

Githa with Commentary

Ryazat: Esotericism

Series I

of

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by

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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.

Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 1

Ryazat

GITHA: Esotericism is the ideal and the most essential subject among all other subjects connected with the mystery of life, for this is the process that leads to self-realization, which is the only aim of the Sufi.

TASAWWUF: The Sufi is one who seeks or has attained God realization through certain processes. No doubt Vedantists, Buddhists, and others have attained, but they do not use the methods known as Ryazat. In other words the Sufi is a specialized type of devotee who uses particular methods or is the channel of a particular aspect of grace in moving toward ultimate awakening.

Ryazat must not be confused with philosophy. It has to do with practices, devotions and disciplines and works toward their effectiveness. By effectiveness is meant the clarification of the mysteries of life as above.

GITHA: It is self-realization which is the ideal, not the process. Through whatever process one may arrive at self-realization, to the Sufi it matters little, as long as one can attain to this ideal.

TASAWWUF: It is here that the Sufi devotee differs from the orthodox believer. Orthodoxy is concerned with processes, not attainment. Orthodoxies divide the humanity. It is possible for an orthodox person to have the attainment—this is described in *The Inner Life*.

When Hazrat Inayat Khan met the Zen monk, Nyogen Senzaki, they not only entered Samadhi together, they remained there unaware of the passage of time. Literary writers and philosophers who have never had such experiences often confuse the humanity by descriptions and commentaries about experiences they have never had. Mysticism is in some respects comparable to Science because it demands experience, and the realization derived from experience.

We can read in books written by the Sufis of the day that they are coming more and more to accept the universality of experience and the experience of universality. Such men as Lings, Schuon, Burckhardt and others are working in this unbounded area of universal experience and both its intellectual and mystical aspects.

No doubt the finality may be in Love. In some respects Love is attainment, Love is realization, and

all expansion of consciousness are expansions of Love. Those who talk about “expansion of consciousness” without realizing in some degree an expansion of Love, Compassion and Mercy delude themselves and others.

GITHA: The first step generally taken on this path is Nimaz, the esoteric prayer, which consists of three objects:

TASAWWUF: There are two aspects of prayer, esoteric and exoteric. Exoteric prayer is that of religions and devotional people found in many parts of the world. They are no doubt very useful. They seem to have limitations, for they do not always tend toward self-realization, or God-realization.

Nimaz is an Arabic term. Exoteric prayer is called Salat in Arabic. By esoteric prayer we need not only prayers with inner meaning, but prayers done by the whole man and not just lips or mind or ego. In these days there is a growing objection to the customary exoteric prayers which seem to divide mankind and also seem to fail in gaining their objectives, limited, or not so limited.

GITHA: **Moral Point of View:** The building up in one’s mind of the God-ideal by thought that the love from the heart may gush forth, making it alive, which ordinarily is as dead.

TASAWWUF: The Suras of the Qur’an begin, “Bismillah er-Rahman, er-Rahim.” This literally has been translated “In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.” The Arabic SM is the equivalent of the Hebrew SHEM. This means universal Light and Vitality. When it is restricted to mean just “name” this is placing God alongside man. To give God a name which is so separative often fails to allow the full functioning of the gushing of heart-love. When the heart love does not gush forth, the mind is not so enlivened. This is what has limited prayer to ritual and formality. Ritual and formality limit the prayer. Heart is beyond these.

GITHA: The prayer may be offered by the praise of God’s grace and power. The contemplation of Divine Grace widens the outlook of the devotee and enables him to view in life the mercy of God in all aspects; and this produces in him a thankful, contented, resigned and peaceful nature, which is most essential on this path.

TASAWWUF: Mohammed has said “Praise God in time of prosperity, and surrender to Him in time of adversity.” The devotee who asks places a limitation around prayer. The devotee who praises rises above any such limitation. These are examples of the lower and higher forms of separation. But in contemplation one rises above the barrier which separates man from God, creation from Creator. It is only this that can produce the thankfulness, contentment, resignation and peace which is the desire of every soul.

GITHA: The contemplation of Divine Power discloses before his view the Mighty Hand of God working through all things and beings. His justice and rule appear clearly before his eyes, keeping him right and orderly in life.

TASAWWUF: The Sufi term **Mushahida**, pure contemplation, is a blending of concentration and devotion. The root of this word is **shahud**, which is also presented in the literature. Also in the **Azan**, the Islamic call to prayer. In a sense it means seeing with the whole personality, or as is said in the Gathas, "It is the soul that sees."

Contemplation (Mushahida) is in many respects one of the highest practices. It enables one to rise above self and this in the positive sense of fulfillment (baqa) rather than in the negative sense of effacement. It is God and man working together. But it is not God without all His attributes, it is not any abstraction, it is Reality; it is fulfillment.

GITHA: **Philosophic Point of View:** Prayer in thought only is seldom complete, for a thought in absence of action is considered no better than an imagination.

TASAWWUF: So many prayers are not self-fulfilling. People ask God, God apart from themselves. They do not realize that when man separates himself from God, God is, so to speak, separated from man. Sufis declare, "When man walks one step towards Allah, Allah walks ten steps toward man."

The difference between the philosophical view, here expressed, and the metaphysical point of view as commonly accepted is that the philosophical point of view is all thought, no action.

No doubt the Cayce Foundation has beautiful intentions. They say, "Prayer is man speaking to God, and meditation is God speaking to man." This may be an excellent statement, but it is all in the ego-mind because there is no physical accommodation for it. They also say, "Jogging may cure many ills." But the average metaphysical person repeats these words without any action. So nothing is proved. In a similar fashion, perhaps, little is proved by prayer kept in thought without action. As such prayers go unfulfilled, many have discarded the institution.

The Sufi is different. He regards prayer without action as incomplete.

GITHA: A thought and action, without speech, are dumb. Therefore, in Nimaz, while the mind is in contemplation on the thought, the tongue and each organ of the body is busy in prayer at the same time, bowing and prostrating itself before the grace and power of the Creator. All this, done at one and the same time, keeps man, in all planes of existence, engaged in prayer, that if one plane has escaped from it, the other planes may drag it back.

TASAWWUF: Thus the Sufi devotee prays with body, mind, and heart. Even if the body moves mechanically, that may be sufficient; that is what the body does. And if the body were to move in certain ways, and to fulfill the psychic laws it would also help the mind and heart; it would help control the lower nature, it would aid in moral development; it would be serving as the temple of God.

There is a portion of prayer in the Hebrew religion; "We bow our head and bend our knees before

the King of Kings.” There is something strange here. Many groups of Jewish devotees do not bow their heads; still more do not bend the knee. The orthodox of every religion think that they alone have the suitable form of prayer that pleases God. But if we go from temple to temple, from church to church, from one religious edifice to another, we shall see many people bowing the head and bowing the knee. This is also explained in the inner teachings on nimaz and salat of the Islamic faith. The psychic principles involved may be universal, the applications particular. Therefore, in the Elementary Study Circles psychic laws are discussed and explained.

GITHA: This makes God see, through the soul of the devotee, the devotion of his heart, and the heart reads the thought of the mind and is moved by it; ...

TASAWWUF: This is, indeed, an aspect of Mushahida. In Mushahida the heart is active. There are stories of the Sufi saint Surmad, that when he was in prayer his heart could see and read the minds of everybody in the mosque. By so doing he aroused enmity, which resulted ultimately in his being martyred by the emperor, Aurungzeb. But if we read the lives of the Sufis, we shall find many examples of it.

This is also presented in studies on *Metaphysics, Volume V* of the published teachings.

GITHA: ... and the mind listens to the repetitions chanted by the tongue of the devotee; and every atom of the body, conscious of the prayer going through the whole being, realizes itself also harmoniously joined with the other parts of one's being. The effect is that the whole being of the person becomes exalted by witnessing his absolute being in prayer.

TASAWWUF: No doubt the term **Mantra Yoga** has become widely accepted to apply to all devotions in which the sounds of the tongue influence mind and body. This also applies to the use of musical sounds.

Saum indicates the five goals of “Thy Grace, Thy Glory, Thy Wisdom, Thy Joy and Thy Peace.” It may be that these result from prayer alone. Such would be an orthodox view. Grace, Glory, Wisdom, Joy, and Peace are no doubt the desires of the soul, because they are of the nature of the soul. These are the aspects of self-realization as presented in this study.

GITHA: **Esoteric Point of View:** Man exists in two aspects, one real and the other false. The real is the soul, which is of the Being of God the Eternal.

TASAWWUF: According to this interpretation, the term “esoteric” which means “that which pertains to the inside,” is also concerned with the eternal. Lord Buddha has said in the Odanna that behind this constantly changing evanescent world, there is the eternal, never-changing existence. We can hardly understand the meaning of Buddha's mission without taking this into consideration. But when we do take it into consideration, we can see that all esotericisms are essentially one. Methods and mannerisms may be different, externals may be different, but essentials are one.

GITHA: The other consists of the mind and body, which are composed of borrowed properties from two planes, the mental and the physical, which are bound to be withdrawn in time by the elements to which they belong.

TASAWWUF: This also is in accord with Lord Buddha's teachings of **anicca** and **anatta**. Hindu teachings differ a little in assuming several bodies or vehicles. In the end they reach the same point, for these are bodies of the physical and mental portions of the universe.

GITHA: And the soul, forgetting this, blinds itself in the false aspect of our being, and loses from sight the thought of the real and everlasting aspect.

TASAWWUF: In the religions of India the two universes, so to speak, are known as samsara and nirvana. In samsara there is constant change; in nirvana such terms as "change" and "changeless" hardly apply. Indeed, it is asserted by some schools of Buddhism that change itself is everlasting. But it may be argued, if such change is everlasting, what is changing? The Sufi may agree with Lord Buddha that this is a useless question and needs no answer. But the Sufi along with the deeper devotees of other faiths seeks the conscious realization of the everlasting process.

GITHA: Therefore, Nimaz, as the first lesson, lays the false aspect of one's being helpless as it is and surrendered before that aspect of the self which is All in All, gracious and most powerful.

TASAWWUF: As has been explained, and will be explained further, the very words in the Nimaz have meanings and effects on all planes of being. If we assume the first words of Saum: "Praise be to

Thee, most Supreme God," we already have the attitude of praise and the presentation of God being All Being. The attitude of praise is presented at many places in the teachings, under the caption of "Prayer" and otherwise. The second item as God being most Supreme, should make one reflect on this subject. But the supremacy of God includes His Graciousness, Mercy, Compassion and Love as well as "most powerful." This becomes realized both in the prayerful attitude and in meditation.

The prayerful attitude require a laying down of self. True, at the lower level there are prayers in which the devotee seeks, but in the higher levels the seeking becomes unimportant if it has limitations, and all important if it does not.

GITHA: Therefore, Nimaz, to the devotee, is a moral culture, to the philosopher it is a spiritual progress, but to the mystic it is the first and most essential process to attain to self-realization.

TASAWWUF: **Devotee**. There is a vast amount of literature on this subject. The real devotee seldom needs any of it. The real devotee is carried by his own attitude.

Philosopher. All writings under TASAWWUF cover this subject.

Mystic. Mystics see the prayer as a whole, the different facets of it as sentences and phrases; even the words themselves. Prayer increases his inner and outer appreciations of the whole prayer and its parts. But the mystic is more capable than anyone else of utilizing the whole prayer, the sentences, the phrases and words as subjects for meditation and contemplation. In this is the perfection and ultimate fulfillment of prayer.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 2

Nimaz (2)

GITHA: Nimaz—the prayer—is an inherent attribute in every soul of man.

TASAWWUF: There are two aspects of prayer: praise and petition for guidance. As petition has often been decayed into appeals for possessions and power, many people have come to reject prayer. No doubt there are many kinds of prayers which are of very limited value. But this does not hold to the essence of prayer.

GITHA: Whatever and whoever appears to man beautiful, superior, precious, wins him—and he surrenders himself, conscious of his imperfection and dependence upon the object or being that has conquered him.

TASAWWUF: *Gayan* says, “All surrender to beauty willingly and to power unwillingly.” The whole history of man shows this tendency to worship. As scientists become more willing to learn the points of view of the illiterate and less literate people, they find plenty of evidence to support this. We can even see it in habits of standing, bowing, kowtowing, etc.

In actual worship—indeed in the ceremonial worship of all faiths—we find this demonstrated as if fulfilling psychic law. Indeed it is fulfilling psychic law: thus the head bowed in or out of worship.

GITHA: It is, therefore, for this reason that there have been so many objects, such as the sun, the moon, planets, animals, birds, spirits, and men, that different individuals have worshipped, adoring whichever appealed to them according to their evolution.

TASAWWUF: We find this all over the world, among all sorts of people from the low austroloids to the most advanced people. Among the ancient Egyptians, and to some extent among the Hindus, we may find many forms and objects of worship within the general religious social order.

No doubt some skeptics and philosophical people have refused or been unable to recognize values in all these institutions. But as man has become better informed and more tolerant, he finds it is very difficult to scoff at peoples as a whole, and institutions as a whole.

Sufism has been called the religion of nature. One aspect of this is to find wisdom in nature; another aspect is to find the elements of nature as worthy of worship, either because of themselves or because of their attributes. Thus one may see light in the sun and moon; beauty in a tree or flower; prowess in a lion or horse, and many worthy attributes manifesting in many creatures.

GITHA: But the inspired souls have, from the first day of creation, realized that all the objects and beings which bent the head of the admirer are in appearance many, but in existence, one.

TASAWWUF: It is therefore held by Sufis and others that Adam was the first prophet. Qur'an teaches that God has never left humanity without guidance. The guidance for everyone is in accord with his understanding. Therefore there is no people without some guidance, though this may not be clear to others.

RYAZAT: Bending the head is an aspect of admiration and surrender; also humility. Admiration and humility may by instinct bend the head, but if a person needs discipline in this direction, he is instructed to keep the head bent both in prayer and otherwise.

GITHA: Therefore that One is idealized as the Supreme Being, as the Sovereign of both worlds, as God. When all worshipped many, they worshipped the One, and have taught, under whatever religion it may have been, the same Truth, bowing to that One, Who alone deserves all kinds of bows.

TASAWWUF: If we examine the oldest complete institutional religion of the world—that is, that of ancient Egypt, we find exactly that. The more we recover the knowledges of this wonderful ancient land, the more we find this to be true. There is differentiated and undifferentiated light, but it is the same light. It manifests under a multitude of names and forms, but it is always the same light. Some aspects of this may be seen in the ultra-microscope; other aspects of it may be seen in the expanded and visionary consciousness of every member of the human race.

Pythagoras is said to have studied in ancient Egypt. On the surface his institutions seem quite different. But it is always the same: the worship of the One under the many and even under the various numbers: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 ... and under the various geometrical forms: point, straight line, intersecting lines, triangles, squares and quadrangles, stars, circles, etc., etc. There is a tradition of Pythagoras that he said, "God geometrizes." In the Sufi teaching the meanings of numbers and geometrical elements are explained.

To understand the meaning of the One and the Many, the Dot and the Circle, etc., one may examine the ancient religions. The Hebrew people were like the Dot, holding with firmness to the One but not giving ample room for the One to become the Many. Other peoples, who we call heathens, while not understanding the One did worship God under unlimited numbers of names and forms. The Sufi sees both of them as right.

The Indian religion or Dharma has institutions covering the worship of God, so to speak, in an endless variety of names and forms. At the same time, the superior forms of Vedanta picture the One excellently, and perhaps perfectly. Thus there is no fundamental difference between the Sufic and Vedantic philosophies as such.

After Moin-ed-din Chishti came to India he was found in communion with leading Indian sages. The impact of this is only slowly affecting the world but it is affecting the world.

Jelal-ud-din Rumi in a sense restored the Pythagorean mysteries in his dance forms, in his institutions, in his disciplines and in his inclusion of Muslim and non-Muslim alike as the Beloved Ones of God.

GITHA: As there have been so many kinds of people in the world, so many customs and manners, one bowed differently from the other. In one country, people bent down, in another country they folded the hands, in one country people knelt down, in the other they prostrated themselves.

TASAWWUF: This subject is explained in the *Gathas*, especially those on “Superstitions, Customs and Beliefs,” the commentaries thereon, and in the general principles of psychic behavior.

GITHA: The Nimaz, therefore, was a form adopted to reconcile with all and combine all customs in one form of worship, that they might not fight on the forms of worship when all worship the One and Same God.

TASAWWUF: No doubt every prophet wished his followers to become universal. It was first necessary to recognize the One God behind multiplicity. Then it was necessary that all mankind unite. Peoples whom we call heathens often united, while people whom we call “believers” often remained separated. Sometimes customs united, sometimes worship.

The Universal Worship presents the idea of all devotees joining. It would put into practice what many call “the brotherhood of man.” But “the brotherhood of man” remains as a sentimental phrase unless it is implemented by some active institution. Nothing in the world is necessarily wrong. Things do not fall into place unless wisely directed.

With the coming of the New Age, the tendency toward real brotherhood is manifested. At the same time there is a departure from the spirit of devotion. No doubt devotion has been necessary to bring and keep the spirit of man close to the Spirit of God. But devotion is not a substitute for morality, and often, piety hardens a man as much as sin does.

It is also true that Brotherhood remains a mere sentiment unless it is hallowed by some institution, by some ritual, by some activity. As the spirit of man awakens, by its very nature it will become devotional. Thus believer and unbeliever both may join in devotion.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 3

Nimaz (3)

GITHA: For the rise of every object or affair, its highest point should touch the utmost depth.

TASAWWUF: Thus the scripture says, "The first shall be last and the last shall be first," or "I am Alpha and Omega." The failure of traditional religion has been in the intellectual and practical separation of the highest point from the utmost depth. Then religion itself has become subject to criticism. Jesus has said, "Whatsoever ye do to the least of these my creatures, ye do it also unto me."

One of the purposes of the Message of the day is to restore through religion. That is to say, to reawaken mankind to the Truth from which religion is derived.

As thought by its very nature seems unable to overcome the discrimination between "highest point" and "lowest depth" other means must be used. These other means include heart, intuition, and worship.

GITHA: The soul, which has descended on earth from its existence in the heavens and which has presumed for the time that it is this material body, rises again to its pristine glory on laying the highest part of the presumed self upon the ground.

TASAWWUF: This is a practice which is found among the devotees of all faiths. Priestcraft seeking to maintain an artificial prowess has misinformed their devotees, falsely teaching that it alone has this knowledge.

In the Hebraic ritual there is a prayer, "We bow our heads and bend our knees." **This is said.** It is said without being usually done by the congregation. Indeed the Christian religion, although

presumably accepting the Hebraic tradition, has relegated the bowing of the head into an esoteric ritual for the few. The many therefore do not benefit from it.

We also find it in many Buddhist and Hindu rituals, but without proper explanation. Mohammed coming as the Seal of the divine messengers made it incumbent on all devotees to bend their heads. He thus corrected a criticism of the Hebraic religion that its devotees were “stiff-necked.”

In Islam there are two aspects of this: shajda as part of personal and collective prayer; and shajda as a special disciplinary practice to further devotion, humility and self-surrender.

RYAZAT: To promote the spirit of Nimaz in the western world, there is a practice of shajda with head touching the ground and arms down on the floor, or earth, the devotee saying, “Ya Allah, I surrender to Thee and Thee alone,” and then raising the hands and head, but without changing the posture otherwise, repeating, “And Thou dost raise me spiritually.”

This is a special practice for mureeds only, usually for khilvat, but may be given to those of good morals but with too much pride; or to those who are in bewilderment from any and all causes.

GITHA: The mechanism of the body is kept in order by the regular action of the breath through every part of the body and by the regular circulation of the blood in all parts of the body, which can be properly done by the highest part of the body, the head, being placed on the ground.

TASAWWUF: We may give many reasons for each aspect of prayer, exoteric or esoteric. They may be explained by either psychic or physical laws. If these practices were given to the world as “yoga,” they would undoubtedly attract many people. The question is, how do we help people and solve problems? We cannot all learn to stand on our heads, and there is very little spiritual or moral gain by being able to do this. Gymnastics is undoubtedly beneficial to body and sometimes minds also. But it does not enable man to control the ego (nufs).

GITHA: The world is constituted, in its living beings, of egos—one ego assuming several forms and becoming several egos.

TASAWWUF: The ego is the nexus of form. While in reality multiplicity is in Unity, yet the manifestation is as if all the elements of multiplicity were separate.

Much of the world’s culture has been based on the presumed separateness of each item and atom of manifestation. This has led to the opposite position that all is illusory. Things are illusory only in the sense that they are separate. This means delusion rather than illusion, for in another sense everything is real and must be considered as real.

There is no good in misusing the word “maya” as meaning illusion. Maya means measurable and apparently separate. That is why devotees repeat “Toward the One ... united with all.”

GITHA: Among this variety of egos, every one claims perfection, for it is the nature of the real ego within. Upon examination, this ego proves to be imperfect, for it is the imperfect division of the perfect ego.

TASAWWUF: In one sense unity is perfection and division is imperfection. When Jesus said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," he did not impose a subjective standard of perfection. The Father in heaven is perfect; he represents the unity. He does not represent division.

In another sense, all mankind has been created in the divine image. In another sense, we are all bodhisattvas, which is to say, perfectable beings. The work of the guide in Sufism is to bring out the perfections of others. It is therefore not surprising that many people regard themselves as perfect, for they are at least in essence perfectable. It is only division that brings out the imperfections

GITHA: It is not perfect, yet it claims perfection in its ignorance, and longs for perfection when wise.

TASAWWUF: The English word "perfect" does not necessarily mean "without flaw." It means having gone through experience, having done something, having something done to one's self; and the result of this has been a changed and changing personality.

At the same time, everyone as a child of God, as a Beloved one of God, as a manifestation of combinations of attributes of God is perfect in essence.

GITHA: This perfection the imperfect ego can only attain by practicing, in the way of worship ...

TASAWWUF: This way of worship includes prayer and other devotions. It does not stop there. In Saum it says, "Draw us closer to Thee every moment of our lives." This can become a reality. The devotion is mostly just the first step. It can also become the last step. It may include all the steps between.

When the great Sufi saint Junaid of Bagdad became an old man, he used to say, "I have nothing left but a few prayers." This great master of esotericism realized that the extension of devotional and disciplinary exercises had the single purpose of God-realization. With the experience of God-realization, all else became vanity.

GITHA: ... and of life in the world, in which he may show such humility, meekness and gentleness that this false pretension which has formed the imperfect ego may be crushed; and then what remains will be the perfect ego.

TASAWWUF: The wise Solomon has said, "All is vanity." But what is vanity? Every time anyone expresses himself, it is in some sense, vanity. Sometimes even non-expression is vanity. When someone tells another not to express himself, that may be worse vanity.

Western people often quote Chinese writings to prove that something is true. They find it very

difficult to behave according to Confucian standards or Taoist standards. The emphasis on the exotic is itself both vanity and egotism. Every people have had their teachings, their guidance, their divine messenger. All the messages contain the teaching of humility, meekness and gentleness. The priestcraft of each group denies this to and of others, thus impairing its own positive proclamations. Fortunately mankind is recognizing universality and the evil influences of dividers diminishes.

GITHA: Nimaz is the first lesson for this attainment.

TASAWWUF: Nimaz in some sense is a common requirement for all devotees. If there should be some exception it is usually for those who pray apart, or keep their devotional spirit hidden. Spiritual development, even to the highest stages, even to the grade where man becomes a master or an adept, does not excuse him from pursuing a path of devotion.

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Series I: Number 4

Wazifas

GITHA: Wazifa means the repetition of a word, and this has been the secret of the Oriental mystics, practiced by them for thousands of years.

TASAWWUF: The idea of repetition is impressed upon the youth of many western lands in their school yells. They never regard them as wazifas or mantrams. Wazifas and mantrams are very much the same; only the language differs.

No doubt many peoples have tended to repeat words from other languages which may be unintelligible to them. They feel some value in the sounds themselves. Often these sounds are used in children's games. Jesus spoke against the "vain repetitions" of foreign peoples. Evidently the same habit was found in his time to repeat strange words as if they had special value. The same is also the theme of *The Frogs* of Aristophanes. From the same source we have such words as "hullabaloo" and "abracadabra" which have definite meanings in the Semitic languages but not in the Indo-Germanic languages.

Even today we find many people believing that Tibetan mantrams have special values. There is little evidence for this. But there is evidence that the **Shema** of the Hebrews had psychic merit. The **Shema** is one of the basic themes of the Hebrew Kabbalah. Many have been intrigued by the Kabbalah but really do not know it, for the Kabbalah is based on the **Shema** and the **Shema** itself on the existence **God**.

GITHA: In Wazifa such words are used which have a certain meaning for a physical, mental, moral or spiritual purpose. In the Vedanta it is called Mantra Yoga, and the importance of this Yoga is great, for its effect is quick.

TASAWWUF: Many people have been deluded into presuming that the term “mantra yoga” has special merit. There is no more merit in the words “mantra yoga” than in the word science. The merit of mantra yoga is in its practice; the merit of science is in its experience.

Physical. Sometimes the sounds have special effect. The difference between traditional and modern Sufism is that today we accept words and sounds connected with various languages but always connected with the essence (Zat) or attributes (Sifat) of divine existence. These sounds—not only OM, but other sounds, especially HU, seem to have been drawn from the empirium itself.

Mental. This comes when the Wazifa has a suggestion.

Moral. Concentration on the merits of Allah produces by reflection the same merits in man.

Spiritual. When the Wazifa is the means to union with God or even direct awareness of Allah, it fulfills this purpose.

GITHA: There are words used in a Wazifa, the effect of which is in their numerical value; there are words also which have been either practiced or have been spoken by great inspired souls, which have their value.

TASAWWUF: In a certain sense any word spoken with meaning a number of times establishes an accommodation in the Mind-world. The repetitions of words which have been used many times, even by ordinary people, increases the psychic power in them. This psychic power is somewhat lost or eroded when words are used superficially or in derision. But there is also a higher psychic power when the original sound words of great masters and prophets are repeated.

The term **Allah** did not originate with Mohammed. It is a very ancient term and probably came from the prophet Abraham. There are words or attributes which have values from their intrinsic sound or meaning. But words, phrases and sentences which originated from prophets and are repeated in forms as similar to those used by the prophet have a special power in them. That is why the **Fateha** of Islam has been so effective and several of the most important wazifas have been drawn from it.

There is also the consideration of **Cyclic Law**. This becomes effective when certain numbers of repetitions are used. We see this cyclic law reflected variously in the days of the week, in the principles found in astrology, in the rhythms of music, dancing and poetry. Corresponding number, multiples of them and larger numbers are used in devotional repetitions. The effectiveness has been corroborated in the lives of many celebrated devotees.

GITHA: Sometimes Wazifa is practiced for the accomplishment of a certain definite aim. In such cases it should be understood as good and pure, otherwise perhaps the aim will be accomplished, but the result will be bad.

TASAWWUF: It is often the spirit of devotion that makes the effect good. The repetition of a school yell is not necessarily good or bad. The chanting of repetitive phrases by a mob will be effective but not necessarily good. The repetitions of the devotee may often be effective and constructive.

****(This draft breaks off at this point)****

Further drafts continue.

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.

Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 4b

Wazifa

GITHA: Wazifa means the repetition of a word, and this has been the secret of the Oriental mystics practiced by them for thousands of years. In Wazifa such words are used which have a certain meaning for a physical, mental, moral or spiritual purpose. In Vedanta it is called Mantra Yoga and the importance of this Yoga is great, for its effect is quick.

TASAWWUF: A great deal has been published on this subject, appearing in *The Sufi Message* literature since the time when these lessons were first given for disciples. In addition to that a number of books have been published, some very valuable from sacred literature and traditions, some not so valuable being commentaries and opinions of authors who have not submitted themselves to the practices about which they write.

In addition to this there has arisen a whole generation of young attracted to Mantra Yoga, who find delight in Mantra Yoga, and even make a play of it. The repetition of the Names of God is so important that even light considerations of sacred phrases have advantages not always found in traditional prayers and rituals.

The considerations of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual also appear in the literature, often from the standpoint of inducing greater response to the corresponding forms of magnetism and also to enable each person to himself become a source or transmitter of cosmic energies. Thus it is no longer a matter of philosophical or dialectical discussion.

Philosophies about Mantras, not accompanied by proper repetitions, have little value. Repetition of sacred phrases, even without any verbal or other explanations, often open the doors to the recesses of heart.

GITHA: There are words used in a Wazifa, the effect of which is in their numerical value; there are words also which have been either practiced or spoken by inspired souls, which have their value.

TASAWWUF: We have first to consider what has been called cyclic law. For example, in fairy folklore there is a saying "say it three times and it is so." Sufis are generally found to use rhythms of ten, twenty, twenty-one, thirty-three, forty, one hundred and one, etc. No doubt the numbers have been derived from ancient occult sciences as that of the Pythagoreans. Although the tradition is that Pythagoras said "God geometrizes," the Jewish mystical science known as gematria has to do with the numerical value of letters, words and sounds. This indeed is the basis of much that has been called *Kabbalah*. Among the great Sufi schools, that of the Kadiris have the symbol of the "Rose of Abdul Kadir-i-Gilani." The petals of this rose are used to represent definite numbers of Wazifas repeated by the devotee. They are woven in such a fashion that they correspond to the dharani of India.

Sacred phrases have been transmitted in all mystical schools. They may have arisen from words expressed by the teacher or words concerning the teacher. The former have a greater value. Their psychic power is tremendous. They may have been a complete sacred prayer, a phrase or sentence from a sacred prayer, or they may have been sacred phrases apart from prayers. This is particularly true of the Wazifas which arose in Islamic culture, from the words of the Prophet Mohammed, and endowed also with the psychic power of utterances from a Messenger of God.

They have in them all the importance of magnetism arising from suggestion. Many times they also have the importance of sound which has cosmic value. For example take the two sounds **Ya** and **Hu**. There have been people that repeated Ya Hu. One of these became the Ya hu-dim, which is to say Jews. But there were also other people that have repeated the sound Hu and also sounds akin to Allah.

A phrase arising from a Divine Messenger has several values. Its very nature points toward God-realization. The multitude of its repetitions are marked in the cosmos itself. The devotee becomes

attuned to this tremendous cosmic magnetism. Therefore it is often more beneficial to repeat phrases that have been uttered many times than to use familiar terms which are translations of these phrases but do not have the same echoes in the universe

GITHA: Sometimes Wazifa is practiced for the accomplishment of a certain definite aim. In such cases it should be understood as good and pure, otherwise perhaps the aim will be accomplished but the result will be bad.

TASAWWUF: This is the difference between spiritualism and magic. In spiritualism (Ruhaniat) the principle is that one becomes more and more aware of God, chiefly through His attributes, for the accomplishment of the purposes of life. In magic the purport is often personal. Thus in the commandments of the Hebrew faith it is said "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord Thy God in vain." The Hebrew term here is Jehovah or Ya-Hu-Va. We might call this a Mantric term. In fact to avoid any difficulty here the people of the Hebrew religion stopped using it entirely and substituted a particular attributive word **Adonai** which means almost the same as the English "Lord," the Hindu "Sri," and the Greek "Kyrios."

We see another example of it in many parts of the world when college students and rooters at athletic games repeat "Ra-rah" not knowing they are actually using a Divine epithet, but not for a necessarily noble purpose.

On the path to God there are many particular attributes formulated as Wazifas to help the seeker to attain an immediate or an ultimate purpose.

GITHA: Among the different purposes for which Wazifas is used are such as: increase of means, success in a certain affair ...

TASAWWUF: Thus "Ya Azeem" may be used to help both the student and the businessman. It literally means something like "O Power" but this is more the power of the universe descending on the devotee the power of wisdom or grace rather than the material strength. For the latter "Allaho Akbar" is used.

The whole attitude in life may be "In unison with the Will of God, we ..." So failure is not necessary. Besides the teacher takes it upon himself to try to help the disciple in all his adventures as well as in accomplishing the main purpose of his life. The teacher often considers he is to blame when the pupil falters. At the same time the success of the pupil may be the sign of wisdom or prowess to both teacher and pupil.

GITHA: ... clearing the path of a certain difficulty ...

TASAWWUF: For this "Ya Fattah" is repeated, generally with motion using the hands as if clearing the way. This movement and corresponding movements in the use of any Wazifa adds psychic power to effort. The proper use of psychic power also belongs to Ruhaniat. This also means

utilizing the power of suggestion as appears in the literature, especially the works on psychology. In other words the Wazifa is an application of "When man walks one step toward Allah, Allah walks ten steps toward man."

If one only knew it there is all perfection and wisdom in Allah, but the way of knowing is not limited to any intellectual attainment. It operates on all planes.

GITHA: ... increasing charm and personality, appearance and atmosphere ...

TASAWWUF: The repetition of the phrase "Ya Jamil" may be taken as an example here. We **say** "God is the perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty." Now how to apply it? It is applied when a particular attribute is verbalized as devotion and used as Wazifa. When the world knows this it will not be necessary to purchase chemicals to beautify one. The alchemy of Allah is vastly superior to any chemicals, has no commercial value, does not produce karmic reactions and samskaras, and brings out the latent faculties which come from the soul itself into physical and mental manifestation. This is one example of what Jesus Christ has said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

GITHA: ... developing power, such as psychic, occult, healing and magnetic power.

TASAWWUF: There are many Wazifas which have been used in various schools of Dervishes (that is, Sufis) which have been used through the ages. Some of these are quite selective. Some of them have direct intellectual, psychological or moral import.

Besides these there are the **Ninety-Nine** "Names of God" which form the rosary of "Pearls of Faith." Most of these are effective. They are like specialized medicines to be used in special cases. The Caliphs and Murshids in the Sufi Orders are given special training in this field.

Elements of psychic science are offered to members of the Elementary Study Circle. Also we have considered this in the studies on Nimaz. Even in the lessons on the prayers with movements, which are offered at Bayat, the importance of these movements is taught and stressed. This work is further enhanced in the Dervish Dances.

Other aspects of developing power appear in the literature on psychology and in the Githas on psychology called **Amaliat**. The members of the Advanced Study Circle are given specific and general training along this line.

Also in the book *Health* there is the philosophy of the development of both healing and magnetic power. This may be done either by the spiritual teacher or the healer (Shifayats) and Khifayats. These latter are often chosen because of their magnetic and healing ability. Healers who have been successful because of their love and tenderness are also trained to develop magnetism which balances them and prevents their loss of power.

GITHA: The Wazifa is also practiced for turning an enemy into a friend ...

TASAWWUF: There are several ways of doing this. Often the Darood (Toward the One, etc.) or invocation helps bring this desired condition. Meditating together or breathing in an atmosphere of a spiritual teacher is like a communion. The teacher consciously acts as a harmonizer.

But there are also specific Wazifas which help produce this result. For example, “Ya Haleemo”—this mellows those who have ill will, hatred, envy or jealousy. It also helps produce humility, meekness and mildness.

“Ishk Allah, mahbood lillah” awakens tenderness in the heart and consideration for all people. It is a very beautiful Wazifa.

GITHA: ... helping another in his prosperity and success ...

TASAWWUF: This practice is: **“Bismillah, Er-Rahman, Er-Rahim,”** which has been translated by Hazrat Inayat Khan as “By the Name of God Who is the Most Merciful and Compassionate.” This is not basically different from the usual translation but as God is Supreme we can only properly use superlatives with respect to Him.

Hazrat Inayat Khan has said, “To whom you wish to see successful in this and that world, **“Bismillah Er-Rahman, Er-Rahim”** brings great success in all undertakings. Unimaginable things are done by recitation and repetition of this. Also develops all attributes of humanity, places you in connection with all Murshids in chain, from whom you receive constant help. This makes a person pious, honest and virtuous.”

Secretary’s Note (Wali Ali): *This concludes draft version b which is clearly the most recently written draft of this particular number (#4) of the commentary. The version written by Murshid Samuel L. Lewis at an earlier time now follows in its entirety.*

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 4C

Wazifa

GITHA: Wazifa means the repetition of a word, and this has been the secret of the Oriental mystics practiced by them for thousands of years.

TASAWWUF: Although Christ spoke of “vain repetitions” he did not declare that all repetitions were vain. In his day the Hebrew people practiced the repetitions of certain sounds and phrases foremost among them being the “Shema.” In their sacred and mystical literature the “Shema,” the declaration of the Unity of God, is considered in almost the same manner and spirit as is their particular declaration, the Kalama, among the Muslims.

There were people of those days who had appropriated Hebrew words and used them without knowing the meaning, just as today we find the same thing going on. Whenever there is a pretender to some secret doctrine, he borrows words of an unknown or little used language, Hebrew or Sanskrit or even Tibetan and has his credulous followers repeat phrases without any depth of feeling or meaning.

If we study closely the religions of ancient times we shall find that they all had certain principles in common although their observations and practices might be quite different. These principles have been preserved by the esoteric or Inner School.

GITHA: In Wazifa such words are used which have a certain meaning for a physical, mental, moral or spiritual purpose. In the Vedanta it is called Mantra Yoga and the importance of this Yoga is great, for its effect is quick.

TASAWWUF: The people of modern times have been prone to adopt the Sanskrit words without always knowing the inner significance of them. There were verbal repetitions, those repeated alone or in group with cadence or chant or even song. Each had an intended purpose. The very sound of the phrase often had a physical or psychic effect. Thus “Allaho Akbar” itself requires a certain strength of voice and feeling and “Alhamdu lillah” another quality and feeling.

Each attribute of God—or in earlier times each name of a god—by repetition, concentration and feeling helped to induce and produce in the devotee some divine quality. He became assimilated to divinity in that manner. And the same is true today, as Master Ali said, “Say Allah and Allah thou shalt become.”

GITHA: There are words used in a Wazifa the effect of which is in their numerical value; there are words also which have been practiced or have been spoken by great inspired souls which have their value.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, a certain number of repetitions seems to have a definite effect on the mind. There is a saying, reputed to come from the fairies, “Say it three times and it is so.” The inner meaning is that in the world of mind, by saying or repeating in thought an idea a definite number of times it would objectify on that plane. A certain number of repetitions builds up a thought-form or thought-force and a certain number of repetitions definitely increases its scope.

Among the Kadiris there is in symbolical form the “Rose of Abdul Kadir-i-Gilani.” The petals of this rose are supposed to represent a definite number of repetitions of various Wazifas repeated by the talib. As he continues them and completes them he weaves that rose which is very much in the manner of the Dharani of the Shingon Buddhists who also practice Mantra Yoga. They have a different name for it but the same goal.

The sacred phrases which have been handed down in all the mystical schools were originally uttered by the divine Messenger or by some Rishi. Many of those of the Sufis have been traditionally handed down from the time of Mohammed although in principle they are older and words have been borrowed from Hebrew and Egyptian, perhaps also from Chaldaic. In these times the Message has been offered in English and although the English is a very involved and quite a derivative idiom, the power of the word of the teacher is indeed great and confers blessings to the pupil who repeats them. Thus the Gayatri have been particularly emphasized that their repetition may help those who desire a prayer or sacred phrases in their own language.

GITHA: Sometimes Wazifa is practiced for the accomplishment of a certain definite aim. In such cases it should be understood as good and pure, otherwise perhaps the aim will be accomplished, but the result will be bad.

TASAWWUF: It is not that the result will be bad so much as that it can not be controlled. There is no doubt that people have prayed for most selfish purposes and that many of the elements of religion have been used magically. In the text books of magic one often finds the sacred phrases of religion. But the Sufi also prays, “Use me for the purpose that Thy Wisdom chooseth.” If this be his keynote, no great harm can be done. And it is always much better to invoke the name of God than otherwise.

In the ancient times there was supposed to be a god presiding over each attribute and also over each aspect of social life. One prayed to that god for the attaining of that attribute for success in that department. But Mohammed showed that all these attributes belonged to Allah, the One and Only Being. And in Qur'an there are supposed to be ninety-nine sacred names or attributes which form the *Pearls of the Faith*. So if one has any desire or need he repeats the name of God along with that attribute, hoping thereby to develop that quality in his own being which will make for success in his hoped for attainment.

GITHA: Among the different purposes for which Wazifa is used are such as: increase of means, success in a certain affair ...

TASAWWUF: The material problem is often one of the first which the pupil places before the teacher. In ancient times the pupil used to vouchsafe his wealth to the teacher especially upon entering a Khankah. The rich gave and the poor received. It was not exactly a communism. The teacher took or gave accordingly as he felt the pupil's needs. But today we live in a different manner and while the teacher wants to help in what way he can, commercial relationships and effort upon the part of the teacher which would prevent the pupil from finding his own self-

expression is unworthy. Often it solves the material problem, often it leaves the spiritual problem untouched.

Yet success is valued on the sacred path because success shows the overcoming of obstacles. It does not matter whether one sees these obstacles as in himself or outside of himself or in life. It becomes a sort of game well worth playing. It is only after the success has been achieved that one can abandon the fruits of action. Too many abandon without there being any fruits. This is the difference between the material poverty and the spiritual poverty. The true fakir can achieve and does, but he remains detached from wealth.

GITHA: ... learning the path of a certain difficulty ...

TASAWWUF: When the mureed is given his first Bayat or soon afterwards he is given the sacred phrase (or phrases) which will benefit him most at his stage of development. Although the teaching may be looked upon as metaphysical and some metaphysics is taught, nevertheless the inner life does not include the abandonment of the world when one enters the path of Sufism. Rather one faces the world. When a difficulty is cleared up that means a solid advancement.

GITHA: ... increasing charm in personality, appearance and atmosphere ...

TASAWWUF: It does not matter whether one comes to the path with a selfish or unselfish motive. Often selfishness covers unselfishness and often seeming unselfishness may be a form of egotism. Underneath there is the cry of the soul. The problem that the disciple brings is only his understanding of the real problem. Sufism being the philosophy of love, harmony and beauty, seeks to bring out these principles in its students.

Whatever one's conception of heaven be, it is right that he should try to realize it upon earth. The best abandonment comes when he is sure of the realization. It is no surrender to give up what one cannot obtain. This is weakness and it is easy to be weak. The Sufi, in developing characteristics within himself helps the whole humanity and spreads radiance and blessing all around.

GITHA: ... developing power, such as psychic, occult, healing and magnetic power.

TASAWWUF: This seems to involve a contradiction. The disciple is warned that if he seeks these things he should not enter the path. That is true. Nevertheless that which is his natural inclination or faculty should be developed, perfected. No one has any attribute or ability unless it is there by Grace of God, or unless it has been woven into the seed-personality upon the astral plane before the soul has come to earth. Besides there are many practical problems to be met with in the world such as casting out obsessions, curing mental and physical diseases, solving psychological knots.

In addition to that there are people who have preserved faculties which were used in ancient times to keep a rapport between this world and the next, so to speak. Talibs who have such ability are given all the help possible in Sufism for their own self-development and for service to the Cause.

GITHA: The Wazifa is also practiced in turning an enemy into a friend ...

TASAWWUF: When the Wazifa is held in thought it becomes Darood. Either Wazifa or Darood may be used in any accomplishment for the sake of love or harmony or beauty, or for protection of oneself or another. For instance, holding the thought or repeating the phrase, "Ishk Allah, Mahbood lillah" disperses the fog of enmity, and if not quickly, then slowly. But if the enemy must be overcome first, then "Allaho Akbar" will suffice.

GITHA: ... helping another in his prosperity and success...

TASAWWUF: The same lessons which are applied for self-protection or self-development may be used to protect or help another. It is always the appeal to God which is stressed. God rains blessings upon all alike, it is the same rain of His Mercy. So by a slight change of concentration or by keeping the needy one in mind during the sacred period the blessings (Baraka) of esotericism may be directed toward him. This idea is offered in the instructions on healing by a simple change of the phrases used, by repeating the suitable Wazifa, the blessing may come in the manner desired.

GITHA: ... bringing victory during war ...

TASAWWUF: If one has to war, then one should keep God with him in his heart even more. This is his best protection. Nor is it wrong to pray for one's nation. If the nation is following Dharma the prayer is more effective, if its karma is against it, the prayer will still help. But the Wazifas are powerful practices and caused most of the victories of the Islamic nations in earlier times. Most ancient peoples repeated sacred phrases before going into battle.

This brings up a question of magic and no doubt the line is thin. But a master-mind whose heart is fixed with God has every right, even a duty to protect his fellow-citizens. If he is born or dwells within a nation and has the development and wisdom he lives among that people that he may aid and protect them. Even the ancient Hebrew prophets did that at times, and the Sufis, who were their successors, later. The persecution of holy men has brought the downfall of nations.

GITHA: ... releasing sufferers from pain.

TASAWWUF: This includes the whole line of healing and it really applies to all forms of pain.

GITHA: Besides the above-mentioned purposes, there may be many other aims and objects for which Wazifa is practiced. In these cases the Wazifa is called "Amal," (singular), and "Amalayat," (plural).

TASAWWUF: These practices enable one to awaken all the mental faculties of himself or another. And while they may be regarded as the practices of an individual they are really the practices of an individual in behalf of a group, whether it includes the disciples (if he be a teacher), or particular

people (if he be a Wali), or every one he meets (if he be a buzurg).

GITHA: When Wazifa is practiced for unkind and selfish purposes, especially such selfish ends in which harm and injury are done to another, it comes under the heading of black magic, which ruins the life of the one who practices it and the one on whom it is practiced.

TASAWWUF: For in calling upon God it is God within Who calls also, although the talib may not know it. And whatever one seeks it is like the rain, it falls upon oneself or another. Besides, any concentration is made more effective through the use of a sacred name. However the one who is selfish has more difficulty in repeating the names of God, or he uses them along with other names. Among the Sufis the spirit of devotion is kept in the foreground that the heart and character remain pure.

GITHA: The proper use of Wazifa is to practice it for the release of oneself or another from trouble, or for an inspiration to oneself or to another, or for the development of devotion or spirituality.

TASAWWUF: In other words there are sacred phrases which fit every need and the spiritual teacher studies their value. But what a mureed has once had he may use at all times for himself or for another. And the secret of the relationship of "self" and "other" has already been explained.

GITHA: For such purposes, repetition of the Sacred Names of God and His attributes is advisable.

TASAWWUF: And if one does not know them, one can always look them up in the books explaining Qur'an or Islam or in *Pearls of the Faith*. There are the ninety-nine beautiful names of God. If one does not know them in Arabic or one does not wish to repeat them in that language, he may use his own or any tongue. The spirit with which they are employed is most important.

GITHA: On the contrary, to accomplish harmful and selfish purposes, the wicked names of the evil spirits are repeated by those who work black magic.

TASAWWUF: For the sacred name of God can not be repeated indefinitely to be used against His Creatures. The one who desires power selfishly has to draw to selfishness, to nufs. All movements of nufs are inward toward a narrow point, while the invocation of Allah spreads radiance, luster and blessing in all directions. The words used for the spreading of blessings cannot be profitably employed for the opposite purpose.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 5

Wazifa (2)

GITHA: Every spoken word is a re-echo of thought and every thought is the re-echo of an emotion. And, as the activity from within manifests on the surface, so the word spoken takes its reverse process: it is reproduced on the mind, and from the mind it is reproduced on the heart, the factor of feeling.

TASAWWUF: The relationship of thought, speech and emotion has so impressed the new school of Anti-Aristotelian philosophy that they refuse to regard them as separate and especially decry the dualistic view which has separated thought and emotion. While no doubt thought shapes our words, the quality is derived from the emotion behind them. Whatever emotion is uppermost will manifest in and through the quality of voice.

When a word is spoken, the feeling and thought from within touch the outer plane and immediately re-echo or react inwardly. Whatever one says touches the mind, then the heart of the listener. This is often obvious, but it also touches his own mind. The proof of that can be seen in that people saying a thing a number of times begin to believe it is true. They will read a book a number of times and if they have a certain feeling of reverence, of surrender, or credulity, the impression will become so great that they will not be able to criticize it or find any faults or weaknesses in it.

GITHA: That which comes from within comes involuntarily, and what enters within from without enters voluntarily.

TASAWWUF: There are two aspects of this involuntary movement. The first comes to the majority of people who are under karma. They are under the influence of the elements and whatever element is there in the breath, for whatever reasons it is there, will produce the emotion which will dominate the personality for that period (wakt) be it long or short. Yes, there will be changes in elemental influence and also in emotion and sometimes one can select an emotion, but if so, he does not control the reaction thereto.

The other aspect comes when one is under grace, and whereas in the former case the heart was covered with a shadow, here the heart is covered with light, it is like being veiled with light. Then often one will say in inspiration or under impression something for which he has had little reason, given little thought.

Nevertheless it is possible to check impulse and to speak just such words as will enable one to know something of the effect. For all that comes from within does not have to be changed into words and expressed on the material plane. That is because of the impulse of Urouj. The regulation and control of it helps produce the master-mind.

GITHA: Therefore, Wazifa is taught by Sufis as a voluntary production of a certain thing on the mind and in the heart, mind being powerful to produce that which is impressed upon it from within and without, and the heart being a still more powerful factor to produce that with which it is impressed from within and without.

TASAWWUF: In the studies and practice of Concentration one learns how to handle impressions. In the use of Wazifa one learns how to develop impressionability, in other words sensitiveness. The atoms and molecules and vibrations which constitute the inner heart have been drawn from the divine light and contain the essence of life. That life is covered in the ordinary person. Calling upon the name of God reawakens the pulsations or activities of spiritual atoms and forces and this produces the sensitivity and impressionability.

For instance, there is the Wazifa Ya Fattah. This was derived from an ancient Egyptian word, Ptah, the name given to the God of the Opening of the Way, the god to whom the neophyte prayed and devoted himself upon entering the sacred path. Mohammed saw the one God, Who was the Way and the Opening and he gave to his initiate disciples this sacred phrase, the repetition of which helps to open the heart and the Way. When the heart is open and becomes sensitive it begins to respond to the cosmic language as well as to the words and thoughts and feelings of others. Its outer response enables it to see the needs of the world, its inner response enables it to deal wisely with all.

GITHA: As many times as a word is repeated, even in a whisper, so many records it has produced in one's mind and in the heart.

TASAWWUF: For the spoken word is the sound which has the effect upon the material plane. When words are spoken they either lead to some action or result materially or are lost and magnetism is consumed. If they are merely whispered so as to impress the devotee's inner being they come in time to shape the character and tendency of his inner being. They become a great influence over him.

GITHA: But the number of repetitions is a question of consideration, that it must be in accordance with the law of numbers. The repetition of the same number every day, or a regular increase or decrease in number, set in time, shows rhythm, and in rhythm there is balance. But when there is no consideration of numbers, the rhythm is lost, and so the balance is lost also.

TASAWWUF: It has been found that certain numbers have the desired or best results such as 20, 33 and 100 or several hundred, to which one more has been added to keep the stream of activity flowing. In the study of concentration these three rhythms are explained. There is Urouj or the accelerated rhythm, Kemal or the mobile, steady rhythm, and Zaval as the retarding rhythm which is called in music *relatando*. If one uses any number and repeats words at any time during the day or week or month, no doubt there is some influence and some result but there is the loss of the advantage of this principle of rhythm.

Rhythm is a most important principle upon which music, mechanics and machinery are founded. The course of the planets, the movement of dynamos and motors, the wheel and disk and many devices invented or discovered by man depend upon the principle of rhythm. It is so all-pervading that it is neglected. It is found in the breath and heart-beat of man and it can be applied to his inner vehicles as well as to the physical body. Their growth, health and strength depend largely upon rhythm.

GITHA: The day and hour of commencement of Wazifa also has its influence upon its effect. A Wazifa commenced during the rise of the moon has a progressive trend, because it is in harmony with nature's tide.

TASAWWUF: Therefore that is the best time to have the mureed begin some new practice. Although it is regarded as a superstition by some, winemakers, for instance, have found that their success depends upon the observation of the moon. In earlier times sowing and planting followed the course of the moon. There is great psychic power in continuing such observations.

GITHA: But if it is commenced during the wane of the moon, there is always an upset or confusion, as confusion is natural during the darkness of night.

TASAWWUF: There are definite forces which pour out through the moon. They influence sex-life in the body and also thought in man. The currents which go up and down between the gonads and pituitary body move in harmony with the moon. During the waxing of the moon they go upward, during the waning they go downward. The ancient Hindu scientists who studied as well as practiced Yoga made many observations and were most punctilious in following the rhythmical principles. No doubt the influence of the moon can be overcome but it is just as well to have the moon on one's side during the battles of life. In Salat one mentions the light that filleth the crescent moon.

GITHA: Sitting in the same place every day when repeating the Wazifa helps it, because it creates a growing atmosphere every day.

TASAWWUF: One can feel this oneself. One gathers one's own vibrations in the place where one sits. The more one sits on a chair or cushion or bed the more one's atmosphere will surround that thing. And the more one sits in one's own atmosphere the easier will he feel. This helps develop an atmosphere and if one has such a place where he feels his atmosphere, he can gather life and strength there and use it for himself or for others.

GITHA: Repeating Wazifa at the same time every day is also desirable, because the invisible forces get accustomed to meet and help at the same time. Without a set time it becomes difficult to gather them.

TASAWWUF: Mohammed instituted the prayers which were to be repeated up to five times a day, and the mosque served as a gathering place where the conveniences were offered to the devotees

for such repetitions. Thus every mosque became the center of psychic power and Baraka and a sensitive person will feel that. It is more important even than the outer architecture of the mosque, it may be called the soul of the mosque or mesjid.

The principle of rhythm for any act is important. In the Western countries there are fixed hours for work and recreation and these have made a marked influence on the people. In many Spanish speaking countries there are set times for the siesta, or relaxation, and this, too, has changed the character of those people. The breath of man changes accordingly and the breath is the channel of the life itself.

GITHA: Cleanliness of body, and purity of mind, and fragrance around, and beautiful thoughts in the mind are the things which give a quicker result.

TASAWWUF: The cleanliness of body is the first need of the mureed and the first initiation consists of cleanliness of body. Impurities of the flesh establish an aura and atmosphere which does not welcome certain thoughts and feelings and a clean body is the best receptacle for wholesome thoughts. Purity of mind is the next need for the mureed and later, in the psychological unfoldment, the advantages of constructive good thought are impressed upon him.

Incense and flowers help purify the atmosphere. The flowers of themselves consume the carbon dioxide and other objectionable gases. Incense makes it difficult to smell undesirable odors. And beautiful thoughts send the direction of the consciousness upward. An invocation or darood is also most valuable to keep away all earthy or selfish thoughts and feelings.

GITHA: Flesh food is sometimes undesirable for Wazifa ...

TASAWWUF: On the whole it is well for talibs in this stage to abstain from flesh foods at least during certain periods, as in Khilvat, or not to eat it at certain meals, as at night, or not on certain days. The subject of food is discussed in the Gathas and their commentaries.

GITHA: ... and disturbances of mind make it fruitless.

TASAWWUF: Yet there are also certain sacred phrases which can be used when the mind is not tranquil. In that case instead of Wazifa being employed for spiritual advancement it is used to avoid retrogression. It has to be employed in a certain way when there are dangers of obsession or psychic disturbances. But as a rule more attention has to be paid to the breathing first, and without right breathing the advantages of Wazifa may be lost.

GITHA: Weakness of character and an impious life, instead of bringing a good result, ruins the life of the one who repeats Wazifa.

TASAWWUF: When the sun of the inner spirit pours its rays more openly upon the personality it tends to perfect and magnify what is there. Therefore weakness stands out boldly before it. So it is

possible to see a spiritual and kindly person who is weak, to fail to develop, through lack of faith and trust. Therefore the moral training and the metaphysical instruction are needed. Without them one does not progress far on the path.

If one leads an impious life, the strength and vitality that come to him will be wasted in ardor and passion. There are even persons who seem to awaken internally before a sage, who gather up a certain momentum which only becomes a further power for wrongdoing thereafter.

GITHA: The pride of repeating Wazifa should be avoided. It should be secret, and its effect should be kept secret also.

TASAWWUF: This will have the very opposite effect of the intention which is to bring to personality the divine attributes. Pride **is** the ego and shuts out the divine light. Speech wastes it and renders useless the efforts to collect and appropriate it.

GITHA: Wazifa should be taught by some blessed soul, or a permission should be taken from a holy person before repeating Wazifa.

TASAWWUF: Otherwise one will be repeating the name of God for some selfish purpose. This may result in the attraction of things, conditions, satisfaction of desires and removal of obstacles. But the effects may be only temporary and pain or trouble may come along with or after the acquisition of the desired result. When one receives from another, one is practicing humility. Besides that one receives a blessing. One can never bless oneself or assure oneself of blessing. A holy person, a spiritual teacher, a wali and even an innocent person can confer blessing.

GITHA: By doing so, a Wazifa produces a thousandfold effect, because there is some powerful thought working with you at the same time, which undoubtedly speeds the success.

TASAWWUF: That is another reason why it is important to have a suitable teacher on the path. When the Sheikh supplies the instructions he implies or offers a blessing. This is a real blessing. Besides, the initiation which is given the mureed of itself is a healing and blessing and offers an impetus for progress for which there is no substitution. Teacher and pupil together thus form an integrated individual and such an instrument is the means God has used to pour forth blessing and happiness upon mankind.

End of draft commentary

(Editor's note: this lesson and all subsequent ones appear to be written during an earlier period)

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.

Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 6

Zikr

GITHA: Zikr is the process of repeating the sacred word with the concentration that it may impress on the entire self of the one who repeats it the meaning of the word.

TASAWWUF: The word Zikr means “remembrance” or “recollection,” and in the history of this word we find something of the mystery of human nature. The Hebrew word “zakar” is translated “male” but it also means “one who remembers.” In the Arabic language the root means “repetition” rather than just remembrance because they learned how to remember through constant repetition. Qur’an is memorized by constant repetition and the movement of the head. In Zikr also there is movement of the head, to impress the inner and outer being of man with the meaning of the words.

The sacred word in Arabic, “La Illaha El Allahu” is called Kalama, when standing by itself and this word may be translated as “declaration.” The usual translation of the phrase is, “There is no Deity but God”; the esoteric translation is “There is no (existing) Being but God” or “God is the only Being.” This interpretation is made into a realization through constant repetition and reiterated impression. Thus Zikr provides its own proof.

GITHA: The Vedantists have called this process Mantra Yoga or Japa.

TASAWWUF: A Wazifa is substantially the same as a mantra. In Zikr there is the added use of music and chanting. In the Vedic times already the use and benefit of musical tones was well known to the sages who taught it to their disciples. While Wazifas may also be chanted, the central theme of Sufism comes in the realization of the words of Zikr.

GITHA: The Sufis have in all times given great importance to this, for it is not only the mind, but the word with a motion in every part of the body which makes a perfect concentration.

TASAWWUF: The perfect concentration is one which touches all planes and all aspects of man’s being. There has to be the feeling first to control the concentration. Then the mind must be one-pointed in its focus. The motion of the body enables the body to join in the concentration or worship, and this motion with speech incidentally produces psychic power, although that is not what is primarily sought.

GITHA: For a sincere worker, it does not take more than six weeks to see its effect upon oneself.

TASAWWUF: It is easier to trace the development through Zikr than through other exercises. Many of the practices given to the pupils by the teacher are needed for purification or for development along some line and the pupil is not always able to measure his progress. Sometimes he even loses faith because he has been looking for visions or special experiences and they do not come. With Zikr there is a difference for there is often an intoxication of personality, there may be a change in the quality of voice and there are several manifest signs of progress.

GITHA: It is wonderful in giving power and realization.

TASAWWUF: The power that comes through Zikr is of a different nature from that obtained by the repetition of "Allaho Akbar." For instance Zikr is not used for self-protection and is not a practice in any way associated with dualism. One does not often apply it against personal enemies or against malignant forces. Its performance does enable one to assimilate the magnetism of Ishk and also leads toward intoxication so that one may rise above the consciousness of the earth-plane and also above its limitations.

GITHA: There are hints given in many places in the Qur'an. "Repeat the name of thy Lord" ...

TASAWWUF: Sometimes the Orthodox in Islam have objected to the use of prayers and sacred practices by the Sufis who seem to have departed from the letter of Mohammed. Now the Prophet himself at one time went through the spiritual training and the methods he received from his teacher and predecessors were essentially the same as those he imparted to his disciples. As Qur'an was given by revelation it could not very well include words and ideas which were the particular thoughts of the prophet. If he wanted to introduce himself into his scripture it would be a book of Mohammed, no doubt, but it would not be, as he says it is, a Qur'an from God.

Nevertheless in his moments of lucidity he at times referred to the sacred practices. His first mission and duty was to the generality for he could hardly be expected to reveal or teach to the ignorant, who had no background, the most esoteric and mystic methods. So he devised or was inspired to devise teachings for the multitude and in these teachings are references to those deeper instructions which had been given to him as a man and which he handed down to posterity.

Foremost among them was the repetition of the Sacred Name. This practice is common to all mystical schools, and even among the Buddhists who it has been said do not cherish the God-Ideal we find the same idea in practice. The repetition of a sacred name or sacred phrase which would elevate the devotee out of his ordinary human state of consciousness to a recognition of the divine has been offered at all times by all Messengers of God.

GITHA: ... or "Cry in the name of thy Lord" ...

TASAWWUF: This gives the idea which has been repeated in modern times as "speak the word

that is put into thy mouth.” For all teachers have instructed their pupils that when there is self-effacement, the tongue speaks for God and in the name of God. So when man as such is silent, then God speaks. And as one develops along the path he may speak more and more as the mouthpiece of Divinity. To reach this stage and accomplish this mission the repetition of the sacred name is most advantageous.

GITHA: ... and “There are our worshippers who move like the branches of the tree in the air, when they repeat Our Name.”

TASAWWUF: This refers to the use of movement. There is movement in Nimaz and there is movement in Zikr and although there are different movements they each have their own significance. The difference between the movement of a tree and that of man is that the tree depends upon the wind or the column of air which is outside of itself, while man depends upon the air or breath or column of wind which is inside of himself, for his effective movements. But in either case, there is no self-will. Man becomes like the tree, freer in his movements as he dispenses with self-will.

GITHA: Shams-i-Tabriz says in this respect, “Allah, Allah say, and Allah thou wilt become.; again I assure thee, that certainly Allah thou wilt become.”

TASAWWUF: This teaching was given in a certain form by Ali and before his time by the Hebrew prophets whose basic teachings can be traced all the way back to Moses and even to Abraham. The repetition of the name of God can produce a tremendous influence upon the mind, especially as one forgets his own personality and concentrates his whole heart and consciousness upon God. But this is not something which can be proven by argument or logic; it comes as the result of effort, of effort in the pursuit of accomplishment.

When one considers the value of love in spiritual development one realizes that the lover loses all of his consciousness in the beloved. Majnun forgets himself so far that he could only utter “Layla” and in the most beautiful poetry of Jami we can learn and feel that if the soul of man feels so before God, man will only be able to utter the name of God. The Omnipresence of God will become impressed so deeply upon the human consciousness that there will be room there for nothing else. It is then that the spirit of man, so to speak, merges into the spirit of God and although man may continue to live and function as a human personality, inwardly he has the divine consciousness. He not only thinks of God, he may even think as God.

GITHA: The most wonderful people in the spiritual cult that are known to the world have always given this the greatest importance, for Zikr is a sure method of spiritual progress.

TASAWWUF: Zikr has always before it the repetition of the sacred phrase. It may be spoken or chanted. In this its use follows the lines of the “Shema Yisroel” of the Hebrew people. A great mistake has been made when in the comparison of these different words people have drawn conclusions about the effects of their various repetitions. This shows lack of development. No

doubt if one actually practiced Shema as it is supposed to be repeated, and one was a Zakir or devotee through Zikr, the same goal would be reached. There would be a similar if not an identical development.

Pure music is pure music and the rightful selection and pronouncing of sweet sounds is of itself and in itself a different thing from the words that are used—which might be drawn from any language. The purest music is the language of heart not of head or intellect. The performance of musical chant, with the thought and concentration upon the highest, ultimately produces ecstasy. This feeling is more important than words and there is the great advantage of repeating the sacred phrases from the past for they carry along with them the magnetism of constant repetitions which is drawn forth from the atmosphere.

These sacred phrases may also be repeated without song and if there are movements, that means that thereby forces are invoked. In the various serbahs or methods of using Zikr, for instance, there are different stages in the awakening or opening of man's inner consciousness. This has to be gradual, for those who force it gain nothing. They are only thinking of themselves, disproving to themselves the very words they repeat, thereby going contrary to the advice of Jesus Christ about vain repetitions.

Zikr is a positive practice which advances the devotee in consciousness beyond this plane, which elevates his attitude and ideals and which cleanses his ego from attachments which bind it to earth.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 7

Zikr (2)

GITHA: The value of repetition has been known and realized by the ancient mystics of various cults in the East.

TASAWWUF: Many people throughout the ages have repeated sacred phrases without knowing the value of the repetitions, sometimes without even knowing the meaning of the words they have repeated. Ordinarily when one wishes to memorize poetry or prose, there is constant repetition. In

learning a particular dance there has to be constant repetition. In the Chinese form of art which has been inherited by Japan, repetition is the chief thing and one has to repeat over and over again the same theme, the same idea, until it is so impressed upon the artist's consciousness that he can reproduce it at will; it has become part of himself.

GITHA: Therefore, today, the Brahmans repeat their mantra, which they call Japa; the Parsees their Gathas; Jews repeat the names and verses from the Kabbalah.

TASAWWUF: We can find these repetitions among followers of different religions and generally it has been that they have derived or preserved the methods from the ancient past. The Vedas themselves were given in a chant-form. The great rishis who received them in a cosmic state of consciousness taught their disciples to reach the same or a similar state through the right use of words and musical notes. The Gathas of Zoroaster were also chanted, they were chanted when first given forth by the prophet and chanted by his followers. The words have been preserved even though the exact pronunciation has been lost, and there is a growing inability to reach the higher spiritual development through the methods connected with his name.

In the synagogues even today there is constant repetition of certain sacred phrases. All of these can not be found in the Bible, many of them coming from tradition. There are two sorts of tradition among the Hebrew peoples, the exoteric and the esoteric, the former comprising the Talmud (or teaching), the latter the Kabbalah (or that which is handed from one to another). The students of the Kabbalah learned the mystical method and practiced the esotericism after the orthodox dispensed with such methods as being worthless or superstitious. Nevertheless when there has been any effort or attempt to revive the religion, one always goes to the mystics who have preserved the teachings in the purest manner.

GITHA: Sufis have always understood the importance of repetition of the sacred words (kalma, kalam), which they have named Zikr.

TASAWWUF: Kalma, kalam, may be translated as "the word of words," or "the utterance of utterances." It stands out preeminently not only among all the words of man but even among the words of revelation and the actual repetition has produced the most desirable effects through the ages.

GITHA: Many consider it very monotonous to see the same thing, to repeat the same word, to think the same thought, but they are utterly unaware of its benefit. Every time that a Kalma is repeated, it has added power or illumination for whatever it may have been meant.

TASAWWUF: Every repetition tends to impress a line in the mind more deeply. It is the constancy of such repetitions which make the deepest impressions in the mind and by that, depth or profundity of mind is secured. Any concentration may in effect do that. Perhaps it may be argued that the constant repetition of anything dulls or stultifies the mind. What it does do is to dull or stultify the ego. It is the ego which feels the restraint for it wishes to pass from thought to thought

as it desires and any constant or forced repetition works against the desire nature. This of itself is very beneficial for man both in his inner development and in the development of personality.

Of course if there is thought in the repetition itself it carries the mind to greater heights. If there is understanding or feeling the benefit is much greater, there is still greater development. Ultimately this can only be proved by one doing the actual repeating. But there is such power and magnetism in the names of God and in the most sacred phrases that the life-force from even the highest planes touches the personality and begins to make itself known in and through the personality by this practice.

GITHA: The importance of repetition may be seen in the success of a singer and in the skill of an artist. As many times the former sings, so much the song is mastered; and as much time the artist gives to his work, so much better result he produces in his art.

TASAWWUF: There are many things gained through repetition in music. First of all, of course, the words and notes of music are learned. Then quality and feeling are added. One may not be able to hold the quality throughout because this can only be mastered by effort and repetition is the method which must be used. As one repeats the same song again and again and again he notices the relationship between the consecutive notes, and how he can best pass from one to another. He develops skill in phrasing and then he begins to perfect the quality of all the notes. The consciousness of the details can hardly come until the basic outline of words and music becomes as of second nature. Then when no more thought need be given to them one can perfect the details.

The same is true in painting and in all arts, only that the painter either does or does not desire to repeat over and over again his theme. In the spiritual training of artists it is necessary to learn to draw the straight line, the vertical line, horizontal line, circle, heart, triangle and all forms with deep feeling until one recognizes them behind every work whether they are expressed or unexpressed.

It is by such means that art is given life and this applies to all the arts. It applies especially to dancing and to the movements of prayers. One may not notice the movement of every little muscle at first. After there is mastery and the body, mind and heart seem to be coordinated, even the smallest flaws impress one, or else one sees how to improve and when one can consciously see a way to improve himself he is becoming a real artist.

GITHA: There are people who have repeated kalmas for forty or fifty years in their life, and every year the word has brought a new power, a new realization, and every year it has increased.

TASAWWUF: One may not think about it directly but when one measures his general consciousness and ability from year to year, and he has been devoting himself to the practice of Zikr, he will find that there are changes. Not only those natural changes which come through the experiences of everyday life so much as a growth in a new direction. New faculties may be gained or a new outlook or a grander feeling or an ability to rise above diseases or resistance to disease.

And more than that there may be a development in mercy, compassion and wisdom which otherwise might have been left unnoticed, perhaps being absent.

GITHA: First, progress is realized year after year, and if it is continued patiently, the progress is realized month by month, and the continuance of the same shows the earnest Zakir a progress day by day and hour by hour.

TASAWWUF: This time of progress has to deal with **makam**, the station or spiritual stage of development and of **hal**, the mystical state. **Hal** is the most important accomplishment in the spiritual life for only by rising above the consciousness of the earth-plane and the wall of the ego can one be sure of his true nature and know his development to be real. In other words **hal** is necessary in order to become conscious of reality.

Now one does not remain in hal, one comes back to ordinary human consciousness in order to do the work for which he exists in the world. Nevertheless after each hal there is a gain and one does not sink back again to his former level of consciousness and development. Thus his spiritual evolution has been enhanced and we say that he has risen to a higher makam. Thus Zikr makes possible the attainment and retainment of makam.

The word Zakir literally means a “rememberer” and is applied especially to those who perform Zikr. Because by this method it is possible to perfect the memory, both in aiding the disciple to improve his memory in regard to those things he would keep in mind, and also to enable him to throw out what he does not wish to have there so that he will not remain slave of any thought or stream of thoughts.

The importance of this, however, comes in the actual performance of Zikr. To help the mureeds in this there are several methods used by the Sufis both in the vocative or recited, and the chanted or sung Zikr. One may progress along either of these lines or both, showing in the latter the reflection of the development of character in the perfection of the development of voice. The practice of Zikr is reflected in the increased scope of range of voice, in the improvement in quality and in the ever increasing facility in the use of voice. In the vocative Zikr the improvement is seen in the change of manner and in one’s relations with others.

GITHA: There are souls who have realized the progress through Zikr every moment of their life.

TASAWWUF: Which is to say that for them there is no loss of makam. This would constitute the real path that day by day and step by step one will be drawing nearer to God, increasing the range of consciousness and acquiring ability and finesse which are not lost and which are the direct result of internal, spiritual effort.

GITHA: It is like the nature of capital and commerce; when there is less capital, it takes a long time for the commerce to flourish; as the capital increases, the commerce develops, and in the end, every moment brings enormous interest and benefit, when the capital is sufficient.

TASAWWUF: The same principle lies at the very foundation of the sciences of physics and mechanics, that force causes matter to move, and that the continued application of the same force increases the

velocity of the moving matter. In commerce capital operates as the force which produces the movement of wealth. In spiritual science the will is the power which, when applied, produces the wealth or results. Zikr requires the deeper will in order to counteract the desire nature. The very movements of the head in it are most effective. Besides the head is cleared out almost automatically of every selfish thought.

The more effort that is put into it, even the more Zikr is repeated increases the light one sees before oneself. This in turn aids the mureed in meditation and in self-assurance. For the manifestation of light on the one hand satisfies those who want to measure their spiritual practice through phenomena and on the other hand the nature of the light is such that it brings that intoxication and joy which uplifts the devotee above the clouds of the ordinary daily existence without impairing his faculties in any one or interfering with his duties.

Moreover the development which come through Zikr may be imparted to the personality as a whole and result in development along any and all lines.

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GATHA COMMENTARY

Series I: Number 8

Zikr (3)

GITHA: Zikr has one great advantage over all other practices. That is, in the body and mind both, the re-echo of Zikr is produced, and both planes of the Zakir's being are set to rhythm.

TASAWWUF: Very often when we repeat a phrase over and over again, even in ordinary circumstances or more especially when we need to memorize, we say that the phrase haunts us. Sometimes this haunting comes unconsciously and against our will. However it does keep in the foreground of the mind and it does shut out other thoughts and it does draw the body into its rhythm so that the acts of the body are as if covered by the shadow of the haunting thought.

This is especially true of the influence of music and because music has such an effect upon people and upon life generally Zikr has been set to music. In this it differs from many other practices. No doubt their power reaches into the mind also and does something to the music but the Zikr sets the

atoms of both mind and body into motion and this motion continues on for some time after the practice is performed.

GITHA: Music constitutes rhythm and tone; and if they are both produced by the means of Zikr in one's body and mind, the very being of the Zakir becomes musical.

TASAWWUF: One can study this in the effects of music in general. All music has certain effects such as for healing, psychic power, aesthetic refinement, and mystical and spiritual growth. The very sounds sometimes combine to produce very definite effects especially if the composer has the inner knowledge of the purpose and meaning of music. When words are used they can add or detract from the personal effects.

The ancients knew how to relate words and music in such a way that their combination influenced the hearers far more than either one alone, although no doubt properly read and written poetry has its effects and symphony music has its effects. The words combined with the music make a special impression upon the mind of man, much deeper than other words, for the words help one to remember the music and be effected more by it and the music also helps one to memorize the words.

When words embodying ideals or psychic power and especially when the name of God is used, there is a deeper effect than through any other combination of words and music because those words of power can reach as far into the recesses of mind as it was intended that they should.

GITHA: It is therefore that the music makes a great effect on Zakir in the assembly of Sama (the musical assembly of the Sufis).

TASAWWUF: The Sufis particularly of the Maulavi and Chistia schools have found, each in their own ways, the great advantage of chanting in groups simultaneously. The benefit of this group or choral assemblage was known in ancient times and one can read about it in much of the older literature of authority such as *L'Awariful Ma'arif* and *Kashf al-Mahjub*. There was a stimulating and intoxicating effect from the sweet sounds and especially as the non-participants remained in meditation did they get a fuller and richer effect. Besides the Qawwallis or chanters themselves seem to receive something from one another.

As Sufism has been introduced in the West due provision has been made for this so that mureeds may unite in chanting. This makes out of the group an integrated individual. Such a group may begin with a concentration and end with a concentration, and even hold in abeyance that concentration during the actual performance of Zikr. This will establish between and among them the magnetic chain which develops psychic power.

Besides sitting in a crescent it is possible for them to hold each others' hands during the chanting of Zikr, and also to dance. Each of these methods produces much power and even enchantment, although until Zikr has been learned so that the Zakirs themselves utter sweet sounds or have the

feeling, they do not benefit much by the more complex developments. For even if there are a few weak or undeveloped persons present they may be drawing the magnetism to themselves rather than aiding in using it for some nobler purpose.

GITHA: It is therefore that the music of Sufis is fitted in emphasized rhythm and composed in ragas (modes) that produce the desired effect on the physical and mental being of the Zakir.

TASAWWUF: There is a decided physical benefit from Zikr. It seems to transmute the lower forces which manifest in the body very definitely. Thus it aids in the overcoming of passion and in the preservation or restoration of youth. It maintains the physical magnetism and also aids in the preservation and increase of mental magnetism. The Zakir will have less trouble with his memory and with all mental processes than any other person.

There is a difference between Zikr and Fikr in effect, that Fikr is a means of purifying the mind while Zikr stimulates the mind and aids in expression outwardly, so that speech, thought and action are more properly coordinated. While there may be a tendency toward intoxication and ecstasy this is more needed than one might surmise, in the Western world. The people who live in the material civilizations gain in certain directions and are misled in other directions.

If a question be asked, can the western modes be adapted to Zikr, it may be said that the western modes have aided in activity and in certain kinds of expression but at the same time they have produced some emotional instability. The music of Zikr is especially adaptable for the solution of some of the psychological problems that disturb the Occidentals.

GITHA: The Sufi is not only responsive to music but to all nature's music—in other words, all that is beautiful—for he is living.

TASAWWUF: That is to say the continued **practice** of Zikr produces and increases sensitivity. There is a tradition that King Solomon learned the languages of animals and that there have been times when some adepts knew the language of birds. How was this possible? It became possible when there was great sensitivity, for this sensitivity made it possible for man to receive the vibrations and communications from other creatures through a delicate concentration. He came closer to them in feeling and they also came closer to him. Then he perceived their heart's yearnings and felt at one with them.

GITHA: He who is not responsive to love and admires all the beauty that is around one is as dead. And the reason why he is not, is that he is unmusical; not in the sense of music that is played by musicians, but in the sense of the sublimity of nature, which is itself music.

TASAWWUF: One may notice that people who are prone to disregard their fellowman (or their own selves), who are not responsive to the laws and who lead a life of folly or crime, have great defects in breathing. This may be observed through their speech; even more is it evident through their inability to sing. Speech, laughter and music reveal the character of every person to the seer and

likewise through right breathing it is possible to correct the defects made known through these three channels.

Rhythmical music of itself is a means by which the breath may be adjusted without much use of verbal corrections which are so repellent. Many a person who will not listen to advice will willingly learn some method of breathing or even try some new way of singing or chanting under a teacher's counsel. The Sufis have found this method very profitable in consoling and helping mureeds and non-mureeds and they have permitted outsiders to visit their assemblies (sama) so that they, too, might benefit from hearing the sweet sounds.

No doubt this sense of rhythm can also be communicated through the dance. This will be very beneficial if there is not too much self-consciousness. There are ways by which the dance may be taught which enables the performer also to become more sensitive and to respond to nature which he feels as within his own heart.

GITHA: The Sufi therefore, names music Ghiz-i-Ruh, meaning "the Food of the Soul."

TASAWWUF: And music seems to influence people on all planes. Even the elements of the mineral kingdom respond to it, which can be learned through a study of sympathetic vibrations and also through the observance that copper and other metal strings are used on some instruments and that metals also have been adapted to organ pipes, bells, cymbals and gongs. And the more life in the forms—the vegetable forms having more life than the minerals, the animal forms still more life—the more definite the effect of the music.

GITHA: The simile of the Zakir, the living man, in comparison with the unmusical, the dead man, is as a rock and a tree. The rock is stiff and steady and without progress, while the tree is bending, moving and delightful to look at. It is said in the Qur'an, "When Our true worshippers repeat Our Name, they move just like the branches of the tree." For in motion is life; the motionless is lifeless.

TASAWWUF: This reveals that the practice of Zikr increases the life-force and the result of this increase of life-force is the development of skill and efficiency in the personality. What one has not been able to do, especially because of awkwardness or shyness, now one finds it easier and simpler to do. Then one becomes more responsive and sensitive, and this makes it possible for him to receive heavenly blessings (Baraka) which in turn help him to fulfill the purpose of life.

Many people pray, "Use us for the purpose that Thy wisdom chooseth," without opening any door to God. They may pray and remain as firm and set in their views as the most obstinate person who is not a devotee. In fact prayer, instead of opening their hearts, may make them only firmer and more set, for then they use the argument of their prayer and devotion in favor of their fixed views. Yet this is lifelessness.

A question may be asked, if movement is so valuable would not the dance be even better than direct Nimaz. The Nimaz has the effect of magnetizing a certain place. This has to be learned first

and it is learned through its accomplishment. If one cannot magnetize a point he certainly will not be able to magnetize an area. He can certainly give out all the magnetism he has collected and then his activities will be of no benefit.

The original pilgrimage or Hajj was a sort of dance around a sacred shrine or altar, performed with movement, rhythm and a degree of grace. The ceremonial or rite grew out of this. But before one can spell the words one has to learn the alphabet, and before one can write a book the meaning of words and the skill in their use must become one's knowledge. So Nimaz and Zikr must precede any attempt or effort to extentionalize rites, ceremonies and dances.

GITHA: By Zikr the expression of the countenance becomes harmonious ...

TASAWWUF: If there is a mureed who is not in harmony with other mureeds, or with himself, Zikr is a good practice. If there is a conclave of mureeds and lack of good feeling among them there should be practice of Zikr, and this may continue until there is the general good will. At the same time, if Zikr is practiced at the right time it will help to remove such ill feelings.

GITHA: ... the voice becomes melodious ...

TASAWWUF: This is important for all kinds of persons. It helps to correct those with speech defects and incidentally to remove the harsh features of anyone's voice. As most mureeds have quite undeveloped or imperfect characters in their early stages, they benefit very much if they can learn to repeat sweeter sounds. The feeling engendered in Zikr also helps to elevate the consciousness and the idealism of the Zakir and these are reflected in the sweeter voice that results therefrom.

With singers it may be more important, and with speakers also. For through Zikr one learns to respond more and more to the Divine Voice and then it is possible to adopt any quality of tone which is best for a particular song or talk.

GITHA: ... the presence becomes healing ...

TASAWWUF: Zikr increases the mental magnetism, and the capacity for the body to become a vehicle of Baraka. It also helps to preserve physical magnetism and to transmute the lower forces which otherwise drain the inner personality. Those on the path of healing collect power and energy thereby, perhaps even without knowing it.

GITHA: ... and man spreads magnetism in the atmosphere.

TASAWWUF: This is one thing of which he may become aware and measure his progress thereby. Magnetism is communicated to his clothes, to his prayer rug or bed, to his room, to his possessions, and ultimately to all with which he comes in contact. This atmosphere he carries around within, learning thereby to feel more of the spirit of others and also consciously or

unconsciously to touch deep chords within them.

GITHA: There is nothing that by Zikr cannot be accomplished, either an earthly or a heavenly thing.

TASAWWUF: Zikr may be accompanied by concentration, the concentration being of such a nature that it will help in the desired direction. According to the goal or achievement desired the concentration can be arranged. But concentration alone does not produce the action. Zikr, with movement, increases the capacity of the flesh for spiritual and mental magnetism. This makes one more willing to act and to make the best use of inspirations. Whenever there is lethargy or a static condition, Zikr is helpful.

So many times have there been failures which could have been obviated, so many times a little magnetism or energy received from within would help toward a success otherwise lost. And all that is needed is a little more application and practice.

GITHA: Some by Zikr have liberated their souls from all bondages and attained ideal perfection, which Sufis call Najat.

TASAWWUF: Najat means spiritual liberty or liberation for which purpose the book *A Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty* was written. Yes, there have been persons who, without any other practices but Zikr have accomplished all the stages of the sacred path. Of course this meant constant repetition of the Sacred Name, usually in song or chant. Then it becomes so that even when one goes to sleep or meditation the effect of the whirling movement goes on and on, either producing an ecstasy or bringing such stimulation and power that life becomes both easier and simpler.

While it is not necessary or even advisable to confine mureeds to this one practice, yet when all else fails they may rely upon it. The more they impress themselves with it, the more they, and the whole world, may benefit.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 9

Zikr (4)

GITHA: The physical mechanism of the body is so arranged that its health depends upon the regularity of its work ...

TASAWWUF: Health depends, like music, upon time and tune although one may not always consider it as such. Nevertheless the importance of rhythm in everyday life is known to the scientists. The mystics of all times have considered it most important and in some ancient countries, as Chaldea, there was a detailed study as to the importance of rhythm and its effect upon life.

In modern times there have been many new studies of rhythm. For example, besides the effect of seasons, and the sun and moon upon the body, it has been observed that there are many other rhythms which effect life and health. The astrologers say that there is a relationship between the rhythms of the organs of the body and certain planetary movements. Dr. Abrams of San Francisco said in his time that every organ of the body has its normal rhythm which it achieved in times of health and fell below that rhythm or failed to achieve and attain rhythm at other times. And of course all physicians know something about the pulse, the breath, and related movements.

GITHA: ... and regularity depends upon the soul, which possesses the body as its vehicle. The clock is so arranged that it goes on for the time it is meant to, but then it requires someone to wind it; if it is not wound it goes out of order.

TASAWWUF: Everyone suffers from fatigue, perpetual motion being impossible for the body. No one, at least no ordinary person, has been able to overcome sleep. Besides the real mystery and meaning of sleep is known only to a few, sages and adepts. The body does tire and the mind does tire. For the ordinary man there is no other means to rest it than through sleep and relaxation. However valuable these are, they do not of themselves restore all the vigor that was there beforehand. So when youth goes it goes, and when strength departs, it is not all brought back.

However, it is possible to recharge the vehicles of the soul. According to the mystics the soul is the source of the breath of life. The breath is sent into the body with all potentialities, the breath is the veritable manna out of which one can select any and all qualities one needs for any and all purposes. It happens, however, that the breath in its physical form is so simple, seems so simple, that few give credence to the supposition that it contains the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Yes, a few call it prana and assume that by giving it a strange name it thereupon is clothed in strange qualities. There is no harm in it; if one has to call it by some strange name to learn its value that is much better than not to learn its value at all.

By meditation and by esoteric practices one may recharge and revitalize the body. For the soul is the divine breath itself which makes this possible. And Zikr is one method by which it can be done; Zikr can reinvigorate and restore the physical body.

GITHA: The mechanism of the body requires winding too. Generally, irregularity of sleep, or food, or activity or repose sets the whole mechanism of the body in disorder.

TASAWWUF: One knows very well that the rest upon different nights is different. We do not always go to sleep for the same number of hours, always getting in bed or arising at the same time. Sometimes sleep provides rest and relaxation for the body, sometimes for both mind and body although if one is disturbed mentally he does not always benefit from repose, and if one knows how to relax, if the mind has been purified or at ease, there is more benefit from sleep. If one enters into deep sleep only does he get the full rewinding thereby.

Food has a more important effect upon the body and mind than the psychologists have given thought to. Besides the chemical properties of it, there are living values and definite vibrations in the food which effect the organism and also reach the mind. The decomposition and chemical changes that take place during the processes of digestion, assimilation and elimination change the gaseous atmosphere around one and interfere with the otherwise free flow of breath. Fasting at least removes some of the obstacles to the path of breath, and thus enables one to draw vitality from the sphere. The solution to this situation does not necessarily come through changes of diet although this often helps; one has to face the life as a whole and see, in view of the various changes and effects due to eating, what else might be done.

The problem of activity and repose is still a more serious one. In the western countries there is too much energy lost in wasteful activity. There seems to be a latent idea that happiness exists only in action. No doubt stillness is death and laziness and lassitude are certainly not virtues. One may spend much time in repose and benefit thereby, but if he does not fully live, he does not get the full enjoyment out of life. In India and other countries where there is more repose there is not necessarily more beauty or more harmony.

What the Western world needs is to learn more of repose, to practice repose and relaxation in order to maintain health and to increase human enjoyment, while in the East there is another need, to use energy wisely. The practice of esotericism helps man find a balance from either extreme.

GITHA: All illnesses come owing to lack of rhythm.

TASAWWUF: The physicians have noticed this, and the examination of pulse and watching of breath has given them some knowledge by which at least they are able to make certain diagnoses and are also able to determine whether a patient can be cured and how he is improving when he is under treatment. The full value of the vibrational activities of the body has not been generally recognized outside of the work of Dr. Abrams; there is, however, an acceptance of the use of color, light, ultra-violet rays, heat and sound. In other words, a recognition of the value of certain kinds of vibrations in restoring health. This is of course the internal application but the diet and regimen that are offered to patients by their physicians also supply other forms of rhythm, and according to the mystics health and rhythm go hand in hand. This subject is discussed in *Health* and in the commentaries thereupon.

GITHA: Zikr is a rhythmic suggestion to the heart, which at once sets it to rhythm when the Zakir is repeating Zikr, and the circulation of the blood that runs throughout the body from this center runs

in rhythm ...

TASAWWUF: The effect of Meditation of itself is similar in that it helps restore rhythm to the blood stream and thereby purifies both mind and body. There is one difference that in meditation the processes go on without the application of conscious will. In meditation one crushes the ego so to speak and the light of the soul floods the body and mind restoring them to a condition of purity which makes for perfection in life.

In Zikr one makes the suggestion to body and mind through the use of words, but one also makes the suggestion to heart; for the willpower is used in directing the currents to the heart. Often there is deep feeling within but that deep feeling is of little practical value because the physical heart, which is the instrument of the heart within, is not properly attuned or properly sensitive. Pain makes the heart sensitive but does not give one the strength to carry through those impressions which come from within. For a weak person may be very sensitive, but he is not spiritual, and a strong person may be able to do things, but these efforts will be of his own will only.

The movement of the head in Zikr helps in the first case to establish a rhythmical movement in the head and then in the body. The constant repetition of any series of words or thoughts also aids in the establishment of rhythm. The particular words of Zikr are suggestive, being based upon the sacred phrases which hold "that God alone exists." When one keeps on saying or suggesting that, he feels more and more that the false nufs is only a creation of his, that it is not his real being and that it stands in the way of full health and life-expression.

Finally the concentration upon the heart with consciousness, breath and movement awakens more and more that sensitivity within. And when to these are added music, that music that strikes the deepest center of the heart, man's inner being begins to awaken, and this awakening is of utmost importance in the life of the seeker.

GITHA: ... the pulsation becomes rhythmic, and the development of every muscle becomes rhythmic. In other words, the physical body becomes rhythmic in every way, which is the first necessary step towards spirituality.

TASAWWUF: There have been many manifest tendencies to ignore the physical body, even to deny its existence. The talib in Sufism is first impressed that the physical vehicle is really the divine temple. He may be asked to repeat a sacred phrase to impress himself with the value of the body. This subject may be impressed upon all. Even the vehicle of flesh can become an instrument of light and when one comes to consider the existence of the Nirmanakaya body or the vehicle of light manifesting on the physical plane, it comes through that perfection which is possible only when there is a living heart.

There has been some interest in both the East and West in the effect of music upon the body. Only instead of studying the simple tones the people of the West, who are otherwise so scientific, have been trying out symphonies and dance tones and other complexities. When the rays of light have

been used, they have been employed in their simplest forms so that their particular rhythms may effect and benefit the body; there is no use of many colors at once. But when symphonies are tried, there are so many rhythms and vibrations which reach the ear and consciousness of the patient, that there is no simple effect, and instead of benefit, the patient may become worse.

While Zikr is not used to restore health to the ill or ailing, it can and should be adopted to increase the vital capacity of everyone. In that way it becomes the best protection against illness. It aids in augmenting the capacity of the body for the vitality which exists in the space. There is one effect of musical tones that they increase the capacity of the cells of the body for light, for the living light which is brought in through the breath. The music helps the body to vibrate, and this vibration when started in and centered in heart touches all parts of the body and personality.

The same vibration is also communicated to the mind producing joy and ecstasy and in that state one feels relieved of all pain. For the ordinary state of health is largely freedom from disease, without being much more. To the mystic the health can grow, the body can progress in spirituality just as much as the mind and heart, and it is a mistake to suppose that the inner life is only a journey in one direction unbalanced by changes outwardly or in the everyday life. Spirituality promotes perfection in all that one lives and in all that one does.

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Githa with Commentary

Series I: Number 10

Zikr (5)

GITHA: The mystics of the East have experienced and realized for thousands of years the importance of the power of sound and the mystery of repetition.

TASAWWUF: This principle was embodied in the mantras and gathas from the most ancient times and also in the psalms of the Egyptians and Hebrews. The sacred words were first, perhaps, uttered by the sages and munis in the inspired state. These inspired words carried with them deep feeling and deep meaning and deep power. The repetition of them helped to impress the inspired with the meaning and increase his capacity for feeling and power.

When to this repetition was added the music of the chant it helped to raise the state of

consciousness of the disciple until he himself experienced more of the higher state which has been the goal of all seekers on the path. The usual translation of the word “Abraham” has been “Father of Mercy,” or “Father of Multitudes,” but Philo said it meant “Father of a Multitude of Sounds.” The same idea is in the phrase Nada Brahma, which conceals the principle that God is the Divine Breath, or to use the words of the Christian Scripture, “God is Spirit.”

When one understands the meaning of spirit in this sense, one learns from more direct experience the Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnipresence of God.

GITHA: When Murshid gives to his mureed a word to repeat so many hundred times or so many thousand times, the mureed does it, without thinking that once repeated and understood was enough. There are adepts who repeat one single sound or a sacred word for years, and sometimes for all their life, without being tired of doing the same thing again and again.

TASAWWUF: And if one should ask a question, what is an adept? How is the adept developed? Can anyone be an adept? One may learn that the secret of adeptship comes through this very same principle of repetition. No doubt it begins as a discipline first, that there may not be so much enjoyment in it. One repeats a word over and over or says a phrase countless times. One does not see the direct effect upon himself—at least at first. But if he perseveres he will begin noticing and others will notice a change in his character, his personality, his faculties.

The repetition of a sacred phrase is of itself a concentration, and this concentration blanks the mind to thought of all else. It impresses one with the meaning and value of the words, first as if that impression were an idea coming from another source. Finally and ultimately one unites with the meaning of the words, one knows through Zikr not only that God alone exists—that being some thought of his, but ultimately he attains baqa, self-realization, and this is the foundation upon which adeptship is based and maintained.

When one listens to machinery in factories one can hear the hum or sound. It is the mantram of that machinery, and when there is a change of rhythm, there is a change of sound and when there is a defect there is also a change and sometimes one can tell the state of that machinery from the sound. The state and quality of man's being is also revealed in the sounds he gives forth in cry, speech or music, but he can by a counter-effort overcome his defects and the music of Zikr is such that it becomes exalting.

GITHA: The result proves to them its value; every month and every year, by repeating the same word, the power becomes increased.

TASAWWUF: This knowledge can only become man's through effort, and the development therein has already been discussed. Very often people want development along certain lines and suppose that it is a certain breath which, if used, will benefit them. No doubt it is so but the method of certain schools of Yogins supposed a rigid discipline. If one wants to develop by the use of breath alone it is certainly advisable to refrain from meats, to go into retirement and lead a secluded life. When

this process is carried on, instead of man concentrating upon self-development he becomes too involved in breath-development. And while one may find recognition of many saints in India, both in historical and other records and in the pilgrimage customs of the day, few of those worthies have developed along the line of breath. Besides moral development does not always result therefrom.

There is a different way that by concentration and repetition of sacred phrases a refinement comes and one can measure this refinement in the breath. Or if there is need for power one will notice an increase of power in the breath. If one desires to hold the breath long or wishes to see if he can hold it long after many repetitions of a sacred phrase he will find it is easier; he has made a gain. Through Zikr and Fikr even without noticing it, there are many changes in the breath and in all of the talib's faculties.

GITHA: Zikr has two aspects of its being, one its spirit and the other its body. The spirit is the breath, which is naturally prolonged through every repetition of Zikr.

TASAWWUF: The Zakir will find it is possible to hold the syllable "HU" longer and longer at the end of each line. It is not especially desirable to hold it long at the end of one line and not so long at the end of another line, but upon each performance of Zikr one may hold that syllable or the other syllables longer. Thus there will be a gradual process by which length and strength of breath are augmented without any strain and without the least sign or danger of reaction.

GITHA: The body of the Zikr is its words. The word produces the fire element, and the breath is life.

TASAWWUF: There is a law in the science of mechanics that if a force is constantly applied it will constantly add to the velocity, in other words establish uniform acceleration. The same is true in the repetition of words especially with movement; there is a constant acceleration and this acceleration leads toward the refinement of the atoms and cells of the body. First, no doubt, there is a process of cleansing and elimination but as one advances, every cell and muscle develops increased capacity for the life force.

The fire element is the vehicle of energy as the air element of breath and the water element of wisdom. In other words by Zikr there is a natural development of Jelal faculties as well as a tendency toward ecstasy. For just as fire rises, so the practice of Zikr elevates the state of consciousness above the face of the earth. But the words and concentration of Zikr add light and this light prevents the fire from ever being destructive.

GITHA: When fire is produced, the heart naturally becomes warmer, and coldness, which is the common disease of every heart, begins to vanish.

TASAWWUF: In the Bible it is said that the heart of Pharoah hardened and in the Kabbalistic tradition it is hinted that Pharoah stands for the glorification and deification of the ego. Egypt is the land of darkness of nufs aniat (Chem, Mitzraim) and while the heart is hardened the children of light, the Beni Israel, are kept in slavery. It is only through the softening of heart that there can be

deliverance. Ultimately Pharaoh and his hosts were drowned in the waves of nufs aniat or Samsara, and the Beni Israel, the initiates, were delivered out of the state of slavery.

This deliverance is expressed in the first commandment of the Israelites, “Ani (or Anochi), the Lord Thy God, that took thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” This is identically the same principle as in Kalama which is the basis of Zikr. The same principle of the Allness, Oneness and Universality of Allah is impressed upon the talib until it becomes his realization. And in his search and efforts the heart becomes more and more sensitive. Then the life force enters through the opening of the inner gate of the heart which is said to be a special cell in its very center, protected by the muscles of the heart. And through that single cell, “smaller than the seed within the grain of barley corn” as the Upanishads teach, the Divine Light enters, purifies, glorifies and illumines man.

GITHA: Then the word, voice, atmosphere, glance, touch, all express warmth; and the presence of the Zakir radiates warm vibrations.

TASAWWUF: As one practices Zikr there is a growing tendency to “speak the word that is put into thy mouth”—in other words, to receive and utter inspirations, and to depend more upon the intuition before and when speaking. There is also a change in the quality of voice, the power of the fire being covered with the softness of the etheric element, and with light.

One carries a living atmosphere with him that others can feel even without there being any speech. The spiritual magnetism is communicated even through the glance that another, looking at the Zakir, feels the force of life there and that the Zakir sometimes reaches the inner being of another merely by a look. There is an increase in magnetism so that their hands are healing and blessing, and one feels that.

GITHA: The Zakir, in time, begins to respond to everything and every being.

TASAWWUF: For God is in every being and God is All-Being, and if the words are true, then their truth will impress itself upon the consciousness of the devotee. The finer the vibrations which become living within a personality, the greater the degree of attunement toward other personalities and things. One feels the “soul of objects” so to speak. All nature becomes living before the Zakir.

GITHA: This warmth in time makes the fire blaze up, and from it a flame springs forth that lights the path of the Zakir.

TASAWWUF: Just as from the glow the blaze or flame arises, so with the increase of devotion in Zikr from this fire comes light, and this light illuminates even the physical body. Many have been interested in the illumination of the flesh; some have discussed or desired it, but when it comes to the effort needed they are not so willing to apply themselves. This is most fortunate, for otherwise they would apply the teachings wrongly and bring harm to themselves and others.

It is the intensity of devotion which produces this light although concentration also helps, for the absence of all ego-thought is most beneficial on the path. Then from the increase of this light “which lighteth every man that comes into the world” first the outer, then the inner personality becomes more illuminated.

GITHA: Zikr is of special importance in the course of a Sufi’s spiritual advancement, and by this a Sufi attains everything on earth and in Heaven.

TASAWWUF: The importance of this has already been discussed. If one is in need of anything and has the right concentration beforehand, and the right attitude, then by the repetition of Zikr, especially under the teacher’s direction, one may achieve every attainment in life.