

SPIRITUAL TRAINING

**By
Sheikh Ibrahim AboKhalil**

Zagazig, Egypt

1950

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL
AL-AZHAR
ISLAMIC RESEARCH ACADEMY
GENERAL DEPARTMENT FOR
RESEARCH, WRITING & TRANSLATION



To Mr: - Mosleh Ibrahim Mohammad Khalil

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

With reference to the application submitted by you for reviewing the book
entitled: Spiritual Training

Written by: Sheikh Ibrahim Abokhalil in 45 pages

We have the pleasure to inform you that the above-mentioned book doesn't
contain anything that contradicts with the Islamic Religion and hence you can
publish it on your own expense.

We remind you to take care and to be precise in printing the Quranic Verses
and the traditions of the prophet (P.B. U.H).

Allah is our Guide, Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you,

Translation Department

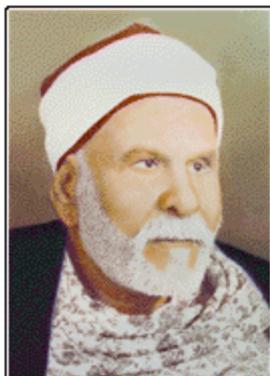
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General Manager of the Department

For Research, Writing & Translation

Dina El Din
16/2/2014





Sheikh Ibrahim AboKhalil
Zagazig' – Egypt
1872 – 1956

Sheikh Ibrahim Abokhalil (1872-1956) was born in Zagazig-Sharkiah-Egypt (ARE) .He is one of the Sufi, Imams in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He was religiously inspired by series of Sufi books, among them was the volume of (el Riyadda el Roheyah) The Spiritual Training'1950.

This volume is one of valuable volumes or books in Sufism that dealt with behavior and the nourishment of the soul and its ascetic. Sheikh Abokhalil debated the topic of the self/soul' heart mind and reason. Moreover' their influence on the morals of the individual and the group' Sheikh Abokhalil' May Allah be pleased with him, clarified how to come near to Allah (God) depending on The Qur'an and Sunnah.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Introduction

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. He bestows whatever bounties on whomever He wills. They will never encompass anything of His knowledge except that which He wills: "He grants Hikmah to whom He wills, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good¹". May Allah's (The God's in Arabic) peace and blessings be with Prophet Muhammad, created with the best of physical and spiritual traits. All beauty is but derived from his. He is of the noblest descent. All good manners are derived from his splendor and guidance. All prophets are but a glimpse of his light and their substance is from him. All of God's loyal people are but a drop of his sea; their secret is attributed to him. The miracles of his predecessors all bring glad-tidings of his mission. Miracles performed by others are reinforced by his secret running in the names and

¹Surah: 2:269 (Albakarah) Hikmah: Literally means 'wisdom', but it means here the knowledge and understanding of the Qur'an, and the Sunnah and one's ability to speak and act in the right manner.

attributes in the same manner that pure souls run in their bodies.

We pray to God to grant us the bounty of being among those qualified to learn from Prophet Muhammad, Allah's (The God's in Arabic) peace and blessings be with him. O Allah! Let not our souls be veiled, due to the dense physical substance, from being inspired by his most rightly-guided soul.

O Allah! We seek refuge in You Who created us in the best of creation from reducing us to the lowest of the low. You have indeed honored us and preferred us to many of those You have created with a marked preferment.

Had it not been due to Allah's Grace, none of us would have ever been purified. What is it, no matter how precious it may be, that is equal to the joy of one moment a person may have due to his being close to Allah?. That closeness which Allah helps one achieve as a result of self-purification and spiritual training to elevate it high so that it acquires obedience and traces the steps of the chosen people of Allah. It is not surprising to see people one would take to have well

gained the wrath of the Almighty as though they would never give up committing sins. However, due to the Divine Providence, they are set right and attracted towards their Protector. All of this is done in no time despite the wide gap between the two states. Yet, there are others, whom one may take, or they themselves may think that they are happy but who, in fact, are in dire need for people to invoke mercy for them and to be pitied. All of that can only be attributed to the spiritual willingness of the person, the willingness of that soul which abounds with wonders.

As to the method that brings one close to Allah, it is, undoubtedly, the pristine Divine Law (shariah) which is the lantern for anyone seeking light and this Glorious illuminative Qur'an which encompasses each and every minor issue (i.e. it is a complete way of life). Whoever recites it, contemplates on it and tries to fully understand the meaning of its ayahs while resting sure that he is addressing his Lord, trying to humiliate himself before his Lord till he gets humble, trying to understand till he gets there, trying to learn till he becomes well-versed, having the sincere intention to be guided through its guidance, putting to practice whatever he learns, he,

who does all of that, will go ahead in discovering the Divine Path. His ultimate goal will be attained, and the following *hadith* (Prophet Muhammad Instructions) of the trustworthy, Prophet Muhammad, Allah's blessings be with him, will apply to him: "Whoever puts into practice that which he learns, will be made by Allah to inherit the knowledge of that which is unknown to him."¹

Each and every ayah of the Glorious Qur'an, nay, each and every word, nay, each and every letter has its own secrets. Whose surface meanings have been disclosed by religious scholars, some of them have been constantly doing their best to fully understand its implications and consequently carry out its dos and don'ts. The Almighty, in return, has revealed to them some secrets in proportion with the degree of faith they have and how well-established in knowledge they are. Thus, its secrets have become manifest to them. Such people are considered as Allah's select who have been spiritually elevated very high.

If you, the intelligent, wish to be in the company of the

¹ Edited by Abu Naim and narrated by Anas in Alhilyah.

Prophets, their followers¹, martyrs and righteous on whom Allah bestowed his bounties, then follow their suit and make sure that you follow their ways rather than being an innovator (in religion). It goes without saying that he who starts a journey will eventually attain his ultimate goal.”

Bear in mind that in doing so you will encounter severe hardships and great frights in order to adjust yourself to that sort of state. This should not be surprising, for the one who dwells in darkness will surely be temporarily hurt when all of a sudden he sees the light. So, start your spiritual training step by step. Handle the self gently if you are to achieve the good of both worlds. Never give room for despair in attempting to elevate yourself spiritually when it stands short of that. Instead you must be firm and strong but always gentle in handling it. Besides, you must create the appropriate time and place as the appropriate environment is the best remedy for the treatment of the soul. Therefore, choose the quietest place and time and select the most loyal friends so as to get well-established in this realm

¹ Siddiqun: Those followers of the Prophets, who were the first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu-Bakr Assiddiq.

and become God-loving. Love is the first step towards guidance and the key to the Divine providence. Being given love implies that you have come to grips with ways to goodness. So, stick to it firmly because it is the most trustworthy handhold. This indicates that your soul has been adapted so that it may be attracted indirectly to a luminous substance. By its very nature, the soul is thrilled whenever it is elevated high and attached to its Creator because that is its natural dwelling. It constantly yearns to go back there and is always over the moon whenever it is taken back home to breathe of its fragrance. The soul is always inclined to purity and eager to be involved in doing good but it is veiled, rather it is covered with more than one layer. Yet when such layers are taken away, and the soul gets rid of darkness and injustice it soon begins to shine and becomes as if it were a brilliant star that derives the light and transmits it. Hence, the eye-sight gets sharper and sharper. This is exactly what we are going to investigate drawing help from Allah, and seeking His Light and Guidance always bearing in mind that success comes only from Allah.

The Creation of Man and His Responsibility

Know may Allah grant us all success, that the body is composed of a dense substance while the spirit is a light luminous constituent instilled by Allah in the body. Man is created in its image ever since its creation. The soul by its very nature inherently believes in Allah. It is also talented with the secret of life, survival and knowledge. So, if your way of life conforms to its secret, you become alive and knowledgeable.

The Almighty fashioned Adam and breathed into him the soul created for him. This being done, the angels fell down prostrating unto him out of conviction of Allah's Might, grandeur, creativity and sublime wisdom when Allah offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it, but man took the responsibility. As such, man must highly appreciate that trust and purify his soul before it passes away to his Creator by strictly adhering to Islamic monotheism which is inherent in every born person. Doing so, man would have fulfilled his duties in bearing the trust. You are held responsible of your **body members**, so provide them with that which is useful to your mind in terms of wisdom and righteousness. You

are held responsible of your **self**, so keep it away from jeopardy and corruption. You are also held responsible of your **soul**; hence let it not be tarnished with whims, lusts, wishful thinking and captivating mirage. Furthermore, you are held responsible of your **body** which is but the total sum of physical members, whether discovered by science, or yet to be discovered such as body members, senses, nerves, cells, blood and currents inside the body believed to cause voluntary as well as involuntary movements. If one reflects on this particular realm alone, it will be sufficient to reveal the grandeur of his Lord

Think of hearing and its secret, the eye-sight and its implications, the faculty of speech itself, the way you comprehend what is heard and seen, the way you carry out things like sitting, standing up, running, interacting, how to think and how to control your thinking, how you desire to do things and how to control your will. This is by no means an exhaustive list of such matters pertaining to human faculties as a whole. If one ponders on just one aspect of them, he can be quite sure of what exactly is meant by the Quranic ayah: "And of

knowledge you (mankind) have been given only a little."¹
You would also be of those who are well aware of the significance of the ayah: "And also in your selves. Will you not then see? "²

Since we have been ordered to ponder on the nature of the self, why don't we thoroughly investigate it to the best of our ability while admitting our inability to fully understand Allah's secrets as revealed in His creation? In doing so we seek Allah's guidance and help. Says the Glorious Qur'an: "And when the selves shall be joined with their bodies."³ That is to say on the Day of Judgment so that they may rejoice or be punished (Both the body and the self being addressed here). Does this apply to the souls? If so, how, then, can we interpret the meaning of the Quranic ayah: "Everyone will taste death."⁴ It is unanimously agreed that the souls stay unless we take its death to be separating with the bodies and loss of its control of the body members and their management as intended, and roaming another world other than its materialistic world. Once, again reference

¹ Surah 17:85 (Alisra)

² Surah 51:21 (Altharyiat)

³ Surah :81:7 (Altakweer)

⁴ Surah :3 : 185 (Al Imran)

is made here to the master of the native speakers of Arabic and the most eloquent of all and the most well - versed in speech as he (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) says: "He whose self is not of liquid form will not render water impure if he dies therein."¹ Thus, **soul** here refers to **blood** as it is the essence of life of every living being.

The term '**soul**' may also refer to **the traits characterizing living beings**. So, in case of animals it is a number of qualities, both latent and obvious, constituting its animalism. In case of man, it is a number of traits, both latent and clear on the basis of which his humanness is made. So, when it is said that a person is of a **noble soul**, it means that he has certain traits which made him a noble and straightforward personality, comprising all virtuous qualities.

The term '**soul**' may also refer to the '**self**' as when Allah's messenger (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) says: « By Him Who holds Muhammad's self with His hand » i.e. Prophet Muhammad's noble self (Allah's

¹ The meaning of this hadith was narrated by Albaihaqi, Alsunan Alkubra 1/253 and Addarqutni's Sunan 1/33

peace and blessings be with him). However, when it is said 'the self that is between his both sides' this signifies the noble and kind self. This sort of usage is meant for emphasis as when it is said 'I saw him with my own eyes', for seeing can only be done with eyes and nothing else. So using the phrase 'with my own eyes' signifies emphasis.

The Importance of Purifying the Self

All said, it has become crystal clear that souls vary and that some of them are distressed while others are happy, some are purified or corrupted, some disobey (Allah) while still others obey Him and spiritual training works well with them. Moreover, negligence and indolence both cause souls harm. Therefore, there are great expectations that all souls that went astray may well be reformed and set right for man was created in the best stature (mould) and as the best example. By his very nature, he is ready to attain the best of human perfection if he but purifies his soul. In the words of the Glorious Qur'an: "And indeed he fails who corrupts his own self "¹ (i.e. disobeys what Allah has ordered, by

¹Surah: 91:10 (Ashshams).

rejecting the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism, by following polytheism or by doing every kind of evil wicked deeds). Glorified He be Who showed man or his soul what is wrong for him and what is right for him. What a great loss for a servant of Allah to be oblivious of Allah and as such Allah made him oblivious of himself or his soul and thus, tried not to reform it. Consequently, every person has the right to hope for the best as far as his self is concerned. None has the right to claim that a certain person will never get better. It has been clearly proved that many who have been on the brink of Hell had been saved from it and repented, with Divine Providence, and took good care of their souls. He who turns a deaf ear to the calling of his soul will make no use of others' advice. The soul will strongly be inclined towards doing harm till it gets rid of materialistic hordes and impurities, and goes out from darkness to the light. If the soul is taken care of by an honest expert of it, it will indeed attain the highest ranks in terms of goodness. We maintain that experience and honesty are conditions because the soul/self has its concealed keys known only to the intelligent expert through experience

This is why it is held that whoever knows his soul well also knows his Lord well because he will manage it and direct it. The soul has ranks and degrees. He will keep elevating it although it may sometimes decline. If he is determined to do so, he will soon administer it by hook or by crook till it is made lenient. Once this is done, it will overcome all obstacles. Then, when it considers its past status it will be astonished and wonders how it approved of being so even for a while. Realizing that it was mean during that time it acknowledges the blessings bestowed on it later and trusts his strength and determination, or his tenderness and intelligence.

The Subjection of Allah's Creation for Man

O Man! Your soul is surely a great and invaluable matter:

You claim that you are but a tiny creature

While you are the macro-universe embodied.

Had you been a tiny trivial entity, the sun, the moon and the stars would not have been subjected to you by Allah's decree. How can you be trivial when Allah has created all that is in heavens and on earth for your sake? If you think of the universe in its entirety, its upper as

well as lower parts, you will find that it is there to make you comfortable and facilitate things for you. Thus, the earth goes around the great sun, or it is rather made to do so, so that you may have the night in which you have sleep and quietness and the day to earn your living and meet your demands. The air surrounding the earth has a stable combination suitable to your body that makes you feel good.

In addition to that, plants abounding with secrets and signs whether pertaining to its life, growth, blossom or giving fruit have but been created for you to eat, have medication and make full use of them in terms of their manufactures.

Sea as well as land animals are all, without any exception, meant for you to benefit from in terms of food, clothes and other uses.

Allah has made for you out of that which He has created shades and if He willed, He could have made it still or withdrawn it a gradual concealed withdrawal.

Look at water and how it carries components from which our bodies draw food and cure. Although it has a

liquid form, yet Allah made it strong enough for ships to sail therein, going and coming like mountains. It is bewildering that when water gets to the freezing point it becomes lighter than when it is in a liquid form so that ice may float in cold areas. Thus, it protects that which is beneath it from getting frozen. Had that been frozen, all living beings therein would perish. These are just few examples and it is impossible here to make a thorough investigation of the exhaustive list of such secrets.

Valuing the Human Soul

Therefore, O Man worry you not! Be proud (of the bounties bestowed on you), keep yourself in a lofty position and never debase it since Allah has fashioned you in the best of creation (shape). This meaning has been rendered so beautifully in the following verse:

Realizing how precious myself is, I hold it in high esteem

Hence I keep it away from being debased (into trivialities)

So abstain from being debased and hold your self in a high rank for which it will be obliged when it stops being oblivious. In so doing, you will quite realize that you have honored it, in the same manner that you were

honored by your Creator and Protector and preferred you greatly to many of His creation.

Let the purest of souls, i.e. that of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) be your utmost criterion, as it has been proven, without any doubt, that Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) has the soundest and the most invincible soul. He, the trustworthy, said: "Whoever sees me in a vision truly sees me because Satan can never resemble me."¹ This is only attributed to the fact that his soul is so high that it is unattainable by any and this status is exclusively his as bestowed on him by Allah. However, if Satan sometimes claims himself to resemble Allah, the Almighty, it goes without saying that it is a sheer fabrication rejected by those having common sense, because there is nothing like unto Him.

The Despondent Self

If you are keen to honor yourself and be a good custodian of it, then let obedience be your crown, humbleness before Allah be your elevator and despondency be your motto. The Lord is our Lord and

¹ Bukhari and Muslim (A unanimously agreed upon *Hadith*).

the ultimate goal of the servant is to be a sincere servant of his Lord. Achieving this is the highest honor, for he who wishes to have dignity in both worlds.

The true servitude is to make your self feel that you are a servant always in dire need for your Lord's help. The further you advance in this field, the more you enjoy the delight of coming close to your Protector.

The Major *Jihad*

The best type of worship is to worship Allah as if you see him. If, however, you do not in fact see him, then you, in turn, are seen by Him. This, in fact, is the highest rank of faith. Of interest here is the way this hadith is interpreted by the Sufis who took the second part of it as a sign of suppressing the self and its lust and whims. This signifies that abnegation brings one closer and closer to Allah. Forsaking one's self implies that he can't care less for its evil desires. He can not afford not to obey Allah and at the same time totally ignores whims and greediness. It is beyond doubt that this can only be accomplished by striving hard, even harder than what is exerted in the battlefield when the hearts reach the throat due to the feeling of being overwhelmed by the enemies. In this context Allah's Messenger (Allah's

peace and blessings be with him) said upon the return of his companions from one of his battles: "We have returned from the minor jihad to the major one. His companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah! What is meant by the major *jihad*? He said: Self-strife: to combat the whims of one's self."¹

That spiritual rank can only be attained by great, decisive, heroes about whom the Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) said: "The strong man is not he who beats others (when agitated) but is the one who has self—restraint then."²

Being fully aware of that, the Sufis think that the reward of anyone given to supererogatory worship will be able to feel, with his senses, the Presence of Allah, without necessarily determining the manner of accomplishing that. Viewing Allah in Paradise, is the greatest of bounties bestowed by Him. In the words of the Glorious Qur'an: |or do you think that you will enter paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are patient?"³

¹ Narrated by Albaihaqi in his Sunan from Jabir. It was also narrated from him by Alkhateeb. It is a common hadith.

² Unanimously agreed.

³ Surah 3: 142 (Al Imran)

None can argue against the possibility of viewing Allah in Paradise because viewing Him is based on the Quranic ayahs: "Some faces that Day shall be shining and radiant. Looking at their Lord"¹ It is also supported by the Prophet's saying (Allah's peace and blessings be with him): Verily you will view your Lord in paradise in exactly the same way that you see the full moon on the fourteenth night (of every month)."²

The only person entitled to this great favor is the one having gnosis or direct perception of reality as narrated by the Master of all the trustworthy from his Lord: "Neither my earth nor my heaven encompass Me, yet I may be encompassed with the heart of my faithful worshipper."³

What, then, is the nature of this heart that may encompass that may not be encompassed by the earth and heaven? Far be it from Allah that He may be encompassed by time and place since both of them were only created by Him. Encompassment in this context is only symbolic and refers to gnosis, i.e. the direct perception of Reality. This type of knowledge is

¹ Surah75 : 22 and 23 (Alkyiama)

² Narrated by Albukhari in his 'Sahih'

³ Narrated by Ahmad in his 'Alzuhd'

described as viewing Allah not in the real sense of the word but refers to attaining absolute degree of certainty.

The Relationship between the Heart and Spiritual Elevation

How could it be possible for the heart to attain this high gracious status had it just been something physical? The heart attains that status simply because it is the dwelling-place of the spirit which itself is luminous. Allah bestows on it life, survival, hearing and seeing. It may well penetrate veils, surmount barriers and nothing can hinder it from attaining its ultimate objective. If equipped with that kind of spirit, the heart becomes well-hearing and well-seeing. An atom of work, then, done by it weighs that of both mankind and jinnkind. To illustrate this, imagine that the spirit is using a telescope to see through. The purer the more absolute the spirit is because it sees through a crystal clear telescope with no rust or veil to hinder vision.

The heart seems to have two functions: materialistic and moral both of which have mutual effect and adaptations.

So it constantly pumps the blood according to a certain system circulating it to the whole body in an utmost accuracy and skillfulness: the work of Allah who perfected all things. This constant pumping continues ever since the person is in the embryo stage well unto his death. This state of pumping goes on all day and night. The heart never stops or sleeps and every cell and vein of the body receives blood proportionately without any increase or decrease. Every member of the body grows and takes the assigned amount of blood: the eye needs it to be able to see, the ear needs it to be able to hear, the brain needs it to be able to have a sharp memory and adapt the tangible as well as intangible things. The mind derives from the blood the power of equilibrium and control of physical desires or instincts to attain spiritual elevation. The whole body is filled with blood with every blessed heartbeat. The heart takes the suitable blood and rejects the bad blood till it is made suitable then is given back to this wonderful heart to be circulated once again. This is done on constant basis till one passes away.

The Heart and the Self

Does the heart with its beats, pulse, life and pumping in this wonderful body receive orders from anyone other than Allah?

Many scientists have spoken of how the brain is in full control of all body movements: voluntary or involuntary, conscious and unconscious. If, for one reason or another, the brain is damaged or ceases to function, this will mark the end of one's life

As for the psychological as well as the moral effect of the heart, it is astonishing because the heart is the center of being affected by the affection, love, fear, caution, anger, pleasure, happiness, sadness, austerity, greediness, eagerness, contentment, the sense of being God-minded, belief, suspicion, ill-feelings, hatred, jealousy, telling the truth, telling lies, etc

Nay, all psychological effects find their way to the heart straightaway. So, it is deeply affected by them whether positively or negatively. That is why we find that many inventors and psychiatrists are in a position to tell whether the speaker is telling the truth or not simply by measuring his pulse with highly sophisticated equipment

which determine whether he is telling the truth or otherwise

It is, therefore, not surprising that some people whose souls are spiritually elevated through practice can read the minds and inclinations of others without necessarily using equipment or other means.

It was stated earlier that the heart is the centre affected by emotions but it does not cause them. What causes them is the self and what affects it. Hence, one finds great differences among hearts. A person may dislike what another person may like. A person may be cautious of someone where another person feels safe. You may get upset if someone does something but may be quite happy if someone else does the same thing. Consequently, it is the self rather than the heart that is upset or pleased. According to a certain poet:

If given the chance, the self may become greedy
But it will be contended if restrained.

So, if you desire something, it is your 'self' which desires it; your heart, on the other hand, will only be affected psychologically and morally by that desire

Cultivating our 'Selves'

This issue is raised because we have just one objective in mind, i.e. cultivation, upbringing and behavior. So which one of these should be cultivated? To go straight to the point: should we cultivate the body and its movements? In doing so, we only look like the person who builds a groundless house. It, therefore, follows that the house will collapse. Should we then cultivate the heart? As mentioned above, the heart, rather than being affecting, is affected. Finally, should we cultivate the self?. You may well be aware that the self is the essence of behavior and way of life. Allah has bestowed on us a mind with which to distinguish the truth from falsehood. We have also been bestowed with a will to control our whims, and intelligence for which we shall be held accountable. So, why don't we benefit from all of that in cultivating our 'selves' to attain the status according to which they have been cultivated by Allah right from the beginning. Needless to say, that we have no intention to claim that the 'self' is void of shortcomings (emotions) as none can deny that such sentiments are inherent, ever since it was created. Rather, we need to train ourselves when to express our satisfaction and

when to get angry; the self should also be trained of what to desire and what to avoid.

It was mentioned earlier that the more satisfied the self is the more satisfied the heart. It follows then that the heart is filled with satisfaction which, in turn, affects the body members controlled by it. This satisfaction generates energy in the entire body in response to it. This meaning is clearly expressed by the following verse the translation of which is:

Once a heart is filled with guidance the body members then become active in worship.

It is, therefore, follows that the heart and its reactions vary according to the type of self controlling it and also according to the status of the subconscious and the conscious in that regard. The effect of the heart may well go beyond the body of its owner to affect others' bodies and hearts whether they are far away or nearby according to the extent of emotions. The effect of ill-feelings and jealousy, for instance, may inflict the body of the person with fatigue, confusion and emaciation. This meaning is embodied in the following verse the translation of which is:

Put up with the plots of the jealous
In so doing, your patience cause him to perish
Fire eats itself
If there is nothing else to eat

The state of being affected may get stronger to affect others, as mentioned above. This results in what is called jealousy which is very well established. No one can argue against its validity. Jealousy is crystal clear and is absolutely true. It was said: Beware of the poison of jealousy as it causes the person and even the camel to kick the bucket. It must be made clear that jealousy is not caused by the eye as an organ. Rather, it is caused by the self for it goes without saying that the blind may well be jealous. Jealousy is often associated with the eye because it is the organ through which the brain perceives things, adapts them, judges them, and is affected by them in accordance with the self of the person. If the person is unconscious and the brain does not interfere, the heart, then the organs will be affected and so on and so forth.

The senses here are not to blame for the harm caused to the person inflicted with jealousy. Isn't it

strange that a person, while sitting and being far away from another person may cause him harm through jealousy stemming from his ill-feeling? No sooner does he feel jealous of some trait of that person than he is badly hurt therein. Still stranger is the fact that no sooner is the person hurt through jealousy and is taken care of by a compassionate heart than he is released from the shackles of jealousy and is rendered once again more active. So, let us just ponder how the first person caused him harm while the other managed to relieve him from the effect of jealousy.

The Power of the Purified Heart

It would, then, be obstinacy to deny that some hearts, due to their spiritual power and luminous secret, may well benefit others. Some of these hearts may be of help for the afflicted irrespective of the distance separating them. Distance does not count here as far as the effectiveness of hearts is concerned. Instead, what matters here is the extent of being affected, positively or negatively, by various types of emotions. Hence, when Ali ibn AbiTalib (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked about the distance between the heaven and earth, he replied: "that of an answered prayer".

It is no longer surprising to learn that wise men attach no importance to distances when it comes to spiritual matters.

It is narrated that while 'Umar ibn Alkhattab, may Allah be pleased with him, was delivering a Friday sermon, he kept silent for a while as though he was unconscious. He then turned his face towards the east shouting: "Take refuge by the mountain!" Then he carried on delivering the sermon till the end. When the delegations came to congratulate him for the victory, the leader of the army, Sariyah, said that had it not been for 'Umar's voice that directed them to take refuge by the mountain, the Muslims would have been badly defeated and the army would have been in utter chaos. He added that 'Umar's voice was heard as though Umar were very close to him. Upon hearing 'Umar say O Sariyah take refuge by the mountain I obeyed his instructions. When I inspected the army, each and every soldier told me that he heard Umar's voice like I did. Consequently, I came to the conclusion that it was Allah's help. So the people of Madinah who heard Umar's sermon told him, Sariyah, of

what they heard of Umar while he was delivering the sermon.

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, manages to do that just because of his spiritual power that helps him see what can never be seen by anyone lacking that sort of power. This can only be achieved by those who free themselves from the shackles of lust.

Advice on How to Attain a Sound Heart

Carnal passions are those instilled in the body from which spring narcissism and egoism which only lead it to inappropriate behavior. If man can get rid of such carnal passions, he will achieve spiritual elevation in proportion with the degree of its purification and control in all cases.

Not succumbing to the evil wishes of the self and ignoring it till it is rendered under control and is humiliated is a great step towards elevating it and making it attain a lofty position. Therefore, it is recommended that you set it free from its dense traits and low desires and passions. Lead the self, then, and submit it to an honest guide and a straight path that will help it repent and go back once again to its True Lord. What guidance to Allah is superior to that revealed and

illustrated by Him (Allah). In this connection is what was narrated by the purest of the pure, the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) from his Lord, The Almighty:

'O My servant! Obey me, I will make you godly. As a result, you would say to the matter 'be' and 'it is'.¹

This *hadith* contains a condition and a result or a reward, then an explanation of that reward. The condition is that a servant must obey Allah; the result of that is that he would be granted the rank of the godly. This entails that once the person becomes godly, he can say 'be! And it is'. This represents the fullest reward. Upon reflecting on this, one is bound to be tempted to meet the requirement of that reward no matter how hard it is to accomplish. It is exactly the same as tempting those who fight for the cause of Allah who sacrifice all they have and are granted a dwelling in paradise in exchange for that (i.e. they fight in Allah's cause. So they kill (others) and are killed). So, what is that obedience that yields that comprehensive good and abundant reward?

¹The meaning of this hadith was narrated by Albukhari in his Sahih. 8:131

In fact, it is complying with the Islamic law in all cases, in every move and deed. Nothing worldly should make you deviate from that path such as passion, lust or transgression.

If you wish to be among the godly who are mighty, loyal and keep their word, then the best way to achieve that would be to strictly adhere to the Glorious Qur'an, the Prophet's Sunnah and what is unanimously agreed upon by the Muslims. One should also quite realize that prayer is the backbone of religion. It should be performed with absolute humbleness. Fasting, it should be understood, is observed for Allah's pleasure Who rewards the fasting person so you should persevere in observing it. Moreover, one should understand that the poor and the deprived are to be paid their prescribed dues. A righteous person was once asked about his money: "Whose money is this?" He said: It is Allah's but I am entrusted with it."

One should also visit the Grand Mosque if he can afford to. However, this should be done not in order to show off and bearing in mind that visiting the Grand Mosque is practical, physical as well as spiritual worship. Not only that, but it is also a psychological, physical,

mental and emotional integration, and that it is all done in reverence to Islamic rituals. This should also be culminated by witnessing that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger. Being always in a state of ablution is strongly recommended for Allah loves the repenting and pure people. One should respect other people's rights and quite realize that he has obligations toward them. If you can't fulfill his obligations, you should, at least, wish them all the best.

Deep in your heart, you must believe in Allah and what was revealed to His Messenger. This belief needs constant care, reinforcement and elevation. It also needs to be made free of both explicit and implicit polytheism. So, one must have trust in Allah alone and not to associate any partners to Him. One must detest showing off or being praised by others. Never utilize worship just to escape criticism or harm of creatures. Instead, worship Allah in all sincerity and have faith in Him.

Avoid the love of fame and arrogance as they render one's deed void and null. You must love Allah, The Almighty wholeheartedly. The sign of such love is to fully adhere to his commandments. Therefore, keep your

'self' fully occupied with your Creator, and make full use of your senses so as to be among those beloved by Him, to whom reference in the Glorious Qur'an is made: "...But few of my servants are grateful".¹ So, make sure that your senses, in their entirety, are truly grateful and never show ingratitude to Him. Gratefulness of the eye, for instance, is to contemplate on the creation of the heavens and earth and whatever you see at all times. Your eyes must be used as a means of guidance not that of going astray. They should be used to see lawful things only and keep away from that which is unlawful; you should also appreciate Allah's bestowal of the eyesight and ponder, albeit unsurprisingly how they are able to see. The eye is the same whether the person is awake or sleeping. However, if the eye of the sleeping person is opened, he will not be able to see while sleeping. Thus, the eyes are more like a telescope with no person to see through. Moreover, how wonderful the spirit is, how wonderful the body and its structure are. How wonderful the nose is and the way we smell with it. How wonderful the nostrils are with cavities to adapt heat and moisture to meet the needs of the body and the

¹ Surah Saba: 34:13

lungs. How wonderful the blood capillaries are as they systematically eject harmful bodies away from the body.

In addition to the above-mentioned types of expressing gratefulness, one has to be grateful for being bestowed with the faculty of thinking. So, one must be grateful for being bestowed with the mind. In fact, every body member must express its gratefulness. You should be in a constant state of remembrance of Allah and gratefulness to Him. You should also thank Allah for the job from which you earn your living.

Love of Allah entails that you love all of His servants simply because they are His creation. Of His servants, Allah loves those who are merciful. The Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) is reported to have said, "Be merciful to those on earth, you will be granted mercy by Him Who is in heaven."¹

A manifestation of mercy is to be gracious to all creatures, a fact that expresses spiritual greatness. You should have no malevolence, malice, rancor or jealousy against anybody, because having such vices renders

¹ Narrated by Albukhari in al'adab Almufrad—Ahmad, Abu Daoud and Altirmidhi on the authority of Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al'as. Altirmidhi said that it is a good sound hadith.

one's deeds null and avoid. You should also love others in exactly the same way you love yourself. Furthermore, you must, in no way, be involved in backbiting, slander or defamation. You should alienate yourself from suspicious actions, defend your brethren's honor secretly, avoid committing major and minor sins, being hypocrite, telling lies, keeping your word if it aims to gain Allah's pleasure, being treacherous and illegally taking a part of the booty". And whoever deceives his compassions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took (illegally)."¹

You should also worship your Lord wholeheartedly, supplicate for Him and be fully devoted to His worship. This, however, in no way, means that you do not get involved in worldly matters. In fact, some sins can never be expiated by fasting, performing prayer and performing pilgrimage or umrah (minor pilgrimage). Rather, they can only be expiated by working hard to earn one's living. Besides you must quite realize that you must carry out your obligations toward your Lord, your 'self', your body and your wife respectively. When inflicted by harm, you

¹ Surah 'Al 'Imran: 161

must be constantly patient. You must be kind even to those who cause you harm. While worshipping Allah, The Almighty, you must be in a state of despondency and utter humility so as to be among those mentioned in the qudusi hadith, "We (Allah) are always present with those who are despondent."¹. You must also have a generous noble self (as dissatisfaction stems from being miser) and high-mindedness. You should train your 'self' to be generous and make it realize how and where to be so: Allah, The Almighty says, "And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful."²

You must be chaste, God-fearing, tranquil due to being in a state of constant God-mindedness. Remembrance of Allah polishes both the self and the heart and is the key to having a lofty position on the Day of Judgment before the Mighty King (of the creation). The self must be held accountable for whatever deeds and one must always bear in mind the Hereafter and behave accordingly. You must bid good and forbid evil with utmost sincerity and in the best of manners. Never argue

¹ Edited by AbuNaim in Alhilyah.

² Surah 59: 9 (Alhashr)

with your opponents except kindly. Seek Allah's forgiveness a hundred times a day saying:

I seek the forgiveness of the Great, All-repenting, All-Merciful Allah.

The Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be with him) whose sins and shortcomings, past and future, have been wiped out used to say, "Repent of your sins for I do so a hundred times each day."¹ Whenever you repent, have the intention never to commit a sin again, be God-minded, despondent and regretting the fact that you had committed such sins, and firmly believing that Allah will forgive your sins.

One must also invoke Allah's peace and blessings to shower Prophet Muhammad a hundred times a day. This is incumbent according to the Qur'anic ayah, "O you who believe! Send your salah on (ask Allah to bless) him and greet him with the Islamic way of greeting (salutation i.e. Assalamu 'alaikum)."²

The above-mentioned prayer must be done as follows:

¹ Narrated by Albukhari in his Sahih.

² Surah 33:56 (Alahzab)

"O Allah! Send your peace and blessings on our Master Muhammad, his kindred and companions. To confirm your belief, you must also say the following hundred times every day.

There is no deity but Allah, The True, Manifest King; Our Master Muhammad is Allah's Messenger who is truthful and trustworthy. This, however, in no way means that you do not comply with Allah's commandments, Rather, it is considered to be a supererogatory worship on part of the great and sincere servants (of Allah).

Allot your 'self' some time to have spiritual practice so that it may gain tranquility and become more obedient and contented.

According to our predecessors your food shouldn't be of soul or derived of soul, this is not continued during your whole life but may extend over intermittent periods. Each period may extend over forty days renewable provided that no physical or spiritual harm is done and that one has adequate spiritual elevation, nobleness of aim and cleanliness.

That spiritual practice helps elevate you spiritually and grants you intimacy with Allah in as much as you meet the conditions of that practice, chief among which is that your food, drink and expending must be purely lawful without any shadow of doubt. He must also make sure that whatever he earns is lawful, avoid extravagance and arrogance or pride, and in all cases keep his heart absorbed with Allah alone.

If you get pleased or dissatisfied, all this must be to safeguard the dos and don'ts of Islam. Let the motive for doing any deed be to gain Allah's pleasure. In so doing, you get closer and closer to Allah Who in turn will protect you. Besides you should have the above-mentioned qualities of the pure and have them as your motto.

Stay in a permanent state of remembrance at night glorifying the God Names and Attributes of Allah, especially those recommended. In no way shall your remembrance be less than an hour per night where you have a devoted heart free of any worldly preoccupations such as parents, friends, wives, children, relatives, provision or any other worldly affair for that matter. All in

all, you must make your 'self' and senses fear the Greatness of Allah by devoting yourself to God, retiring from worldly affairs and rallying your forces to obey Him, coming closer to Him and abandoning all except Him. You should quite realize that He is the most worthy of protection and having mercy at you. Seek His help in your seclusion to join the pure souls granting you comfort. Reflect on the meaning of the Divine Name glorified. If you exceed the minimum period required for glorification, you will be more elevated provided that you stop remembrance while still eager to carry on. If, however, you carry on while bored, without interest, your remembrance will be just in vain.

The intelligent assume that strife in remembrance must make the will and spiritual power concentrate on quite understanding the Divine Name gloried wholeheartedly as preoccupation with other things hinders spiritual elevation. If you succeed in achieving that with Allah's help then do whatever you wish in order to be granted a rank similar to that of the godly mentioned in the hadith. Allah's bounties are countless, so you may be among Allah's elects, the King, the Mighty and the All-wise. Beware of trials and arrogance as you have the comfort

and joy of worshipping Allah in that manner, because Satan has his hidden ways of deceiving you. He can well do this with all except those who are godly.

It is reported that Satan used to appear to a godly servant in man's image holding a lantern with his hand to enlighten the way to the mosque every dawn; then he would disappear but Satan's efforts to tempt the man were fruitless.

Conclusion

I pray to Allah to reform our 'selves', grant us spiritual elevation, honor us by helping us draw near to Him so that we may be destined to safeguard His religion, implement His Divine Law, love His Prophet and adhere to his guidance. O Allah, shower our master Muhammad, the illiterate Prophet, his kindreds and companions with Your peace and blessings.