond the fantasies of changing heavens and hells. This has been called “The Palace of Mirrors” (see *Mind World*). We are naturally gravitating all the time to the fruits of our actions, and at the same time elevated by our longings and hopes.

The difference between the esoteric and exoteric religion is that devotees of the latter work in the darkness though they use the term “light.” This light, however, is symbolic, not real. As the soul progresses, it finds itself in real realms of real light. “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness apprehends it not.” This is so.

But the devotee does not cling to his Ideal for the sake of phenomena of light. It is love that does the real clinging, it is love that does the real elevating, it is love that is the reality beyond names and forms.

AKIBAT: During our life on earth we are conscious of three conditions: that of the body, the mind, and the soul. After physical death we are conscious of two only.

TASAWWUF: This subject is continued in much of the literature and also in the class work of talibs (pupils). Only as the worlds of mind are so much grander and complex than that of earth; and the worlds of mind so much grander and complex than mind itself, it is not easy to place these subjects in words.

AKIBAT: On the physical plane, if the thief comes, we are not so much afraid. We look about to find something to attack him with. But in a dream we are afraid, for we have nothing with which to attack him. Here the will is much stronger; there the imagination is stronger, and the will less so.

TASAWWUF: We say that the waking world is “real” and the dream world “unreal.” We might also say that the solid is real and the gas unreal, but this does not make it so. In Indian philosophy it has been taught that there are states of waking, dreaming, deep sleep and cosmic outlook, or “The

Fourth State of Consciousness.”

This fear in the dream realm comes from attachment to earth. Jesus Christ has said, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” This indicates that the earth has been made for the full play of man’s will which is often called “free will” though it is not free. It is subject to laws and limitations. And being already limited, when the conditions change, it cannot express its power. The dream exemplifies it, and when we leave this world, at first we seem utterly devoid of willpower or our willpower seems useless. This is also a delusion.

AKIBAT: In the physical life we have changes from one experience to another. If in the night we are afraid, in the morning we say, “I had a nightmare,” or “In my dream I was sad,” but it means nothing. But there we have no change.

TASAWWUF: The dream life is, so to speak, glimpsing into another world, a world to which we are not accustomed and so we see it in a sort of gaseous envelope. But sometimes dreams take on more solid forms. They may be as symbols or they may be memories, or they may be indicative of what is to come. They may be also pure vision.

Dreams are not so important in the spiritual life as they are all connected with names and forms. Yet there is another instruction in Murakkabah or Concentration which builds the willpower and gives the mind control over the unseen, be it in imagination or dream or vision or any sort of fantasy. The adept learns to control the world beyond as the average person learns to control the world of senses.

AKIBAT: Thus it is here that we should awaken to what is the aim of our life. There we cannot improve so much as we can here. That is why there have always been some, the chosen ones of God, who have said, “Awake, awake, while there is still time.”

TASAWWUF: But the call to awaken does not often bring the change; we pass through some emotional alterations, without affecting the nufs. By Murakkabah, we are trained to develop the willpower, to develop the penetrative power, to control the ego, to master stage by stage, state by state, the world around within ourselves.

Then we may reach the point where the dreamlife is as real, as important, as penetrative as the waking state, or from another point of view, as illusive.

AKIBAT: There are some who in a dream can do what they wish. They can cause to happen whatever they will, and the next day they see occur what they saw in the night. Such are exceptional cases. Because they have mastered their will here, they can make every thing go according to their will even on the higher plane.

TASAWWUF: This comes also in the life of the Sufi who has practiced Murakkabah, which is called “Concentration,” and whereby one learns to fashion things, vibrations, and events. But also when

one has clear sight, it becomes easy to fashion formations. In the fearful contemplation or “Mushahida,” one acts as a channel for the wisdom of the universe and then he may be called a “Master.” But the more one acts as a channel for the real willpower, the easier it is to fashion events and even to alter what the world calls “fate,” which is nothing but the natural outcome.

Disciples practice Murakkabah first to get control over their own wildness and lack of inner integration. Actually, man came to manifestation to provide channels by which the Divine Will could exert itself. When the Divine Will cannot find human channels through whom to function, then there are destructive activities which seem to be punishments to sinful humanity. In the story of Abraham, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah would have been saved if enough persons could have channeled the Divine Power. As there were not such channels, the cities were destroyed. This has often happened throughout history.

AKIBAT: When a person is just as glad that another should eat a good dish as that he should eat it himself, that another should wear beautiful clothes as that he should wear it himself, then he is raised above humanity. These are the saints and sages, and their hereafter is in their hands, because they are happy both in the gain and the loss.

TASAWWUF: This is the identity consciousness and it has been taught by the great masters of all faiths. When Moses proclaimed that one should love thy neighbor as one loves one's self, it meant he should identify himself with his neighbor, not express wild ardor or uncontrolled infatuation. The whole Mosaic code is based on nothing but loving and considering the neighbor, and even the stranger, as if oneself. And it was the departure from the Mosaic code, which in each instance led to the exile of the Beni Israel. And although Jesus came to restore this code, his followers departed from the idea. So Mohammed came and gave the Shariat, which in many respects is like the code of Moses; in many instances whole institutions were incorporated into his code.

The great teaching of Mohammed is **tauhid** which is translated as “unity,” but it also means the identity-consciousness which links the whole humanity into one single brotherhood in the Fatherhood of God.

AKIBAT: The mind of the prophets and murshids cannot be compared with other minds. Theirs is a master mind, and they can hold it much longer.

TASAWWUF: One can only be a Murshid when he can hold the identity-consciousness with pupils; one is a Prophet who has the identity-consciousness with all phases of Humanity. Jesus gave this out in his parable of the shepherd and lost sheep. After Mohammed won the battlefield at Badr by calling in the Divine Power, he realized that Allah was in everybody, friend and foe. So outwardly he had to lose the battle of Ghed. In the lesser Jihad, this was a loss; in the greater Jihad, this was a great victory. As soon as the Prophet realized that the whole of Humanity was within himself, he became the Master of the whole world, and the whole world had to bow before him without him needing to call in the divine Name in any dualistic fashion. The willing surrender of Mecca was nothing but the natural outcome and manifestation of the Prophet's attainment to Union with God.

Once this Union is achieved, one can hold everything within heaven and earth in one's grasp, so to speak, though this is hard for the average mind to comprehend.

AKIBAT: As they have lived only for others, after death they still live for others. They have thought only of what is eternal. Others have thought of things that pass away, and so in time their mind passes away.

TASAWWUF: The idea of a shrine is presented in the teaching of Moses, but no doubt it existed long before that in earlier faiths. This same institution has been continued in Islam. Some Muslims have objected to it because it does not appear in the Holy Qur'an, but many institutions of earlier religions were continued in Islam without any reference in Qur'an.

So people congregated at the shrines of saints and of the Prophet. And it seems that in those places there is a Holy Spirit. People can see and feel it and sometimes even be conscious of the saint or prophet themselves. For there is an avenue of Baraka, divine blessing or magnetism, in those places, and from the unknown or unseen the Master blesses and heals and helps the people on earth. In the Orient this is called the Buddha-mind, the mind which does not pass away. But Paul also, in the Christian Scriptures, said "We have the mind of Christ." If people had the mind of Christ they would be aware of this. But as every religion decays, the ego is accepted as being real, and the relation to the rest of the world becomes veiled. As one is veiled from his brethren whom he sees, he is even more veiled from the saints whom he does not see. Which does not stop the Saints, and Masters and Prophets, from blessing and helping; they do that anyhow, that is their nature. This is also called "Bodhisattva," or Spirit of Guidance.

AKIBAT: Sufism is learned chiefly in order that a person may know what will happen to him after death, in that being which is our real being, though usually it is hidden from us.

TASAWWUF: It is not necessary to dwell on this. We must find the eternity in the immediate, in the next second or even in this second, in this breath, in this heart-pulsation. When Jesus said, "Think no thought of the morrow," it was meant that we should become conscious of the eternity which is our real home. Yet it is also true that this eternity expresses itself in many forms, in many phases, giving rise to the planes of existence.

AKIBAT: After the physical death the life that cannot die bears man up and he remains always alive.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, he is no longer subject to death, as the Bible teaches, nor to the sleep as we know it. There is a continued consciousness.

AKIBAT: Both on earth and on the sea we living beings exist, having both elements in our form, the earth and the water. The beings of the sea are formed of earth as well; we have water also in our constitution. Yet the sea is as strange to us as earth is to the creatures of the sea. Neither would like their places exchanged, and if it so happens that they are out of their element, it leads them to

their end.

TASAWWUF: We see this from one point of view in the biological evolution, and then there is another point of view which is concerned with elementals, beings who exist in the air and fire elements. This is usually the subject of magic. Some schools of Sufis also are concerned with them or with the Jinns. But our life on earth should be concerned with the creatures of earth; God has placed us here with a purpose.

AKIBAT: It is because the fish has not realized that it is also an earthly being and that the earth is its element too, that it cannot live on earth; and in the same way beings on land whose life depends on getting to the shore, fail when they think that they will sink in the sea.

TASAWWUF: For there is a fear in getting out of one's element and especially when the earth is contaminated with another element fear arises. We see this in the evolution of plants and animals which first existed in the sea and gradually adapted themselves to the land. But first all the creatures were creatures of the sea, the water. The higher evolution brought the sentient beings to the land, but still water constitutes a large portion of their bodies, and in man the circulatory system is a sort of sea within us. The planes of the universe constitute a different sort of ocean-of-life. Beings on their way to manifestation are afraid to come here and sometimes are born after being put into a sort of trance and when the little infants come, also at first they are afraid. They have been deprived of their element and their friends.

AKIBAT: If we were dropped into the sea, it would be a terrible thing. We would be convinced that we would go to the bottom, that we would be drowned. It is our fear that makes us go to the bottom, and our thought; except for this there is no reason why we should sink. The sea lifts up the whole ship in which a thousand people are traveling and in which tons of weight are loaded; why should it not lift up our little body?

TASAWWUF: In the spiritual life we learn to overcome fear. The first step is faith, for if there is no faith in the teacher or little faith in the presence of God, one could not progress. As soon as there is the faith, that can be used to cast out fear. When one has love, often one can do things that would be impossible otherwise. The mother whose children are in danger does not reason, neither does she fear. At that time the Spirit-of-guidance which is in all of us, takes over the body. At that time this is no longer the personal body, it is the temple of God and the divine in us takes over. But mostly this does not happen, and when there is no great danger but only an impending one, very often the fear manifests. The unusual often provokes fear; feeling the Divine removes that fear.

AKIBAT: Our inner being is like the sea, our external being as the earth. So it is with the world called death. It is the sea part of ourselves, where we are taken from the earth part, and, not being accustomed to it, we find the journey unfamiliar and uncomfortable, and call it death.

TASAWWUF: The child becomes accustomed to this world under the influence of its parents or guardians. They call this world the real one, and in most cultures this is accepted and anything else

is called odd. True, the scientist may regard the gas to be as real as the solid, but even those philosophers who say that matter is unreal, regard the solid as more real than the gas. This is due to the activity of the ego-mind. Then one receives impressions (samskaras) and regards the impressions as real and that from which one does not have impressions as unreal.

The progress of the modern sciences has come because there was evidence that what man had not realized, experienced before, might be as real or even more real than what he had experienced. This is now accepted in the sciences by scientists. In a similar way, the devotee is satisfied that there is much which he has not experienced and what he has not experienced may be more true than what he has. Such brilliant poets as Wordsworth and Tennyson have made this the subject of many of their compositions.

AKIBAT: To the seaman the sea is as easy to journey upon, whenever he chooses to, as the land.

TASAWWUF: And there are those who have contacted worlds of the unseen, and there may be many such worlds. At the lower levels are those who enter the trance and see fleeting pictures of what is not noticed here. Then sometimes we have direct dreams and vision. There are clairvoyants who see beyond the time and space. And there are those who are in close contact with what we call the “beyond,” but which is not necessarily beyond.

Finally there are those who understand the cyclic laws of the universe who find that so-called death is a veiling and unveiling; that past, present and future are caused by our ignorance as well as by the unrolling of time.

AKIBAT: Christ, in connection with this subject, said to Peter, “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” Both in the Sanskrit and Prakrit, liberation is called **Taran**, which means swimming. It is the power to swim which makes water the abode of the earthly fish, and for those who swim in the ocean of eternal life, in the presence as well as in the absence of the body, it becomes their everlasting abode.

TASAWWUF: There is a phrase used by many mystics and especially in Buddhism, “in the stream,” which is perhaps the same as “on the path.” Only the sense of a path indicates a difference from the surrounding element and “in the stream” indicates a harmony or unity with the surrounding element.

Then the Buddhists say “reach the other shore,” which is a symbolic way of putting it, yet it is a real experience. No doubt the crossing of the Sea which appears in the books of Moses happened, and yet from another point of view, this is the experience of every soul, that it has to cross a sea. We find this also in the Puranas of Indian literature, where even the Avatars themselves are made into the creatures of the sea, rather than land.

AKIBAT: The swimmer plays with the sea. At first he swims a little way, then he swims far out. Then he masters it, and at last it is his home, his element, as the earth is. He who has mastered

these two elements has gained all mastery.

TASAWWUF: There is the similarity between the consciousness of man and the iceberg, that most of what constitutes a person is not seen, not observed, perhaps not observable, but is there. And in the trance or under hypnosis, much of what seems to be hidden comes to the surface. With the mystic it is not always necessary to change any state of consciousness, that he is able to “function as if belonging to both worlds.” He is aware.

Tasawwuri is a practice whereby one is attuned to the teacher or master regardless of time and place. Then one gets to be, so to speak, in the two elements of seen and unseen. Then there are those who are more awake at night, in the sleep, or in the meditation, that there they find themselves in a larger universe and function in this larger universe.

AKIBAT: The divers in the port of Ceylon, and the Arabs in the Red Sea, dive down into the sea. First they stop up their ears, eyes, lips and their nose, then they dive and bring up pearls. The mystic also dives into the sea of consciousness by closing his senses from the external world and thus enters into the abstract plane.

TASAWWUF: This knowledge was known from the earliest times. It appears in the Yoga system of Patanjali and it was known also in the Egyptian society, from which the Sufis inherited much knowledge. It is not wise to practice breathing exercises without an instructor, for the gymnastics is only one side. If one does not know the effects of these gymnastics, he enters into a dangerous world. No doubt many swim naturally, but to become a good diver, one should have training and discipline.

In all forms of devotion and discipline, some attention is taken from the senses. With the development of Insight (Kashf), more attention is taken from the senses, which then become one's servants. In the development of **shahud**, one finds that there is a vision not associated with the self or the sense, yet not necessarily apart from the self or senses.

One should not try to reach the abstract until he has been disciplined in the lesser stages. You cannot start diving deep before you learn to swim and then take small dives until the organism becomes used to it. Both the breath and mind must go through stages of control until stopping becomes natural and does not upset the equilibrium.

AKIBAT: The work of the Sufi is to take away the fear of death. This path is trodden in order to know in life what will be with us after death. It is said in the Qur'an, “Mutu kubla anta mutu,” or “die before death.”

TASAWWUF: The Sufi learns to die before death. But also we have the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which is really the death of Nufs, the ego, and it can be quite independent of any death of the body. The death of the ego comes in the process of initiation, which has many stages. So it is that St. Paul said, “I die daily,” and the Zen Buddhist finds himself where there is neither life nor death and



yet there is both life and death.

AKIBAT: To take off this mortal garb, to teach the soul that it is not this mortal but is that immortal being, so that we may escape the great disappointment of mortality which death brings, this is what is accomplished in life by a Sufi.

TASAWWUF: Of course, the word **Sufi** has two meanings—one the disciples in specific schools which have practices associated more or less with the religion of Islam and with Arabic phrases, although Persian and Urdu are also used by some Sufis. And then there is the meaning that the Sufi is free from distinctions and differences and anybody free from distinctions and differences may be called a Sufi, regardless of his religion.

The life-in-immortality may be pursued here and is also discussed in *Moral Culture* under the “law of Renunciation.” Once a person renounces, he is living his immortality and his life and affairs go on and on, regardless of the body or vehicle through which he functions. The term “Bodhisattva” has been applied to those who, although on earth and in a physical body, really function from the standpoint of eternity. It is the universal Spirit of Guidance which manifests and operates through them. They do not necessarily follow any logical or customary modes or habits and they will often be shunned as peculiar. But when one looks closely, one can see in them the sense of purpose, the sense of duty, the sense of assurance beyond fear and shortcomings.

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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 2](#)

### The Day of Judgment

AKIBAT: In Buddhism and in the Hindu religion little is said about the Day of Judgment, because they have the doctrine of Karma, but in the Qur'an it recurs so often in the different suras, great emphasis being put upon it, and in the Bible the Day of Judgment is spoken of very many times.

TASAWWUF: The very idea, “Day of Judgment,” shows that the judgment comes in the day, the light, not in darkness. Muslims in their daily prayers always refer to God as “Maliki Yaumeddin,” which indicates that in God's hands is the future of all of us. This is very different from the popular explanations of all religions which condemn those who are not in agreement with their own versions and interpretations, and despite the saying of Jesus Christ, “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” This is so universal. And people do not realize that such personality-judgment keeps them apart. It is the cause of wars, and prevents the manifestation of peace on earth, and it should also

be added, in the worlds unseen. For God is Master of everything.

The teaching of karma gives the indication that for whatsoever we do, we shall have return in like measure. This also a sort of judgment, but it is a judgment of limitation. And this judgment previously referred to is immeasurable.

AKIBAT: The Day of Judgment, of which various religions have spoken, is a great secret. All that can be said about it is that not one moment of time, not the blinking of the eye passes without a judgment; that in the conscience of each individual there is a faculty of judging, which judges himself and others, and that this faculty exists in its perfection in the Universal Conscience, which judges the whole universe. The former is man's justice, the latter is the justice of God.

TASAWWUF: Although there is the prayer, "Thy will be done," and although the essence of Islam is surrender to Allah, so long as there is attachment to the ego, these are mere words, and mankind is more often caught by the tyranny of words than anything else. He holds on tight to his limitations and does not realize that this very behavior pattern is harmful both to himself and everybody else. For it needs only a single activity to light a fire, or cause dissension or start a war.

The whole tenor of all Scriptures is solidly against this behavior pattern. There is no ultimate difference between any great religion's teachings. If man could bow down, not only in ritual, but in his psychological functions, it would change his activities, remove his pains and benefit the whole universe. For the surrender in love is the universal salvation. Even a single human being, by the union of God, can produce wonders.

AKIBAT: In man's justice partiality and error are found, for his conscience is overshadowed by his self; thus the seeing faculty of the conscience is dimmed.

TASAWWUF: Not only did Mohammed urge the prayers five times a day, but in the repetition of these prayers, one hears over and over again: "Maliki Yaumeddin," which is an injunction never to condemn first those with whom one prays. And if we pass from the Qur'an to the Hadith, we find that Mohammed never condemned anybody that prayed, including those of different faiths who then lived in Arabia.

AKIBAT: God's justice is the right justice, for no shadow of partiality falls upon his universal Consciousness, because the whole universe is His field of vision and therefore His sight is keen.

TASAWWUF: All religions teach this, but each overlooks the fact that other faiths also accept the Universal Being and the Universal Code. Shadows are caused by the intervention of the human ego (nufs), and the unconscious seeming identity of the small self with the Great Being. Therefore, while codes come and seem to be based on Divine Wisdom, when we look closer, this is not always so.

Many countries do not have a code based on Divine inspiration. Those that do and the religions

that do, have depended on common consensus, logical deduction, analogy and seeming fairness within certain limits. This means that series of thoughts have been interposed into legal systems and operate to preserve customs and precedents. This contradicts that the Day of Judgment is every instant, and it establishes what the Hindus call chains-of-causes and effects, and these inhibit the establishment of righteousness (dharma) on earth. The Indian idea of "Dharma" is itself an intervention with their own principles of revelation, and has led to the establishment of inequities and inequalities in the name of Divine Justice. But as we look closer, the same happens to all people, though in various ways and to various degrees.

AKIBAT: As our justice determines our likes and dislikes and creates in us favor or disfavor for another, so it is with God. He reckons the account of deeds and bestows rewards and punishments; He also forgives in His Mercy and Compassion whomever He may choose to forgive, as do we human beings in our small way.

TASAWWUF: This is discussed from certain points of view in the teachings on Morals, published, unpublished, and commentaries. It is found also in the Bible when Jesus was questioned as to why men were born blind, and it was to fulfill a great justice, one beyond the ordinary understanding of the people of the time.

The Bible teaches that there is a peace "beyond understanding." Actually also there is a Justice and also a Mercy beyond understanding. But if we study closer, the Bible teaches that the Mercy belongs to the realm of eternity and Justice to the realm of time.

AKIBAT: To the short-sighted, man's justice is plain, but God's justice is too vague to be apprehended; and there are many apparent examples to lead him astray, such as the righteous being ill-treated while the wicked enjoy life, but the keen-sighted can see an end to the enjoyment of the wicked and to the ill-treatment of the righteous.

TASAWWUF: Justice has been pictured as blind, for it means that whenever there is need for it, very often the whole picture is not seen. Sometimes it is because of mere outer reports, without considering motives; more often it is because of personalities involved. Today there is some change from it, that factors are taken into consideration, even sometimes to the degree that man is removed from responsibilities. Aphorisms themselves have never been of much value. People have repeated over and over "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." At times such phrases are like instruments of Satan. For instead of their being high moral standards, they are lovely sounding aphorisms and preaching sentiments takes the place of the loving, living heart.

The next thing to be understood is what is called **Karma** in India, which also has been explained in the literature.

AKIBAT: The seer can see the blow awaiting its time to fall upon the one, and the reward being prepared for the other. It is only a matter of time.

TASAWWUF: First, the divine justice is operative and all things come to their level. Secondly, the seer is trained so as to see in the realms of principles rather than in the outward time. Everything we do, or even say and think tends back toward an equilibrium and, as Jesus said, “for every idle word you shall suffer in the Day of Judgment.”

It is not any St. Peter that stands at any gate to judge, nor is it an angel or group of angels who render judgment. No doubt there is a recording in the ethers, in the universe. Thus each of us renders his own judgment.

AKIBAT: To a material person this seems absurd. He thinks, “If I rob someone, if the police catch me, that is judgment. If they do not catch me, it is all right; then I am safe from it. If I have a purse of money, and I can pay barristers and lawyers, it is all right.” For he does not see anything in the hereafter, he sees only what is here.

TASAWWUF: Very often one finds apologists for the various religions, that also they excuse their fellow-devotees and judge sharply those of other faiths. But the universal law is that every misdeed makes a mark on our mind, on our nervous system. Someone has said that God may forgive us our sins, but our nervous system will not. Every moment as well as every motive makes a mark both on the brain and in the mind. This cannot be effaced by will-power. It remains and stands as an obstacle to our experience of joy and bliss. The experience of heaven is that of joy and bliss and not merely some material-like reward (or punishment).

Sometimes this comes out in dreams, that after doing what is not right, we are disturbed at night. And even if one strengthens his own self-justification, it does not always influence others and thus he makes enemies.

AKIBAT: A simple believer believes that there is a Day of Judgment, but he knows hardly anything about it.

TASAWWUF: For the first thing, he should realize is that the Judgment comes in the Day, that is in the light. The more we live in light and the greater the light, the more all our shortcomings will be seen by ourselves and others. In the shadow-worlds they will not be noticed and we can hide them from our consciousness and conscience. But they are there. And when we come into the light, they are exposed.

AKIBAT: It is for the Sufi to understand that there is a record in the memory of every action, thought, and work—nature’s manuscript open before our own conscience; and if a murderer escapes the police, he cannot escape from his conscience within.

TASAWWUF: That is why Buddha taught that everything in our lives was mind-made. If the mind is active, it makes a mark on the Supreme Ocean of Peace, and it cannot escape the result of having made that mark. Both our goodness and badness make the marks, and these are signs of vanity.

In the ancient days there were places of refuge even for murderers and sometimes this was necessary, for all of society made it their business to avenge felonies and crimes. Modern justice is beginning to see more from the point of view of the contentment. Still this is not always enough. For every action has an equal and opposite reaction; this is true in the laws of mechanics and is also true in the moral universe.

AKIBAT: One might think, "It is his own conscience, what does it matter if it is displeased for a while?" But there is the universal Conscience behind it, perfectly just and all-powerful, which, if he escaped from the land and sought refuge in the water, could hang him even by means of the waves of the sea, as a penalty for his crime,

TASAWWUF: The Bible teaches about the hardening of the heart. Actually it is the mind that hardens. As soon as the heart hardens just a bit, there is poison created in the bloodstream, the circulatory system does not operate correctly. Then there is disease, for only a pure heart can pour forth clean and pure blood, and only pure and clean blood can purify and revivify the organs. This is called "the blood of Christ" and it is within us. As soon as we harden our minds, the blood reaching the brain and the nervous system is contaminated. That is why it is said that the pure in heart shall see God. It is only the pure in heart that can stand above the justice and judgments of the mind.

Thus it is said that God creates the good and this comes out in the purity of heart and blood. And it is man, which is to say, mind, who creates the good and the evil; by good one means that which strengthens and enlivens the personality, and by evil we mean that which takes away strength, vitality, and awareness.

AKIBAT: Everything that one does, all one's works, have three parts: the beginning, the action, and the end. In the beginning there is hope, in the action there is joy, but in the end comes the realization.

TASAWWUF: The triangle is a symbol found in many parts of the world, and it not only means beginning, culmination, and termination, it also indicates the divine operations of strengthening, perfecting and disseminating. And there is a phrase "riding high," which manifests when we are on the crest of the waves of movement. This exhilarates us for a while, but we cannot as yet see the result of our action, so we do not know whether we shall finally have joy and peace, or dismay and difficulty.

AKIBAT: In the morning when one wakes up, one is fresh and ready to plan all the work of the day.

TASAWWUF: God in the morning was called "Ra" by the Egyptians. It means the manifestation of light and energy. This is called **Urouj** by Sufis and it stimulates man and he can even increase or decrease it at will. But if he energizes too much, he sets in motion many things and does not have the peace. He can even stir up difficulties which is the wont of nufs, the ego. So there must be a balance. That is why Jesus said, "Give us each day our daily bread."

AKIBAT: A person works all day, and in the evening he sees what result he has got from his work, how much he has gained.

TASAWWUF: This aspect of divinity was called **Khapera** by the Egyptians which also meant the scarab beetle. This was the scavenger and harvester. In Sufism it is called **Zaval**, which is the period of reward or punishment for what he has done. And in the end the accounts balance.

But by the practice of meditation and Presence, one can either protect oneself against the bad marks, or avoid them, and thus much misery can be prevented.

AKIBAT: When a child is born it is fresh and ready to enjoy everything. It is happy with any little thing, any little doll that it is given. It does not know where the world is nor what the cares of life are.

TASAWWUF: Thus it is said that the little children understand the Kingdom of Heaven. Adults do not; they become concerned with themselves, with the affairs of the world. Necessary as these are, they are not the affairs of God, and if the affairs of the world affect us too much, we cannot know the bliss that comes from the relief of cares and tribulations.

Disciples are trained in order to adjust their egos and consciousness, to feel that Divine Presence in and through every act and every thought.

AKIBAT: Then a person has to go through all experiences, good and bad, in life; and when old age comes, then he sees the results of his actions. At the time of action he does not see them, because action is blinding.

TASAWWUF: Yet it is our duty to act; we were born in this world to act. And if we do not have foresight, we cannot measure the result of our actions, we follow the impulse of egos. And thus it is in our own life often, in our old age we receive the compensation for everything that has occurred earlier. We cannot then erase what is our fate, but we can adjust ourselves to it.

The wise may say: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," but it is also wise to be merciful to others. For to the merciful is Mercy granted, but not always to others.

AKIBAT: Then, if he has worked for riches, he has got riches; if he has worked for fame, he will have that. And if he loves, he receives the affection and sympathy of his surroundings.

TASAWWUF: It is remarkable that although this taught in all religions, in the Scriptures, the tendency to become self-centered makes us blind. And if we do live on to old age, we may be complaining that we have received injustice. This is seldom so, and if it appears so, then there are reasons behind it which are not always clear. For as we persist in some habit, not only does this habit become engrained in us, it also becomes engrained in the ethers. We make a rut, so to speak, in the cosmos also, and our road is straight or crooked, rough or smooth, according to these

ruts. No doubt even the partial sciences of palmistry and phrenology bear this out.

AKIBAT: When he is old, that is the period of his judgment on earth. Then he sees the reward of his action. If he has murdered someone, the judgment is when he is hanged. If he has robbed, he is in gaol (jail) and he repents. But the time of action comes only once, and after that it is too late to repair one's fault.

TASAWWUF: Every moment, no matter how small the impulse, immediately makes its mark in the universe, on the universe. Once started, it must go on to its finality. And thus also there are thoughts which become like living things. When we give birth to them, they live, and we cannot destroy them. We can only wait until they have gone through their own stages of birth, maturity, and decay. When we resort to meditation or spirituality, it is to prevent more such elemental creations and also to establish a counterforce which will compensate for such activity.

We can see it even in the faces of people. What has been called "The Mark of Cain" is not some special mark. It appears in a sense like a frown, that we create the vertical lines on our own forehead by unseemly actions, by removing the heart from its position of command.

AKIBAT: There are many things that we do that seem all right at the moment, but afterwards our self is not satisfied. It is just like a person eating something that at the time has a pleasant taste, but afterwards produces a bad odor, so that the smell of his own breath makes his head ache.

TASAWWUF: We must realize that the words of Scriptures are true—not "true" in a sense that they must be accepted as philosophy, as something to be believed in, but that which we should incorporate into our daily lives and characters.

AKIBAT: Whatever was tolerated in him while he had power, magnetism, and activity, together with energy, manner, appearance, and looks, no one will tolerate any longer when the power has left him. He has become cranky; his children want to leave him, because they say that old papa has lost his head; his friends despise him, because they say that he is no use.

TASAWWUF: It is not that the head has been lost, so much as that the ego has increased. As we age, we tend to cling to ourselves more, to make much of memory, to be less considerate of others, and this brings about the natural reaction that we disturb others and so are not welcome. All of the common life is concentrated on the satisfactions of nafs, the ego. If one is satisfied that he can draw on, depend on, the accumulation, the merits, the faculties of others, he is satisfied. When the person loses the grip on these faculties, we can no longer depend on him. This shows that man is limited, and so long as we depend on limitation, we are limited also.

AKIBAT: There are many habits and weaknesses of the mind which in youth do not seem of much consequence, such as jealousy, greed, envy, anger, and passion. When youth is gone, and the strength and magnetism of youth, then only weakness remains with its gaping mouth.

TASAWWUF: Besides this, these weaknesses such as jealousy, greed, envy, anger and passion all deprive the blood and the heart of the natural magnetism. There is a personal magnetism which decreases with age, and there is another magnetism which draws its sustenance from eternity. The Sufi depends on the last, knowing that both forms are Grace. And if we can diminish or free ourselves from jealousy, greed, envy, anger, and passion, we increase our stock of joy. Also we may increase our stock of joy by our discovery of God and God-consciousness and God-merits, and this in turn will diminish these evil tendencies.

AKIBAT: Whilst we are engaged in an activity, we are blind. Our eyes are opened when the result comes.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, Judgment comes in the light, the seeing. Whether it is the light which awakens our eyes, or the seeing which makes us aware of the light, the effect is the same.

AKIBAT: A Badishah was once riding in the jungle. Crossing a bridge he saw a man who was quite drunk standing in the middle of the bridge. The man called out, "Will you sell that horse, O passer-by?" for he was quite drunk and could not recognize the rider. The Badishah thought, "He is drunk", so he paid no heed. After shooting for some hours in the jungle he returned and saw the man who had been standing in the middle of the road now sitting by the roadside. The Badishah asked the man in fun, "Do you want to purchase this horse?" The man's drunkenness had now passed. He was astonished to think what he had said to the Badishah in his drunken state, but fortunately he thought of a very witty answer. He said, "The purchaser of the horse has gone, the groom of the horse remains." This amused the Badishah, who overlooked his fault.

There is a time when our ego desires all that tempts it, but when that stage of beginning and action is past, helplessness remains.

TASAWWUF: This is set forth in the doctrine of Urouj, which is a process of obtaining, of getting, or growing. It is limited. If it were not limited, this world would be possessed by giants, both animals and man. This shows there is a physical limit to growth and by the same principle a limit to accumulation, activity, merit. A dynamo can set forth only so much power and no more, and if we try to get more power from the dynamo than it has capacity for, we can destroy it. The same is true with humanity. Only God is beyond the limitations.

AKIBAT: Our life has three parts, the part before our birth, the time of our life here, and the time after death.

TASAWWUF: This teaching appears in the literature, also in *The Phenomenon of the Soul* and *The Soul Whence and Whither*. But it is also taught by the Messengers of God and appears in the wisdom teaching of all religions, both in the Scriptures and folk-traditions. All hold that this is but a temporary state in an eternal on-going.

But it must be repeated, because man has the tendency to regard this life as the most important,



sometimes as the only existence. He shakes his head in agreement and then strives hardest for the worldly success. And as each strives his utmost, there is conflict and reaction and this keeps the outer world in seeming turmoil.

AKIBAT: When considering our life here and hereafter, we understand that our life on earth is our youth, the hereafter age, the time of reaping the fruits of our actions. And the judgment comes in age, which is the time after death.

TASAWWUF: For we create our heavens and hells. Whatever is in the mind, when the mind stands free from the body, that stands forth. If we enjoy something, our whole longing is for it. When we are released from the denseness of the earth, the attainment is easier, but also it brings satisfaction, grief, sorrow, and just enough enjoyment to balance our efforts.

At the same time, we are free from the limitations on magnetism of the aging body of earth. The life afterwards is not hampered by the sphere, it is hampered only by our outlooks and desires.

AKIBAT: In the arts too we see that there are these three aspects. In music there is first the introduction, then there is the music in its full grandeur, then there is the conclusion, which gives the essence of all that has gone before.

TASAWWUF: This is especially true of most forms of Oriental music, but it was also true for a long time in the West. When we are thrown into something suddenly, it does not bring the magnetism with it; it is violent though we do not realize the violence. It is only afterwards that (when) we do not get the benefit, that we realize it. And sometimes we want it more and more like alcohol or drugs, but it never satisfies.

AKIBAT: In painting the artist first designs, then he colors the picture, and then he looks at it; if it is not as he likes, he wipes it off or he tears it up. A person might say, "You yourself have made it, why do you tear it up?" It is because when he looks at it, he sometimes discovers that it is valueless; whereas when it is better the artist desires it to be sent to the exhibition, and he proudly calls his relations and friends to look at it.

TASAWWUF: Actually all art and all creations depend on planning. Without the proper planning, there will not be the proper execution. In some parts of the world, the preparation is through meditation and non-action, and in other parts of the world, the action and the meditation come together. Only that results in loss of magnetism, the artist gives from a limited store of inner values. But in either instance, whether through action or meditation, we have some results.

AKIBAT: This world is the Creator's picture. The Creator as an artist looks at His work, and He alters it, improves it, or He wipes it off as He chooses best.

TASAWWUF: It is very hard for man to get the complete picture of this creation or even to realize that it is a continual process, with continual changes and continual ameliorations—that is, efforts

toward what appears to be better in the directions of love, harmony and beauty of which God is the perfection.

AKIBAT: Why is the Day of Judgement called “day?” Our day is when we are awake, our night is when we are asleep. This is not the day and night of the earth, which are limited to twelve hours each, but the day and night of the consciousness. What separates one day from another, what makes us distinguish the days, is the night.

TASAWWUF: We see something of this in the chessboard which is divided into the squares of light and dark, or day and night. Sufis also say there are divisions between the planes of the universe, called **Barzakh**, which are light intermediaries. And before the soul comes to the earth, also there is such a period and sometimes after death also. People often act as if their deeds are unseen and unknown to others. It is not so. They may hide little things from themselves and others, but in the period of light, in the periods of knowledge, it is very different. And sometimes when people have wronged someone, then this person shows them what is the truth, then they become shamefaced. This is a coming to the day, to the light, an awakening.

AKIBAT: Here our life is in the darkness of activity, where the world of illusion appears to our eyes as real and the rapid passing of life appears to us stable; just as when in the train it seems as if the trees by the line were running while the train is standing still.

TASAWWUF: Because we are living in a time-process and a space-process, which is also connected with the ego, and the ego also moves. This was uncovered when the principle of relativity was discovered. But it takes a long time for this to penetrate the social consciousness no matter what becomes known to scientists and philosophers, because the social consciousness is always adapted to samsara or nufsaniat, the continuous processes of cause and effect.

AKIBAT: When the illusionary life has proven to be not so real as for some time we had thought it to be then comes the day when things appear as clear as in daylight. To some few this happens in this world, but to all in the hereafter.

TASAWWUF: Sura C103 of Holy Qur’an reads:

“I swear by the declining day!  
Verily, man’s lot is cast amid destruction.  
Save those who believe and do the things that are right.  
And enjoin truth and enjoin steadfastness on each other.”

There is some question that we can understand Qur’an until we appreciate that many Suras refer to mystical states and processes in the spiritual life of the Prophet. By “destruction” here is meant the same as nufsaniat and samsara. We are kept continually on the wheel and whirlpool of cause and effect, activity and retribution. It is by returning and turning to God (Tauba) that we rise above this condition.

This also comes in Sura 75, the Resurrection. The whole of this Sura bears out this point first introduced in Fateha in the sacred phrase, "Maliki Yaumeddin," Master of the Day of Judgment.

AKIBAT: Here we have two states, the waking state and the dream. **There** the only reality will be the dream. That will be our day, uninterrupted by any intervening night. It will not change. And this day will last forever, that is to say until our individuality is merged in the divine consciousness.

TASAWWUF: It is said by some that the boundaries of Malakut extend to the moon and the boundaries of Djabrut to the fixed stars. In the physical world and in the mental world also we have the light and the darkness. But when we get beyond that there is no such rotation around a sun, but always the light. The Bible also teaches that there will be no day-and-night but always light.

If man could stand out in space and there was no rotation, he would be seeing the sun all the time. Thus in the Angelic world one sees the sun all the time. Even in the dream life we are not forced to pass into light-and-shadow, light-and-darkness as here, but because of our will-power, we experience what we have wished and also the compensation of karma for that.

AKIBAT: We dream of all things which are in our surroundings and of all things as they appear naturally. We dream of a horse or an elephant, or of our brother, our sister, our mother, our father, or our uncle; but we do not dream of nonexistent objects, such as a horse with wings or a rabbit with elephant ears, because these are not of our world.

TASAWWUF: Dreams tend to manifest in forms which we have experienced and not otherwise. They are often activities of memories, clear or confused.

AKIBAT: That with which our consciousness is impressed, that only is our world. And that world comes into the judgment which is always going on. The world of the husbandman will be his cottage with his family, the world of the king will be the surroundings of his palace.

TASAWWUF: Because these things are mind-made, in a sense, Sufis learn to train the mind and the will through disciplines of **Murakkabah** or concentration, and then they discover that the ego-mind has been subject to many self-imposed limitations. By the discipline one raises above these limitations and discovers that what has been called "reality" is not necessarily reality.

The new sciences bring us constantly into realms of greater vision and greater understanding. But we do not realize that we have always been limiting ourselves and continue to limit ourselves by attributing absolute reality to that which is believed or known at the moment, even though it becomes changed the very next moment.

AKIBAT: Shall we, then, not be in a great gathering where there will be millions and billions of souls in whatever form they may appear, and all the souls that have existed on earth will be tried at the same time? It will be so in appearance, but not in reality, for every individual's Judgment Day will reflect the whole world within himself and will be peculiar to himself; in other words a world will be

resurrected in each soul.

TASAWWUF: There have been many such traditions and they are found in many religions, especially where the elements of dualism have come in. This has to be in part because the moral teachings were best imparted that way. Something has to be done to impress people to do what is right and not act, each one according to his own ego-propensities. We have this even in the ancient Egyptian teachings and very well depicted that the soul has to be weighed. But this was in the realm of the shadows, Amenti. When the soul came into the light, As-en-ru, it found itself in bliss.

The Bible teaches of a new heaven and a new earth. Actually this means the heaven and earth freed from the mind's conception of heaven and earth and hell. We are mostly dominated by our conceptions and not by sight or insight.

AKIBAT: The affirming and denying aspects of conscience will both be in full play, sometimes in the guise of Munkir and Nakir, the recording angels.

TASAWWUF: In the Egyptian religion there was just one record and one recording. Yet if we read the negative confession of **Ani**, we find the purest moral teaching equal to those of Christ or Ghandi or anybody that came afterwards. Then all the records were kept together. Besides the Egyptians knew about bookkeeping and accounting which was not so well known to the Arabs and others. Each had to be taught that which they could appreciate, so we have the two recording angels. Yet from another point-of-view, when we perceive these angels as the activities of breath, of breath in the left and right nostrils, these will be tendencies, not of right and wrong, but of power and wisdom. In the end the interpretation and effect is the same.

AKIBAT: In reality it will be like a gramophone record, which repeats all one's life's experiences, remembered and forgotten, good and bad, together with the moving picture of all who were concerned in them, whether dead before or after, or still alive on earth. This takes place before one's own soul in the presence of the perfectly just and mighty Being, the thorough Knower and Weigher of all things.

TASAWWUF: Sometimes when people have been rescued from drowning they say they have experienced all of life flashing before them. And it may be that when the Judgment comes it is not only the deeds, but also the impressions that judge men.

We actually live in a universe of Infinite Mercy. We do not realize it and therefore everything which is not in accord with this Mercy impresses the mind and the nervous system. These impressions being the reward or the punishment. They do not bring the bliss. We cannot have the bliss until we are entirely free from all the impressions (samskaras).

The process of unlearning presented in the teachings of the spiritual path (tarikah), helps to free the soul of everything that has weighed it down.

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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 3](#)

#### Heaven and Hell

AKIBAT: The idea of heaven and hell exists in some or other form in all religions. This gives the religions a great hold on the masses keeping them completely under their sway, inducing them to do good and to keep from evil. Without this it would be almost impossible, for man is always being tempted to evil, and great difficulties stand in his way when he attempts to do good, when the wicked seem to possess the kingdom of the earth, while the righteous look to the mercy of God. If no such promise had been given, no other reward, however great, would ever have united mankind in the religion of faith.

TASAWWUF: No doubt angelic beings always tend to do what is good. They have no potentiality for evil, they live in the light. But they also are limited because they know only the light. To be able to do what is right even when one lives in both the light and the darkness, requires much more strength and wisdom. Therefore it is a great soul that does what is right when in the darkness, and also the tests in the darkness produce the greatness in the personality.

In the Moral Instructions we begin by studying and understanding the sway of Reciprocity, and this must be done until the heart awakens. Only after the heart begins to manifest among the darkness, can we pass from Reciprocity to Beneficence. Every Sura of Qur'an begins: "**Bismillah er-rahman er-rahim**" which means that in the Eternity the Righteousness (**Rahm**) persists. The righteousness is the natural condition of eternity. How to make this Righteousness manifest in the worlds of limitation? It was for this purpose that man was created so that God, so to speak, had instruments for His own enjoyment of His own creation. And these instruments, at first not so perfect, had to be purified until they became the instruments of the light and **Rahm**.

AKIBAT: The reward that God gives is quite different from any earthly comforts and riches, but in early times, and even with most people now, it could only be expressed in the form of earthly rewards. That is why the Apostles received the power to speak to every man in his own language.

TASAWWUF: It is folly to speak to people beyond their understanding. All the esoteric teachings tell that there is a language-of-light, in and through which the revealing Messenger spoke, and also a simple language which the people might understand. And it is only after the awakening of this understanding that they can come toward the realization of Truth.

We can see today a much broader understanding and tolerance. It is not always the ideal, but it is growing. The general human consideration is growing. The effect of the great wars and the turmoil that has come thereafter, has been the slow but steady growth of the wide vision toward the universal brotherhood. The whole of humanity, so to speak, had to undergo initiations.

Jesus has said: "In my Father's house are many mansions," which literally has no meaning whatsoever. But symbolically it shows that there are many paths to truth, many disciplines which lead from darkness to light, many ways by which man can go and reach beyond destruction into hope.

AKIBAT: The early Scriptures were given at a time when the evolution of the world was such that people were eager for whatever material comfort was obtainable. If it had been at this time, something else would have been promised.

TASAWWUF: Today we have the material comforts and even luxuries. It is as if the world had passed its peak and was subsiding into luxuries. Yet what seems to be needed is peace and happiness. There is very little sight of either. Saum prays for "Grace, glory, wisdom, joy and peace," which seem to belong to the soul, but which we do not experience in daily life.

AKIBAT: They were told, "If you will keep from sin, then you will be amid thornless lota trees and banana trees laden with fruit, the shade of them spreading over you, with water flowing and couches set up. Under them shall walk youths ever-blooming, and bright ones with large eyes like hidden pearls. There shall be created for you a new creation, and maidens young and beautiful, with golden goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing wine. Brows ache not thereat nor do the senses fail. And fruits of what you like best, and flesh of birds, whatever you desire. Ye shall hear therein no vain talk nor sin, only the cry, "Peace, peace!"

TASAWWUF: But peace does not come with the satisfaction of desires; only there would be no need for contrition unless someone wanted power. But in the heavens, there is no room for those desiring power, nor is there any need for power because the wishes are granted.

Every thought we have is like a created being with a birth, growth, maturity and death. And these thoughts exist and persist so long as they are nourished by the mind. For some, the fulfillment of these thoughts constitutes their heavens; so most heavens look like places where material ideals and dreams come into conscious existence.

AKIBAT: When a child is told, "If you do this, you shall have candy," however great the sacrifice is, it will do it, for it thinks, "I shall have candy." The words in the Scriptures about the reward of good deeds in Heaven were spoken in a manner suited to the evolution of that time. The promises were made as an older person makes promises to a child and says, "Do not take another person's apple; I will give you another apple, even sweeter than this. Don't take another child's doll; I will give you another doll, even better than this." This was the only way of keeping unevolved people from undesirable actions.

TASAWWUF: We see this in all the religions. Most religions stopped with their original sacred books, But the Buddhists have a vast literature, the principle being that as devotees became fully awakened, they too added to the storehouse of knowledge, even in literature. And the more advanced Scriptures indicate that the rewards are for the less evolved, that as people grow in spirituality and come closer to God realization, they are less concerned with everything in name-and-form that arises in the worlds of separation.

This is also the principle expressed by many Sufis, especially in their poetry. As man grows in the realms of light, he cares less for possession, which seems to arise from the worlds of formation and darkness.

AKIBAT: In the same way mankind was threatened with punishment, such as being burnt by a scorching fire, made to drink from a fountain boiling fiercely, having no food but thorns and thistles, as a mother says to her child, "You will get (blank) if you do so."

TASAWWUF: The Hebrew mystical interpretation of Scriptures offers four levels of understanding. But the Christians have too often limited their understanding to a single meaning or two. This despite the fact that the Scriptures themselves indicate their inner significance which cannot be known to the multitude. As the ignorant gained the power in the Christian churches, Mohammed was sent as Messenger by God and he told us that every passage in Holy Qur'an has an inner and outer significance, and each of these exists also at seven levels.

Despite this, the tendency has also been to accept only the limited literal meaning. And if one sticks to that meaning, there are many things in the life of Mohammed that lose semblance of reason and sanity. But with the overall view and the recognition of the God-realization, the whole presents a perfect pattern, so much so that some Sufis have regarded Mohammed not only as Prophet and Messenger of God, but as the Divine Beloved and the Perfect Man.

With all this, we cannot brush aside the literal, for some minds are so affected that they do experience the hell-fire and hell-punishments in the most literal sense as set forth in the Scriptures; and also sometimes in obsessions and evil dreams.

AKIBAT: The Prophet said, "Hell is for the wicked, and heaven is striven for by the fools."

TASAWWUF: This is also an application of the Prophet's own interpretation of Qur'an, that it has several levels and also inner and outer meanings at each level. It is curious and perhaps remarkable, that in the totality of claimed communication with persons who have passed on, no matter what the religion or cultures, the real or pretended insight into the hereafter is almost quite different from the Scriptures, even from those acceptable to such seers and visionaries. The Bismillah of Holy Qur'an repudiates all ideas of perpetual hellfire or even the deadly judgment that many fear.

AKIBAT: Each religion has pictured heaven and hell according to familiar scenes upon earth, in

whatever part of the world it might be.

TASAWWUF: This is universally true. Generally Heaven is the magnification of what has been desired and seldom attained; and Hell that which a person feared most.

AKIBAT: The heaven of the Hindu is an opera house. In it are the Upsaras and Gandharvas, the singers and dancers, and in their hell are snakes and scorpions, filth and worms.

TASAWWUF: These ideas are found not only in the Scriptures, but in the literature, both prose and poetry. No doubt there is some reason for supporting the existence of heavenly creatures who are inspired more by harmony than by anything else, and after that pleasures, although not necessarily low forms of pleasures.

AKIBAT: In the Christian Heaven, the blessed become angels robed in white, with white wings.

TASAWWUF: The idea here is still of heavens and harmonies. No doubt, above this world, there is one of Jinns and fairies of many types and above that, what has been called the “many-colored land,” but above that, the realm of Light. And the idea of white angels is that the soul ultimately comes to this realm of pure light. Nevertheless, Christians also refer to the “glassy sea” which is beyond the worlds of separation.

AKIBAT: They hold golden harps. They are in the blue sky, seated on white clouds,

TASAWWUF: The golden harps signify the most beautiful harmonies with the most perfect instruments. Seated on the clouds means they are above the whole universe of stress, storm, and strife. For even people who desire Heaven would neither be satisfied nor rewarded by the particular thing vouchsafed them. And if they had to endure such heavens, in time they would be just as dissatisfied as when on earth.

AKIBAT: ... singing the praise of God, and their joy is in knowing God and in the communion of the blessed.

TASAWWUF: This brings us closer to the ideals of many religions, that the celestial beings are in bliss and sing forth praises. It would seem that in coming toward the full-spring of evolution, the sages of early times themselves experienced bliss and sang their praises. Thus the Vedas and perhaps the Psalms. But afterwards, when they went from darkness to light, teachings are found in Gathas which, at another level, are expressions of the soul who has found the cosmic harmony.

AKIBAT: The Christian Hell is a blazing, fiery furnace with lakes of brimstone and burning sulphur, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

TASAWWUF: These ideas came in part from earlier religions, as those of the Olympians in Greece, and also of the followers of Zardusht (Zarathustra). Also people whom they despised; used



to punish criminals and enemies by fires and also by imprisonment in abandoned wells, and in underground cells. From these came their concepts of Hell.

AKIBAT: The devils goad the damned with the red-hot prongs of their pitchforks. They are parched with thirst, and there they remain either forever or until they have paid the debts of their sins to the uttermost farthing.

TASAWWUF: It is very strange that people who insist on the literal interpretation of Scriptures often wander into imaginary or seemingly hidden meanings. A few ideas from the Christian Book of Revelation—which is not always regarded as sacred—have been expanded and the whole teaching of the benign Jesus has been lost in traditions and conventions utterly irreconcilable with the Sermon on the Mount, with the principles of Mercy, Compassion, and absolute Justice.

No doubt all our untoward acts, thoughts and words, take on living forms and either become what may be called “demons” or feed the existing demons who live on the sins of human beings. If we could suppress the sins, we should be destroying the ill effects of our own acts, thoughts and words and so also destroy any possible demons. The warfare between the Devas and demons is really a struggle between man’s interest in God and in himself. Every self-centered activity produces ill results.

AKIBAT: In the Moslem heaven there will be Houris and Malaks to wait upon the inhabitants of Jannat, the heavenly attendants, whose faces will be luminous and radiant with heavenly beauty and incomparably more handsome than the fair ones of the earth.

TASAWWUF: Houris signify creatures of light. There is no doubt that as the soul becomes free and purified, it will be functioning in realms of light; also as a man becomes free of selfhood and immersed in Godhood, he will find only this light and creatures of light.

AKIBAT: Milk and honey flow in streams, and jewels and gems roll underfoot. Cooling drinks, the bracing breeze, and all fruits and delicious foods will always be ready, and fountains of Kouthar, the divine wine, will run.

TASAWWUF: For the law of compensation is such that there is a total balancing of accounts in the hereafter. Every thought, speech and act is adjusted in the universal operations. And if man has been deprived of pleasantries in this life, as soon as he is released from the earthly body, he may be finding them. It is the dense earth that deprives us of many satisfactions.

The divine wine signifies the soul partaking of bliss. The earthly body can only comprehend bliss as some form of intoxication, but there are many forms of intoxication, and grades of bliss according to man’s accommodation thereof.

AKIBAT: Every person who enters Jannat, whether he be a child or aged, will be young there. There will be the association of the holy, and the divine atmosphere will be felt throughout

everything.

TASAWWUF: This is contrary (to the teaching) that each should have reward, and especially in joy. For the heaven of the child would not be the heaven of the adult and what pleases one person would not please another. Besides, when saints and sages have appeared to people on earth, they appeared in manners befitting their mission and not necessarily as possessing young bodies.

This is only a symbolical way of putting man's desires into words. Besides, if we read Scriptures closely enough, they seem to contradict each other in many ways. In the end we must come to the often repeated conclusion that "Heaven is the fulfillment of the heart's desire and Hell the shadow of a soul on fire."

AKIBAT: Hell in the Moslem tradition is said to be like a raging fire, hotter beyond comparison than any fire on the earth. There will be the association of those crying and shrieking, calling for water with flames in their mouths. Melancholy, miserable, helpless, and feeble will be the surroundings, and darkness, confusion, horror, and ignorance will be felt all around, while a devilish atmosphere will overwhelm all.

TASAWWUF: We should not lightly brush these symbolical ideas aside. When the spirit leaves the body, it does not change in character, but it does lose the ability to control the environment. And therefore one will feel weak. But as many leave the world in contrition, it must be borne in mind that never can the soul be separated from the Infinite Mercy Divine which embraces all things.

It is only when the soul divests itself of this Mercy that it will seem to experience purgations. But nothing in this universe lasts forever, neither the good things nor the bad. And there have never been sins so great that in the course of aeons, full atonement and compensation is not made. But mostly, religions regard punishment because of deviation from their theology, rather than from breaking the laws of God, and rewards as naturally befitting those who have conformed to the religious practices. These are all man-made conventions and persist in time, not in eternity.

AKIBAT: One might ask why the different religions have given differing accounts of heaven and hell. But the prophets never spoke what is not true, so that if we take the philosophical view, we see that the meaning is that whatever we have idealized we shall have. (see Bhagavad Gita IV)

TASAWWUF: The Message of the Day carries a great deal of detail on this subject, which is found through the literature and also to some extent in that reserved for initiated mureeds. But also as one advances on the path toward liberation, one experiences what was not experienced while limited to the bodily consciousness, and this may be both in the way of reward and punishment, but also as the Scriptures relate, "What the eye has not seen nor the ear heard." Despite this, mostly the Orthodox go contrary even to their own Scriptures.

If we look closely and deeply, we find the same principles in every faith. The illustrations may appear to be different.

AKIBAT: The Hindus had idealized music, singing, playing, and dancing; therefore this was their heaven.

TASAWWUF: There are many explanations for it. For the higher heavens are worlds of harmony. Also when the inner ears are open, one can hear the music of the spheres. But it is also true that music, singing, playing and dancing, increase the consciousness and appreciation of joy and bliss as nothing else can. And so in the spiritual life of many Hindus, these arts are found and are used to help the consciousness rise above the denseness of the earth.

AKIBAT: In Christianity, because from its foundation the thought of the distinction of sex has been avoided, the holy place was held to be one where there are angels, sexless, singing to the God in the heavens above the clouds.

TASAWWUF: This is not to be dismissed lightly. For myths arise out of the experiences of man, which cannot be explained or depicted otherwise. And there have been periods where seers have been able to explain because they see or have seen beyond the bonds which usually limit the generality. And even from the time of Moses, a place was set for God and around that, altars and processions to bring to mankind the truth behind the ceremonies and written records.

AKIBAT: In Arabia, in the hot sand, a person wishes for a cooling drink every moment, and the climate makes the people emotional and gives them the desire to admire youth and beauty.

TASAWWUF: Thus the ideas of the heavens are often drawn from the environment, that which they have admired most and wanted most becomes for them the scheme for their heaven. For people do not appreciate that which is beyond the imagination, and beyond the experience.

AKIBAT: Hell, in almost all religions, has been described in some way or other as the place of torment, where all sources of torture are to be found.

TASAWWUF: And according to what they fear most, or have experienced the torments of, they imagine as belonging to Hell. And as some people have different experiences than others, they have different concepts of torture, but the ideas of the tortures are universal.

AKIBAT: The picture of heaven or hell had its origin in the simplest revelation as it comes to the mind of the Prophet: a great horror at the idea of sin and a sense of joy and beauty at the sight of virtue. It expresses itself first in artistic imagination, before it comes to the lips.

TASAWWUF: For the Prophet may receive the revelation in forms not comprehensible to man. At the same time, he considers the well-being of man, how mankind can benefit from the teachings of grace or warning, of admonition or blessing. As the understanding of different peoples is different according to evolution and habitat, so the picturization of Heavens and Hells is different, but the underlying principles are the same.

AKIBAT: The thought of horror at once brings pictures of fire, especially in the deserts and hot sand of Arabia, where water is the one salvation of all creatures, and fire is always the chief element of destruction.

TASAWWUF: This idea was already present with the ancient Egyptians, they had their judgment Day and the rescue of the soul from Hell-fire. And it is probably true that such ideas existed even before the invention of writing, for the position of mankind in the universe has not changed.

AKIBAT: When the thought of joy and beauty comes, it at once pictures the beauty of the opposite sex, which has charmed the soul from the first day of creation and will do the same forever.

TASAWWUF: For there are two general principles behind all teachings of sex in the religions, one based on enjoyment and the other on transmutation, but in both the principle of beauty is present. So not only are our concepts, but when it comes to a choice of heaven in which to live we each would choose that which would correspond to our deep desire. So in a sense man makes his own heaven, out of his own mind-stuff.

AKIBAT: Then all delights which appeal to the senses and all sights which one longs to see, stood before the Prophet's artistic view, and were expressed in the language that his listeners were capable of appreciating.

TASAWWUF: Also the soul coming to earth has innately certain types of enjoyment which may belong to it, and it is drawn instinctively to such enjoyments and not to other things. But the combination of this longing and yearning on one side, and actual material enjoyment on the other, unite, and are then depicted by artists based on either their study of Scriptures or the sensitivity of their faculties.

AKIBAT: While the Sufi penetrates to the source of this idea, the simple believer revels in the words. All that the traditions say is understood literally by the faithful, but by the Sufi perceives them differently.

TASAWWUF: If the heaven does not bring happiness, if it does not bring joy, it is not a heaven. No one can subsist by eating the food which appears in a painting. This is recognized, but many people believe in the pictures drawn by their mind's eye and consider them as most real, whereas in a sense, they have no reality at all. Although Jesus has said, "By their fruits you shall know them," most people prejudge and never consider the fruits, and going deeper, consider even less the fruits of the spirit which are Grace, Glory, Wisdom, Joy and Peace.

AKIBAT: To him Houris are the heavenly expressions of beauty appearing before the eye which was open on earth, admiring the divine immanence on earth. "God is beautiful and He loves beauty." as it is aid in the Hadith. The whole creation was made that the beauty within the Creator might manifest in His creation, that it might be witnessed.

TASAWWUF: The creation is, so to speak, as if God wished to understand God and if He wished to understand God he could best do this as non-God. So He created all forms, but in them, manifesting as non-God, he could not understand. It was only in his final creation of Man, that there was a creature that was not complete, yet was capable of understanding.

No doubt each animal might have its conception of Heaven according to its understanding and if we travel around the earth, we find mostly people who believe in the hereafter and in some sort of heaven. But they differ in almost everything excepting appreciation of enjoyment. Each enjoys according to his capacity and outlook. But to the Sufi these look like childish enjoyment, and anyhow they do not prove to be real in any absolute sense. Released from the flesh, the soul enjoys as it can enjoy to the propensities of the spirit with which it is covered.

Even the term **Houri** may be the same as the Grecian **Hora**, both mean ray-of-light and both ultimately have the same significance.

AKIBAT: The same tendency is working throughout the whole circuit. God's eye sees heavenly beauty through the godly on their way towards the eternal goal. "No soul knows what is reserved for them, what joy will refresh their eyes as a reward for what they have done," says the Qur'an.

TASAWWUF: The same thing is taught in the Christian Scriptures. Yet almost everybody interprets it to the contrary, limiting the conception of heaven according to orthodoxies and traditions, and condemning those who differ as if they had committed some great sin merely by refusing to accept a tradition which has generally neither scriptural or experiential background.

The Hebrew Scripture says: "No man can see God and live" and of course so long as the ego persists one cannot see God. But with the God-realized souls, it is different.

AKIBAT: Honey is the essence of all flowers. The essence of the whole being is wisdom. Wisdom is the honey which is found in Heaven. Milk is the pure and essential substance prepared in the breast of the mother. The essential sustenance of our being is the spirit, which is pure like milk, and by spirituality we drink that milk on which our soul is nourished.

TASAWWUF: This same symbolism is found in several Scriptures and it is most probably also that Moses learned the wisdom of the Hindus from his father-in-law who was a guru. So we find the same symbolic terms in the Bible and Upanishads. Even Sri Ramakrishna said; "I do not wish to be honey I wish to love honey," which is to say the ultimate bliss.

This also shows that we cannot accept only the literal meaning of the Scriptures, and some Scriptures have no literal meaning at all. But when man is blessed with spiritual experience while living on earth, and wishes to express it, it is nearly always by the same symbols.

AKIBAT: It is said in the Bible, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

TASAWWUF: But what proceeds out of the mouth of God? Many things are said in some Scriptures which could not possibly have proceeded out of the mouth of God. Even Jesus said that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings could come wisdom, but the priestcraft in all faiths will not allow this. So they restrict the Scriptures and make of the Scripture finalities, whereas these only point the way. Until man has the experience it is nothing, and when he is enlightened it is everything.

AKIBAT: The earthly treasures such as gems and jewels, which the godly have renounced in their life upon earth, are rolling like pebbles, worthless, beneath their feet.

TASAWWUF: There is a tradition about Jesus, that he was walking along the seashore with Peter and he asked: "If you saw pearls and pebbles which would you pick up?" "Why, the pearls, of course." "Very far art thou from the Kingdom of Heaven." For in the Kingdom, one does not make such distinctions among creations and creatures and all are full of the same light from the same Creator. And in that state one could not do it, and besides, if there are values, they are different. If children were asked to devise a heaven, it would be very different, but the adults would not accept it.

AKIBAT: To the seer earthly wealth, which man pursues all his life, becomes in the end like pebbles rolling under his feet. Kouthar, wine, means the intoxicating influence of spiritual ecstasy, which is hidden in the heart as love. This purifies the mind from all impressions gathered upon it during the life on earth, thus preparing the soul for the at-one-ment with God.

TASAWWUF: This non-recognition of earthly things has been explained again and yet again, and it must be remembered again and yet again. For people are concerned with the affairs of earth, and if not with things, then with persons who either seem to cause them trouble or with whom they are uncomfortable.

The way of the Sufi is not that of the dualistic moralist. When we become aware of the life in the heart, this is aroused and cultivated. From a little stream of water it becomes as a large flowing river in which we can bathe not only our bodies, but our hearts and souls. And this is the river of which the Scripture says, "All the rivers flow into the sea and yet the sea is not full," for God is not affected by the souls which merge with Him, but the soul which becomes aware of God is affected and blessed.

AKIBAT: There is a difference between heaven and hell for each person, in accordance with the grade of his evolution. What is heaven to one person may be Hell to another.

TASAWWUF: Many people have some idea of heaven, and if the traditional heavens do not please them, they either become unbelievers, or else they regard themselves as sinners, because they would feel uncomfortable in that kind of heaven, so they misjudge themselves.

We must bear in mind above all the Mercy and Compassion of God, as is said, "Bismillah, Er-

Rahman,” “In the Universal Effulgence of Deity Who is All-Beneficent, All-Compassionate.” Heaven is only the manifestation of bliss in ourselves, and Hell is its suppression.

AKIBAT: A poor man will think it Heaven to have a comfortable house to live in and a carriage to drive in. If a king were made to live in the house of a rich merchant, with one or two carriages, and a few servants to wait upon him, he would think it hell.

TASAWWUF: Whatever restricts us is Hell for us; whatsoever impedes us, whatsoever maintains or increases tension, that is Hell. And whatsoever releases us from tension and restrictions, that is heaven, for each one.

AKIBAT: A click of the tongue is more painful to the horse than ten lashes on the back of a donkey. This shows that the hell of a horse and of a donkey cannot be the same.

TASAWWUF: The horse, being far more intelligent, responds to appeals to his mind-heart. The donkey being more somnolent, needs obvious prodding. You cannot appeal to him, you must show some outward deed. And all of us are like the animals in some way, but not like the same animals.

Besides, when we leave this world, we carry bundles of impressions and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of those impressions will make us feel we are rewarded or punished; but it is not the soul, it is the impressions which are being so affected.

AKIBAT: There is a story told of a Badishah before whom four persons were brought, arrested for the same crime. He looked at one and said, “Hang him.” He looked at another and said, “Life-long imprisonment.” He looked at the third and said, “Banish him.” Then he saw the fourth and said, “Shame! How dare you show your face to me? Go, and never come before me again.” The one who went to be hanged killed a few more on his way to the gallows. The exiled one went away and started his trade and roguery still more prosperously in another country. The imprisoned one rejoiced shamelessly with friends in the prison. But he who was exempted from all punishment went home and committed suicide; to him the Badishah’s bitter words were worse than a bowl of poison.

It is not that God from His infinite state rewards us or punishes us, or that there is one fold or enclosure called heaven, in which the virtuous are allowed to be, and another called hell, in which all the sinners are penned.

TASAWWUF: Although Buddha has expressed it most clearly that our futures depend on our mind-activity, and especially on the impressions therefrom, we take this as philosophy, not as reality. The great Teachers of Humanity did not come to give philosophical instruments, but to prepare mankind to live in the infinity instead of in narrow time-cycles. But the nature is such that the mind makes structures and concepts which are taken for reality.

Sufis especially study Murakkabah, which may be called the Science of Concentration, so they can

remove unfavorable impressions, and build up favorable ones. In this way the master-mind creates his own Heaven, his own Hell.

AKIBAT: In reality we experience heaven and hell in our everyday life all the time. But here we experience both states, the dream and the physical life. There is always the possibility of change. If we experience hell now, tomorrow it may be heaven. If our experience today is heaven, then there is a chance that tomorrow it may be hell. But when we return from this world of variety we do not progress in experience; our heaven and hell do not change much.

TASAWWUF: It is the life on earth that gives us the most impressions. In the afterlife the impressions may operate as in dreams; they are not so impressive, so effective. Many have accepted reincarnation because this presupposes that we are given innumerable chances to build up accumulations of power and wisdom. It is not necessarily so, because the Grace of God is all-embracing; but here again we are affected more by the *thought* of its being all-embracing, than by the actuality of the experience thereof. This means we are still limited by our mind worlds, and thus limited Heavens and Hells.

AKIBAT: Let us take first the hell and heaven that each person makes for himself here. When a person does an action with which his conscience is not pleased, the impression remains with him, torturing him continually and keeping before his eyes the agonies that his self experiences.

TASAWWUF: Someone has said that God may forgive us our sins, but our subconscious will not. This is not true; it is only true of those who have not experienced Inayat (Grace) or Tauba (return, repentance). For every action and activity makes a mark on the mind and to come to the perfect bliss, all these marks must be removed, they must be erased, we must unlearn. And this unlearning, this erasing cannot come through thought, by thought. It can come through devotion, it can come from cultivating holiness and it can come through efforts toward self-mastery.

AKIBAT: We see in the world people in high position, in luxurious surroundings, possessed of wealth and power, yet whose evil deeds yet keep up a blazing fire within them. Sometimes their life shows outwardly what their inward state is; sometimes it does not, and people think they are happy, but they themselves find they are in hell. And yet it is partly hidden from their eyes, because of the continual variety of their experiences. This the vague sight of their hell, which they will in the future experience fully.

TASAWWUF: There are both moral and psychological laws of reciprocity. Whatsoever we borrow from this universe must be paid back to the universe. We accumulate only in our own set of times, and the real nature of time is not usually considered. When Allah is called "Rab Alamin," it means not only Lord of the Worlds, but also Lord of the knowledge of the worlds and also Lord of the times. Each plane has its own "timing," so to speak.

There is a price for accumulation and this must be met, either beforehand, or at the time of purchase or afterwards. With each individual, it is not necessarily a payment of coin. But there is



the price of attachment and this is limited to the time of the plane of functioning. The wise therefore do not envy those who seem to have the fortune of the world, for it may be a reward or it may be that which has higher price in the universe beyond this plane.

Hell is the experience of those who feel deprived of that which they have long been attached to.

AKIBAT: When a person does some deed which his conscience likes, it approves him. It says, "Bravo! Well done!" His soul is glad of his deeds. In however bad an environment he may be placed, the inner joy still suffices to keep him happy. When by his righteous deeds he has satisfied his conscience, the God within is pleased.

TASAWWUF: All the great teachers have told us what to do to attain and maintain happiness. The biblical meaning of "sin" is not so much wrong-doing, as doing that which will not merit happiness. We are our own judges and the degree of happiness or unhappiness in the end proves to be the Day of Judgment, for it is Bliss which is the final experience of deliverance. Therefore Sufis say there is satisfaction (**Riza**) only in God, and not as the result of self-approval.

AKIBAT: However bad his worldly situation may be, he is happy within himself. The world, perhaps, may deem him unhappy, but he is happier than kings. This is his heaven.

TASAWWUF: Tradition shows that always the dervishes are happier than others, but the social order never fully approves the dervish. It is always pointing out that there are better ways and means for happiness and salvation, but such indicators are not experiences. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruits of the spirit are Grace, Glory, Wisdom, Joy and Peace, and nothing else.

AKIBAT: And the same experience continues uninterruptedly on the higher plane of existence, which is heaven and hell.

TASAWWUF: Merely to allude to Malakut or mind-world or anything else is not enough. If there are disturbances, if there are constant changes, if there is satisfaction or dissatisfaction, one has not yet reached his finality. It is only when we continue long in one state, that it can be called Heaven; and Hell is mostly a mental allusion to the suffering the soul undergoes even in this life as well as in the hereafter.

AKIBAT: Every person creates his own Heaven and Hell. A disciple once asked his murshid, "Pray, Murshid, let me see heaven in a vision." The murshid said, "Go into the next room, child, and sit and close your eyes and you will see heaven." The mureed went into the next room and sat in meditation. He saw in his vision a large area but nothing else. There were no rivers of honey and seas of milk, nor bricks of ruby, nor roofs of diamonds. He went to his murshid and said, "Thank you, Murshid. Now I have seen heaven, I should like to see hell." The murshid said, "Very well; do the same again." The disciple went into the next room and sat in his meditation, and again he saw a large area, but nothing in it, no snakes, no fire, no devils nor cruel animals, nothing. He went to

the murshid and said, "I saw an area, but again there was nothing in it." The murshid said, "Child, did you expect that the rivers of honey and the seas of milk would be there, or the snakes or the fire in hell? No. There is nothing there; you will have to take everything from here. This is the place to gather everything, either the delights of heaven or the fires of hell."

"Heaven is the fulfillment of the heart's desire, and Hell is the shadow of a soul on fire." says Omar Khayyam.

TASAWWUF: This has already been explained.

AKIBAT: Our self, in reality, is heaven if blessed by divine mercy, and it is our self which is hell if cursed by the divine wrath.

TASAWWUF: This wrath is not against the self, but against the self which strays, the nufs ammara. The divine Mercy is all-embracing, but it is not all-embraced, and in order to become embraced, sometimes the Divine Will seems to take on the nature of an avenging or chastising spirit, but it is only to bring the soul back on the path toward fulfillment.

AKIBAT: The seven gates spoken of in Qur'an are the seven openings of our senses, through which gates we experience our heaven and hell, and the seven pinnacles mean the seven planes of man's existence, which have each its peculiar heaven and its peculiar hell.

TASAWWUF: Hadith teaches that Qur'an was given in seven dialects and that each has its inner and outer meaning. But the Orthodox always try to present one meaning for everything which cannot be. For the mind does not encompass the universe and the universe encompasses all minds.

The different planes of activity provide both different outlooks and different arenas for activity and expression. None can be rightly judged or expressed in terms of another. *The Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty* indicates the finite possibility for all of us.

AKIBAT: Things appear to us as we make them appear.

TASAWWUF: This subject has been discussed by philosophers in all ages, but the conclusions of philosophers do not influence humanity much, and even those who hold to this, in practice, give much credence to material and external events. Buddhists, on the whole, have given more practical consideration of this outlook. Elsewhere it has tended toward either fatalism or nihilism, neither of which fulfills any purpose in life, nor explains man's real nature to him.

AKIBAT: If we are tolerant with our surroundings and contented with whatever we have, enduring unavoidable discomforts and inconveniences, and if we acquire knowledge of our being, if we see the divine immanence around us, and if we develop within us the love on which the whole world is sustained, our life becomes a preparation for heaven and our hereafter its full expression. Such is

the state of the godly.

TASAWWUF: And it is the *attitude* and not external appearance that constitutes the norm of the Sufi. The Gita teaches to be equal-minded in pleasure and pain, but undeveloped philosophers easily quote Scriptures which they do not exemplify in their daily lives. It is better not to quote than to quote and to falter. For those who have access or knowledge, or wisdom, and then go astray, must pay a double penalty.

AKIBAT: As it is said in the Qur'an, "The pious enter therein in peace and security .... There shall touch them therein no worry, nor shall they be cast out."

TASAWWUF: This is a much better presentation of the Bliss than the material pictures of Jinnat, the Heavens. For there is Peace, but it is not the Peace of avoidance of conflict; nor it is the Peace of non-action. By "peace with security" is meant that our positive faculties can operate, that the Attributes of God (Sifat) can find expression in and through us. And when the Attributes manifest in and through us, then we are safe either from Hell-fire or the karmic tendencies toward equilibrium and retribution.

AKIBAT: If they are covered with rags, if lying on the dust, that dust becomes the throne of Suleyman, and their turban of rags becomes Khusrau's crown.

TASAWWUF: If we change our focus on nature and take the long view, both momentary disturbances and great calamities like wars, fall out of focus; they do not affect us so much. Just as wars between insects or even animals do not affect human society so much, neither do the wars and catastrophes of the earth-plane affect the inner planes much.

Or if we use the ultra-microscope, we find ourselves in a different universe of harmony and beauty. It is even below our feet, but we do not see it. When we come to the uttermost stages of analysis, we find harmonies and beauties of which we have not been aware and yet out of these were the physical stuffs of the physical world composed. Or historically it has always been the dervish or the homeless monk that has been the repository of wisdom and bliss and this cannot be repeated too much.

AKIBAT: Our discontent with what we have in life, our intolerance of our surroundings, and lack of endurance of those conditions that we cannot avoid, our weakness in giving way to our passions and appetites, our lack of sociability, our ignorance of our true being and our blindness to the wisdom of God manifest in nature, are the torment of life here and the blazing fire in the hereafter.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, we are constantly creating our own Hells. Love should make us feel satisfied and raise us to a state of praise. When one seeks to gain from the beloved more than is given, there will never be satisfaction. It is only in having a common goal, or a common vision, more than on physical and material satisfaction, that either marriage or friendship can be sustained. The world is what it is and we cannot change it. But by adapting ourselves to it, we

become strong. A runner in the stadium has no particular obstacle, but a runner in the wilderness has to find his own path and he has to struggle. That brings him strength and endurance.

And if we are not satisfied with the people of the world in which we live, we may never have the satisfaction. Not having the satisfaction (**Riza**), we have already lost the ability to enjoy what is heaven, whether in this world or the next.

AKIBAT: Heaven is for the pious whose virtues were for this end, and hell is for the wicked who themselves have kindled its fire.

TASAWWUF: For heaven is a lasting state whose substance is at the basis of creation, but Hell is a world of fires fed by the creation, especially humanity. And so long as man is self-centered (e.g. nufsaniat) and has no vision of God, the forces that he has impelled or even created, build up fire by friction and abrasion and it is the friction and abrasion of our worldly behavior that sustain the Hell-fire.

AKIBAT: The Sufi says, I am beyond both, happy in the arms of the eternal peace. Neither can the joy of heaven tempt me, nor can the fire of hell touch me, for I have embraced the bliss and have kissed the curse, and have been raised above life's joys and sorrows.

TASAWWUF: The practices of Meditation and Concentration take the disciple to where the perturbation, the reactions, the impressions that becloud the mind, do not come. As soon as one soothes vibration of whatsoever nature, one finds oneself in an atmosphere beyond disturbances. There, there can be no rewards and no punishments in the ordinary circumstances and interpretation. Yet it is also true that when man reaches that stage, it not only belongs to self-mastery, it belong to world-mastery, for ruler is he who is ruler of himself and master is he who is master of himself.

AKIBAT: Of course, no soul will remain in heaven or hell forever. It is a gradual process of dissolving in the ocean of the eternal Being the remainder of the individual being. It is this state which is called **Pulserat**, or purgatory.

TASAWWUF: For in this sense Pulserat is the outcome of Nufsaniat, also that for whatsoever we sow, we reap in equal balance. It is in this Purgatory that any and every attachment is removed, whatsoever its nature. And so long as attachment remains, one is subject to birth and death, joy and sorrow. It is this universal phenomenon which has led to beliefs in reincarnation or physical rebirths, but the whole cosmos can also be explained in other ways. However, whatsoever the explanations, the hope of all devotees is to rise above the purgations of Purgatory and find a more permanent home in the bosom of the universe.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,  
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Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

#### [Chapter 4](#)

Kayamat, the End of the World

AKIBAT: A Persian poet says—

“Thou hast hidden thy face under the veil of Thy creation,  
But I know that it is Thou who hast by one stroke set both the worlds in motion.”

TASAWWUF: It is one thing to say that God is the only being, and it is another to have understanding of it. And for the understanding, we must try to see God in all His aspects, especially as has come down in the mystical traditions. These picture God as wishing to know Himself and to love Himself, so he made the creation in which He has been hidden, so to speak. But when the veils are lifted, He is found to be Love, Beloved, and Love itself.

AKIBAT: The world is like a child's hoop; when a blow is given to it, it runs on and on; when the force of the blow is spent it stops and falls down, and this may be seen in a lesser way in all things in the world. When the activity of the world has expired the world will fall down.

TASAWWUF: And where does the world get its activity? What is called “karma” really means nothing but action. But every action has its reaction, not only in the world of mechanics, but in every facet of the universe. So long as there is energy in action—and all action depends on energy—there will be a manifest universe which provides its own power through its own actions.

Practices such as Meditation and Concentration may cause the action to cease. There is a Zen story that some monks seeing a flag and one argued: “The flag is moving,” and another said “The wind is moving,” but a sage told them, “not the flag, not the wind, the mind is moving.” So Buddhist monks practice meditation so the mind will not move.

Sufis have different practices to the same goal, that the mind be not moving about, disturbing itself and the whole universe.

AKIBAT: The course of destruction is like the course of manifestation: it is in cycles. The first action is created by the blow given, and each action afterwards causes a further action.

TASAWWUF: For once action is started, it does not readily stop of itself. Owing to the existence of friction and inertia there is no perpetual motion; that is one phase. But with mental action also, one must stop the mind and this is not easy for the mind, unlike the physical forces, always seeks to start more activities and as fast as they run down, it starts more activities. So not only motion, but commotion also.

AKIBAT: The course of the world's life is like that of the clock. It is wound to go for a certain time. Some clocks go for four days, some go for eight days, some you have to wind every day. When that time for which it was wound has passed the wheels stop.

TASAWWUF: This is a universal phenomenon in mechanics. Now we have what are called "self-winding watches," which every movement of the body or even the heart may cause to continue in motion for an indefinite period. But this is exactly as the mind operates, that once starting out, unless it is tired of that kind of activity, it will go on to start something else. So all through life, the mind is in motion, producing what the Hindus call samskaras.

When disciples examine their minds or hearts, they find all kinds of scars and wave-movements and everything but rest and peace. Therefore every effort is made to remove these lines and scars, to seek the universal peace.

AKIBAT: The law of construction and destruction may be described as having three aspects. Urouj, the first aspect, shows the force of activity; Kemal shows the climax, the limit of its progress; and Zawal brings it back to inactivity, the end of which is the absolute Kemal.

TASAWWUF: These principles have been known from most ancient times. We find them in ancient Egypt where the Godhead was known as Ra when rising, as Atum at the zenith, and as Khapara towards the setting. And in another sense, they are the Trimurti of India, where they are found as in elephants, where the Godhead is pictured as Brahma, the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva or Mahaish, The Assimilator or Destroyer. However we picture them, they are not only universal symbols, but universal processes.

Also we find them in man as Youth, Maturity, and Age, each with its setting, its rhythm, its gradual subsiding.

AKIBAT: Kemal shows its destructive power in both its poles, first at the end of Urouj, the activity in force, when the progress stops; and again at the finish of Zawal, when the activity absolutely ceases.

TASAWWUF: The understanding of these principles involves a major study in tasawwuf; this is an ancient science also of the Egyptians and the word **alchemy** means simply "Egyptian Wisdom." But the world has tended either to reject the existence of this vision or to accept it at best on the symbolical level. This is like collecting keys without knowing whether they open doors or not.

Actually, all the esoteric sciences may be said to deal with God, Man and the Universe, but in the finality these are all one. We can see this in everything, both in the internal psychology and in the outer biology, that these principles operate. Therefore in the inner schools, great attention is paid to the awakening of self by processes, particularly in Murakkabah or Concentration, so that the experience of the Universe can be one's own experience.

AKIBAT: The constructive element is called Kadr, the dominated power. The destructive is the absolute power which dominates. It is called Kaza. All that is born, built, made, or that springs up, must one day or other, singly or collectively, submit to Kaza, the destructive power.

TASAWWUF: These principles are explained in *Pearls from an Ocean Unseen*, and elsewhere. They were of great concern to the early Islamic philosophers. But outward considerations and speculation satisfy the ego without explaining. The Sufi holds that it is God, through man, who works out His intended purpose in Nature. All power is really divine power which seems to be allotted and divided through personalities, and through all creatures. But it is ultimately one power, and it has also many rhythms which account for the time periods of existence of everything from the tiniest particle to the whole universe.

AKIBAT: It amazes us when, owing to an explosion, a factory is accidentally blown up, and thousands of lives are lost; it horrifies us to see a big city destroyed by a flood, and millions of lives sacrificed; but to the Creator it amounts to nothing. It is as if a mathematician were to write a sum, multiply, add, subtract, and divide, up to thousands and millions of figures, and suddenly take a fancy to destroy the whole thing.

TASAWWUF: We can see this even more closely since the invention of the atomic bomb and the use of nuclear energy in explosions. It does take time to make these devices, but it is a very sudden phenomenon when the destruction is accomplished. Or as is said in *Gayan*: It takes Shiva a moment to destroy what it has taken Brahma years to build. This suggests patience on our part in building and self-control in facing calamity. We must not assume that the affairs of the world must be pleasant, and we should assume an attitude near to indifference in regard to all events.

AKIBAT: There is a time when one finger is cut off, and a time when the whole hand is lost. There is a time when one limb perishes, and a time when the whole body is dead. There is a time when one thing in the room is broken, another when everything in the room is smashed, another when the whole house is ruined, another time when the whole city, or the whole country is destroyed. So there is a time when the whole world is destroyed, even the universe; but this comes in a much longer period of time.

TASAWWUF: We see this first in the teaching of Buddha that all things are impermanent, that a thing, by its very nature, must ultimately be removed by the world of phenomena. But teaching does not always impress people to accept it as the way of life, and we all tend to accept social norms and be comfortable with social norms.

World War II demonstrated each stage and step of this and also demonstrated man's ability to stand firm even under the most calamitous conditions. And since that time we find that as man goes beyond the duties which are naturally his, he becomes more subject to the destructive forces which are there. Only their karmic times are not laid out and they may manifest at any time.

There are larger cycles which were presented to the world first by the theosophists based on Indian

cosmologies and then these cosmologies became open to the world. They have also been given by some Muslim writers—explaining laws of rhythm and cycles which are the bases of their teachings).

The Pralaya and Manvantara are huge cycles which are like the breathings of God Himself to make and to destroy the universe. All the Scriptures teach or imply this.

AKIBAT: Why is manifestation, although it is made of eternal life, yet subject to destruction? The answer is that the eternal life is the only life and this seeming life on earth is merely an assumption.

TASAWWUF: Eternity does not belong to name and form. The eternal life is ours, or in another interpretation, we belong to eternity; but it is not the eternity of passing things. All persons, things, forms, institutions, are transitory, impermanent—their very nature makes it so. We should become reconciled to it.

AKIBAT: The Prophet was once asked, What is the soul? He answered in one word, “Amr-e Allah,” an action of God. There is the same difference between God and His manifestation that there is between a man and his action. As the action perishes and man remains, so the manifestation is destroyed and God remains.

TASAWWUF: The same teaching is taught by the Hindus who say one can take the unlimited away from the unlimited and the unlimited will remain. There is nothing that can be added or subtracted from Infinity in mathematics, and there is nothing that can be added or subtracted to or from God in reality. The breather breathes—or thinks, or acts—and there is a manifestation, but the breath, the act, the thought, does not make the manifestation eternal. What is behind the phenomena is what is lasting.

AKIBAT: All impressions and all memory, and all stains of the world disappear from the consciousness, leaving it as pure as it was before.

TASAWWUF: What is called “involution” involves the collection of attributes, names, forms, powers, faculties, and for this the scaffold or ego or **nufs** was erected. The custom of consciousness makes it appear that this ego-mold is the reality, whereas in truth it arises from attachment to Urouj, which is not only the principle of Impetus, but of centripetal activity. Not only does personality arise from this, but joy and sorrow, good and bad, success and failure. Yet all of these are covers and covers over covers and veils over veils. And the more these cover, the less the joy and bliss which is the longing of everybody. Therefore the Sufi is concerned with “unlearning” in this sense, to remove all the adhesions which seem to accumulate around personality.

AKIBAT: If a bottle full of ink is poured into the ocean, the inky substance is absorbed, and the sea is clear and unchanged as before. When a new universe is manifested, it is without the experience of a previous manifestation. When the universe has ceased to be, it starts again, and though this is repeated numberless times, each time it is as fresh as ever.



TASAWWUF: The cyclic law has to be understood from two points of view, relative and absolute. The relative must assume that all things and beings and persons are real; the absolute assumes either that they are not real, or that they are modes, aspects and manifestations of the Universal Being who alone is. Both of these interpretations may be regarded as correct; there is no value in arguing that one is correct and the other is incorrect or imaginary. Only in the end when we come to the center and reality of our being, we realize that One Being alone is.

All spiritual training and discipline therefore is “Toward the One” which is the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty; which is the Only Being in which all else subsists and subsides. We come to accept this as Philosophy, and yet from the Psychological point of view the total magnitude of innumerable entities impresses us. If we can see from both points of view, we are near the Perfection.

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## [Chapter 5](#)

### Haunted Places

AKIBAT: In our daily life the influence of visitors who come to our house is felt not only in their presence but remains even after they have left. In the chair in which they have sat, the room in which they have been, the hall in which they have walked, a finer person can sense it, though not, of course, everybody.

TASAWWUF: The whole theme of this Chapter has been further presented in *Cosmic Language*. There it is given, largely to enable us to see where psychic and psychometric phenomena fit into the universe as a whole, and see what is their deeper significance.

What is called “Siddhanta” is that part of Indian culture dealing with phenomena and special powers that may manifest in a personality. There are offhand two ways of developing this power; one is to concentrate in the psychic sciences rather similarly to what one does in the physical sciences. The other is to discover that as one advances spiritually, the shadows and obstacles which were in his personality disappear, there is more light and as there is more light, one is aware of greater phenomena.

Spiritual students are discouraged from the developing of psychic powers, and this prohibition is found also in the Bible and other sacred literature. Besides, this is a poor way to do it. Jesus Christ has said, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven ... and all else shall be added unto you.” The best

way to have these faculties is when they come from and with Grace.

Then there is the possibility of man having more than one body and even in the Indian teachings there are several ways of looking at it. But with the Sufis it is not necessary to analyze the universe bit by bit. Besides, the spiritual life builds up the human brotherhood, the brotherhood of the parts of personality within oneself and the brotherhood of relation between man and man. With every step of progress there is increasing fineness, awareness, sensitivity. It is more important to develop understanding than to develop the faculties themselves.

But each body has an influence on the other bodies; each part of personality has an influence on other bodies or the planes where these bodies function. This is the material for the book called *Metaphysics* which was originally class material for the advanced mureeds. Now it has been published, but it is hard to comprehend without the assistance of a spiritual teacher.

AKIBAT: Once, on a journey, I had taken a room at Kandy in Ceylon, and during the hours of my meditation in the evening, whilst I was engaged in the sacred practices, I felt very restless and disturbed, and I could not fix my mind on my meditation for a single moment. I became cross with myself, and went to bed, but my uneasiness increased. Then I got up and felt I must look in the cupboards. I did not know why I was doing so. I think perhaps my inner self wanted to guide me to the reason of such an unusual experience.

TASAWWUF: The spiritual teacher is usually sensitive, whether he be of a Jemali (fine) or Jelali (strong) type. As the Kashf develops, he becomes more and more aware. And every practice of devotion also separates the personal atmosphere from the finer aspects of it, so that in prayer or meditation, one is more likely to be sensitive than otherwise.

AKIBAT: I found there, to my surprise, a bunch of black hair, looking as if some woman had collected her combings for a long time.

TASAWWUF: If the mere presence of a person should leave vibrations and emanations, physical remains leave even more. In the study of magic in all parts of the world, great consideration is given to the hair and nail clippings and such things. For from them come emanations. In the psychic sciences, sometimes these emanations are called "ectoplasm" and there is enough evidence to show that ectoplasm may be, in its own sphere, as *real* as our material matter is in this world.

Further studies in magic, even among the most literate people, shows that attention has been paid to such things and their emanations seem to have more power if thought or especially a ceremony has been connected with them. Devotees can, by repeating sacred phrases, protect themselves against any evil forces, but ordinarily one does not look for such things or think too much about them.

AKIBAT: I spent a bad night, and in the morning the first thing I did was to ask the landlady who

had occupied this room before me. She said, "Sir, don't remind me of her. The thought of her makes me feel ill. A woman lived here for some time. She never paid me my rent, called me bad names, fought with the men, and quarreled every single day, driving away all my other tenants. Now my heart is at rest since she has left this house."

I said, "What a shame that you gave me such a room to stay in." She said, "Sir, I gave you that room on purpose, because you seem from your looks to be a godly man, so that I was sure that this room would be purified by your good influence." I had no answer for her but a smile.

TASAWWUF: When the Psychic Research Society was formed in England, some of the scientists investigated and one wrote *Phantasm of the Living*. They recognized the psychic phenomena and could not agree that they came necessarily from the dead. Today we know there is a growing interest in psychic matters which has nothing to do with the investigation of immortality. And ultimately it will be found that many have more than one body and that this universe consists of more than one plane.

Many years have passed since *Akibat* was written, and during that time the study of crimes has been given attention, and men who work in this field find there are all sorts of traces of personal presences which used not to be considered. They are just beginning to call in clairvoyants and seers. No doubt in the future there will be much more of this on a sound basis. But the subject also is discussed at length in *Cosmic Language*.

There is another side, that the breath leaves traces of all kinds and not only in the gaseous emanations which exude from the body, but in other vibrations. Many of these are poisonous. Every thought that we have as we exhale makes a particular mark on the gas that is let out of the body. Each exhaled gas has its own characteristics and as it settles anywhere, it leaves traces of those characteristics on that thing on which it becomes rested; or in the atmosphere where it becomes absorbed.

When one goes into a temple or mosque where there have been holy prayers, often the places are not only restful but healing. All the good emanations which have gone out with the exhalations during prayer and devotion remain there. This is so that even when the holy places are open courtyards, one can feel the vibrations. These reach their highest efficiency around tombs of saints or in centers of great pilgrimages such as Mecca and Benares.

AKIBAT: If the influence of the living is such, how much greater is the influence of the dead in those places where they have lived and been happy, to which they are attached, and from which death has forcibly taken them! The remembrance of their home keeps them in the home in which they lived or in the field in which they worked, and in the clubs in which they enjoyed life, and in the houses of the friends to whom they are drawn.

TASAWWUF: The emanations of the living may become modified by the later thoughts and emanations either in the same place or in other places. But once a person has left this world, he

can no longer alter the vibrations or emanations because he is not effective here. Also the less evolved generally tend to think more of the earth after they have gone and this often strengthens whatever they have left here. Some places and buildings are obsessed and these obsessions also keep a kind of door open between this world and the Barzakh, or intermediate place between this world and the next which is a world mostly of purification and not of constructive effort and progress. So that long after the spirit has gone, even if he has changed, that does not always bring an early change in the obsessed spot.

AKIBAT: If the spirit, during his life, has been interested in good dishes, after his death wherever there is a good dish he will always be there. If all his life he has been fond of whiskey, after his death he will be at the bar where there is whiskey. Spirits are also attracted to their graves and to the crematorium by the love of the body which they had thought was their only self, but which in fact was merely the instrument of experience. In fact there is not one inch of space, whether on land or on the water, free from the influence of spirits.

TASAWWUF: Madam Blavatsky who had certain psychic faculties, warned against trance mediumship and this sort of spiritualism for this very reason. It made it easy for a sensitive to contact the lower vibrations, which were often thought-forms, elementals, and the ignorant cannot distinguish them from real persons, as they are living and have some human characteristics.

In extreme cases, there are those called the “undead” who seem to hover between this world and the next. Sometimes certain kinds of persons who have been drawn to evil, or to magic, hover in this Barzakh and can affect the negatively sensitive people of this world. But the positively sensitive can protect themselves with sacred phrases or sometimes with rituals.

AKIBAT: A person who has been very fond of a certain society, of the society of his friends, his parents, his brothers and sisters, will long to be in that society.

TASAWWUF: There are customs like the Irish Wake based on this, but even they wish to help the spirit get to the right heaven. Sometimes a person is so obsessed, it becomes an infatuation, and in this case it either draws the spirit down, or results in invoked elementals who are still connected with that spirit, manifesting on this lower earth-plane.

AKIBAT: The spirits that are desperately attached to this plane, and especially those among them that have but lately left it, manifest to the view as apparitions, or else by knocking at the door, by rapping on the tables and chairs, by lifting and removing objects, and by speaking. Their voices vibrate in the spheres and become audible to some of us.

TASAWWUF: We are all clairvoyant and clairaudient to some extent. It is the modern world with its attention to thought, science and philosophy, which draws our attention from the heavenly world, from the imagination and keen sense alike which makes us aware. Ignorant people (scholastically considered) who are not so enmeshed with thought and worldly affairs are still aware of these things; as are those who become sensitive from the higher point of view. But there is no value in

heeding them too much, and one's prayers and practices which may be used to protect oneself, also help these spirits in their higher evolution.

AKIBAT: Sometimes one hears singing and shouting, and sometimes dancing on the top floor, or fighting going on among them.

TASAWWUF: There are parts of the world such as the West Indies, which are particularly sensitive. Those lands were once occupied by peoples who were more concerned with the dead than with the living. And all over there are the teachings that the physical world and material life are not too important in eternity.

Modern voodoo has arisen in those regions and it is a combination of magical rites of many peoples who are not concerned too much with ideals. Besides, every kind of music and art may be in a sense, magical, although it is not usually put to such purposes. In the studies for mureeds this is all explained and also in the Tibetan sciences from a closely allied point of view.

AKIBAT: Some spirits appear to the living without any clothes, some with their legs and feet twisted outward. The former is owing to their lust, also to the misery they went through in life; the latter is due to a life passed in the thought of duality, and because they have gone astray in life, not having kept to the thought of unity; their body itself then demonstrates their crookedness.

TASAWWUF: The psychic science which seems to delineate symbols also depicts more than the symbol. If one looks at pictures and especially the art which has developed in this century, one sees the thoughts which are in the minds of the painters. They are giving their thoughts and so a part of their personality. They do not always know they are showing their innermost secrets which are clear to a keen mind. But when they leave the world and are no longer covered by this dense body, they appear in the form of their thoughts, which are no longer restrained by the flesh.

Actually all the sciences and arts which become part of one's accumulations as one progresses, show the reality in every form and behind every form, whether that reality be that of an instant or of an eternity.

To protect ourselves against any evil therefrom, or even so as not to see and hear them, exorcisms may be performed or even making the sign of the cross. Sufis usually repeat Wazifas or repeat the Name of God, or the declaration of His Omniscience and Omnipresence with **La Illaha El Il Allah**

AKIBAT: I had my first experience of the spirits when a boy. One night I awoke in the middle of the night feeling a wish to look out of the window into our courtyard at the beautiful moonlight shining there.

TASAWWUF: Children are more sensitive, and may be more aware. Also those who are more delicate and sensitive by nature are more apt to have such experiences.

Also they occur in certain places, in certain atmospheres, at certain times (as close to midnight), more than in other places, atmospheres and times.

AKIBAT: I went to the window, and looking out I saw some way off a man of saintly appearance, clothed in a long white robe, with long snow-white hair and beard. I saw him as plainly as in full daylight. I was amazed at the sight of him, wondering how it had been possible for him to enter our courtyard, all the doors being locked.

TASAWWUF: The heavy material world, of course, is not a bar to entities of other planes. The vision is posited in the Bible and is ignored in the popular religions. So it has become a matter of concern only to certain groups who overstress its importance to counterbalance the understressing by others. It seems few regard such phenomena as normal, which they are.

AKIBAT: But for his saintly appearance I might have supposed him to be a thief, but the nearer he came the taller he grew. At each step his height increased, until I could no longer see his head, and as he came forward his figure became a mist, until at last he was like a shadow, and in a moment he vanished from my sight. My hair stood on end and I was completely overcome by bewilderment.

TASAWWUF: There are many places in the Orient and especially in India and Pakistan which have sites used in very ancient times for religious and magical ceremonies which have this faculty either of drawing spirits or making them more visible on earth. Also many spirits have the ability to manifest to those whom they wish to see them, or in the places which they love. If one calls the Names of God or any Name, it has the tendency to intensify real manifestations and to dissolve the false or the wicked. At Ajmer, which is a very saintly center, these phenomena often occur; they are considered normal though they bring blessing and are interpreted by the guardians of the holy places. This is true also elsewhere but especially at Ajmer around the tomb of Saint Moin-ed-din Chisti.

AKIBAT: The next morning when I told my family what I had seen, they tried to make nothing of it in order to keep me free from superstitious beliefs; but others told me that they too had often seen this phantom appearing in this quarter.

TASAWWUF: The folklore of England especially seems to be associated with spirits who appear in certain places and often those who took part in some drama. They seem to manifest periodically. In other places also some drama may be connected with these appearances, though not on written record. Or the place may be the center of manifestation of Baraka, the sacred vibrations; or of the other vibrations, not so sacred.

It is superstition when there is no discrimination and the phenomena are sought for their own sake regardless of after effects. For the world it is better not to be concerned. The soul is on earth to work out its manifest purpose on earth and then to progress to and on other planes of existence.

AKIBAT: This taught me that spirits are attached to those places in which they are interested, just

as we are, and they are constantly attracted to the places of their interest. Their form is not solid but ethereal, and can expand.

TASAWWUF: This is true even to the highest spirits, such as Khwaja Khizr who is said to haunt certain places and to appear to people mostly from and in those places. And very often great saints do manifest to those on earth and in this ethereal form, and with the similar type of seemingly gaseous expansion. When they seem to be far off, their forms, even their personalities, are clearer to one.

AKIBAT: This phantom which I saw was that of a Pir who lived in the well in our courtyard. After a few years of these first experiences, I was trying to forget and disbelieve this impression, fearing that it might lead me toward superstitions. But one day, happening to arrive at our country cottage in the middle of the night, I found on our land a huge person at a distance of three yards from me, making a sign that he wished to wrestle with me in the way Indians do, who give a challenge by slapping their thighs and crossing and slapping their arms.

TASAWWUF: No doubt if one is too concerned with spirits, one will not increase in devotion; or one may give too much thought to the spirits. Of course a Pir finds it easier to manifest to those who have not set up obstacles in their way of life through evil actions, and so he was seen by Hazrat Inayat Khan while a boy.

And he was also sensitive, so that other spirits might know this and come. The challenge to wrestle appears in the Bible in the story of Jacob who became Israel. These Biblical stories were not only real, but archetypal representations of events that may occur to those entering the spiritual path.

AKIBAT: I did not for one moment take him to be a man; I at once thought that he was a spirit. At first I was terrified, comparing my size and strength with this gigantic spirit, but I had heard that the spirits swallow the fearful.

TASAWWUF: That is why devotees repeat **Allaho Akbar**. One can read of such events in *The Arabian Nights*, covering man's contact with Jinns. The worst of the Jinns is known as **Afrit** which is the same as **Preta** in Sanskrit, which are the obsessive spirits and which also in a sense are the most damned.

AKIBAT: So although I did not know the art of wrestling, I determined to fight with him, and I advanced, quite prepared to give him a blow. At each step that I took forward he drew back, which naturally gave me courage to close in upon him. He retreated until he was against the wall. I was glad that now I had got him, and approaching I struck him with a strong blow, which instead of hurting the spirit, knocked my hand against the wall, and the spirit disappeared.

TASAWWUF: Courage before spirits gives one strength even if it is one's own courage and strength. Elementals prey on our fears and fear is the worst thing to have in dealing with psychic entities. All the evils that we hear of, all the harm comes because fear is dominant and love and

faith are absent. One does not use gentleness in dealing with spirits. The sacred phrase **Allaho Akbar** is a great weapon, but even self-assurance and self-control help. And if one has the mastery of breath, one controls the immediate atmosphere and spirits, unless very friendly, cannot operate in such atmospheres.

AKIBAT: The reason why the spirit appears and yet has no solid form is that it exists in a vaporous state, and the image seen in this vaporous form is nothing but the impression of his former body when on earth.

TASAWWUF: Sometimes one gets as far as ectoplasm which is an exudation that passes from one place to another and may even be measurable in our physical terms. But its importance is easily exaggerated. Indeed, every impression on or from the mind is much more important than exudations or what seems to be seen. Spirit forms use some of the finer material, atoms and vibrations which belong to the air or space. It is of no value to spiritual students to be concerned with ectoplasm any more than to be concerned with any of the vital forces attached to the physical flesh.

AKIBAT: Among very many different experiences I cannot forget one which made a great impression upon my mind. I had purposely rented a haunted house in James" Street, Sekunderabad, although my friends advised me not to, and in order to experience any manifestations there I slept there alone without even a servant. After a few days I began to find that whenever I played upon the vina at night, sitting on my bed, the bed would gradually begin to move as if levitating, and to rock to and fro. It would seem to rise for an instant some way into the air, but the movement was so smooth that there was no shock. I was playing with my eyes closed, and I thought that perhaps this was the effect of imagination under the spell of music. This went on for some time. Then I happened to send my vina to be repaired, and one night to my great horror I heard a noise as if all the windows of my house were being smashed. I got up and looked everywhere. The window-panes were unbroken, and there was no reason to suppose that there might be anyone in the house who had caused the noise. For three days this went on and I could not sleep. I had no peace at night until my vina came back. The spirits seemed to be so much interested in my music that they rejoiced in it and showed their appreciation by lifting me up; when the food of their soul was not given they rebelled. You might ask by what power the bed was lifted. The answer is that the finer forces are much more powerful than the external forces. There is nothing that they cannot lift up or carry.

TASAWWUF: This subject has been introduced in *In an Eastern Rose Garden*. But there are also higher aspects and these higher aspects become clearer when there is the opening of the inner faculties along with kashf which brings one into conscious recognition of higher planes. From the higher planes one can introduce powers which seem almost infinite compared with those of this plane. This also comes with all spiritual practices, be they sacred phrases or breathings or even meditative and concentration practices; whatever they be, when they are performed they add very, very much to the personality.



AKIBAT: There are some who master the spirits so that the spirits bring them whatever they desire from anywhere, jewels, money, fruits, food. The spirits can even carry a person from one place to another. But those who work evil by the help of a spirit, train that spirit in evil and one day the spirit throws the bomb of evil back at them.

TASAWWUF: For everything accumulated a price must be paid. This is so whether we obtain or attain material things or super-material things. It is not only the evil for which there is retribution but there is good which is not in accord with the Divine Guidance. The pride of man, presuming that he can in some way be good and that he in some way does good, does not deter a bill being sent to him for every thought, speech and action which is not in accord with the Guidance.

Believers and unbelievers alike must compensate the universe for whatsoever they have obtained from the universe by, in, and from their own egos. So for the most part Sufis make no effort to deal with the subtle entities, even with the good among them. The goodness of God is so much greater, the power of Allah is so much more magnificent. We do observe phenomena like the efforts of Father Divine and these efforts, however miraculous they may seem, have to be reckoned with in the Book of Life. We came into this world empty and we either leave empty or pay for everything and anything. At one time Father Divine looked like a miraculous person; at another time he dropped out of sight realizing that as an individual he was indebted to the universe. This is true of everybody.

AKIBAT: Sometimes spirits bring news for him who has mastered them. From whatever distance they can bring the news in a moment of time.

TASAWWUF: Sometimes it is difficult to determine the nature of seership. One person by Kashf, another by developing the holy breath, another by some other means, may be able to perceive from a distance and immediately. And still another person will have this spirit-guidance and it may be difficult to distinguish by what method the guidance has come, whether through a spirit or from the sphere itself. In any case it is there and the uninitiated can not distinguish.

AKIBAT: Sometimes the spirits go and cause trouble to someone if they are so directed by a spiritualist master. I have myself seen a case where the spirits would set fire to a man's house. Sometimes his clothes would catch fire, sometimes his papers burned, sometimes the food disappeared from the dish in which it had been put and dirt was found in the dish instead.

TASAWWUF: During the Second World War, Hitler thought it was all right to summon spirits and he called in magicians and spiritualists and others. And perhaps to some extent they did utilize these spirits, but as great as the subtle beings have power over aspects of this world, the real spiritual forces of the universe have still many times more power over the subtle forces. If this were not so prayer would be useless, devotional ceremonies would be useless and there would be many gods operating and the One God would neither clearly be perceived nor would humanity be able to summon Him.

No doubt in the history of the world some time was consumed before the generality became aware of the One Supreme Universal God, but even then many were able to distinguish between powers of light often called Gods and powers of darkness. In the Kali Yuga, conscious recognition of all subtle entities became less and less. And sometimes people who went into trances or shadows, contacting entities and forces of the unseen, concluded that they were in touch with higher and spiritual forces. But they had no general characteristics of distinguishing good from evil, high from low. The result has been that psychic science is at a low ebb in many parts of the world, and is considered a fantasy in others.

AKIBAT: In twelve years" traveling throughout India, during which I concerned myself with psychical research, I have met with great and extremely expert spiritualists, who were able to receive news in a moment from any part of the world, and could even foretell future events by the help of a seer spirit.

TASAWWUF: This is true even now, though not many people have investigated. Generally the spiritually minded and the metaphysical people look for saints and holy men; generally other travelers may look for exciting political and social events and so pay no attention. Even the psychical research societies of the west have ignored the vast possibilities here. And the figure of Madame Blavatsky has caused far more argumentation than careful investigations.

One of the most renowned places of history is found in the life of the Tibetan saint, Milarepa. His teacher determined to end once and for all, all interests and tendencies in the magical direction. Marpa, the teacher, knew that Milarepa would have to pay back to the universe for everything he had taken from the universe regardless of moral or metaphysical laws. He went to a great extent to purge the disciple and however cruel he may seem to have been in these disciplines, in the end Milarepa attained spiritual perfection and is known as one of the greatest saints of all times.

AKIBAT: Mohammed Chehl, a simple, unassuming man of ordinary appearance, our greatest spiritualist in India, showed the most wonderful phenomena. He could disconnect railway carriages from a train, leaving as many as he chose with the engine. Sometimes he disconnected all the carriages when the train was starting, leaving the engine to start alone. He never cared to travel in any class but the third. He used often for fun to ask the people sitting in the same railway carriage to show him their tickets, and then he would take the tickets, tear them up, and throw them out of the window in their presence. Everybody was angry and wanted to fight with him. He said to them, "Who has taken your tickets? You have them with "you." He said to one, "Look in your turban," to another, "Look again in your pocket," to another, "See in your shoe," to another, "Find it in your sleeve." They were all amused and thought him a wonderful conjurer. He said to them, "You may think that I hid your tickets and then put them in your pockets by sleight-of-hand, but what do you think of this?" And he put his hand out of the window and asked for a few hundred tickets for Delhi, and a few hundred for Ajmer, and a few hundred for Agra, and he asked them what other stations they wanted. When the train reached the next station there was great excitement. The station-master had just received a telegram saying that all the tickets for those stations had been stolen in a second and nobody knew where they had gone.

Mohammed Chehl never produced such phenomena unless he wanted to amuse himself. He never cared for notoriety or money. Nothing would induce him to make a show or a trade of his power. If he had cared to show his great power in the Western world, he could have filled his house with bags of gold.

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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 6](#)

### Spiritualism

AKIBAT: The believers in spirit phenomena often lose their balance and go to such lengths that the pursuit of spiritualism becomes a craze with them, for it is always interesting to tell and to listen to ghost stories. The teller has a tendency to exaggerate the story, to make it more interesting and arouse the astonishment of the hearer, and a simple listener has a tendency sometimes to take a rod for a snake.

TASAWWUF: There is the story of “One-Eye, Two-Eyes, Three-Eyes” in the fairy tales of Europe in which Two-Eyes is made into the heroine and is regarded as normal and sane. This is a protest at the same time against the unusual, or against those who cannot be controlled by the material powers. No doubt One-Eye symbolizes those who are able to go into trance and by going into trance find themselves in another world, able to communicate with beings and forces unseen to the material-minded. And no doubt Three-Eyes represents the superconscious who have open access to higher planes. But both accepted phenomena and entities not of this world, not subject to the powers of this world and so were all classed together as “witches” and considered evil. But essentially a “witch” means a wise person or even a seeress.

In his last days Aldous Huxley researched into this situation and felt that many remarkable people were persecuted and martyred and removed from the world. And when in the nineteenth century there was revival of spiritualism, anything odd became a matter of wonder. It did not matter what the nature of the oddity was; those who were looking for weird phenomena were satisfied and there being no wise guidance, once the doors were open much publicity was given to oddities, less to wisdom.

In the middle of the twentieth century those known as “witches” came out of hiding and very often they possessed faculties not common to the average person or what has been molded into being “average persons.”

AKIBAT: There is a well-known case which happened in India where ghosts were being discussed among friends. One among them said, "I don't believe in such things. I am willing to go and sit half the night in the graveyard if you like." His friends said that they would not believe him unless he did so. He went the same night to sit in the graveyard. Half the night he passed trying to avoid all the threats that his imagination produced before him during that dark night in the graveyard. When the time was over, as he started to return to his friends, his long robe caught in some thorn bushes growing there. He thought surely the spirit had surely caught him. He fell down and was choked with fear, and in the morning he was found dead.

TASAWWUF: The fear itself would be greater force than the ghosts. But in graveyards there are emanations even from the decaying physical body and its double, sometimes called the "etheric body." These have limited abilities to act as condensers for vital and subtle forces, and there is no doubt one can feel them. But there are some people—and this often happens to doubters—who because of their very nature free such places for a time from spiritual-obsessing entities and forms.

AKIBAT: Often a landlord's enemies spread rumors that the house is haunted, so that he may not be able to get a tenant.

TASAWWUF: And it can even happen that these very rumors establish thought-patterns and these patterns in turn draw down to earth entities and forces which otherwise would not have appeared. Or because they cause some fear and fear itself acts as a magnet. For there are voices and sounds and vital forces everywhere, but mostly we are unaware of them. If we were concerned with everything that is living throughout the sphere, we should not be able to pursue our purpose in life properly.

AKIBAT: Sometimes the pretended spiritualists, who have made this their life's occupation, make it as interesting a play as they can, by arranging some knocks from here and there, by lifting the chairs and table with an arrangement of wires, by producing effects of light and shade with phosphorus; they take advantage of the simple-minded.

TASAWWUF: What have been called psychic phenomena in the West have been simplified and so has limited possibilities to certain kinds of "real" manifestations and still more to arrangements and charlatantry. Besides, as the investigators do not see beyond the immediacy, they can often easily be fooled. But there are real psychic phenomena which cannot be imitated and no number of contraptions can stop, entities from coming to and even obsessing negative persons. There is nothing elevating in this.

When Sufism was first introduced into the Western world it attracted many persons who had been interested in spirit phenomena and that was the reason for the instructions known as *Akibat* which were given in the hope they would clarify minds. But they did not; the lessons were continued in *The Phenomenon of the Soul*, and *The Soul, Whence and Whither*, and even those with many questions and answers did not satisfy some even after they had become mureeds, and the situation was never fully clarified.

AKIBAT: Some pretend to carry messages from the spirit world or to it, and deceive many earnest enquirers into these matters. Many carry out their questionable purposes by holding spirit meetings. All this drives material people, unbelievers in the spirit, still further away from the knowledge of the finer existence, while the so-called spiritualists are often so much engrossed in their hobby that they never realize their own spirit.

TASAWWUF: For man is much more than body and has been created for a purpose. The higher knowledge is nothing but knowledge of one's own self. When one delves into such matters, he is not only limiting his activities by confinement, he inhibits his own possibilities of looking into the grandeur which is every person's, made in the Divine Image.

There will no doubt arise a real psychic science wherein sincere people will investigate, perhaps even on scientific lines, but not necessarily on the narrow, controlled methods labeled "scientific." Even a plant which is under investigation has some freedom. Still more freedom is needed for any person peering into either the lower or higher realms of personality.

Trance mediums and many enthusiasts limit the possibility of psychic phenomena both to persons acting as mediums, and to the spirits themselves, by confining them within narrow limits.

AKIBAT: In ordinary life we experience two planes, the physical plane in which we experience through the eyes, the ears, and all the organs of the body; and the mental plane, the plane of thought and feeling. When we are asleep and all our organs are resting, we see ourselves just as we appear when awake in various surroundings. This shows us that we have another being besides this physical being and other eyes besides these eyes.

TASAWWUF: Even now the scientists have not always measured the limits to which human senses may function. All eyes are not the same eyes and all ears are not the same ears. The senses of taste and touch and smell are not the same anywhere. So with no exact idea of the limits or even of the functions of the material faculties, how can we be sure of the totality of man's faculties?

Interest is now being aroused in the psychic sciences and there is no question that there are faculties and functions which material science alone cannot explain. But instead of having the universal, rigorous approach of the laboratory, many investigators limit their approaches; they are insensitive to human feelings and often cannot imagine that they are placing boundaries where none exist in fact.

For a long time any report that there were unidentified space objects or unusual entities, even like people, in the great Space, were pooh-pooed. The skeptics that control the popular newspapers and magazines always object in the name of science. They were not scientists themselves but always declared that "science" had not found such things. But when the air command of the military and the scientists themselves stated that not only were they not sure there were no such space ships and strange people, but there was evidence that such things might be, the skeptics

began to withdraw and to blame their false reports on others.

And even if we find strange space vehicles and beings, after a while it may be considered natural, just as radioactive transformations have been found to be natural. It was not so long ago that the press and skeptics insisted that there could be no transmutation of metals. And when the scientists found out that there could be, the press and skeptics always blamed others. Such is the human nature. And in time we may be finding that the civilization has changed and that new vistas, new faculties, appear and very often these are in accord with the predictions of the seers of the past, or of the present.

AKIBAT: Whilst we are dreaming, the dream is real to us. When we awaken, we think, "I was there and now I am here. If what I saw in the dream had been real, it should all still be here now that I am awake; but it is all gone."

TASAWWUF: The Bible posits dreams and visions. In some parts of the world people regard the dream as more real than the waking state. From the mystical point of view, this objective world exists, but it is not the only existence nor even perhaps the most important of the worlds. Holy Qur'an calls Allah "Rab Alamin" which means that He is Master of all manifestation whatsoever. We can call Him "Lord of all the worlds," which also means all the potentialities of thought as well as of all potentialities of form.

Then there are seers who can see things at a distance and we cannot explain them by traditional knowledge. But someday this may become more common knowledge when man admits his limitations and becomes more curious, more tolerant. Many of the peoples of what are called the emerging nations have faculties quite different from those of Europeans, or even of the Chinese and Indians which seem to be the predominant powers. This proves nothing. The Botanists consider all plants and know no weeds; the Chemist and Mineralogist examine all the substances before them without becoming subjective.

AKIBAT: Whilst we are dreaming, if some one comes and tells us that it is a dream, that it is not real, we do not believe him. Or if someone tells us it is a dream, we say, "No, it is quite real, I see the things about me."

TASAWWUF: For the dream at the dream stage of cosmic consciousness seems most real and sometimes in it one can think of nothing else. Calling appearances realities does not make them such.

AKIBAT: There is an expression we use of what is past, saying, "It is all a dream now."

TASAWWUF: It is easy to state that because something has been a dream it is nothing. But every impression is real. Many impressions are not seen yet they go into the storehouse of memories. And sometimes the impressions we retain or invoke at night draws on these storehouses and the forms that appear are forms that we have experienced. Even if the experience itself is new, the

forms are drawn from the past. And even if the dream signifies something to be fulfilled, usually the forms are also drawn from the memory.

Actually we can brush aside all impression, all memories, be they received in the dream or waking state. All belong to the maze of samskaras, the impressions which indent the mind, make it complex and attach us to the wheel of life-and-death.

AKIBAT: When a person after death still longs for the earthly joys, he is in a very bad state, because he has not the physical body with which to experience them. He is like a cricketer or a football player who has lost his arms; he longs to play, but he has no arms; or a singer whose throat has been operated on; he will long to sing, but he cannot, because his voice has gone.

TASAWWUF: Which does not mean that the next world is so different, and yet it is different. It does not have the limitations as does the earth-plane. It does no good to explain in detail or to give any emphasis or importance to the next life. We are sent into this world to progress as much as possible here. We can learn to be the masters of the universe even while still being encased in the flesh. When we are released from the flesh will be the time to give consideration to the world in which we then find ourselves. We are here because we are here, also to find the purpose for our being here and to seek happiness and fulfillment even while here.

AKIBAT: When the physical plane is taken from a person, then the dream remains as reality, because there is no contrast to prove it otherwise, and this state of existence is called **Mithal**.

TASAWWUF: “Mithal” is sometimes translated as purgatory. It is not necessarily heaven or hell. Buddha has taught that all conditions are mind-made, only here we have to work through the denseness of earth. In the afterlife we shall not have to work through that denseness and whatever we think or desire may be coming to us. But it will not always bring delight; we shall have to be aware of the folly of thoughts. Therefore thought-training is exceedingly valuable whether in this life or in the life to come.

AKIBAT: He cannot experience upon the earth now because he has lost the physical means. All the impressions that he has gathered upon earth are his world. It is the nature of the mind to gather as many impressions as it can. From this store the pictures that he sees are formed. We do not dream of what we do not know, of what we have not seen. The butcher sees the meat all day, and at night he does not dream of the dairy but of meat.

TASAWWUF: This is explained in *The Unity of Religious Ideals* in the story of Lot, that Lot’s wife went a little way with Lot and his daughters and then turned around. This represents the mind and the mind-world. It is both a heaven and a hell. Whatever we dream or surmise will then seem to come into objective reality. But if we have disciplined the ego—and there are many ways in which to discipline the ego—then we go on to direct reward or punishment.

One must not suppose phantoms to be unreal. Anything that makes an impression on the mind is

in a certain sense real. Creation is an activity of mind, whether divine or human mind. The weak, imaginative person creates only beings that exist in his own particular atmosphere that can be fed by his thoughts, his emotions, his fears. For even the impressions that he entertains do not necessarily affect others, the thoughts that he may have are not always shared by others. So such words as hallucinations, fantasies, goblins, ghosts," need not necessarily be regarded as entirely unreal, untrue. But their existence may depend upon the magnetism they draw from human beings. In the case of obsessions there is a deliberate effort to draw on human magnetism and subsist thereon.

AKIBAT: Sometimes, not only in the West but also in the East, those apparitions of the departed that come to communicate, to warn, to speak with someone dear to them, are called spirits. The word is really inappropriate. The spirit is the essence, the soul that dwells beyond. But since the word is so generally used, let us accept it. These so-called spirits are not the soul alone, but the soul together with the mind; that is, all that remains of the external self after the death of the body.

It sometimes happens that ghosts wish so much to experience the life of this world, that to a certain extent they make themselves substantial. They cannot make themselves as concrete as we are; otherwise they could live here. But to a certain extent they do, by activating the elements around, either the ether or the air.

When people see a ghost it is part illusion and in part they may really see it. When the inner eye sees, these outer eyes think that they see. But if they try to touch the ghost, there is nothing there. Thus the actual self of the spirit might show itself in the mist, but where, one may ask, does it get the clothes in which it appears, or anything that it may hold in his hand? The answer is that it is the impression of itself that the spirit holds which mirrors the soul of the spectator, so that by his concrete illusion he feels its presence as positively as if he saw it with his own eyes.

TASAWWUF: In the extreme case certain philosophical schools say that this material world is unreal, that it is nothing but a mass of impressions held together by the magnetism, by the power. So it has also been said, "We created thee out of our light and from thy light we created the heavens and earth." The Hebrew word "Adam" means the first man and the first emanation from God on earth, and it also stands for mankind and that which is nourished by the highest form of blood. But Hebrew "Adamah" which is the feminine of **Adam**, means the earth, the creation, the ground.

This shows that there is a sort of polar opposite magnetism between the humanity and the groundwork wherein he functions. Man cannot only reshape the earth but its very existence depends to some degree on the *reality* with which he infuses it. As it is taught concerning **Kayamat**, the end of the world, that is if all thought, all consideration, all impression, all magnetism were withdrawn, the physical world itself would be withdrawn into the Eternity.

To a much less degree but on the same principles, there is the more or less gaseous world of ghosts, phantoms, hallucinations and apparitions. They may be regarded as either real or unreal,



both real and unreal, neither real nor unreal.

AKIBAT: The dead feel the thought, the good wish of the living; Prayer and religious rites focus the mind of the living on that of the dead, so that the dead may be helped by the living, or the living may be blessed by a saintly spirit.

TASAWWUF: In several parts of the world there are customs, and those who do not believe in them call them “superstitions,” by which elaborate rites are held, great consideration is given to the departed, and there are some in which joy predominates and in others cases sorrow. But when the rites are joyous and joyful, this helps the departed spirits very much. At the same time, too much consideration does not help the dead; right feeling is the best attitude.

Now as to the holy spirits, those who have accumulated blessings and could bless people while on earth. They can do this also after they leave the world. Tombs especially are avenues for these blessings but also some personal possessions, relics and even amulets which have been blessed by them, give magnetism, give strength, give infusions of life and also moral vigor to devotees on earth.

Also a study of the movements in prayers, and especially those expressive of emptiness, enables one to be filled, even filled with what is called “holy spirits,” which is reality.

AKIBAT: The custom of offering food, perfume, or incense, to the dead exists among the Hindus and Moslems. If someone comes to see us and we set food before him, or whatever may please him, it is appreciated. It is so with the dead also.

TASAWWUF: This also exists in many places and on the isle of Bali where there are beautiful rites; many pictures have been taken. But mostly the tourists only see it as a show, or the artistic expression of a people. It is so, but it is much more, for those people believe the next world is more real than this one; that what happens in heaven is of greater value than what occurs on earth, that there are many heavens and this world is only the underpinning or shadow of these many heavens. So there is a continuum of life and this is expressed by more than vague belief.

Then there is hospitality, and once it was believed that all strangers should be considered as emissaries of God, or as part of universal mankind. And even now we see much hospitality in many parts of the world.

AKIBAT: They enjoy by our eating, by our smelling the perfume, because, although they do not enjoy the actual thing that we put on the table, yet the impression of our mind, the joy it gives, mirrors itself upon their soul.

TASAWWUF: This is also a teaching of the Indian Upanishads, that many beings of higher worlds can even subsist on perfumes and odors, that these emanations send overtones, and it is not only the overtones of the physical vibrations, but also of our thoughts, feelings, sentiments, all of these

penetrate into the unseen parts of the universe. For our joy or even satisfaction is part of our ongoing existence and the more spiritual—that is, the more the activity is concerned with what belongs to eternity—the more value it has.

Some Sufis even have places at table for their Pirs who have departed and in many rituals food is placed before the gods. It may be eaten symbolically there, but it is eaten afterwards, sometimes by priests, sometimes by the poor.

AKIBAT: The dead person becomes more interested in the things that speak to the mind than in the material satisfactions. Therefore, when the food and drink and perfume are offered, the sacred names, the suras of the Qur'an, are read before them so that their intelligence may be satisfied also.

TASAWWUF: Just as the human person seems to occupy three bodies, so he gives off emanations which are subtle and angelic, and these emanations touch the spheres to which they belong. A blessing is something which goes beyond appearance and the Name of God touches every portion of the universe. When a devotee repeats the Name of God, he may suppose it is an act of discipline or duty or of surrender, but when a devotee repeats the Name, it is also the Divinity which is repeating the Name through him. And God infuses His universe most by the feelings and words of everybody and the more feeling they put into these words and thoughts, the more the whole universe benefits, both the living and the dead.

While Suras are repeated by Muslims, other people have other sacred texts which they repeat or chant. The effect is the same. The more the noble sounds penetrate the sphere, the more the universal benefit.

AKIBAT: In order to know of the existence of the spirit we must ourselves live in the spirit, and above matter.

TASAWWUF: Jesus taught to lay up treasure in heaven and he even told us what the nature of these treasures is. But the materially-minded may think of heaven as a place where he can store comforts, luxuries, have servants and no worries. And as these are thought-impressions, they have no more power than the one who thinks them.

But man is more than deeds or thought; he has feelings, aspirations, love, magnanimity. And when he acts accordingly, it is not only his material body which acts, not only his subtle body, but his angelic person also. And the more he acts in accord with his angelic nature, the more he is living the life of the true spirit and the more the spirits benefit.

It is also true that through prayer, devotion, self-discipline and sometimes grace, especially if one has a pure nature or is purified, the barriers of communication, usually closed because of egocentric heaviness, are open, then both man on earth and those beyond benefit by communion.

AKIBAT: If a person loses someone whom he loved very much and in whom he was quite absorbed, and he goes about lost in the thought of that person, he will become dead to the world about him, and then wherever he goes, in the crowds, in the jungle, he feels the presence of that person, because his self is no more before his view.

TASAWWUF: Originally the **Sati**, the immolation of widows, came from that and when a man died, his wife was often condemned; or she was convinced that she had no more life on earth. But in the Sufi stories, love is no more on one side than the other, with Farhad and Shirin, with Leili and Majnun, the man and the woman are equal in the love, and wife is not compelled to die, while the widowed man may live on and be married.

There is no question that the pure lover, whether it be in marriage or in the spiritual life or otherwise, will feel such a bond with the beloved that there is nothing in heaven or earth to equal that bond, that bond for him or her becomes the reality and nothing else matters so much.

In the life of mureeds there are stages in fana, or self-eradication. But as the teacher is so much more wise, more developed, it is not necessary for the disciple to depart. In this case love itself is the life and the communication.

AKIBAT: Our connection with the beings on earth is much stronger, because we are conscious of our earthly life. We think of our friends whom we see, and sympathize with them; but we think much less of those who have passed on and what their condition may be now.

TASAWWUF: There are two aspects of this. One is that the growing materialism draws man away from attention to an ongoing life with some indifference to his future after the death of the body. The other is that as man grows in evolution and in wisdom, he will probably pay more attention to the moment than to his past or future.

AKIBAT: Those who are living on other planes also think much less of us. There may be a connection between a mother and child, or between a lover and his beloved, but ordinarily there is no contact between the living and dead.

TASAWWUF: There are some people who can perceive or say they perceive into the next world. But they do not pay too much attention to this phenomenon any more than busy people pay attention to the passing clouds. They say that those who have gone are busy on the plane where they live and we also should be busy on the plane where we are functioning.

AKIBAT: In regard the spirit communion, which is a subtle subject, I will say that it is better to have more connection with the beings living upon earth than to be obsessed with the desire to meet with the people on the other side of life. It is here that we are meant to evolve, and by being absorbed in those who have passed on we are taken away from the life we are meant to have; and we live on earth as if we were dead. People in pursuit of the spirits have a dead expression on their face.

TASAWWUF: That is why the spiritualist churches and organizations do not draw the vital people. Even those who are engaged in psychic research from a serious view do not pay much attention to them. They see only the underside, the shadow side to the life of the next world; they seldom really come into connection with the dead, but they waste their own magnetism, they play lightly with their own emanations and are often offering themselves to the dead or to spirits instead of God; and often they actually get in touch with beings who function on other planes, those who are not so evolved and who take every advantage of this strange human concern.

There are natural psychics and there are people who develop some psychic or clairvoyant faculties. But these and other faculties may even function better on the physical plane. The clairvoyant who can overcome the limitations of time and space within the physical framework is much more fortunate than those who will not face this reality with themselves.

AKIBAT: To have a devotion for the immortal and holy beings who have passed away is allowable because they are more alive than the living and more than the dead.

TASAWWUF: In many parts of the world, multitudes go to the tombs of saints and also to places where holy beings have lived. There is always vitality in those places. Often one feels the blessings coming from those holy men, even those who have been gone for centuries. And this is particularly true of Mecca, and also the places in Medina where the Prophet Mohammed lived. One who goes to such places can feel this and benefits.

AKIBAT: There are spirits whom we attract by our love for them, by our wish for their presence. We are surrounded in life by our friends, by those whom we like, whom by our liking we attract to us. And we attract the spirits also by our love. These are usually of a higher sort, these whom we call upon for help, for guidance, the murshids and the prophets.

TASAWWUF: Self-surrender means nothing else, that we give up our hold on our egos and generally it is through love. By love we are in close harmony with the beloved, and the more spiritual the beloved, the more beneficial the connection. The Bayat of the Mureed is not for the moment, it is for the eternity, for so long as the mureed needs it, it is his journey toward God.

In the life of mystics and also in devotees there is comfort and even great benefit by visiting shrines, and also sometimes in the manifestation of the saints and teachers either in dreams or in waking vision. All of these have lasting value.

AKIBAT: Sometimes there are visions of the murshids, the higher beings; these come to the initiate. They come to guide and to help in all difficulties. Someone who is quite absorbed in the thought of a prophet or murshid may be so lost in him, that if he calls upon him in any difficulty, the one upon whom he calls will always come and help him.

TASAWWUF: There are many practices in ryazat, the esoteric disciplines, which help disciple and teacher to become and remain attuned one to another. The disciple is often taught to feel the

presence of the master, to imitate his walk, his breath, his manner, to feel his personality, to feel his atmosphere, and very often the teacher, without the pupil even knowing it, keeps up this attunement because the spiritual unfoldment of either is not separate from the other. Like the Bodhisattva in the Buddhist religion, salvation is considered universally and not particularly.

And whenever the mureed is in trouble, he should feel the presence of his teacher and invoke it. This is true regardless of the space separation and once the rapport is established, no event like death of the body can alter it much.

Sometimes it is wise to go to sleep with the vision of the teacher, and especially when one is troubled in any way. If nothing else, this effort will bring calmness and relaxation and so is beneficial. But there are many ways by which one may benefit from a connection with one's spiritual teacher or with the chain of teachers or the whole chain of Sufis, and Prophets.

AKIBAT: To have devotion for a murshid or a prophet who has passed on is better than to ask for his help in whatever difficulty we may be, for God Almighty is closest to us and sufficient to help us in all our difficulties. No mediation of anyone, living or spirit, is necessary.

TASAWWUF: While it may be well to have a concentration on a murshid either when going to sleep or at some fixed time, it is more important to practice the Presence of the Divine Being at all times. Sometimes one has the special practices with the Murshid, but even Jesus Christ warned that people should recognize that only God is all virtue, all benefits, all fine qualities, all blessing. The saint even is but a channel for the blessing which comes from God Himself. And devotion is a better protection than invocation.

AKIBAT: Of course, as in life we depend upon each other's help, so also on the higher plane if the help of some holy spirit is granted to us we may accept it, but only if God's being is realized in all; from whatever source the help comes it is from God.

TASAWWUF: This seems to take on two aspects, the aspect of person and the aspect of being. In the aspect of person, the Divine Light is caught in the personality which has the capacity for it, who acts as a condenser or transformer for the Holy Spirit, so to speak, and makes it possible for this Light and Bliss to be received by people.

Yet it is also true that this same Light is in the sphere itself; it is not different from the sphere; it is the basis of the breathing which in its higher aspect is the Holy Spirit. Only we do not realize we have this Grace always until our attention is called to it. Sometimes this comes in the experiences called Initiation, and it is recognized. But in other forms it often comes and is not recognized.

AKIBAT: I have had many experiences of the vision of my Murshid, one of which is the following.

Once we were making a three days' journey through the jungle, in a place where there was great danger from robbers, and every night two or three travelers were killed. Ours was the smallest

caravan. Generally the caravans were of twenty wagons, but it happened that ours was of three wagons only. I had with me very precious gems given to me by the Nizam of Hyderabad, and instead of arms I had musical instruments with me. All the night I saw the form of my murshid, at first faintly, afterwards distinctly, walking with the wagon. The two other wagons were attacked and robbed, and a few worthless bundles were taken; but my wagon was safe. This is not the only instance I have had in my life; I have had a thousand experiences of the sort.

TASAWWUF: The bond between teacher and pupil is not affected by the time-space in which either operate. The bond of Bayat is not an earthly bond. The teacher is part of the stream of masters, and adepts from all time, for all time and beyond all time. Many who have not had these experiences are envious and they reject them when they occur to others. But on the spiritual path this may be a normal condition.

AKIBAT: Animals can see the spirits better than we, because their activity is less than ours. We, owing to the worries and anxieties of life and the comforts and temptations of the earth, live more on the surface, although our intelligence is brighter than that of the animals.

TASAWWUF: Indian philosophers have given particular attention to this subject. They claim that every activity, every thought, makes a mark on the mind and these marks are binding and they increase our complexities and perplexities. The practices of the Presence of God and the performance of various disciplines in concentration both remove these excrescences and purify the mind according to Safa. But the intellectual consideration itself is another addition to complexity and perplexity and without endeavor and discipline, man remains in the confusion.

AKIBAT: Animals after their death also appear as spirits, but for a shorter period and fewer in number than human beings, for they are not so absorbed in the earthly life as man is in his person and possessions.

I once had an experience with a dog. Returning from the theater in the middle of the night with a few friends, I saw a dog following us. He showed a special interest in us. One of us, thinking it to be a street dog, struck it with his stick. The instant that the stick hit it, the dog disappeared, and at the same moment the stick broke in pieces. This happened in the presence of many people. We then found that a dog, a pet of our family, very fond of us, had died six months before, and it was the spirit of that dog, still attached to us, that was following. This dog was an exceptional one, and a remarkable thing about it was that every Thursday, regularly, it would fast.

TASAWWUF: The impression that man carries persists after the death, for they have made ridges in the mind and man has identified himself with these ridges. The basic teachings of Buddhism have been to make man realize he is not identical with his samskaras, the accumulation of impressions, that he can rise beyond them and be free. Animals, not so impressed, therefore are more easily freed, but their liberation is not spiritual, they remain as animals until released therefrom. Man also can be released by freeing himself from bondage. This also was the first Commandment of Moses as it appears in the Jewish Bible (not identical with the First

Commandment of the Christians, which is borrowed from the Jewish Second Commandment.)

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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 7](#) Obsession

AKIBAT: We often find in our daily life that we do things that we do not wish to do, things against our will and contrary to our ideals. Sometimes we recognize that such or such a friend has induced us to do an action which otherwise we should not have done, and we ascribe to him the credit or discredit of its results. It may be because our love for him is so great that we take his word to heart, whether we agree with it or not, or we may be so under the power of another person that we cannot but act as he wishes.

TASAWWUF: The worst aspect of this has appeared in a book called *Hidden Persuaders*. If we have not disciplined ourselves we have no bulwark against this persuasion. It is a well-known fact that among the bazaar merchants of the Near East, the sophisticated people are the easiest to fool, for they have impressed themselves with a self-assurance which is blindly egocentric. They do not listen to friends, they have no inner voice and so they fall a prey to strangers.

Besides, many people take pride that they are able to influence others. They do not realize that every soul is in its natural state free. All souls are covered with minds and these minds become enmeshed with the ego (nufs) and so long as they are unaware of their own inner guidance, they listen to others, in particular those whom they trust. But this very habit makes them negative, they do not have strong will-power.

No doubt beginning with childhood it is right to be receptive toward our parents, to listen to them, to be guided by them. But wise parents will help their children to be strong, to build up resistances against easy persuasion. And most of the delinquency of youth comes to those who have not been properly persuaded by their parents.

AKIBAT: Occasionally we feel inclined to do a thing which apparently we have no reason to do. This is owing to the silent influence of some other person acting upon us without any spoken word and causing us to do that which we imagine to be his wish.

TASAWWUF: There are several ways in which thoughts and suggestions can fill the atmosphere and can be picked up by sensitive or responsive people. Indeed every thought goes into the sphere

on its own wavelength and if there is power in it, it will have an effect similar to that which any power expresses and imposes.

In the extreme cases, the black magicians, or diabolical people work their will this way, but even many who do not believe they are evil, have forms of hypnotic charms and influences on people and on the atmosphere.

AKIBAT: Sometimes the thoughts and conditions of mind of another person make so strong an impression on us, either in the presence of that person or in his absence, according to the extent of his power, that his condition is transferred to us.

TASAWWUF: More consideration has been given to the negative influences, to the presumable evil persons and forces which harass us. The seeker of God can repeat divine phrases and so overcome evil. Actually anybody that puts his whole trust in the deity, whatever his religion, is so protected. But mostly people do not consider God to be real and if they do not consider God to be real, they are more apt to be disturbed.

But it is not only evil forces that exert influences. The spiritual people of all times exert considerably more influences. If one goes to shrines and tombs and temples and mosques, one can feel this influence.

In North Africa, in particular, attention is given to Baraka, the vibrations of blessing that have manifested in and through and from saints and these vibrations are healing and strengthening, protecting and inspiring. That is why people go to tombs in all parts of the world; they may have reason or no reason, but they can feel the influence. (This subject is given more detailed consideration in *Cosmic Language*.)

AKIBAT: We sometimes laugh without reason on seeing the intensity of another person's laughter, and we feel sad without any reason when we are in contact with one who is sorrowful. We fulfill the wish of another, not knowing that he had any such wish, sometimes even without his own knowledge of it.

TASAWWUF: For all thoughts, emotions and feelings send out vibrations which enter and affect the immediate atmosphere. Thought-transference is an extreme case in which people deliberately place themselves in tune with each other, but actually everybody can do it if he gives the matter attention.

All religions have affirmed that man should heed his thought, speech, and action and strive for good thoughts, good speech and action. Unfortunately this has remained as if it were theoretical philosophy, but there is no thought, no speech, no action which does not have its effect upon the immediate atmosphere and also upon the whole world. Therefore Sufis practice the presence of God to purify their own consciousness and also to help the world.



AKIBAT: It also happens now and then that we feel a desire to eat fish, and find that the cook has prepared the very dish of which we were thinking; sometimes we think of a friend and it happens that the friend comes to see us. All such instances are proofs of silent suggestion, the inner influence directed consciously or unconsciously. Sometimes we are under the influence of a another person's mind and thought, at another time another someone may be under our influence; it depends upon the positive or negative state of the will.

TASAWWUF: For some period, the importance of suggestion was given considerable consideration and then it was found to have limits. Suggestion is always operative, but its power may be small, or it may fall upon the consciousness of those who have greater power and so, even when recognized, will be pushed aside.

The positive force of Jelal is used by Sufis to influence or help others and the negative force of Jemal is used to be receptive to or to be helped by others. In the grand concourse where all human beings are found to belong to the whole kingdom and brotherhood of humanity, these operations are often put to great use and thus promote harmony.

Yet it is also true that in influencing crowds, speakers are able to work upon the group consciousness into which each individual falls and loses his initiative. This is something that has often been used for good and evil both, in this world.

AKIBAT: Suggestions are of two kinds: spoken command, and suggestion by thought. One who is powerful-minded often may not intentionally command or suggest, and yet every word spoken by the powerful and thought by the master is fulfilled.

TASAWWUF: The practice of Mujahida, which is a long and involved science, gives man control over the external world as the result of the influences he has over his small ego (nufs). Both the Christian and Islamic Scriptures affirm that as man overcomes himself, he will be in control of the world and even over more than what we call the world. This is something that becomes true in the life of the inward striver.

The Mahamudra meditation of the Tibetans was supposed to have influenced the atmosphere and everybody concerned. These devotees internalized everything and regarded the world as being inside themselves. Sufis have the same idea, some of the same principles, but keep the God-ideal foremost and find, by invoking and feeling the Divine Presence, the practice of intensive contemplation (Mushahida) most valuable and most effective.

AKIBAT: "Word spoken and action done" is the accomplishment which is called **Siddhi** by Yogis, and those so accomplished are called **Saheb-e-dil** among Sufis.

TASAWWUF: The words "Saheb-e-dil" mean "gentleman of heart," in which case the consciousness also extends to Djabrut, the world of heart, the angelic kingdom and man then finds the Kingdom of the Heavens within himself as the Christian Bible teaches; also it is operative.

Siddhantic phenomena are often regarded as miraculous and some people confuse the miraculous with the spiritual. But the highest and more profound miracles are performed by the spiritual. We can read about them in the biographies of saints and masters. They are true at all times and whether they are placed in literature or not. But sometimes the miracles occur without any effort being made to that end. In fact Prophet Mohammed performed a miracle at Sadr when he took a handful of dust and cried **Allaho Akbar**. He did not know how much power had been accumulated in his person and the enemy were badly defeated. But afterwards when he went to Allah in appreciation, he discovered that Allah was God over everybody, the good and the bad, the friend and foe alike. And rather than use this means of winning, he accepted the defeat at Ghed and began using the heart exertion, thus being the first and most important of the Saheb-e-dil. And by the heart-method the victory was more easy than the victory on the battlefield and more complete.

But few Muslims have followed in the footsteps of the Prophet; they divide the world into their own forms of good and bad, not recognizing Allah as the Deity over all, that everybody is under the divine care. So therefore the religion called Islamic, though it gained power for a time, failed to conquer the earth because its leaders were more concerned with self-power than with self-surrender.

The study of Siddhanta is often more interesting and more alluring than Vedanta and also one can find all kinds of miraculous and magic studies among Sufi literature. But all the saints have abandoned both austerities and miracle-mongering after they came to self realization.

AKIBAT: Hypnotism and mesmerism are a kind of obsession for either a good or a bad purpose.

TASAWWUF: Both hypnotism and mesmerism were often used for purely phenomenal purposes, sometimes for entertainment, and yet sometimes also as a means of healing or suggesting health. They often give power to the operator and he in turn does not always recognize his responsibility. And while the entertainment feature has been great, still there is temporary abandonment of will under the influence. It is true that in healing or in psychological operations, it is important to utilize suggestive methods to the full, and in proper hands hypnotism can be very beneficial.

AKIBAT: The black magicians work six different spells: murder, fascination, severance, unrest, torture, persecution. The same are also wrought by the evil soul whose occupation it still is to work evil upon the earth. This it accomplishes solely by means of obsession. Those subject to its influence experience any of these ill effects.

TASAWWUF: Some people deny the presence of diabolic entities and some deny their influence. While others are afraid and believe, and these fears and beliefs also help the evil person more than anything else. You can read many books and pamphlets which discuss the evil phenomena, but few of how to get rid of obsessing entities. And fascination itself proves also to be a handicap to the unwary or weak and an instrument in the hands of the devil, so to say.

But the Sufis are more concerned with the Divine Presence and concentration on the Divine

Presence. This always upsets and defeats the wicked and sometimes even destroys them. Bulwer Lytton has given us some interesting literature, especially his "The Strange Story," and Talbot Mundy wrote many books along these lines. Their seeming fictions are not always entirely fantasy and not only has magic been practiced in Tibet, but now groups calling themselves witches are operating more openly. But mostly these are not wicked persons. They involve those who can invoke psychic forces either by rituals or by personal faculties. It is not necessary to analyze all these means or to give them much consideration. It is far more important to learn the laws of protection, such as repeating the proper sacred phrases or calling upon one's Murshid or other means.

AKIBAT: All this is partial obsession. Thousands of such influences come and go like moving pictures upon the blank curtain of man's mind, and it rarely happens that the effects last longer; if it does then people call it obsession.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, we are all obsessed more or less. Every influence from without, every thought we pick up from the papers, from magazines, from entertainments, from advertisements are, in a sense, obsessions.

The practice of Meditation is a great medicine, for it keeps the mind clear and pure and maintains it clear and pure. It is this which is essential in Sufism. But also placing the head on the ground in prayer which is called Sajda, and is found in many religious rites all over the world, has inestimable value.

AKIBAT: The influence of the dead is the same as the influence of the living, but even stronger. Their spirit throws its reflection upon the mirror of man's mind, and man acts as the spirit wishes, knowing all the while that his wishes are other than the spirits'.

TASAWWUF: This has two aspects. One aspect is called "obsession" when one falls prey to certain entities whose consciousness is still reflected on earth after they have left and who function through a subtle body. Their influences are greater in certain parts of the world where magical rites have been practiced. And once these rites have been performed, even centuries afterwards, the spirits may be haunting such places for they find it easier to operate there. And what are called "haunted houses" not only include places of murder or crime, but also scenes of former magical rites.

Then there is the opposite condition which is recognized by the masses of many lands, that influences of the saintly-dead can still be obtained, and people go to shrines and holy places where the effects are the opposite of those of haunted places, although the phenomena may be in some senses similar.

AKIBAT: The intensity of spirit obsession is much greater than the influence of a living person, for the living are themselves subject to influences and obsessions, and their own self is an obsession to them, reflecting the various pictures of their own life upon their soul; but the spirits, from whom

the burden of external existence is removed, are much more powerful, freer, and more inclined to obsess others.

TASAWWUF: Again this must be noticed in the two opposite regards. The people of fear, by their very fear give scope to the evil obsession; while the people of love, if their love is great, give opportunity to the real spiritual spirits. Only it has been generally that the weak, the curious, the negative, have been more concerned with the next world, for often they have failed in this one. And their very concern with the next world instead of earth activities also helps to make them the prey of obsession.

Yet it is only the sensitive who feel the full influence of saints and the blessings of holy places. If one repeats sacred phrases it always defeats the wicked and increases the possibility of favorable effects from contact with the righteous. Therefore it is more important to practice the presence of God than to build up any philosophy concerning influences. The practice of the Presence of God will no doubt increase the spiritualism beneficial to mankind.

AKIBAT: Frequently a crime is committed by a man under the influence of another. A person with an evil thought of revenge, the desire to kill somebody, by the very concentration of his evil thought becomes so weak that he cannot do it himself. Then he may consciously or unconsciously, by the intensity of his desire, convey to some other person the suggestion of doing it. The other person is innocent of the evil desire and so has the strength to accomplish it.

TASAWWUF: We must see this from two points of view. First, the negative point of view and how to combat it; otherwise the very suggestive power will work against us. Not only will we be prey to the evil forces, but by giving more consideration to them we strengthen them still further. This is one reason why there is not peace in the world, for a reality is attributed to those we oppose and every thought we give to them strengthens them psychically, while if we refuse to consider them mentally, we do not add to their psychic power.

We are living in a "Mind-world" all of us. Every breath draws us some of the thoughts that permeate the atmosphere. There is at the lower level the partaking of common thought. We see this in mob action, mob violence, and this is due to the intoxication of life. If we are good people but still under intoxicating influences, we are too weak to be effectively good and we cannot prevent evil, for we are without the willpower to act otherwise.

Reports from Africa come that magic is still operative, it is suggestive, it is ritualistic, and by a strong breath a person can impel, even compel, weak people to do as one wishes, to pick up one's thoughts and commit overt acts without being able to explain why. Knowing this, Sufis constantly repeat sacred phrases, and any of them may be disarming to evil influences. One does not fight evil directly; one may even "resist not evil." One calls on the Divine Power, and this Divine Power can also act conversely to the evil forces. For if man is so weak as to be influenced by external forces, he can also be influenced by the good.

Praying in churches and mosques, going to holy places, means entering atmospheres where the evil forces cannot operate. The more one goes to such places, the more one breathes and meditates and prays there, the stronger he becomes and also he becomes more sensitive to the constructive, good forces of the universe whether as forces themselves or as personalities who represent the activity of the creator in the realms of creation.

The Fateha which is repeated by Muslims is one of the most powerful and one of the most repeated of prayers and where it is said enough the dark forces may not enter. This is so even for the generality who cannot comprehend the God-Ideal. The prayers of Christians and Jews would also be effective, but it is now recognized, as Qur'an teaches, that there have been some changes. These changes may not be too important, but the exact words of the prophets of God have always both a charm and a power which man-made prayers at their best do not have. Otherwise prayer alone would disperse evil forces and it does not always do so.

Finally it should be affirmed that the power of saints and masters is much greater than the power of ordinary people; and the power of Murshids, too. So by attunement we protect ourselves.

AKIBAT: This is often seen with anarchists; among anarchists there are some who only plan the deed, and there are others who carry it out.

TASAWWUF: This can be seen constantly in all parts of the world, that a few subversive people can rouse a mob and cause them to perform acts which they, as individuals, would not have done of their own thought and own will. It is noticeable that the subversive's opposite numbers, while understanding these principles, do not themselves act according to the laws of suggestion and influence. So a few subversive people are often more effective than many police.

At least one president of France was so assassinated and many leaders have been murdered, are even being killed today, because those in authority, though they know the laws of mob-action, seldom operate accordingly, and do not readily stem the tide. If a few people can rouse a mob, a few people can rouse it contrariwise.

AKIBAT: There are two sorts of obsession: one is when the soul imparts its qualities to another; the other is when one soul causes another to accomplish some deed; this may be either evil or good.

TASAWWUF: We seem mostly concerned with evil obsessing forces. But it is not necessarily so. The law operates whether the powerful, operative force, being Jelal, is good or not good; and the negative receiving personality is Jemal, being receptive, whether good or not good. Indeed much of telepathy can be explained that way. But while the term "Obsession" is used for evil influences, of this world or the next, with regard to good forces, it is used only for the personality and entities of the next world. Ideas sent out in this world in a natural manner or for good, wholesome and inspiring purposes are not generally regarded as being obsessive.

AKIBAT: In India we have often seen this with snakes. The soul focuses itself upon the snake, and

then the snake will feel an inclination to go and bite a certain person.

TASAWWUF: This can be only when there is fear or ignorance. Animals sense the fear and they are often drawn to acts which they would not otherwise commit. For many animals are only destructive for the sake of food, or to get rid of rivals. And if human beings leave them alone, they do not respond, they do not attack.

We must consider again not only do we live in a physical world, in a psychic world, in a mental world, but also in a divine world; and according as we live, so the forces which we arouse and also to which we respond.

AKIBAT: If the influence is so strong from living persons, the obsession of a dead person, of a spirit, is much stronger still. The dead person has no other means of expression, and so he seizes upon a weak person, a weak mind, and controls that.

TASAWWUF: For that reason there has been much opposition to some of the phenomena regarded as spiritualistic. People who are sensitive but not actually clairvoyant are unaware of the character of the entities to which they expose themselves. And when Madame Blavatsky opened up the universe of psychic phenomena, she was more apt to be warning against entering into a portion of the universe without wisdom. But eager people, without the wisdom, exposed themselves to questionable forces and still do.

In the Christian Bible the existence of the spirits is affirmed and also how to test them, but in the Western world it has generally happened either that the existence is denied, or there is no test. The former people are in ignorance, the latter in superstition.

AKIBAT: It is not that the soul enters into the body; the soul is much too large to do that.

TASAWWUF: That is why sometimes people see ghosts as huge creatures. During the Middle Ages in Europe there was a struggle for power between two groups called “Guelphs” and “Ghibellines” and from the former we get the word “elf” which means a small creature of the unseen, and from the latter the word “goblin” which means a large creature of the unseen. And more evil was associated with the large creatures because there is always the element of fear; the fear itself becomes a factor in obsession.

AKIBAT: But it reflects itself upon the other soul. A spirit focuses itself upon the soul of another; the greater power holds the lesser.

TASAWWUF: All through the stories of the Arabian Nights we find tales of Jinns and oft times they were successful and again the people to whom they appeared knew how to repeat sacred phrases and protected themselves with the sacred phrases. But the influence in the Christian world which is not so aware of these entities and where people do not use the sacred phrases for protection, caused and still causes dismay and uncertainty. There is no knowledge of what to do. Their very

Scriptures are not taken so seriously as they are in Islam.

AKIBAT: If a man has left this world full of anger, full of hatred against his enemy and longing to do him harm, he cannot find peace. If a person leaves the earth with revengeful feelings he will long to accomplish his revenge. He is restless and looking for some means to accomplish his desire.

TASAWWUF: There are universal laws concerning moral behavior. They operate even in the body itself and in the glands, causing certain diseases and weaknesses and so long as man holds on to his negative thoughts he will not only be subject to these diseases but he carries his thought with him. All such thoughts react both upon the personality and the sphere and the hatred and revenge and envy operate as forces and do harm to those obsessed. They do still more harm to the obsessor. That is why Jesus said to pray for one's enemies. In the grand Universe of Allah there is room for all, but evil is always very limited no matter how large it seems to loom.

AKIBAT: The negative soul, suited for his purpose, receives this impression; not the positive soul, but one who is weak in body or mind. The well-balanced and vigorous throw off such influences; they are not easily affected.

TASAWWUF: The sacred phrase **Allaho Akbar** has so many purposes. It is used constantly in prayer by Muslims, but it should also be used in everyday life outside of prayer. It strengthens will-power, it strengthens psychic power, its very tonal sound keeps evil entities away. It has many values.

AKIBAT: A spirit may obsess for a good purpose or for an evil purpose.

TASAWWUF: All persons in the body are subject to the same laws. Just as the physical laws cover all people on the earth-plane, so the psychic laws covers all people within their realm and the laws of each plane cover the entities of that plane. Reason has no part in it. But whereas the rational laws of the universe validate that power goes from the strong to the weak, in the phenomena of obsession, for some time the power goes from the weak to the strong.

AKIBAT: If a mother dies before she has been able to bring her child up, and all her thoughts and affection are centered in the child, she may obsess one of the relations, who then will feel inclined to take the child and do all he can for it.

TASAWWUF: This is a common habit in many parts of the world. But the custom may have been started because of the influence of the dead, and in many places also people have such respect for the dead and wish to carry out what the dead desire. And when this is so, the guardian who takes the place of the mother or the stepmother will fondle the child and give it loving care. But elsewhere there is not this recognition; we have the stories of the wicked stepmothers. They are heedless of the world beyond and also of this world.

AKIBAT: It may happen in the case of soul-mates. Especially in the East this is often seen, where a

man may love a girl or a woman whom he has seen only once and there is no chance of his ever seeing her again. Then, if he dies, she may become obsessed. She can think of nothing else than of his thought and she becomes half-dead, and is often in a trance. It may not be that she loved him very much, but his thought obsesses her, and she feels his condition only.

TASAWWUF: This was also the theme of the Hebrew play, “The Dybbuk,” but generally the Hebrew religion has come so much under the influence of Western thought which is misnamed “civilization” that people did not take it seriously. And when such cases do occur—and they do occur—the materially-minded western psychologists and psychiatrists often consign the victim to mental hospitals. So the mental hospitals are often filled more with the obsessed than with the mad. Still there are many ways in which to exorcise such people and when tried with faith and devotion many people have been so rescued.

AKIBAT: The disciples of Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Wali, a great saint of Delhi, were once sitting waiting for him to come and speak upon a very abstruse and difficult matter, when to their astonishment they saw his servant come into the room and sit down on the Murshid’s seat. Nizam-ud-din then came in, made a very deep bow to the servant and took his seat before him. The servant began to speak and spoke for some time, explaining some very subtle and deep questions. Then a change came over his face, he looked around, and ran from the room in great confusion. Afterwards Nizam-ud-din told his disciples that he had asked his murshid for the answer to some very difficult question, and that the subject was so complex that the murshid needed a human form in order to explain it exactly, and that was why he had spoken through the servant.

TASAWWUF: The commentator had been asked to try to collect materials on Islamic art for the University of Punjab, in Lahore, Pakistan. After many years he returned there with colored slides and asked to give a rehearsal so he could go over his notes. Instead a very large meeting had been arranged and he was called on to speak without any preparation. He did not know what to do. There was a chair in which he sat before the meeting and when it began some Master appeared and told him to sit in the chair while he used the commentator’s body. The lecture was perfect in all respects and brought considerable applause and favorable comments. The speaker did not know what to say.

About a week later he was in Abottabad in Hazara county and was explaining the incident when a holy man appeared and said: “I see Bu Ali Shah Khalander standing behind you. It was he that gave the lecture and spoke through your vehicle for you. You have been blessed by a very great Master.” While the existence of the Auliya is often affirmed, contact with them is often unconscious and again kept secret. Or when a principle is verified by fact, many people become envious and do not accept it as natural. But psychic and cosmic phenomena may be as natural as physical phenomena and it is only because of their seeming rarity that they are regarded as miraculous.

AKIBAT: I have taken a great interest in this subject. As a boy, out of curiosity, I studied it very much. I have always gone where obsessed people were to be found and I have seen some very curious and remarkable cases of obsession. One was in a Parsi family. There was a young lady



who sometimes once a day and sometimes two or three times, would change her mood and would speak in Arabic and Persian; and she spoke about philosophy and metaphysics which she had never been taught. She was so strongly obsessed that she did not care to speak to her father and mother or her brothers and sisters or anyone else; nor would she ever go out. She always had incense burning in her room and led a very retired life. They brought learned people to speak with her, and she discussed with them like a great philosopher and got the better of the argument. Then she would forget it all again. At Sekunderabad there was a boy who sang Telagu songs. He had never learnt them, because Telagu is not spoken there among Muslims. Sometimes he would sing many songs, and then later on he could not sing one.

Many people who are obsessed go to Ujjain in Central India to be healed at the tomb of a Sufi, Miran Datar, a saint who in his lifetime cured cases of obsession, and continued doing so even after death. I once visited this place. On the steps of the tomb a man was sitting who seemed a quiet and thoughtful person. He was praying. I spoke to him. If I had known that he was obsessed, I would not have spoken to him, but I did not know it. I asked him, "Why are you here?" He said, "Do not ask me such a question." I said, "Why not?" He said, "Because I am afraid. Now that I am near this holy tomb I have a little strength to answer you; if I were not here I could not even do that." He told me that he had been a store-keeper on some British liner going back and forth between Bombay and London. One day at sea he had a strange feeling, as if some power were taking hold of him, and he was not able to do anything. After that this power would often take hold of him, and he could not do what he wanted to do. At times he wanted to eat but could not; at other times, when he did not want to eat he had to go and eat. He became quite weak. He told the ship's doctor, but the doctor could do nothing for him. Then he went to see many other doctors, but none of them could help him. At last he went to the tomb of Miran Datar to see if he could find some relief.

While I was at the tomb of Miran Datar, the Prince of Kheralu came to it, a very handsome boy of twelve or thirteen, accompanied by aides-de-camp and attendants. He was brought there to be cured. A conversation began of which we could hear only the part spoken by the prince whose words were really those of the spirit that obsessed him. He said, "I will not leave him. I like him so much. He was in the forest, shooting, and he came near the tree on which I was sitting. Don't whip me, Miran, I am his guardian, I will not leave him. Miran, don't whip me." The prince began to run, leaping high into the air, and showed every sign of being severely whipped. He ran round and round the tomb, leaping every time that the invisible whip struck the spirit. At last he fell down exhausted, and his attendants at once lifted him up and carried him away.

TASAWWUF: This needs no comment. That they really occurred should either be taken on faith, or can be verified by what happens in the lives of others.

AKIBAT: When I came to the Western world I was curious to know whether it is only we in the East who have so many obsessed people, or whether there are obsessed people in the West also. They said to me, "Here if someone were to show such a condition, we should put him in a lunatic asylum. If you wish to see such cases as you mention, you must go there." I went, and found that

there were many who were mad and also many who were obsessed.

TASAWWUF: We must return to Grimm's story of "One-eye, Two-eyes, and Three-eyes," that the West has established its own normality which is an abstraction of reality and which has been substituted for reality. In his last days the British philosopher Aldous Huxley, who also studied Vedanta, took an unusual interest in this situation and concluded that the West was erring, that many people had unusual faculties and unusual experiences, but unusualness did not mean unnatural; that there had been many such persons in previous generations. They had been persecuted and martyred so that those with odd tendencies were removed from society.

This produced enough influence that after many centuries there were those who came out of hiding so to speak, and called themselves "witches" which should not have any connotation; it may even mean that they are "wise, for a witch originally meant a wise person.

AKIBAT: I wanted to try some experiments in casting out the influence, but the doctors would not let me, because they wanted a medical diploma, which unfortunately I lacked.

TASAWWUF: The medical arts of the West are not exact sciences. If they were, the practitioners would be able to heal. There is no doubt a logical way in which to move from cause to effect and effect to cause and in the pure sciences this is always operative. But when there are egocentricities, this will not be. One cannot make rules for life; life is beyond the ordinary rules, and in the material world of the West there is no knowledge of the finer bodies or finer forces.

No doubt there have been some new aspects of religion, inspired from within the heart of man, or drawing ideas from the Orient, which have led to aspects of healing unrecognized officially. The result is that there are always diseases which are not cured, always problems which are not solved. This shows that man is still caught in the web of nufsaniat, samsara.

In addition to Kashf, insight, there is the direct sight sometimes called Clairvoyance, wherein man can see the inside of the causal factors and both faculties may operate at once. As long as the Deity of people is inoperative through them, they will not be able to trace the life force; when the Deity is recognized as the Reality, the life-force can be traced and many physical and mental ailments can be alleviated.

AKIBAT: Then they took me into the laboratory where they were dissecting brains, and they showed me that this man had this spot in his brain that was decayed and therefore he was mad, and another man had a cavity in his skull and therefore he became mad too. I asked them whether it was the decay that caused the madness, or the madness that caused the decay. At first they were astonished, but then they thought that there might be something in my philosophy.

TASAWWUF: It is our worn out movements of nervous tension, uncontrolled emotions, wrong breathing, that break the lines of communication in the nerves and make it impossible for the bloodstream and the life-force to function through the brain tissue.

If we learn to breath correctly, if we learn to control the emotions which can be done through meditation, also by Mujahida, and if we do certain physical exercises, such as are incumbent in Nimaz, the probability is that madness would not occur. Of course there are madzubs who purposely enter a “mad” state or are thrown into it from too many ecstatic experiences. But that is totally different; there will be no brain decay in them.

In the Orient where there is recognition of three bodies and they still know about the humors, knowledge which came from ancient Greeks and otherwise, some diseases which occur in the West are much more easily healed.

AKIBAT: According to the mystic’s view the cause is mostly within. It is the fever that gives heat, not the heat that gives fever. Weeping does not come first and then sadness. The sadness comes first and that causes the tears to fall.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, mystics still accept the Platonic view and also medical ideas which we find in the writings of Galen and Hippocrates. They are not cast aside because of the discovery of germs, or the complicated chemical system which has encroached into medicine. The chemicals are not life though they do affect the nerves.

There must be an overall method, not just analysis but constructive integration and synthesis, seeing the whole person. The Chinese methods are based on living operations and not entirely on detailed analysis. For the life is not analysis and death is like analysis. Therefore often several people have to be called, everybody becoming a specialist. But the mystic is not a specialist in this sense, he sees the whole person. He not only recognizes the material but the subtle bodies and so he can judge a person better whether he is able to heal or not.

This subject is also discussed in the lessons on Healing.

AKIBAT: An Arab who had lost his camel, after searching for it everywhere heard that it was in the stable of the Sherif of Mecca. He went to the Sherif and said, “I have been told that my she-camel which I lost has been sold to you and is in your stable.” The Sherif asked him, “How will you recognize your camel? Has she any particular marks?” The Arab said, “She has two black marks upon her heart.” The Sherif was amazed to hear this, wondering how the Arab could know about his camel’s heart; and in order to ascertain the truth the camel was cut open, and two black marks were found upon her heart. The Sherif asked, “How could you know that your camel had these two black marks upon her heart?” The Arab replied, “Twice my camel was in great sorrow; twice she lost her foal; she looked up and gave a deep sigh, and I knew that each time a black mark was left upon her heart.”

I have seen that there are many suffering from such influences in the West, but, science being the conqueror of religion, the casting out of devils, so often mentioned in the Bible, is today mostly regarded as only a superstition.

TASAWWUF: The investigations of Aldous Huxley were never completed but they have stimulated the resurrection of psychic and occult endeavors on the part of man. There are methods of purification, purification by prayer, purification by ceremony and sometimes also a single person has the ability to do this. The Sufi Movement of the day also adopted a ritual both for cleansing houses to prevent them from being invaded by noxious forces; also to exorcise those which have been subject to spirit influences. Also for each individual there is both a ritual and a personal method.

But sometimes also the use of sacred phrases and direct mental effort, ordering spirits to leave, has been successful. Only in the West they would not readily permit it. Also a Master, by his control over breath, can sometimes make it very uncomfortable for the obsessors.

AKIBAT: The East, on the contrary has gone to the other extreme. There are a great many cases of illness there which are taken to those who cast out devils, and these, in order to get as many patients as they can, interpret every disease as the influence of a spirit.

TASAWWUF: The anthropologists have collected a great many instances of this in all parts of the world. At first they were largely observational or critical, but sometimes they found that the so-called witch-doctors or shamans did effect cures, and so more details were taken. And it has even reached a state where some medical doctors also have shown interest, especially in Africa, and have gone to watch their methods and collect the herbs and have become careful enough not to overlook anything. For if the so-called backward people can cure what the so-called civilized people have failed to cure, there must be something in it. And although the term "spirit" has many interpretations, we can neither overlook or disdain on the one hand, or accept blindly on the other. For there are still natural healers and so-called magicians who cure some sick.

AKIBAT: There are, however, two advantages in this course. The first is that the patient thinks that the disease is not within himself, but is an external influence which will cease if it is cast out. This prevents his taking his illness too much to heart, for the very thought of having a disease which is rooted in the body may often lead him to his death. Instead of that, however serious the illness may be, the patient will have the impression that it is a spirit that can be cast out; and this belief may restore him to health.

TASAWWUF: Sufic Occultism has two bases; One is insight, Kashf, and the other is careful observation of the law of cause and effect. If the problem is physical, suggestion alone will not help and if there is a psychological cause, it will not be removed by medicine alone. This has been discussed in the book *Health*, but there one does not learn much about the occult side, which has to be traced.

The separation of physical and mental factors, which comes as the result of analysis and dualism, has not brought about substantial lasting cures. It is not that the methods used are "wrong;" they are incomplete and the proof that they are incomplete comes in the fact that they do not always succeed.

The more thought man gives to his ego, the more he will be susceptible to disease. The hypochondriac is one who is so self-centered, he has not consideration of others. He has to learn to look about him, to be concerned with people and affairs outside his skin and the more he does that, this alone will help restore his health.

Such persons need to know more about breath, and this will prevent them from becoming obsessed. But a self-centered person who does not know how to breathe, who is subject to fear and envy, can easily be obsessed, more than other persons.

AKIBAT: The second advantage is that a wise person can, while pretending to cast out spirits, arouse the patient so that he begins to confess the secrets of his heart—some hidden thought or feeling which may have made him ill. He had not been able to speak of it, having been constrained by the situation in which he was placed, but when this poison is released, the patient can be easily cured. Fakirs often work in this way.

TASAWWUF: It is not an empty aphorism that confession is good for the soul. It is that when we lay ourselves bare, the poisonous situation is revealed and the poison can be removed. So Sufis carefully watch over themselves against lust, envy, greed, ill-will and having learned to purge themselves and thus become purified, they are more qualified than others to help humanity.

In Sufism generally the paths of Shifayat, the spiritual healer, and Shuyukhuyat, that of the spiritual teacher, are separate. The former may use touch, glance, lotions, herbs and even medicines; the latter uses the glance, the breath, the blessing, all of which are healing, but systematically, for the whole person. In both instances the patient, especially if it is a mureed, is susceptible to the holy influences and can benefit or even be entirely healed. For man has within himself the Holy Spirit which can cure anything.

AKIBAT: Sometimes women, owing to the strict customs and manners of their country and religion, cannot tell the secret of their despair to anyone, and thus they hold the poisonous seed in their heart until their death, and this consumes them within. Many have longings which could not be attained, jealous fits which could not be explained, heartbreaks which could not be repaired.

TASAWWUF: The extreme seclusion of women in Islam was not warranted. It did not exist in the time of the Prophet and was never instituted in many Islamic lands. Besides some of its features were found elsewhere and nobody bothered about recording it; for women on the whole were not given consideration until the rise of humanism. So it is wrong to select the Islamic Purdah as a particular evil of a particular group.

Yet the restriction of freedom for any person is not only a mark upon the body and society, it touches the deepest part of being. The religion of Islam as taught by Mohammed and echoed in every Sura of Holy Qur'an is based on Bismillah, that everything is found in the Name of God, and the characteristics of this are profound mercy and compassion. If anything prevails over the mercy and compassion, the religion is not whole, not sincere.

And there is no question that one finds it even now, that the inner and outer lives of women have been restricted. So we find in one part of the world women become psychologically ill because they are so restrained and in another part of the world women become psychologically ill because there is little or no restraint. In either case they do not have the confidence they need.

The confessional of the Roman Catholic Church has often been the source of healing and many psychologists have observed the benefit therefrom. So many women in Islamic countries also go to the Sheikhs and real or pretended holy men. Even if the teacher is not a holy man, the visitation by the women benefits them in some way.

AKIBAT: All such cases show externally a bodily disease, which doctors try to cure by chemical prescriptions, but the root remains. This treatment is like poison within mixed with poison without; the result, without any doubt, is usually death.

TASAWWUF: That is why diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis, and all glandular afflictions remain and millions are spent on research, without finding easy cures. For every disease has an easy cure if it can be properly traced. The mind, the breath, the psychological and physiological factors must all be taken into consideration, nothing left out. Sufis therefore seek to observe life from wholeness. The words “wholeness, health, salvation” and such terms not only come from the same etymological roots, they have the same meaning. Christ as Savior was one who healed the whole personality, within and without.

AKIBAT: As soon as the patient's secret is known to the healer, he has really made a successful operation in the invisible heart and taken out all the poisonous substance which was causing the sickness and leading the patient to his death. He then releases him from this by words of consolation, by fragrance, by music, by the recitation of the names of God, and by reflecting upon the heart of the obsessed his own wisdom and piety.

TASAWWUF: The last illness of the commentator came under such conditions. Knowing the story of the removal of a drop of black blood from the heart of the Prophet and his healing thereby, he made every effort to remove all signs of jealousy, envy, ill-will, malice and negative emotions. As he did so he found he was becoming freed from an obsessing entity which he had not recognized. He was fortunate that at that time his physician was also a psychologist and had knowledge of occultism. And once he got free from the obsessing entity, he became free from most diseases. When he went again to the Orient, the only illness came from questionable soft drinks. The strange foods and strange conditions did not produce any bad health and the long hot weather had even a pleasant effect on the body.

AKIBAT: No doubt there are very few, even in the East, who could give the right treatment; and mostly there are real devils amongst those who profess to cast out devils.

TASAWWUF: This seems to be true all over, and the application of the phrases from Holy Qur'an is regarded as a “must.” Once the commentator met an Albanian who told him he became cured

just by reciting the Qur'an. The Sura he repeated had nothing to do with illness or health. But there is no doubt that the repetition expelled the "bad breath" or the "obsessing spirit" and so became free.

The methods used by both the holy and unholy men may be according to the same ritual. Verses from Qur'an or any Scripture must be repeated from and in the heart, with a clear voice, not too loud but clear and the resonance will also help. In the Arab world the reciters and Hafizes must regard every word no matter how well they know the text. In this way they purify the atmosphere and so some Mosques became temples of healing without any other apparent reason. The same is true of some shrines. The example of Lourdes proves this, but it is also a demonstration of the lack of general purity in the West because all true shrines are centers of healing.

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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 8](#)

### Conclusion

AKIBAT: I have known good and bad, sin and virtue, right and wrong; I have judged and been judged; I have gone through birth and death, joy and pain, heaven and hell; and what I realize in the end is that I am in all and all is in me.

TASAWWUF: This is the sublime teaching found in the end at the summit of every faith. What is called "Sufism" is the Divine Wisdom behind every religion. Only it is not so evident. In the West the tendency is to stress something else, and especially particulars; in the East the tendency is to stress the universal and omit the particulars. In Sufism we find both together and so the Sufism of the day is designed to unite East and West. God bless you.

Alhamdulillah Alhamdulillah Alhamdulillah Alhamdulillah