

# Orders and Organizations:

**Their inception, development, maintenance, and demise.**

**Including their: purposes and structure, creation, establishment, and continuance, densification, and deterioration.**

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The following general areas or topics are included or touched on in this work. They are not necessarily sequential, and are both introduced and expanded upon within the entire series of writings. Interspersed are writings, called reflections, on attributes that may also be considered from the standpoint of practices and relate to the preceding section. There are 26 pages in all. The last page is a list of links to all the other pages in this writing.

Introduction.

Broad background and Metaphysics.

Source of the Teaching and Orders on various levels.

Establishing and continuing an order.

Some elements and work of the coordinator.

Transmission of the Teaching.

Structure of the order.

Structure of the organization.

The perpetuation and growth of the Teaching.

Harmony of purpose within the organization.

Groupings that work.

Characteristics of vibrant, living orders, organizations, and teachings.

Elements of institutionalization and deterioration of spiritual entities into self-perpetuating organizations.

Elements of stabilization, deterioration, and/or crystallization of spiritual teachings, orders, and organizations including the loss of spontaneity, application, and purpose.

**The most useful,(and intended) manner to access this writing is to read it from the beginning to the end. The most comprehensive approach is to read and to also do the practices associated with each section. However, as with most things, many people are reluctant to spend the time and effort to do the "most useful" thing or follow the intention of the work. For you, I am providing a link from here to the last page which has links to all the pages. If you want to go to it now, or shortcut the process of learning that is built upon**

**by reading and/or working with it as intended, then go ahead and help yourself. If, however, you want to read this quickly for information, then it could be slightly helpful.**

## **Orders and Organizations**

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The purpose of life is found through living. It is neither found nor fulfilled through the creation, perpetuation, or membership in an order or organization. Nor is it found through following a person's teaching or being a Muslim, Jew, Hindu, Christian, or other religious person. These religions and teachings are however fulfilled when one completes the reattachment, reassimilation, and re-membrance of being what is one's own birthright - a member of All, an expression of All, and as one with All. It is fulfilled in daily life through and by Love and Awareness. For there is already an existing Order, Organization, and Teaching - and no more is needed to either supplement or support it. That is you in your greatness, and it is yours to be realized and lived.

As far as we know, God did not say "Make an order and follow its teaching to know life". The Prophets and Great Teachers did not establish orders for people to become Jews or Christians or Buddhists or Moslems.

The way of life is to experience and know the fullness of oneself, and it is in doing so consciously that the fulfillment takes place. Yet the Divine One has given guideposts and signs for It to return to this consciousness should creations of Itself lose its way and sense of being. It is found in the innermost remembrance and continuous Presence Which Never Forgets, is always unwavering, and is part of and in all at all times. It is there, and remembrance takes place. It is natural through evolution that this continues, and by this process all is known.

God did not say in the 10 Commandments to form religious orders. Buddha did not say the Pure Land is made up of Buddhists and to be a member of a Sangha. Jesus did not say that all people should be Christians and attend churches. Mohammed did not say that everyone should always do all the ritual and activities of Islamic law. The Law and the Prophets are fulfilled through living in awareness of our own true nature and being, and orders are nothing more than tools to do so.

They are part of - some - of the vehicles used to assist people to remembrance, reconnection, and expression. They are not made to last forever, nor are they necessarily the only ways or means. They need to be viewed as temporary constructions to achieve intermediate goals or ends.

The Great Teaching is that which percolates and makes itself known through all of life. It raises and leads all things to the next higher stage. It is present, existing, and ever dynamic, and extends through all. As progression takes place through the various stages of mineral, vegetable, animal, and finds its culmination in human; so too does the expression of that from which the Teaching stems and its parts become known. Known, Knowing, and Knower - Together.

It would be a very strange world indeed if in order to function properly, all people would have to live in spiritual or religious communities. It would be odd for everyone to have to attend the

same kind of services every day or week or month; or wear the same clothes, or think the same thoughts. But it is not too much to say that all can progress and express themselves as the True One. For it is the nature of being to do so.

The forms will vary. The teachings will vary. They will go away. What is needed at one time is no longer of value or need at another. Like a school for living, all any order or teaching does is to bring forward a step for living. It does not need to be continued after its usefulness is done.

The teaching, orders, forms, organizations, structures, by-laws, tenets, decrees, inviolable laws, patterns, buildings, methods, approaches, practices, sayings, and hierarchy are limited in time and usefulness. They are only good to be used to make the next step, and are both temporarily applicable and changing. Only under the right conditions are they useful.

They are for the right people, the right time, and the right place. They are changeable - only valid until they need to be replaced. It is the clinging to these outer forms, methods, and means that causes many problems and keeps people from advancing as quickly or cleanly as they might - toward the One realizing itself and living and expressing Itself that way. Fortunately, behind and through it all, no matter how much people get in the way or muddle it up, or cling to the unusable and dead; the living Word and Being always bubbles to its surface.

That is the Real Teaching. That is through the True Ordering. It is from That basis that the transitory orders and teaching springs.

## Reflection

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### **For Recitation, Attunement, Realization.**

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Following each section of this work is a page similar to this. They are titled with the section number and the word "Reflection". The other reflection pages contain commentaries. The heading indicates the purposes. Of course any of that use and development is up to you.

If you wish, you may use any of the phrases on this and any of the other reflection pages to go through a process of recitation, starting with audible, then refined to the breath, then without sound, then to the source. You may use this process as a means of moving from the manifest to the source - from the apparent to the real. Should you spend any time and effort, there is the potential to be benefit; and there is the possibility of also gaining a greater understanding and assimilation of the section of writing it follows. These of course are also only part of a larger process of understanding. On the other hand, if you do not wish to do any of this, you may just click on to the next section.

Following below are a series of Names and Phrases. The recitation and attunement may be approached and or applied in the same manner as

the commentaries, but without the intellectual portion. What, or how many you do, and how deeply you may go is up to you.

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**A selection of Phrases.**

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram,Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Om

La I'llaha, El Il Allah Hu

Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha

Shema Yisrael, Yahuwah Elohainu, Yahuva Echod

Abwoon D'bash Shemaya, Nitkadesh Shmuoch

Om Mane Padme Hum

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## **Orders and Organizations: 1**

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In the promotion and continuance of the Greater Teaching and Illumination of mind and body in both the denser non-physical planes and Earth, there is a process which includes the establishment of religious or spiritual orders and their organizations through which the function of the Teaching can express.

Orders are established for many different specific reasons, but always under the umbrella purposes of continuing and updating the Teaching. The outer forms they express themselves through then become the organization or visible structure. The means to do that reflect the purposes - made coherent to the time, place, and people.

From the point of view of earthly man, these orders may seem disjointed and contradictory. However, from another point of view, they are complementary and continuous. It is from that point of view that the process of creation of orders is initiated, or commences.

Before getting into the process of this creation of orders, let us consider a broader perspective. The Divine primordial Being creates of itself all that exists, layer upon - or within - layer from the undefined into the densest. In the course of doing this it takes on different functions, each corresponding to the level or sphere of fineness and harmony, together with the corresponding purpose.

As there is denseness without form or structure, there is the layer of heart - defined yet not separate - unified yet not All. From there more definition begins and One can behold Itself. In

this level of mind, One becomes separate enough to mirror Itself. As this goes deeper into greater solidity and definition, sphere upon sphere, spiral upon spiral, world within world, we find the increase in definition and apparent separation of form. It is here that the heavens and earth exist.

Also existing, and carried deeper within Itself and mind is the One Being differentiating Itself as through the mirror of experience of self-beholding. It is through separation that mind can perceive itself. Breath becomes the vehicle for the Divine One to move. The spirit-breath connects and carries. It is reflected from and within layer to layer, until, in the human it shows itself in the breath - which is not the real breath, but only an organ or vehicle to use to connect to the true Breath. In the process of this densification there are many kingdoms.

The level of Heart we have mentioned. It is undifferentiated. The mind is denser and reflects itself as whole. The level of pattern provides the space, or akasha, to accommodate the movement of mind. That spirit-stuff accumulates and the next layer forms. That provides another accommodation for reflection. Eventually cells within the structure of mind become dense enough to form what may be called bodies. There is then a corresponding tonal quality, light quality, breath quality, and consciousness. It is there we may call the heavens and the bodies of the universe.

Within that are wide, broad, deep, interspersed and intertwined qualities and purposes - with their corresponding points of view. Some are more inclusive than others. Some differentiate even more, and as they do there is a corresponding accumulation of spirit-stuff in form and denseness. These are the vehicles that Oneseff builds through which It functions, corresponding in density to the plane or level, or vibration. When the two, the vehicle and the level are at relative solidity, one can affect the other directly. It is here, in the levels of mind that mind affects and perceives itself; in the level of pattern in which through intent, breath, and direction of feeling, that creation furthers; and so forth until in the level of the dense earth, the human body can interact. Yet the external structure and differentiated levels, from the finest to the deepest still are contained in, permeate, and make up all that is unseen and seen in the human. We may think of it as a cell within the being of the infinite body of the Divine, cloaked in shell upon shell, ending with the physical form.

As each layer and depth gets more solid, and as each reflection and mirror becomes more distinct, there is the corresponding tendency for the mind-stuff to accumulate and define itself as that form or structure, along with the corresponding purpose.

At one level there is the perception and feeling that one can get "lost" in this differentiation and possibly "forget" itself. And so, in infinite wisdom, or self-protection, the One provides the vehicle and process for itself to perceive and act as the intermediary, with the tools to reach both density and unmanifest, through Breath the connector and Heart the perceiver. It is this that become the Spirit of Guidance; Self-guidance to itself.

As the denseness and differentiation continues in natural order, so too is the means provided to remind oneself and guide oneself back. This is the function of that Spirit - or Being - conscious of itself both as undifferentiated on one end of the spectrum and dense separation on the other; with the vehicles of mind, feeling, thought, and sense through which to function, and the tool of breath through which to connect. There then are also the corresponding smaller bodies or cells that reflect these qualities of higher heavens. They are found in each of the layers, and as what

are sometimes called the bodies of man. In reality these are only reflections of the divine personality. Symbolically they are the lower triangle of the 6 pointed star. But when the identification is with them, they are perceived as oneself and then one's vehicle, until finally, through re-membrance and expanding oneself in Return the identification and body grows back to itself.

So from the smaller differentiated form and consciousness, the aspect of being which guides is at one time considered external and later is rejoined. The point of view and identity has also a corresponding change.

It is from this point of view then that the "orders" are brought forth. They are some of the means used to reawaken oneself. They are some of the vehicles - through the human being - that the Divine All-One acts and reaches through to awaken itself. It is through these - the ordering of light, love, and harmony that a stage of development or Teaching is brought and is then updated; as long as the connection and receiver is still available. If not, then another means is found. And it is here that an additional ordering is brought into place, as a means to accomplish the next needed step or to satisfy an existing need.

From the point of view of the person who is attached to his body as himself this may appear haphazard. but from the point of view of That Which Guides Itself, it makes sense and is apparently natural.

## Reflection

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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**With the exception of this page, all the rest of the "reflection" pages are *much* shorter and contain two commentaries on a single attribute of the Nameless One. This contains three commentaries on two names.**

**The use of the commentaries is such that one may read and gain a certain level of general intellectual understanding. From there, if you wish, you may apply it as a practice as outlined on the previous reflection page.**

**The commentaries that follow and appear on subsequent pages are selections from the same two works and are presented in the same order. The first commentary on each of these pages is taken from the book "The Most Beautiful Names", compiled by Sheikh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti. It is published by Threshold Books, and is Copyrighted 1985 by the Jerrahi Order of America. It is used by permission of the Jerrahi Order of America. We thank them. The selection and commentary is referenced as "1". The second commentary is from a translation of the writings of Al-Ghazali from about the 12th century. It was published by Daystar Press in Ibadan Nigeria. We are thankful for this work. That is referenced as "2".**

**They provide two different expressions and are complementary. They can be used as starting points. Should you decide to read and/or work with these, please keep in mind that they were written originally with specific audiences in mind. They also reflect the time, attitudes, and conditions existing, so will of course be expressive of that nature - for the sake of communication if nothing else. You may consider some things out of date or too traditional or orthodox for your subjective taste. One thing though that is never out of date is the realization and point of view of the original author. Although some of the wording or approach may seem inappropriate, it would be far more real and active to keep your attention as much as possible attuned to that original point of view than it would be to intellectualize it. If you find that point of view and the breath of the writer, it can lead you far. Please keep in mind that it is experience that is of real value, not the knowledge of fact.**

**On this page, there is also another explanation written and included as part of 2 different types of practices - walk and dance. These were written by and introduced by Samuel Lewis in approximately 1970. This was copyrighted by the Sufi Islamia Ruhaniat Society in 1975 as part of a larger work, and is used by permission of the author. We thank him. It is referenced as "3".**

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## **Ar Rahman, Ar Rahim**

### **AR-RAHMAN**

He is the one who wills mercy and good for all creation, at all times, without any distinction between the good and the bad, the faithful and the rebel, the beloved and the hated. He pours upon all creation infinite bounties. The proof is in the Qur'an: *wa rahmati wasi'at kulla shay'ian* - "My Mercy covers everything" (7:156)

The ones who know have interpreted the meaning of Rahman as the will of the total good of Allah, iradat al-khayr, and say that Rahman, like Allah, is a proper name of the Creator, and cannot be attributed to others. The meaning of this mercy is a fineness of feeling, a pain and concern felt when one knows that someone is in distress. It begins with this pain, whose pressure moves us to help the one in distress. But the feeling of mercy and pity is not sufficient. Real compassion is in force when one is able to alleviate the pain and distress which the pitied one is suffering. Allah is beyond of all these, yet He opted for compassion rather than punishment before He created creation. He has created all creation with His mercy. Everything which has come to be since the beginning is blessed with mercy. He has created all creation, including His supreme creation, man, without defect and pure. He has blessed His creation with infinite bounty. In His mercy, He has shown the dangers of loss and perdition. He has given man and only man the freedom of choice between good and bad.

Find in yourself the light of Rahman by using your freedom of choice for the good of yourself and of others. Feel the pain of the misguided one as well as the unfortunate one, not with

condemnation, but with pity and assistance.

Abu Hurayrah (May Allah be pleased with him) reports the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying, "Allah Most High has one hundred portions of mercy. He has sent only one portion upon the universe and divided it among all His creation. The feeling of mercy and compassion that His creatures feel among themselves is out of that share. The other 99 portions He has saved for the Day of Last Judgment when He will bestow them upon the believers."

Another hadith reflecting the will and wish of Allah to offer His compassion and beneficence to the creation is: "If one does not need and ask Allah [for His compassion and beneficence], Allah will direct His anger towards him."

'Abd ar-Rahman is he in whom Allah expresses His mercy upon the universe. Every son and daughter of Hz. Adam (May Allah bless him) takes their share of the mercy from the Merciful in accordance with their potential. None are excluded from this expression of the Merciful, as the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah's mercy upon the universe, says in a tradition: "Allah has created man in the form of his mercy."

## **AR-RAHIM**

He is the source of infinite mercy and beneficence, who rewards with eternal gifts the ones who use His bounties and beneficence for the good. This is mentioned in the Qur'an: *wa kana bil-mu'minina Rahiman* - "He is compassionate and beneficent [only] to the believers" (33:43).

Ar-Rahim indicates beneficence toward those who have a will and choice, and who use it according to Allah's will and for His pleasure. When Allah says, "I have created all for you . . ." that is the expression of His rahmaniyyah. When we find this bounty hidden in everything, including ourselves, and use it as He wills us, caring for it as it is left to us to do for His sake, we are rewarded with eternal salvation. Allah says, ". . . and I created you for Myself." This great honor is the expression of His rahimiyyah.

Hz. Mujahid (May Allah be pleased with him) said, "Rahman belongs to the people of this world; Rahim belongs to those of the Hereafter." The ones who know pray: *ya Rahman ad-dunya wa Rahim al-akhirah* - "O Rahman of the world and Rahim of the Hereafter." Rahman is mercy upon the nafs, the worldly being. Rahim is mercy upon the heart. Rahman gives sustenance in this world. Rahim gives eternal salvation in the Hereafter.

The manifestation of rahimiyyah in the believers occurs as thankfulness to Allah, who gives all, and also as the ability to be compassionate, caring and giving, which He also gives us. Absence of pride in being instrumental in doing good deeds, and realization that He is the Creator of the ones in need as well as the satisfaction of their needs, in extending Allah's beneficence upon those who need it all this reflects rahmaniyyah.

If you should encounter difficulties, unthankfulness and resentment, you should bear it for Allah's sake, because you will receive your reward here and tenfold in the Hereafter. Do not show off your good deeds, especially to their recipients. Be thankful to them; if their conditions did not exist, your compassion and generosity could not be exercised.

As for the recipients of compassion and care, they should be thankful to their benefactors and



remember them well at all times, because "The one who cannot be thankful to man cannot be thankful to Allah." But they should not make gods out of their benefactors, becoming their servants instead of Allah's servants. They should know that good comes only from Allah; but the tool that He has chosen is a beautiful tool, worthy of respect.

The ones who find the taste of Allah's attributes of Rahman and Rahim in their beings, and come close to their Creator through them, cannot have doubt and sadness in their hearts. They know that whatever happens, Allah, ar-Rahman, ar-Rahim, will have mercy upon them, save them, and reward them.

On the other hand, the ones who think that Allah's compassion, mercy and beneficence which appear in them are their own qualities, becoming arrogant, are bound to become of the doubters. That doubt, in extreme cases, may push man to take his own life.

'Abd ar-Rahim is the pious one whose fear and love of Allah are constant. His life is a constant effort to perfect himself in accordance with the prescriptions of Islam, and he is the one with whom Allah is pleased. He is the one who is honored with the manifestation of Allah's compassion and beneficence, which he expresses towards other believers.<sup>1</sup>

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## **AR-RAHMAN AR-RAHIM**

### **The Merciful and Compassionate One**

These two names are derived from rahma (mercy). The concept of mercy necessitates one who is an object of mercy, for no one is an object of mercy unless he is in need. Ar-Rahman is the one by means of whom the needs of the needy persons are satisfied in such a way that neither intent, volition nor solicitude are involved. The one in need is not called rahim. Furthermore, the one who intends the satisfaction of a need but does not in fact satisfy it though he is able to do so, is not called compassionate. For if the intention had been perfect, he would have carried it out. On the other hand, the one who (for valid reasons) is unable (to carry an intention to fruition) may still be called a merciful one in view of the empathy that motivated him. In spite of this, however, he falls short (of his goal).

Perfect mercy is that which actually bestows good upon those in need. The willing of good for the needy is concern for them. All-inclusive mercy gives to both the worthy and unworthy. The mercy of God is perfect and all-inclusive. It is perfect in the sense that He not only wills the satisfaction of the needs but actually satisfies them. It is all-inclusive in that it includes the worthy and the unworthy, this life and that which is to come and encompasses the essentials, needs and advantages which go beyond them. Thus He is in truth the Compassionate absolutely.

An Important Detail: Mercy implies a pain-inducing empathy which lays hold of the compassionate one. This moves a merciful person to satisfy the wants of the object of mercy. The Lord Most High is free of this. Perhaps you are of the opinion that this is an imperfection in respect of the meaning of mercy. On the contrary however, this is a perfection and not an imperfection (in respect of the meaning of this concept). As for its not being an imperfection, this is because the perfection of mercy lies in the perfection of its fruit. Whenever the needs of the needy one are perfectly satisfied the object of mercy has no share in the empathy of the one

showing mercy and his feeling of distress. On the contrary, the feeling of distress on the part of the one showing mercy is caused by his own weakness and imperfection and does not (at all) increase his weakness in respect of the aim of the needy one after his needs have been perfectly satisfied.

That this is perfection in respect of the meaning of mercy lies in the fact that the compassionate one (whose mercy) originates from empathy and distress almost desires by his act to repel empathy from himself. Certainly that falls short of the perfect meaning of mercy. On the contrary, the perfection of mercy lies in the fact that he looks upon the one requiring mercy for the sake of this one requiring mercy and not for the sake of being relieved, of the pain of empathy (in himself).

A Useful Lesson: Ar-Rahman is more specific than ar-Rahim and therefore is applied only to God, whereas as-Rahim may be applied to one other than He. In this respect it approximates the name "God" which functions as a proper noun, even though (ar-Rahman) is definitely derived from rahma. For this reason God combined the two when He said, "Say (unto mankind): Cry unto God, or cry unto the Beneficent (ar-Rahman), unto whichsoever ye cry (it is the same). His are the most beautiful names."

From this point of view and the fact that we have forbidden the synonymity of the names that are enumerated, it follows that a distinction should be made between the meanings of these two names. One would prefer that the basic meaning understood from ar-Rahman be a kind of mercy. It is a quality quite beyond the reach of human potential. Rather is it related to the bliss of that life which is to come. The ar-Rahman is the one favourably disposed towards man, firstly, by creating him; secondly, by guiding him to faith and the causes of happiness; thirdly, by making him happy in the life to come; and, fourthly, by bestowing upon him the vision of His gracious face.

An Admonition: Man's portion of the name ar-Rahman is that he should have mercy upon the servants of God Most High who neglect Him. He should turn them from the way of negligence to God by public preaching and private counsel and do this gently, not harshly. He should look upon the sinners with eyes of mercy, not eyes of censure. This he should do in view of the fact that every act of disobedience occurring in the world is, as it were, his own disobedience. He must go to any length to remove it, to the fullest extent his ability permits, and do this out of mercy for that sinner, because he is now exposed to the anger of God and merits being removed from nearness to Him.

Man's portion of the name ar-Rahim is that he does not leave the poverty of the needy person without satisfying it to the best of his ability. He will not abandon the poor person in his neighborhood and city until he has provided for that person's maintenance and staved off his poverty. This he will do either by means of his own wealth, his influence in the area or the effort to intercede with a third party on behalf of the needy one. If he is unable to satisfy him, the merciful one will single out the needy person in his prayers. Furthermore, he will manifest his sorrow on account of the poor man's need out of empathy and sympathy until he becomes, as it were, one who actually shares in his suffering and want.

A Question and Its Answer: Perhaps you ask, "What is the meaning of God Most High being a compassionate one and His being the most merciful of all those who have mercy? No compassionate person who is able to remove disabilities can tolerate the sight of the afflicted, the

one who suffers hardships and torment and the physically ill without using his power to deliver them from their disabilities. The Lord Most High possesses the ability of dealing with every affliction, staving off all poverty, relieving every illness, and removing every hardship. The world overflows with illnesses, severe trials and tribulations. He is capable of removing all of them. Nevertheless, He leaves without help those of His creatures who are afflicted with calamities and sufferings.

Your answer is that the mother of the little child may feel tenderness for her child and protect him from the cupping, whereas the wise father forced him to it. The ignorant person thinks that the mother is the compassionate one and not the father. But the wise person knows that the father's infliction of pain upon the child by means of the cupping belonged to the perfection of his mercy sympathy and compassion, whereas the mother actually was the enemy disguised as a friend. He also realizes that a little pain is a blessing rather than an evil when it ultimately serves as the cause of great joy.

Ar-Rahim most certainly intends nothing but good for the object of mercy. All existing evil has some good in it. If that evil is removed, surely the good inherent within it will become ineffectual. Subsequently by means of the nullity of the evil itself, an even greater evil results. Since this is the case, even though the amputation of the leprous hand appears to be an evil, inherent in this act, is ample good, namely, the well-being of the total body. Furthermore if the amputation of the hand is omitted, the destruction of the entire body would ensue, and then (certainly) the (ultimate) evil would be greater. The amputation of the hand for the sake of the soundness of the entire body is an evil within which there is good. The primary intention behind the consideration of amputation is the well-being of the body as such, and certainly this is generally good.

Moreover, when a sound body cannot exist except by amputating the hand, then the way to health is the amputation. The soundness of the body is desired for its own sake, in the first place, whereas the amputation is desired for the sake of something else, in the second place, not for its own sake. Therefore, both are complete in the volition. But the one is willed for its own sake and the other for the sake of something else. Undoubtedly that which is willed for its own sake has precedence to that which is willed for something else. For this reason God Most High says, "My mercy precedes My anger." His anger is His will to do evil, and the evil comes into existence by means of His will. His mercy is His will to do good and the good comes into existence by means of His will. However, He wills good for the good itself, whereas He wills evil not for itself but rather for the good that is within it. Good is determined essentially, but evil is required accidentally. Both of them are predetermined, and there is not at all in that which is contrary to mercy.

Now if some kind of evil occurs to you in which you see possible good, or if it occurs to you that the attainment of a good which contains no evil is possible, then be sure you suspect your mind of being inadequate in respect of one of these two.

The first is your view that this evil has no good within it. So this must be a part of that which the mind simply cannot understand. In this respect perhaps you are like the boy who considered cupping a pure evil, or the stupid man who considered killing in retaliation a pure evil. (The man) primarily considered the person killed ... whom, of course, the act was pure evil. However, he overlooked the general good accruing to the community as such resulting from the act. Such a

person does not understand that the achievement of a general good by means of a specific evil is, in fact, a blessing. This (truth) the good (man) ought not disregard.

The second notion (to be held suspect) is your view that the attainment of good is possible without being involved with evil. Surely this (truth) also is subtle and obscure. The possibility and impossibility of everything possible and impossible cannot be apprehended by intuition and superficial examination. On the contrary, this can often be known only by deep, subtle thought of which the majority of men are incapable. This being the case, let your mind be suspect in respect of these two extremes and do not doubt God is the most merciful one of those who are merciful. His mercy always precedes His anger. Have no doubt at all that the one who wills evil for evil's sake, rather than for good, does not deserve the name "merciful". He is incapable of removing the veil that covers this secret, an uncovering which in his case is made impossible by evil. You must be content with faith. Do not covet the uncovering. You have been shown by a symbol and on allusion if you are one of his people worthy of it.

Consider this bit of poetry: "If the person you have been addressing were alive, you would have made him hear. But the one whom you have called is not alive." Certainly this is the condition of the majority of the people. But as for you, O brother, for whom this explanation is intended, I believe you are one of those trying to perceive and understand the secret action of God in respect of your destiny and therefore one who can dispense with these revolving thoughts and admonitions.<sup>2</sup>

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*[The following selection is taken from the work of Samuel Lewis on Spiritual Dance. I am putting it here because it shows the innovative application of recitation and movement. Its basis is recitation of Divine Name and attunement - in this particular case that of ER RAHMAN and ER RAHIM. Through its use in this manner, a person begins to experience these qualities and grow within that personality, while at the same time the personal personality grows toward the reality toward which the Name(s) point. It increases the field of operation, scope, and capacity. It is an example of a living teaching. This was brought forth for both specific and general purposes - certainly applicable to the time and people. If they are used now, it is up to the guide to ensure the efficacy.]*

Spiritual Dancing is that which elevates the consciousness. Dancing may be said to be the movement of the body or any of its parts to rhythm, and spiritual is that which helps to make man realize that this body is really the Divine Temple. Therefore the use of sacred phrases and words, or the practice of deep meditation before starting, is necessary. For no dance is a Spiritual Dance because it is called that. It does not mean a certain form or technique, nor a ritual, nor something so esoteric that there is no understanding by performers and no communication to audience.

Spiritual Dancing should be in the Name of God, so the first Spiritual Dance is based on BISMILLAH. This means "In the Name of God," but when used it is also interpreted as "I begin in the Name of God." To this are added ER RAHMAN and ER RAHIM, and when the full phrase, BISMILLAH ER RAHMAN ER RAHIM, is used, it may be interpreted narrowly as "In the Name of God the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful," and broadly, "We begin in the Name of Allah, etc." We begin in the Name of Allah rather than in the Name of God because we use the sound ALLAH.

There is a tradition, "Say ALLAH and Allah thou shalt become," so devotees say ALLAH, the sound as well as the word. We read that the Hindu religion teaches a theory of "Sound-God," but in practice, they do not always use a Sound which is divine. There are a number of Divine Sounds and we may use all of them, but we begin with ALLAH. So the first phrase used is the Bismillah.

*[There then are a few paragraphs with instructions for doing a group dance. I have omitted them. In addition, the phrase ER RAHMAN ER RAHIM may be also used as a walking practice, as can all the other attributes or Names. There are applications beyond the dance alone, as the following mentions.]*

There also may be a silent meditation beforehand, but if the participants are not veterans in this, they may learn the meditation through dancing, and also learn the dancing through meditation. Both institutions are found in some countries of the world.

*[Here is more instruction which I have omitted.]* One begins to feel the Compassion; one bestows the Compassion; one acts as the Divine Agent in producing the Compassion for the World. The Compassion is already there; man acts as a condenser to bring it to manifestation in the physical world.

*[And more omitted]* ... repeat ER RAHIM, that God is the All-Merciful. When He gives, it is Compassion, and when He receives it is Mercy, but always actually it is ALLAH giving and Man receiving. Nevertheless, by this stance, man increases his capacity for Mercy, his Mercifulness and tenderness.

So out of the Divine RAH, the Compassion is the positive and the Mercy is the negative, or, as they are called in Arabic, ER RAHMAN and ER RAHIM. They are of the same root and of the same essence, only in the English they are made to appear as of different sources, which they are not. The Arabic presents their emanation from Divinity and their relationship to each other.

*[And more omitted]*

It may be questioned whether or not these are folk dances. Of course they are folk dances. There have been groups like Dervishes, and even Shaking Quakers, who used dance forms. The Bible has much to say on this, and traditional religion very little. The development of ecstasy has always be regarded as beneficial to the young, to help them rise above the denseness of earth. If not shown "right ways", youth will take to "other ways ". This is the nature of youth.

**It may also be asked if this is a rigid form, or able to be used as the basis for modulation and improvisation. What must remain is the sacred phrase; this, the sacred phrase, and not the form, is the foundation of development along this line. [My emphasis]3.**

*[I have not included any other dances, walks, or spins utilizing the Divine Names as foci in this writing. Each one has them, and as through the recitation - either outward, audibly, or on breath, or of the sense - any of these forms can be used to further experience the quality or attribute. It is through application as needed as correctives or for unfoldment, a systematic approach, or through individual instruction that this is best conveyed, so I will only make note that they exist. If the forms are used it is up to those instructing to ensure that they are conveyed in a real and timely manner, in the correct circumstances. Any other use is self-defeating or of limited value.]*

# Orders and Organizations: 2

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The One Being through mind perceives itself and accumulates into a large extensive body - almost without end in itself - and connects through Divine breath all of creation and creator as one. It helps and assists and guides as needed. We can call it the Spirit of Guidance. It is from this level that the Teaching is brought into the earth.

Like a step-down transformer it is made more solid and intelligible through each correspondingly dense layer. The soul that then gravitates toward a level becomes connected to that process and with its framework. The soul that reaches to the source becomes aware of the Divine plan. But for the others, less evolved, it is consciousness of the level or field in which it operates. That harmony and balance changes with the development and attunement of the soul.

As there is a constant "flow" of being and extensions of being into denseness, so is there a replenishing of those souls that make up the body and mind of this Spirit of Guidance. And who does this Spirit guide? It guides both those on the journey into density and those seeking the return to itself. It guides also those who are not knowing of its presence but need it the most - those "sleeping", or forgetful of their source. And this guidance continues all the time. It is from here that the ordering of Love, Harmony, and Beauty creates and takes the forms of ordering through which to express itself and work. And the Order is born.

The Order - or ordering of the Teaching through the Spirit of Guidance is then made up of that which is the overall Guiding Spirit manifesting itself also as the souls and oversoul which are attuned to those levels. They, as one being, are the functional Guide.

The ones that make this up - as co-workers and co-perceivers and co-being with existence see and feel the need of that which is. Their job then, is to provide for those needs. And what could be a greater need than for those who have forgotten their source, themselves, to be provided with the signs and paths of return? It is here that the orders do their work and fulfill their purposes.

From the point of view of the Divine, and the Spirit of Guidance - made up of all the souls aware and connected and working on those levels - it is the recognition and filling of need. From there, the important step is to find a vehicle through which this guidance can be expressed and extended until its purpose is satisfied and its need is no longer there.

So from that point of view, there is reaching into the denseness and finding the suitable vehicle in the soul that is both closely attuned and available to act. This person is the one, then, that gets the job of bringing forth the initial teaching and then the form and structure of this particular ordering - known then as an "order".

From the point of view of Divine Guidance, it is the need finding a vehicle to satisfy it. From the point of view of the one in Earth, it may be a great unsettling, the Voice of God, the instruction of the Prophets, or another such experience. It may be a shaking to the quick, or a series of revelations, or dreams, or a sudden turn of awareness - or any combination of these and other things; all of which eventually results in this person bringing through the guidance into the earth.

Within the Sea  
The Sea within  
A Breath brings Forth  
The feeling vision of Light  
Of Myself  
The Light moves forth  
The Breath involves  
I take and move  
Within Myself  
To Self to Sea.

## Reflection

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**For Recitation, Attunement, Realization.**

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## AL-MALIK

### AL-MALIK

He is the Owner of the universe, of the whole creation - the absolute Ruler. Allah is the only Ruler of the entire universe, visible and invisible, and of all creation, from before the beginning and after the end. There is none like Him because He is the Creator of His kingdom, which He created from nothing. Only He knows the size of His kingdom, the number of its population, and the strength of His armies. Only His will, His rule and His justice exist. What happens is what He wills; what He does not will will never happen. He does not need His kingdom, His kingdom needs Him. He rules by Himself; He does not need any means of help to rule. He has created the universe as a place of work for His creation, and has created the Day of Last Judgment as a great court of justice. In the world, one's deeds are planted. On the Day of Last Judgment the rewards are reaped. Everyone will receive the result of his doings. There is none other than Him in whom to take refuge.

Servants of Allah who come to know their Master, finding the meaning of that divine name in themselves, will become sober from the drunkenness of counting their fortunes, their high positions and their fame as their own. Those who have served worldly kings as gods will wish for the Master of their masters. All will know that they are not left on their own in this divine kingdom, but that there is an absolute Ruler who sees a black ant crawling on a black rock on the

darkest of nights, as well as the most secret thoughts and feelings passing through minds and hearts. Everything that one is and everything that one does is watched and recorded; all will be accounted for on the Day of Last Judgment.

One who knows al-Malik, even if he is a king, will know that at best he is a shepherd charged for a short time to care for a flock that is not his. To the extent of his conscientiousness, hard work and devotion, he may expect to be rewarded by his master. If he is a bad shepherd, killing and roasting the lambs, drinking all their milk, letting the wolves ravage the flock, he certainly will be punished. When his duty as a shepherd ends, he will have to give an accounting. It is better to put one's accounts in order before the day that they must be submitted.

'Abd al-Malik is the servant who has been given the power and control over his own life and actions, as well as the life of others, to the extent of the orders and will of Allah. The manifestation of the name ya Malik, the absolute King of the universe, upon a servant of Allah is the hardest to bear and the most powerful of the attributes manifested in man.<sup>1</sup>

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### **AL-MALIK - The King**

Al-Malik is the one whose essence and attributes are independent of all existing things, but everything in existence is dependent upon (in need of) Him. To be sure, nothing can exist without Him, whether it be in respect of its essence, its attributes, its existence or its continued existence (baqa'). Each and every thing derives its existence from Him or from that which is derived from Him. Everything other than He Himself is subject to Him in respect of both its attributes and essence. But He has no need for anything. This, indeed, is the absolute al-Malik.

An Admonition: It is inconceivable that man could be an absolute king since he is not independent of everything. To the contrary, he is always a pauper before God Most High, and this would be the case even if he were independent of everyone except God. By the same token it is also unthinkable that everything in the universe should have need of him. Rather he should know that the majority of things in existence have no need of him. Man begins to understand the limited degree to which he can accept the title of king only when he knows that whereas he might be independent of some things, he shall always be totally dependent upon others. The true king among men is the one who realizes that in reality only God is the absolute king. For this reason he is always and only totally dependent upon God (though he might be independent of certain human relationships).

Nevertheless, he governs his own kingdom in such a manner that his troops and his subjects obey him. That kingdom which is his in a very specific way is his heart and his physical body. His troops are his appetite, anger and passion. His subjects are his tongue, eyes, hands and the remainder of his organs. He achieves the rank of a king in the world when he controls them and they do not control him; when they obey him and he does not obey them.

If in addition to this he can become independent of all men, whereas mankind as such remains in dire need of him in respect of this life and that which is to come, then, surely he becomes the king as far as this terrestrial world is concerned. This is the rank of the prophets - may the blessings of God and peace be upon them - for they could dispense with guidance in respect of the next life from everyone except God Himself, while everyone remains in need of their direction.



Next in order concerning this kingship are the scholars, the heirs of the prophets. Their supreme authority lies in the extent to which they have the ability of supplying spiritual guidance for men and at the same time remaining independent of seeking guidance from them. In this manner man is able to approach the angels and their characteristics and thereby draw near to God Most High.

This kingship is a gift to man from the true king whose own kingship is shared with no one. The perceptive person was absolutely correct when one of the emirs said to him, "Ask of me that which you need," and he replied, "Do you ask this of me when I have two servants who are your masters?" The chief asked, "Who are they?" He answered "Greed and vain desire. I have conquered them, but they have conquered you; though I hold sway over them, they hold (rule) over you."

One of (the mystics) said to a senior, "Give me some advice." He replied, "Be a king in this world and in that life which is to come." The other asked, "How is this possible?" The senior answered, "The meaning is this. If you put an end to your greed and appetite for this world, you will be a king in both this world and the next. For certainly kingship consists of freedom and independence."<sup>2</sup>

## Orders and Organizations: 3

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As the root of the tree brings forth the trunk and its branches, we may consider the orders, teachings, and lineages as the branches and fruit. The root is found through the center of the center of the source and connects as a trunk through the heavenly planes by way of the One Master, the Guidance from which it branches into the teachings and is carried forth into the earth through the branches of the paths and ways, bearing fruit of the orders which seed themselves and drop to the earth, bring forth the sprouts which grow to new trees.

There is a structure and form to the tree, and there is a form and structure to the order. With the roots in heaven, or the finer spheres it first is brought into being in the level of mind, from which it is acted upon with feeling and breath and carried into the land of pattern and then to form. The structure is first built as the potential for the intent to express itself. At this point it is the capacity through which the force and movement can come. It is here that it is brought into denser form and intersperses with the lower spheres. The mind, heart, and breath motivates and solidifies the pattern into and through to earth or the sphere of activity. When it comes in to the earth, it connects through this ordering process to the source and intent, and carries with it the intent of the creators, acting as one. This process has stepped down the Divine Intent into a workable form through which needs can be met and guidance can be expressed. All that is needed now is a receiver in earth to make that next step. It is here that the prophet or seer - or bringer of the way - by whatever name one gives the person, comes into action.

This person, is the receiver of the Message. He or she is attuned enough to feel, receive, or sense the guidance. Through one way or another, or a combination of methods, the intuitive guidance is passed from the spirit to the material by way of the breath, heart, and mind. It comes from the One Guiding Spirit, made of all those and that which associate and become the united body or face of that which is behind it. They, it, one, convey to the person.

The structure that is there now in heavenly mind, form and pattern can be brought forth into the earth as a mirror of that previously created and then act upon the earth and those within. This then becomes the work of the Bringer of the Way, who establishes the order. This guidance opens the way and forms the structure and means to come into earthly manifestation, and it is then carried out by the earthly worker.

As one might reasonably expect, the clearer and closer the worker is attuned to the heavenly spirit, the more clearly he can know the intent of the work and process, and the more effective he can be in fulfilling it. If the person is muddled, yet still the most appropriate vehicle for the promulgation of the teaching, then the result will be muddled. If clear, then clear results follow. It is thus through attunement to the Divine or higher guidance that the person gets a more accurate viewpoint, and is thus more effective in the work he is doing.

This is why, and one of the reasons only, that it is necessary for the human person to rely upon the Higher Guidance to act correctly. It is also why people go astray from the original intent; that there is, or may be a break or clouding of this process.

He whose heart sings the Divine Song  
And tunes to the Music of the One  
Brings forth Goodness and Love.

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The Nourisher and Sustainer. He Who Is Aware of all the needs of creation and provides it with everything. The heart, the soul, the mind, the bodies all have needs to sustain its life. From the point of view of the Sustainer, It provides all that is needed. If it asks for sustenance, it receives it in kind. If it is unable to ask, it is provided for.

But the flower asks by drooping; the sea asks by drying or being empty; the clouds answer by carrying the water. The man asks by needing the light of the sun. For all things ask in their own way. The Muqit carries forth what is needed through the heart. The attunement to the need of man and guidance, together with the attuning to the abundant supply available to fill those needs; together with the intent and guidance provides the means. He who walks with his head in the air and feet in the ground and heart akin to the One, feels the breath of the Divine, and fills the needs. Ya Muqit.

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## Reflection

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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**AL-MUQIT**

AL-MUQIT

He is the Nourisher of all creation.

Allah creates the nourishment of each of His creatures before He creates them. No one can take away the nourishment destined for each element of the creation.

The sustenance due to one will not run out until death overtakes him. Look at the plants, look at the birds. Think of the twins in the womb of the mother, how each takes its destined nourishment without trying to take away from the other and without fighting. Yet the same twins who tranquilly and peacefully received their sustenance through their mother's lifeblood, coming into this world and growing up, may kill each other for the inheritance of their mother. Has Allah told them, "When you come into the world, go and fetch your own sustenance, I am done with you"? Has He forgotten to give them their sustenance?

Allah is 'Alim. He is Khabir. He does not forget. He does not fall into error. He is Qayyum, Muhaymin, the Lord of the Universes. He does not lose sight of His creation, nor does He fail in His protection and care for it even for a split second.

He gives nourishment without being asked to the ones who cannot ask and work for their own nourishment. For the ones who can, Allah has created means of sustenance. He needs no means. Because Allah wills it, His servants may choose between lawful and unlawful means.

Opting for the unlawful will not increase your sustenance. Whatever your nourishment is and wherever you receive it, it can only be your lot. The means do not create the sustenance. They do not even give the sustenance. The means are like pipes coming from Allah the Nourisher to each and every creation. The nourishment in them flows as death presses from the end of the pipes. Death will not come upon you until your nourishment is finished, and it will certainly come upon you after your last mouthful and breath.

Therefore a faithful servant of Allah, who believes that Allah al-Muqit is the creator and giver of his nourishment until the day of his death, counts on Allah's promise alone. He opts for the lawful means. He does not endanger his life here and in the Hereafter with evil ambition, treachery, and lying to try to get the sustenance due to others.

'Abd al-Muqit is given the awareness of the needs of others and the means to satisfy those needs at the right time in the right amount without delay and with nothing lacking. 1

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### **AL-MUQIT** - He Who is Cognizant and Capable of Providing His Creation With Everything It Needs

The meaning of al-Muqit is that He is the creator of nourishment. (The nourishment) He conveys to the bodies is food, and (that which) He conveys to the hearts is knowledge. Thus it has the same meaning as ar-Razzaq except that al-Muqit is more specific than ar-Razzaq. For sustenance includes nourishment and that which is not nourishment, nourishment being that which is sufficient for the support of the body. If, however, it is taken to mean one's taking possession of a thing, having power over it, with the appropriation being achieved by the power and knowledge - and the argument for this (interpretation) is in the words of God Most High, "God overseeth all things," that is to say, He is cognizant of and has power over everything - its meaning would then go back to (what is meant by) power and knowledge. As for (the topic of)

knowledge, it has already been discussed. As for (the topic of) power, it is to be discussed below. In terms of this meaning, His characterization as al-Muqit is more complete than His characterization as al-Qadir alone and al-Alim alone because it indicates a composite of the (other) meanings. Therefore this name is not synonymous (with either of these two).<sup>2</sup>

## Orders and Organizations: 4

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The one who brings forth the teaching is not necessarily connected with the creation of an organization. By being aware of the Source of Creation and the intermediary of Guidance, as one and the same; and by being connected and conscious of this connection, he or she brings into earth the ordering of light, love, harmony, and beauty. This is the real "order", for this person has been touched by the Divine to express it, and does not create it of his own. Later, he or others may solidify it more into structure, but the ordering and conveyance is the first step.

If one looks at the teachings of the originators and the prophets, one finds a common theme of: "not me - not the person, not the means, not the words, not the motions, not the forms - but the True One, the Creator, the Source. All the rest is the process and the effects. Pay attention to the Source, the Only Real and True Being. Let that be the guiding light, not the outer forms."

This then is brought through with the Divine Ordering. It is only later, when there is degeneration, when there is clinging by the followers to the person, or the forms, or the structure, that the ordering decays and loses its full usefulness. Should that continue, eventually it crystallizes beyond hope of redemption and becomes an empty shell, devoid of life, and must be replaced or superseded.

There is any series of cases in which people of good intention desire to extend the life and reach of an organization and bring forward other or new means of service, teaching, or approaches. They will sometimes form "orders" which are of similar structure, form, or name of Real "live" orderings, but without the Divine origin and Guidance of the Spirit. These are not truly "orders" from the higher point of view; but they certainly can be of some more limited use or value. As long as they are perceived and put forth in this manner then there is no confusion. However, they usually are not offered or taken in that more limited fashion and are mistaken for the true ordering from the One Guiding Spirit; therefore leading to confusion and blockage rather than clarification and connection.

## Reflection

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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**AL-GHAFFAR**

AL-GHAFFAR

He is the one who accepts repentance and forgives. If one is guilty of the disruption of harmony within oneself and around oneself, which is perhaps the greatest sin, and one realizes, wills and begs Allah's help not to do it again, if one begs with tears of shame and asks Allah al-Ghaffar for forgiveness, Allah will forgive one and perhaps transform one's sin into a good deed.

A sinner is like a poor fellow who has fallen into a sewer. What is the first thing that he must do? He cannot face others in that state, nor can he stand himself. He must wash and cleanse himself, unless he is insane, not realizing his offensive state. The soap and water with which to wash one's interior is repentance. Woe to those who do not see nor smell the dirty stench filling their interiors!

Repentance is between each person and Allah; no one else need hear it. It need not even be pronounced. Allah knows what passes through one's heart. Repentance must also be accompanied by a firm intention not to do the sinful act again. The sign of acceptance of your repentance and the accordance of forgiveness by Allah al-Ghaffar, is that He will not let you repeat that sinful act again.

'Abd al-Ghaffar is the one who is given the quality of forgiving a fault, of covering and hiding a fault from others, of having the compassion of not seeing a fault as a fault. He does this in cases and to persons whom Allah, the Forgiver, has forgiven.<sup>1</sup>

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### AL-GHAFFAR - The Very Forgiving One

Al-Ghaffar is the One who makes manifest what is noble and veils what is disgraceful. The sins (of man) are among the disgraceful things which He veils by placing a veil upon them in this world and disregarding their punishment in the hereafter. Al-Ghafr means veiling. The first of God's veils for man is to be found in the fact that the opening in his body that has been created for that which his eyes consider ugly has been hidden within him and is concealed within the beauty of his exterior. How great is the difference between the interior of man and his exterior in terms of cleanliness and dirtiness, and ugliness and beauty! Just look at that part of him which God exposes and that part which He covers!

God's second veil for man is the human heart which He has made the seat of his reprehensible thoughts and disgraceful desires so that no one might know about this veil. If mankind were aware of the things that occurred in (a man's) mind in terms of repeated temptations, thoughts of corruption, deception and evil thinking in general, certainly they would detest him. But behold how his secrets and weaknesses are veiled from all people but himself!

God's third veil for man is the forgiveness of the sins for which he deserved to be disgraced in the sight of mankind. God has promised that He will exchange good deeds for man's misdeeds so that he might cover the repulsive qualities of his sins with the reward of his good deeds when he has proved his faith.

An Admonition: Man's portion of this name lies in his veiling for the next man that part of him which needs to be veiled. (Muhammad) said - may the peace of God be upon him - "The one who veils the imperfections of a believer, his imperfections will God cover on the day of the resurrection". The slanderer, the spy, the avenger and the one who requites evil with evil are far removed from this characterization. However, the one who is characterized by it is the one who

does not divulge anything about God's creation except those things which are best in them. There is no creature totally free from perfection and imperfection, from ugliness and beauty. The one who disregards the repulsive qualities and remembers the good ones is the person who possesses a share of this name, even as it is related of Jesus - may peace be upon him - that he and his disciples passed by a dead dog, and the stench of it was over-powering. His disciples exclaimed, "How this corpse smells!" But Jesus - may peace be upon him - replied "How lovely is the white of his teeth!" In this way he pointed out that they ought to mention only that which is good.<sup>2</sup>

## Orders and Organizations: 5

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When the Teaching is brought forth, the Bringer of the Way or Word, if he is attuned to the Divine Purpose through the One Guide, works in conjunction. This person has the capacity to include a greater personality expression through the physical, mental, psychic, heavens, and planes of structure, pattern and form, and becomes a co-worker in developing and expressing both the ordering and Teaching. It is here that the personality assumes a larger "field" and expands to operate in a larger venue, from the larger point of view. The faces, bodies, minds, and personalities of the co-workers are all perceived as expressions of one's own being - inclusive with and manifestations of the One Real Guiding Spirit.

It is actually a great service for those who have existed through physical form and who have returned even further on the path of reintegration to keep a contact with the physical. It is a choice of consideration to keep within oneself and connected to those who call out and to those who pay attention. It is the Bodhisattva - as part of the attributes of the All-Being-One. These personalities are kept so that contact can be made by the earth residents and those in need coming and going. Part of the work is the responsiveness to "calls of help" - or prayers. Part of the work is guidance, and part of the work is strengthening of the form and underlying structure of the ordering. All of this can take many forms. For example, guidance can be expressed in many ways. Prayers can be answered or interceded through many avenues, and the strengthening can take place on multiple levels. But always behind and through all these different avenues or vehicles, there is a continuity of Heart, Breath, and Mind. There is creation through the motivation of Spirit-Stuff by will; with the direction of mind and will, the pervasiveness of heart, and the connection and carrying of and through breath. The person of the Bringer of the Teaching, Way, and Order co-operates in this process, from that point of view, while also cognizant of the personal vehicles.

This is where the ordering is brought into the earth. It is created, using form, mind, symbol, pattern, and structure. It is actually created first as real before it is built in earth. The archetypes are applied and utilized. The forms of cube, sphere, pyramid, cross, flame, are all part of the architecture. The presence is so real that it can be seen and felt. Then it is filled by the earthly work and structure; but first comes the construction and densification through the finer planes. Color, sound, breath, will, seeing, and feeling, are some of the tools that are applied in this construction. It is very real and present, and can be and is strengthened through attention by all concerned. This then is the building of the foundation of the order.

Included with this will also be the scope of the order. This will include size - that is physical area

- intent or purposes, and range, including peoples and times. There are some orders set up for very specific purposes and are then deconstructed or abandoned after that purpose is achieved - although the empty shell may mistakenly be continued, or attempted to be continued. There are some orders that are particular to a certain peoples or race, and some that are limited in time or space to achieve a particular effect or series of effects, with the intent that it is dismantled and ceases to operate after its usefulness is done, and it has brought forth what is needed. There are other orders which are more far reaching both in scope, purpose, time, and location. These become the world teachings or have a more global or universal purpose.

The workers within the ordering need to have an awareness of both the purposes and extent of the order. In this way they can maintain, perpetuate, or end it properly and adequately. Without that they are acting in the dark and subject to their own personal limitations, desires, and conditioning. It is one of the responsibilities of the Bringer to convey this information, but much more importantly, to open the way for the consciousness and awareness of purposes, intent, scope, and breadth of the ordering to come to those who follow afterward. By doing so the work continues in the right way, for the right people, in the right time. Thus, then, after the "death" of the body and "passing" of the personality, a part of what remains is the establishment and continuation of the lineage of the order.

## Reflection

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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## AL-QUDDUS

### AL-QUDDUS

He is the most pure one, devoid of all blemish, shortcoming, weakness, heedlessness and error.

Al-Quddus is the equivalent of the attribute mukhalafatun lil-hawadith - He is the Creator "bearing no resemblance to the created." This is one of the five qualities that indicate the non-resemblance of Allah to anything.

Al-Quddus is the unique purity that is Allah's, whereby His essence, His attributes, His names, His words, His actions, His justice, are devoid of all blemish. He bears no resemblance, in any of His attributes or actions, to even the most perfect of His creatures. Even the most perfect creatures have something lacking in their essence, attributes, actions, judgments, or words. For one thing, they are temporal, while Allah - the most perfect, the most pure, is eternal, free of time and place. Before existence there was no time and no place, but Allah existed.

The believers who understand and feel this divine purity will wish to praise Allah for His perfection (taqdis) and will remember to avoid attributing any qualities that are defective or any temporal imperfect state to Allah (tasbih).

To find the feeling of al-Quddus in oneself, one should work on cleansing one's faith by eliminating doubts. Faith is a whole. The existence of a single doubt blemishes it. One should try

to cleanse one's devotions and prayers by sincerity. Sincerity in prayer is to pray to Allah for Allah's sake, for no other purpose, seeking no other benefit. Otherwise the prayer itself becomes shirk, the unforgivable sin of associating equals with Allah. One should try to cleanse one's heart by abandoning bad habits; bad habits are like garbage and thorns, and our hearts are Allah's houses. He says, "I do not fit in heavens and earth, but I fit into the hearts of My believing servants."

'Abd al-Quddus is he whose heart is cleansed and purified, and contains none but Allah. A heart filled with Allah is safe from all but Him entering it. The manifestation of the name Ya Quddus, the Most Pure, could only appear in a heart described by Allah in the Holy Tradition: "I do not fit into the heavens and the earth, but I fit within the heart of my faithful servant."<sup>1</sup>

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### **AL-QUDDUS - The Most Holy One**

Al-Quddus is the one who is above every description which human perception could apprehend, the imagination could grasp, the fancy could reach, the innermost consciousness could pervade and thereby have an understanding of Him, or the reflection could determine. I do not merely say that He is free of faults and deficiencies, for the mention of this would be akin to a breach of propriety. Certainly it is not part of propriety for one to speak of the king of a country and say, "He is not a weaver," or "He is not a copper." For to deny the existence of an object in one sense of the word almost suggests that this object may exist and together with that suggestion there is a deficiency.

I would rather say that the Most Holy One is totally free from all of the characteristics of perfection as the majority of people commonly understand this concept. This is the case since man normally looks to himself, first of all, in order to become acquainted with his own characteristics and thereby realizes that only some of them are perfect. The perfection he sees is related to his knowledge, power, hearing, seeing, speech, will and choice: In conjunction with these faculties he applies the term, saying that these are the names of perfection.

But this self-inspection also reveals areas of imperfection in respect of his ignorance, incapacity, blindness, deafness and dumbness, and vis-à-vis these faculties he applies the term imperfections. The aim of his praise and characterization of God Most High is that he might portray Him in terms of the qualities of his own perfection, such as his knowledge, power, hearing, sight and speech as though at the same time he withholds from Him the characteristics of his imperfections.

But God Most High is completely free from characterizations in terms of man's perfection, even as He is free from characterization in terms of man's imperfections. God Most High is free from and exalted above every attribute that one could possibly ascribe to man, and above everything resembling them. Unless there is special permission to use (names) and it is proper (to do so), the majority of these attributes cannot be ascribed to God Most High. But you already understand this subject from the fourth section of the introduction, and therefore it is not necessary to repeat it here.

An Admonition: Man is holy to the extent that he sublimates his will and knowledge. As far as his knowledge is concerned, he should sublimate it from all objects of imagination, from things perceived through the senses as well as those merely fancied, and from all those perceptions in



which the animal kingdom shares. Rather the activities of his reflection and his knowledge should be concerned with those things which are above being (either) near and apprehensible by sense, or distant and inaccessible to sense. In fact, he must rid his inner being of all objects-of-sense perception and imagination and must acquire such forms of knowledge that, even were he deprived of the instruments of his sense perception and his imagination, it would continue to be noble, universal, divine knowledge related to the eternal and everlasting objects-of-knowledge, not personal (knowledge) subject to change and alteration.

As far as his will is concerned, he should keep it free from concern for human fortunes which in the final analysis are reduced to the pleasures of passion, anger, eating, marrying, dressing, feeling and gazing upon things, and the remainder of the pleasures he may attain by means of his sensory perception and the desires of his heart. Rather will he desire God alone. He will find pleasure only in God. His only real desire will be his meeting with God, and he will rejoice only in his proximity to God. If Paradise and all its delights were offered to him, he would not concern himself with them. He will not be satisfied with anything in the house except the Lord of the house Himself.

In short, the sensory and imaginative perceptions are shared by the animal kingdom. This being the case, it is imperative that he advance beyond them to those things which are the particular characteristics of man. Appetitive, human satisfactions the animal kingdom knows also. Therefore, it is necessary that he free himself from these. The dignity of the seeker is commensurate with the dignity of that which he seeks. The one whose concern is with that which enters the belly will discover that his value is found in that which goes out of it. But the one who has no aspiration at all except for God Himself, will have a rank commensurate with his aspiration. The one who raises his knowledge above the stage of mere sensory perceptions and imaginations and dedicates his will to that which is above the demands of appetite, certainly he has entered the fullness of the realm of holiness.<sup>2</sup>

## **Orders and Organizations: 6**

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When a person establishes an order in earth, if correctly approached he is working in conjunction with, and with the point of view of unity and cooperation of the Guide. From that point of view, one is aware of certain patterns and potentials, and also "receives guidance" or is aware of need and the overall methods or approaches and work. But it is through his determination and actions in the physical that this is carried to its next step. It is always working in conjunction, but as the tool that is equal to the level of the world. This then is the human component of the chain of transmission or the ladder of creation and lineage.

The work that is attempted then is to be conscious of both, or multiple levels, and to do what is needed in the particular situation. While the general pattern may exist, it is subject to change according to the physical needs.

Approaches and forms are determined by the people and situations, not the overall patterns. Intent and purpose can only be carried forth when there is capacity to receive it. This capacity is found through those that the work or teaching is passed on to. In most cases it must also be

developed further by the "teacher" or guide - that is the bringer or maintainer of the ordering, by whatever name or title.

The important thing to keep in mind here, is that for the work to be successful the process of expressing the guidance must take whatever form is needed. This is adaptable and changeable to the particulars of the situation, which includes the people, places, and times.

As the grouping changes and develops then there may very well be a change in the guidance, teaching, or form. As the people involved grow or change there may also be a corresponding change in structure, words used, practices, methods, or emphasis. All of this is also determined by the guide in conjunction with and from the point of view of the One Guiding Spirit.

As the outer forms change according to the need, there will be some involved who do not like it. There may also be others who are more impressed and drawn to it. That is not important other than as an indication of personal reactions. But it is also up to the working guide to assist those people toward a proper and more real integration of understanding, purpose, and action. This will allow the grouping to form and function more completely and adequately. If these stages are missing there is the risk of both crystallization and deception. So as the needs change there may also be a corresponding change of form or method.

This is important to keep in mind in both the development and growth of an order or organization. It is a basic teaching and understanding that needs to be conveyed to those involved. This is so there should first of all not be a clinging to form or person, and secondly and more importantly, there will then be promoted the correct point of view to look from and adjust the work as needed. This will then feed over into the personal approaches of those involved and their own work. In this way there can be the establishment and continuance of a spirit of spontaneity rather than crystallization or decay through clinging to form.

What are some of the qualities we are seeking to instill and develop and what are some to diminish or expel? These are conveyed through the attention and awareness of the bringer, supervisor, or guide - the one charged with that responsibility. But it works best by also being in harmony both with the Guiding Spirit and the people involved, so there can be a functional continuity.

The qualities to develop are an awareness of purpose, place, and time, in accordance with need; and the methods and forms to meet those needs. The qualities to avoid are shortsightedness, personal ambitions, desires and aversions, and a reliance upon any past methods or means that have allowed this situation to reach the point that it has.

## **Reflection**

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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**AZ-ZAHIR**

**AZ-ZAHIR**

Allah is the Manifest One.

A thing is apparent to some and hidden from others in accordance with their abilities to see and to realize. Allah Most High is hidden from those who seek to see by means of their senses or their imagination, but He is apparent to those who seek to know Him by the inference of that treasure of wisdom and reason that Allah has bestowed upon them.

Allah is hidden in the endlessness of His infinite power and existence. He is like a light that makes all visible, yet His Light itself becomes a veil to His Light. That which has no bounds seems not to have a shape, therefore becoming invisible. But He is apparent in everything: everything our eyes see, every sound we hear, everything we touch, everything we taste. The meaning of everything we think, everything without and everything within us, is not Him but is from Him. Everything is a proof of His existence. Everything says, "I am nothing on my own. The one who made me, who keeps and maintains me, is my Creator. I am in need of Him every moment of my existence. Every shape, every color, every taste, every perfume, every movement, every force, every quality that appears in me is from Him. It is His making, His gift, His bounty, His work."

Allah is manifest in His attributes. One can know an artist from his artwork. If one does not see the setting sun, but sees its reflection in distant windows and says that he has seen the sunset, he is not lying. If one sees the perfect attributes of Allah in His creation, within and without himself, and says, "I have seen Allah," he is not lying.

One is able to see only what is closest to one, and that which is closest to you is yourself. Man is Allah's best creation. All creation is within man. If you see His perfect attributes in the perfect creation that you are, you will see Allah the Manifest One, and your faith will be complete.

The apparent and the hidden are also in man. His form, his words, his actions, and his work are manifest. His feelings and thoughts are hidden. Man is not what he is only because of what is manifest in him. He may grow fat or thin, he may even lose a limb - but his essence, his identity, that which is he, that which is constant, is hidden in him. His identity becomes manifest only through his action, through the evaluation of the quality of his actions.

'Abd az-Zahir is the one to whom the inner meaning of things becomes outwardly manifest, like the prophet Moses (May Allah bless him), upon whom the secret of the Manifest One was bestowed. He saw the manifestation of the divine light in the flames of the Burning Bush, and invited the Bani Israel to faith with a huge Torah revealed to him in golden script, ordering worldly law, salvation from the hand of the tyrant, and the benefits of Paradise.<sup>1</sup>

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### **AZ-ZAHIR AL-BATIN - The Manifest and Hidden One**

These two characterizations also are among those that are relative, for that which is manifest is (at one and the same time) manifest (in relation to) one thing and hidden (in relation to) another. (But) from the same point of view it cannot be both manifest and hidden. Rather it is manifest from one point of view and hidden from another, for it is only in relation to perceptions that things are manifest and hidden.

(Certainly it is true that) God Most High is hidden if He is sought through the perception of the

(five) senses and the treasure house of the imagination, but He is manifest if sought through the treasure house of the mind and its reasoning faculties. You may (object to this and) say, "As for His being hidden in relation to the perception of the senses, that is (quite) obvious; but as for His being manifest in relation to (that which is perceived by) reason, that is abstruse. For (one terms) manifest that about which there is no dispute, that in the perception of which people do not differ. But this is a point on which men have had great doubt. How, then, is it possible for him to be a manifest one?"

(At the same time), however, you must realize that He is hidden in spite of his manifestness, in view of the degree of his manifestness. (Or to state the matter in another way), his (very) manifestness is the cause of his hiddenness and his (very) light is the veil of his light, for everything which goes beyond its own limits must (eventually) turn to its opposite. Perhaps you are astonished by this teaching, consider it (quite) remote and will not understand it unless we cite an analogy.

Let me assure you that if you were to consider a single word written by a certain author, from it you would be able to infer that he is learned, capable, and able to hear and see, and you would also reach the position where you were very certain about the existence of these attributes. Indeed, if you saw a written word, (from it) you would attain unmistakable evidence of the existence of its writer who is learned, capable, able to hear and see and, (of course), is alive, and the only evidence (of his being such a person) would be the formation of the single word (in question). Even as this word is unmistakable evidence of the attributes of (its) author, so (also) there is not an atom in the heavens and the Earth, not a celestial body, star, sun, moon, animal or vegetation, not a characteristic or anything that is characterized which does not bear witness of its own need for (the) manager who planned it, determined it and endowed it with its particular attributes. Moreover, man cannot contemplate any of his own external or internal members or parts, or any of his attributes or states which pertain to him by necessity and not by his own choice, without finding them to be outspoken witnesses for their Creator, Realizer and Planner.

This same truth applies in respect of everything which he perceives by means of all his senses, whether it be within or without his own person. If (some of) the things differed in respect of the witness (they brought), in that some of them bore witness and others did not, surely certainty would result in respect of all of them. But since the witnesses are so numerous that they have overlapped and (therewith) become indistinct, they have (in fact) become obscure due to (the) excessive clarity. An illustration of this is that the most manifest of (all) things are those which are perceived by the senses, and of these the most manifest things are those that are perceived by the senses of sight, and the most manifest of (all) things perceived by sight is the light of the sun which shines upon (worldly) bodies, that light by which everything becomes manifest. How could that by which everything is made manifest not (itself) be manifest?

This (is a question that) has confused many people and caused them to say, "As far as the coloured objects are concerned, only the colouring - (that is to say) black and red - exists in them. As for the possibility of there being together with the colour a radiance and a light associated with the colour, this is not true." These people become conscious of the existence of light in the coloured things by the difference they perceive between the shade and the pace of the light and between nighttime and daytime. Since it is possible to conceive of the sun being concealed during the night, and its being veiled from sight by (various) dark bodies during the day, (you know that) its effect is distinguishable by the things that are coloured, and thereby the

difference is perceived between that which is affected and illuminated by it and between the shaded objects concealed from it.

Thus the existence of the light is (actually) known by the non-existence of the light. (The same result would also obtain) if existence were placed vis-à-vis non-existence and the difference were perceived, with colours remaining constant in either case. If the light of the sun fell upon all the bodies that are manifest to a person and if the sun did not set and so enable him to notice the difference (made by its setting), surely it would be impossible for him to know that the light is something of consequence, existing and distinct from the colours; and this in spite of the fact that it is the most manifest of all things; indeed, it is that which makes all things manifest.

(Similarly), if the non-existence or absence of God Most High, the Holy One, from some things, were conceivable, certainly the heavens and the earth and everything that would be cut off from His light would perish, and (then) surely the distinction between the two states (of existence and non-existence) would be comprehended. (In such an eventuality - which, of course, is impossible) His existence definitely would be known. But since all things are in agreement in respect of the witness (of Him) and all of the various states are uniformly constant, that is the cause of His being hidden. Praise, then, be to the One who is concealed from mankind by His light, the One who is hidden from them by the degree of His manifestness! He is az-Zahir, the One (in comparison with whom) there is no one more manifest; and He is al-Batin, the One (in comparison with whom) there is no one more hidden.

An Admonition. Do not be surprised at this (admonition) in respect of the attributes of God Most High, for the sense in which man is (said to be) man is both manifest and hidden. It is manifest in that one may infer it by looking at his orderly (and) wise deeds; (but) it is hidden if it is sought through sensory perception. For sensory (perception) is concerned only with his external form, but the fact remains that) man is not man (simply) by virtue of his visible form. For if that form is changed - indeed, if all his component parts are changed - he is still he, (a man). And (it is an indisputable fact that) the (various) parts (of the body) do change. When he has grown old perhaps the parts of every man's body are no longer the same as they were when he was a youth. They disintegrate with the passing of time and are exchanged for similar parts as a result of the nourishment (one receives). But man's nature has not changed. That (inner) nature is hidden from the senses, (but) it is manifest to reason by deduction from the evidence of its effects and deeds.<sup>2</sup>

## Orders and Organizations: 7

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When an order is brought forward and the teaching expressed, there is a need both for a bringer and receivers. One can not take place without the other. When there are receivers, from whom it is hoped that eventually another or other givers will develop, that obviously means there are people involved. Assuming there is a basic understanding of the potential for clinging to outer forms or teachings, there still is the need to have form through which to function. These forms are set up for several particular reasons, all within the framework of expression of the teaching and the continuance of both it and the ordering.

The difficulty with form is that by its very nature it is crystallized. The problem is to deal with it in the proper way so it does not intercede between the Teaching and the learners. There needs to be a constant attention to the balance of form, structure, guidance, need, and spontaneity. This is done through knowing the goal of the teaching, an awareness of the need of the learners or students, and the methods to get to the goals.

Since there are people involved in any guiding and learning situation, these people need to interact. They will also have to interact with the rest of the world and other peoples in some ways. There are, in addition, certain responsibilities and relationships that these people have. They can be associated with family, job or profession, or other work. All of these will have to be integrated and worked with within the structure of the teaching. In addition to these outer responsibilities or associations, people have certain basic requirements involving housing, food, clothing, and other "necessities" of life. These all have to be provided in some reasonable ways and need to be paid for. Out of this may come some sort of structure to provide or assist in providing for some or all of these "needs". This may mean the forming of some sort of organization or living place. In addition, there will have to be some place or places to hold classes or meetings, and to do work related to the purposes of the order. As the teaching is most effectively brought through everyday life, there will have to be provisions made for this interface and interaction, rather than a hermitage (although that could be beneficial and needed in other situations).

All of this, then, lends itself to the creation of some kinds of physical and social structures; which will then be seen as the outer face of the organization. This also is where there is the potential for clinging to forms and to elements of self-perpetuation. Just because something exists for a real purpose at one time does not mean it should exist beyond the fulfillment of that purpose. When its usefulness is finished, it is time to move on from it or dissolve it.

The organized physical entity (organization) may take almost any specific form and structure to meet the expression of the order (which is different than the organization) and the teaching. It needs to be always kept in mind that the outer is only for the purposes of expression and is both temporary and changeable. Thus it will take the form that is appropriate for the peoples, times, and situations. It must be fluid enough to adapt to that; and the people involved must also be fluid enough to change, and sensitive enough to know both when change is needed, and aware enough to know the direction toward which to move. This process then becomes the school that provides the means of interaction and learning that comes through putting into practice the teachings. This includes, of course, guidance from the physically unseen levels; those presently involved with this guiding structure or form on all levels, those who initially brought it forth and oversee it, and those who may have come after, in earth, making up the lineage. The forms are not important other than as means to bring forth the teaching and work in the appropriate means and ways.

## **Reflection**

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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# **AL-BASIR**

## **AL-BASIR**

He is the one who is All-Seeing.

He sees all that has passed, all there is and all there will be until the end of time - from the time when He moved the sea of nothingness in 'alam al-lahut until after Doomsday and the Last Judgment. He has also given to His creatures the ability to behold His creation. Some of His creatures see shapes and colors and movements better than men do, but He has given man an eye of the heart, to see deeper than what meets the eye - an inner eye to see the inner man.

That eye is called the basirah. Although we cannot see Allah - only He can see Himself - with the basirah we can see ourselves. In doing so we will know that though we cannot see Him, He is looking at us, seeing not only what is on the outside of us, but what is in our minds and what is in our hearts. He who sees himself and knows himself knows that Allah sees him.

When you are in front of someone whom you respect and fear, you behave properly, with good conduct. You stand respectfully. You watch what you do and what you say. Yet that person can only see your outside; your respect and fear of him depend only on your temporal worldly interest and concern. The one who has created you and the ones before you, the one who truly controls your life, sustains you, loves you, protects you, has mercy on you, is with you night and day, the one on whom your life depends for eternity in the Hereafter - He is closer to you than your jugular vein. He has also told you clearly through His prophets and in His holy books what He wishes you to do, how He wishes you to behave, to the minutest detail. Yet right in front of His eyes, you do not hesitate to perform the most shameful and careless acts, without respect or fear.

Is it because you do not see Him that you believe that Allah al-Basir cannot see you?

'Abd as-Sami' and 'Abd al-Basir are the ones who hear and see the Truth with the eyes and ears of Allah, as Allah says in a divine Hadith: "My servant comes close to me with his continuous devotion until I love him and when I love him I become his ears with which he hears and his eyes with which he sees and his tongue with which he speaks and his hand with which he holds."1

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## **AL-BASIR - The All-Seeing One**

He is the One who watches and observes in such a way that (even) that which is under the earth does not escape His attention. Moreover, His seeing this also is free of dependence upon the pupil of the eye and the eyelids, as well as being free of the necessity of relying upon the stamping of forms and colours upon His eye as they are imprinted upon the eye of man. For human vision results from the receiving of impressions and the changing (of colours), and this necessitates (the presence of various) accidents. If God is free of this necessity, sight in this case is an expression for the attribute by means of which there is disclosed a perfection which differentiates between the things that are seen. (Certainly) this is more evident and obvious than that which can be understood by one whose perception is (a sense of) sight which is limited to such degrees of existence as are manifest.

An Admonition: In respect of sensory perception man's portion of the characterization of sight is self-evident. But it is weak and inadequate. For man's sight does not extend to (those objects) which are distant, and it does not penetrate the hidden object which is near-by. Rather does it only reach the things that are obvious, and it falls short of those things that are hidden, including (man's) secret thoughts. However, man's portion of seeing spiritual matters consists of two things. One of them is that he knows that God created vision for him so that he might behold the signs and wonders of the kingdom and the heavens. And his vision is a warning. A (certain) man said to Jesus - may peace be upon him - "Is there any creature who is similar to you ?" He answered, "The one whose vision amounts to a warning and his silence indicates that he is thinking and whose speech consists of remembering (God), he is similar to me."

Man's second portion of seeing spiritual matters consists of the fact that he knows that God sees him and is aware of him, and therefore he does not take lightly this fact that God sees him and is aware of him. The one who hides something from one other than God when he does not hide it from God Most High is the one who makes light of God's sight. Watching one's step is one of the fruits of faith in this characterization. The one who draws near to sin while knowing that God Most High sees him, Oh, what a reckless man he is! And if he thinks that God Most High does not see him, Oh, what an unbeliever he is!<sup>2</sup>

## Orders and Organizations: 8

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When a teaching is brought through and expresses it can take any form and use any tools to convey what is needed. The same can be said about an organization, for it is an extension of that teaching. The ordering of an outer organization in a sense also reflects the inner order, but that is more difficult to see.

What is apparent though is that the person or persons who have responsibility for either bringing through the teaching and/or establishing and building the order, will have to operate from the station and point of view of inner awareness and cooperative guidance in order to do the work correctly. It cannot ever be by outer considerations or based upon other established forms, methods, or structures. Usually, it is the same person who "starts" the order and conveys the teaching.

Because the outer forms or structures of any teaching can take any forms that are appropriate, it is easier to indicate when a form has crystallized or outlived its usefulness than it is to say if it is real and useful. However, there will be certain overall characteristics of a vibrant, living teaching and an order in harmony with its source.

There will be a fluidity of function. What may seem appropriate at one time will or may change at any other time. There is a point of view and actual encompassing of and by the Order Bringer that includes the scope and body of the order all within that person. The mind, heart, and breath expand to both include and be in touch with all the members. The leader, Pir, or director (by whatever title) of the order will be able to harmonize the separate parts into a unified whole. The forms that this takes are more on an unseen rather than the outer basis. It is conveyed both through an initiatic structure and process and also the integration of breath, heart, and mind.



The outer work of the teaching also reflects the inner or more refined. It can take any form that is needed. There is a nice story of "Three Visits to a Sage" which illustrates this. It is about people who come to a teacher who is attempting to introduce and accomplish different corrections. Each time they visit, the outer teaching is different and each time there are various reactions of like or dislike, affinity or repulsion.

There are certain characteristics of a teaching though that can also be indicators of it being vibrant, alive, and responsive. Then, for both an order and its initiatic processes and methods, and a teaching, there are many more indicators of its deterioration or becoming crystallized or reflecting a conditioned attitude or approach.

For an order, here are some indications it is alive and functional. They will be present from the point of view of at least the person with the central responsibility of coordinating the order and preferably also by those who are bringing forth the teachings.

There is an awareness of those who comprise the order - on all levels.

There is the ability to communicate with and feel the presence of those in the order.

There is an understanding, feeling, and awareness of the underlying form, pattern, and structure of the order.

There is an awareness of the purposes and goals of the order, both immediate and long term.

There is the ability to accommodate the presence of those within the lineage or chain of the order, and both see and feel from their point of view.

There is an understanding and awareness of the relationship of the order to that of other teachings and orderings.

There is a sense of unity within both the order and the overall structuring.

There is a common purpose and both a feeling and knowing of working together as part of one whole.

There is a sense of unity between the order, the people who make it up, and with people and beings of other teachings and orders.

There is not a sense or feeling of "us and them".

There is no competition within the inner grouping, but rather a feeling of being complementary.

There is an easy sharing and consideration of others.

For the director, leader, coordinator, Pir, or other person named in charge of heading the order, there will, in addition to the above, be the ability to function with form, pattern, will, mind, and breath in the integration of the order. There will be an overall ability to include all members of the order, the underlying and interpenetrating structure within one heart, being and awareness, and to hold it there with any concentration that is needed. There will be the conveyance of instruction, guidance, and inspiration through the channels of breath, mind, and feelings when appropriate; and that awareness of communication and guidance will be maintained and

expressed as needed when working outwardly as well as inwardly. As only one small example of activity, he may, among many other things, use will to work with thought forms, and utilize energy in that process. This is applied on the level of pattern.

The following elements are also indications of aliveness and responsiveness of an order:

Initiation will be inner based rather than outer.

Not all people seeking initiation will be accepted.

There will be varied waiting times and pre-consideration based upon the individual.

There will be a central positive indication that the person should be initiated.

While there may be general teachings, readings, or courses that are asked of pre-initiated; these will not override inner knowing. They are not required, but are treated as suggested general guides and may be adapted to the person.

There will never be a passage of money to get initiated.

Although there may be ritual, it is not necessary and can be changed or done away with at any time or in any circumstance.

There will not be tying to an outer organization, personality, or person to be obeyed. The inner will rule the outer.

There will not necessarily be dues, fees, or tithing to be a member of an order.

There will not be pressure to conform.

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For the teaching, this too has outer form that may be recognizable as reflections of vibrancy and aliveness. The process of conveyance of the Teaching is fluid and responsive to the needs of the persons, place, and time. All other things are subordinate to that.

What is conveyed is what is needed, not more or less.

The teaching can take any form.

Real learning is different than outer traditional learning and must be approached correctly.

One of the initial and continuing lessons in learning is learning how to learn. This is stressed over memorization, recitation, and accumulation of fact.

The acceptance of people into a grouping is based upon their capacity and ability to integrate rather than their past "credits", states, or positions, and rather than random or self-selection, or expressed intent.

The capacity to learn is stressed over outer knowledge.

The teaching is conveyed differently for different people or at various times or in various settings.

There is a spontaneity and newness of expression each time there is a meeting or gathering.

The work is tailored to the individual.

There is interaction that is specific in addition to general when it is warranted.

There is not a building up or satisfaction of the individual or group through praise or setting oneself above another.

There is a cutting off of a process or teaching if it is not having the desired effect. That there is no need to continue something if it is either not working or a different or varied approach is what is called for.

That any of these "rules" can be broken and substituted with anything else that is appropriate at the time; and that none of these are rules.

## Reflection

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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## ASH-SHAKUR

### ASH-SHAKUR

He is the one who repays a good deed with a much greater reward. Thankfulness is to return good with good. To be thankful is a duty of man towards Allah. He is the one who created you and poured upon you all His bounties. He has left you free to see His gifts and to be thankful, or to be blinded by arrogance, denying even His existence.

Blessed is the one who chooses the path of thankfulness, spending what Allah bestows upon him in Allah's way. Then Allah ash-Shakur returns his thankfulness with rewards infinitely superior to his good deeds, and this in turn paves the way for further good deeds.

The thankful one knows that all he is and all he has is from Allah. He uses every part of his body - his mind, his tongue, his hands - only for the purposes for which they were created. He uses all that he has - his talents, his strength, his money - for Allah's pleasure on Allah's creation. Allah helps the thankful and increases their wisdom, their abilities, and their fortunes.

The ones who deny the bounties of Allah and hide them in secret rooms all for themselves are misers who pretend that they do not have anything. Therefore, although they have a lot, it is just as if they have nothing, so they want more and more. Never finding enough, they suffer destitution in the midst of abundance. Allah leaves them alone with their egos, their insatiable greed. All the bounties that they have received decay, stored in some secret place, unused. They pass from one loss to another, from one disaster to a worse one. If they do not take heed of these lessons, their unthankfulness will lead them to eternal damnation. We take refuge in Allah from such an eventuality.

'Abd ash-Shakur sees all good and nothing but good, and that all good comes from Allah. He is in a state of continuous thankfulness as was Hz. 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), who said:

"All praise and thanks to Allah who presents His greatest favors to His beloved servants in the form of hardship and affliction, and presents to His enemies His punishment in the form of bounties."1

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### ASH-SHAKUR - The One Who Expresses Thankfulness by Rewarding Bounteously

Ash-Shakur is the one who rewards trivial pious deeds with many grades, and the one who gives unlimited happiness in the life to come for activity during a limited period (in this life). The one who rewards the good deed with multiples of it is said to be thankful for that good deed, and the one who praises the performer of this good deed is also said to be thankful for it. If you consider multiple rewards (to be the criterion in this matter), then there can be no absolute ash-Shakur except God Most High, because His increase of the reward is not restricted and limited since the blessings of Paradise are infinite. God Most High says, "Eat and drink at ease for that which ye sent on before you in past days."

(Furthermore), if you consider the concept of praise (to be the criterion), (you will discover that in the human realm) one's praises are directed to a second party, whereas when the Lord Most High praises the actions of His people, He is actually praising His own actions, since man's actions are a part of His creation. If one is given something and then praises (the giver), one may say that he is thankful. But the one who gives and then goes on to shower praises upon the recipient (certainly) is more worthy of being called a thankful person. The praise of God Most High upon His people is exemplified by His saying, "... Men who remember God much and women who remember, (God hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward)", and by His saying, "How excellent a slave! Lo! he was ever turning in repentance (to his Lord)" and by other verses of this nature.

An Admonition: It is conceivable that man may be a thankful person in respect of another man, either by praising the second person for his good treatment of him or by rewarding the second person with a greater (benefit) than he received. (Actions of this nature) spring from man's praiseworthy qualities. The messenger of God said - may God bless him and grant him salvation! - "The one who does not thank man does not thank God." As far as thanking God is concerned, one can use this term only metaphorically and then only loosely. For even if man praises God, his praise is inadequate since the praise God deserves is incalculable. If man (expresses thankfulness by being) obedient, (even) his obedience is another one of the blessings of God Most High upon him. To be sure, man's thankfulness in itself is another blessing in addition to the blessing for which he is offering up his thanks. However, the best way of manifesting thankfulness for the blessings of God Most High is to make use of these blessings in obeying, and not disobeying, Him. And even this can only happen with God's help and by His making it easy for man to be a thankful person to his Lord. The idea underlying that statement is subtle.2

## Orders and Organizations: 9

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Indications of conditioning, stabilization, crystallization, or deterioration of the order.

There is the lack of a feeling of connectedness to those making up the order.

The presence of those in the lineage is hard to reach or is unreachable.

There is a sense or feeling of being special, or doing a work that no one else can do.

There is a deliberate isolation and feeling of secrecy in relation to other orders.

There is indiscriminate initiation of anyone who seeks it.

There is an element of proselytizing.

There is a clinging to rituals as important in the field of function.

There is a sense of membership in an exclusive group.

There is a feeling or belief that "our way is the right way".

There are rigid outer requirements for membership in the order such as time spent, classes attended, contributions, work, etc.

There is required reading of information to learn and to be tested on.

There are special outward signs, dress, words, symbols, or affects of membership.

There are repetitive phrases emblematic of being in the group; and there is a corresponding negative reaction to people who do not conform either in word or action to these "ideals".

There is dissention at meetings - (not just different points of view) - especially caused by feelings of superior knowing.

There is a rule book for the order.

There is the same way of doing things as previously, because it was done by the originator or his disciples.

Outer symbols are valued as signs of spirituality, and in particular, there are "holy" objects of the order; without which it would be lessened or hurt.

There is a satisfaction of personal companionship by association.

There is a seeking of "feeling good" and reinforcement through association.

There is a strengthening of resolve and value through association.

There is satisfaction of emotional needs through association.

There is a greater sense of self-worth through "belonging".

It is the outer face. It provides the space and structure through which physical interactions can take place; with the intent that through these interactions and applications there will be a transference of the teaching. It is the school, and allows people the opportunity of putting in practice through the physical work, the principles, theory, understanding, and realization they have. It also provides the means or space through which further development may take place.

It needs to be emphasized that the organization, in order to be effective, must reflect the needs of the teaching and people in their ever changing development and approach, both within the smaller community of those directly involved, and the larger community of the world. Thus the face of the teaching and outer organization must always be responsive to situation, time, and people. It must not be static, and it is not important that the structure remain at all, other than as a momentary and appropriate means.

The organization and its parts are not for the satisfaction or gratification of the members. It is there to promote the expression of the teaching and as a focus for the work to take place. It must be dynamic. While there are certain requirements for living such as a place to stay, sleep, eat, put or store objects, and work; it is not necessary that these be provided as part of an organization or that they are important in the promotion and transmission of the teaching. One the other hand, they may be so. It is up to the guide and his approach and methods, seeing from the point of view of the goal and the immediate and longer term needs of the progression needed to reach the goal, that the structure or form results.

For example, if there is a need to establish a communal living situation then it should be done. If that structure or form gets in the way of the next step, then it needs to be abandoned, destroyed, or changed. The clinging to the form is a sign of deterioration and crystallization. The overall form needs to be fluid enough to adjust to changing conditions, needs, and peoples, plus the changing need of the greater teaching, and for its effect in the world. It is through this, then, that the people gain the experience and point of view of how to proceed.

The teaching expresses itself through the forms that are available and/or created. The capacity of the individuals to both receive and carry out the teaching and work will also have a determining effect on the look of the form.

Organizations include hierarchical structure, physical facilities, ancillary services, organs (such as publications, programs, courses, etc.), teaching methods, and so forth. Because any of the forms can range from being correctly aligned and functionally active to a state of decay, deterioration, or crystallization; or be cultish vestiges, for the satisfaction of secondary personal desires, or be dead; it can be difficult to tell what is really going on by looking only at the manifestation. One must delve deeper into its purposes, whether there is real guidance to it, its reason for being, or if it has lost its vitality or never had it - in which in either case it is "of the world" and not a spiritual endeavor.

Along that line, one can examine if there is some sort of coordinated Guidance from one who knows and experiences and uses this as a tool for growth, or if it is something which is just "done". It is helpful to look at the grouping of people and find out if it is haphazard or if there is a purpose to it. For example, it may be that a living center is set up. It can be that the people who make it up are selected for a purpose or purposes determined by a real teacher for certain reasons of conveyance of the teaching. In that case it may have spiritual life. On the other hand, it may be that all the people simply gravitated to forming a house sharing, or like each other, or want to save money by living together. In that case it performs a secondary function, a social one, but not a spiritual one.

Of course there also can be any degree of situations in the middle. For example it may have originally had a real purpose and correct active grouping. Perhaps the teacher died or someone else took over. There then could be the continuance of the same outer form with a progressive

loss of purpose, vitality, and function. Those who are within the form may still think it is functional and spiritual, and ascribe spiritual attributes to it, but just saying so or thinking it is so does not mean that it is the case. It is this self-delusion that is the cause of many problems relating to advancement in the path or way, as there then is no real active teaching present.

This can be the case with any other outer form or structure, or process. For example, it may be beneficial for people to help others through various means of service. Indeed, it is almost essential to development in the path and to spiritual function. But it also may satisfy other more personal or secondary attitudes or needs, such as feeling better by helping another - in which case it is satisfying personal greed to feel better; or that it is "good" to do or that service "should be done", in which case it is a conditioned effect. This can continue in many worthwhile endeavors, yet while they may be helpful or worthwhile on some levels, they are not real spiritual works. They are satisfactions of personality or lower level activities. To do them and realize what is being done and its limitations is one thing, but to call them or think of them as active spiritual activities is self-defeating and delusional. It is up to the people involved to determine its level of functionality. The same that can be said for outer forms and structures, or organizations can also be said about teachings and their methods, approaches, and forms.

Here are some qualities or elements of a living organization in tune with the teaching:

There will be a grouping of people based upon their capacity to both learn individually and to interact with purpose. This includes being able to learn from each other and through the process of interaction.

Form will follow higher need. It will be developed to provide the means of filling the need. Intuitive guidance is the impetus.

The Grouping of people will be with purpose, not haphazard.

People will not be accepted into work or living situations just because they desire it.

There must be at least one person (leader or guide) to whatever endeavor or structure who knows what is going on and can convey what is needed to those involved; or provide the inner motivation and introduce the correct "strikes or hits" (the impact) to achieve the proper overall effects that are sought; OR the people involved must have reached the levels within their own development to be able to interact at the level of Realness, with inner guidance and knowing, and then actually do apply their tools, knowing, and guidance correctly.

There is an awareness of structure, organization, and form as temporary and transitory, and people pay attention to see that it does not outlive its real purpose of usefulness.

There is not the continuance of a form that was vibrant simply because it was done that way in the past - no matter who brought it into being or how operational it was.

Ritual is not done simply for the sake of doing it, or with some thought that by doing it there will be benefit. Ritual includes all activities.

The people are well adjusted and not in need of psychological or psychiatric correction. Thus they will not use the group or organization for that purpose.

There is not the mis-description of economic or intellectual activities as spiritual. For example, there may be the sales of books or other materials or objects. While this may raise money for the organization and provide employment, and also while this may convey material which others can use; this is not a spiritual teaching or deeper spiritual activity. It is selling material which, at best, if applied correctly is useful from an outer standpoint or conveys information. It is not the basis for spiritual realization and mystical experience. Objects such as symbols, signs, banners, slogans, etc., may be nice, but to think that through their use there will be spiritual gain or that they are expressions of spirituality is delusional and wishful thinking.

There is the use of clothing, garb, or uniform for a real purpose. Simply because one wears something does not make one spiritual. The same can be said for all other outer affects - including speech, such as using "spiritual phrases" (like "God willing", etc.) or activities, for example kissing another's hand or bowing.

The list can go on, but this conveys the general point. To go further than the cursory examination in this writing, of both these elements and also teachings and practices, I strongly suggest reading "Neglected Aspects of Sufi Study", by Idries Shah. It is very well organized, clear, and provides much more information.

## **Reflection**

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**Commentaries for intellect, recitation, attunement, realization.**

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## **AL-MUTAKABBIR**

### **AL-MUTAKABBIR**

He is the Greatest, who shows His greatness in everything, on all occasions. The manifestation of greatness belongs only to Allah. The creation, whose being or not being depends on the will and the single order of Allah, does not have the right to assume this name.

Of all the creation, the first one who became arrogant and claimed greatness was the accursed Devil. Then there are those who have followed the Devil, who think that the power, intelligence, knowledge, position, fame, and fortune that Allah has lent to them momentarily are theirs, so that they become proud.

If man thought of his beginning and his end, which are very close to each other, he would remember that his "before" was a drop of sperm transplanted from his father's urinary tract to his mother. His end will be to become a limp, cold, yellow corpse that cannot be borne even by the ones who loved him and that will be thrown into a hole in the ground.

Where are the Pharoahs, the Nimrods, Napoleons and Hitlers?

Al-Mutakabbir is an honor fit only for Allah. The created one cannot assume this attribute. Allah al-Mutakabbir is the adversary of the proud man. He will humiliate him, making him the lowest



of the low. Just as the rain that comes from the skies does not gather on the tops of high mountains, Allah's blessings and compassion gather in lowly places.

The ones who wish to feel the divine attribute of al-Mutakabbir will find it only when they work hard to try to achieve the highest level of their potential, while never boasting of or even revealing their greatness.

'Abd al-Mutakabbir is he who is shown his smallness and the greatness of Allah. His egotism and pride are effaced and replaced by the greatness of Allah reflected in him. He is safe from being belittled and bows to none other than the Truth.<sup>1</sup>

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### **AL-MUTAKABBIR - The One Supreme in Pride and Greatness**

Al-Mutakabbir is the one who considers everything base in comparison with his own essence. He does not consider majesty and glory to be the property of anyone other than himself. He looks upon others as the kings look upon their servants. If this evaluation is true, then this is pride in the purest sense of the word; and the one who makes it certainly is a proud person. That conclusion in an absolute sense is inconceivable of anyone except God Most High.

However, if that self-glory and self-magnification are false and his conclusion in respect of his uniqueness in magnificence is not as he believes it to be, then pride is false and reprehensible. The one who considers magnificence and glory to be his own particular properties, to the exclusion of others, must know that his evaluation of it is false and his opinion useless. The truth of the matter is that these two characteristics are the property of none but God Most High.

An Admonition: Al-Mutakabbir among men is the one who is abstemious and a "gnostic" (al-carif). The significance of the abstinence of the "gnostic" lies in the fact that he is free from created things which might occupy his heart. He considers himself above everything except the Truth Most High so that he becomes contemptuous of both this world and that which is to come. He is one who considers himself above being distracted by either of them from the Truth Most High.

The abstinence of one who is not a "gnostic" is only a transaction and an exchange by which the individual hopes to purchase enjoyment in the next life by means of forfeiting enjoyment in this life. He is ready to forsake a thing now in the hope of receiving it many times over in the hereafter. Certainly this is only forward-buying (salam) and bargaining. The one who is enslaved by the appetite for food and marriage is contemptible even though these (pleasures) are lasting. However, al-Mutakabbir is contemptuous of every appetite and portion in which the animal kingdom can conceivably share.<sup>2</sup>

## **Orders and Organizations: 11**

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The Teaching is that which exists already for the purpose of assisting the creation in general, and the human beings and other souls in the process of remembering, realization, and the fulfillment of action and life from a Divine point of view.

It exists whether or not there are orders or organizations, teachers, or guides. It will bubble to the surface through evolution and unfoldment of itself if left to itself. But through the avenues of these orders, guides, organizations, and the methods employed, there can be a quickening of the process, the alleviation of pain and suffering, and the expansion of joy, love, harmony, and peace; all contributing to a better life and world. It is through this process that the work unfolds. It is through transmission of Heart by way of the vehicle of Breath, Love, and attunement of Mind.

There is a transformation of point-of-view, identity, and function. There are, as by-products, increased capacity for joy, love, peace, and harmony; which in turn leads to greater realization. There is in this process of realization an increase of awareness of what one is and function from that perspective. While there are other aspects that take place on a societal or global point of view and draw the attention of co-workers in the creation, this is the aspect of the Teaching as relates to the individual soul and its reintegration.

The process or means of doing this, the conveyance of the teaching and therefore the increase or expansion of the experience of realization, is not important. The experience and function is the important part. Thus the forms or methods are only used to assist in reaching these goals. It should also be emphasized and reiterated here, that this process is not one external to the person, nor does it rely on the conveyance of information, although that is helpful up to a point. The reality exists. It is the process of re-membrance, re-attachment, awakening to what one already is.

The guidance is what is used to assist a person in this process. The tools that are used include, but are not limited to the outer forms of instructional materials, books or writings, classes, camps, practices, and any other things or approaches that may be instrumental in function, and assist the person to take the next step toward the goal. What is important is providing the means to do so.

Much of the outer work is initially for the conveyance of information - which is not experience - but is many times grabbed on to as being the teaching and used as a substitute for experience. From there, it is the assistance in dealing with lower aspects of the personality and mind, beginning to get a sense or a recognition of what is Real and what one is, and then guidance in making the transition to that. It is really very much akin to the tuning of the entire person to a very loud and obvious music, which has been forgotten and is not heard or seen because one is so accustomed to being in the midst of it. This could be likened to "sensory fatigue", such as what happens when a person is exposed to same smell for a long period - like baking cookies, or gasoline. After a while, the sense receptors will be saturated by the stimuli, and the person will get used to it as "normal" and not notice that it is there. It, the tuning, is the feeling for what is, and letting oneself sort of slip back to what one is by releasing the attachments or holds of attitudes, mind, and attention from one aspect of it to the greater whole that it is.

This assistance, or guidance, must be conveyed on an individual and personal basis, and the conveyor, or guide must have the point of view of both the goal and the process. There is no way for the "blind to lead the blind", no matter how well intentioned or how much knowledge or information the person has. It is only from the point of view of being part of this guidance and Goal, and at the same time being aware of the particular needs and blocks, and ways for the person to make that next step - for the path to be created. For this to then take place, and for the

"journey" to be completed there must be a joint, cooperative, willing, endeavor by both guide and guided, with full energy, attention, and desire to reach that goal - being the reunion with the Divine Being that one is. This then, to be reached, becomes the sole "thing" of importance or value; and one focuses more and more on this; attuning, feeling, letting go, giving over, and becoming, all at the same time.

The teaching methods and forms are for assistance in this process of transformation. Thus, I say there "must" be a guide to assist and that guide must have the experience of the goal. That is not to say that there cannot be direct intervention from and through the Divine One or through beings not of physical forms; for that can take place. But it is people, through the forms of earthly bodies, working in this sphere, that are able to easiest and most physically directly work with another having this form also.

In the process of this "teaching" but really more accurately a guidance and conveyance, the activities of daily life are used. Part of the purpose of the work is, in addition to taking part in the experience of re-becoming, to also integrate that in regular life, as a "regular person". Again, we hear the expression of the "head in the air and the feet in the ground". Much of the work of conveyance is done through daily activity. Here a person can gain a sense of perception of the integration or Guidance, intent, purpose, understanding, and function, through the everyday world. It takes a while to begin to get a feeling, then inkling, then stronger sense of how this works. It is gained through observation, attunement, feeling, and doing. Thus much of the work needs the person for this conveyance and as a model and "impeller".

Another thing to consider here is my use of the phrase "the blind leading the blind". This is not to disparage any good works or attempts by people who are interested in or able to help others. This is only a statement of function, and describes a situation. Nor does this mean that people who have limited experience, tastes, inklings, or states of the Divine goal, cannot be of benefit. However, their guidance and assistance is limited to the range of their experiences, integration, knowing of the whole, awareness, and abilities to both convey that information and seeing of the needs and capacities of the "guided".

Let me give a few more examples. Beginning to approach the spiritual path has been described as similar to a person who shoots an arrow at a target they can not see. It is helpful of course for this person to have the assistance of someone else who can see the target - like a spotter for artillery shooting. In addition, if the person who wants to "shoot" has not seen an arrow, or bow, or if having seen one is not able to use it, then it is a prerequisite to shooting that the person gain the ability to use the bow and arrow. In addition, if the person needs to be able to shoot the arrow a long distance, he must develop the skills and strengths to do so. This is all before the first arrow can be shot with a reasonable chance of even reaching the target. After it is finally shot, then and only then can there be correction of aim and distance.

Along that line, the "spotter" or guide, or someone else, who sees the target must also have taken on the role of assisting the individual shooter in developing those necessary skills. So he too must have those abilities and be able to convey what is needed to learn them. For each "shooter" there may be a different set of practices, corrections, and strengthening needed. Two potential shooters will each come with different experiences, physical attributes, body structure, mentalities, and so forth. So each may have to learn or acquire or modify skills particular to themselves. Thus within the framework of "teach how to shoot an arrow" the instruction will of

necessity be particular.

There is another aspect of the limited point of view in the "blind ...". That is the extent to which a person is actually able to guide another and what can be said about it. The spiritual path has often been described as a journey or climb to the mountain top. The journey has been described both as one across the sea and land. Let us consider these metaphors.

If a journey, there is the movement from one place to another. Let us say the goal is to cross the ocean to what a person has been told is land on the other side. The person can not see the land. It is taken on faith or hope that there is such a place. The person who desires to set out on this journey must have the skills and vehicles to use to cross the ocean, and must point in the right direction. The journey may include unknown currents, waves, distractions, storms, and other impediments which can sink the boat or cause it to go off course. It is obvious that it is helpful to have the assistance of one who not only knows how to make a boat, but also has made that journey before. If he has not completed that journey, then will he not reach a point in the ocean where he will not know the way and be blind? When that point is reached, then what good will he be in guiding another?

The other aspect of guiding or leading a journey is across the land to the other side of the "continent" to the ocean. Here too the journey is taken on faith that there is an ocean. If our "guide" in this instance, has so to speak traveled part way, say from New York to Kansas City, with the goal of getting to San Francisco - which he has not yet seen but has been told exists - and he has taken a route along the center of the country, then he may be able to lead another along the path as far as he has proceeded. After that point, he too will be going on ground that is uncharted or new to him. He might believe very strongly that there is a San Francisco, and as he actually got nearer to the west coast, might have gotten glimpses of something he thought it was, but until he actually gets there, the best he can say is that this road he is traveling "may" get there. He also may be able to point out some of the way stations, hazards, and high points of the particular path he is taking. Now, when he gets to the goal of travel, he will then be able to point out that it does indeed reach that goal. He will then know one way to get there.

Let us take the consideration a step further and apply it to the metaphor of climbing a mountain. The other conditions of setting out, skills, paths, etc. are generally the same as the other journeys. However, in this case, when a person reaches the top of the mountain via one path (at least our particular mountain) he is able to look down and see all the other paths to get to the top from all the sides surrounding the mountain. Some are more meandering than others. Some require scaling a cliff or fording a river. Some paths are dead ends. Some are more level or easier to walk but longer in distance, and thereby more suited to a slow walker than a fast climber.

But from the mountain top that guide is able to see all the paths and, with the development of the proper skills, is able to assist others along the one most suitable. To do this, our guide develops, among other things, the ability to see from the mountain top at the same time as walking from the bottom up. This is akin to having one eye looking through the video camera from the top while the other eye is looking from the bottom. It is not just remembering the way the path looked from the top or carrying a picture taken from that position after arrival. The video is "live" because the conditions of the mountain change. the paths erode, weather comes in, there are rock slides, and so there is the need to adjust the direction, and equipment, and clothing, and

supplies according to these changing conditions. There also is the continual development of equipment which then can be used in addition to or replacement for the older used before.

Thus on a journey and mountain climb, we might consider our guide is one who crosses the ocean or land but also, in doing so, has the same kind of perspective as from the mountain top. That is, the one of the true guide who knows the Way, not one particular pathway. That is another reason why it is useful to have a person in the body for assistance and guidance.

The teaching and guidance takes place in and through many forms, some subtle and some gross. There is the transference to and through the individual which leads to a larger sense of identity, of what the one individual is. So there is also, as part of this process, the development or grouping of people who not only have the capacity to interact and learn from each other in an outer sense, but also to be able to make the transition to perceiving and acting as through one body. Short of that is the delusion of separation.

As noted, the forms that are used may include classes, camps, written material, dance, song, recitation, practices, living or working centers, or other endeavors and aspects of organizations. What is essential is that it be appropriate and timely. That means, among other things, that it must be adapted for the people and situations, not static, or done simply because it was done before or was useful at one time. There is no "hope" in the process that it might work. There is hope, but it is not for the efficacy of the teaching. In order to be approached and applied correctly, it must be done so by someone with the awareness of what it is and that it is the correct application. To be effective it cannot be done blindly. And that is why there is no "hope" that the teaching or form, or method is correct.

This leads to a consideration of what elements might be of a "correct" or living teaching, together with brief consideration of what does not work, but many times is thought of or promoted as a real teaching. Here are some elements of the former.

The real teaching will have as its basis real experience and guidance of and attunement to the Divine One, with a corresponding point of view. It will be expressive of what is needed to take the next step. It will be freeing and lead to greater joy, love, harmony, and realization. The by-products of outer understanding, expanded abilities, perception, and knowledge, will be secondary and are not stressed as essential. There will be a greater ability to act harmoniously in groups and there will be a greater appreciation for all others. There will be a real perception of equality of all being and oneself. It will be appropriate to the individual or group, and applied in the manner that is needed and useful at the time. It will be adapted to other forms in other circumstances even if it appears contradictory. It will utilize anything at its disposal to assist in making or contributing to the desired effect. It will not be stopped, and it is not personal.

Here are some elements of characteristics of a non-teaching or one which is deteriorating or deteriorated:

The attitude that anyone who comes to the group and asks to be "taught" or take part in classes is appropriate, simply because they have asked and gotten there.

The attitude that when a person says he is seeking guidance or spiritual realization that the person actually is. In most cases, they are not.

The attitude that anyone who comes to the "class" or group has the capacity to learn, and that

it is appropriate for the person to be there.

That there is a course of study applicable to everyone.

That there is some sort of standard curricula.

That advancement is based upon the knowledge of outer form, methods, or information.

That groupings of people are random, based upon either who shows up or whoever expresses interest in them.

That classes are offered without regard for the effect that is desired.

That anyone can benefit at any time from a "teaching".

That conveyance of information is "higher" learning or spiritual teaching.

That prerequisites are satisfied by mere attendance.

That spiritual practices are of more than limited value.

That everyone should do the same practice, or that the same practices are given in the same order to everyone - privately or publicly.

That dance, ecstasy, or emotional activities are of more than limited value as correctives or means to a next step of learning that is a balance.

That somberness reflects seriousness.

That anyone can learn.

That classes, camps, or gatherings in which the participants self-select their activities based upon their interests are "vital", appropriate, or real teaching situations.

That people should do what they are drawn to.

That understanding outer form: practices, information, or theory is real understanding or of more value than that which may possibly lead to experience.

That teaching or guidance is done by someone without experience and point of view equivalent at least to the level of need.

That recitation of prayers, invocations, statements, sayings, or other material becomes mechanical and done just because it is done.

That a valid and real teaching, method, or approach is valid and appropriate in another situation, time, place, or with other peoples.

That because a "real" teacher used a practice it is applicable beyond that use.

That because a real guide or teacher did certain things they should be continued or emulated.

That people - even previous Great Teachers - are put on a pedestal.

That the person is of importance.