

Objective One : Purification

Explained in Seven Chapters

Chapter 1: On Purification In General

As it has already been said, besides the outer appearance of the *Salat*, it has a reality, and apart from its exterior it has an interior. And as its outer form has its formal disciplines and conditions, its interior has its disciplines and conditions, too, which are to be observed by the *sālik*. Thus, purification has also its outer form and formal disciplines, the explanation of which is out of the scope of these pages.

The *faqḥs* (jurists) of the Ja'farī school (may Allah make high their words and raise their ranks) have explained them. As regards the inner disciplines and purifications, they shall be explained in general: It should be noted that the reality of the *Salat* is ascension to the Proximity, and reaching the Presence of Allah, the Almighty and Most High. Thus, to attain this great objective and ultimate goal, one should practice certain purifications, which are other than the outer purifications. The thorns of this road and the obstacles in the way of this ascension are such impurities that if the *sālik* were marked by one of them, he would be incapable of ascending to the peak and completing the ascension.

Such impurities are the hindrances in the way of the *Salat* and the plagues of Satan. But what is a help to the *sālik* in his journey and is a discipline of the Presence is the condition of this reality. The traveler to Allah has first to remove the obstacles and impurities so that he may be purified and attain purity which belongs to the world of light. Unless all the impurities, outer and inner, open and hidden, are purified, the *sālik* will have no chance of attending the Presence (of Allah).

Thus, the first kind of impurities is that of the outer instruments and powers of the soul which may be polluted with obstinacies and acts of disobedience to “the Benefactor” [*waliyy un-ni'am*] this is an apparent snare of *ibṭīs*. As long as man is trapped in this snare, he is deprived of being in Allah's

Presence and attaining His Proximity. No one may have the notion that without purifying the outside of his kingdom he can reach the state of the truth of humanity, or he can purify his inner heart, as this will be a Satanic vanity and of *Ib/ع*'s big tricks.

This is because the heart's impurity and darkness will be increased by disobediences, which mark the triumph [*ghalabah*] of nature over spirituality. Unless the *sālik* conquers the kingdom of the outside, he will remain deprived of inner conquests, which are the big objective, and no way will be opened for him to happiness. Thus, one of the big obstacles of this *su/ع* is the impurities of the acts of disobedience, which must be purged and purified with the water of sincere repentance.

It should also be noted that all the external and internal powers which Allah, the Exalted, has bestowed upon us from the invisible world are divine deposits free from all impurities and are purged and purified, and even illuminated with the light of the God-given disposition, and excluded from Satan's dark and impure influence.

Yet, since they have descended in the dark abode of the world of nature, and the influential hands of the devil of imagination and fancy have reached them, they have deviated from the original purity and primary disposition, and got polluted with diverse Satanic filths and impurities. So, if the *sālik* to Allah could, by adhering to the care of Allah's *Wal/ع*, repel Satan's influence, purge the kingdom of the outside and return the divine trusts as they had been given to him with no treason, he would be forgiven and protected, and, as far as the outside is concerned, he need not worry, and then he would turn to the inside to purge it from the impurities of corrupt moralities.

This is the second kind of impurity, which is more corrupt and more difficult to cure, and thus, it is more important to the people of austerity, because as long as the inner moralities of the soul are corrupt and encircled by spiritual impurities, it will not deserve the state of holiness and "the private place of intimacy" [*khalwat-i uns*], as the origin of the corruption of the exterior kingdom of the soul is its corrupt morals and its vile habits.

And, unless the *sālik* changes his vile habits to good ones, he will not be safe from the evil acts. If he is successful in repentance (while still having vile habits), its stability which is a matter of grave importance cannot be achieved. So, the outer purification depends on the inner purification, besides the fact that the interior impurities cause deprivation of happiness, and originate the Hell of morals, which, as the people of knowledge say, is worse and more intense in burning than the Hell of deeds. This question has frequently been mentioned in the *Hadiths* of the infallible *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a).

Therefore, it is a must for the *sālik* to Allah to carry out this purgation. After he has cleansed his soul of the corrupting impurities of the morals with the pure water of useful knowledge and lawful, good austerity, he will have to set upon purifying the heart, the capital which, if reformed, all kingdoms will be reformed, and if it is corrupt, all will be corrupt. The impurities of the world of the heart are the origin of all impurities, such as being attached to other than Allah, to oneself and to this world.

This is originated by the love of this world, which is at the head of all sins, and by self-love, which is the mother of all diseases. As long as the roots of this love are still deep in the heart of the *sālik*, he will see no marks of the love of Allah in it, and he will find no way to his destination and objective. So, as long as there are remnants of this love in the heart, his journey will not be to Allah, but to the self, to the world, and to Satan. So, being purged of the love of self and of the world is the first stage of purifying the journey to Allah in reality, because before this purgation the journey would not be to Allah, and it would be a sort of carelessness to refer to *sālik* and *salūk* in this instance.

After this stage there are other stages, after which there will appear a model of 'Attār's *Seven Cities of Love*, the reciter of which, as a *sālik*, could see himself at the bend of a lane, while we remain behind walls and thick veils, and think that those “cities” and “kings” are nothing but of the weavings of our presumption. I have nothing to do with Shaykh 'Attār or Maytham at-Tammār, but I do not deny the original (gnostic) stations, and I cordially love their owners, and, by this love, I hope to be relieved. You yourself be whom you may, and bind yourself to whom you like.

The pretender wanted to come to look at the Beloved [Friend], The hand of the invisible came and pushed off the stranger. [1](#)

But I do not approve of disloyalty by brethren in faith and by spiritual friends to the gnostic friends, and I will not refrain from offering advice, which is the right of the believers to one another.

At the top of the spiritual impurities, which cannot be purged even with the seven seas, and which caused despair to the great prophets ('a), is the impurity of “the compound ignorance” [*jahl-i murakkab*], which is the origin of the incurable disease of denying the stations of the people of Allah and of knowledge, and is the source of doubting the people of the heart.

As long as man is polluted with such impurities, he will not take a step towards knowledge [*ma'rif*], or rather, this impurity so often extinguishes the inborn light [*nūr*] of disposition, which is the light [*chiragh*] for the road of guidance, and puts out the fire of love, which is the heavenly horse [*burq*] for ascending to high stations, causing man to eternally stick to the earth of nature.

Therefore, it is necessary for man, through thinking about the status of the prophets and the perfect holy men [*awliyā'*] ('a), and by contemplating their stations, to wash those impurities away from his heart, and not to be satisfied with the status he is in, because this satisfaction with the knowledge [*ma'rif*] one has, and remaining stagnant, are of the great tricks of *iblis* and the evil-commanding soul. We take refuge in Allah from them. Now, as this thesis is written according to the taste of the common people, I refrain from the three purifications of the holy men [*awliyā'*]. And praise be to Allah.

[1.](#) A poem by Hāfiz. In the printed copies it is stated: "...to come to the show place of the Secret."

Chapter 2: Concerning The Stages Of Purification

Know that as long as man is in the world of nature and in the abode of the primary [*hay'at-i nā'iyah*] matter, he is under the rule of the divine soldiers and the satanic soldiers. The divine soldiers are the soldiers of mercy, safety, happiness, light, purity, and perfection. The soldiers of *Iblīs* are on the opposite side. But as the divine aspects have mastery over the satanic aspects, at the beginning, man's disposition possesses natural divine light, safety and happiness, as is openly stated in the noble *Hadiths* and hinted at in the noble divine Book. [1](#)

As long as man is in this world, he can, on his own free will, put himself at the disposal of either of the two. So, if from the beginning of the God-given disposition till the end, Satan had no way of intruding, man would be divine, luminous from head to foot with purity and happiness, his heart being the light of Allah, observing nothing but Allah.

His inward and outward powers would be luminous and pure, and no one would use them but Allah, and Satan would have no share in them, nor would his soldiers be able to control him. Such an honorable being is absolute purity and pure light, and his past faults and the future ones are forgiven. [2](#)

He is an absolute conqueror, enjoying the station of original “great infallibility” [*'ismat-i kubrah*], and the other infallibles have the same station as the followers of that sacred essence. He is the Seal of the Prophets and possesses the station of absolute perfection. His vicegerents, though of separate substance, join him in disposition and completely follow him in absolute infallibility.

As to some of the infallible prophets and holy men [*awliya'*] (*'a*), they have no absolute infallibility and are not protected against Satan's intrusion, such as Adam's act with respect to the “tree,” which was one of the intrusions of the great *Iblīs*, the chief of the *Iblīs*es, and despite the fact that the “tree” was a paradisiac divine tree, yet it was marked by a multiplicity of names, which is contrary to the state of complete humanity. This is one of the meanings, or of the ranks, of “the forbidden tree”.

If the light of the divine disposition was polluted with the formal and spiritual impurities, it would be at a distance from the court of the Proximity and “the Presence of Love” [*hadrat-i uns*] in proportion to its pollution, until the light of disposition completely goes out, and the kingdom becomes altogether Satanic, and its inside and outside, secret and open, are put at the disposal of Satan.

Thus, Satan becomes its heart, ear (hearing), eye (seeing), hand, and leg, and all his other organs become Satanic. If somebody reaches this stage take refuge in Allah from it he becomes absolutely wretched and will never see the face of happiness. Between these two limits there are so many stages which only Allah, the Exalted, knows. Whoever is nearer to the horizon of prophethood, is of “those on

the right hand” [*ashḥab-i yamīn*], and whoever is nearer to the satanic horizon, is of “those on the left hand” [*ashḥab-i yasar*].

It should be noted, however, that even after the pollution of the inborn disposition, it is possible to purify it. As long as man is still in this world he can get out of Satan's domain and can easily join the party of Allah's angels, who are the soldiers of the divine mercy.

The reality of *jihād-i nafs* [self-struggle] which, according to the Messenger of Allah (s), is more meritorious than struggling against the enemies of the religion, and is the greater *jihād* ³ is this getting out of Satan's domain and entering the domain of Allah's soldiers.

So, the first stage of purity is the observance of divine laws and the obedience to Allah's commands.

The second stage is to be adorned with virtuous morals and faculties.

The third stage is the purity of the heart, which means submitting the heart to Allah, after which the heart becomes luminous, or rather it becomes of the world of light and a degree of divine light. The luminosity of the heart flows to other organs and inner powers, and the whole kingdom turns into light, and light upon light, till the heart becomes divine and godly and the Divinity [*hadrat-i lāhūt*] manifests in all the inner and outer stages.

In this case, servitude completely vanishes and is annihilated, and Lordship explicitly appears, in which case, the heart of the *sālik* is overcome by a state of tranquility and familiarity, and he loves the whole world, and experiences divine trances, and the sins and faults become forgivable to him, and will be covered by the shelter of “love manifestations” [*tajalliyāt-i hubb*], and primary holiness [*wilāyat*] begins to appear in him, and he becomes worthy of attending “the Presence of Intimacy” [*mahdar-i uns*]. Then, there are other stages, mentioning which does not suit these papers.

¹ For example, the noble verse: “So set your face to the religion, as a man of pure faith Allah's nature upon which He originated mankind.” (Sūrah ar-Rūm 30:30). See the hadīths in Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 3, p. 276; vol. 64, p. 130, and in At-Tawhīd, ch. 53, p. 321.

² A hint at the noble verse: “...That Allah may forgive your past faults and those to come.” (Sūrah al-Fath 48:2).

³ Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 67, p. 65; vol. 19, p. 182.

Chapter 3: The Cordial Disciplines Of The Sālik When Coming To Water For Purification

In this chapter we translate a noble *hadīth* from *Misbāh ash-Sharāh* so that the pure hearts of the people of faith may get from it some lumination.

It is stated in *Misbāḥ ash-Sharāḥ* that Imām as-Sādiq ('a) said: “When you intend purification and *Wudu'* [ritual ablution], proceed to the water as you proceed to Allah's mercy, because Allah has made water the key to His proximity and supplication, and a guide to the court of His service. And, as Allah's mercy purifies the sins of the servants, similarly the outer filths are purified by water and by nothing else. Allah, the Exalted, says:

“And He it is Who sends the winds as good news heralding His mercy, and We send down purifying water from the sky” (Sūrah al-Furqān 25:48).

He also says:

“And we made every living thing of water. Will they not then believe?” (Sūrah al-Anbiyā' 21:30).

So, as He has given life with water to everything of the blessings of this world, likewise, He has made obedience the life of the hearts, out of His mercy and grace. Think of the clarity, softness, purity and blessing of water and of its tender mixing with everything. Use it to purge the organs that Allah has ordered you to purify, and observe their disciplines in His obligations and advantages. So, if you use them respectfully, the springs of the advantages will burst out for you presently.

Then, mix with the creatures (servants) of Allah like the mixture of water with things: It gives to everything its due without any change in its own meaning. And learn a lesson from the Messenger of Allah (s) (who said): “A sincere believer is like water.” Let your clearness with Allah, the Most High, be like the clearness of water as He sent it down from the sky and called it “purifier” [*tahḥīr*]. Purify your heart with fear of Allah [*taqwā*] and certitude [*yaqīn*] as you cleanse your organs with water.”¹

In this noble *ḥadīth* there are delicate points and facts, which enliven the hearts of the people of knowledge, and bestow animation on the clear souls of “the people of heart” [*ashḥāb-i qulūb*].

Describing water, in this *ḥadīth*, as Allah's mercy, or interpreting it to be so, denotes that water is one of the great manifestations of Allah's mercy, which He sent down to the world of nature, and made it the source of life for the beings. Rather, the vast divine mercy, which descended from the high heaven of His Names and Attributes, and with which the lands of the individual entities [*ta'ayyunāt-i a'yān*] were revived, is called “water” by the people of knowledge.

And as the vast divine mercy is more obvious in the apparent substance of water than in other things, Allah, the Exalted, has assigned to it the task of purifying the outer filths, and made it the key to the door of His proximity and of the supplications to Him, and the guide to the court of His service, which is the door of the doors of the inner mercies.

Actually, the water of Allah's mercy descends and appears in every growth [*nash'ah*] of existence and in every visible and invisible scene to purify the sins of Allah's servants according to that growth [*nash'ah*] and suitable to that world. So, the invisible sins of the individual entities are purified with the water of mercy which descends from the heaven of His Oneness [*ahadiyyat*], and the sins of the non-existence

of “the outer quiddities” [*māhiyyat-i kharijiyyah*] are purged with the water of the vast mercy descending from the heaven of His Unity [*wahidiyyat*] in every stage of existence according to that stage.

In the stages of human growths [*nashat*], too, the water of mercy has different manifestations, as with the water descending from His Essence onto “the purgatorial collective individuations” [*ta’ayyun-i jam’iyyat-i barzakhiiyyah*] the sins of the “existential secret” [*sirr-i wujūd*] are purified: “Your existence is a sin incomparable with any other sin.” With the water descending from His Names and Attributes and the manifestation of Act, the vision of the attribute and the act is purged.

With the water descending from the sky of His “Decree of Justice” [*hukm-i ‘adl*] the inner moral impurities are purified. With the water descending from the sky of His Forgiveness the sins of the servants are purged. And with the water descending from the sky of “the kingdom of heaven” [*malakat*] the formal impurities are purged. So, it is clear that Allah, the Exalted has made water the key to His proximity and the guide to His court of mercy.

Then, in the noble *hadīth* there is another instruction, which opens another way to the people of *sulūk* and of observance. It says: “...Think of the clarity, softness, purity and blessing of water and of its tenderly mixing with everything. Use it to purge the organs, which Allah has ordered you to purify, and observe their disciplines in His obligations and traditions, as under each one there are many advantages. So, if you use them respectfully, the springs of the advantages will burst out for you presently.”

This noble *hadīth* refers to the degrees of purity in general and puts it in four general degrees, of which one is that which is mentioned so far in the noble *hadīth*, i.e. purifying the organs. It also notes that the people of observance and the *sāliks* to Allah should not stop at the apparent form of the things. They have to regard the appearance as a mirror reflecting the inside, to detect the facts from the forms and not to be satisfied with formal purification, which is a satanic snare.

So, in the purity of water they discover the purity of the organs, which they have to purge and clarify by way of performing the obligatory duties and the divine laws, whose fineness is to be used to make fine the organs and to take them out of the coarseness of disobedience, and to let purity and blessing flow into all the organs.

And, from the tenderly mixing of water with things, they realize how the divine heavenly powers are mixed with the world of nature, preventing the impurities of nature from affecting them. When the organs are clothed with the divine obligations and laws and their disciplines, the inner advantages gradually appear, the springs of the divine secrets burst out and a part of the secrets of servitude and purity uncover themselves for the *sālik*.

After explaining the first stage of purification and its instruction, the *hadīth* gives the secondary instruction, saying: “...then mix with the creatures (servants) of Allah like the mixture of water with things: It gives to everything its due without any change in its own meaning. And learn a lesson from the

Messenger of Allah (s) (who said): “A sincere believer is like water.”

The first instruction concerns the *sālik*'s managing his organs and inner powers. The second instruction mentioned in this noble *hadīth* concerns man's relation with Allah's creatures. This is a comprehensive instruction telling how the *sālik*'s behavior with the creatures should be, which is also an implication of the reality of privacy [*khalwat*]; that is, the traveler to Allah, while treating each group of the people with kindness, giving them their natural dues, and dealing with anyone of them according to his disposition, is to strictly observe the divine rights, and never to lose his own meaning, which is servitude and attending to Allah.

At the same time of being in multiplicity [*kathrat*], he is to be in privacy [*khalwat*], and his heart which is the lodging of the Beloved is to be free from others and empty of all designs and paintings. Then the *hadīth* refers to the third instruction, which concerns the *sālik*'s connection with Allah, the Exalted. It says: “Let your clearness with Allah, the Most High, be like the clearness of water when He sent it down from the sky and called it 'purifier' [*tahīr*].”

That is, the traveler to Allah should be free from the intrusion of nature, and its impurity and darkness should not be allowed into his heart, and all his acts of worship should be free from all external and internal polytheism. As the water is pure when descending from the sky, and the hands of impurity have not extended to it, the heart of the *sālik*, which has descended pure from the heaven of the invisible, is to be protected against the intrusion of Satan and nature, and to be prevented from being polluted with the impurities.

After this instruction, the *hadīth* comes to the last and the comprehensive instruction for the people of austerity and of *sulūk*. It says: “Purify your heart with fear of Allah and certitude as you cleanse your organs with water.”

Here is a reference to two lofty stations of the people of knowledge: one is “God-fearing,” which is perfected by abandoning everything other than Allah. The other is certitude, which is perfected by discerning the Presence of the Beloved.

[1.](#) Misbāh ash-Sharī'ah, ch. 10, on “Purification”.

Chapter 4: Concerning The Purifier

The “purifier” is either water which is, in this respect, basic or “earth”.

Know that the traveler to Allah, generally speaking, has two ways to take him to the loftiest goal, the station of proximity to the Divinity: The first of them, which is the principal and original one, is the journey

to Allah by turning towards the Absolute Mercy, especially the compassionate mercy, which is the compassion that takes every being to its appropriate perfection. It is of this kind of compassionate mercy that the prophets ('a) were sent to lead on the roads and to help those lagging behind.

To the people of knowledge and the people of heart, the House of Realization is the form of divine mercy. The creatures are perpetually and completely drowned in the oceans of Allah's mercy, yet they do not make use of it.

The Great Divine Book which has descended from the divine invisible world and the proximity of the Lord, and has appeared in the form of words and speech so that we, the deserted, the prisoners in the jail of nature and put in the fetters of the crooked chains of the soul's desires and whims, make use of it and rescue ourselves is one of the greatest manifestations of the absolute divine mercy, of which, we, the blind and deaf, have in no way made use.

The Messenger the Seal of the prophets, the honorable absolute guardian, who came from the Sacred Presence of the Lord and the company of the divine proximity and familiarity to this abode of estrangement and dread, where he had to keep company with the people like Abū Jahl (the Prophet's uncle and his bitter enemy) or even worse, and whose sigh: "...My heart is enveloped by a cover of dust..."¹ has burnt the hearts of the people of knowledge and friendship is Allah's vast mercy and the divine absolute generosity, who had come into his (worldly) body as an all-embracing mercy for the dwellers of this lower world, in order to take them out of this abode of terror and estrangement, like a "ring-dove"² which throws itself into the net of blight to save its flock.

The traveler to Allah should take the purification with the water of mercy as a form of using the descending divine mercy, and to make use of it as long as it is possible for him to do so. Should his hand become short of it, because of inertia or negligence, and be bereaved of the water of mercy, he would have but to pay attention to his own humility, indigence, poverty and destitution.

When he has in full view of his humility of servitude and is aware of his need, his poverty and his own potentiality, and discards his haughtiness, conceit and selfishness, a door of mercy opens to him, and the earth of (his) nature changes into the white earth of mercy, and becomes the dust which is one of the "two purifiers"³, and becomes the object of Allah's mercy and kindness. The stronger this state in man, i.e., his awareness of his humility, the more he receives of mercy.

Should he decide to depend on himself and on his action in his journey, he would perish, since there might be no one to extend help to him, like an infant which boldly starts walking alone, taking pride in its own steps, and depending on its own ability, without its father offering it any help, rather leaving it to itself. But when it recognizes its inability and inefficiency, it turns to its affectionate father, distrusting its own power, and entrusts itself to the care of its father, who offers his help, hugs it and guides it step by step to walking.

So, it is better for the traveler to Allah to break the leg of his journey and completely renounce his self-

confidence, austerity and action, and abolish himself, his power and ability. He should always remember his mortality and dependence in order to become an object of Allah's care, and to cover a hundred-year distant road in a single night by the attraction of the Lord, and the tongue of his inside and his state say, in the Presence of the Lord's Sanctity, imploringly and helplessly:

“Oh, who responds to the distressed, when he calls unto Him, and removes the evil...”⁴

¹. Refer to footnote 88.

². See Kalīlah wa Dimnah, ch. “Ring–Dove.”

³. It refers to a narrative related by the late ʿAkhṣand Khurasānī (may Allah sanctify his soul) in Kifāyat al-Usṭā, vol. 1, p. 130, to the effect that: “Dust is one of the two purifiers, and is enough for you for ten years.”

⁴. Sūrah an-Naml 27: 62.

Chapter 5: Some Disciplines Of The Wudu’ (Ritual Ablution) In Respect Of The Interior And The Heart

Imām ar-Ridā (‘a) is quoted to have said: “The servant has been commanded to perform the *Wudu’* (ritual ablution) so as to be pure when standing before the All-Powerful and supplicating, and by obeying Him, to be purged from filth and impurity, beside his removing laziness, expelling sleep and purifying the heart to stand in the Presence of the All-Powerful.

Confining it (the *Wudu’*) only to the face, the two hands, the head and the two feet, was because when the servant stands before the All-Powerful, the parts which are exposed are those which are ordered to be washed in the *Wudu’*: as with his face he performs the *sujūd* (prostration), with his hands he requests, desires, dreads and supplicates, with his head he inclines to Him in his *rukū’* (bowing down) and his *sujūd*, and with his legs he stands and sits...”¹

Up to here he explained the principal point in the *Wudu’*, informing the people of knowledge and *salīk* that to stand in the holy Presence of Allah, the Glorified and Most High, and to offer supplication to the Provider of Needs, require certain disciplines which should be observed. One must not appear in His Presence even with the external filths and impurities and with a sleepy eye, let alone with a heart, which is filled with dirts, and it is afflicted with spiritual impurities, which are the origin of all impurities.

Despite the fact that a narrative says: “Allah, the Exalted, does not look at your faces, but He looks at your hearts,”² and despite the fact that the means with which man attends to Allah, the Exalted, and what is, in the worlds of creation, worthy of looking at His Majesty, Greatness and Glory, is the heart,

while the other organs have no share in it, yet, they did not neglect the outer cleanliness. So, they decided the external purification for cleaning man's exterior, and the inner purification for cleaning his interior.

In this noble *hadīth*, it is clear from assigning the purification of the heart to be a result of the *Wudu'* that the *Wudu'* has an interior with which man's interior is purified, and meanwhile it appears that there is a connection between the exterior and the interior, the visible and the invisible. Similarly, it becomes clear that the outer cleanliness, the outside *Wudu'*, is the act of worship, and of obeying the Lord.

Therefore, the purification of the outside results in the purification of the inside, and purging the exterior leads to the purity of the interior. Generally, the traveler to Allah must, at the time of *Wudu'* be aware of his being about to stand in the Presence of Allah, the Almighty, as with such states of heart as he has, he does not deserve to be in His Presence, or he may even be dismissed from the Presence of the Lord, the Most High.

Thus, he must get ready to have his outer purification transferred to his interior, and to purify his heart which is the object of Allah's attention, or, actually, is the lodging of His Sanctity from all that is other than Allah, and to take out from his head any notion of arrogance and Oneness, which is the origin of the origins of the impurities, so as to become worthy of His Presence.

After that, Imām ar-Ridā ('a) explains the reason for specifying certain organs to *Wudu'*. He says: "Confining it only to the face, the two hands, the head and the two feet, was because when the servant stands before the All-Powerful, the parts which are exposed are those which are ordered to be washed in the *Wudu'*: as with his face he performs the *sujūd* (prostration), with his hands he requests, desires, dreads and supplicates, with his head he inclines to Him in his *rukū'* (bowing down) and his *sujūd*, and with his legs he stands and sits..."

The gist of his discourse is that these organs take part in worshipping Allah, and it is through these organs that worship is manifested. Consequently, it is necessary to purify them.

Then he refers to those acts of worship which appear from them, opening the way of their being valid and useful to the deserving people, and making the people of knowledge familiar with these secrets that the organs on which servitude appears in Allah's Blessed Presence, should be clean and purified, as the outer limbs and organs of the body, which have a deficient share of those meanings, would not be worthy of that station without purification.

Although submission is not, actually, a character of the face, and none of requesting, desiring, dreading, supplicating and facing the *qiblah* belongs to any of the tangible organs, yet, as these organs are the manifestations of those meanings, they must be purified. Therefore, purifying the heart, which is the real place of servitude, and the actual center of those meanings, is more necessary. Without its purification, the external organs will never be purified even if they are washed in the seven seas, and it (the heart) will not deserve being in the Presence of Allah. Actually, Satan will have a hand in it, and it will be

dismissed from His Glorious Presence.

Connection: In an authorized narrative in '*Ilal ash-Sharḥ*' it is thus related: “A group of Jews came to the Messenger of Allah (s) and asked him questions. Among their questions they asked: “Tell us, O Muhammad, why are these four organs given the *Wudu'*, while they are the cleanest parts of the body?” The Messenger of Allah (s) said: “When Satan whispered to Adam ('a) and he came near the 'tree' and looked at it, he lost face. He stood up and walked to it the first step taken towards sinning.

He took with his hand some of what was on it and ate it. Off his body flew what were on him of jewelry and apparel. He put his hand on the top of his head and wept. Allah accepted his repentance, but made it incumbent upon him and his offspring to purify those four organs. So, Allah ordered the face to be washed, because it looked at the 'tree'. He ordered the hands to be washed to the elbows, because he took with them (the fruit of the tree). He ordered the head to be wiped (with the hand wet with water), as he put his hand on the top of his head, and He ordered the feet to be wiped because with them he walked to sin.”^{[3](#)}

Concerning the reason for imposing fasting, there is also a noble *ḥadīth* to the effect that the Jews asked him: “What caused Allah to impose on your people to fast for thirty days?” He said: “It was Adam ('a), because what he had eaten from that 'tree' remained in his stomach for thirty days. So Allah made it incumbent upon him and his offspring to endure hunger and thirst for thirty days, and He allowed them, out of His kindness, to eat and drink at the nights.”^{[4](#)}

These noble *Ḥadīths* give the people of allusion and the people of heart to understand many points: Although Adam's sin was not like the sins of the others, as it might have been a natural one, or a sin of being inclined to multiplicity, the tree of nature, or of attending to multiplicity of names after the attraction [*ḥidhibah*] of self-annihilation [*fan'-i dhāt*], yet it was not expected from one like Adam ('a) who was Allah's chosen one [*safiyy*] and distinguished by proximity [*qurb*] and self-annihilation.

Therefore, according to the love-zeal [*ghayrat-i hubb*] of His Sanctified Essence, He announced his disobedience and going astray to all the worlds and on the tongues of all the prophets ('a). He, the Exalted, said:

“And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he went astray.”^{[5](#)}

Thus, so much cleaning and purification were needed for him (Adam) and his offspring who were hidden in his loin and (so) participated in the sin, though they did participate (in it) after coming out of the loin, too.

Therefore, the sin committed by Adam and his offspring has many degrees and manifestations. The first of those degrees is paying attention to multiplicity of names, and the last of those manifestations is eating from the forbidden tree, the invisible [*malakūt*] form of which is a tree that carries diverse sorts of fruits.

And its visible [*mulk*] form is its nature and affairs, and the love of this world and the self, as seen now in his offspring, is of the affairs of the same inclination to that tree and eating from it. Similarly, for their cleaning, purifying, cleansing, *Salat* and fasting for the redemption of the father's sin, which is the origin there are many degrees in proportion to the degrees of the sin.

From this explanation it is understood that all kinds of disobedience of the children of Adam are related to eating from the 'tree', and are purified in a certain way. All their sins of the heart are also related to that tree, and are purified in a certain way. Then, all kinds of spiritual sins are related to it, too, and are purified in a certain way.

Purifying the external organs is the 'shadow' [*zill*] of the purity of the heart and spirit for the perfect. It is an order, and a 'means' to them, for the people of *sulūk*. As long as man is within the veil of the individuation [*ta'ayyun*] of the organs and their purification, and he lingers there, he cannot be of the people of the *sulūk*, and is still in the sin.

But if he engaged himself in passing through the stages of external and internal purifications, and used the formal and outer purifications as a means of purifying the spirit and the heart, and in all the acts of worship and rites he observed their spiritual aspects and was benefited by them, or better, if he gave more importance to the internal aspects and regarded them to be the highest objective, he would be admitted through the door of the *sulūk* along the road of humanity, as is referred to in a noble *hadīth* in *Misbāh ash-Sharāh*: “..And purify your heart with *taqwā* (fear of Allah) and *yaqīn* (certitude) when you cleanse your organs with water.”⁶

So, a *sālik* man needs first a scientific *sulūk* so as to distinguish, with the blessings of “the people of remembrance” [*ahl-i dhikr*] ('a), the stages of servitude, and regard the formal worship inferior to the spiritual and inner worship. Then the practical *sulūk*, which is the reality of the *sulūk* has started. The aim of this *sulūk* is to free the soul from other than Allah, and adorn it with the manifestations of His Names and Essence.

Getting to this stage, the *sālik* would be at the end of his journey, attaining the goal of his progress to perfection, and acquiring the secrets of austerity and worship, as well as the delicacies of *sulūk*. Those are the manifestations of Majesty, which are the secrets of purity, and the manifestations of Beauty, which are the objective of other worships. To give the details is beyond the capacity of these pages.

1. 'Uyūnu Akhbār ar-Ridā, vol. 2, ch. 34, hadīth 1, p. 104.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 67, p. 241, quoting Jami' al-Akhbār, p. 117 (with a slight difference).

3. 'Ilal ash-Sharāh, vol. I, ch. 191, hadīth 1, p. 280.

4. Ibid., vol. 2, ch. 109, hadīth 1, p. 378.

5. Sūrah Tā-Hā 20:121.

6. Misbāh ash-Sharāh, ch. 10 on “Purity”.

Chapter 6: Concerning The Ghusl And Its Cordial Disciplines

“The people of knowledge” [*ahl-i ma’rifat*] say that the (state of) *janābah* (major ritual impurity) is getting out of the homeland of servitude and entering exile [*ghurbat*]. It is “declaring lordship” [*izhar-i rubābiyyat*] and claiming I-ness and entering within the frame [*hudūd*] of the Patron [*mawla*] and acquiring the quality of mastery [*siyadat*]. The *ghusl* (ritually washing the whole body) is a purification of this filth and a confession of the shortcoming. One of the religious personalities has enumerated one hundred and fifty states, in ten chapters, saying that the *sālik* should purify himself from them during his practicing the *ghusl*. Most of them, or rather all of them, stem from might [*‘izzat*], power [*jabarūt*] and haughtiness of the soul, selfishness, and self-conceit. [1](#)

The writer says that the (state of) *janābah* is vanishing [*fanā*] in nature and neglecting spirituality. It is the ultimate end of the complete sovereignty of animality and bestiality, and falling down to the lowest of the low. The *ghusl* is purging from this sin, turning away from the rule of nature, and attaining the divine authority and power. This is brought about by cleansing the whole kingdom of the soul, which has vanished in nature and been afflicted with Satan's conceit.

So, its cordial disciplines are that the traveler to Allah, at the time of *ghusl*, should not stop at the outer purification and washing the body, as it is a low superficial crust and belongs to this world. His paying attention to the *janābah* of the inside of the heart and the secret of the spirit and purifying them from that impurity should be more important to him.

Therefore, he must avoid letting his bestial soul and animal concern [*sha’h*] overpower the human soul and the divine concerns [*shu‘n-i rahmān*], and to repent of Satanic impurity and arrogance, and to purify the inside of the spirit which is a divine blow breathed in him by “the Breath of the Compassionate” [*nafas-i rahmān*], from Satanic tastes, which mean paying attention to other than Allah, being the root of the forbidden tree, so that he may deserve his father Adam's Paradise.

He must also know that eating of this tree of nature, desiring this world and attending to multiplicity are the origins of *janābah*, and, unless he purifies himself from this *janābah* by immersion in, or by complete purification with, the water of Allah's mercy, which flows from the pillar [*sāq*] of the Divine 'Arsh and is free from Satan's intrusion, he will not be fit for the *Salat*, which is the reality of ascension to (Allah's) proximity, as there can be no *Salat* without purification. [2](#)

This is referred to in the noble *hadīth* in *al-Wasīl*, quoting Shaykh as-Sadīq (may Allah be pleased with him), who said with authorities:

“A group of Jews came to the Messenger of Allah (s). The most learned among them asked him some

questions. Among his questions was: “What for did Allah command that one should perform *ghusl* because of the *janābah*, but He did not command it after relieving oneself from feces and urine? The Messenger of Allah (s) said: “When Adam (‘a) ate from the (forbidden) tree, it crept into his veins, hair and skin.” During sexual intercourse water would come out of every vein and hair in his body. So, Allah made it incumbent upon his offspring to perform the *ghusl* of the *janābah* till the Day of Resurrection...”³ as the narrative goes.

In another narrative, Imām ar-Ridā (‘a) said: “They were ordered to perform the *ghusl* because of the *janābah*, but they were not ordered to do it after the *khalā’* (relieving oneself from feces and urine), though it is filthier than the *janābah*, because the *janābah* pertains to the soul of man, and what comes out is something from the whole body, while the *khalā’* does not pertain to the soul of man, and what comes out is the food that goes in through an inlet and comes out from an outlet.”⁴

The appearance of these *Hadiths* to “the people of the appearance” [*ashab-i zahir*] denotes that as the semen is from the whole body, the whole body needs the *ghusl*, and this coincides with the opinion of a number of physicians and natural philosophers. But giving it the cause of eating from the tree, as in the first *hadith*, and ascribing the *janābah* to the soul, as in the second *hadith*, open a way to information for the people of knowledge and allusion, because the question of the ‘tree’ and Adam’s eating of it are of the secrets of the sciences of the Qur’an and the infallible *Ahl al-Bayt* (‘a), in which many sciences are occult.

For this reason in the noble *Hadiths* the causes of legislating many rituals are ascribed to the said case of the ‘tree’ and Adam’s eating of it, such as the *Wudu’*, *Salat*, *ghusl*, fasting during the month of Ramadān and its being thirty days, and many of the *hajj* rituals. The writer has for many years been thinking of writing a thesis on this subject, but other engagements have prevented that. I ask Allah, the Exalted, success and happiness.

Generally speaking, you are an offspring of Adam, a seed for meeting (Allah) and created for knowing (Him). Allah, the Exalted, has chosen you for Himself and has shaped you with His two hands of Beauty and Majesty, and told the angels to fall down bowing to you, and caused *Iblīs* to envy you.

So if you want to get out of the state of the *janābah* of your father, who is your origin, and to be worthy to meet the Beloved [*hadrat-i mahbūb*] and to become ready to attain “the state of familiarity” [*maqām-i uns*] and “the Presence of the Divine Sanctity” [*hadrat-i quds*], you are to ritually wash the interior of your heart with the water of mercy, and to repent from attending to this world, which is of the manifestations [*mazahir*] of the forbidden tree, and to completely wash your heart, which is the meeting place of the Beautiful and the Beauty of the Majestic, from loving the world and its evil affairs, which are Satanic impurities, for the paradise of meeting the *Haqq* (Allah) is a place for the pure: “No one enters Paradise except the pure.”⁵

“Wash yourself, then walk to the tavern.”⁶

1. He refers to Shaykh Muhyi 'd-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī in his *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyyah*, vol. 1, p. 363.
2. Wasīl ash-Shah, vol. 1, "Book of Purification," sec. on "Wudū'," ch. 4, hadīth 1, p. 261.
3. Ibid., sec. on "Janabah," ch. 2, hadīth 2, p. 466, quoted from *Man Ḥaḍurh al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 22; *Al-Majlis*, p. 115; *Al-'Ilal*, p. 104.
4. Ibid., hadīth 4, quoted from *al-'Ilal*, vol. 1, p. 281 and *'Uyūnu Akhbār ar-Ridā*, p. 291.
5. "Paradise is not entered except by the good." *Usūl al-Kifāyah*, vol. 3, "Book on Faith and Disbelief," sec. on "Sins," hadīth 7, p. 371.
6. Wash yourself, then walk to the tavern,
That this ruined convent may not be polluted by you.
Ḥafiz Shērāzī

Chapter 7: Some Cordial Disciplines For Removing Filth And Purifying Impurities

Be aware that removing the *hadath* (impurity), as already stated, is getting out of I-ness and selfishness and parting with carnality [*nafsiyyat*] or rather it is complete separation from the house of the soul, since, as long as there are remnants of a servant's self, he will be polluted with *al-hadath al-akbar* (the major impurity) and the worshipper and the worshipped in him are Satan and the soul. If the stages of the journey of the people of the Road and *sulūk* were for getting ranks and ascension to high degrees, they would not be out of the intrusion of Satan and the soul, and the journey and *sulūk* are justified [*mu'allal*].

Thus, the *sulūk* is within the stages of the self, and the journey in the very inside of the house. Such a *sālik* is not a *sālik*, not a wayfarer, nor is he an emigrant to Allah and His Messenger, and he has not yet been purged from the major impurity, which is "the servant himself" [*'ayn-i 'abd*]. Should he become completely purified from this *hadath*, the worshipper and the worshipped would be the *Haqq* [Allah], and "I would be his ear (hearing) and his eye (seeing)," ¹ which is the result of the proximity by the *nafilah* (supererogatory act of worship), would take place.

Therefore, as far as purification from the *hadath* is concerned, the *ghusl* of the whole body is necessary, because as long as "the very servant" [*'ayn-i 'abd*] is still there in a way, the *hadath* is not yet removed, as "under each hair there is a *janabah*." ²

So, purification from the *hadath* is purification from the *hudūth* [novelty] and perishing in the sea of ancientness [*qidīm*]. Its perfection is in getting out of the multiplicity of names, which is the interior of the 'tree'. By this getting out he will get out of Adam's infectious sin, which is the origin [*asl*] of the offspring.

So, the *hadath* is of the spiritual impurities, and its purification is of the inner invisible affairs and is a light. *Wudu'* is a limited light, while the *ghusl* is an absolute light. "Which *Wudu'* is purer than the *ghusl*?" ³

But removing the external filth and impurities has no such position, because it is a superficial cleaning and an external purification. Its cordial discipline is that the wayfarer servant, who wants to be present in the Presence of Allah, is to know that with Satanic filth and impurity one cannot find his way there, and unless he comes out from the big moral dispraised acts, which are the source of the corruption of the human utopia, and the origin of the external and internal sins, he will have no way to the wanted goal.

Satan, who was in the neighborhood of the world of sanctity and was regarded of the cherubim, yet, at last, because of evil inclinations, he was dismissed from the position of the favorites, and was cursed by:

“Then get out of it, for surely you are accursed.” (S^{ur}ah S^{ad} 38:77 and S^{ur}ah al-Hijr 15:34).

So, we, the survivors of the caravan of the invisible world, the sinking ones in the deep pit of nature, and the returned to the lowest of the low, how can we, with our Satanic, evil inclinations, deserve being in the Presence of His Sanctity and in the neighborhood of the godly and the companions of the favorites? Satan became self-conceited, recognized his being of fire, then said:

“I am better than him...”⁴

This self-admiration led to self-worship and arrogance, which drove him to despise and insult Adam (‘a), and said:

“...and him you created of dust,”

And made a false analogy. He did not see Adam's goodness or his perfect spirituality. He looked only at Adam's appearance, his being of clay and of dust, while of himself he looked at his being of fire, disregarding his polytheism of egoism and egotism. Self-love prevented him from discerning his shortcomings and hid his faults from his eyes. This selfishness and self-conceit led him to self-love, arrogance, ostentation, hypocrisy, obstinacy, and disobedience, driving him from the sacred ascension down to the desert of the abode of darkness of nature.

So, it is on the wayfarer to Allah, as he cleans himself from external filth, to purify himself from the origins of vileness and internal Satanic impurities, and thoroughly cleanse, with the divine water of mercy and lawful austerity, his utopia, his virtuous city, and purify his heart, the place of divine manifestation, and to take off the shoes of ambition and loving pomposity, so as to become worthy of entering the sacred valley of *ayman* and of being a place for the Lord's manifestation.

Unless he is cleaned from evil filths, purification from impurities [*ahdth*] cannot take place, as purifying the exterior is a preliminary step to the purification of the interior. Unless a complete, mundane and visible *taqw^h* according to the instructions of the pure *shar^h'ah* happens, no cordial *taqw^h* will take place; and unless the cordial *taqw^h* is brought about by the already named affairs, no real, secret and spiritual *taqw^h* can happen. All the stages of *taqw^h* are preliminaries to this stage, which is neglecting everything other than Allah.

As long as there are in the *sālik* remnants of selfishness, his heart will not discern Allah's manifestation. It is, however, possible that sometimes, owing to the precedence of (Allah's) mercy and the prevalence of the “near-to-Allah” [*yalīlillāh*] aspect, invisible help is extended to the *sālik* such that the remnants of his I-ness are burnt out by the Divine firebrand [*jadhwah*].

It is probable that in the way Allah manifested His glory to the mountain, crushing it to pieces and in the falling down of Moses senseless, there are references to what has been said; and there is a similar difference between the *sālik-i majdhūb* (the *sālik* attracted by Divine Grace), and the *majdhūb-i sālik* (the attracted one who is traveling to Allah). The people of truth understand from this an important point worthy of knowing, since knowing nothing about it would be the cause of many errors, goings astray and deviations from the right path. No one of those who are in quest of truth is to ignore it or be unaware of it.

It is this: The *sālik* who is in quest of truth must declare himself innocent from the extremities of some ignorant Sūfis and some negligent phenomenalists, so that it may become possible for him to travel to Allah. As a matter of fact, some sects of the first group believe that the external knowledge and act are formal, and stuffed moulds, intended for the ignorant and the common people, and that those who are the people of the secret, heart and truth, and are of good background, need not practice such acts, and that the external acts are required for the purpose of acquiring cordial truths and attaining the looked-for destination, and so, when the *sālik* reaches his destination, practicing those preliminaries will be departing, and engaging in the multiplicities will be a veil.

The second group, on the other hand, rose to face the first group and went to the other end of extremity by denying all the spiritual stages and divine secrets, and rejected all affairs, except the mere external appearance and the superficial form, alleging that everything else is nothing but imagination and fancy. These two groups are still in dispute and argument, each one accusing the other of being against the *shar‘ah*. In fact, both groups have somewhat exceeded the limits and they have gone to the extremes. In my *Sirr as-Salat* I have referred to this point, and I show, here, a moderate and middle way, which is the straight path.

It should be noted that the formal rituals and the external worships are not only for acquiring perfect spiritual characters and cordial truths, but that is actually one of their fruits. To the people of knowledge and of heart, all worships transfer the divine knowledge from the inside to the outside and from the secret to the public.

And as the blessing of mercy of the Beneficent [*ar-rahīm*], or rather of the Compassionate [*ar-rahīm*], covers all human cordial and formal growths [*nashā‘at*] and each one of these stages has a share of the general divine blessings, each has to do a part of praising Allah, and thanking Him for the beneficent and merciful favors of His Absolute Necessary Being. As long as the soul has a share of the formal mundane growth [*nashā‘at*] as well as of the visible life, the carpet of multiplicity will not be completely rolled away, and the shares of nature will not be done with.

As the traveler to Allah must not engage his heart with other than Allah, he is also not to make use of his bosom, imagination and nature in other than Allah's way, so that his *tawhīd* (monotheism) and glorification may become firm in all the growths [*nasha'at*]. And if the spiritual attraction has any result other than serving Allah and submission to Him, it will indicate that there are still some remnants of selfishness, and the *sālik's* journey is inside the house of the soul, and not to Allah.

The goal of the journey of the people of Allah is to color the nature and the kingdom of the body with Allah's color. There is a noble *hadīth* in which Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: "I am Allah! I am *ar-Rahmān* (the Beneficent)! I created *rahīm* (the womb, relationship) and derived its name from mine. So, whoever observed it (i.e., observed kinship relations), I would observe him, and whoever severed it, I would sever him."⁵

One of the interior concepts of this *hadīth* is, perhaps, this severing the nature, which is the mother of the spirits, off the original homeland, and observing (connecting) it to its austerity and returning it to its homeland of servitude. Abū 'Abdullāh (as-Sādiq) ('a) is quoted to have said: "I advise you to take care of your aunt, the date-palm, as it was created of Adam's clay."⁶ This noble *hadīth* refers to that kinship relations mentioned before.

In short, taking out the kingdom of the exterior from the homeland of servitude, and leaving it to itself, is a deep ignorance of the stations of the people of knowledge, and is of the temptations of the accursed Satan who deviates each group from Allah, the Exalted, in a particular way. At the same time, denying the stations and blocking the way to knowledge, which is the delight of the eye of the holy men [*awliyā'*] ('a), and confining the divine laws to the exterior, which is the world's share.

The kingdom of the self and the animal state, and disregarding the inner secrets and disciplines of worship which result in purifying the inside, reforming the heart and developing the interior are utmost ignorance and negligence. Both of these two groups are far away from the way of happiness and the straight path of humanity, and both are cut off from the stations of the people of knowledge.

The one, who is aware of Allah and knows the stations, must observe all the inner and outer rights and help everyone who has a right to get it. He must purify himself of exaggeration, fault and going to the extremes, remove the filth of denying the outside of the *shar'ah*, which is, in fact, limitation, and remove the filth of denying the inside of the *shar'ah*, which is restriction, and both of which are of the temptations of Satan and his treacheries, so that the road of traveling to Allah and attaining the spiritual stations become easy for him.

Thus, one of the stages of removing filth is removing the filths of the false fancies, which prevent Allah's proximity, and the ascension of the believers. One of the concepts and positions of the universality of the ultimate prophethood, or rather, of the proofs of the finality of the prophethood, is that he (the Last Prophet) attained, in all the spiritual states to all their rights and shares as regards all the affairs of the *shar'ah*. As in the knowledge of the affairs of the Lordship, the Glorified, He is known in the highest

height and in the nearest nearness to the state of universality:

“He is the First and the Last and the Manifest and the Hidden,”^{[7](#)}

“Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth...,”^{[8](#)}

“If you are lowered down with a rope to the lowest of the earth, you will come down onto Allah,”^{[9](#)} and

“... Wherever you turn, there is Allah's Face...,”^{[10](#)}

Through which the knower of the divine knowledge, attracted by the divine attractions, feels invisible delight and divine ecstasy. Similarly the practical-cordial monotheism is permeated into the last stage of the horizon of the nature and the corporeal body, and no being is deprived of a share of knowing Allah.

In short, the people of Sufism unknowingly speak of 'Īsā's (Jesus') wisdom, while the phenomenologists speak of the wisdom of Moses. The *Muhammadans*, however, are, by limitation, innocent of both of them. To expand on this brief is out of the question and does not suit these pages.

Connection

Quoting Imām as-Sādiq ('a) it is narrated in *Misbāḥ ash-Sharāḥ*, thus: “The *mustarḥ* (washing closet or toilet where one relieves oneself) is called so because the people are relieved there from the weights of the filths, and they clear out there the dirt and impurities. The believer learns from this that the pure of the ephemeral things of this world (i.e., food) will finally have such an (impure) end. Then, he will be relieved by abandoning this world and turning away from it. He empties his soul and his heart from being engaged with it, and disdains collecting and possessing it, as he disdains the impurities, the feces and filth. He thinks, of himself, how he is honored in an instance and feels humiliated in another.

He then realizes that adhering to contentedness and *taqwā* gives him relief in both worlds, that comfort is in neglecting this world, in refraining from enjoying it and in removing the impurity of (wanting) the unlawful and the doubtful, and so, he closes the door of arrogance to himself after knowing it, runs away from sins, opens the door of modesty, remorse and shyness, strives to carry out His commands and to refrain from the forbidden, hoping for a good return and a delightful proximity. He imprisons himself in the prison of fear, patience and abstinence from (satisfying) the desires until he arrives, with Allah's custody, in the eternal abode, and tastes His pleasure, as this is what is reliable (counted), and everything else is nothing.”^{[11](#)} This is the end of his noble speech.

In this noble speech there is a comprehensive order for the people of knowledge and *sulūk*, and it is that a conscious person, on his journey to the Last Abode, must, in whatever state he may be, demand all the spiritual pleasures, and not neglect, in any condition, to remember his ultimate goal and return. That is why the wise men have said: “The Prophet serves the (divine) decree [*qadḥ*] as the physician serves the body.”

As the great prophets and holy men [*awliyā*] ('a) have no care whatsoever except for Allah's decree [*qadā*] and the "near-to-Allah" [*yalillih*] aspect, and the heavenly Kingdom [*malakūt*] of the divine decree governs their hearts, they believe that the management of all affairs is in the hands of Allah's angels, who are the divine soldiers, while the physical physician, being far from this stage and discarded from this valley, ascribes the running of the affairs of nature to the natural powers.

In brief, a *sālik* should, in all conditions, make use of all the aspects of his *sulūk*. So, as he sees that the trivial matters and the pleasures of the visible world are destined to annihilation and change, and realizes that their fate is corruption and vanishing, he will easily have his heart turn away from them and free his heart from thinking of them and being engaged with them, and he will be disgusted with them as he is with filths. The inside of the world of nature is filthy. Filth and dirt seen in a dream which is a door of revelation [*mukāshafah*] are interpreted to mean worldly positions and wealth, and, according to the revelations [*mukāshafah*] of 'Alī ('a), this world is but a carrion. [12](#)

So, as the believer empties himself from the loads and excretions of nature and relieves the natural town from their harm, he is also to relieve his heart from being attached to it (nature) and getting engaged with it. He is to remove from his heart the burden of loving the world and position, and empty the spiritual utopia and relieve it from those impurities. Let him think how being engaged in the world will, after few hours, humiliate the honorable soul and force it to undergo the worst and most disgraceful state.

Let him know that to busy the heart with the world, after a while, when the curtain of visibility is drawn up and the veil of nature is pushed aside, will humiliate man and bring him to the reckoning and punishment. He is to know that adherence to *taqwā* and contentment brings comfort in both worlds a comfort which is a result of neglecting the world, by slighting it and rejecting its pleasures and entertainments. Having purged himself of the formal filths, he is also to purify himself from the impurities of the *harām* (the unlawful) and the doubtful cases.

Having understood himself and recognized the humility of his need, he has to close to himself the door of arrogance and haughtiness, to run away from recalcitrance and sin, and to open to himself the door of modesty, remorse and shyness. He is to strive to obey Allah and refrain from disobedience, so as to return to Allah good and well, and to attain Allah's proximity with purity and serenity of the soul.

He is to imprison himself in the prison of fear and patience and curb his soul of its desires, so as to be saved from the prison of Allah's punishment, and to join Allah's custody in the eternal abode, and, thus, to taste Allah's contentment. This is the ultimate hope of the people of *sulūk*, and everything else is nought.

1. Refer to footnote 21.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 78, "Book of Purification," sec. on "The Incumbency of the Ghusl of Janabah," hadīth 23, p. 51.

3. Jāmi' Ahādīth ash-Shāh, "Book of Purification," sec. on "The Ghusl and its Regulations," ch. 12.

4. "I am better than him. You have created me of fire, and him You created of dust." (Sūrah Sād 38:76).

5. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 71, p. 95, quoted from Ma'āniy al-Akhhār, p. 302.

[6.](#) Ibid., vol. 66, p. 129, quoted from al-Mahāsīn, p. 528.

[7.](#) Sūrah al-Hadīd 57:3.

[8.](#) Sūrah an-Nūr 24:35.

[9.](#) 'Ilm al-Yaqīn, vol. 1, p. 54.

[10.](#) Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:115.

[11.](#) Misbāḥ ash-Sharāḥ, ch. 9, on “Privy”.

[12.](#) Nahj al-Balāghah, edited by Fayd al-Islām, sermon 108: “They fell upon a carrion by eating of which they were exposed.” Or as in sermon 151: “They are falling upon an easy carrion.”

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/adab-salat-disciplines-prayer-second-revised-edition-sayyid-ruhullah-musa-wi-khomeini/objective-one#comment-0>