

**SUFISM AND MORALITY WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO SHAIKH ABDUL QADIR  
JILANI AND SHAIKH SHARFUDDIN MANERI**

**Thesis  
Submitted for the Award of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **Declaration**

The thesis entitled “Sufism and Morality with Special Reference to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Dhaka is based upon my own research carried out under the supervision of honourable Professor Dr. Shah Kawthar Mustafa Abululayee, Department of Philosophy, University of Dhaka.

I firmly declare that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted earlier to any University or Institution for the award of a degree or publication.

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## **Certificate of Supervisor**

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled “Sufism and Morality with Special Reference to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri” submitted by Md. Jamal Hossain accomplished under my supervision. This is the original work of the researcher. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis or any of its part has not been submitted to any University or Institution for any degree or any other similar purposes.

I also certify that the researcher has fulfilled all the requirements of submission of Ph.D. thesis as prescribed by rules and regulations of the University of Dhaka.

This is to further certify that the candidate has made necessary corrections in the thesis as per suggestion of one of the examiners (Convener).

I, therefore, recommend to submit the corrected version of the thesis.

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*Dedicated to*  
*My Late Father*  
*Abdul Aziz Howlader*  
*&*  
*My Mother*  
*Saleha Begum*

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## Abstract

Practicing morality is indispensable for the spiritual development. But nowadays a trend is clearly visible which is directed towards material gains and carnal enjoyments by passing moral outlook. In many countries the moral and spiritual degradation is on its last limit. In this situation, the world requires such a kind of philosophy which simultaneously emphasizes material as well as spiritual development of a person. Sufism is an excellent expression of that thinking. The lesson of Sufism is that a individual will live in a society but he will be free from its carnality.

The purpose of the present thesis is to find out the close relation between Sufism (mystical philosophy of Islam) and morality, with the special emphasizes on the moral thoughts of two great Sufis– Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri and to explore the comprehensiveness of Sufi morality. For the above purpose we have designed the thesis in seven chapters whose summary (abstract) is stated below.

In Chapter One– **Introduction**, the basic theme of the thesis, ‘morality’ has been explained. The discussion consists of a number of sub-headings: What is morality? Where does morality come from? Relation between religion and morality, Why should human being be moral? Development of morality and above all, morality in different mystical traditions. In the discussion of historical evaluation of morality and religion based mystical traditions, it has been unveiled that moral views of philosophers and mystics are somehow similar to Sufi approach to morality.

In Chapter Two – **Islamic Concept of Morality**, an attempt has been made to give an overview of morality from Islamic perspective. For that, the chapter has been designed in the flowing sub-headings: Nature of Islamic Ethics, Significance of life, Islamic view about moral judgment, Moral standard, Impact of motive and intention, Source of good and evil, Moral significance of Islamic creed and Moral law of Islam. Here it has been distinctly mentioned that in Islam, religiosity and morality are interrelated. A believer follows the commands of God which is based on morality and thus he comes closer to God; at the same time he achieves moral

perfection. It is also revealed that man's conscience naturally makes a distinction between good and evil. Revelation (*al-Qur'an*) and the teachings of the Prophet (*Sunnah*) awaken human conscience which usually remains asleep because of inherent evil tendencies in human being.

In Chapter Three– **An Overview of Sufism**, a comprehensive idea of Sufism, i.e., its aim, nature, origin, development and chief doctrines have been presented. Here it has been shown that Sufism is thoroughly based on the moral philosophy of Islam. It teaches how a devotee can build an excellent moral character.

In Chapter Four – **Relation Between Sufism and Morality**, attempt has been made to divulge how Sufism is related to morality. For that purpose the chapter has been divided into the following sub headings: Moral analysis of Sufism, Relation of Sufi moral values with religion, Enjoining good and prohibiting evil, Moral training of the Sufis, Characteristics of Sufi morality etc. Here it is shown that moral elements of Sufism and general morality interweave each other. It is also shown that enjoining good action, prohibiting evil action and actual practicing of it are the basic characteristics of Sufi ethics.

In Chapter Five– **Morality in Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani's Writings**, it has been found that very life of the Shaikh which was based on struggling for being moral. In his moral teaching it has been disclosed that he has emphasized on purification of soul, (i. e. curbing lower self), social justice, altruism, opposition of egoism, brotherhood of mankind, importance of knowledge, above all truthfulness and love of God. Besides these, he has taken self control or perfectionism as a moral standard.

In Chapter Six – **Morality in Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri's Writings**, a brief life sketch of Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Maneri has been given which itself represents his moral teachings. The most important aspect of his ethical philosophy is internal purity and the service of humanity; service is the easiest and fastest way to acquire the nearness of God, according to him. To him, a Sufi is one whose life is dedicated to the service of humanity. It is better than traditional prayers. Through it an individual can improve his morality, become a leader and can lead a moral life. Besides these, in his moral teachings he has opposed



egoism, and emphasized on altruism, building good moral character, acquisition of knowledge, social ethics, removing bad habits etc. For moral judgment he put emphasis on intention.

In Chapter Seven- **Concluding Remarks**, the findings of the thesis have been summed up. It is revealed that Sufism is the moral philosophy of Islam. It is fully based on the Holy Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet (SAW). Its central theme is purification of soul (i.e. curbing lower self or *nafs*) improvement of one's moral and builds up one's inner and outer life. Its aim is the attainment of eternal felicities as well as moral perfection. Like other Sufis, Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri strongly uphold the basic principles of Sufi morality which are also appraised by moral philosophers. These are altruism, humanism, justice, service of humanity, asceticism, lawful earning, truthfulness, good conducts etc. At the same time, like other Sufis, they strongly opposed egoism, violence, hatred, hypocrisy, arrogance, revenge, vindictiveness, and encouraged non-violence, non-communalism, large-heartedness, benevolence and magnanimity, which are the most significant virtues of Sufi life.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

The term 'moral' is commonly used as synonymous with 'ethical'. In Ethics, the word 'moral' is used in two senses wide and narrow.<sup>1</sup> In the wide sense, a moral act is a voluntary action, i.e., an action that a man could have done differently if he had so chosen. In this sense, it is opposed to the word 'non moral'.<sup>2</sup> In the narrow sense, moral action signifies virtuous or right action. In this sense, it is opposed to the word 'immoral'.<sup>3</sup>

The term 'moral' has been derived from the Latin word 'mores' which means habit, customs, or conduct.<sup>4</sup> In early societies, customs or conventional habits only constituted moral principles, i.e., the term 'moral' was used to signify the standardized customs upon which judgments of virtue or vice, rightness or wrongness were passed.

Ethics is concerned with rightness or wrongness of conduct,<sup>5</sup> but all types of human activities are not moral activities. Actions which lie beyond human control are not moral actions. Spontaneous or automatic action, instinctive actions are also beyond human control and hence, they are also non-moral. Only voluntary actions which are performed by individuals with deliberation and intention for realizing a definite goal are moral actions.

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1. Abani Mohan Datta, *Problems of Ethics*, (Chittagong: P. K. Datta, 1967), P. 41

2. **Non-moral:** An action is said to be non- moral when it falls outside the scope of judgment by the standards of virtue or vice, rightness or wrongness. All actions, performed by agencies other than human beings are non-moral actions. Automatic, spontaneous, reflex and instinctive actions of human beings are also non-moral since they are not performed consciously and deliberately.

3. **Immoral:** An action is said to be immoral when it is judged to be vicious or wrong. If an action is done after proper consideration and choice, the doer must be held responsible for it. If such a voluntary action turns out vicious or wrong then it is said to be an immoral action. Breaking of promise is an immoral action, if it is done purposefully.

4. John S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, (London: University Tutorial Press Ltd., 1938), p. 1

5. That is, the general theory of conduct considers the action of human beings with reference to their rightness or wrongness, their tendency to good or to evil. (*Loc. cit.*)

## 1. What is Morality?

In philosophy, there are two areas of value of Judgment. The first is ethics or the study of morality that deals with what is good or bad, right or wrong in a moral sense. The second is aesthetics or the study of art and the artistic, the beautiful and the non beautiful, i.e., what is good, bad, right or wrong in art, and which constitutes what is beautiful or not beautiful in our lives.<sup>1</sup>

Here it is mentioned that the terms good, bad, right and wrong which we use in a moral sense, can also be used in a non-moral sense, usually in reference to how someone or something functions.

According to Aristotle, being moral is the function of a human being. He added that anything that is good or bad is so because it functions well or poorly.<sup>2</sup> If we can discover what the function of human being is, then we shall know how the terms good or bad can be applied to human being. The proper function of human being is to apply reason. Therefore, being moral is reasoning well for a complete life.

## Morals and Manner

Manner is another area of human behaviour which is closely related with ethics and morals. Generally, in our society, we feel that good manners go along with good morals and we infer that if people are taught to behave correctly in social situations they will also behave correctly in moral situations. In spite of this, manner differs from morality. Manner is concerned with certain types of social behaviour dealing with taste whereas morality is concerned with ethical behaviour.<sup>3</sup> It is generally desirable for human beings to behave with good manners toward one another and also to be moral in human relationships. But in order to act morally, it may at times be necessary to violate the manners of a particular society.

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1. When we say that a person is attractive or homely, and when we say that a sunset is beautiful or a dog is ugly or that a painting is great, we speak in terms of aesthetic rather than moral or ethical values.

2. Jacques p. Thiroux, *Ethics Theory and Practice*, (California: Glencoe Publishing Co., Inc. 2nd ed. 1977), p. 6

3. *Ibid.*, p. 7



In short, we can say morality deals basically with human beings, how they relate to other beings, both human and non-human. It also deals with how human beings treat other beings to promote mutual welfare, growth, creativity, and strive for what is good over what is bad and what is right over what is wrong.

**Applications of morality:** There are four main aspects related to the application of morality<sup>1</sup>-i. religious, ii. natural, iii. individual and iv. social morality.

**i. Religious morality:** Religious morality is concerned with human beings in relationship to a supernatural being or beings. For example, in the Jewish and Christian traditions the first three of the Ten Commandments<sup>2</sup> relate to this kind of morality. These are:

1. I am the Lord, your God; do not worship false gods.
2. Do not take the name of God in vain.
3. Keep holy the Sabbath Day.

These commandments deal with a person's relationship with God, not with any other human beings. By violating any of these three commandments a person acts immorally toward God, without acting immorally toward anyone else.

**ii. Natural morality:** Natural morality is concerned with human beings in relationship to nature. Such morality has been widely practiced in all primitive cultures, such as in the American Indian.

**iii. Individual morality:** It is concerned with human beings in relationship to themselves. A person may or may not perform some particular act, not because of society, law or religion, but because he himself thinks that it is right or wrong from within his own conscience. It is also concerned with individual's obligations to promote their own well-being.

**iv. Social morality:** Social morality is concerned with human beings in relation to other human beings. This is the most important category of all. According to moral philosopher, most important human moral issues arise when human

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 8

2. Other Commandments are: (4) Honour your father and your mother (5), Do not kill. (6) Do not commit adultery. (7) Do not steal. (8) Do not bear false witness against your neighbour. (9) Do not covet your neighbour's spouse. (10) Do not covet your neighbour's belongings.

beings live in a society and begin to conflict with one another. In Buddhism and Confucianism, the social aspect represents almost the total morality. Furthermore, everything that is directed toward the individual aspect is also intended for the good of others in the individual's culture. Non-religious ethical systems also stress the social aspect such as— ethical egoism, which stress the individual aspect- “everyone ought to act in his own self-interest” and thus, it emphasizes the whole social surrounding. Utilitarianism in all of its form, emphasizes the good of “all concerned” and therefore is obviously dealing with the social aspect. Nonconsequentialist or deontological theories such as Kant's theory stresses on action toward others more than any other aspect, even though the reason for acting morally toward others are different from those of ethical egoism or utilitarianism. Here, it is mentioned that the most ethical systems, even individualistic and religious emphasize the social aspect, where most human problems and conflicts are occurred.

## **2. Who is Morally or Ethically Responsible?**

Answering this question, we can say that only human beings are morally responsible. Human beings can be moral or immoral and therefore, only human beings should be held morally responsible for their actions and behaviour. But if one wants to attribute morality to supernatural beings, he has to do so, on faith. Again, if we want to hold animals or plants morally responsible for destructive acts against each other or against humans, then we have to ignore most of the evidence which science has given us, concerning the instinctual behaviour of such being. But recent experimentation concerning certain animals reveals that in the future animals might be taught to be moral.

## **3. Where Does Morality Come From?**

There are many views concerning where does morality come from. Is it a part of the world, originating from some supernatural beings or deeply rooted within nature? or is it a product of the minds of human beings? Or is it the combination of the two or all three of these? Again, as morality deals with values

having to do with good, bad, right and wrong, are these values totally objective or subjective? There is a long controversy about these. But if we examine the history of moral philosophy, we find that, concerning the arising of morality, there are mainly two theories: objective theory and subjective theory.<sup>1</sup>

**Objective theory:** There are two basic theories from which concepts of objective values arise– the supernatural theory and the natural theory.<sup>2</sup>

**The supernatural theory:** Some believe that values come from supernatural being, beings or principle– the good (Plato), the gods (the Greeks and the Romans), Jahweh or God (the Jews), Allah (the Muslims) etc. They also believe that these beings or principles incorporate the highest good themselves. They reveal to human beings what is right or good and what is bad or wrong. If human beings want to be moral, then they must follow these principles or the teachings of these beings. If they don't, they will be considered immoral and will usually be promised some temporal or eternal punishment for their transgressions by Highest Moral Authority (God).

**Natural Theory:** Others believe that morality is somehow embodied in nature and that there are 'natural laws' which human beings must adhere to if they are to be moral. For example, some people argue that homosexuality is immoral because it goes against natural morality. St. Thomas Aquinas argued for this as well as for the supernatural basis for morality and so did Immanuel Kant.

**Subjective Theory:** There are some moralists, who argue that morality streams strictly from within human beings. They believe that things can have value and be classed as good or bad, right or wrong if and only if there is some conscious being who can put values on these things. In other words, if there are no human beings, then there can have no values.

From the above discussion we can say that, objective and subjective theory of values is not above criticism. Concerning the supernatural being it is said that the existence of supernatural beings is only a belief. There is no concrete proof of

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1. *Ibid.*, p.11

2. *Loc. cit.*

the existence of a supernatural being, beings or principle. Hence, it is impossible to establish that morality comes from this source. On the other hand, natural laws are descriptive whereas moral and social laws are prescriptive. Though some values reside outside of human beings, many more are dependent on human beings. Hence, values are both objective and subjective. Harold Titus and Marilyn Smith state that values really involve an 'interaction of variables'. The variables are: (i) the thing valued; (ii) a conscious being who values or the value; and (iii) the context or situation in which the valuing takes place.<sup>1</sup> To evaluate a thing, these three variables are necessary, without any of these things, the process of evaluation is not possible.

#### **4. Relation Between Religion and Morality**

Religion consists in belief in a super human power which controls and guides the destiny of man. It is the consciousness of our practical relation to an invisible spiritual order. W. Lillie defines religion, as "the belief in a super-natural reality which affects the believer emotionally in such a way as to impel him to perform certain acts directed towards the supernatural reality"<sup>2</sup>. Religion, therefore, postulates belief in God, who is the creator, sustainer and the moral-law giver of the entire universe.

Historically there has been a very close connection between morality and religion. It is considered that religious customs were recognized by men, before moral customs were distinguished from them. And in this way, morality may be said to have developed from religion.<sup>3</sup> Duties to one's fellow-men, is continued to be regarded as duties of religion or commanded by God. Hence, up to the present day, morality and religion have to a great extent enjoined the same duties. In the higher level of religious understanding allegiance to the laws of morality takes a higher place among religious duties. There seems to be some justifications from

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1. *Ibid.*, p.14

2. William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, (London: University Paperbacks, 1961), p. 303

3. *Loc. cit.*

the view that, the more religious an individual is, equally the more moral to others or the society. In brief, since the religions consider God as the moral-law giver, there must be a close relation between morality and religion.

There is a controversy among the philosophers regarding the relation of morality to religion, Descartes, Locke, Paley and their supporters are of opinion that *moral conceptions owe their origin to religion*. They consider that the moral laws are the commands of God. All actions sanctioned and enjoined by the religions are good and those forbidden, are bad. But such a view is not always supported by philosophers. To them, the arbitrary commands of God can not constitute the real moral code, if they are not ethically sound. The moral value of an action is judged by individuals with reference to some standards which may not be directly connected with religion.

Kant and Martineau hold the opposite view and point out that religion owes its origin to morality. According to Kant, moral obligation is the basic fact of our life. But the very notion of moral obligation implies freedom of will, immortality of the soul and the existence of God. Moral actions have their own genuine values. They must ensure perfect happiness. In other words, virtue and happiness must accompany each other. The virtuous should be rewarded with happiness and the vicious should be punished with pain. But in real life, consistency between virtue and happiness is rare. But moral life implies harmony between them. So, the moral values should be preserved by some supremely powerful being. That being is God Himself.

Martineau also argues that moral obligation implies the existence of God. We know the right and the wrong by intuition into our conscience. The consciousness of rightness generates a sense of obligatoriness. Consciousness of the moral obligation becomes significant only when there is a person to take account of all activities done by us. This account cannot be taken by our fellowmen, society or government, as they cannot understand the inner motive of our activities. So, the ultimate source of moral authority must be an omniscient and omnipresent personal being. Such a being is God Himself.

But evidences in support of the doctrine of Kant and Martineau are rarely available. The primitive man was drawn to religion not by the sense of moral obligation, but by emotional abundance. Kant and Martineau overlooked this emotional aspect of religion and hence, their argument is not adequate. The fact is that, though religion may have provided legal or separate moral system in human history or it may have provided very powerful and effective sanctions for morality but it does not prove that morality must have a religious basis.<sup>1</sup> That is, morality may exist without religion.

According to ethical thinkers, morality needs not to be based solely on religion for the following reasons:<sup>2</sup>

1. In order to prove that to be moral, one must be religious and for that we would have to prove conclusively that a supernatural world exists. If some human beings do not accept the existence of a supernatural world and yet, act morally then there must be some attributes other than religious belief which are necessary for one to be moral. Moreover, it is obvious that most of the religions contain ethical systems but all ethical systems are not based on religion. Hence, there is no necessary connection between morality and religion.
2. Religion does not provide an adequate rational foundation for morality. It is impossible to prove conclusively the existence of any super nature, afterlife, God or gods. If one urges that we should be moral because a being exists which is the source all goodness and we will be rewarded or punished in afterlife by Him; but the existence of these things cannot be proved, then the entire system is based on unproved assumption. Believing in God and afterlife makes people 'feel' better about acting in certain ways. It may also provide powerful sanctions for acting morally or not acting immorally. But it does not provide a valid, rational foundation for morality.

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1. In this context we can mention the opinion of Kant: 'Morality... in no way needs religion for its support'. He also said that the moral law aroused in him a feeling of awe, which is very like, if not identical with, the characteristics like religious emotion. (Quoted from, William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, p. 305)

2. For detail, see, Jacques p. Thiroux, *Ethics Theory and Practice*, pp. 19-22

3. If religion is to be the foundation of morality which religion will provide this foundation? Within a particular religion that question may be answered, but obviously, there is no satisfactory answer for the members of other conflicting religions.
4. There is a difficulty resolving the conflicts arising from various religiously based ethical systems without going outside them. That is, we have to go beyond any particular religion's ethical system and have to use some sort of rational compromise or broader ethical system which cuts across all religious and non-religious lines. So, we must have to establish a basis for morality from outside religion but it must be one in which religion is included.

The arguments put forward above tried to establish that morality can exist independent of religion. To be moral it is not necessary that an individual should be religious. But a close study or in depth observation will reveal that the very foundation of morality is based on religious scriptures, which according to religious believers descend from God time to time for the guidance of human beings. Though religion has a special focus on spirituality and devotion to divinity, it will not be possible to arrive at that station without an individual's passing through moral code. Moral philosophy cut off from religion can only present sketchy picture of morality. A comprehensive moral philosophy can only be established by the aids of religious scriptures, the teachings and practices of the religious leaders-prophets, saints and religious scholars.

## **5. Why Should Human Beings be Moral?**

Philosophers have mentioned various reasons to be moral. Here we will mention few of them.

1. Religion or supernatural thing has been used as the foundation of morality. If a person has religious faith, then he or she does have a foundation for a personal morality, even though this foundation is basically psychological rather than logical.<sup>1</sup> For many individuals, this is psychologically true because they feel

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 23

that their existence has a meaning and purpose, and that they have a reason for being moral if and only if there is a God, an afterlife or some sort of religion in their lives. But this view is not always acceptable, because there are many people who do not feel this way. According to the critics, it is terribly presumptuous of religious believers to feel that if people do not have a religious commitment their lives would be meaningless.

2. It has been argued that enlightened self-interest is the basis of morality.<sup>1</sup> According to this view, it is generally better to be good rather than bad and to create a world and society that is good rather than one that is bad. If everyone tries to be good and to avoid and prevent bad, it will be in everyone's self-interest. For example, if in a society no one kills, steals, lies or cheats then each member of the society will be benefited. It is also said that it is one's self-interest to do good rather than bad because he can be benefited if he does, and moreover he can be exiled or punished if he does not. Thus, the argument of self interest inspires one to be moral.
3. Tradition and law have been provided another basis for morality. This argument suggests that since traditions and laws have been activated over a long period of time, it governs the behaviour of human beings and urges them to be moral rather than immoral.<sup>2</sup> And thus they play an active role to make people moral. But all of these arguments are not free from difficulties. We have already mentioned the problem of religious argument. Concerning self-interest it is said that the argument of self interest can be a problem when other interests conflict with it. It is often difficult to persuade someone who sees obvious benefits in acting immorally in a particular situation and it is his self-interest to do otherwise. Again, morality established by tradition and law is problematic, because it is difficult to change it and to question successfully about it. This lack of questioning sometimes encourages blind obedience to immoral practices. It encourages to believe that as something have been done in a certain way for hundreds of years, it must be right.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 24

2. *Loc. cit.*



By examining different views related to morality it appears that morality emerges according to human needs, i.e., the recognition of the importance of living together in a co-operative and dignified way. People generally seem to need friendship, love, happiness, freedom, peace, creativity and stability in their lives, not only for themselves but for others too. In order to satisfy these needs, people must establish and follow moral principles which encourage them to co-operate with one another and free them from fear of losing their lives, mutilating, cheating and imprisoning. In brief, we can say that, adhering to moral principles enables human beings to live their lives as peacefully, happily, creatively, and meaningfully as possible.

## **6. Development of Morality**

"What is meant by morality?" This question is not only an important question of recent ethics; rather, it was also raised among the thinkers of the ancient times. So, for the current study we are in need of clear idea about the history of evolution of morality, because without clear idea of morality our discussion cannot have a fruitful end. When reviewing the social history of human beings, it is seen that since the primordial society, morality has reached up to the contemporary level by passing through a number of levels. In ethics, there are three levels in this context- (a) the level of instinct, (b) the level of custom and (c) the level of conscience.

### **The level of instinct**

On the level of instinct person's right and wrong conduct is determined by fundamental need and natural instincts. There are two contradictory ideas among the philosophers about the primitive state of man.<sup>1</sup> According to the French philosopher Rousseau, man is naturally independent and good, and he is free from restrictions imposed by the customs and social institutions. So, the primitive life of man was a life of peace, unity, good will and tranquility. On the other hand, English philosopher Hobbes held that, in primitive society ordinary people used to

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1. William Lillie, *op. cit.*, p. 52

seek only those things which can satisfy him or can make him happy and is delightful to himself. The primitive people used to believe that they had right over everything, because all things were acquired through violence. So, they had to clash with each other. However, at the level of instinct those actions which are satisfying to the self-assertive instinct of the members of the species are right. On the other hand, those actions which are organized by inherent tendencies, like-resistance, dispute etc., which the person dislikes is considered to be wrong. That is, in the case of moral judgment of people, this like– dislike instinct is considered to be right or wrong.

### **The level custom**

According to sociology, in ancient times custom or code played a special role in every level of society. It is to be noted that ‘ethics’ originated from this tradition or custom.<sup>1</sup> In other words, moral consciousness is introduced from the level of custom of ancient society. On the level of custom, the conduct of people is justified by the ideology of the society or the traditional heritage. A special characteristic of the customary level is that here more importance is given to the tribe or community as contrasted with the individual.<sup>2</sup> At this stage, the tribe is not only considered as a political unit but also an economic, a moral and a religious unit. At this level, liking and disliking of man is not a inner matter but it is imposed to himself from outside. Concerning the freedom of will or other moral questions, the verdict of individual’s conscience was not accepted at all here. So, the necessity of conscience-minded ethics is felt.

### **The level of conscience**

In the historical analysis, it is seen that the development of morality has largely improved when it reached conscience level from the level of custom. At this level, the person determines the ethical standards more carefully through his personal judgment. At the level of custom, the authority in the moral life is

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1. The word ‘morals’ is derived from the Latin word *mores*, meaning habits or customs and the name ‘ethics’ itself comes as a secondary derivative of the Greek word *ε"θος* which also meant custom or habit. (*Ibid.*, p. 56)

2. *Loc. cit.*

outside the individual; here he must do what is approved by his group. But the level of conscience the authority of moral life is man's internal affair; it is an inner power which directs him to do right actions.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted here that, even though the rational morality developed among the ancient Greek philosophers, but in the medieval period rational morality was buried by the Roman Catholic church. As a result, to the common people the moral code of conduct was considered to be an outward manifestation of the emotions. Again, widely changing of modern moral thinking led to a massive change in the trend of contemporary ethics. So, we can divide the range of moral evolution into four parts. 1. Greek Ethics (500B.C.–500A.D.), 2. Medieval Ethics (501A.D.– 1500A.D.), 3. Modern Ethics (1501AD–1900A.D.), 4. Contemporary Ethics (1900A.D. – till today).

### **Greek ethics**

Though Greek ethics originated from Heraclitus (530 – 470 BC) and Democritus (460 – 370 BC) etc. thinkers, we can get a comprehensive idea about ethics from the discussion of Sophists, Socrates (470 – 399 BC), Plato (427 – 347 BC) and Aristotle (384 – 322 BC). Heraclitus accepted the fire as the fundamental principle of the world. Fire is the symbol of bright and purity and it is always fighting with darkness and humidity. In human life, the struggle for light and darkness, dryness and moisture is going on. The goal of human moral life is to secure the victory for the bright and dry. “Keep your soul dry” was with him the fundamental moral Law.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Democritus accepted happiness or pleasure as a moral standard, which created a stir in Greek thought. The thoughts of Heraclitus and Democritus later developed into the Stoics and Epicureans thought respectively.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, there is a glimpse of moral and political discussions either theoretical or practical aspects in Parmenides and Pythagoreans thinkers. However, at first

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 61

2. John S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, p.120

3. *Ibid.*, p. 119

Sophists gave more importance on moral problem in their philosophical discussion.<sup>1</sup> The Sophists' moral doctrine has been followed from the message of 'Man is the measure of all things'.<sup>2</sup> According to the Sophists, there is no permanent or recognized standard of morality, the person himself is the holder and carrier of understanding of right and wrong. Morality is subjective to them. But the question of morality took special importance in Socrates' thinking and in his philosophy of life than that of the Sophists' thought.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Socrates' moral philosophy occupied the central position in Greek thought which it never lost afterwards.<sup>4</sup> Socrates did not limit mere knowledge to knowledge level, brought it in practical life and removed the distance between knowledge and action.<sup>5</sup> He established good conduct on knowledge and said, "Knowledge is virtue." According to him, he who knows what is good must act accordingly and no one voluntarily follows evil.<sup>6</sup> The true wise person cannot do wrong; the wrongdoing is performed by the ignorant person. In other words, according to Socrates, knowledge is the source of goodness and ignorance is the source of evil. 'Know thyself' from this principle, it is clear that he has given more importance to the person's self knowledge or the knowledge of his own nature. 'Moral knowledge is essential for an honest life', this 'speech' of Socrates later generated positive response in the thinking of Plato and Aristotle. After Socrates' death, his followers were divided into two groups– the Cynic and the Cyrenaic.<sup>7</sup>

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 120

2. This saying (dictum) is attributed to Protagoras. This dictum may be said to express the principle of subjectivity in ethics [Reginald A.P. Rogers, *A Short History of Ethics, Greek and Modern*, (London: Macmillan and Co Ltd., 1965), p32]

3. Socrates did not set himself up as a professional teacher, rather regarded himself throughout his life as a student of moral science. He believed that there could be no morality which did not rest on a scientific basis. (J.S. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 121)

4. Henry Sidgwick, *Outline of the History of Ethics*, London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1967), p. xviii

5. That is, he considered that a thorough understanding of the nature of goodness was a necessary condition for living a thoroughly good life. (William Lillie, *op. cit.*, p. 93)

6. Reginald A.P. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 35-36

7. The cynics identified the good with abstinence from pleasure and indifference to pain, and well-being for them was mainly negative. According to Antisthenes, "pleasure, indeed roundly to be an evil; better madness than a surrender to pleasure". On the other hand, the Cyrenaics held that good must be something positive and concrete. The only concrete good is immediate pleasure. (For detailed, see, Reginald A.P. Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40)

Later these two communities were transformed into the Stoics and the Epicureans respectively.<sup>1</sup> Both communities have emerged from the teachings of Socrates. The Epicureans made ample improvements of hedonism and said that happiness is good. Happiness should be aimed of people. The stoics emphasized rational knowledge instead of happiness. According to them, goodness is natural and completely rational. Hence, it is understandable to human intelligence. After Socrates, Plato played pioneering role in coordinating moral thinking with general philosophy. Plato established moral theory on his metaphysical theory. Plato described his view in his theory of ideas. According to this doctrine, the fundamental being of special objects is the ‘ideas’ in which the objects can be similar to its original entity. Plato’s most important ethical work is *The Republic*. Here he wishes to show that justice in pure sense is essentially good, not for society as a whole, but also for the individual who practices it.<sup>2</sup> According to him, there are four cardinal virtues belong to the state as a whole. These are Wisdom, Fortitude or Courage, Temperance and Justice.<sup>3</sup> But justice is the highest of the cardinal virtues, because it includes all of them. It is realized in the state when the rulers govern wisely, the soldiers fight bravely and industrial classes work with energy and thrift all being obedient to the reason that governs. Plato defined it as “doing your own business and not interfering with that of other people”.<sup>4</sup> Justice finally is the presence of all virtues in the soul and consists in the harmonious exercise of intellect, emotion and desire under the guidance of reason.

According to Plato, the real objects of knowledge are ‘ideas’ and the particular objects of sensible experience are true only so far as the mind conceives them as manifestations of ideas. The ethical ideals are not known by particular feelings of pleasure, but only reason. To him, there is one fundamental or highest idea by which all different ideas are connected. Different ideas are to be conceived as manifestations of the highest idea which Plato calls the “Absolute Good”, or the idea of the Good.<sup>5</sup>

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1. John S. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. 122

2. Reginald A.P. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 43

3. *Ibid.*, p. 44

4. *Ibid.*, p. 45

5. *Ibid.*, p. 55

The idea of the good is not merely an abstract conception, nor it is identical with any particular existing object, rather, it reveals itself in everything that truly exists. It is the source of all truth, knowledge, beauty and moral goodness. Its apprehension by the soul is knowledge, its dwelling in the soul is virtue, its shining forth to the soul is beauty. Its manifestation in the state is justice.<sup>1</sup>

In his ethical theory, Plato rejects the Protagorean dictum and asserts that God, not man is the measure of all things.<sup>2</sup> The ideas of divine order and harmony contain the ultimate explanation of the universe. The ideal for each lower soul is to become dear to God and to grow like Him. The greatest of all evils for man is the excessive love of self; man should rather love those who are higher in the kingdom of souls and strive to reach their level. He also holds that reason or intelligence is the proper regulator of human actions. Ignorance is the chief source of evil and it practically means a failure to recognize one's proper position and work in the scheme of the universe.

Aristotle holds that ethics is an attempt to find out man's chief end or highest-good. The highest human good is the well being which is universally admitted. But there are different views concerning the nature of well-being. Hence, Aristotle defined well-being by the following considerations.

1. Well-being must be complete in itself.
2. Man's well-being must consist in the fulfillment of the work or function for which he exists and in which his true being finds expression. Here it is noted that human soul consists of two parts-the rational and the irrational. Regulating the emotion and desire by reason man fulfils his true function, the end for which he exists.
3. Since the life of well-being is complete and all satisfying, the man who lives this life has reached its highest excellence, i.e., he possesses virtue.
4. Finally, well-being is not attainable in a single moment but requires for its realization the whole life of a man, i.e., from the state of maturity to death.

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 62

From the above discussion, it is clear that well-being or human good is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue in a complete life. This activity must be purely rational.

## **Virtue**

Explaining the nature of well-being in his ethics Aristotle also described nature of virtue, justice, friendship, mean, pleasure or happiness etc. The Greek word virtue literally means excellence, that is, the fitness of an organized structure or of an artificial product for the end for which it exists and by which its true nature is defined.<sup>1</sup> Aristotle defines virtue as “a permanent mental state, expressing itself in deliberate actions, and lying in a relative mean fixed by reason, that is, as the man of practical wisdom would fix it”.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, a human virtue may be described as any praiseworthy mental state that is permanent.

To him virtue is of two kinds – (i) intellectual virtue and (ii) moral virtue. Moral virtues spring from habit. It is habit of rational choice. To produce a virtue we must use our reason and act repeatedly until this sort of action has become a second nature. However, though man has natural capacities for acquiring virtues, its acquisition is a matter of habit. It is a mean to an end. Again, morally virtuous actions are deliberate, which must be done for the sake of what is good.

## **Justice**

Plato has attached a comprehensive philosophical meaning to the word ‘Justice’. On the other hand, Aristotle tries to fix and analyze its actual meanings. At first, justice often signifies obedience to the law of the state. Again, it is often identified with complete virtue. Aristotle has mentioned some characteristics of justice. Such as- (a) justice is proportional, (b) it is lawful and fair, (c) it is perfect, (d) it is intermediate between a sort of gain and a sort of loss, and (e) just action is intermediate between acting unjustly and being unjustly treated.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 68

2. *Ibid.*, p. 71

## **Happiness**

According to Aristotle, happiness must be desirable in themselves not for the sake of something else. It does not lack anything, but is self sufficient. It lies in virtuous activity and perfect happiness lies in the best activity, which is contemplative. The activity of God must be contemplative. Hence, those human activities akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness. A man, who exercises his reason, seems to be both in the best state of mind and most dear to the gods. Of all human beings, the philosopher is the most godlike in his activity. Therefore, he is the dearest to gods and is happiest and best. That is, according to Aristotle, the man who is the most reasonable and can cultivate his reason.

Aristotle wanted to implement morality on the basis of welfare. The greatest welfare for the reasonable person is to develop himself as a perfect man. According to him, it is possible to achieve perfection through habitual practice of those tasks which signify man as a man. According to him, 'not peace but perfect goodness is moral ideal. If a person attains perfection, then peace automatically follows it.

## **Medieval ethics**

In medieval period Western ethics is influenced by religion, especially Christianity. During this time, the role of the church was immense. Ought to-ought not etc. would not have been determined by the individual's independent thinking or conscience, rather it was ordained by the religious orders of the priestly group. And sometimes they would have determined the moral values of actions according to their own interests. Among the medieval thinkers, St. Augustine, St Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, etc. are particularly worth of mentioning.

According to famous medieval philosopher, Augustine, ethics is an inquiry into the supreme good. This is the good that provides the standard for all our actions; it is sought for its own sake and not as a means to an end.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010), p. 448



Through the rejection of riches, honour and sensual pleasure one can achieve supreme goodness. Augustine claims that happiness is the supreme good and it is truly possible only in the vision of God in an afterlife, i.e., the supreme good of the city of God is eternal and perfect peace. Hence, virtue in the present life is not equivalent to happiness; it is merely a necessary means to an end, that is, ultimately other worldly.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, so hard we try, we are unable to avoid vice without divine grace. To him, moral virtues are inseparable from the theological virtues. That is to say, someone who lacks the virtue of faith, hope and charity, cannot truly possess virtues, such as wisdom, temperance or courage.<sup>2</sup> An act that is not done from the love of God must be sinful; and without orthodox faith one cannot have true love of God.

Another famous moral philosopher of medieval period is Thomas Aquinas. He gave more importance to the role of intention in ethics. To him, for an individual's action to be morally good, it must belong to a class of acts that is not bad, it must take place in appropriate circumstances, and it must be done with a virtuous intention.<sup>3</sup> If any of these elements is missing, it is a bad act. Hence, a bad intention can spoil a good act, but a good intention cannot redeem a bad act.<sup>4</sup> We may have a false belief about the goodness or badness of an action; such a belief is called by Aquinas an erroneous conscience. We must follow our conscience even if erroneous; but though an erroneous conscience always binds us, it does not always excuse us. It is mentioned that, medieval thought could not last for long. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the onset of scientific thought and in the face of the Renaissance movement medieval religious ethics began to fall.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 450

2. *Ibid.*, p. 451

3. *Ibid.*, p. 457

4. *Loc. cit.*; Aquinas agrees with his predecessor Abelard that the goodness of a good action derives from the good will with which it is performed; but he says that the 'will' can only be good if it is willing an action of a kind reason can approve.

## Modern ethics

Due to the Renaissance movement, an unprecedented stir began in the mind and action of the people in modern times. In modern ethics, the wave of individual separatism was first seen in Thomas Hobbes' thought. According to Hobbes, moral standards are not dictated by the divine will or nature.

The person himself determines the goodness and badness of the behaviour with the help of his moral knowledge. Henry Moore (1614 – 1687) and Cadworth (1616 – 1688), known as Cambridge's Platonist, rearranged the moral thinking of Hobbes. According to them, the moral laws are self-evident and unchanging like mathematical rules. Like his predecessors, Clerk also considers moral laws are directly inferred through intuition. Clark, Moore and Curdworth's moral theory is known as rational intuitionism. During this time, Shafstabari (1671–1773) and Hutcheon (1694–1747) introduced another type of intuitionism which is known as moral sense theory.<sup>1</sup> According to this moral theory, the difference between right and wrong depends on only intuition.

The man who coordinates the views of these two communities is famous moral philosopher of Britain, Joseph Butler (1692-1752). He coordinated moral sense theory and rational intuitionism and said that moral sense is not-absolute criterion; rather conscience is the absolute criterion for moral judgment. To him, role of intellect is superior to the feelings in the case of determination of right-wrong or good-bad. In modern ethics, the introduction of the metaphysical thinking is a major contribution of Spinoza. According to Spinoza (1632-1677), moral rules follow from metaphysical rules. To him, good or bad of moral action is related to cause and effect.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the moral sense theory of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson later influenced the moral theory of Hume (1711-1776)

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1. William Lillie, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98

2. He held that the fundamental motive of human action is self -preservation. Good and bad simply mean what is conducive or non-conducive to self preservation (*Ethics*, 138). Mind's highest good is the knowledge of God and mind's highest virtue is to know God. (*Ethics*, 129). Only free man is happy and his freedom consists of in the controlling of his emotions by reason.

Difference between is-ought of contemporary philosophy takes place basically in Hume's thought at first. According to him, morality relates to the person's feelings and tendencies.<sup>1</sup> Hume's subjective psychological moral theory was later opposed by Reid and Richard Pries. According to Reid and Pries, the moral values depend on objects or actions; it is not possible to determine ethical values with the help of person's emotions or feelings. The good and evil of moral action is determined by the help of wisdom. In the history of moral evolution, Kant's rationalism or rigorism is another break through doctrine. Kant (1727-1804) is trying to set moral standards with the help of human practical reasoning. To him, absolute moral ideal of human life is to perform act with the help of reason.<sup>2</sup> As a reaction of Kant's rationalism, hedonism is introduced as a moral standard in ethics. The advocates of hedonism, Bentham (1748 – 1842) and Mill (1806 – 1873) put stress on the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. According to them, happiness is our moral ideal. Later British moralist Henry Sidgwick established links between the two contradictory moral theories- Kant's rationalism and utilitarian's hedonism. By coordinating between egoistic hedonism and altruistic hedonism, and utilitarianism and intuitionism, he says: "I do not see the difference between intuitionism and utilitarianism. I think Bentham and Mill's utilitarianism need a foundation and this fundamental basis can be provided through basic intuition".<sup>3</sup> Dr Sidgwick's doctrine is known as an intuitional utilitarianism or rational utilitarianism.

In the nineteenth century, the study of biological evolution began to change in moral theory and strengthen the evolutionary interpretation of good and evil.<sup>4</sup> Herbart Spencer, Hegel, Green, Westermarck, explain morality from the evolutionary point of view. According to Spencer, happiness is the moral ideal. It

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1. Hume rejected natural law models of morality and sought to show that a virtue centered theory could best account for our moral convictions. Morality, he argued, must be rooted in our feelings, since morality moves us to actions, and reason alone can never do so. He also added that approval and disapproval of action are the moral feelings. (Peter Singer, ed., *A Companion to Ethics*, UK & USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd. 2000, p. 150)

2. The function of reason in ethics is to produce a will that is Good in itself, and a will is good only if it is motivated by duty. To him good will is the only thing that is good without qualification, again it is the highest good. A will is good not because of its effects but in itself and for its own sake. (Anthony kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 698)

3. Henry Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*.

4. William Lillie, *op. cit.*, p. 97

is to be noted that Hegel,<sup>1</sup> Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Green, Bradley (1846-1928) and Bausang (1866-1995) etc. took metaphysics as the foundations of ethics and explained their moral theories accordingly.

## **Contemporary ethics**

In the beginning of twentieth century, British Philosopher Moore played an important role in shaping contemporary moral philosophy through his book *Principia Ethica*. He tried to explain of moral issues by clearing the meaning of ethical terms and ideals through logical analysis of language. In this way Moore laid the foundation of meta-ethics in contemporary ethics and gave a new dimension to morality. From Moore's meta-ethical approach a number of theories have originated, such as naturalism, non-naturalism, emotivism, prescriptivism, descriptivism etc. However, the worth mentioning development in contemporary ethics is the emergence of practical ethics, that has brought a major break through in moral philosophy.

## **7. Classification of Contemporary Ethical Theories**

Concerning the cognizant of moral question, ethical theories can be divided into two types-cognitivism and non-cognitivism. According to cognitivism, our moral knowledge relies on moral issues or actions. According to this theory, moral knowledge is universal and subjective. On the other hand, according to non-cognitivism, our moral knowledge is not dependent on moral issues or actions, rather relate to our feelings, emotions or attitudes. It is to note that, Mill, Bentham, Kant, Sidgwick, Moore, Prichard are of advocates of cognitivism, and Hume, Air, Stevenson, Hair etc. are advocates of non-cognitivism. There is a big question of cognitivism. Is moral knowledge dependent on natural qualities or non-natural qualities? On this issue the moralists are divided into two groups-Naturalists and non-Naturalists.

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1. For Hegel, morality is concerned mainly with the motives of the moral agent. He distinguishes between purpose and insertion. Hegel resembles Kant in the emphasis he places on the importance of purpose, or ultimate motive. But he does not agree with him that duty is the only morally worthy purpose. He does not accept the principle of universality as the criterion of moral acceptability. (Anthony Kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 703)

## **7.1. Naturalism and non-naturalism**

According to naturalism, morality is defined by natural virtue or metaphysical entity. In other words, what is good or morally preferable depends on our psychological sensitivity. For example, hedonist says that the happiness is the desirable object of our morality. Here the moral ideal is defined by natural virtue called 'happiness' or psychological elements. Mill, Bentham, Spencer, Perry etc. are the exponents of this theory. On the other hand, according to non-naturalism, the basic ideas of our morality are not defined by natural virtues. The basic idea or ideas of morality are simple and non-natural, because the moral idea of goodness is not percept with our senses, nor it is considered by any natural idea. Through intuition we become aware of moral knowledge. The supporters of this view are Moore, Prichard, Ross, Broad, Carit etc. Non-natural moral theory is again divided into two moral categories- (a) teleological moral theory, (b) deontological moral theory. According to the teleological moral theory, the good and evil of the deeds depend on the results or consequences of the action. The teleological moral theory is also known as act-utilitarianism. The supporter of this view is Moore. On the contrary, according to deontological moral theory the good and evil of the deed depends on the nature of the work or the moral law, not on the outcome. This view is called rule-utilitarianism, Prichard, Ross, Broad, upheld this doctrine.

## **7. 2. Non-cognitivism**

According to non-cognitivism, morality relates to our emotions and feelings. Hence morality is relative. Four forms of non-cognitivism are observed– (a) Naive subjectivism (b) Emotivism. (c) Prescriptivism (d) Descriptivism. It is to be noted that these doctrines are mainly the subject matter of met-ethics.

In recent times applied ethics is added to ethics, which has opened a new horizon in morality. Applied ethics is a science whose work is to explain the specific moral problems and to show its reasoning. In this context William Lille says: It is a reasonable extension, the province of ethics to examine how its principles work out in the actual circumstances of the moral life. Illustration of

applied ethics is euthanasia, pornography, death penalty as punishment, opposite discrimination, strike, abortion, physician-patient relations, reproduction, moral basis of technology, evil of terrorism etc. social problem. Notable sections of the applied ethics are: Bio-ethics, medical ethics, environmental ethics, professional ethics, publicity ethics computer ethics etc.

## **8. Morality in Different Mystical Traditions**

Mysticism is the essence of every religion. Inherent spirit of religion is expressed through mysticism. To a mystic, religious laws and rites has a special significance than a general religious man. In the case of morality a mystic also bears a higher form of moral ideal than a man of religion.

### **8.1. Morality in Hindu mysticism**

According to Hinduism, the aim of human life is free from the chain of transmigration of soul or to achieve *moksha* or liberation. Hinduism recognizes three paths for liberation-the path of knowledge (*Jnana marga*), the path of action (*Karma marga*) and the path of devotion (*Bhakti marga*). The adoption of any one of these with sincerity and earnestness may lead to the ultimate goal of liberation. These paths are not totally independent of each other. They are rather interdependent and one implies the other. Nevertheless, adoption of any one of them in accordance with one's attitude or temperament leads one to his spiritual goal or *moksha*. The Bhagavadgita clearly proclaimed that either by following the path of knowledge or by following the path of selfless actions or again by following the path of dedicated devotion to the Lord, one can attain liberation.<sup>1</sup> All the three paths lead to the same goal. The path of knowledge is the path of inner realization, the realization of the immortality of the soul and the identity of one's own inner being with all others. The path of action is the path of performing

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1. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative Religion*, (Madras: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), p. 31

selfless, nonattached action (*Niskama karma*). The path of devotion is the path of sincere worship or passion for God.<sup>1</sup>

For the attainment of true knowledge, i.e., for the attainment of the inner realization of truth, Hinduism prescribes various disciplines of yoga Sadhana or meditation. The famous *Astangika* Yoga-marga as pictured in the Yoga system of Indian philosophy may be cited in this connection. Many Hindu Yogis or Sadhus renounce the world, go to the jungles or mountain-caves and practice this path of meditation for *Moksha*. This is the path of *Nivrtti*.<sup>2</sup> But those who cannot leave the world are advised to take the path of *niskama karma* which is really the path of morality. The Bhagavadgita has laid utmost emphasis upon this path of *niskama karma* as a means of liberation. As against the path of *Nivrtti*, this may be called the path of *pravrtti*.<sup>3</sup>

Hindu morality has its roots in the Vedas and the Upanisads although Vedas are generally regarded as a treatise of rituals and the Upanisads as a treatise of *Jnana-Brahma-or Atma-Jnana*.<sup>4</sup> The conception of *Rta*, which is the central concept of Hindu morality, comes from the Rig-Veda itself. Furthermore, the virtues like truth, charity, liberality etc. are much emphasized in Vedas. In the Upanisads, several references can be found, where the teacher after giving the lesson of Jnana to his pupil, instructs him to practice virtue- to speak the truth, to cultivate modesty, humility etc.<sup>5</sup> In the Dharma Shastras, we find analysis and description of ethical virtues and duties. Two kinds of duties (*dharmas*) have generally been distinguished in the Dharma Shastras in particular and in general— (i) Varnashrama Dharna and (ii) Sadharana Dharna.<sup>6</sup> It is well known that Hindu society has been divided into four broad classes-Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and

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1. In the same way Upanisads implicitly contain the three fold path of knowledge, action and devotion, where knowledge stands for the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, action stands for self control, and devotion represents Barahma Jigyasa or passion for Brahman, The metaphysical background of the Upanisadic Philosophy is non dualistic reality. Its goal is self- realization, and the means of attaining it are reason, renunciation and devotion. Thus Upanisadic ethics is not only universalistic but cosmic and anti-individualistic. (I.C. Sharma, *Ethical Philosophy of India*, ed and revised by Stanley M. Dugert, U.S.A.: Jhonsen Publishing Company, 1965. pp. 93-94)

2. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p. 31

3. *Ibid.*, p. 32

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Taittiriya Upanisad*,

6. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p.32

Sudra. Duties of each class are well-defined and every individual is expected to perform duties of the class to which he belongs. Such duties of the individual are known as his *Varna Dharma*.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the idea of morality, Hindu mystic's view differs from the traditional one. To the ordinary Hindus, the *Summum bonum* of human life is free from transmigration of the soul. But to the Hindu mystics, the aim of human life is union with *Brahman* or reaching from manhood to Godhood. But God (*Brahman*) is perfect and most pure Being.

So, to achieve Brahman or to unite with Brahman one should be perfect and pure as like as Brahman. Till man is captured with defilement of lower self and evil desire, he will not be able to unite with infinite. For that, Hindu mystics consider Bhakti marg as a way of God realization or unite with Him.

In Hinduism, it is commonly held that action binds one to rebirth. In fact, it is not action, but desire for its fruits binds individual to rebirth. Hence, the true devotee is he who neither hates nor desires.<sup>2</sup> The right way of life lies in the spirit of detachment and disinterestedness, and in the surrender of oneself and all his actions to God. Such surrender is the outcome of devotion (bhakti). The way of bhakti is the way most distinctive way of the Gita.<sup>3</sup>

The term bhakti is derived from the root *bhaj*, which means 'to adore'. Bhakti is thus adoration of God, loving devotion to Him.<sup>4</sup> It involves *prapatti*, or complete self-surrender. All action must be performed for God's sake. Such

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1. The Bhagavadgita gives the following list of duties for each class separately.

- i. The ethical duties of a Brahman are serenity, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, uprightness, knowledge (jnana), scientific attitude (vijñana) and faith. (18:42)
  - ii. The ethical duties of a Kshatriya, based on his psychological nature, are heroism, boldness, not fleeing the battlefield, generosity and lordliness (*Gita*, 18:43)
  - iii. The ethical duties of Vaisyas are agriculture, cattle rearing, trade, engineering etc. (*Gita*, 18:44)
  - iv. The ethical duties of Sudras are physical labour, obedience and maximum production of wealth for nation. (*Gita*, 18:44)]
2. Since the supreme good accepted by the Upanisads is self-realization, oneness of the individual self (*atman*) with the universal self, Brahman, it is quite evident that the three Purusarthas i.e., *Artha*, (wealth), *Kama* (the fulfillment of desires) and *Dharama* (duty), have been thought of as means to the attainment of *Moksa*. (I.C. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 92);
3. Sidney Spencer, *Mysticism in World Religion*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 34
4. In *Gita* Krishna says to his disciple: Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me. Truly I promise to you, for you are dear to Me (18: 65). That is, God is ready to go to all lengths to embrace His devotee if the latter has true devotion and love for the Supreme person.



devotion leads to the realization of God, the union of the soul with Him. The principle of bhakti is of central importance in the sectarian movements- Vaishnavism and Shaivism. Both *Vishnu* and *Shiva* are identified with Brahman. The chief quality both of *Vishnu* and *Shiva* is His boundless grace. Our worldly life with all its ills, is the means which He has appointed for our union with Himself. Hence, we owe Him a limitless devotion.

Concerning the nature of bhakti, Ramanuja<sup>1</sup> says, “Bhakti is not merely faith or devotion; it is the knowledge and love of God-participation in the life of God by the love which is itself a form of knowledge”.<sup>2</sup>

It can only be effective through the practice of meditation on the divine personality, i.e., bhakti is a loving, intuitive and experimental knowledge of God who is the soul of our souls. Here Ramanuja’s view is similar to Augustine as well as Christian mystics. To them, God is the ‘Soul of the Soul’. He dwells in the secret places of the heart, so that there is a mysterious communication between God and us. Yet He stands everlasting beyond us. It is only those who follow this path can reach the highest goal. Ramanuja stresses the need of constant activity in this life. He rejects the possibility of any final deliverance for the soul while it remains subjects to the limitations of the physical world.

Bhakti may exist on different levels, but wherever it exists, it purifies the soul, and prepares the way for union with Brahman. In this context, it has been said in Gita: If even a man of very evil conduct worships Me with undivided worship... swiftly he becomes righteous of soul, and comes to eternal peace. Be assured that none who loves me shall perish (*Gita*, ix:26).<sup>3</sup>

In morality, the importance of Bhakti is that those who follow the way of bhakti, abandons all self-seeking, all pride and wrath, all disquiet, all attachment to earthly things. Their heart is filled with divine grace and goes out in selfless compassion. He practices constant recollection, taking refuge in God in the midst

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1. The greatest and most influential of the philosophers of Vashnavism.

2. Sidney Spencer *op. cit.*, p. 45

3. It is also mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita* : “Of all yogins he who with all his inner self given upto Me, for Me has love and faith, him I hold to be the most united with me in yoga’ –the way of union. (*Gita*, vi:47)

of his activities. Thus, he becomes a virtuous man. In the *Vishnu Parana*, stress is laid on universal love as the necessary fruit of God-realization. Since God is the Supreme Reality underlying all beings, to see our unity with God is to see our unity with all.

In the same way, the keynote teaching of Ramkrishna was the ethics of identification. Ramakrishna looks upon all beings as a manifestation of God.<sup>1</sup> Hence, men should cherish towards their fellow-creatures with devotion and reverence as they cherish towards God. Bhakti at its highest point is mukti. The fire of devotion burns up the sense of me and mine purges the soul of egoism and brings about release.

From the above discussion it is clear that there is no place of egoism in Hindu mysticism. Moreover, it is out mostly altruistic, as it believes that God prevails in all human beings. So, to love human being is to love God.

## **8.2. Morality in Buddhist mysticism**

Buddhism is basically a non theistic religion. The religious practices of a Buddhist mainly consist in pursuing a life of ethical discipline rather than in following different modes of prayer or in performing various rituals. Allegiance to *Dhamma* consisted in believing in the four noble truths and some of the doctrines like *Pratitya-samutpada*, *Anatmavad*, *karmavad* etc. as well as in practicing certain ethical virtues.<sup>2</sup> But later on, at least one sect of Buddhism,<sup>3</sup> called Mahayana believed in a kind of theism, or even polytheism. To them, Buddha himself was begun to be treated as God and was believed to have incarnated himself on earth several times, even earlier.

Buddha clearly stated that the *Summum bonum* lay in the attainment of a state of liberation which alone could put an end to all sufferings. The aim of the

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1. The cultural Heritage of India, ed. by H. Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1956, vol. 4. 404f.

2. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p. 46

3. Buddhism is mainly divided into two form-Hinayana and Mahayana. The main division between them revolves on the nature and significance of Buddhahood. For the Hinayana, the Buddha (the enlightened one) is a historical person who attained enlightenment and proclaim the way of salvation to his followers. On the other hand, to the Mahayana, he is the infinite and eternal Reality which underlies but immeasurably transcends the universe.

ethics of Buddhism is to acquire the highest stage of the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva is one who must give up egoism altogether and rise above anger, hatred and error to gain the virtues of conviction, compassion, benevolence and disinterestedness.<sup>1</sup> For detailed study of the Buddhist ethics, we should at first mention the ‘four noble truths’ which is the foundation of Buddhism.

The first noble truth is the existence of suffering in the world; the second, the suffering has a cause; the third, suffering can be got rid of; and the fourth, there is a way to accomplish this aim. The presence of suffering is evident from the painful nature of birth, decay, disease, death and even from relation with unpleasant objects. The cause of suffering is the attachment of the mind to worldly objects or desires. A chain of causes of suffering is explained in Buddhism. If the chain of causes of suffering is broken, one can get rid of it immediately. The way to break this chain lies in a life based on righteousness or Dharma. Hence, the ethics of the Buddha is the result of the transitory nature and painful ending of so called worldly pleasure.

The knowledge of the four noble truths came to the Buddha not automatically, but after he had practiced a life of righteousness. To Buddha, the ethical life means the practice of virtue, not only a nodding acquaintance with it. The Buddha explained the details of the ethical life and laid down the eight-fold path for the guidance of the aspirant. In the Benares sermon, the Buddha declared, “Now this, monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain: this is the noble eight-fold way; namely right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindedness, right concentration”.<sup>2</sup> Practicing this eightfold path is called the practice of Buddhist ethics.

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1. A Bodhisattva is literally a being whose essence is bodhi (enlightened). Bodhi or Bodhichitta (heart of enlightenment) is an expression of the Dharmakaya in human consciousness. In another sense Bodhisattvas are heavenly beings who have gained the highest degree of wisdom, power and blessedness which is possible to those who are still finite. They have delayed their entrance into Nirvana in order to continue their work as guides and helpers of mankind. (Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 86)

2. I.C. Sharma, *op. cit.*, 161

## Characteristics of Buddhist ethics

If we analyze the Buddhist ethics we find its some general characteristics, which are given below.

1. The Buddha would not limit the evaluation of actions to the narrow concept of a motive alone, but also consequent. In this sense Buddhist ethics is a consequentialist or a teleological ethics<sup>1</sup>
2. Buddhist ethics lays very great emphasis on working towards the material and spiritual welfare of others. The Buddha himself was described as a person concerned with the well-being and happiness of mankind. In general, Buddhist ethics has a utilitarian stance, but the Buddhist utilitarianism is not a hedonistic utilitarianism.
3. Buddhist utilitarianism stresses on the ultimate happiness for the individual, as well as a social. In brief, it is concerned with the material and spiritual well-being of mankind. In keeping with utilitarian stance, Buddhism also has a strong altruistic component, specially embodied in the four sublime virtues of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.
4. As ethics is concerned with the moral development of man, the Buddha requested people not only to refrain from some evil states, but also to practice positive moral virtues.<sup>2</sup> The virtues fall into three groups:<sup>3</sup>
  - i. Virtues of conscientiousness: veracity, truthfulness and righteousness.
  - ii. Virtues of benevolence: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.
  - iii. Virtues of self-restraint: self-control, abstinence, contentment, patience, celibacy, chastity, purity.
5. The Buddha also showed concern regarding all forms of life. The Buddhist concept of society bears a deeper ethical sense which includes all living beings, not only human but also lower creatures. Unlike most Western systems of ethics, the cultivation of socio-moral virtues covers behaviour in relation to all living beings.

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1. Peter Singer, ed., *A Companion to Ethics*, pp. 61-62

2. Buddhist ethics deals both with the nature of the evil states which darken the mind, as well as the wholesome mental states which illumine the mind. The sutta on the '*Simili of the Cloth*' cites sixteen such defilements: greed, covetousness, malevolence, anger malice, hypocrisy, spite, envy, stinginess, deceit, treachery, obstinacy, impetuosity, arrogance, pride and conceit. (*Ibid.*, p 64)

3. Peter Singer, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 64

The mystical aspect of Buddhism is closely bound up with its ethical discipline, that is, the attainment of nirvana. According to the mystics of Mahayana to enter upon the path of the *Bodhisattva*, a man must take certain vows. He must resolve in particular, to save all beings, to destroy his own evil passions, to learn the truth and teach to others, and to lead all beings towards Buddhahood.<sup>1</sup>

He must practice the six virtues of perfection-generosity or charity, moral conduct, patience and forbearance, strenuous endeavour, meditation, and wisdom or intuitive knowledge.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental feature of the ideal of the *Bodhisattva* is compassion and self giving. Through compassion and self giving one affirms his inner unity in the *Dharmakaya*<sup>3</sup> with all beings. Hence, the ethics of the mystics of Mahayana is the ethics of identification.

According to the mystics of Mahayana the goal of life is the attainment of enlightenment (*bodhi*) which is the realization of the eternal Buddha nature present in all beings. To them, Nirvana is the annihilation of the ego-conception, freedom from subjectivity, insight into the essence of success, the recognition of the oneness of existence.<sup>4</sup> Nirvana has also been described the realization of infinite love and infinite wisdom.<sup>5</sup> But this infinite love and wisdom is itself the heart of reality; it is the eternal Buddha, the *Dharmakaya*. Nirvana is thus identified with ultimate Reality; it is the Buddha nature which is the essence of all things. In Nirvana a man finds an active love to his fellows; the realization of the infinite love of the *Dharmakaya*, one finds such opportunity of love which material life affords. In entering Nirvana a man loses his separateness, but he attains an infinite expansion of being in union with eternal Buddha.

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1. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 89

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Dharmakaya* i.e., the body of truth or reality. In the Mahayana the *Dharmakaya* is both the supra-personal Absolute, beyond the range of thought, and the supreme and all embracing personality, revealed not only in the wisdom of the historical Buddha, but in their boundless love and compassion. It is the love which flows out to all beings, and leads all beings to their goal, and at the same time identifies itself with all beings and includes them within itself. (Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 84)

4. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 91

5. Mukerjee, R., *The Art and Theory of Mysticism*, London, pp. 79

The distinctive vision of the Mahayana is the ideal of unification or interpenetrating unity.<sup>1</sup> In the same way, the Hinayana says that, Nirvan involves the extinction of the sense of separate individuality or self-naughting and a complete detachment from the sphere of finite things.<sup>2</sup> The practice of meditation and trance serves to foster this sense of detachment.

In brief we can say that according to Buddhist mysticism Nirvana means the highest good and the highest form of life. In order to attain this highest good, mystics of Buddhism have to practice a strict moral code of life where there is no place of egoism. Moreover, they have to practice altruism. Buddhasitic altruism is extended to the lower creatures.

### **8.3. Morality in Judaic Mysticism**

Judaism is the religion of the Jews, the descendents of the ancient Hebrews, “the chosen people.” It is based on a revelation which is revealed to the prophet Moses, on the Mount Sinai. It has three main pillars-Jehovah, the God; Covenant and the Torah (the Law). Judaism is a strictly monotheistic religion believing that religiosity consists in nothing but observing the contract made with God and following the commandments and the laws given by Him. Its sacred text is the *old Testament of the Bible*.

According to *Biblical* doctrine, God created man in His own image. This implies that man is essentially spiritual in nature and God has given special status to man among creation, i.e., he (man) is the goal of creation.<sup>3</sup> God wants that man will be His partner in His aim of the ultimate establishment of good on earth. For that, man’s essential duty is to imitate God. This concept of man forms the foundation of Jewish ethics. God’s nature is essentially ethical and therefore, He wants that man would be a follower of moral conduct endowed with Justice and love. Man’s cardinal duty is to observe the Moral Law, the Torah, given by God.

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1. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 93

2. *Ibid.*, p.79

3. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p. 114

When God was about to create man, the angels asked, “What is man, that You are mindful of him? Why do You need man?” God answered, “who, then, shall fulfil My Torah and Commandments?” This question shows clearly that man has been made by God mainly to play the role of a moral agent.<sup>1</sup> He is not only responsible for himself, but also for the society he lives in. Judaism does not teach asceticism, rather it teaches an active social life of love, righteousness, justice etc. Because, man is free and therefore, he is to be blamed for his misdeeds.

The basic principle of conduct in Judaism is ‘imitatio Dei,’ i.e., imitation of God.<sup>2</sup> It means assimilating the attributes of God in oneself. “Be ye holy, as I thy Lord, am holy.” Judaic God is endowed with essentially such ethical qualities as justice, mercy, righteousness and holiness. The basic ethical virtue therefore consists in the cultivation of these qualities. Judaism counsels men to think that all times they are standing before God, all things are being done in the presence of God. It asks men to avoid such qualities which are hated by God. Such as, pride or arrogance, lying, shed innocent blood, devising wicked plots, creating mischief, presenting false witness and sowing the seed of misunderstanding amongst brethren etc. It also disapproves of the following three: speaking one thing from the mouth and entertaining something else in the heart; knowing of evidence in favour of someone, but keeping silent over it and testifying alone against someone for some disgraceful thing in him. Judaism is very much against charging interest for money from someone. It also discourages excessive attachment to worldly objects and accumulation of wealth by foul means and beyond one’s genuine requirements. On the other hand, it encourages that one should cultivate a sense of detachment from the world and be inclined towards God.

For the way of life Judaism emphasizes ten moral precepts, which is known as the Ten Commandments. These commandments are considered as given by Jehovah to Moses for the guidance of the children of Israel. These ten precepts are given below:

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 24

(i) Thou shalt have no other gods before me (i.e., before Jehovah). (ii) Thou shalt alone worship the God. (iii) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. (iv) Remember the Sabbath the seventh day of the week, i.e., Saturday, on which all Jews are required to refrain from all kinds of works and Join in the Divine worship to be holy. (v) Honour thy father and thy mother, (vi) Thou shalt not murder. (vii) Thou shalt not commit adultery. (viii) Thou shalt not steal. (ix) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. (x) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's possessions which include house wife, men-servant, maid-servant, ox, ass, etc.

In Judaism, protection of the environment is not only desirable but mandatory. In Torah there are ample evidence of this concern, where Israelites were commanded to take a number of specific steps to protect the land, the vegetation and the animals.<sup>1</sup> They are allowed the land to lie fallow one year out of every seven. A series of Biblical laws ensure that human beings will not be the cause of pain to animals and will give them a day of rest out of every seven. The Jewish dietary laws restrict consumption of fish, fowl and animals. Even when the Israelites will be at war, they would have to preserve those trees that bore fruit and they can cut down for their military needs only those trees that do not.

Concerning morality Jewish mystics cannot be unanimous. Hence, in the History of Judaic mysticism we find different mystical tradition, such as, Merkabah mysticism, Hasidism, Kabbalism, the Zohar etc. But in Hasidism we find a clear idea concerning the ethical view of Judaic mystics. Hasidism is known as a modern movement of Jewish mysticism.

The main emphasis of the Hasidism was on the divine immanence. They considered the living presence of God as the driving essence of all things. It opposed all forms of asceticism. Men must avoid all darkness of spirit and enjoy good things of life in purity of heart. Hasidism considers two qualities are supremely necessary– humility and love.<sup>2</sup> But love must be universal. It must be directed to men irrespective of their attitude or character. A man should love his

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1. Joseph Runzu and Nancy M. Martin ed., *Ethics in the World Religions*, vol. 3 (U.S.A: One world Publication, 2007), p. 105

2. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 208



enemies, just as much as his friends. Here it is mentioned that only the truly humble man can love a wicked man, thinking that– he is ‘better than I am’.<sup>1</sup>

This attitude to wrong doers is related to the universal immanence of God. As God is present in all beings, there is a measure of good in all, and it is our duty always to look to the good and not to judge that which appears to be evil. To them, evil differs from good, not absolutely, but only in degree.<sup>2</sup> There is no separate sphere of evil. Evil is but a lower grade of the good, owing to the diminution of the divine Light illumining it.<sup>3</sup> Hence, we must think well of others, as much as possible. Hasidim was essentially a movement of religious revival. It found its centre in the life and experience of the saint, rather than in any defined doctrine. Rabbi Baer said that it is only the man who has become one with God who is capable of that complete concentration of the mind on God which is the secret of effective prayer.<sup>4</sup>

Jewish mystics (Specially Luria) also advocated fasting and other forms of self mortification as an aid to spiritual growth.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, all of them laid the greatest stress on the principle of love. Since in all human beings there is in the last resort one universal soul, so all men are organically interrelated. Cordovero says “In everyone there is something of his fellow-man. Therefore, whoever sins injures not only himself, but also that part of himself which belongs to another”.<sup>6</sup> One must love one’s neighbours. Love must be cultivated by the constant exercise of meditation and prayer. One should pray: “Lord of the Universe, I forgive all who have made me angry and harmed me. ... whether wittingly or unwittingly, whether in deed or thought. May no man be punished for my sake or because of me.”<sup>7</sup>

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1. L. Newman, *The Hasidic Anthology*, (New York 1934), p.186

2. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 208

3. I. Epstein, *Judaism*, (Harmondsworth, 1959), pp. 273

4. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p. 208

5. It was the aim of the mystics of Merkabah to ascend to the Heaven to enjoy the presence of God. For that they had to fit themselves by moral training and ascetic practices like fasting and ablutions. They achieved their end by the vision of Hekhloth, and finally of the Merkabah, in a condition of mystical ecstasy. (Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178)

6. *Ibid.*, p. 200

7. Epstein, *op. cit.*, p. 250

According to Luria Love must be universal, i.e., one should love all human beings without restriction of nationality,<sup>1</sup> The mystics of Safed believed that the exile and dispersion of the Jews was itself designed to bring about the salvation of all human souls.

In summing up we can say that like other mysticisms Judaic mysticism also stresses on inner purification of self, denounces egoism and prefers altruism. It opposes all sorts of asceticism but discourages excessive attachment to worldly objects and hoarding wealth. Above all, it also emphasizes on humility, universal brotherhood and love.

#### **8.4. Morality in Christian mysticism**

Christianity is one of the most influential Semitic religions. It has dominated a large population of the world, especially in the Western world. Its origin is in the teachings of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> a Jew by birth and reported to be born of a virgin mother, Mary. It is basically a Monotheistic religion, although the idea of Trinity is found in it.

Christianity is a religion of redemption from a life of sin and suffering. Jesus Christ, the founder of the religion is regarded as the redeemer of man and therefore the true religious path is nothing but to imitate his ways. 'Imitation of Christ' is the basic Christian principle of religious or moral life. It consists cultivating all the virtues that Christ demonstrated throughout his life. And Christ's life is the best example of a life of deep love, humility and suffering. Thus, love, humility and suffering for the sake of others as well as for the sake of soul instead of flesh are the basic moral virtues of Christianity.<sup>3</sup> The suffering of Christ on the cross is really a symbol of suffering for the sake of spirit. 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' and 'turn to him your right cheek who slaps on your left one' are the two Christian ethical teachings of love and humility.<sup>4</sup> Even hatred is to be met not with hatred but with love.

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1. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p.200

2. Although Christianity, without doubt, originated in the teachings of Jesus, it took definite shape as a religion at the hands of St. Paul. St. Paul not only propagated the teachings of Jesus with full sense of devotion and honesty, but also added important ideas from his own side. And thus, Christianity as it spread may be taken as Christianity of Jesus teachings combined with Paul. (Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p131)

3. Kedar Nath Tiwari, *op. cit.*, p.146

4. *Loc. cit.*

Love is the essential nature of God Himself and therefore it is the greatest virtue to be followed by every Christian in his relationship to both God and man.

If we enter into greater details of Christian ethical teaching, we find a host of other associated and duties prescribed in it. First of all, it adopts the famous Ten Commandment of the Judaic tradition in some what a modified or ‘Christianized’ form, as it is called as the basis of its ethical discipline.

Besides, being influenced by Greek sources, virtues such as justice, charity, temperance, wisdom, fortitude etc. are also emphasized in Christianity. Paul has listed the following nine virtues to be followed by a Christian as a mark of his duties towards God: other men of the society and to himself- love, joy and peace in relation to God; patience, kindness and goodness in relation to others; and faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in relation to oneself.<sup>1</sup>

The most important feature of Christian ethics is the idea of love. It takes a universal form in the teaching of Jesus. Moreover, it is free from all kinds of narrowness of the human passion and thinking. Christians are enjoined to love their fellow human beings irrespective of race-color, creed, known-unknown, relative, non-relative, native and non-native. Jesus had enjoined his followers to love also their enemies,<sup>2</sup> so that they could be the children of their heavenly father. They should love and serve human beings only as human beings, the best creatures of God and no other identity or criteria should not be considered here. Therefore, love for the humanity and to serve for the humanity is the core of Jesus teachings and Christian ethics.

A fundamental teaching of Christian ethics is that, each and every individual should be humble and avoid all kinds of pride, boasting and arrogance. According to Reinhold Niebuhr, pride is a form of egoism and it corrupts the human spirit and as a result they forget their common humanity and their equal unworthiness in the sight of God.<sup>3</sup>

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1. *Ibid.*, p.147

2. Mathew, 5: 46-48 (*The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition, Nashville (USA) Catholic Bible Press, 1993)

3. Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, (Sanfrncisco: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 27

Another important feature of Christian ethics is that, it puts emphasis on purity of the heart which is the centre of mortality. At the same time it severely despises wealth and worldly prosperities; because if man has worldly prosperity, certainly, it creates obstacle to his absolute devotion.

The mystical aspect of primitive Christianity finds its fullest and most definite expression through the epistles of Paul and in the gospel of John. The essence of Pauline and Johannine Christianity is called Christ-mysticism.<sup>1</sup>

Its centre theme is union with Christ, i.e., *Summom bonum* of human life is union with God. Christ-mysticism is itself a form of transcendental experience. It is the essence of the early Christian faith that Jesus has been transported into the divine Glory. In Paul's conception, now he (Jesus) belongs totally to the spiritual order. Since, Christ is spirit, he can live in men-can possess them and speak through them, and become the inner principle of their being, and they can live in him.<sup>2</sup> And this is the core concept of Paul's Christ mysticism.

The history of the Christian church is naturally divided into two-Eastern and Western. Eastern mystics have laid great stress on practice of meditation and prayer as the means of lifting the soul to consciousness of God. Through constant meditation on divine things and Spiritual contemplation, the soul is caught up into an ecstasy. And at length, it enters into a union with God so closely that whatever we breathe or think or speak is God.<sup>3</sup>

Deification is a fundamental aspect of Eastern Christian mysticism. According to Gregory of Sinai, in the experience of contemplation, the mind is ineffably merged with God into one spirit. In this context, in the fourth century John of Lycopolis says that when iron is placed in the fire and the fire passes into it and becomes one substance with it. In the same way, when the love of Christ comes into the soul as a living fire, it consumes the seeds of sin from the soul and it becomes one substance with Him.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p.216

2. *Ibid.*, p. 217

3. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p.227

4. Quoted from, Margret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East*, (London: 1931), p. 92

On the other hand, Western mystics emphasize on the 'Imitation of Christ'. That is, one ought to imitate Christ's life and conduct, if he wants to be truly enlightened and delivered from all blindness of heart. The endeavour to reproduce the life and follow the example of Jesus (which was mostly ethical) was indeed, common to all Western mystics. Here it is mentioned that in comparison to general Christians, Christian mysticism follows the life of Christ more passionately and loves him more than anything's else.

The mystics conceive that the imitation of Christ involves fundamentally killing the lower self and surrendering wholly to God. Purgation is a necessary condition of the contemplative life, which is clearly illustrated in the teachings and examples of Jesus. As Susa says, "we must practice a perpetual giving up of self, and make God's honour and glory our sole aim, just in the way that the dear Christ acted towards his heavenly Fathers."<sup>1</sup> In this way, we should strike at the root of sin, which is the principle of self-love and self-seeking. In the imitation of Christ the mystics lay special stress on humility and love. Augustine Baker traces the humility of the Christ to his realization of the 'nothingness of creatures and the absolute totality of God'.<sup>2</sup>

The Protestant mystics lay very great stress on the fact of evil and its manifestation in human life.<sup>3</sup> To them, the divine element in man is hidden because of sin. In fact, sin separates us from God. For the Protestant mystics, salvation is the birth of Christ in the soul or union with God. Through the birth of Christ within him a man brings back that unity which was his previous state before the Fall. John Smith says: "Salvation is nothing else but a true participation of the divine nature; a good man becomes the tabernacle of God wherein the divine Shechinah does rest."<sup>4</sup> He is freed from the self-seeking and self-love which imprison the

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1. *The Seven Steps of the Ladder of Spiritual Love*, Trans, F. S. Taylor, (London: 1943), p. 66

2. Sidney Spencer, *op. cit.*, p.248

3. All sin, death, damnation and Hell is nothing but this kingdom of self, or the various operation of self-love, self-esteem and self-seeking, which separate the soul from God, (*The Spirit of Prayer*, 1:2 Hobhouse, p. 94)

4. G.H. Williams, ed., *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, (London: 1957), Ch.5

soul and confine it to its own home. He shares the life of God. Living wholly to God and living the life of God in a sober sense, a man becomes deified, the soul and God being united together in the unity of affections, will, and end'<sup>1</sup>

In sum up we can say that Christian mysticism stresses on breaking dualism between Heaven and earth. To the protestant mystics, both Heaven and Hell are states of soul, not places in a special sense. Heaven is the turning of the will into the love of God. The soul which is one with God, is itself the very Heaven of God, wherein He dwells. On the contrary, the soul in which the divine light does not shine carries about a Hell within itself. In fact, the most real Hell is a state of self-love, pride and arrogance against God; and to love God and seek the union with him is the most substantial Heaven.

## **9. Purpose of the Thesis**

From the above discussion it is revealed that moral issues have been remained the central point of all philosophical and religious traditions. Without being moral a person cannot be religious. The purpose of the present dissertation is to find out the close relation between Sufism (the mystical philosophy of Islam) and morality, specially in the philosophy of two great Sufis- Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri and then to prove that, the idea of Sufi morality is better and wider and practicable than the concept of morality found in general philosophy. Make the study more specialized and comprehensive the views on ethical issues of the two leading Sufis, e.g. Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri have been included in our study.

The title of the thesis is 'Sufism and Morality with Special Reference to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri.' So far as our knowledge goes no research work has been done on this topics. In this study our

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1. *Ibid.*, Chs. 4, 3

humble attempt will be to high light the close link of morality with Sufism.

For this purpose we have designed the thesis in the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Islamic Concept of Morality
3. An Overview of Sufism
4. Relation Between Sufism and Morality
5. Morality in Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani's Writings
6. Morality in Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri's Writings
7. Concluding Remark.

In this dissertation we have adopted the descriptive, analytic and evaluative methods. In this context, we have used the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith, classical works of Sufism and Ethics and works of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri as the primary sources of our study. Moreover, works and commentaries on Sufism and on Ethics are also used as the secondary sources.

## CHAPTER II

### Islamic Concept of Morality

Islamic ethics is associated with the Arabic word *Akhlaq*. The term *akhlaq* (morality) is the plural form of *khulq*. In Arabic *khulq* means disposition and essence.<sup>1</sup> In the Qur'an the term *khulq* means a set of traits and types of conduct.<sup>2</sup> It is also used to indicate a set of religious and moral qualities.<sup>3</sup>

From the same root, the term *khalaq* is also used in the Qur'an to refer to the positive qualities gained by an individual from his moral conduct (68:4). The term *da'ab* also occurs to indicate custom and fixed ways of behaving.

In the Hadith *adab* occurs in the sense of instruction (*tarbya*) in the virtues. The Prophet (SAW), for example says: A father can give his child nothing better than good moral education (*Tirmizi*). He also says: Honour your children and let them be of good manners (*Ibn Maza*). So, according to the Qur'an, *akhlaq* means the habits, nature, behaviour and all qualities and customs of human societies governing people's judgment and conduct leading them to either virtue or vice.

In the terminology of Muslim scholars of ethics, *akhlaq* (morality) is a habit, which results through the repetition of a certain action; if that habit is the result of a good action, it will be called "good morality", and if it is the result of the repetition of an evil action, it will be called "evil conduct".<sup>4</sup>

The science of ethics discusses the ways of attaining virtues and adorning the soul with them, removing vices, and purifying the soul of them. This science determines moral obligation of human beings and thus it is also called the

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1. Dr. Sayyid Husayn Hashimi, 'Standards to Evaluate acts' in *Ethics in Islam*, compiler: Behruz Rafiee, trans. Abolfazal Haghiri (Tehran: The Center for Cultural International Studies, 2004), p. 126; It is mentioned that, in his *Sihah al Lughah*, Jawhari says: *Khalq* or *Khluq* means disposition and essence.

2. This is no other than a customary device of the ancients (26:137).

3. It is mentioned that, when God, speaking of Muhammad, says: And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character (57:4; 33:21).

4. Behruz Rafiee (ed.), *Ethics in Islam*, p. 126;



instruction for life on the science of obligations. Islamic ethics includes all aspects of human life. It embraces human being's personal, social, civil, ethical, criminal, mercantile, constitutional and international aspects.

The subject of morality is the human habits and soul, for the latter is able to do either good or evil actions voluntarily. According to Islam, morality is used to attain certain principles, and by observing them man is able to distinguish between good and evil in his own actions and those of others.<sup>1</sup> Its aim is to purify the human soul, and it leads man to the happiness and salvation as well as God's contentment.<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Nature of Islamic Ethics

According to Islam, human soul is the centre of human morality. Generally, it is considered as a science of moral norms and values. According to Routledges Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the word 'ethics' sometimes refers to 'the systems of values and customs instantiated in the lives of particular groups of human beings'; sometimes refers to 'ways of living or acting'; and also sometimes refers to 'moral principles'.<sup>3</sup> Islamic ethics seems to be closely related to the first or the second sense of the term 'ethics'<sup>4</sup> as it offers a practical guideline for the people with a view to achieve the highest goal in their lives.

All human desires, intentions and wills originate in the soul and whatever derives from the soul, physical organs are just utilized as an instrument to fulfil these goals. Hence, if the soul is pure, all the good intentions and wills come out therefrom and physical organs go through accordingly. On the other hand, if the soul is polluted, then all evil intentions and desires come out therefrom and physical organs just go through accordingly. The peculiarity of Islamic ethics is that religiosity according to it, is based on morality. The philosophical ethics starts

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1. Dr. Muhammad Jawad Mashkur, 'Morality in Quran', in *Ethics in Islam, op. cit.*, p.159

2. *Ibid.*, p.160; "By the soul and the proportion and order Given to it; And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it" (91: 7-10).

3. See, *al-Qur'an*, 95:4 also cf. 64:3

4. Md. Akthar Ali, 'Fundamental Basis of Islamic Ethics: An Analysis', in *Rajshahi University Journal of Arts & Law* 37, 293-300 (2009) p. 293

with the psychological constitution of man's nature and the obligation laid on him as a social being, but in Islamic ethics the basic perception is faith in a personal God and morality is the attempt of each individual as well as society to get attached with Him as far as possible.<sup>1</sup> "Create in you attributes of God" is the highest ideal of this religious ethics and all the ideals of moral conduct follow as a necessary consequence from this.<sup>2</sup> It is this imitation of God which not only serves as the norm of moral excellence but also as the spring of moral life.

So, Ethics, like other Islamic sciences, takes its origin from the Qur'an<sup>3</sup> the Hadith. Besides, Qur'an and Hadith, Ijma (Consensus of the Islamic legal Scholars) and Qiyas (Analogical Reasoning) are also the basis of Islamic ethics. It is wholly based on Qur'an. The Qur'an lays down the foundation of a religious system on purely ethical principles,<sup>4</sup> hence there is not much distinction between Islam and Islamic ethics. The moral, civil, canonical, and criminal laws of Islam are not rigidly separated from one another and cannot be identified as isolated systems or science.<sup>5</sup> The Muslims started the study of Ethics along with the study of the Qur'an.<sup>6</sup> It was their peculiar characteristic that they took their stand on the Qur'an and founded and developed their sciences on original and independent lines.<sup>7</sup> Qur'an insisted that Allah had created man with moral responsibility and therefore there must be a day of judgment for mankind with rewards and punishment. So Mohammad (SAW) proclaimed three beliefs which come to be regarded as fundamental for the ethics of Islam: (i) Belief in Allah (God), (ii) belief in the Day of Judgment and (iii) belief in Virtuous deeds. Virtuous deeds would be rewarded in the Day of Judgment.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Bashir Ahmad Dar, *The Qur'anic Ethics* (Lahore: Institute of Islamic culture, 1960), p. 7.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. M. Umaruddin, *The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazzali* (Aligarh: The Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1962), p. 43.

4. Ethics in Islam is nothing but some total of injunctions laid down in the Qur'an for the practical conduct of life and fully exemplified in the practice of the Holy Prophet (SAW) through his life. (*Ibid.*, p.44)

5. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

6. *Loc. cit.*

7. D. S. Margoliouth, *Early Development of Muhammadanism* (New York, 1914), p.74.

8. Quoted in, Dwight M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), pp. 264-266.

According to Islam, the ultimate Being or Reality is God<sup>1</sup> He is self-subsisting, all-pervading, eternal and Absolute Reality.<sup>2</sup> He is the first and last, the seen and the unseen (al-Qur'an 107:3).<sup>3</sup> For our understandings, He describes His attributes through revelation by similitude from what is loftiest in the heavens and the earth (30:27) and in our own experience (30:28) (our highest ideals). These attributes are many and are connoted by His names (59:24) but they can all be summarized under a few essential heads: Life,<sup>4</sup> Eternity (57:3), Unity,<sup>5</sup> Power,<sup>6</sup> Truth, Beauty, Justice, Love and Goodness. The real goodness of man according to the Qur'an is the assimilation of those divine attributes.

## 2. Significance of Life

The whole truth about the creation and the divine purpose for which man was created has been revealed in different verses of the Holy Qur'an. Life in this world is only an opportunity for man to prepare for the next world (62:22), which would be permanent and perfect (29:64; 87:17). One will be resurrected after his death and called to account for his deeds on the Day of Judgment. The pomp and the glitter of this world are designed to test the righteous that will have their rewards in the Hereafter. Much of the pomp and the grandeur of this world are regarded as an illusion. The delusion of the worldly pleasures and the reality of the other worldly divine pleasure have been depicted in a long verse of the Qur'an (10:24).

The Holy Qur'an thus states the nature and purpose of life in this world. This life is only a sojourn in man's journey from the nothingness to eternity (6:98). Hence, worldly pleasures are not to be coveted much. The life of the present is only transitory neither its vicissitude nor its accomplishment should not distract a human being from the path of righteousness. The transitoriness of this world however should not mislead an individual into giving up this life or not

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1. *Al-Qur'an* 2:186; 31:30

2. *Al-Qur'an*, 2:115; 6:62; 2:111; 31:30; 32:2; 4:27; 62:2.

3. In the latter part of the thesis in the case of *Qur'anic* Verses we shall only mention its Verses number.

4. *Ibid.*, 2:255; 11:65

5. *Ibid.*, 2:163; 5:75; 6:19; 16:22, 51; 23:91; 37:2-5

6. *Ibid.*, 2:29, 117, 284; 3:29; 4:12, 13, 65, 73; 7:54; 10:55; 11:6-7; 13:16-17

taking this world seriously. The life has to be lived in all its fullness and glory. The righteousness does not consist in running away from this life but it does consist in patiently persevering through tests and trails which have been ordained for those whose heart “over-flows with faith in Allah and promise made by Him”.

According to the Qur’anic belief, Allah in His infinite mercy and wisdom has provided this earth with all the beautiful gifts for man to enjoy and this has been clearly pointed out in the following verses:

“Say: who hath forbidden the beautiful gifts of God which He hath produced for His servants, and the things clean and pure (which He hath provided) for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world for those who believe (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment” (7:32).

And again “Eat of the good things we have provided for you” (2;57). And also “Eat and drink but waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters” (7:31).

These verses bring home the divine purpose of man’s creation. Islam rejects the cult of complete abstention and condemns those who forbid the beautiful gifts of God (7:32). The moral order thus promulgated by Allah for man invests the life of this world with all glory and grandeur. It only forbids obsession with the worldly life. So life in this world has to be taken only as a means of seeking the pleasure of the Lord, for, His pleasure is the greatest good that man can aspire after.

## **Unity**

Islam stands for uncompromising Monotheism which denounces all forms of *Shirk* or polytheism. The greatest emphasis in the Qur’an is on the unity of God (*Tawhid*). The unity of God implies that the universe is created and wisely governed by God. God governs this world by certain laws which are of His Own making.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing unforeseen; everything happens according to laws which are clearly manifest to one who keeps his eyes open. Discussing the rise

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1. *The Qur’anic Ethics*, p. 8

and fall of different nations and cultures, the Qur'an emphasizes uniformity in the mode of operation of the divine causality.<sup>1</sup>

It is stated unequivocally in the Qur'an, "Generations before you We destroyed when they did wrong" (10:13). "And never did We destroy the townships unless the folk thereof were evil-doers" (28:59). Thus, by emphasizing upon the unity of Godhead, the Qur'an wanted to establish the basic principle that the rise and fall of nations is not arbitrary but is the necessary consequence of the neglect of moral principles.<sup>2</sup> So, according to the Qur'an belief in the unity of God implies belief in the divine causality and the presence of moral order in the universe.

Unity of God also implies the wheel of the law of righteousness works without any considerations of favour or disfavour.<sup>3</sup> There can be no nation having any peculiar relation to God as the Jews claimed exclusively for themselves. The covenant with the Jewish prophets was operative only within the law of divine causality. "Both the Jews and Christians say: "We are the sons of God, and His beloved. Say: 'Why then doth He punish you for your sins?' Nay, you are but men, of the men He hath created." (5:20).

The quality of moral code is in direct proportion to the universality of the ideal. The Qur'an's denunciation of *Shirk* (Polytheism) is in reality a denunciation of the lack of any co-ordinated and high ideal of life from which all people devoid of *Tauhid*. To deny all false gods means to deny all lower ideals and to accept the Highest and Supreme God as the only Reality;<sup>4</sup> it is to bring harmony and unity in the ethical life of individuals and societies<sup>5</sup> Here it is mentioned that unity as one of the ideals of man, implies unity in the internal life of man, a co-ordinations of reason, will and action, also in words and deeds.<sup>6</sup> It also implies that member of a national or ideological group should develop ties of intimate relationship among

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, p.9

3. *Ibid.*, p.10

4. *Ibid.*, p.12

5. M.M Sharif, (ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Delhi: Low Price Publication, Vol. 1, 2004) p.157

6. Hence God Says: "Are many Lords differing among themselves better, or one God, Supreme and Irresistible!" (12:39).

themselves. It is in this respect, that religious ethics (ethics of pure monotheism) is far superior to all secular ethics with their discordant and lower ideals.

## **Justice**

Justice in Islam is conceived as a sacred trust, a duty imposed upon man to be discharged in all sincerity. It is one of the best acts of devotion and one of the most important duties after belief. According to the Qur'an, the Creator of the world is just and commands us to be just (7:29). The system of the human relations, from within the family to that of society, is evaluated against the standard of justice; for dealing with relatives, divorce, marriage, expenditure, and the spouse's bridal gift should be in accordance with justice. In the same way, religious and political leadership, testifying, judgment, if they are not in accordance with justice, they are of no value. Financial transactions among individuals of society, if not based on justice, are blameworthy and immoral. In the system of values in Islam, justice is not only a standard by which to evaluate men's social conduct, but also a standard by which to evaluate civic conduct in non-religious relations. So we should accept it as a moral ideal.

Now, we shall mention some examples from the Holy Qur'an, which emphasize the pivotal place of justice in all of the above mentioned realms.

### **1. Divine justice**

"We sent aforetime our apostles with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance that man may stand forth in justice. ..." (57:25).

"God commands justice, the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion. ..." (16:90).

### **2. Justice in the family**

Islam envisages a type of social order in which justice should be the basic principle in determining the relations of individuals and nations. Hence no distinction is made between man and man. So, Qur'an declares: "O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves or your parents or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor.

For God is the best protector. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily God is well- acquainted with all that ye do" (4:135).

### **3. Justice in judgment**

"God doth command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice" (4:58).

### **4. Justice in giving testimony**

"O ye who believe! When death approaches any of you, take witnesses among yourselves when making bequests, to just men of your own brotherhood or others from outside if ye are journeying through the earth, and the chance of death befalls you" (5:109).

### **5. Justice in Financial relations**

"Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: ..." (17:35). This verse implies the necessity of observing justice in economical issues.

"God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for your faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: For God loveth those who are just" (60:8).

Thus, we see that the Qur'an assigns a very important place to justice in its moral principles, for its violation leads to evils which destroy the basic harmony of social and international relations.

## **Brotherhood**

The idea of unity leads to the conception of unity of the whole of humanity. The Qur'an repeatedly stated that mankind was created from a single pair of male and female<sup>1</sup> and from single breath of life. So, all people are equal member of human community. According to the Prophet (SAW) mankind is a fold, every member of which is a shepherd or keeper unto every other, and

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1. *Al-Qur'an*, 4:1; 6:98; 10:19; 39:6; 49:13

accountable for the welfare of the entire fold (Bukhari). Further, mankind is the creatures of God, and most beloved of them before Him is he who is the best to His creatures (Baihaqi). These and other sayings of the Prophet (SAW) stress the point that one has to identify his interests with the interests of others. The duties to one's self and the duties to others are here placed side by side as the component parts of one's responsibility in life. Only when the individual has a developed sense of such responsibility, he is a moral being and of greater service to society.

For carrying out the Divine Will and design of a universal society based on righteousness, the believers have to be the vanguard and to organize themselves into a single brotherhood. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an: "The believers are but a single Brotherhood. So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear God that ye may receive mercy" (49:10). And further, "If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel make ye peace between them; but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God. But if it complies then make peace between them with justice and fair..." (49:9). It is thus clear that bringing about peace and reconciliation between the contending parties amongst the Believers is the collective responsibility of the entire brotherhood.

The brotherhood of the believers would thus serve as a launching pad for universal love and peace. This brotherhood of the believers is not in any way designed against any religion, race or nation. Its only intention is to constitute a hard core of an ultimate universal peace and love.<sup>1</sup> It will serve as an inspiration and example for the people of other religions races and nations to cast off their differences and join in the universal society.<sup>2</sup> The believers thereby would fulfil the divine Will and Plan of a single universal society based on peace, love and justice where "the most honourable in the sight of God are those who are the most

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1. Israrul Haque 'The Concept and Contents of Morality in Islam'. in *Muslim Education Quarterly* (Cambridge: The Islamic Academy, Autumn, Issue 1994), vol. 2, N.1, p.62

2. *Loc. cit.*



righteous”); their language, race and nationalities would be only a means of recognition and not a source of despise between man and man.<sup>1</sup> In order to carry out the divine plan of a universal society, based on the unity of mankind, Allah has commanded the believers to be just and fair to all types of people and under all circumstances. Even the hatred and enmity of the non-believers are not to deny them justice and fairly”.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth, the significance of unity is not the loyalty to race or nationality, to thrones, priests or to divine, but to God alone, the supreme God, the sustainer of the worlds.

## Love

The love of God is the essence of Islam. The Qur’an demands that the people should love God above everything else (9:24). In fact, love is the highest ideal of ethical conduct which symbolized in the person of God. The significance of this love for God is further elucidated in the following verses:

1. "For God loves those who turn to him constantly. And He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2:222).
2. “...Whom He will love as they will love Him” (5: 57).
3. “Say, if you love God, then follow me: God will love you and forgive your sins” (31:30).

In this context the Holy Prophet says: “None of you shall be a true believer if he does not love God above himself, his son, wife, wealth etc” (Bukhari). The love for God is here made dependent on the love for the Holy Prophet, i.e., for the moral and social ideals for which he was striving.”<sup>3</sup>

Love for the Prophet (SAW) or for God is thus, in the last resort, to be considered not merely as love for a person but love for an ideal.<sup>4</sup> The highest moral standard and courage displayed by the early Muslims was not only the result of any emotional attachment to the person of the Holy Prophet (SAW) but

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Al-Qur’an*, 5:2, 8:42

3. *Qur’anic Ethics*. p.13

4. Cf. “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (St. John, 14:15) and “If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my love” (St. Jhon, 15:10)

to this ethical ideal represented in the lofty conception of Allah. The love for God for these people was love and active striving for the establishment of an 'Ideal State' or a world community based on the highest moral principles, the benefits of which would be open to all mankind irrespective of any national, racial or class consideration.<sup>1</sup> Such a universal and lofty ideal is possible only if people submit of their own free will to God, who represents the best ethical values.

### **Goodness**

Goodness is an attribute of God<sup>2</sup> and therefore, it becomes the duty of every person to obey his own impulse to good (2:158). He should do good as God has been good to all (28:77) and love those who do good (2:195). Since the objective of good is known to God alone, the good life is that which is lived in accordance with the law of God.<sup>3</sup> So men ought to behave in the manner which pleases God and what pleases God most are the righteous deeds.<sup>4</sup> A beautiful description of righteousness is given in the Holy Qur'an:

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness<sup>5</sup>—to believe in God and last Day, and the Angels and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic, such are the people of truth, the (God-fearing) (2:177). In the same way, attitude of goodwill towards all fellow beings must be followed, because God is in harmony only with good will (3:76).

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1 . *Qur'anic Ethics*, p.13

2. *Al-Qur'an*, 16:53; 59:23)

3. Dr. M. Mukaram Ahamed, *Introduction to Islam* (New Delhi: Anmol Publication pvt. Ltd., n.d), p. 390

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. As if to emphasis again a warning against deadening formalism, we are given a beautiful description of the righteous and God fearing man. He should obey salutary regulations, but he should fix his gaze on the love of God and the love of his fellow-men. We are given four heads: (i) Our faith should be true and sincere; (ii) We must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to our fellow-men; (iii) We must be good citizens, supporting social organization; and (iv) our own individual soul must be firm and unshaken in all circumstances. They are interconnected, and yet can be viewed separate. (Cf. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an*, Text, Translation and Commentary, vol. 1, 2 (Delhi : Kutub khana Ishayat-ul-Islam, 5th (ed.) 1979), p. 69

It is clear that believe and work righteously are the injunctions to be strictly observed. These words are frequently reverberated and echoed in the Qur'an. As all the prophets were quick in emulating good works, so all people are advised to strive together towards all that is good and virtuous.

## **Truth**

Truth is the highest virtue of a believer's character. A believer in God is also necessarily a truth-loving person. The Qur'an mentions truthfulness as one of the most prominent qualities of true a Muslim.<sup>1</sup> He always speaks the truth. In all matters he says just what is in accordance with reality.<sup>2</sup> Truthfulness means that it is to have no contradiction between a man's knowledge and the words that he utters, and for that matter, whatever he says should be what has come to his knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Falsehood, by contrast, is the utterance of statements which do not tally with knowledge.<sup>4</sup> A believer is a man of principle and for such a person telling the truth is paramount. For him no other behaviour is possible, for he finds it impossible to deny the truth.

The universe is based wholly on the truth. It is the light which runs through the cosmos (6:73). Here everything expresses itself in its real form. The sun, the moon, rivers, mountains, stars, and planets are all based on truth. They appear just as they really are. A believer too has exactly the same character. He is totally free from falsehood or double standards. At the very outset he should be a true person both from inside and outside. Compromising in the matter of truth is not possible for him. Truth is the attribute of the Divine Being (31:30). Hence, truth should be adhered to and pursued without mixing it with falsehood in the least (2:42). Among the things that God taught the Prophet and the believers are the following: "O my Lord Let my entry be By the Gate of Truth and Honour and likewise. My exit by the Gate of Truth and Honour. ... " (17:80-81)

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1 . They do not bear witness to what is false (25:72)

2. Truth implies adherence to Reality.

3. Dr. M. Mukaram Ahamed, *op. cit.*, p.412

4. *Loc. cit.*

## Purity

Purity is one of the qualities of God. So it is the duty of every man to be pure inwardly and outwardly. Islam like other religions begins with the purification of morals. It does not begin with the discussion of high philosophic doctrines of morality.<sup>1</sup> It does not ask its followers to get involved in mere discussion on the difference between good and evil. Islam commands the performance of certain duties and assures the devotee regarding the attainment of certain objects, after that performance is done in an earnest humble and conscientious way.<sup>2</sup> The *Qubus Nama* is a book on moral precepts composed in 1082-83 A. D. deals with the ethnical aspects apart from the spiritual aspects of prayer, fasting and other religious exercises as means to cleanliness, humility and temperance in conformity with the laws of Islam.<sup>3</sup> It is mentioned that Prophet of Islam fixed five such duties to be performed, viz., the saying of the (i) *Kalima*, (ii) *Salat*, (iii) *Sawm*, (iv) *Zakat*, and (v) *Hajj*. These play a significant part in building the character. *Kalima*, i.e, belief in the unity of God aims at the unity of man. *Salat* or prayer five items a day, regularly reminds the believer of his duties to God and to His creatures and in its continuity and consistency is a series of acts to form a stable character on piety and righteousness. *Sawm* or fasting, which extends over the whole month of *Ramadan* in each lunar year, is to teach self-restraint and to make the believer aware of the hardships that the poor and the needy are confronted with and thus to awaken in him the feelings of sympathy for them. *Zakat* or poor due for the help of economically depressed classes and for such as are mentioned in the Qur'anic verse (9:60) it is self-sacrifice on the part of the believer and serves to ensure social security. *Hajj* or pilgrimage is to be performed at least once in the lifetime, by those who can afford the journey of *Makka* (the sacred sanctuary of Muslims), its social aspect cannot be exaggerated as it affords the opportunity for the believers to meet together and confer with regard to social well-fare of the community. While *Zakat* is to teach self-sacrifice,

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1. Khaja Khan, *The philosophy of Islam* (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1981), p. 50

2. *Ibid.*, p. 51

3. E.G. Browne, *Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, rpt. 1st edn.1902), p. 282

Hajj teaches the etiquette of social life and social behaviour. These are the pillars of Islam designed in such a manner that they serve to purify the soul of man, and keep in check his desires.<sup>1</sup> Desire is often so personal that its satisfaction leads men to deviate from the right path. To control such desire is seemed more fundamental than their satisfaction.

### **Peace loving (Non-violence)**

Islam is such a religion which teaches non-violence.<sup>2</sup> According to the Qur'an, God does not love *fasad* or violence (2:205). Basically *fasad* is that action which results in disruption of the social system, causing huge losses in terms of lives and properties.<sup>3</sup> So God loves non-violence. He abhors violent activity being indulged in human society, as a result of which people have to pay the price with their possessions and lives. This is supported by other statements in the Qur'an: "Peace is one of God's names (59:23). Those who seek to please God will be guided by Him to "the paths of peace" (i.e., the home of peace) (89:30). The entire spirit of the Qur'an is coherent with this concept. For instance, the Qur'an attaches great importance to patience (39:10). Patience implies a peaceful response or reaction, whereas impatience implies a violent response. The word *Sabr* exactly expresses the notion of non-violence as it is understood in modern times. That patient action is non-violent which has been clearly expressed in the Qur'an.

Violent activities breed hatred in society, while non-violent activities lead to love. Violence is the way of destruction while non-violence is the way of construction.<sup>4</sup> In an atmosphere of violence, it is enmity which flourishes, while in an atmosphere of non-violence, it is friendship which flourishes. The method of violence gives way to negative values while the method of non-violence is marked by positive values. The method of violence entangles people in problems, while the method of non-violence leads people to the exploiting of opportunities. In short, violence is death, non-violence is life.

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1. Desires is an emotion that is directed to the position of some object from which pleasure is expected.

2. Islam in itself means a religion of peace

3. Dr. M. Mukaram Ahamed, *op. cit.*, p. 387

4. *Ibid.*, p. 388

It may be mentioned that both the Qur'an and the Hadith have attached great importance to *Jihad*. *Jihad* means struggle, to struggle one's utmost. It must be appreciated at the outset that this word is used for non-violent struggle as opposed to violent struggle. One clear proof of this is the verse: Perform *Jihad* with the Qur'an most strenuously (25:5). The Qur'an is not a sword or a gun. It is a book of ideology. In such a case performing *Jihad* with the Qur'an would mean an ideological struggle to conquer people's hearts and minds through Islam's superior philosophy,<sup>1</sup> Non-violent activity is not limited in a specific sphere. It is a course of action which may be followed in all matters.

### **Power**

Power as a human ideal implies that man has the potentiality of assuming responsibility undertaken by him of his own accord.<sup>2</sup> God breathed His spirit into him<sup>3</sup> and, therefore, made him His vicegerent on the earth. Everything in the universe was created subservient to him (45:3); even the angles were ordered to bow down to him (38:72). He was given a position of great honour in the universe and was elevated far above most of God's creation (17:70). He has all the faculties that are necessary for his physical and spiritual development and can pass beyond the limits of the Heavens and the earth with the power given to him by God (2:34). He is given the power to distinguish between good and evil (15:10) and therefore, he alone is responsible for what he does. He is endowed with freedom of action but his freedom is limited by the free causality of God (74:55-66). His responsibility is proportionate to his powers (2:286). He has been shown the path of righteousness and it is up to him to accept or reject it. Being created after the pattern of God's nature (30:30), man is capable of developing from one stage to the next higher stage. But this development involves struggle against the immoral forces of the external world which he is able to meet successively with the co-operation and help of God (40:51). It is the primary duty

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. M.M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Delhi: Low price Publication, 1961, rpt, 2004), vol. 1, p. 159

3. *Al-Qur'an*, 15:29; 38:72

of the believers to participate actively in the struggle for the establishment of a social order based on peace, harmony and justice.<sup>1</sup> The ideal of power demands that in order to establish a state on the basis of peace, freedom of thought, worship, belief, and expression, the morally-oriented individuals will have to strive hard.<sup>2</sup> *Jihad* or utmost striving with might and main (5:38), with wealth and their person (9:20), as they ought to strive, becomes their foremost duty so that agitation, oppression and mischief should be totally eliminated from the world.

### Disvalues

Corresponding to these values there are some disvalues which are symbolized in the Qur'an as act of Satan (*Iblis*).<sup>3</sup> He is described as a persistent rebel (4:117) who is constantly engaged in deceiving (8:48) people and misleading them from the path of righteousness (4:119). He sows the seeds of enmity and hatred (5:89), creates false desires (4:10), commands what is shameful and wrong (24:121). In short, He is an enemy of mankind.<sup>4</sup> So believers are advised that they should be aware of him.

We also find in the Qur'an certain vices condemned and certain regulations merely recommended. All the *Suras* of Al-Qur'an especially *Suras* '2', '4' and '5' have many passages of exhortations, namely "Deal not unjustly (with others,) and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly" (2:279).

"Covet not that which God hath bestowed on some of you preferably to others."

"O true believers! Observe justice when ye appear as witness before God, and let not hatred towards any individual induce to do wrong."

Vices that are condemned as boasting:

"And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth. For God loveth not any arrogant boaster" (31:18).

On pride the Qur'an says: "... For God loveth not the arrogant, vainglorious" (4:36)

"And walk not in the earth exultant" (17:37).

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1. M.M. Sharif, *op.ict.*, p. 159

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, p.165

4. *Al-Qur'an*, 35:6; 36:36

The Holy Qur'an is severe to thieves, robbers, slanderers and adulterers. "As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: A punishment by way of example, from God, for their crime (5: 38). Thieving is so serious offence in Islam that concerning this Prophet (SAW) says: "If Fatema, the daughter of Muhammad (SAW) steals, let her hand be struck off." (more Qure'anic verses on *suras* '5' and '24'). The Qur'an also prescribes sever punishment for those who are guilty of lewdness.<sup>1</sup> The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge ye each one of them (with) a hundred stripes (24:2). Similarly, those who bring false accusation against honourable women are punishable with eighty stripes (24:4). Intoxicants including opium, tobacco and unclean food such as pork, carrion, blood and those animals or birds which die a natural death or killed by any other animal (*Sura* '2', and '5') are forbidden to eat of lust but permissible on extreme necessity to save one's life from hunger etc.

Prohibition of wine occupies a prominent place in the Holy Qur'an.<sup>2</sup> Wine is an abomination to God. So Islam completely prohibits it and even possessing money obtained from liquor sale is a great sin. Prohibited things include opium, bhang, tobacco, drugs etc. that may cause one to lose his thinking and reasoning power.

All life being sacred (6:151), it is forbidden to commit suicide or to kill anybody without a just cause.<sup>3</sup> It is equally sinful to murder one's children for fear of want or poverty (6:151). Killing a person without a reason is tantamount to slay the human race. (5:53)

There are certain disvalues which imply disrespect of life.<sup>4</sup> Such as, begging which leads to killing one's self-respect is looked upon by the Qur'an. The Qur'an forbids throwing fault or sin on somebody who is innocent of it (4:112), and swelling one's cheek out of pride at men. Scandal mongering and backbiting are hateful deeds (24:18).

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1. "If any of your women are guilty of lewdness take the evidence of four ... and if they testify, confine them to house until death do claim them. Or God ordain for them some (other) way..." (4:15, 16)

2. *Al-Qur'an*, 2:219; 5:90-91

3. *Ibid.*, 4:131, 140; 17:33

4. M.M. Sharif, *op. cit.*, p.168



There are certain disvalues which arise out of misuse of power. Warning is given to those people who oppress men with wrong-doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice<sup>1</sup> (42:42). It is forbidden to indulge in vain talk,<sup>2</sup> to exhibit fierceness (48:26), to be arrogant against God (44:19), to swell one's cheek with pride, or walk in insolence through the earth (31:18). Arrogant and obstinate transgressors (40:35), vainglorious people (4:36), those fond of self-glory (38:2), people rebellious and wicked (44:7) are held out as examples of those who misuse their power.<sup>3</sup>

It is forbidden to accept a report without ascertaining its truth (44:6), to utter slander, intentionally forging falsehood (60:12), and to throw fault or sin on somebody who is innocent of it (4:112), for these are all against the value of truth. Indulgence in disputation (29:46), vain discourses (46:68), and susceptibility (5:106) to superstitions<sup>4</sup> are disvalues opposed to wisdom. Hypocrisy<sup>5</sup>, showing off, usury, hatred, harshness or unkindness to others are also condemned in Islam. Those who do not try to save themselves from these are liable to be always afraid of others, to be unable to distinguish truth from falsehood and right from wrong.

Against goodness, the Qur'an denounces the disvalue of vice, i.e., doing wrong and shameful deeds.<sup>6</sup> In the Qur'an, people are forbidden to come near adultery, wine and gambling (2:219), for they are the work of Satan.

The Holy Qur'an refers to several satanic tendencies in man,<sup>7</sup> such as ungratefulness<sup>8</sup>, hastiness (16:37), impatience (70:19-21), despair and unbelief in times of adversity, and pride and conceit in times of prosperity,<sup>9</sup> quarrelsomeness (16:4), arrogance (75:31-40), greed of ever more and yet more (74:15), niggardliness (17:100), transgression of the bounds of propriety (96:6) and false

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1. *Ibid.*, p.169.

2. *Al-Qur'an*, 19:62; 23:3

3. M.M. Sharif, *op. cit.*, p.169

4. *Al-Qur'an*, 5:160; 6:138-141, 143-144

5. The hypocrites have been described as "In the lowest stage of fire" (4:145) and uttering words from the mouth which are not in the heart has been condemned again and again.

6. *Al-Qur'an*, 3:14; 42:37; 52:32

7. M.M. Sharif, *op. cit.*, p.172.

8. *Al-Qur'an*, 7:10; 36:45-47; 74:15-25

9. *Ibid.*, 11:9-10; 17:83

sense of self-sufficiency (96:7). These tendencies often lead to different forms of wrong-doing and therefore, must be counteracted by all right thinking people.<sup>1</sup>

Holy Qur'an thus forbids<sup>2</sup>: to commit indecent assault or any action leading to the crime;<sup>3</sup> to engage in prostitution or fornication (4:25;24:33), or any other sort of immorality, public or hidden<sup>4</sup>; to follow uncontrolled desires (4:135) to imitate the unbelievers<sup>5</sup>; to covet other people's good<sup>6</sup>; to hoard money and love riches excessively (89:19-20); to strut arrogantly (17:37); to dress indecently (women)<sup>7</sup>; to make use of ill-acquired gain (74:5); to commit infanticide even under the pressure of cruel poverty, whether experienced or anticipated<sup>8</sup>; to show any disrespect to parents in their old age (17:23); to mistreat spouses through humiliation, extortion, deprivation or anything else<sup>9</sup>; to shed human blood which God has expressly consecrated, if it is not by right<sup>10</sup>; to cause ruin or corruption on the earth<sup>11</sup>; to display aggression, even towards enemies<sup>12</sup>; to use another person's good, without their consent<sup>13</sup>; to touch the property of orphans, except in the most honest manner in order to increase its value for them<sup>14</sup>; to reject orphans (107:2); to do any violence to them (93:9); to treat them disdainfully (89:17); to neglect the poor<sup>15</sup>; to scold people asking for help (93:10); to choose poor-quality objects as gifts (2:267); to give presents out of self-interest (74:6); to remind people of one's generosity (49:17); to be a false witness (25:72); to commit any breach of trust (8:27); to enter anyone's home without asking his permission (24:27-28); to withdraw from any gathering without permission from the host

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1. M.M. Sharif, *op. cit.*, p.172

2. M.A. Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, Eng. tr. Danielle Robinson and Rebecca Masterton (London, New York: I.B. Tauris & co. Ltd.2008), pp.137-138

3. *Al-Qur'an*, 4:24, 25; 5:5; 17:32

4. *Ibid.*, 6:151; 7:33; 16:90

5. *Ibid.*, 3:156; 8:47

6. *Ibid.*, 4:32; 15:88; 18:28

7. *Ibid.*, 24:31, 60; 33:33

8. *Ibid.*, 6:151; 17:31

9. *Ibid.*, 2:229, 231-233; 4:19

10. *Ibid.*, 6:151; 17:33

11. *Ibid.*, 2:11; 7:56

12. *Ibid.*, 5:2; 7:33; 16:90

13. *Ibid.*, 2:188; 4:29

14. *Ibid.*, 4:6; 6:152

15. 107:3; 89:18

(24:62); to spy on other people's secrets (49:12); to slander and mock them (49:11); to taunt them with derogatory nicknames (49:11); to plot an injustice or an act of aggression (5:2); to break our sacred links and form schisms (3:103); to forget God (59:19); to disobey Him (33:36), to associate any thing whatsoever with Him (2:22). These are harmful to individual as well as social life.

Any behaviour which is contrary to the established rule of the Qur'an as well as any lack of faith in superior truths, is condemned (by Qur'an), not because they lead the offenders to perdition, but because they imply simultaneously or individually, the following errors<sup>1</sup>: going astray<sup>2</sup>; carelessness (17:179); walking in darkness<sup>3</sup>; deviation from the right path (4:27); following desires blindly<sup>4</sup>; worshipping passions (25:43); imitating the unjust (4:140); ignorance<sup>5</sup>; wrong use of intelligence (4:44;23:80), disputation without knowledge or guiding light (31:20); imitation ignorant and erroneous forebears (37:79;43:22) ; falsehood (8:8); careless attitude (6:140); evil action<sup>6</sup>; unjust behaviour<sup>7</sup>, self-betrayal (2:187); impurity of the heart (5:41); despicable moral outrage<sup>8</sup>; lack of commitment (4:72-73); acting according to self interest (24:48-49); words contradicted by action (26:226); attachment to this world (7:176); being distant from God (5:91).

The most natural conclusion to draw from this accumulation of errors is to agree with the Qur'an that they produce not only the darkening or eclipse of the soul and sickness or infirmity of the heart, but the death of the spirit of those who have stubbornly decided to be unfaithful are viewed as the worst of all, the lowest of the creatures on earth.

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1. M.A. Draz, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-339

2. *Al-Qur'an*, 1:7; 2:16, 108, 175; 3:90, 164; 4:44, 60, 116, 136; 5:12; 6:39, 56, 116, 119, 140; 7:170; 10:45, 108; 14:3; 18:104; 19:38; 22:4

3. *Ibid.*, 2:17; 6:39, 22; 13:16; 14:1; 24:40; 35:20; 57:9; 65:11

4. *Ibid.*, 6:119; 7:176; 18:28; 28:50; 30:29; 42:15; 47:15, 16

5. *Ibid.*, 2:102, 103; 6:35, 37, 111; 16:101; 21:24; 27:61; 28:57; 30:30, 59; 31:25; 34:28, 36; 39:9, 29, 49

6. *Ibid.*, 2:169; 5:62, 63, 79; 9:9; 17:38; 63:2

7. *Ibid.*, 2:40, 145, 229, 254; 3:4; 5:107; 6:21, 52, 93; 7:37; 9:23; 10:17; 18:50, 57; 19:38

8. *Ibid.*, 5:90; 9:28, 95, 125

### 3. Moral Judgment

According to moral view, moral judgment is the Judgment which approves or condemns a mode of conduct. It relates to the following factors.<sup>1</sup>

1. The subject of moral judgment, i.e., which sits in judgment over the modes of conduct of the moral agent.
2. The object of moral judgment. It can be conceived either as the motive of a performed voluntary action or as the consequence thereof.
3. The predicate of moral judgment, i.e., the term of moral approval or condemnation.
4. The standard involved in the moral judgment. It can be conceived either as law or as end.

#### Islamic Teachings Related to Moral Judgment

From Islamic perspective above topics are discussed below:

##### i) The Subject of moral judgment:

The Qur'anic view with regard to the subject of moral judgment is that it is the conscience or moral reason of the moral agent<sup>2</sup>, because it maintains:

“Oh but man is telling witness against himself” (75:14). And this possible because of the duality of human nature:

“And a soul and Him Who perfected it, and inspired it (with Conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it” (91:7, 8).

##### ii) Object of moral judgment

The object of moral judgment is, the first instance of voluntary action which involves will (or motives), as opposed to reflex action which lacks will. Thus it has been affirmed:

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1. Dr. Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahaman Ansari, *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*, (Karachi: Indus Educational Foundation, n. d), Vol.1 p. 269. Also see, Jhon S.Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethich* (London: University Tutorial Press Ltd., 1938), p. 103  
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 274

“God will not call you to account for thoughtlessness in your oaths, but for the intention in your hearts;...” (2:225).

“And there is no blame on you in the mistakes that you make and unintentionally, but (what counts is) that which your hearts intend purposely ...” (33:5).

“And there is no sin for you in the mistakes that ye make unintentionally, but what your hearts' purpose that will be a sin for you”. (35:5).

### **iii) Predicate of moral judgment**

In the Qur'anic value system morality does not stand in an isolation from the other values, especially the spiritual. So the Holy Qur'an has not employed just one set of terms, like 'right' and 'wrong' and 'good' and 'bad' to denote the moral virtues and vices. Rather it has used different sets, and even single words, in different contexts, with the basic notions of moral goodness and evil running through them. Thus we find the following sets of opposites:<sup>1</sup>

1. *Salihat* (good deeds) and *sayyi'at* (ill deed): (45 : 21);
2. *Khayr* (good) and *sharr* (ill or evil) : (99:7, 8);
3. *bir* (Godliness, righteousness, kindness, Charitable) and *ithm* (sin): (5:2);
4. *hasanah* (good deed, benefaction, charity) and *sayyi'ah* (ill deed): (27:89-90);
5. *ma'ruf* (goodness) and *munkar* (indecent) : (3:104);
6. *halal* (lawful) *haram* (unlawful) : (10:59);
7. *taiyyib* (good, pleasant, delicious) and *khabith* (bad) : (2:267).

### **iv) Standard of moral judgment**

Concerning the standard of moral judgment, Qur'anic view is that it is Law (revelation) which has been clearly set down among others in the following verses:

1. “... If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what God hath revealed, they are (no better than) unbelievers” (5:47).

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 275

2. “... And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what God hath revealed, they are (no better than) wrong-doers” (5:48).
3. “... If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what God hath revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel” (5:50).

This means that only actions performed in obedience to ‘Law’– the Law grounded in the transcendental value of Divine pleasure are morally approvable or virtuous, and those performed in defiance of ‘Law’ and obedience to ‘Desire’ are morally condemnable or vicious.

#### **4. Moral Standards**

One of the important questions which arise in the philosophy of ethics is what is the standard by which we can make distinction between the good and evil actions of man, and what basis a certain action is considered to be good and another action evil? We can find many theories concerning this. But it is not possible to analyze all the views and ideas to find a standard to evaluate the moral acts. So the ethical theories should be, in terms of similarity between them, classified under certain categories, and then we can go on to evaluate them. one of the classifications, which can be maintained for the ethical points of view of the western philosophers is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

- i. Intentionalism, ii. Ethics of obligation, iii. Consequentialism.

Here at first we have discussed the limitation of these theories, later we have discussed Islamic view about moral standard.

##### **i. Intentionalism**

A theory which relates the correctness or wrongness of a certain action to the intention of the agent is regarded as intentionalism. Among the Western Motivationalist philosophers, Kant is (because of his emphasis on the will and intention in his ethical theory) closer to the Islamic ethical theory. According to Kant, that action is voluntary which is observed by the rationality is a moral action. That is why, some researchers have classified his ethical theory as a rationalist one.

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1. Behruz Rafiee, (com.), *Ethics in Islam*, pp. 129-142

## Deficiencies of Intentionalism

In spite of its positive aspects Kant's theory there are two important deficiencies in his point of view, which cannot be ignored.<sup>1</sup>

First, when a man confronts two inconsistent obligations, it annoys him. For example, one promises the other to be a confidant and keep his secret, then another one asks the former about that same secret. Here, one confronts two inconsistent obligations (being confidant to someone's secret and being truthful), both of which cannot be fulfilled at the same time.

Second, the other and more important deficiency in Kant's one-sided approach is to restrict the values of actions to the intention and will of the agent, and ignore the results of these actions which are against the convention of mankind's lifestyle, and the rationality of life.

### ii. Ethics of obligation

Ethics of obligation is a theory according to which, the correctness or wrongness of an action depends instead of the agent's intention and the consequences of action, on the action itself. Philosophers such as— W.D. Ross, A.C. Ewing, and H. Prichard and some others are of the view that the good and evil of the actions and their being correct or wrong are determined by the kinds of actions. For example, to keep one's promise, to perform services for the deprived, truthfulness all of these things are good and correct, but not for the intention of the agent or for the consequences following them, but rather due to the fact that these actions are essentially correct and right.

The difficulties of the theory of ethics of obligation originate from the fact that a certain action cannot be proved to be good or evil. In other words, if a theory cannot provide a standard to evaluate the good or evil of actions, it will suffer ambiguity and fall into a vicious circle<sup>2</sup> (The good action is an action which is good.)

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1. Behruz Rafiee, (com.), *Ethics in Islam*, p.130

2. *Ibid.*, p.133

### iii. Consequentialism

According to consequentialism the correctness or wrongness of all actions are considered upon the consequences of actions. The advocates of this theory are divided into two groups:

1<sup>st</sup>. Those who have deemed pleasure as a valued consequence;

2<sup>nd</sup>. Those who have regarded “good” as a valued consequence.

According to the first group, the correctness or wrongness of a certain action is determined by the fact whether the consequence of the action is favourable or painful. According to the second group, however, “good” and evil should not be identified with pleasure and suffering, for these are separate things, the same as a red apple, in which the redness and the apple are two separate things. G. E. Moore was of the same view and maintained that the correctness or wrongness of a certain action depends upon the good and evil of the results of that action.<sup>1</sup>

The group of philosophers who regard pleasure-giving and sorrow removing character of the actions as the standards by which to evaluate the good and evil of actions are called the Hedonists. They hold, the good action is an action, which results more than any other possible action in pleasure, and less than any other possible action in sorrow and suffering. Thus, if a man is to choose an action from among various actions, his moral duty is to choose an action, which leads to the greatest pleasure, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Here it is mentioned that, hedonist are divided into two groups: egoists and utilitarianists. Those who regard the pleasure of the agent as the standard of the goodness of a certain action are called egoists and those who deem the pleasure of mankind as the standard of a certain action are called utilitarianists. But these two theories are not above criticism.

In an Islamic approach, not one of the above-mentioned standards can be regarded by itself, as a standard in evaluating man’s actions and his moral

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1. *Loc. cit.*



goodness. Evaluation of man's actions, in a religious approach, is based on the three bases:<sup>1</sup>

- a) the motive of the action (in terms of agent),
- b) the essence of the action (in terms of the action) and
- c) the action's effects and consequences (in terms of consequences).

For this reason sometimes an action is regarded as good in terms of the intention, and its relation to the soul of the agent; but the same action is deemed evil, in terms of its individual and social consequences, or in terms of the fact that the essence of the action can not be considered good. Also in cases, where the action is good both in terms of the action and in terms of the consequences, or in terms of one of them, but is not good in terms of the agent, the action cannot be called good.

## **5. The Impact of Motive and Intention in the Value of Action, in Islam**

The motive and intention in performing actions in Islam is of such value, that one may think that the intention is the only standard by which of evaluation action and determination of its rightness or falsehood is done.<sup>2</sup> In Prophetic *hadith*, it is said:

“The reward of deed depends upon the intention” (Bukhari).  
Again, “The one reaches to what he has intended.”

Concerning this Allah says:

“O ye who believe! Render not your almsgiving by reproach and injury like him who spendeth his wealth, only to be seen of men and believe not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is as the likeness of a rock whereon is dust of earth; a rainstorm smiteth it, leaving it smooth and bare. ...”(2:264).

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1. Behruz Rafiee, (com.), *Ethics in Islam*, p.137

2. *Ibid.*, p.138

“And the likeness of those who spend their wealth in search of Allah’s pleasure, and for the strengthening of their soul, is as the likeness of a garden on a height. The rainstorm smiteth it and it bringeth forth its fruit twofold. And if the rainstorm smite it not, then the shower. Allah is Seer of what ye do” (2:264-265).

In these two noble verses, a certain action in two cases, each of which is performed by two persons, are compared. The two are different only in one aspect, that is, the intention of the agent. This very difference causes one of them to be of value, and the other of no value.

In addition to the impact of the intention in evaluating actions, the Holy Qur’an maintains a particular contribution for the consequences of the action. Hence, if an action involves public or private interests, it is good and praiseworthy. And if it is followed by individual and social detriments, it is blameworthy, even if the agent has good intentions or the essence of the action is good.<sup>1</sup> Such as— truthfulness, if it leads to mischief is blameworthy.

The Holy Qur’an prohibits Muslims from speaking ill about the idols, of polytheists; “Revile, not those unto whom they pray beside Allah lest they wrongfully revile Allah through ignorance. ...” (6:108).

To revile idols can undoubtedly stem from good intentions, and since the idol is a misleading lie, to lower its position is also good; nevertheless God has prohibited Muslims from reviling what is sacred to the enemies (of God). What caused this prohibition by God, is the consequence of the action.<sup>2</sup>

In verse 104 of the noble chapter “Cow” God asks the believers that while they are addressing the Holy Prophet, not to use the phrase “Listen to us”:

“O ye who believe, say not (unto the Prophet): “Listen to us” but say “Look upon us,” and be ye listeners. For disbelievers is a painful doom” (2:104).

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1. *Ibid.*, p.140

2. *Loc. cit.*

Muslims had no evil intention in using this phrase, and to use this phrase was also not an evil action; but when the Jews misused it to revile and deride the Holy Prophet, this caused God to prohibit the believers from using.<sup>1</sup> Besides the good stemming from the agent and consequential good, the Holy Qur'an has paid attention to the active good of Man's actions, and regarded it as a prerequisite to determine an action as good.<sup>2</sup>

That is why according to Qur'an those actions, which are good both in terms of the agent and in terms of the consequence, if they are not good in terms of the action, are not regarded as good. Theft, for instance, even if it is committed to perform services for the needy, is not a moral or value action, since the essence of this action, which is to encroach on others' rights, is blameworthy and immoral. On the other hand, an action such as telling the truth, which is morally good, if used for an evil reason, or if truthfulness results in endangering an innocent one will be an immoral action.

In brief, from the Holy Qur'an's view, those actions which enjoy all three aspects are regarded as moral and of value. In the absence of each one of them, the action will be an immoral one.

Beside these standards, Holy Qur'an teaches us, that every man is able to make a distinction between good and evil by referring to his own primordial nature. In the Holy Qur'an it is said in this connection: "And a soul and Him who perfected it, and inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it" (91:7-8). The researchers of the Holy Qur'an have considered the inspiration of "what is wrong" and "what is right" as an innate knowledge (conscience) of the good and evil aspects of actions.

## **6. Source of Good and Evil**

Holy Qur'an teaches us that the human soul has received the knowledge of good and evil in its primal structure (91:7-8). As well as the faculties of language and the external sense, man is endowed with moral awareness (75:14). He already

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1. Behruz Rafiee, (com.), *Ethics in Islam*, p. 140

2. *Ibid.*, p.141

knows the two paths of virtue and vice (90:10-11). It is true that the soul commands to evil (12:53), but man is also capable of mastering his inclinations; and for he who controls his faculties and restrains his lower desire, he will be succeeded, i.e., paradise will be his home (79:40-41). So the Prophet says: Whenever God wants good for someone, He raises within that person's inner heart a counselor who exhorts him to act or to abstain. Therefore, according to Qur'an there is an internal force within man, which can only advise him and clarify his choice, i.e., command him to act or not to act. In the language of the Qur'an: Do they follow the command of their reason, or is it that they are an unjust people? Again: "O ye who believe! if ye fear God He will grant you a criterion (to judge between right and wrong), remove from you all evil (that may afflict) and forgive you. ..." (8:29). This verse states that there is no other justified rule of conduct other than the commandment of reason.

Reason is therefore, the sole legitimate authority. Hence, Prophet (SAW) answered, being asked to give a definition of good and evil: "Ask your heart, consult your conscience; good is what gives peace to the soul and the heart; evil is that which troubles the soul and makes the heart palpitate, whatever men may say and whatever they may offer you (Muslim)."

## **7. Moral Significance of Islamic Creed**

It is a basic requirement of religion to embody its fundamental beliefs in a creed; and the creeds of different religions are naturally different. The Islamic creed is consistently and purely ethico-religious covering 'this worldly' as well as 'other worldly' good.<sup>1</sup> It is built up, in the form of Articles of Faith, on belief in seven Qur'anic verities, namely:

(i) Allah (God); (ii) The Angels; (iii) The Prophets (or, human Messengers of Divine Guidance); (iv) Divine Scriptures; (v) Al-Qadr (or, the Law of Measure); (vi) Resurrection; and; (vii) The Life of 'Hereafter'. Ethical Significance some of the main verities are given below.

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1. Fazl-ur-Rahaman Ansari, *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*, vol., 1, p. 125

## i) God

God Himself is the ethical ideal i.e., ideal of Supreme Good, and the proper ethical function of the human being is to imitate Him.<sup>1</sup> This teaching forms the fundamental base of Islamic moral philosophy, and it has been repeatedly brought into focus in explicit terms in the Qur'an. For instance:

- a. The mercy, compassion and loving kindness of God is the ever-recurring theme of the Holy book. Its very first verse projects it with full emphasis in terms of *Rahman*. Hence, the observance of compassionate kindness (*marhamah*) has been made one of the governing principles of Islamic life (90:17; 30:21;).
- b. God is *al-Barr* (52:28) i.e., kind, affectionate, gentle, just, righteous, honest, considerate, beneficent. Hence, a human being has to act as *barr* through practicing *birr* (righteousness) comprehensively (2:177), with special emphasis on social good (3:92). In fact, *birr* has been made one of the governing principles of human life (5:2) and to be from among the *abrar* (pl. of *barr*) has been made the ideal (3 :193).
- c. God is Forgiving (*Ghafur*) and Merciful (*Rahim*). Human beings should also be forgiving and merciful in their behaviour towards one another (24:22).
- d. God is the Bestower of Good. A human being should also do good to his fellow-beings (28:77).
- e. God does not wrong to any human being even in the slightest measure.<sup>2</sup> The human beings also should not wrong either others or themselves (2:279;).

One important aspect of this ideal is that it has not been laid down only theoretically, but has also been projected in practical terms in the moral personalities of all the prophets of mankind, who came to exemplify the Divine Ethics.<sup>3</sup> And, finally in the exemplary moral character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

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1. Cf. We take our colour from Allah, and who is better than Allah at colouring? We are His worshippers. 11:138

2. 10:44; 4:40

3. *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*, vol., 1, p.175

This ideal is the highest– the most sublime, the noblest and the most consequential idea conceivable for humanity. It supplies an objective moral standard and provides the highest motivation for morality, because on the positive side, the entire human moral behaviour has been conceived therein as based on ‘love for God’ (2:177). On the negative side, the devotee of God is to remain perpetually in state of ‘fear of God’, Who is always present with him (57:4), watching him as to whether he is fulfilling his role of vicegerency (49:18;) and will recompense him after death.

- ii) *The Prophets*-all the prophets of humanity– are the Human Ideal of Supreme Good, as possessors and demonstrators of humanly-perfect harmony between the human will and the Divine Will.
- iii) *The Scriptures*-all the Books of Guidance which came from God to humanity- represent Divine Guidance in respect of the pursuit of harmony between the human will and the Divine will are for the attainment of Supreme Good by human beings.
- iv) *The Resurrection*-belief in revival after death-relates to the following basic Qur’anic concepts:<sup>1</sup>
  - a) lifts up the human vision beyond earthly existence and thus crushes the attitude of earth-rootedness which is the mother of all moral ills;
  - b) bestows on human values absoluteness, as opposed to expediency, and renders the moral struggle worth-while, meaningful, and genuinely consequential;
  - c) hence, provides the enthusiasm for moral struggle, in the face of all obstructions and frustrating situations;
  - d) supplies the basis for the consummation of the reward of moral struggle;
  - e) establishes the rational ground for the highest sacrifice in the service of all that is good, even the sacrifice of life.

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1. *Ibid.*, pp.130, 131.

- v) Belief in the '*Hereafter*' relates to the following basic Qur'anic concepts.<sup>1</sup>
- a) God is the Moral Sovereign of the Cosmos;
  - b) the Cosmos is a Moral Order;
  - c) man has to function on the earth as a moral being with a spiritual base;
  - d) he has to submit his credentials to the Moral Sovereign, Who is actually the Over-All Sovereign, in order to pass to higher level of existence;
  - e) hence, he has to face Final Accountability on the Day of Judgment.

Finally it can be said, that Islamic Creed is through and through universal, and not sectarian, because it demands belief not only in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Holy Qur'an but in all the prophets of God and in all the revealed Scriptures that came before in any part of the world. The final part of belief in all prophets is the affirmation of belief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) not only as one of the Prophets but as the last Prophet of God, who came to seal the age of prophethood and Prophetic Revelation in the history of mankind (33:40) and to be the guide for entire humanity in its age of maturity for all time (34:28).

## 8. Moral Law

Islamic law is the command of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).<sup>2</sup> Divine laws (moral laws) are the standards of right conduct and provide guidance not only in establishing a well ordered society but also in distinguishing between 'good and evil. As a well knit system of obligations, they safeguard the rights of all and as a product of Divine wisdom which alone knows what the objective good is they ensure the welfare of the entire humanity. Divine laws, thus, take in their sweep not only this world but the world to come<sup>3</sup> Islamic life, as such, is the harmonious blend of the material with the spiritual. More spirituality

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1. *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*, vol., 1, p. 131

2. Allah says that He has breathed from His spirit into the human soul and with it has been breathed the enlightenment about what is right and what is wrong. Man continues with this enlightenment so long as he keeps his soul pure but loses it as soon as the soul is corrupted in which case he can only grope about in the dark as to what is right and what is wrong (91: 7-10) (*Muslim, Education Quarterly*, p. 65)

3. But ye prefer the life of the world, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting (87:17)

is never preached in Islam<sup>1</sup> Divine law is unique in that, it has its own permanent standards of justice. Allah says: “God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice, and rebellion” (16:90).

“And come not nigh to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he attain age of full strength; give measure and weight with full justice. No burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfil the covenant of God” (6:152).

The Holy Qur’an lays down at different places a complete and comprehensive code of moral laws which transcends all limitations of time. These moral laws are self-sufficient to guide man from the cradle to the grave, from eating and drinking, to discharge all his social responsibilities. The moral laws regarding eating and drinking of good things (*halal*) sets the moral tone of man’s life. It at once rejects the cult of “eat, drink and be merry”, by prohibiting waste by excess use of it (7:31) and by prescribing thanks to God. This signifies that man carries great moral responsibility of avoiding waste in the matter of eating and drinking. He has to remember while eating and drinking that he is enjoying the bounty of Allah. Purity, simplicity and austerity those have been ordained in matters of food and drink same have been ordained in the matter of clothes as well.<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur’an enunciates this philosophy of clothes in the following verse: “O ye the children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you, but the raiment of righteousness-that is the best, ...” (7:26). Though Allah has condemned waste and extravagance or ostentation and display (4:38) in the day to day life, it does not in any way signify exhortation to niggardliness or miserliness. Allah has reserved the same condemnation for niggardliness as well. He says in the Holy Qur’an: “For Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious; (nor) those who are niggardly or

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1. And (God) hath made of service unto you whatsoever in the Heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; it is all from Him. Lo! herein verily are portents for people who reflect. (45:13; 7:32)

2. Israrul Haque, 'The concept and contents of Morality in Islam', in *Muslim Education Quarterly*, Cambridge: The Islamic Academy Cambridge, Vol. 2, no. 1, p. 60



enjoin niggardliness on others or hide the bounties which Allah has bestowed on them” (4:36-37). Extravagance and niggardliness both are equally repugnant to the morality of Islam. Poverty and pestilence are not the real enemies of man; his real enemies are his pride and passions.

According to the Qur’an, righteousness (*taqwa*) is the standard and measure of all values. It explodes the myths of racial superiority, national greatness or cultural pride. The real value and the worth of man lies in his righteousness; no matter whatever race, class or nationality he belongs. It also strikes at the very root of all pride and arrogance arising out of one’s possessions and power.<sup>1</sup> The morality in Islam is thus based on righteousness. Through it universal peace, love and justice are attained.

We are already aware that Islam is a religion of peace. All its dogmas and teachings emanate from peace and Muslims are advised to practice the principles of toleration to fellow beings. Hence, Islam enjoins upon its followers to observe utmost restraint in warfare. It has prescribed certain formulas how to wage war, how to treat the prisoners, how to distribute booty etc. It is stern against killing peaceful population, wanton destruction of dwelling and houses, slaying the old and children. Felling trees, destroying gardens and cultivation, have been prohibited. At the same time, Islam reminds its votaries “to fight those who fight against you but transgress not by attacking them first, for God loveth not the transgressors” (2:190-91).

The basic motive running throughout the whole moral structure of Islam is *Jihad*, viz. active and dynamic struggle for the establishment of a moral social order in which the ultimate values both physical and spiritual are given concrete shape.<sup>2</sup> In its wider sense, *Jihad* includes every act for the propagation of truth i.e., Islam. *Jihad* is a recognized form of preaching, preaching with tongue as well as in case of necessity adaptation of force. In this broad sense, *Jihad* recognizes all activities with tongue, pen and sword for the propagation of one’s faith and

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1. According to the Qur’an righteousness does not consist in performing rituals or merely in abstaining from vices. It consists in giving away freely of that which one loves (3:92).
  2. Nobody can be expected according to the Qur’an to enter the Heavenly Kingdom of God unless he had actually participated in this struggle and attained moral perfection, which is the first prerequisite of this objective.

belief. The highest form of *Jihad* is one's supreme sacrifice of his own life for the establishment of truth. In this special sense, *Jihad* allows a Muslim as a unit to fight for their religion if they are attacked or are under threat.

Here it is mentioned that the function of man in the world has been made clear by Allah at the very beginning of the Holy Qur'an (2:30). As man is vicegerent or representative of God, it is his responsibility to manage the world on behalf of his Lord. Man in this sense is a responsibly being. Hence, morality in the Islamic point of view consists of acting with responsibility in the world.<sup>1</sup> So, morality has a productive value in the present turbulent world.

From the above discussion it is clear that Islam as a religion stands for Morality. Here man has been created with the purpose of pursuing moral struggle.<sup>2</sup> In Islam, religion and morality is closely interrelated. The believer follows the commands of God in every action, and in all his actions, he comes closer to God. In its moral teaching, the Holy Qur'an does not employ the methodology of philosophy; but rather it follows its own particular way, which is rational one interwoven with belief, It originates from man's chaste soul and his true nature.<sup>3</sup> To believe in Islam, every just and moderate man submits himself to the truth, without standing in need of philosophical arguments. The Holy Qur'an says: "Say, the evil and the good are not alike even though the plenty of the evil attract there" (5: 100). "... but the raiment of the restraint from evil, that is the best" (7:26).

So, man's true nature and dispositional conscience naturally makes a distinction between good and evil. It is this conscience which enjoins good actions on us and prevents us from doing evil one. It is this conscience which makes us

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1. A. F. M. Obaidur Rahman, 'The Basis of Morality: Islamic Perspective,' in *Philosophy and Progress*, Dhaka University: Dev centre for Philosophical Studies, June 1986, P 26.

2. "He who created death and life that He may try which of you is best in deeds" (67:1-2)

3. God says: "We have indeed created man in the best of mould. Thereafter (i.e., in consequence of wrong use of his opportunities and misuse of his free will by man) We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low (he himself having destroyed his original purity and goodness), except such as believe and do righteous deeds: For they shall have a reward unfailing" (95:4-6). Again, "By the Soul and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it" (91:7-10). This double capacity for moral success and moral failure is grounded in the conflict with which human nature has been endowed.

find whether our actions are in right direction or in a wrong one; and in the first case it leads us to satisfaction, and in the second, it causes us to be ashamed. Here it is mentioned that, Revelation and the prophets awaken our conscience which may remain asleep because of everyday business, then to return man, who is created naturally chaste to his original nature. That is why, the prophets propagate moral principles, which are strictly observed by mankind, so that a man can achieve his primordial status, the status of the vicegerent (*Khalifah*).

## CHAPTER III

### An Overview of Sufism

Sufism is the mystical Philosophy of Islam. Sufism chiefly consists of purification of the soul from pomp and enjoyment of the world. Its aim is to attain spiritual perfection with a view to final absorption in God. Sufism is nothing external to Islam; it is a part and parcel of it. Islam has two sides- esoteric and exoteric or internal and external, and the two sides are interdependent. Neither can be developed without the assistance of the other. In this context, Junaid of Baghdad said that, “The external and internal aspects of Islam are essentially the same and that are far from being antagonistic, corroborate each other.”<sup>1</sup> It is therefore clear that the aim of Sufism is to harmonize between revelation and reason and reconciling between body and soul. Anything unreasonable or immoral cannot be Islamic. Similarly, if our body and soul are left free even temporarily or if one is sacrificed at the altar of the other, the real spirit behind the teaching of Islam will be crushed.

Sufism is centered on Almighty Allah (God), i.e., complete obedience to Him and unadulterated love for Him. The whole Sufi theosophy revolves on these pivots. The Sufis believe that there is no real being except God (Allah), Who is all merciful and loving and to Whom a man can approach with a loving heart. He (God) is a beloved; He longs to unite with His creatures and they in their turn, pine for union with Him.

Here, it is mentioned that according to Sufis, the present existence of man is the cause of his separation from God. That is why, Sufis neglect their body and take every possible care for the development of the soul. They practice severe mortification, austerity and physical hardship for seeking deliverance from the

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1. Dr. Syed Muzaffar-ud-din Nadvi, *Muslim Thought and Its Source*, (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1<sup>st</sup> Published 1946, rpt., 1983,), p. 107.

lust of flesh (*nafs*) that keeps him in a prison of body. In this sense, Sufism is based on morality. Without leading a moral life, a Sufi cannot imagine to achieve his goal. In this chapter, we will try to give a pen picture about Sufism.

The Arabic word *Tasawwuf* is derived from the word 'Sufi.' Different theories have been put forth about the etymological derivations of the word *Sufi*.

1. Some say: "The Sufis were only named Sufis because of the purity (*Safa*) of their hearts and cleanliness of their acts (*athar*)."<sup>1</sup>
2. According to others: "They were only called Sufis because they are in the first rank (*Saff*) before God."<sup>2</sup>
3. Others have said: "They were only called Sufis because their qualities resembled those of the people of the Bench (*Suffah*), who lived in the time of God's Prophet (SAW)."<sup>3</sup>
4. Certain Muslim scholars (such as-Historian Abu Reehaan Beruni) think that the word 'Sufi' comes from the Greek word '*Sophia*' which means wisdom and that a Sufi is one who is a seeker after wisdom or Truth (al-Haqq).
5. Others have said: "They were only named Sufis because of their habit of wearing wool (*Suf*)."<sup>4</sup> Etymologically, the word Sufi is derived from the Arabic word '*Suf*' which means wool.

If the derivation from 'Suf' (wool) be accepted, the word is correct and the expression of sound from the grammatical (etymological) point of view is also correct. At the same time, it bears all the necessary meanings such as withdrawal from the world, inclining the soul away from it, leaving all settled abodes, keeping constantly to travel, denying the carnal soul and its pleasures, purifying the conduct, cleansing the conscience, dilation of the breast and the quality of leadership.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi, *Kitab al-Ta'arruf li Madhhab Ahl al-Tasawwuf*, Eng. tr. A.J. Arberry, entitled, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, first published, 1935, rpt., 1979) p.5

2. Al- kalabadhi, *op. cit.*, p.5

3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

4. Al- kalabadi, *op. cit.*, p.9

Wool is also the attire of the prophets and the garb of the saints. So early Sufi scholars like Abu Nasr al-Sarraj, Abul Qasim al-Qushairi, al-Kalabadhi, ar-Rudbari, Ibn Khaldun and others<sup>1</sup> accepted this view.

The above discussion indicates that there is no consensus regarding the etymological derivation of the words *tasawwuf* or Sufi. Nonetheless, according to the generally accepted view by a majority of scholars of Sufism, the word ‘Sufi’ has been derived from the Arabic word ‘*Suf*’ meaning wool. Hence, *tasawwuf* literally means ‘wearing wool’ and Sufi is the one who wears wool.<sup>2</sup>

Here it is mentioned that, from the earliest times woolen raiment was regarded as the symbol of simplicity of life and avoidance of ostentation that was practiced by the Prophet (SAW) and his immediate successors. The term Sufi was therefore, in later times,<sup>3</sup> applied to those ascetic and pious devotees, who made the simplicity of their apparel as a silent protest against the growing worldly luxury.

## 1. What is Sufism?

Sufism is the philosophy of love. The end and aim of a Sufi life is to acquire the love of God. The Sufi loves God alone; his thinking, meditation and prayer are to God alone.

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1. According to Abu nasr al-Sarraj, “the word ‘Sufi’ comes from ‘suf’ because the woollen raiment is the habit of the prophets and the badge of the Saints and elects (Al-Sarraj Al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Luma fi'l Tasawwuf*, ed, Nicholson, London: Luzac and co.,1914. p.20). The eminent Shaykh Abu Ali al-Rudbari agreed to the derivation of the word ‘Sufi’ from ‘suf’ as an expression of purity, seclusion and spiritual perfection on the way to God. He described a ‘Sufi’ as “one who wears wool over (his) purity, gives his lust the taste of tyranny, and having overthrown the world, journeys in the pathway of the Chosen One (A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of The Sufis*, p.10). According to Shaikh Shihab al-Din-Surawardi, author of *Awarf al-Maarif*, the word Sufi is etymologically derived from Suf, the coarse woollen cloth which, as he said was worn by the Holy Prophet (SAW). According to Suhrawardi, except this derivation other derivations are etymologically incorrect.
  2. The words *labisa 'l-Suf*, ‘he clad himself in wool’, occur frequently in the early literature and signify that the person to whom they are applied has renounced the world and become an ascetic; at a later period, when the asceticism passed into mysticism, *labisa 'l-Suf* generally means, ‘he became a Sufi.’ In Persian too the ascetic is often called *pashmina-push*, i.e. ‘wearing a woollen garment.’ The old Muslim ascetics who clothed themselves in wool borrowed this practice from Christian hermits or monks. (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921 vol. 12, p.10.
  3. According to Qushayri the word 'Sufi' came into vogue a little before the expiry of the second century Hijri (815-816 A.D.). (For detailed, see, Edward G. Browne, (*A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, Vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977 rpt., first published 1902), pp.297-98) On the other hand, according to Abdur Rahman Jami, the first ascetic from whom the word “sufi” was applied was Abu Hashim of Kufa (d.A.D.768), a contemporary of Sufyan al-Thauri (d.A.D.778). (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol.12, p.10). Again Al-Sarraj mentions the view that it was invented by the people of Baghdad, (*Kitab al-Luma*, p. 22)

According to the Islamic terminology, he is called a Sufi who has freed himself from the worldly splendour, that is, delusion for wealth and power, inspired by the love of God and His Messenger Hazrat Muhammad (SAW); and accepts as the final aim of his life to worship the Almighty God and follows the way of life of His great Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as his own ideal of life. In a Sufi's life, there is no worldly desire, except acquiring the satisfaction of God. He annihilates everything other than God and he himself absorbs in God. In this context, great saint Junaid Bagdadi has said: He who sacrifices his life and death for God's satisfaction is a real Sufi. In describing Sufism, he has said that to keep away one's desire from worldly attraction, to abstain from worldly allurements, to develop moral character, to keep one's soul pure from the deception of evil instinct, to enrich oneself with human character and to acquire the acquaintance of the Creator of the whole world, and to annihilate one's tiny existence in the great existence of God is called Tasawwuf or Sufism. The real task of a Sufi is to keep himself away from any kinds of anxiety and thought except God and to lead a moral life disinterestedly and indifferently to the world.

In fact, to the Sufis, the meaning of Sufism is so clear that they do not need any explanation. Hence, everyone who speaks on the meaning of Sufism and who is called a Sufi speaks according to his own experience. Here, we will mention some of the Sufis' opinion on the subject in order to give a hint about Sufism.

Imam Qushayri, the author of the great Sufi compendium *Risalah* takes, Sufism in the sense of purity (*safa*), i.e., the purity of inner and outer life and says that "purity (*safa*) is an admirable attribute on every tongue, and its opposite, impurity is blameworthy."<sup>1</sup> Concerning this, al-Hujwiri says: "The true Sufi is he that leaves impurity behind." He also says: "The quality of purity is unrelated to acts and states, and its name is unconnected with names and nicknames-because purity is the attribute of those who love and the lover is he that is dead (*fani*) in his own attributes and living (*baqi*) in the attributes of his Beloved."<sup>2</sup> That is, purity is

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1. Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyah*, Eng. tr. B.R. Von Schlegell, entitled, *Principles of Sufism*, (Pakistan: Suhail Academy Lahore, 2004, p. 301

2. Al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, Eng. tr., R.A. Nicholson, (New Delhi: Taj Company.1991). p. 32

a resplendent and manifest idea, and Sufism is an imitation of that idea. The more inwardly pure a man is the higher will be his rank and his station. Hence, most of the Sufis regard purity of the soul as means of reaching the closeness to God.

Abul Hasan Nuri said: "Sufism is the renunciation of all selfish pleasures."<sup>1</sup> That is, their (Sufis) spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from extreme desire, so they have found rest with God in the first rank and have fled from all, except Him.

Concerning the definition of 'Sufi' Dhu'n Nun al-Misri says: "They are a people who prefer God over all things and whom God prefers over all things."<sup>2</sup>

Again, Ash Shibli stated, "The Sufi is separated from mankind and united with God as He Says (to Moses), 'I have attached you to Myself (20:41), cutting him off from all else.'" In this context, Hujwiri says: "The Sufi is he that is dead to self and living by the Truth; he has escaped from the grip of human faculties and has really attained to God."<sup>3</sup> Hence, al-Ghazali says that by purifying the heart, forsaking all things except God, always remaining engaged in the worshipping of God and totally merged in Him is called Tasawwuf, .i.e., he who have purified by love is pure and he who is absorbed in Beloved and has abandoned all else is a Sufi.

Concerning the nature of Sufism Junaid says that sufism is founded on eight qualities exemplified in eight Apostles: (1) the generosity of Abraham; (2) the acquiescence of Ishmael; (3) the patience of Job; (4) the symbolism of Zacharis; (5) the strangerhood of John; (6) the pilgrimhood of Jesus; (7) the wearing of wool by Moses; and (8) the poverty of Muhammad (SAW).<sup>4</sup> In the same way, Ruwaym b.Ahmad al-Baghdadi said: "Sufism is founded on three traits: adhering to poverty and dependence on God, attaining the virtues of generosity and selfless giving and abandoning resistance and choice."<sup>5</sup> That is, Sufism is founded on good morals. He who has good morals is a true Sufi. Hence,

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr. *Principle of Sufism*, p. 305

3. Al-Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 35

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

5. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr. *Principle of Sufism*, p. 303



when two goodly states or moral qualities are presented to a Sufi, he takes the better one.

From the above discussion, it is clear that according to these great Sufis, Sufism is nothing but the purification of the soul and will. It is the effacement of one's desires in the Will of God. In a nutshell, self-discipline, the avoidance of what is forbidden and the performance of what is ordained are the main theme of Sufism. The Sufis are agreed that all the ordinances imposed by God on His servants in His Holy Books, and all the duties laid down by the Prophet (SAW) in the traditions are a necessary obligation. These may not be abandoned or forsaken in any way by them. In this sense, Sufism is a purely Islamic discipline which builds up the character and inner life of the Muslims. The teaching of Sufism is not limited only to the purification of the soul but to acquire nearness to God.

Hence, it can be said that Sufism teaches how to purify one's self, improve one's morals and build up one's inner and outer life in order to attain perpetual bliss. Its subject matter is the purification of the soul and its aim is to attain the eternal felicity and blessedness, i.e., acquire love of God.

## **2. Sufism and Shari'ah**

In order to comprehend the true nature of Islamic mysticism or Sufism, we have to explain the relation between Sufism and Shari'ah. Sufism is the inward aspect of Islam and Shari'ah is the outward aspect of Islam. Islam consists of the combination of these two aspects.

In general sense, Shari'ah is the external introduction of personal and social law, i.e. it is the canon law of Islam, the totality of Allah's commandments.<sup>1</sup> According to Islamic terminology, Shari'ah is the way of life which God specified for His servants and ordered them to follow it. In a word, the way of life which consists of Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma, Qiyas is called Shari'ah. General Muslims consider Shari'ah, as the only way of life. On the other hand,

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1. *Islamic Bishochose*, (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, vol. ii, 1979), p. 616

Tasawwuf or Sufism is the expanded form of Islam which is based on Shari‘ah. Abiding by the rules and regulations of Shari‘ah, the way which the Sufis practice to establish the love of God in their heart is called *tariqat*

Source of knowledge of Shari‘ah is the Qur’an, Hadith and Fiqh. Though the roots of tasawwuf are the Holy Qur’an and Hadith, their inner meanings are apprehended through mystical experiences (*kashf*). By receiving such knowledge through *kashf*, Sufi enlightens his heart and by facing various kinds of obstacles Sufi proceeds stage by stage to his goal. In fact, Shari‘ah is the body of Islam and tasawwuf is the soul of it.

In the early stage of Islam, there was no difference between theologians and Sufi views. But in the later time, by giving importance upon the teaching of various aspects of the Qur’an, Muslim society was divided into various groups, such as theologian, Sufi, Mutazila, Ashariya etc. Such kinds of division occurred as a result of giving importance on the particular aspect. Although there are some similarities among the aims of these groups, there are also some dissimilarities among them. Several differences between theologians (*Shari‘ah ist*) and Sufis, are given below.

1. By the Kalima ‘*Tai-i-ba*’ the theologians mean that there is no god but Allah, the only object of worship, and Hazrat Muhammad (saw) is His *Rasul* (Messenger). To the theologians the significance of ‘*La-i-laha*’ is that there is none to be worshiped but Allah. But its inner meanings, according to the the Sufis in real sense there is no being but Allah.
2. Orthodox Muslims put emphasis on the ordinary meaning of the Qur’an but the Sufis mention simultaneously the significance of both the external and the internal meanings. And they consider internal meaning more important.
3. Islam equally emphasises on reason (*aql*), religious traditions (*noql*) and intuition (*kashf*) and refers these three as sources of knowledge. But the general people put more importance to religious tradition and give less importance to reason and totally deny the necessity of intuition (*kashf*). Sufis give more importance to intuition. According

to them, the hidden meanings of revelation (*ohi*) would not be understood except intuition (*Kashf*).

4. General Muslims think that God is the greatest. He punishes the sinner and rewards the virtuous. So they worship God for the fear of Hell and hope of the Heaven. But to the Sufis, God is loving. They worship God only for His love, i.e., they worship God not for Heaven or for the fear of Hell but for His love. According to orthodox Muslim, relation between God and man is same as the relation between master and servant. But to the Sufis, relation between God and man is as like as lover and Beloved.
5. Orthodox Muslims think that by observing religious rules and regulations man can attain perfection through his own effort. Regarding this there is no necessity of Guide or Shaikh or spiriatural Guide. But according to Sufis, in order to travel to the Divine path (*tariqa*) the guidance of a Shaikh is a crying need. Without the guidance of a Guide it is impossible to proced a single step on the way of *tariqa*.
6. Most of the Sufis think that the goal of the human life is to achieve nearness of God. But to the orthodox Muslims, a man can never achieve the nearness of God or can unite with God, because union is possible between the similar kinds of objects. God is Creator and man is His creation. There is a basic difference between the Creator and creation. But Sufis think, God blows His own spirit (*Ruh*) into the man and this spirit (*ruh*) makes him vicegerent (*Khalifah*) of God on earth. Concerning the union between Allah and human being the Sufis say that it is in fact the spiritual union, although the Sufis are also divided of this concept.
7. For spiritual fulfillment, Sufis feel the necessity of passing several stages. Passing these stages one by one Sufi achieves the highest stage, the union with the God. But the orthodox Muslims are not aware of these stages.

8. The distinction between the Sufi's position and that of the orthodox theologians lie in the fact that the theologians regard the law (*shari'ah*) and Reality (*Haqiqah*) as one and the same, while the Sufi considers that the two are so different from each other that unless one explicitly recognizes the difference, one is apt to commit a fundamental error.<sup>1</sup> Reality from this point of view is a special aspect of God. Man can never completely comprehend it, whereas the *shari'ah* is a code of human conduct which man can and must aspire to understand and act upon as completely as possible. Hence, the law is one of the acts acquired by man but the truth is one of the gifts of God.
9. The understanding of *Shari'ah* requires no special faculty other than the one which an average human being applies in solving the problems of his daily life. But the understanding of esoteric aspect of religion requires a special capacity which is the privilege of the prophets and saints.<sup>2</sup>

The above mentioned differences between a Sufi and an orthodox Muslim are based in fact on understanding the inner side of Islam. Sufi co-ordinates both external and internal side of Islam but the orthodox Muslims are the only spokesman of external side of Islam. As they are unaware of the internal (*batini*) aspect of religion, they are not able to understand their importance. Infact, religion consists of both inner and outer aspects. Both the aspects are to be conjoined.

### **3. Origin of Sufism**

Many opinions have been expressed regarding the origin of Sufism. Some express that the roots of Sufism lay in pre-Islamic religious traditions; while other argue that the Qur'anic injunctions and the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provided the bases of Sufi doctrines and practices. Late thirteenth/nineteenth and early fourteenth/twentieth century Western orientalist

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1. M.M. Sharif, ed. *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol.i (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2004) p. 318

2. *Loc. cit.*

generally corroborate the former view, while the later day historians and scholars generally maintain the latter position. According to F. H. Palmer, Sufism is the development of the primal religion of the Aryan race.<sup>1</sup>

Nicholson points out to the external or non-Islamic influences on Sufism, which include Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, Buddhism, and Vedantism. But he has added that the seeds of Sufism were inherent in Islam, and these internal forces within Islam can not be isolated from the external factors. He also says: "The great non-Islamic systems ...gave a stimulus to various tendencies within Islam which affected Sufism either positively or negatively."<sup>2</sup>

According to Philip k.Hitti, Sufism has its origin in the Qur'an and Hadith, though later on it has absorbed elements from Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism and Buddhism.<sup>3</sup> Trimmingham considers Sufism, a natural development within Islam which owed little to non- Muslim sources. He, however, adds that it is received "radiations from the ascetical-mystical life and thought of Eastern Christianity."<sup>4</sup>

While critically reviewing the varied theories of the origin of Sufism, Edward G. Browne gives his verdict in favour of the theory that Sufism represents the Esoteric Doctrine of the Prophet (SAW) of Islam.<sup>5</sup> In the same way, Louis Massignon, a renowned French scholar of Sufism altogether rejected the view that Sufism was alien to Islam. Instead he has argued that "It is from the Qur'an, constantly recited, meditated upon; applied that Islamic mysticism proceeds in its origin and development."<sup>6</sup> Among the well known scholars, H.A.R. Gibb corroborates the views of Louis Massignon.<sup>7</sup> Again, khaliq Ahmad Nizami has suggested that, the origin of the Sufi ideas can be traced back to the Qur'anic and Prophetic traditions. He rejected the view that Sufi doctrines owe their origin to

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1. E.H. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism: A Treatise on Sufistic and Unitarian Theosophy of the Persians*, (London: Luzac, first published, 1867, rpt., 1969), pp. 9-11

2. For a detailed see, Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, (Beirut: Khayat Book and Publishing Company, 1914, rpt.), pp. 8-23

3. Philip k. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, (London: Macmillan, 1958), p. 433

4. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.2

5. Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. I, 1977, rpt., first Published 1902), pp. 418-19

6. Louis Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique mystique musulmane*, (Paris: J. Vrin, 1954), p. 104

7. R.A. Gibb, *Mohammedanism: A Historical Survey*, (New York: Oxford University Press 1963), p.128

the Greek, Vendantic or Buddhist philosophies.<sup>1</sup> Concerning the origin of Sufism, we can get the best idea from Muhammad Iqbal. According to Muhammad Iqbal, “No idea can seize a people’s soul unless in some sense, it is in the people’s own. External influence may wake it up from its deep unconscious slumber; but they cannot-, so to speak, create it out of nothing ...Von kremer and Dozy derive Persian Sufism from the Indian Vedanta: Merx and Mr. Nicholson derive it from Neo-Platonism, while Professor Browne, once regarded it as Aryan reaction against an unemotional semitic religion.

It appears to me however, that these theories have been worked out under the influence of a notion of causation which is essentially false.”<sup>2</sup>

He also says: “It can, I think, be easily shown that in the Qur’an as well as in the authenticated traditions, there are germs of Sufi doctrine which, owing to the thoroughly practical genius of the Arabs, could not develop and fructify in Arabia, but which grew up into a distinct doctrine when they found favourable circumstances in alien soils.”<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, many scholars of Sufism, including its proponents, trace its origin in the Qur’an and the practice of the Holy Prophet (SAW), and cite a number of Qur’anic verses and Hadiths in support of their assertion.<sup>4</sup>

From the above discussion, we can say that though the basic origin of Sufism is Qur’an and Hadith, there are some external influences on the way of its development. But is not true that Sufism is derived from others mysticism. Because all mystical traditions, associated with different religions of the world have something in common, but the similarities and the commonalities do not necessarily mean that the latter were a borrowing from the former in terms of their doctrinal systems, methods and practices. Moreover, like any other mystical traditions, Sufism did not develop void of intellectual. When the Muslims came in

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1. For a detailed, see in Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tarikh-I Mashaikh-i Chisht*, (Delhi: Idarah-i -Adabiyat-i Delhi, 1980), pp. 45-49
  2. Muhammad Iqbal, *Development of Metaphysics in Persia: A Contribution to the History of Muslim Philosophy*, (East Lansing, Mi.H-Bahai 2001, first published, London: Luzac and company, 1908), pp. 76-77
  3. *Ibid.*, p. 84
  4. For a brief discussion, see, *Yusuf Salim Chishti, Tarikh-i Tasawwuf: Hindi, Yunani, Islami*, (Lahore: Ulama Academy, 1976), pp. 104-22; For Some Quranic verses and Hadith relation to Sufism, see Stoddart, *Sufism : The Mystical Doctrines and Methods of Islam*, pp. 77-82

contact with the people of other races, cultures, and intellectual traditions, a mutual exchange of ideas was inevitable. The Sufis too imbibed ideas and concepts as well as practices from them, which helped to develop the Sufi doctrines further.

### **Place of Sufism in Islam**

Now, we proceed to sketch the development of Sufism from the very beginning of its existence, so as to judge whether the Muslim Divines derived their inspiration from foreign sources or from their Holy Book. We have previously mentioned that Sufism came into being towards the close of the second or beginning of the third century of the Islamic era.

In a sense, it is a mistaken idea which leads some modern scholars to connect Sufism with Greek philosophy which had by that time begun to creep into the minds of some of the learned Muslims. The fact is that, Sufism is as old as Islam itself. It was brought into being as soon as the verses of the mystical cult were revealed to the Prophet (SAW). It cannot be denied by Arabic knowing scholars that the Qur'an is often allegorical with a mystical touch. As for example: "He(God) is first and last, visible and invisible, and He is the knower of everything" (57.3).

"God's hand was above their hands" (48.10).

"When you shot the arrow it was not you who shot, but God shot" (8.17).

"Everyday he is in a new manifestations" (55.29).

"And you do not wish unless God wishes" (85.20).

"Allah is the highest of the Heaven and the earth" (24.35).

"I breathed into man, My Spirit" (25.29).

"Witherso ever ye turn, there is the face of Allah" (11.115).

"There is no god but He, everything is perishing except His face" (28.88).

"So it was not ye who slew them but God slew them: thou didn't cast (arrows) when thou didst cast, but God cast" (8.17).

"For I am nearer to him than his jugular vein" (50.16).

Such verses emphatically prove that the universe with all its contents is merely a reflection of the Divine Being. It was the desire of self-expression on the

part of God which ultimately led to the creation of universe. In a *Hadith-e-Qudsi*, God said to the Prophet (SAW): "I was a hidden Treasure, and I desired to be known; and therefore, I made the creation that I might be known."

These mystical expressions are further corroborated by the traditions, which say:

"Whosoever knoweth himself knoweth his Lord."

"My servant continues to draw near to Me through works of Supererogation until I love him. And when I love him I am his ear, so that he hears by Me, and his eyes so that he sees by Me, and his hands so that he takes by Me."

"My earth and My Heaven contain Me not, but the heart of My faithful servant containeth Me"

Now, it is the all-absorbing character of the God that mentioned in the Qur'an and tradition, which served as the basis of the future theory of "Unity of Existence" or "Pantheism." All Sufis aim at annihilating themselves in the Creator, because they believe in the core of their hearts that He is the only real existence and the rest is only His manifestation. Again, "Love" is the foundation stone of Sufism. Sufi's attempt is to reach the Highest stage of spiritually on the wings of love and devotion. This love must be pure and perfect, selfless and disinterested. This basic part of Sufism was also furnished by the Qur'an and the tradition. God says:

"Tell (them) if you love God, follow me (Prophet, SAW), God will love you" (111.30).

Those who believe have exceeding love for God" (11.165),

"God loves those who turn to Him constantly. And He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2.222).

"He loves them and who love Him" (5.54).

"Then do remember Me, I will remember" (2.152).

"God loves not the evildoers (3.140); God loves the good-doers" (3.34).

"God appears as either lover or beloved" (85.14).

Again, the Prophet (SAW) says:

"None has belief who does not love."

"Man is with him whom he loves."

"Belief means that, God and His messenger are beloved by you more than anything else."



“Love God, because of the favours He bestows on you and love me (Muhammad, SAW), because God loves me.”

“Oh God, give me Your love and the love of those who love You and make Your love beloved to me more than cold waters.”

From the above quotations, it can rightly be inferred that the seed of Sufism was sown in the very beginning of Islam. The Prophet (SAW) himself displayed mystical inclinations, and used to resort to some hidden places e.g., cave *Hira* for meditation and devotion. He was often found in the state of complete absorption in his Lord. His intimate association did not fail to imitate him. A section of the companions from their acceptance of the faith, had been mystical in tendency and ascetic in practice. They had cut themselves off from worldly affairs, and passed their time in a portico of the mosque of the Prophet (SAW) in meditation, prayer and devotion. They are known as “*Ahl-us-Suffa*”, from which the word Sufi was sought to be derived by the early Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

The early Caliphs, who were the busiest rulers in the world, occasionally indulged in mystical expressions. They denied the existence of things other than God, and ascribe every action of the universe to the Divine Hands. Mystical inclinations in the beginning were confined to a small section of Muslims only. But afterwards, it spread among others as a result of the great catastrophe that overtook the Muslim world during and after the reign of the Caliph Uthman. The unshakable unity of the believers was shaken, the brotherhood of Islam was shattered, swords were unsheathed and Muslims began to hit one another's heads. These horrors and atrocities accelerated the progress of quietism or asceticism in the pious circles of the Muslim community.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the period of the Orthodox Caliphate, a group of selfless people sprang up, who had practically retired from the busy world. These Muslims, after renouncing all sorts of luxury and enjoyment, surrendered themselves to the Supreme Being, to Whom alone they appealed for favour of protection from the worldly atrocities. Slowly, but steadily, this group increased in

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1. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *Muslim Thought and its Source. op. cit.*, pp. 81-82

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-82

number and in strength. They took their stand on those verses of the Qur'an which characterize the world as transient and devotion to God, as the highest good for humanity.<sup>1</sup> Neither had they been conversant with foreign languages, nor had they occasion to mix with the Greeks or Aryans, or with those who were known as philosophers. They were too much absorbed in their Lord to think of their things. These earlier mystics (meditative and ascetic Muslim) who, whether so entitled or not, were essentially Sufis and are called as such by their successors.<sup>2</sup>

The prominent Sufis of the period of asceticism are al-Hasan al-Bashri, (d.728 A.D.), Habib Ajmi, Ibrahim bin Adham (d. 777 A.D.), Daud at tayi (d.781-82 A.D.). Fudayl bin Iyad (d 803 A.D.), Maruf of karkh (d.815 A.D.), Shaqiq Balkhi (d.810 A.D.), Rabia al-Adawiyya (d.752-753 A.D). It is needless to say, that these saints had nothing to do with Greek or Aryan Philosophy.

The Sufis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century were usually orthodox and law-abiding. They cultivated poverty, self-abasement, and resignation. If they loved God, they feared him more, and on the whole their mysticism lacked positive qualities as well as distinctive theories. They stand midway between asceticism (*zuhd*) and theosophy or gnosis (*ma'rifat*). The word that describes their attitude best is 'quietism (*rida*).<sup>3</sup> Some of their important ethical sayings are given below:

### **Sayings of Hasan of Basrah**

1. "A man should speak the truth even though he is excited through anger."
2. "A grain of genuine piety is better than a thousand fold weight of fasting and prayer."
3. "Beware of this world, for it is like a snake, smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly."
4. "Cleanse these hearts (by meditation and remembrance of God), for they are quick to rust; and restrain ye these souls, for they desire eagerly and if ye restrain them not, they will drag you to an evil end."

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, p. 418

3. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, New York, Vol. 12, p. 11

## **Sayings of Ibrahim Adham**

1. "If you wish to be the friend of God or to be loved by Him, renounce this world and the next; empty yourself of these two worlds and turn face toward Him. Then God will turn His face toward you and overwhelm you with His grace."

"You will not attain to righteousness until you traverse six passes:

Firstly, you shut the door of pleasure and open the door of hardship.

Secondly, you shut the door of eminence and open the door of abasement.

Thirdly, you shut the door of ease and open the door of affliction.

Fourthly, you shut the door of sleep and open the door of wakefulness.

Fifthly, you shut the door of riches and open the door of poverty.

Sixthly, you shut the door of expectation and open the door of making yourself ready to die."<sup>1</sup>

## **Sayings of Rabiya al-Adawiyya**

1. "He is a bad servant who worships God for fear of punishment or desire for paradise; God is worth of worship even if there is no motive of fear or reward."
2. "O God! Give to Thine enemies whatever Thou hast assigned to me of this world's goods and to Thy friends whatever Thou hast assigned to me in the life of the Hereafter, for Thou Thyself art sufficient for me."
3. "O God! If I worship Thee for fear of Hell, send me to Hell and if I worship Thee in hopes of Paradise, withhold Paradise from me, but if I worship Thee for Thine ownsake, withhold not from me the Eternal Beauty."

The center of mystical activity later shifted from Basra to Baghdad, which had become the political and religious capital of the whole empire after al-Mansur, founded it in 762. Among the mystics of Baghdad, the most noteworthy are Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d.815), Mansru b. Ammar (d.839), Bishr b.al-

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1. Quoted in R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of Arabs*, Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 1994, p. 323

Hafi (d. 842) Ibn Abi' Dunia 894.<sup>1</sup> The second stage of evolution of Sufism starts from second half of ninth century to first half of tenth century by these Sufis of Baghdad. Like Sufism in every period of its history, the new Sufism of third century is also the product of diverse forces— speculative developments of the Mohammadan monotheistic idea, Christian asceticism and mysticism, Gnosticism, Greek and Indian philosophy etc.<sup>2</sup> This stage began with Maruf Karkhi (son of Firoz or Firozan).<sup>3</sup> He is described as a God intoxicated man. He defined Sufism as "the apprehension of Divine realities and renunciation of human possession."<sup>4</sup> He established himself as an eloquent preacher who admonished his audience to practice abstention and contentment with God's decree. According to him, saints of God are known by three signs: "Their thought is of God, their dwelling is with God and their business is in God." He also says: "Love is not learned from men; it is one of God's gifts and comes from His grace."

Maruf Karkhi was soon followed by one who is universally regarded as a pillar of Islamic mysticism, i.e., Thawban-bin-Ibrahim Dhul-Nun Misri (d.245 A.H./859-60 A.D). He is ascribed as the authorship of the mystical theories and doctrines.<sup>5</sup> He was a profound scholar, both a mystic and a philosopher. Like other early mystics, he practiced asceticism of extreme type.<sup>6</sup>

He regarded the temptation of self as the greatest veil,<sup>7</sup> and looked upon seclusion as indispensable for the promotion of sincerity in a Sufi. According to him, there are two different paths for the mystic to follow. The first path is to avoid sin, to leave the world and to control passion; the second path is to leave all

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1. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p.

2. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings. (New York, vol. 12), p. 11

3. He was a client and disciple of Iman Ali b. Musa ar-Rida, in whose presence he made profession of Islam, for he had been brought up as a christian or, possibly, as a sabian. (R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, Delhi: Adam publishers & Distributers, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1907, rpt., 1994, p. 385

4. *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 385

5. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *op. cit.*, p. 84

6. Khwajah Farid al-Din-Attar, *Tadhkirat al-Auliya*, (Bombay: Karimi Press 1321 A.H.), p. 78

7. *Ibid.*, p. 83

besides of God and empty the heart of everything.<sup>1</sup> It is a higher path. Al-Misri was careful to emphasize the purgatory character of ritual and mental prayer, as well as the practice of self- mortification.<sup>2</sup> Here it is mentioned that, the two greatest Sufis that the school of Bagdad produced were al-Muhasibi (d.857) and al-Junaid (d.919). Al-Muhasibi's mysticism rests of two pillars: self examination (*al-Muhasabah*), and readiness to suffer the worst tribulations in the service of God.<sup>3</sup> The touchstone of genuine piety, according to him, is death, and the token of the great virtue of fortitude (*al sabar*) is readiness to suffer. Without rejecting the validity of the ritual basis of worship, al-Muhasibi insisted on the inward aspect of belief.

Abul Qasim al-Junaid is regarded in the Sufi tradition as one of the foremost pioneers and is universally respected.<sup>4</sup>

He was perfect in every branch of science and spoke with authority on the theology, jurisprudence, and ethics.<sup>5</sup> His influence on the subsequent development of Sufism was very great.<sup>6</sup> According to him, only he can truly traverse the path (*tariqah*) who walks with the book of God (al-Qur'an) in his right hand and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in his left hand. Once the soul has become cleansed of its sins, it becomes fit to receive its Lord and to hold spiritual converse with Him in intimate fellowship.

Gradually Sufism turned into doctrinal aspect. Bayazid al-Bistami (d.261/874 A.D.) and al-Husayan bin Mansur al-Hallaj (d.398 A.H/922 A.D.) drifted the Sufi teaching towards the doctrine of Unity of Being (*wahadat al-wujud*).<sup>7</sup> Bayazid of Bistam was a contemporary of Dhul Nun Misri. He made some improvements on the existing condition of mysticism by introducing the

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 89; To him, mystical path consisted in a series of stations (*Maqamat*) which the mystic must travel, and a corresponding series of states (*ahwal*) with which God might favor him.

2. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 239

3. *Ibid.*, p. 237

4. Here it is mentioned that it was Junaid who systematized the mystical doctrines and put them in black and white. He also harmonized the esoteric and exoteric forms of the faith and succeeds in bringing about cordial relations between the adherents of the two.

5. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 128

6. According to Junaid: We learned Sufism not through words but through hunger, the renunciation of this world and through depriving ourselves from the things which we are accustomed to and in which we take delight. (Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushyriah*, Eng. tr. Alexander Knysh, entitled, *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, Doha: Center for Research on the Muslim Contribution to Civilization, n.d.) p. 43.)

7. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.* p. 139

doctrine of self- effacement and self-annihilation. This doctrine was really the logical consequence of the absorption or ecstasy taught by Dhul- Nun Misri. Bayazid declared that unless a man loses himself in God he cannot obtain a clue to the Divinity.<sup>1</sup> These two ideas of self annihilation and absorption paved the way for the development of the theory of Unity of Being in Islamic mysticism.<sup>2</sup> According to al-Hallaj, man is essentially divine, because he was created by God in His own image. In al-Hallaj, we have the supreme example of Unity of Being. Here it is mentioned that, it was Junayed who systematized the mystical doctrine and put them in black and white. It was however, reserved for Ghazali to popularize mysticism among various sections of the Muslim community.

By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Sufism had been strongly established in the Muslim lands. It earned approval and wide ranging appeal among people. In fact, in the last quarter of eleventh and early year of twelfth centuries, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1098-1111 A.D.) tried to reconcile Sufism with the *Shari'ah*, thus bridging the gulf between the two.<sup>3</sup> His younger contemporary, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166) further popularized Sufism. So Martin Lings writes: "If Ghazali more than anyone else may be said to have prepared the way for general recognition of sufism, it was his younger contemporary Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani who was to make the recognition fully operative."<sup>4</sup>

As the Juristic and Sufi versions of Islam came closer to each other, more people including the jurists belonging to various schools of *fiqh* (Muslim jurisprudence) started entering the fold of Sufism. Lessons in jurisprudence were given in the *khanqahs* while Sufism in the *madrasahs* as well. As a result, the institutions of *madrasah* and *khanqah* were later merged at the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The process of assimilation of the juristic and Sufi variants of Islam gave further impulse to the popularity of Sufism in Muslim societies.

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1. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *op. cit.*, 85

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. For detailed, see, Montgomery watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935).

4. Martin lings, *What is Sufism*, (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 2nd ed., 1981), p. 111

5. For a detailed, see-Janathan Berkey, *The Transmission of knowledge: A Social History of Islamic Education*, (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1992), P.47

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century A. H we find further development of Sufism in Spain and Persia. Muhiyyu'd-Din idnu 'I-'Arabi (d. 638 A. H.1240 A. D) may be regarded as the first Spanish Sufi. In Spain, we get another Sufi 'Abdu' l-Haqq ibn Sab'in (d. 667 A.H). In Persia, Jalalu'd-Din Rumi (d. 672 A.H) practically completes the golden age of Sufism. His great mystical poem the 'Mathnavi' has received an extraordinary reverence.

The doctrine of Unity of Being reached to its culmination in the writing of Ibnu 'l-Arabi.<sup>1</sup> The teachings of Ibnu 'l-'Arabi had been a great source of inspiration for the subsequent Sufis who followed doctrine of *wahdatul wujud*. Even Rumi is supposed to have had a share on it. Later Sufis such as Iraqi (d-686 A.H.), Shabistari (d. 720 A.H), Qashani (d. 730 A.H.), al-Jili (d. 811 A.H.) Ja'mi (d.898 A.H.) and others bear evident marks of Rumi's influence. Among the Sufis of Indo-Pakistan of this period Khwajah Mu'inu'd-Din chisti (d-1234 A.D.) exerted a great enduring influence. Sufi prior to him was Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri, renowned as Data Gonja Bakhsh- the auther of monumental work in Sufism, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*. The most prominent Sufis of the sub-continent were Sufis were: Bakhtyar kaki (d.1236 A.D.), Najamuddin Awliya of Delhi, Fariduddin Ganja Shakar, Alauddin Saber Kaliari, Sharfuddin Maneri etc.

#### **4. Sufi Doctrines**

Sufism is a vast and diverse subject. It is not a regular organized school. For it is manifested in different shapes and ages and countries. Moreover, divergent tendencies can be found in the teaching of distinguished Sufis who founded different Sufi Tariqas (orders). So, it is not possible to make any accurate view concerning the doctrines or traits which will be acceptable to all the Sufis.

In spite of the divergence, a family likeness may be traced among them and some common points may be enumerated.

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<sup>1</sup> Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op.cit.*p.140

## God

Sufi conception of God is a bit different from that of Orthodox Islam. The Muslim regards that God is unique in its essence, qualities and acts; He is absolutely unlike all other beings. But Sufi means that God is the one Real Being which underlies all phenomena. Sufism interprets the first part of the kalmia “*La ilaha illa llah*” not as “Nothing is adorable but Allah but as nothing is existent but Allah. So, according to them, God is the only Reality, all else are illusive. But about the nature of this Reality, the Sufis are not unanimous. According to Sufi Philosophy, Reality is the universal will, eternal-light, and supreme beauty, whose nature is self-manifestation, reflected in the mirror of the universe.

According to Dhul Nun Misri, God is the All-prevailing, the All-knowing, the All-wise, the All-just, the All-true. He acknowledges Him in the proof of His Handiwork and the evidence of His acts.<sup>1</sup> So far, essence of God was considered light, but in the post al-Ghazali period, under the influence of Neo-Platonism God came to be known as ‘Thought’. But all the schools of Sufism are unanimous that the Ultimate Reality is supreme Mind like a human mind, from whom all life and existence have emanated just as ideas emerge from a human mind.

For some, the emanation is in essence, for others it is in thought and for still others the phenomenal world is reflection of the real ideas present in the Supreme mind.<sup>2</sup> But in the later Sufism, the sensual objects are also God in essence.<sup>3</sup> The Ultimate Reality in its essence is attributeless, nameless, indescribable, and incomprehensible, but when covered with *avidya* or descent from its absoluteness, names and attributes are formed.<sup>4</sup> God’s essence is unknowable through deductive and reflective knowledge, but can be realized directly in intuition.

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1. A. J Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1969 fifth impression, first Published 1950), pp. 52-53; A.M.A. Shushtery, *Outline of the Islamic Culture*, Vol.2, (Bangalore: The Bangalore Press 1938), p. 486
  2. S. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western*, Vol.2, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. Revised ed. 1929, p. 185
  3. Vide- A. E. Affifi’s *Mystical Philosophy of Muhyiuddin Ibnal Arabi*, (London: Cambridge University Press), p. 54.
  4. A.M.A. shushtery, *op. cit.*, p. 486



## Concept of the universe

The universe or the external world has been explained by the Sufis as the manifestation of God Himself. Accordingly, it is believed that the life and the phenomenal world, before emanating, were latent in the mind of God, the Supreme Mind. As a natural consequence of the impulsive principle of love there is emanation from God Himself and through a series of emanations the universe is evolved. Thus, God is pervading in each and every existence. For the early Sufis the Divine Reality is not visible, but is hidden, behind the visible and invisible. For them, as the self of man is divine and different from his body, hence, divine element is pervading in the universe but different from matter.

The knowledge of the world illumines soul which yearns for the union with God. Thus, the world is helpful in achieving the union with God. But the world is the manifestation or the reflection of something which is real and the man is to attain the Real and not the reflection of the manifestation. So the world, though created by God, reflecting His Wisdom, His Art and His power, is the object of neither attainment nor hatred. Man, in ignorance, takes the reflection or the manifestation as real and hankers after it. The world has the capacity to attract the soul.

It attracts it, gives birth to the *nafs* in the man and imprisons it. Later Sufism is pantheistic which does not believe in any second principle other than God. To them, the material world proceeds from Him like the flowing of a river.

## The goal of life

According to the orthodox Muslims, the aim of human life is the avoidance of Hell and attainment of Heaven.<sup>1</sup> But according to Sufis, the goal of life is attainment of God i.e., union with God.<sup>2</sup> This union is the basis of Sufi ethics; it is the *Summum bonum*, the Highest ideal. Imam Ghazali more explicitly elucidated it. According to Imam Ghazali, the *Summum bonum* is the realization of the vision

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, pp.184-86

2. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.*, p.145

of God, in the next world. This everlasting bliss, the complete end or ideal, will be achieved through one's love for God as demonstrated by one's conduct in this world.<sup>1</sup> But the intensity of love towards God is conditioned by one's knowledge of God.

That is, man's love for God which is the supreme end in this life and the vision of God which is the complete end or the *Summum bonum* in the next, are direct consequence of the knowledge of God.<sup>2</sup> Now this knowledge is achieved through the purification of the heart, which breeds love, which in its turn leads to the complete vision.

### Source of knowledge

According to Sufis, real knowledge of God can only be attained by means of *kashf* or intuition;<sup>3</sup> reason is not at all helpful in attaining the knowledge of God.<sup>4</sup> It is mentioned that concept of gnosis or intuitive knowledge (*ma'arifah or hikmah*) as a means of comprehending God was first articulated by Dhu'l Nun al-Misri.<sup>5</sup>

Intuitive or esoteric knowledge is opposite to the knowledge acquired through the five senses and reason (ilm or exoteric knowledge). As the concept of *Ma'arifah* or intuitive knowledge comes very close to revelation to the Prophet (SAW), the *ulama* who possesses knowledge of Islamic law or *Shari'ah*, becomes highly critical of the Sufi. For this, during fourth/tenth century some important Sufis had to give their lives on charges related to the claim of intuitive knowledge.

### Self

No sound ethical system is possible without a firm psychological foundation. If we examine the psychological nature of man, we can find that all psychological phenomena originate in the self. The concept of the self is

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1. M. Umaruddin, *The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazali*, (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1962), p.86.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. Tanvir Anjum, "Sufism in History and its Relation with Power," in *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 45, no. 2, 2006, (Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute), p. 251.

expressed in Arabic by four terms, viz *Qalb* (heart), *Ruh* (soul), *Nafs*, (desire nature), and *Aql* (intellect, reason).<sup>1</sup> Each of these terms signifies a spiritual entity.

According to Sufis, Qalb or hearts are three, one physical on the left side; another called the animal soul, on the right side; and a third between the other two.<sup>2</sup> Again some Sufis say, man has two souls- one is rational and the other is animal called *nafs*.<sup>3</sup> The rational soul is considered the true self of man which is different from his body. It is a spiritual substance created but not shaped. It is not bound by space and time but it is akin to universal soul and just as the latter is a macrocosm, it is microcosm of the universe. It may be compared with the Universal Soul as rays are to the sun. It is not body but affects the body with its illuminative attribute.

About *Ruh* (the self) Junaid says: only God knows its essence and nature. Nothing more can be said about it. Again, Abu Sa'id al-Kharaz says, '*Ruh* is created and due to it, the body gets existence and life. Intelligence and reason are associated with it.'<sup>4</sup>

The *Nafs* is associated with material life and carnal desire. The rational soul in its essence is potentially good and pure, and therefore, can succeed in killing the animal soul (*nafs*) and join its original source. It is restless because of its separation from its source and seeking union with it.<sup>5</sup> When it turns to the *nafs* it is separate and restless, but when it turns to its source, i.e., God, it is united and is in blissful state.<sup>6</sup>

The main objects of morals are the cleansing and purification of the heart. Al- Ghazali calls it *Tazkiyy an-Nafs* means purification of the self. *Tahdhib al-Akhiaq* means cleaning, pruning and polishing of character. To him, the self of man needs lopping and pruning or cleansing, since by implicating the lower

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1. Imam Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-din*, Eng. tr. Maulana Fazlur Karim, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2003), fifth ed. Vol. 3, pp. 4-5
  2. P Archer, *The Sufi Mystery*, (London: The Octagon Press, first published, 1980), p. 63; A.M.A Shushtrey, *Outline of Islamic Culture*, p. 474
  3. S.R. Sharda, *Sufi Thought*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, pvt. Ltd. first pub. 1974), p. 27.
  4. *Loc. cit.*
  5. A.M.A Shushteri; *op. cit.*, p. 358
  6. *Ibid.*, p. 595

nature of man, his appetites, and passions have acquired mastery of its higher nature. Hence, this lower nature should be controlled and brought under the subjugation of the higher nature viz., reason, by removing the vices.<sup>1</sup>

The lower nature must not be wholly annihilated. It must be pruned in such a way that it does not cause any harm.

Tazkiyya an-Nafs is realized through Amal and through *Mujahadda*.<sup>2</sup> *Amal* means action, but in its wider connotation it means the subjugation of the appetites and impulses in such a way that the self, turning away from them, attracts only towards God.<sup>3</sup> So that it is purged of all evil and low associations. When it is achieved, the self is occupied with the sight of God and then the blessings of God begin to pour on him as they pour on the saints, the prophets and the sincere ones. On the other hand, *mujahada* (struggle against vice) is like the medical treatment of the self for purging it of impurities.<sup>4</sup> True knowledge is achieved by means of the struggling of the self, i.e., we will reach our aim by means of *Mujahadan an-Nafs*. This is only a gift and grant out of the generosity of God. But in order to deserve this gift one has to make oneself capable of receiving it by cleansing the self and making it free from uncleanness and contamination.

The nature and signification of these expressions explain clearly the aim of morality. Firstly, good conduct is not something which can be superimposed from outside. It is an inner development of the self. The self, therefore, can develop to its full height and can attain its natural beauty only if it is allowed to grow unhampered without the temptations of the flesh. The Qur'anic verse– ‘He will indeed be successful who purifies it (the self), and he will fail who corrupts it’ (91:9-10). Secondly, good character does not demand the total destruction of natural propensities. They are necessary for the body. But they should be under the complete control of reason.

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1. Al-Ghazali, *Kimiya-i-Saadat*, p. 6ff quoted in M. Umaruddin's. "The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazali, p. 92

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. M. Umaruddin *op. cit.*, 91

4. *Ibid.*, p. 92

## Relation between God and man

According to Sufis, relation between man and God is that of the lover and the Beloved. God created the universe out of love and man in His own image.<sup>1</sup> So in human soul, there is the Divine Attribute of love. This impels man to pine for the union with God.

Love for God, (*mahabbad*) is the central idea in a Sufi's life, which requires moral perfection of self. But a Sufi believes that he may be blessed with love by God; love is satisfied with nothing less than God Himself. It is mentioned that the notion of disinterested love for God was clearly articulated perhaps for the first time by Rabi'ah al-Basri. Because of her advocacy for disinterested love of God, she became the model of selfless love among the Sufi circles. She urged to worship God, out of love, instead of owing to fear of Hell or desire for Paradise. She taught that a Sufi must love God for His Own sake.<sup>2</sup> Other Sufis like Dhu'l Nun al-Misri, Sari al- saqati and Junaid al- Baghdadi further articulated the idea.

## Fana

*Fana* or obliteration or annihilation of the self is the last station of the Sufi journey to God. Another associated doctrine is that of subsistence or permanence (*baqa*). By *fana* (annihilation), the Sufis refer to the disappearance of blameworthy qualities. Whereas by 'Subsistence' (*baqa*), they refer to the persistence of praiseworthy qualities.<sup>3</sup> The servant of God cannot but have one of these two types of qualities. Because it is well known that if he does not have one type, he will inevitably have the other. Whoever annihilates his own will, subsists in the Will of God.

The Sufis use the word '*fana*' in different senses. According to Abu Bakr al-Kalabadi, passing away is a state in which all passions pass away, so that the mystic experience no feelings towards anything whatsoever, and loses all sense of

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1. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.*, p. 145

2. Margaret Smith, *Rabia The Mysticis and Her Fellow Saints in Islam*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 rpt. first published 1928), pp. 96-110

3. Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 89

discrimination; he has passed away from all things, and is wholly absorbed with that through which he has passed away. Others believe that '*fana*' implies the nullification of all kinds of consciousness. Hence, the author of the doctrine (*fana*), Abu Sa'id al-kharraz says: "Annihilation is annihilation of the consciousness of manhood, and subsistence is subsistence in the contemplation of Godhead."<sup>1</sup>

The word *fana* is also used in the sense of the transformation of human attributes into Divine Attributes. To Junaid, '*fana*' is the assimilation of the individual will in the Will of God.

When a Sufi abandons the evil deeds, denounced by the Divine law, it is said that he is annihilated from his passions. And when he is annihilated from his passions, he subsists in the service of God, through his determination and sincerity.<sup>2</sup> When someone renounces this world, it is said that he is annihilated from his desire. And when he is annihilated from his desire, he subsists in the sincerity of his repentance.<sup>3</sup>

When someone has refined his morals by cleansing his heart from envy, malice, avarice, greed, anger and pride, as well as any other impurities that adhere to the soul; it is said: "He has been annihilated from the base traits of character."<sup>4</sup> And when one is annihilated from bad morals, one subsists in chivalry and truthfulness. When one is annihilated from his characteristics he advances to the next one at which he loses the sight of his annihilation.

Summing up all these, we can say total annihilation of self is experienced after passing through various stages.<sup>5</sup> At first stage, human qualities are annihilated. At the second stage, annihilation of the vision of God takes place. Then come the last stage of the annihilation of annihilation which is a mark of perfect state of *fana*. Here everything related to the seeker of God passes away and the soul enjoys eternal rest in God.

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1. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 245

2. Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 89

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. M. Hamiduddin, "Early Sufis: Doctrine" ed., M.M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim philosophy*, (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1st Published, 1961, rpt., 2004. Vol. 1, p. 333

## 5. Evaluation of Sufism

There is no theory in Philosophy above criticism. As a doctrine of theology, Sufism is also not above criticism. Many scholars have mentioned its different faults. Such as–

Firstly, some critics say that nowadays what exists in the name of Sufism or what people perceive to be Sufism, is nothing but a sort of ignorance, superstitious practices, religious exploitation, excessive ritualism and spiritual consumerism. In response to this critic we can say that if we adopt an objective and fair assessment of Sufism we find that Sufism is an authentic expression of Islam, deeply rooted in its history. Those beliefs and practices are against the basic teachings of Islam cannot be considered as the aspects of Sufism. Moreover, History testifies to the transformational role that Sufism played in the spread of Islam across the world. It were Sufi shaiks who introduced Islam to many places in the world which today turned into major Muslim population.

Secondly, pessimism, i.e., withdrawal from worldly affairs is a common accusation leveled against the Sufis. But this view is not acceptable. In the time of Self mortification, sometimes the Sufis detached themselves from the society for a time being, but when they are enlightened they return to the society for the welfare of humanity. History testifies the efforts of Sufis, who engaged themselves for the service of humanity as well as in Jihad to protect the freedom of their people. Such as Sanusiya movement of Libya, Abd al-Qadir al-Jazairi's resistance against French occupation in Algeria or the efforts of Naqshbandi Sufis fighting against Russian aggression or Hazrat Shajalal (Rah)'s arrival at Sylhet and his fighting against Raja Gobinda's tyrannical rule.

Thirdly, some critics branded Sufism as *bidah* and *shirk* and its adherents labeled deviants, innovators, and even polytheists. In this context, they mentioned the name of Hambalite scholar Ibn Taymiya who rejected Sufism. However, a careful reading of his works proves that his position actually represents an objective and balanced assessment. In his treatise *al-Tuhfa al-iraqiah fi al amal – al qalbiyah*, he says:

The corrupt doctrines and practices that have infected these people have caused some groups to reject the way of the Sufis altogether, root and branch,

such that those who veer from the proper course in this regard fall into two groups: (i) a group that accepts both what is true and what is false of the Sufi way; and (ii) a group that rejects both what is true and what is false of the way of Sufis, such as many groups of theologians and jurists. And the right position is simply to accept of this way, as well as any other way, that which is consistent with the Book and the Sunna, and to reject of it, as well other ways, that which violates the Book and the Sunna.

This proves that he was not against Sufism altogether.

Summing up the above discussion we can say that all human endeavours—individual or collective are subject to errors and mistakes and Sufism holds no special privilege in this regard. The spirit of self-criticism is an integral part of the Sufi heritage and legacy. Al-Wasiti said: “At first Sufis were given clear indications; then these became motions and now nothing remains but sorrow,” Siraj al-Tusi in his book *al-Luma*’ devotes a whole section to deviance and excesses of Sufism. This self regulatory trend within Sufism continued in the works of great Sufi personalities like al-Sulami, al-Qushayri, Hujwiri, al-Ghazali and others. In avoiding ambiguous mystical language of Sufism, many other works were also penned paving the way for a more accessible and comprehensible presentation of Sufism so that it “inspires and provides instruction on personal piety and self-refinement.

Here it may be mentioned that, the controversy about Sufism is the result of some factors such as, the adoption of a fragmented vision of Islam; the emergence of philosophical and mystical Sufism; the misuse and abuse of authentic Sufi teachings by its adherents and the rise of an intolerant and divisive discourse on Islam. Hence, if by Sufism we are referring to its prevalent contemporary manifestation of deviant beliefs, superstitions, innovated practices and folkloric interpretation of its faith, then this is actively contravenes Islamic teachings and should be rejected. On the other hand, if by Sufism we mean the spiritual and moral guidelines, and practices based on the Qur’an and authentic Prophetic traditions which aims at achieving sincerity in turning to God and elevating the human soul then it is at the core of the Islamic faith.



## CHAPTER III

### An Overview of Sufism

Sufism is the mystical Philosophy of Islam. Sufism chiefly consists of purification of the soul from pomp and enjoyment of the world. Its aim is to attain spiritual perfection with a view to final absorption in God. Sufism is nothing external to Islam; it is a part and parcel of it. Islam has two sides- esoteric and exoteric or internal and external, and the two sides are interdependent. Neither can be developed without the assistance of the other. In this context, Junaid of Baghdad said that, “The external and internal aspects of Islam are essentially the same and that are far from being antagonistic, corroborate each other.”<sup>1</sup> It is therefore clear that the aim of Sufism is to harmonize between revelation and reason and reconciling between body and soul. Anything unreasonable or immoral cannot be Islamic. Similarly, if our body and soul are left free even temporarily or if one is sacrificed at the altar of the other, the real spirit behind the teaching of Islam will be crushed.

Sufism is centered on Almighty Allah (God), i.e., complete obedience to Him and unadulterated love for Him. The whole Sufi theosophy revolves on these pivots. The Sufis believe that there is no real being except God (Allah), Who is all merciful and loving and to Whom a man can approach with a loving heart. He (God) is a beloved; He longs to unite with His creatures and they in their turn, pine for union with Him.

Here, it is mentioned that according to Sufis, the present existence of man is the cause of his separation from God. That is why, Sufis neglect their body and take every possible care for the development of the soul. They practice severe mortification, austerity and physical hardship for seeking deliverance from the

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1. Dr. Syed Muzaffar-ud-din Nadvi, *Muslim Thought and Its Source*, (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1<sup>st</sup> Published 1946, rpt., 1983,), p. 107.

lust of flesh (*nafs*) that keeps him in a prison of body. In this sense, Sufism is based on morality. Without leading a moral life, a Sufi cannot imagine to achieve his goal. In this chapter, we will try to give a pen picture about Sufism.

The Arabic word *Tasawwuf* is derived from the word 'Sufi.' Different theories have been put forth about the etymological derivations of the word *Sufi*.

1. Some say: "The Sufis were only named Sufis because of the purity (*Safa*) of their hearts and cleanliness of their acts (*athar*)."<sup>1</sup>
2. According to others: "They were only called Sufis because they are in the first rank (*Saff*) before God."<sup>2</sup>
3. Others have said: "They were only called Sufis because their qualities resembled those of the people of the Bench (*Suffah*), who lived in the time of God's Prophet (SAW)."<sup>3</sup>
4. Certain Muslim scholars (such as-Historian Abu Reehaan Beruni) think that the word 'Sufi' comes from the Greek word '*Sophia*' which means wisdom and that a Sufi is one who is a seeker after wisdom or Truth (al-Haqq).
5. Others have said: "They were only named Sufis because of their habit of wearing wool (*Suf*)."<sup>4</sup> Etymologically, the word Sufi is derived from the Arabic word '*Suf*' which means wool.

If the derivation from 'Suf' (wool) be accepted, the word is correct and the expression of sound from the grammatical (etymological) point of view is also correct. At the same time, it bears all the necessary meanings such as withdrawal from the world, inclining the soul away from it, leaving all settled abodes, keeping constantly to travel, denying the carnal soul and its pleasures, purifying the conduct, cleansing the conscience, dilation of the breast and the quality of leadership.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi, *Kitab al-Ta'arruf li Madhhab Ahl al-Tasawwuf*, Eng. tr. A.J. Arberry, entitled, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, first published, 1935, rpt., 1979) p.5

2. Al- kalabadhi, *op. cit.*, p5

3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

4. Al- kalabadi, *op. cit.*, p.9

Wool is also the attire of the prophets and the garb of the saints. So early Sufi scholars like Abu Nasr al-Sarraj, Abul Qasim al-Qushairi, al-Kalabadhi, ar-Rudbari, Ibn Khaldun and others<sup>1</sup> accepted this view.

The above discussion indicates that there is no consensus regarding the etymological derivation of the words *tasawwuf* or Sufi. Nonetheless, according to the generally accepted view by a majority of scholars of Sufism, the word 'Sufi' has been derived from the Arabic word '*Suf*' meaning wool. Hence, *tasawwuf* literally means 'wearing wool' and Sufi is the one who wears wool.<sup>2</sup>

Here it is mentioned that, from the earliest times woolen raiment was regarded as the symbol of simplicity of life and avoidance of ostentation that was practiced by the Prophet (SAW) and his immediate successors. The term Sufi was therefore, in later times,<sup>3</sup> applied to those ascetic and pious devotees, who made the simplicity of their apparel as a silent protest against the growing worldly luxury.

## 1. What is Sufism?

Sufism is the philosophy of love. The end and aim of a Sufi life is to acquire the love of God. The Sufi loves God alone; his thinking, meditation and prayer are to God alone.

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1. According to Abu nasr al-Sarraj, "the word 'Sufi' comes from 'suf' because the woollen raiment is the habit of the prophets and the badge of the Saints and elects (Al-Sarraj Al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Luma fi'l Tasawwuf*, ed, Nicholson, London: Luzac and co.,1914. p.20). The eminent Shaykh Abu Ali al-Rudbari agreed to the derivation of the word 'Sufi' from 'suf' as an expression of purity, seclusion and spiritual perfection on the way to God. He described a 'Sufi' as "one who wears wool over (his) purity, gives his lust the taste of tyranny, and having overthrown the world, journeys in the pathway of the Chosen One (A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of The Sufis*, p.10). According to Shaikh Shihab al-Din-Surawardi, author of *Awarf al-Maarif*, the word Sufi is etymologically derived from Suf, the coarse woollen cloth which, as he said was worn by the Holy Prophet (SAW). According to Suhrawardi, except this derivation other derivations are etymologically incorrect.
  2. The words *labisa 'l-Suf*', 'he clad himself in wool', occur frequently in the early literature and signify that the person to whom they are applied has renounced the world and become an ascetic; at a later period, when the asceticism passed into mysticism, *labisa 'l-Suf*' generally means, 'he became a Sufi.' In Persian too the ascetic is often called *pashmina-push*, i.e. 'wearing a woollen garment.' The old Muslim ascetics who clothed themselves in wool borrowed this practice from Christian hermits or monks. (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921 vol. 12, p.10.
  3. According to Qushayri the word 'Sufi' came into vogue a little before the expiry of the second century Hijri (815-816 A.D.). (For detailed, see, Edward G. Browne, (*A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, Vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977 rpt., first published 1902), pp.297-98) On the other hand, according to Abdur Rahman Jami, the first ascetic from whom the word "sufi" was applied was Abu Hashim of Kufa (d.A.D.768), a contemporary of Sufyan al-Thauri (d.A.D.778). (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol.12, p.10). Again Al-Sarraj mentions the view that it was invented by the people of Baghdad, (*Kitab al-Luma*, p. 22)

According to the Islamic terminology, he is called a Sufi who has freed himself from the worldly splendour, that is, delusion for wealth and power, inspired by the love of God and His Messenger Hazrat Muhammad (SAW); and accepts as the final aim of his life to worship the Almighty God and follows the way of life of His great Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as his own ideal of life. In a Sufi's life, there is no worldly desire, except acquiring the satisfaction of God. He annihilates everything other than God and he himself absorbs in God. In this context, great saint Junaid Bagdadi has said: He who sacrifices his life and death for God's satisfaction is a real Sufi. In describing Sufism, he has said that to keep away one's desire from worldly attraction, to abstain from worldly allurements, to develop moral character, to keep one's soul pure from the deception of evil instinct, to enrich oneself with human character and to acquire the acquaintance of the Creator of the whole world, and to annihilate one's tiny existence in the great existence of God is called Tasawwuf or Sufism. The real task of a Sufi is to keep himself away from any kinds of anxiety and thought except God and to lead a moral life disinterestedly and indifferently to the world.

In fact, to the Sufis, the meaning of Sufism is so clear that they do not need any explanation. Hence, everyone who speaks on the meaning of Sufism and who is called a Sufi speaks according to his own experience. Here, we will mention some of the Sufis' opinion on the subject in order to give a hint about Sufism.

Imam Qushayri, the author of the great Sufi compendium *Risalah* takes, Sufism in the sense of purity (*safa*), i.e., the purity of inner and outer life and says that "purity (*safa*) is an admirable attribute on every tongue, and its opposite, impurity is blameworthy."<sup>1</sup> Concerning this, al-Hujwiri says: "The true Sufi is he that leaves impurity behind." He also says: "The quality of purity is unrelated to acts and states, and its name is unconnected with names and nicknames-because purity is the attribute of those who love and the lover is he that is dead (*fani*) in his own attributes and living (*baqi*) in the attributes of his Beloved."<sup>2</sup> That is, purity is

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1. Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyah*, Eng. tr. B.R. Von Schlegell, entitled, *Principles of Sufism*, (Pakistan: Suhail Academy Lahore, 2004, p. 301

2. Al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, Eng. tr., R.A. Nicholson, (New Delhi: Taj Company.1991). p. 32

a resplendent and manifest idea, and Sufism is an imitation of that idea. The more inwardly pure a man is the higher will be his rank and his station. Hence, most of the Sufis regard purity of the soul as means of reaching the closeness to God.

Abul Hasan Nuri said: "Sufism is the renunciation of all selfish pleasures."<sup>1</sup> That is, their (Sufis) spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from extreme desire, so they have found rest with God in the first rank and have fled from all, except Him.

Concerning the definition of 'Sufi' Dhu'n Nun al-Misri says: "They are a people who prefer God over all things and whom God prefers over all things."<sup>2</sup>

Again, Ash Shibli stated, "The Sufi is separated from mankind and united with God as He Says (to Moses), 'I have attached you to Myself (20:41), cutting him off from all else.'" In this context, Hujwiri says: "The Sufi is he that is dead to self and living by the Truth; he has escaped from the grip of human faculties and has really attained to God."<sup>3</sup> Hence, al-Ghazali says that by purifying the heart, forsaking all things except God, always remaining engaged in the worshipping of God and totally merged in Him is called Tasawwuf, .i.e., he who have purified by love is pure and he who is absorbed in Beloved and has abandoned all else is a Sufi.

Concerning the nature of Sufism Junaid says that sufism is founded on eight qualities exemplified in eight Apostles: (1) the generosity of Abraham; (2) the acquiescence of Ishmael; (3) the patience of Job; (4) the symbolism of Zacharis; (5) the strangerhood of John; (6) the pilgrimhood of Jesus; (7) the wearing of wool by Moses; and (8) the poverty of Muhammad (SAW).<sup>4</sup> In the same way, Ruwaym b.Ahmad al-Baghdadi said: "Sufism is founded on three traits: adhering to poverty and dependence on God, attaining the virtues of generosity and selfless giving and abandoning resistance and choice."<sup>5</sup> That is, Sufism is founded on good morals. He who has good morals is a true Sufi. Hence,

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr. *Principle of Sufism*, p. 305

3. Al-Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 35

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

5. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr. *Principle of Sufism*, p. 303

when two goodly states or moral qualities are presented to a Sufi, he takes the better one.

From the above discussion, it is clear that according to these great Sufis, Sufism is nothing but the purification of the soul and will. It is the effacement of one's desires in the Will of God. In a nutshell, self-discipline, the avoidance of what is forbidden and the performance of what is ordained are the main theme of Sufism. The Sufis are agreed that all the ordinances imposed by God on His servants in His Holy Books, and all the duties laid down by the Prophet (SAW) in the traditions are a necessary obligation. These may not be abandoned or forsaken in any way by them. In this sense, Sufism is a purely Islamic discipline which builds up the character and inner life of the Muslims. The teaching of Sufism is not limited only to the purification of the soul but to acquire nearness to God.

Hence, it can be said that Sufism teaches how to purify one's self, improve one's morals and build up one's inner and outer life in order to attain perpetual bliss. Its subject matter is the purification of the soul and its aim is to attain the eternal felicity and blessedness, i.e., acquire love of God.

## **2. Sufism and Shari'ah**

In order to comprehend the true nature of Islamic mysticism or Sufism, we have to explain the relation between Sufism and Shari'ah. Sufism is the inward aspect of Islam and Shari'ah is the outward aspect of Islam. Islam consists of the combination of these two aspects.

In general sense, Shari'ah is the external introduction of personal and social law, i.e. it is the canon law of Islam, the totality of Allah's commandments.<sup>1</sup> According to Islamic terminology, Shari'ah is the way of life which God specified for His servants and ordered them to follow it. In a word, the way of life which consists of Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma, Qiyas is called Shari'ah. General Muslims consider Shari'ah, as the only way of life. On the other hand,

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1. *Islamic Bishochose*, (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, vol. ii, 1979), p. 616

Tasawwuf or Sufism is the expanded form of Islam which is based on Shari‘ah. Abiding by the rules and regulations of Shari‘ah, the way which the Sufis practice to establish the love of God in their heart is called *tariqat*

Source of knowledge of Shari‘ah is the Qur’an, Hadith and Fiqh. Though the roots of tasawwuf are the Holy Qur’an and Hadith, their inner meanings are apprehended through mystical experiences (*kashf*). By receiving such knowledge through *kashf*, Sufi enlightens his heart and by facing various kinds of obstacles Sufi proceeds stage by stage to his goal. In fact, Shari‘ah is the body of Islam and tasawwuf is the soul of it.

In the early stage of Islam, there was no difference between theologians and Sufi views. But in the later time, by giving importance upon the teaching of various aspects of the Qur’an, Muslim society was divided into various groups, such as theologian, Sufi, Mutazila, Ashariya etc. Such kinds of division occurred as a result of giving importance on the particular aspect. Although there are some similarities among the aims of these groups, there are also some dissimilarities among them. Several differences between theologians (*Shari‘ah ist*) and Sufis, are given below.

1. By the Kalima ‘*Tai-i-ba*’ the theologians mean that there is no god but Allah, the only object of worship, and Hazrat Muhammad (saw) is His *Rasul* (Messenger). To the theologians the significance of ‘*La-i-laha*’ is that there is none to be worshiped but Allah. But its inner meanings, according to the the Sufis in real sense there is no being but Allah.
2. Orthodox Muslims put emphasis on the ordinary meaning of the Qur’an but the Sufis mention simultaneously the significance of both the external and the internal meanings. And they consider internal meaning more important.
3. Islam equally emphasises on reason (*aql*), religious traditions (*noql*) and intuition (*kashf*) and refers these three as sources of knowledge. But the general people put more importance to religious tradition and give less importance to reason and totally deny the necessity of intuition (*kashf*). Sufis give more importance to intuition. According

to them, the hidden meanings of revelation (*ohi*) would not be understood except intuition (*Kashf*).

4. General Muslims think that God is the greatest. He punishes the sinner and rewards the virtuous. So they worship God for the fear of Hell and hope of the Heaven. But to the Sufis, God is loving. They worship God only for His love, i.e., they worship God not for Heaven or for the fear of Hell but for His love. According to orthodox Muslim, relation between God and man is same as the relation between master and servant. But to the Sufis, relation between God and man is as like as lover and Beloved.
5. Orthodox Muslims think that by observing religious rules and regulations man can attain perfection through his own effort. Regarding this there is no necessity of Guide or Shaikh or spiriatual Guide. But according to Sufis, in order to travel to the Divine path (*tariqa*) the guidance of a Shaikh is a crying need. Without the guidance of a Guide it is impossible to proced a single step on the way of *tariqa*.
6. Most of the Sufis think that the goal of the human life is to achieve nearness of God. But to the orthodox Muslims, a man can never achieve the nearness of God or can unite with God, because union is possible between the similar kinds of objects. God is Creator and man is His creation. There is a basic difference between the Creator and creation. But Sufis think, God blows His own spirit (*Ruh*) into the man and this spirit (*ruh*) makes him vicegerent (*Khalifah*) of God on earth. Concerning the union between Allah and human being the Sufis say that it is in fact the spiritual union, although the Sufis are also divided of this concept.
7. For spiritual fulfillment, Sufis feel the necessity of passing several stages. Passing these stages one by one Sufi achieves the highest stage, the union with the God. But the orthodox Muslims are not aware of these stages.



8. The distinction between the Sufi's position and that of the orthodox theologians lie in the fact that the theologians regard the law (*shari'ah*) and Reality (*Haqiqah*) as one and the same, while the Sufi considers that the two are so different from each other that unless one explicitly recognizes the difference, one is apt to commit a fundamental error.<sup>1</sup> Reality from this point of view is a special aspect of God. Man can never completely comprehend it, whereas the *shari'ah* is a code of human conduct which man can and must aspire to understand and act upon as completely as possible. Hence, the law is one of the acts acquired by man but the truth is one of the gifts of God.
9. The understanding of *Shari'ah* requires no special faculty other than the one which an average human being applies in solving the problems of his daily life. But the understanding of esoteric aspect of religion requires a special capacity which is the privilege of the prophets and saints.<sup>2</sup>

The above mentioned differences between a Sufi and an orthodox Muslim are based in fact on understanding the inner side of Islam. Sufi co-ordinates both external and internal side of Islam but the orthodox Muslims are the only spokesman of external side of Islam. As they are unaware of the internal (*batini*) aspect of religion, they are not able to understand their importance. Infact, religion consists of both inner and outer aspects. Both the aspects are to be conjoined.

### **3. Origin of Sufism**

Many opinions have been expressed regarding the origin of Sufism. Some express that the roots of Sufism lay in pre-Islamic religious traditions; while other argue that the Qur'anic injunctions and the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provided the bases of Sufi doctrines and practices. Late thirteenth/nineteenth and early fourteenth/twentieth century Western orientalists

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1. M.M. Sharif, ed. *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol.i (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2004) p. 318

2. *Loc. cit.*

generally corroborate the former view, while the later day historians and scholars generally maintain the latter position. According to F. H. Palmer, Sufism is the development of the primal religion of the Aryan race.<sup>1</sup>

Nicholson points out to the external or non-Islamic influences on Sufism, which include Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, Buddhism, and Vedantism. But he has added that the seeds of Sufism were inherent in Islam, and these internal forces within Islam can not be isolated from the external factors. He also says: "The great non-Islamic systems ...gave a stimulus to various tendencies within Islam which affected Sufism either positively or negatively."<sup>2</sup>

According to Philip k.Hitti, Sufism has its origin in the Qur'an and Hadith, though later on it has absorbed elements from Christianity, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism and Buddhism.<sup>3</sup> Trimmingham considers Sufism, a natural development within Islam which owed little to non- Muslim sources. He, however, adds that it is received "radiations from the ascetical-mystical life and thought of Eastern Christianity."<sup>4</sup>

While critically reviewing the varied theories of the origin of Sufism, Edward G. Browne gives his verdict in favour of the theory that Sufism represents the Esoteric Doctrine of the Prophet (SAW) of Islam.<sup>5</sup> In the same way, Louis Massignon, a renowned French scholar of Sufism altogether rejected the view that Sufism was alien to Islam. Instead he has argued that "It is from the Qur'an, constantly recited, meditated upon; applied that Islamic mysticism proceeds in its origin and development."<sup>6</sup> Among the well known scholars, H.A.R. Gibb corroborates the views of Louis Massignon.<sup>7</sup> Again, khaliq Ahmad Nizami has suggested that, the origin of the Sufi ideas can be traced back to the Qur'anic and Prophetic traditions. He rejected the view that Sufi doctrines owe their origin to

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1. E.H. Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism: A Treatise on Sufistic and Unitarian Theosophy of the Persians*, (London: Luzac, first published, 1867, rpt., 1969), pp. 9-11

2. For a detailed see, Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, (Beirut: Khayat Book and Publishing Company, 1914, rpt.), pp. 8-23

3. Philip k. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, (London: Macmillan, 1958), p. 433

4. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.2

5. Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. I, 1977, rpt., first Published 1902), pp. 418-19

6. Louis Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique mystique musulmane*, (Paris: J. Vrin, 1954), p. 104

7. R.A. Gibb, *Mohammedanism: A Historical Survey*, (New York: Oxford University Press 1963), p.128

the Greek, Vendantic or Buddhist philosophies.<sup>1</sup> Concerning the origin of Sufism, we can get the best idea from Muhammad Iqbal. According to Muhammad Iqbal, “No idea can seize a people’s soul unless in some sense, it is in the people’s own. External influence may wake it up from its deep unconscious slumber; but they cannot-, so to speak, create it out of nothing ...Von kremer and Dozy derive Persian Sufism from the Indian Vedanta: Merx and Mr. Nicholson derive it from Neo-Platonism, while Professor Browne, once regarded it as Aryan reaction against an unemotional semitic religion.

It appears to me however, that these theories have been worked out under the influence of a notion of causation which is essentially false.”<sup>2</sup>

He also says: “It can, I think, be easily shown that in the Qur’an as well as in the authenticated traditions, there are germs of Sufi doctrine which, owing to the thoroughly practical genius of the Arabs, could not develop and fructify in Arabia, but which grew up into a distinct doctrine when they found favourable circumstances in alien soils.”<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, many scholars of Sufism, including its proponents, trace its origin in the Qur’an and the practice of the Holy Prophet (SAW), and cite a number of Qur’anic verses and Hadiths in support of their assertion.<sup>4</sup>

From the above discussion, we can say that though the basic origin of Sufism is Qur’an and Hadith, there are some external influences on the way of its development. But is not true that Sufism is derived from others mysticism. Because all mystical traditions, associated with different religions of the world have something in common, but the similarities and the commonalities do not necessarily mean that the latter were a borrowing from the former in terms of their doctrinal systems, methods and practices. Moreover, like any other mystical traditions, Sufism did not develop void of intellectual. When the Muslims came in

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1. For a detailed, see in Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tarikh-I Mashaikh-i Chisht*, (Delhi: Idarah-i -Adabiyat-i Delhi, 1980), pp. 45-49

2. Muhammad Iqbal, *Development of Metaphysics in Persia: A Contribution to the History of Muslim Philosophy*, (East Lansing, Mi.H-Bahai 2001, first published, London: Luzac and company, 1908), pp. 76-77

3. *Ibid.*, p. 84

4. For a brief discussion, see, *Yusuf Salim Chishti, Tarikh-i Tasawwuf: Hindi, Yunani, Islami*, (Lahore: Ulama Academy, 1976), pp. 104-22; For Some Quranic verses and Hadith relation to Sufism, see Stoddart, *Sufism : The Mystical Doctrines and Methods of Islam*, pp. 77-82

contact with the people of other races, cultures, and intellectual traditions, a mutual exchange of ideas was inevitable. The Sufis too imbibed ideas and concepts as well as practices from them, which helped to develop the Sufi doctrines further.

### **Place of Sufism in Islam**

Now, we proceed to sketch the development of Sufism from the very beginning of its existence, so as to judge whether the Muslim Divines derived their inspiration from foreign sources or from their Holy Book. We have previously mentioned that Sufism came into being towards the close of the second or beginning of the third century of the Islamic era.

In a sense, it is a mistaken idea which leads some modern scholars to connect Sufism with Greek philosophy which had by that time begun to creep into the minds of some of the learned Muslims. The fact is that, Sufism is as old as Islam itself. It was brought into being as soon as the verses of the mystical cult were revealed to the Prophet (SAW). It cannot be denied by Arabic knowing scholars that the Qur'an is often allegorical with a mystical touch. As for example: "He(God) is first and last, visible and invisible, and He is the knower of everything" (57.3).

"God's hand was above their hands" (48.10).

"When you shot the arrow it was not you who shot, but God shot" (8.17).

"Everyday he is in a new manifestations" (55.29).

"And you do not wish unless God wishes" (85.20).

"Allah is the highest of the Heaven and the earth" (24.35).

"I breathed into man, My Spirit" (25.29).

"Witherso ever ye turn, there is the face of Allah" (11.115).

"There is no god but He, everything is perishing except His face" (28.88).

"So it was not ye who slew them but God slew them: thou didn't cast (arrows) when thou didst cast, but God cast" (8.17).

"For I am nearer to him than his jugular vein" (50.16).

Such verses emphatically prove that the universe with all its contents is merely a reflection of the Divine Being. It was the desire of self-expression on the

part of God which ultimately led to the creation of universe. In a *Hadith-e-Qudsi*, God said to the Prophet (SAW): "I was a hidden Treasure, and I desired to be known; and therefore, I made the creation that I might be known."

These mystical expressions are further corroborated by the traditions, which say:

"Whosoever knoweth himself knoweth his Lord."

"My servant continues to draw near to Me through works of Supererogation until I love him. And when I love him I am his ear, so that he hears by Me, and his eyes so that he sees by Me, and his hands so that he takes by Me."

"My earth and My Heaven contain Me not, but the heart of My faithful servant containeth Me"

Now, it is the all-absorbing character of the God that mentioned in the Qur'an and tradition, which served as the basis of the future theory of "Unity of Existence" or "Pantheism." All Sufis aim at annihilating themselves in the Creator, because they believe in the core of their hearts that He is the only real existence and the rest is only His manifestation. Again, "Love" is the foundation stone of Sufism. Sufi's attempt is to reach the Highest stage of spiritually on the wings of love and devotion. This love must be pure and perfect, selfless and disinterested. This basic part of Sufism was also furnished by the Qur'an and the tradition. God says:

"Tell (them) if you love God, follow me (Prophet, SAW), God will love you" (111.30).

Those who believe have exceeding love for God" (11.165),

"God loves those who turn to Him constantly. And He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2.222).

"He loves them and who love Him" (5.54).

"Then do remember Me, I will remember" (2.152).

"God loves not the evildoers (3.140); God loves the good-doers" (3.34).

"God appears as either lover or beloved" (85.14).

Again, the Prophet (SAW) says:

"None has belief who does not love."

"Man is with him whom he loves."

"Belief means that, God and His messenger are beloved by you more than anything else."

“Love God, because of the favours He bestows on you and love me (Muhammad, SAW), because God loves me.”

“Oh God, give me Your love and the love of those who love You and make Your love beloved to me more than cold waters.”

From the above quotations, it can rightly be inferred that the seed of Sufism was sown in the very beginning of Islam. The Prophet (SAW) himself displayed mystical inclinations, and used to resort to some hidden places e.g., cave *Hira* for meditation and devotion. He was often found in the state of complete absorption in his Lord. His intimate association did not fail to imitate him. A section of the companions from their acceptance of the faith, had been mystical in tendency and ascetic in practice. They had cut themselves off from worldly affairs, and passed their time in a portico of the mosque of the Prophet (SAW) in meditation, prayer and devotion. They are known as “*Ahl-us-Suffa*”, from which the word Sufi was sought to be derived by the early Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

The early Caliphs, who were the busiest rulers in the world, occasionally indulged in mystical expressions. They denied the existence of things other than God, and ascribe every action of the universe to the Divine Hands. Mystical inclinations in the beginning were confined to a small section of Muslims only. But afterwards, it spread among others as a result of the great catastrophe that overtook the Muslim world during and after the reign of the Caliph Uthman. The unshakable unity of the believers was shaken, the brotherhood of Islam was shattered, swords were unsheathed and Muslims began to hit one another's heads. These horrors and atrocities accelerated the progress of quietism or asceticism in the pious circles of the Muslim community.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the period of the Orthodox Caliphate, a group of selfless people sprang up, who had practically retired from the busy world. These Muslims, after renouncing all sorts of luxury and enjoyment, surrendered themselves to the Supreme Being, to Whom alone they appealed for favour of protection from the worldly atrocities. Slowly, but steadily, this group increased in

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1. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *Muslim Thought and its Source. op. cit.*, pp. 81-82

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-82

number and in strength. They took their stand on those verses of the Qur'an which characterize the world as transient and devotion to God, as the highest good for humanity.<sup>1</sup> Neither had they been conversant with foreign languages, nor had they occasion to mix with the Greeks or Aryans, or with those who were known as philosophers. They were too much absorbed in their Lord to think of their things. These earlier mystics (meditative and ascetic Muslim) who, whether so entitled or not, were essentially Sufis and are called as such by their successors.<sup>2</sup>

The prominent Sufis of the period of asceticism are al-Hasan al-Bashri, (d.728 A.D.), Habib Ajmi, Ibrahim bin Adham (d. 777 A.D.), Daud at tayi (d.781-82 A.D.). Fudayl bin Iyad (d 803 A.D.), Maruf of karkh (d.815 A.D.), Shaqiq Balkhi (d.810 A.D.), Rabia al-Adawiyya (d.752-753 A.D). It is needless to say, that these saints had nothing to do with Greek or Aryan Philosophy.

The Sufis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century were usually orthodox and law-abiding. They cultivated poverty, self-abasement, and resignation. If they loved God, they feared him more, and on the whole their mysticism lacked positive qualities as well as distinctive theories. They stand midway between asceticism (*zuhd*) and theosophy or gnosis (*ma'rifat*). The word that describes their attitude best is 'quietism (*rida*).<sup>3</sup> Some of their important ethical sayings are given below:

### **Sayings of Hasan of Basrah**

1. "A man should speak the truth even though he is excited through anger."
2. "A grain of genuine piety is better than a thousand fold weight of fasting and prayer."
3. "Beware of this world, for it is like a snake, smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly."
4. "Cleanse these hearts (by meditation and remembrance of God), for they are quick to rust; and restrain ye these souls, for they desire eagerly and if ye restrain them not, they will drag you to an evil end."

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi*, p. 418

3. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, New York, Vol. 12, p. 11

## **Sayings of Ibrahim Adham**

1. "If you wish to be the friend of God or to be loved by Him, renounce this world and the next; empty yourself of these two worlds and turn face toward Him. Then God will turn His face toward you and overwhelm you with His grace."

"You will not attain to righteousness until you traverse six passes:

Firstly, you shut the door of pleasure and open the door of hardship.

Secondly, you shut the door of eminence and open the door of abasement.

Thirdly, you shut the door of ease and open the door of affliction.

Fourthly, you shut the door of sleep and open the door of wakefulness.

Fifthly, you shut the door of riches and open the door of poverty.

Sixthly, you shut the door of expectation and open the door of making yourself ready to die."<sup>1</sup>

## **Sayings of Rabiya al-Adawiyya**

1. "He is a bad servant who worships God for fear of punishment or desire for paradise; God is worth of worship even if there is no motive of fear or reward."
2. "O God! Give to Thine enemies whatever Thou hast assigned to me of this world's goods and to Thy friends whatever Thou hast assigned to me in the life of the Hereafter, for Thou Thyself art sufficient for me."
3. "O God! If I worship Thee for fear of Hell, send me to Hell and if I worship Thee in hopes of Paradise, withhold Paradise from me, but if I worship Thee for Thine ownsake, withhold not from me the Eternal Beauty."

The center of mystical activity later shifted from Basra to Baghdad, which had become the political and religious capital of the whole empire after al-Mansur, founded it in 762. Among the mystics of Baghdad, the most noteworthy are Ma'ruf al-Karkhi (d.815), Mansru b. Ammar (d.839), Bishr b.al-

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1. Quoted in R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of Arabs*, Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 1994, p. 323



Hafi (d. 842) Ibn Abi' Dunia 894.<sup>1</sup> The second stage of evolution of Sufism starts from second half of ninth century to first half of tenth century by these Sufis of Baghdad. Like Sufism in every period of its history, the new Sufism of third century is also the product of diverse forces— speculative developments of the Mohammadan monotheistic idea, Christian asceticism and mysticism, Gnosticism, Greek and Indian philosophy etc.<sup>2</sup> This stage began with Maruf Karkhi (son of Firoz or Firozan).<sup>3</sup> He is described as a God intoxicated man. He defined Sufism as "the apprehension of Divine realities and renunciation of human possession."<sup>4</sup> He established himself as an eloquent preacher who admonished his audience to practice abstention and contentment with God's decree. According to him, saints of God are known by three signs: "Their thought is of God, their dwelling is with God and their business is in God." He also says: "Love is not learned from men; it is one of God's gifts and comes from His grace."

Maruf Karkhi was soon followed by one who is universally regarded as a pillar of Islamic mysticism, i.e., Thawban-bin-Ibrahim Dhul-Nun Misri (d.245 A.H./859-60 A.D). He is ascribed as the authorship of the mystical theories and doctrines.<sup>5</sup> He was a profound scholar, both a mystic and a philosopher. Like other early mystics, he practiced asceticism of extreme type.<sup>6</sup>

He regarded the temptation of self as the greatest veil,<sup>7</sup> and looked upon seclusion as indispensable for the promotion of sincerity in a Sufi. According to him, there are two different paths for the mystic to follow. The first path is to avoid sin, to leave the world and to control passion; the second path is to leave all

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1. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p.

2. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings. (New York, vol. 12), p. 11

3. He was a client and disciple of Iman Ali b. Musa ar-Rida, in whose presence he made profession of Islam, for he had been brought up as a christian or, possibly, as a sabian. (R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, Delhi: Adam publishers & Distributers, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1907, rpt., 1994, p. 385

4. *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 385

5. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *op. cit.*, p. 84

6. Khwajah Farid al-Din-Attar, *Tadhkirat al-Auliya*, (Bombay: Karimi Press 1321 A.H.), p. 78

7. *Ibid.*, p. 83

besides of God and empty the heart of everything.<sup>1</sup> It is a higher path. Al-Misri was careful to emphasize the purgatory character of ritual and mental prayer, as well as the practice of self- mortification.<sup>2</sup> Here it is mentioned that, the two greatest Sufis that the school of Bagdad produced were al-Muhasibi (d.857) and al-Junaid (d.919). Al-Muhasibi's mysticism rests of two pillars: self examination (*al-Muhasabah*), and readiness to suffer the worst tribulations in the service of God.<sup>3</sup> The touchstone of genuine piety, according to him, is death, and the token of the great virtue of fortitude (*al sabar*) is readiness to suffer. Without rejecting the validity of the ritual basis of worship, al-Muhasibi insisted on the inward aspect of belief.

Abul Qasim al-Junaid is regarded in the Sufi tradition as one of the foremost pioneers and is universally respected.<sup>4</sup>

He was perfect in every branch of science and spoke with authority on the theology, jurisprudence, and ethics.<sup>5</sup> His influence on the subsequent development of Sufism was very great.<sup>6</sup> According to him, only he can truly traverse the path (*tariqah*) who walks with the book of God (al-Qur'an) in his right hand and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in his left hand. Once the soul has become cleansed of its sins, it becomes fit to receive its Lord and to hold spiritual converse with Him in intimate fellowship.

Gradually Sufism turned into doctrinal aspect. Bayazid al-Bistami (d.261/874 A.D.) and al-Husayan bin Mansur al-Hallaj (d.398 A.H/922 A.D.) drifted the Sufi teaching towards the doctrine of Unity of Being (*wahadat al-wujud*).<sup>7</sup> Bayazid of Bistam was a contemporary of Dhul Nun Misri. He made some improvements on the existing condition of mysticism by introducing the

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 89; To him, mystical path consisted in a series of stations (*Maqamat*) which the mystic must travel, and a corresponding series of states (*ahwal*) with which God might favor him.

2. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 239

3. *Ibid.*, p. 237

4. Here it is mentioned that it was Junaid who systematized the mystical doctrines and put them in black and white. He also harmonized the esoteric and exoteric forms of the faith and succeeds in bringing about cordial relations between the adherents of the two.

5. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 128

6. According to Junaid: We learned Sufism not through words but through hunger, the renunciation of this world and through depriving ourselves from the things which we are accustomed to and in which we take delight. (Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushyriah*, Eng. tr. Alexander Knysh, entitled, *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, Doha: Center for Research on the Muslim Contribution to Civilization, n.d.) p. 43.)

7. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.* p. 139

doctrine of self- effacement and self-annihilation. This doctrine was really the logical consequence of the absorption or ecstasy taught by Dhul- Nun Misri. Bayazid declared that unless a man loses himself in God he cannot obtain a clue to the Divinity.<sup>1</sup> These two ideas of self annihilation and absorption paved the way for the development of the theory of Unity of Being in Islamic mysticism.<sup>2</sup> According to al-Hallaj, man is essentially divine, because he was created by God in His own image. In al-Hallaj, we have the supreme example of Unity of Being. Here it is mentioned that, it was Junayed who systematized the mystical doctrine and put them in black and white. It was however, reserved for Ghazali to popularize mysticism among various sections of the Muslim community.

By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Sufism had been strongly established in the Muslim lands. It earned approval and wide ranging appeal among people. In fact, in the last quarter of eleventh and early year of twelfth centuries, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1098-1111 A.D.) tried to reconcile Sufism with the *Shari'ah*, thus bridging the gulf between the two.<sup>3</sup> His younger contemporary, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166) further popularized Sufism. So Martin Lings writes: "If Ghazali more than anyone else may be said to have prepared the way for general recognition of sufism, it was his younger contemporary Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani who was to make the recognition fully operative."<sup>4</sup>

As the Juristic and Sufi versions of Islam came closer to each other, more people including the jurists belonging to various schools of *fiqh* (Muslim jurisprudence) started entering the fold of Sufism. Lessons in jurisprudence were given in the *khanqahs* while Sufism in the *madrasahs* as well. As a result, the institutions of *madrasah* and *khanqah* were later merged at the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>5</sup> The process of assimilation of the juristic and Sufi variants of Islam gave further impulse to the popularity of Sufism in Muslim societies.

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1. Syed Muzaffaruddin Nadvi, *op. cit.*, 85

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. For detailed, see, Montgomery watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935).

4. Martin lings, *What is Sufism*, (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 2nd ed., 1981), p. 111

5. For a detailed, see-Janathan Berkey, *The Transmission of knowledge: A Social History of Islamic Education*, (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1992), P.47

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century A. H we find further development of Sufism in Spain and Persia. Muhiyyu'd-Din idnu 'I-'Arabi (d. 638 A. H.1240 A. D) may be regarded as the first Spanish Sufi. In Spain, we get another Sufi 'Abdu' l-Haqq ibn Sab'in (d. 667 A.H). In Persia, Jalalu'd-Din Rumi (d. 672 A.H) practically completes the golden age of Sufism. His great mystical poem the 'Mathnavi' has received an extraordinary reverence.

The doctrine of Unity of Being reached to its culmination in the writing of Ibnu 'l-Arabi.<sup>1</sup> The teachings of Ibnu 'l-'Arabi had been a great source of inspiration for the subsequent Sufis who followed doctrine of *wahdatul wujud*. Even Rumi is supposed to have had a share on it. Later Sufis such as Iraqi (d-686 A.H.), Shabistari (d. 720 A.H), Qashani (d. 730 A.H.), al-Jili (d. 811 A.H.) Ja'mi (d.898 A.H.) and others bear evident marks of Rumi's influence. Among the Sufis of Indo-Pakistan of this period Khwajah Mu'inu'd-Din chisti (d-1234 A.D.) exerted a great enduring influence. Sufi prior to him was Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri, renowned as Data Gonja Bakhsh- the auther of monumental work in Sufism, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*. The most prominent Sufis of the sub-continent were Sufis were: Bakhtyar kaki (d.1236 A.D.), Najamuddin Awliya of Delhi, Fariduddin Ganja Shakar, Alauddin Saber Kaliari, Sharfuddin Maneri etc.

#### **4. Sufi Doctrines**

Sufism is a vast and diverse subject. It is not a regular organized school. For it is manifested in different shapes and ages and countries. Moreover, divergent tendencies can be found in the teaching of distinguished Sufis who founded different Sufi Tariqas (orders). So, it is not possible to make any accurate view concerning the doctrines or traits which will be acceptable to all the Sufis.

In spite of the divergence, a family likeness may be traced among them and some common points may be enumerated.

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<sup>1</sup> Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op.cit.*p.140

## God

Sufi conception of God is a bit different from that of Orthodox Islam. The Muslim regards that God is unique in its essence, qualities and acts; He is absolutely unlike all other beings. But Sufi means that God is the one Real Being which underlies all phenomena. Sufism interprets the first part of the kalmia “*La ilaha illa llah*” not as “Nothing is adorable but Allah but as nothing is existent but Allah. So, according to them, God is the only Reality, all else are illusive. But about the nature of this Reality, the Sufis are not unanimous. According to Sufi Philosophy, Reality is the universal will, eternal-light, and supreme beauty, whose nature is self-manifestation, reflected in the mirror of the universe.

According to Dhul Nun Misri, God is the All-prevailing, the All-knowing, the All-wise, the All-just, the All-true. He acknowledges Him in the proof of His Handiwork and the evidence of His acts.<sup>1</sup> So far, essence of God was considered light, but in the post al-Ghazali period, under the influence of Neo-Platonism God came to be known as ‘Thought’. But all the schools of Sufism are unanimous that the Ultimate Reality is supreme Mind like a human mind, from whom all life and existence have emanated just as ideas emerge from a human mind.

For some, the emanation is in essence, for others it is in thought and for still others the phenomenal world is reflection of the real ideas present in the Supreme mind.<sup>2</sup> But in the later Sufism, the sensual objects are also God in essence.<sup>3</sup> The Ultimate Reality in its essence is attributeless, nameless, indescribable, and incomprehensible, but when covered with *avidya* or descent from its absoluteness, names and attributes are formed.<sup>4</sup> God’s essence is unknowable through deductive and reflective knowledge, but can be realized directly in intuition.

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1. A. J Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1969 fifth impression, first Published 1950), pp. 52-53; A.M.A. Shushtery, *Outline of the Islamic Culture*, Vol.2, (Bangalore: The Bangalore Press 1938), p. 486
  2. S. Radhakrishnan, *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western*, Vol.2, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. Revised ed. 1929, p. 185
  3. Vide- A. E. Affifi’s *Mystical Philosophy of Muhyiuddin Ibnal Arabi*, (London: Cambridge University Press), p. 54.
  4. A.M.A. shushtery, *op. cit.*, p. 486

## Concept of the universe

The universe or the external world has been explained by the Sufis as the manifestation of God Himself. Accordingly, it is believed that the life and the phenomenal world, before emanating, were latent in the mind of God, the Supreme Mind. As a natural consequence of the impulsive principle of love there is emanation from God Himself and through a series of emanations the universe is evolved. Thus, God is pervading in each and every existence. For the early Sufis the Divine Reality is not visible, but is hidden, behind the visible and invisible. For them, as the self of man is divine and different from his body, hence, divine element is pervading in the universe but different from matter.

The knowledge of the world illumines soul which yearns for the union with God. Thus, the world is helpful in achieving the union with God. But the world is the manifestation or the reflection of something which is real and the man is to attain the Real and not the reflection of the manifestation. So the world, though created by God, reflecting His Wisdom, His Art and His power, is the object of neither attainment nor hatred. Man, in ignorance, takes the reflection or the manifestation as real and hankers after it. The world has the capacity to attract the soul.

It attracts it, gives birth to the *nafs* in the man and imprisons it. Later Sufism is pantheistic which does not believe in any second principle other than God. To them, the material world proceeds from Him like the flowing of a river.

## The goal of life

According to the orthodox Muslims, the aim of human life is the avoidance of Hell and attainment of Heaven.<sup>1</sup> But according to Sufis, the goal of life is attainment of God i.e., union with God.<sup>2</sup> This union is the basis of Sufi ethics; it is the *Summum bonum*, the Highest ideal. Imam Ghazali more explicitly elucidated it. According to Imam Ghazali, the *Summum bonum* is the realization of the vision

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, pp.184-86

2. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.*, p.145

of God, in the next world. This everlasting bliss, the complete end or ideal, will be achieved through one's love for God as demonstrated by one's conduct in this world.<sup>1</sup> But the intensity of love towards God is conditioned by one's knowledge of God.

That is, man's love for God which is the supreme end in this life and the vision of God which is the complete end or the *Summum bonum* in the next, are direct consequence of the knowledge of God.<sup>2</sup> Now this knowledge is achieved through the purification of the heart, which breeds love, which in its turn leads to the complete vision.

### Source of knowledge

According to Sufis, real knowledge of God can only be attained by means of *kashf* or intuition;<sup>3</sup> reason is not at all helpful in attaining the knowledge of God.<sup>4</sup> It is mentioned that concept of gnosis or intuitive knowledge (*ma'arifah or hikmah*) as a means of comprehending God was first articulated by Dhu'l Nun al-Misri.<sup>5</sup>

Intuitive or esoteric knowledge is opposite to the knowledge acquired through the five senses and reason (ilm or exoteric knowledge). As the concept of *Ma'arifah* or intuitive knowledge comes very close to revelation to the Prophet (SAW), the *ulama* who possesses knowledge of Islamic law or *Shari'ah*, becomes highly critical of the Sufi. For this, during fourth/tenth century some important Sufis had to give their lives on charges related to the claim of intuitive knowledge.

### Self

No sound ethical system is possible without a firm psychological foundation. If we examine the psychological nature of man, we can find that all psychological phenomena originate in the self. The concept of the self is

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1. M. Umaruddin, *The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazali*, (Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1962), p.86.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. Tanvir Anjum, "Sufism in History and its Relation with Power," in *Islamic Studies*, Vol. 45, no. 2, 2006, (Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute), p. 251.

expressed in Arabic by four terms, viz *Qalb* (heart), *Ruh* (soul), *Nafs*, (desire nature), and *Aql* (intellect, reason).<sup>1</sup> Each of these terms signifies a spiritual entity.

According to Sufis, Qalb or hearts are three, one physical on the left side; another called the animal soul, on the right side; and a third between the other two.<sup>2</sup> Again some Sufis say, man has two souls- one is rational and the other is animal called *nafs*.<sup>3</sup> The rational soul is considered the true self of man which is different from his body. It is a spiritual substance created but not shaped. It is not bound by space and time but it is akin to universal soul and just as the latter is a macrocosm, it is microcosm of the universe. It may be compared with the Universal Soul as rays are to the sun. It is not body but affects the body with its illuminative attribute.

About *Ruh* (the self) Junaid says: only God knows its essence and nature. Nothing more can be said about it. Again, Abu Sa'id al-Kharaz says, '*Ruh* is created and due to it, the body gets existence and life. Intelligence and reason are associated with it.'<sup>4</sup>

The *Nafs* is associated with material life and carnal desire. The rational soul in its essence is potentially good and pure, and therefore, can succeed in killing the animal soul (*nafs*) and join its original source. It is restless because of its separation from its source and seeking union with it.<sup>5</sup> When it turns to the *nafs* it is separate and restless, but when it turns to its source, i.e., God, it is united and is in blissful state.<sup>6</sup>

The main objects of morals are the cleansing and purification of the heart. Al- Ghazali calls it *Tazkiyy an-Nafs* means purification of the self. *Tahdhib al-Akhiaq* means cleaning, pruning and polishing of character. To him, the self of man needs lopping and pruning or cleansing, since by implicating the lower

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1. Imam Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-din*, Eng. tr. Maulana Fazlur Karim, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2003), fifth ed. Vol. 3, pp. 4-5

2. P Archer, *The Sufi Mystery*, (London: The Octagon Press, first published, 1980), p. 63; A.M.A Shushtrey, *Outline of Islamic Culture*, p. 474

3. S.R. Sharda, *Sufi Thought*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, pvt. Ltd. first pub. 1974), p. 27.

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. A.M.A Shushteri; *op. cit.*, p. 358

6. *Ibid.*, p. 595



nature of man, his appetites, and passions have acquired mastery of its higher nature. Hence, this lower nature should be controlled and brought under the subjugation of the higher nature viz., reason, by removing the vices.<sup>1</sup>

The lower nature must not be wholly annihilated. It must be pruned in such a way that it does not cause any harm.

Tazkiyya an-Nafs is realized through Amal and through *Mujahadda*.<sup>2</sup> *Amal* means action, but in its wider connotation it means the subjugation of the appetites and impulses in such a way that the self, turning away from them, attracts only towards God.<sup>3</sup> So that it is purged of all evil and low associations. When it is achieved, the self is occupied with the sight of God and then the blessings of God begin to pour on him as they pour on the saints, the prophets and the sincere ones. On the other hand, *mujahada* (struggle against vice) is like the medical treatment of the self for purging it of impurities.<sup>4</sup> True knowledge is achieved by means of the struggling of the self, i.e., we will reach our aim by means of *Mujahadan an- Nafs*. This is only a gift and grant out of the generosity of God. But in order to deserve this gift one has to make oneself capable of receiving it by cleansing the self and making it free from uncleanness and contamination.

The nature and signification of these expressions explain clearly the aim of morality. Firstly, good conduct is not something which can be superimposed from outside. It is an inner development of the self. The self, therefore, can develop to its full height and can attain its natural beauty only if it is allowed to grow unhampered without the temptations of the flesh. The Qur'anic verse– ‘He will indeed be successful who purifies it (the self), and he will fail who corrupts it’ (91:9-10). Secondly, good character does not demand the total destruction of natural propensities. They are necessary for the body. But they should be under the complete control of reason.

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1. Al-Ghazali, *Kimiya-i-Saadat*, p. 6ff quoted in M. Umaruddin's. "The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazali, p. 92

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. M. Umaruddin *op. cit.*, 91

4. *Ibid.*, p. 92

## Relation between God and man

According to Sufis, relation between man and God is that of the lover and the Beloved. God created the universe out of love and man in His own image.<sup>1</sup> So in human soul, there is the Divine Attribute of love. This impels man to pine for the union with God.

Love for God, (*mahabbad*) is the central idea in a Sufi's life, which requires moral perfection of self. But a Sufi believes that he may be blessed with love by God; love is satisfied with nothing less than God Himself. It is mentioned that the notion of disinterested love for God was clearly articulated perhaps for the first time by Rabi'ah al-Basri. Because of her advocacy for disinterested love of God, she became the model of selfless love among the Sufi circles. She urged to worship God, out of love, instead of owing to fear of Hell or desire for Paradise. She taught that a Sufi must love God for His Own sake.<sup>2</sup> Other Sufis like Dhu'l Nun al-Misri, Sari al- saqati and Junaid al- Baghdadi further articulated the idea.

## Fana

*Fana* or obliteration or annihilation of the self is the last station of the Sufi journey to God. Another associated doctrine is that of subsistence or permanence (*baqa*). By *fana* (annihilation), the Sufis refer to the disappearance of blameworthy qualities. Whereas by 'Subsistence' (*baqa*), they refer to the persistence of praiseworthy qualities.<sup>3</sup> The servant of God cannot but have one of these two types of qualities. Because it is well known that if he does not have one type, he will inevitably have the other. Whoever annihilates his own will, subsists in the Will of God.

The Sufis use the word '*fana*' in different senses. According to Abu Bakr al-Kalabadi, passing away is a state in which all passions pass away, so that the mystic experience no feelings towards anything whatsoever, and loses all sense of

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1. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *op. cit.*, p. 145

2. Margaret Smith, *Rabia The Mysticis and Her Fellow Saints in Islam*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 rpt. first published 1928), pp. 96-110

3. Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 89

discrimination; he has passed away from all things, and is wholly absorbed with that through which he has passed away. Others believe that '*fana*' implies the nullification of all kinds of consciousness. Hence, the author of the doctrine (*fana*), Abu Sa'id al-kharraz says: "Annihilation is annihilation of the consciousness of manhood, and subsistence is subsistence in the contemplation of Godhead."<sup>1</sup>

The word *fana* is also used in the sense of the transformation of human attributes into Divine Attributes. To Junaid, '*fana*' is the assimilation of the individual will in the Will of God.

When a Sufi abandons the evil deeds, denounced by the Divine law, it is said that he is annihilated from his passions. And when he is annihilated from his passions, he subsists in the service of God, through his determination and sincerity.<sup>2</sup> When someone renounces this world, it is said that he is annihilated from his desire. And when he is annihilated from his desire, he subsists in the sincerity of his repentance.<sup>3</sup>

When someone has refined his morals by cleansing his heart from envy, malice, avarice, greed, anger and pride, as well as any other impurities that adhere to the soul; it is said: "He has been annihilated from the base traits of character."<sup>4</sup> And when one is annihilated from bad morals, one subsists in chivalry and truthfulness. When one is annihilated from his characteristics he advances to the next one at which he loses the sight of his annihilation.

Summing up all these, we can say total annihilation of self is experienced after passing through various stages.<sup>5</sup> At first stage, human qualities are annihilated. At the second stage, annihilation of the vision of God takes place. Then come the last stage of the annihilation of annihilation which is a mark of perfect state of *fana*. Here everything related to the seeker of God passes away and the soul enjoys eternal rest in God.

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1. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 245

2. Abul Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 89

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. M. Hamiduddin, "Early Sufis: Doctrine" ed., M.M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim philosophy*, (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1st Published, 1961, rpt., 2004. Vol. 1, p. 333

## 5. Evaluation of Sufism

There is no theory in Philosophy above criticism. As a doctrine of theology, Sufism is also not above criticism. Many scholars have mentioned its different faults. Such as–

Firstly, some critics say that nowadays what exists in the name of Sufism or what people perceive to be Sufism, is nothing but a sort of ignorance, superstitious practices, religious exploitation, excessive ritualism and spiritual consumerism. In response to this critic we can say that if we adopt an objective and fair assessment of Sufism we find that Sufism is an authentic expression of Islam, deeply rooted in its history. Those beliefs and practices are against the basic teachings of Islam cannot be considered as the aspects of Sufism. Moreover, History testifies to the transformational role that Sufism played in the spread of Islam across the world. It were Sufi shaykhs who introduced Islam to many places in the world which today turned into major Muslim population.

Secondly, pessimism, i.e., withdrawal from worldly affairs is a common accusation leveled against the Sufis. But this view is not acceptable. In the time of Self mortification, sometimes the Sufis detached themselves from the society for a time being, but when they are enlightened they return to the society for the welfare of humanity. History testifies the efforts of Sufis, who engaged themselves for the service of humanity as well as in Jihad to protect the freedom of their people. Such as Sanusiya movement of Libya, Abd al-Qadir al-Jazairi's resistance against French occupation in Algeria or the efforts of Naqshbandi Sufis fighting against Russian aggression or Hazrat Shajalal (Rah)'s arrival at Sylhet and his fighting against Raja Gobinda's tyrannical rule.

Thirdly, some critics branded Sufism as *bidah* and *shirk* and its adherents labeled deviants, innovators, and even polytheists. In this context, they mentioned the name of Hambalite scholar Ibn Taymiya who rejected Sufism. However, a careful reading of his works proves that his position actually represents an objective and balanced assessment. In his treatise *al-Tuhfa al-iraqiah fi al amal – al qalbiyah*, he says:

The corrupt doctrines and practices that have infected these people have caused some groups to reject the way of the Sufis altogether, root and branch,

such that those who veer from the proper course in this regard fall into two groups: (i) a group that accepts both what is true and what is false of the Sufi way; and (ii) a group that rejects both what is true and what is false of the way of Sufis, such as many groups of theologians and jurists. And the right position is simply to accept of this way, as well as any other way, that which is consistent with the Book and the Sunna, and to reject of it, as well other ways, that which violates the Book and the Sunna.

This proves that he was not against Sufism altogether.

Summing up the above discussion we can say that all human endeavours—individual or collective are subject to errors and mistakes and Sufism holds no special privilege in this regard. The spirit of self-criticism is an integral part of the Sufi heritage and legacy. Al-Wasiti said: “At first Sufis were given clear indications; then these became motions and now nothing remains but sorrow,” Siraj al-Tusi in his book *al-Luma'* devotes a whole section to deviance and excesses of Sufism. This self regulatory trend within Sufism continued in the works of great Sufi personalities like al-Sulami, al-Qushayri, Hujwiri, al-Ghazali and others. In avoiding ambiguous mystical language of Sufism, many other works were also penned paving the way for a more accessible and comprehensible presentation of Sufism so that it “inspires and provides instruction on personal piety and self-refinement.

Here it may be mentioned that, the controversy about Sufism is the result of some factors such as, the adoption of a fragmented vision of Islam; the emergence of philosophical and mystical Sufism; the misuse and abuse of authentic Sufi teachings by its adherents and the rise of an intolerant and divisive discourse on Islam. Hence, if by Sufism we are referring to its prevalent contemporary manifestation of deviant beliefs, superstitions, innovated practices and folkloric interpretation of its faith, then this is actively contravenes Islamic teachings and should be rejected. On the other hand, if by Sufism we mean the spiritual and moral guidelines, and practices based on the Qur'an and authentic Prophetic traditions which aims at achieving sincerity in turning to God and elevating the human soul then it is at the core of the Islamic faith.

## CHAPTER IV

### Relation Between Sufism and Morality

Sufism, in essence, is the spiritual and ethical tradition of Islam. It provides guidelines on personal piety, self development and exaltation of moral, spiritual and ethical behaviour. It focuses on controlling the evil traits of one's lower self: ignorance, arrogance, envy, anger and hatred and replacing these with some virtues. Such as knowledge, humility, contentment, patience, love of God etc. In this respect, Sufism is the way of building up a good moral character. Al-Qushayri in his *Risala*, al-Hujwiri in his *The Kashf al-Mahjub* recounted different definitions of Sufism which link it directly to good character and ethics. Al-Jurayri explained it as, 'Taking up every sublime moral characteristic and leaving behind every lowly one.'<sup>1</sup> Sufism is actually identical with the *Qur'anic* term *tazkiyatan-nafs* (purification of the self) and the Prophetic term *ihsan* (spiritual excellence). According to Prophetic tradition, *ihsan* is defined as "worshipping Allah as though one sees Him and if this is not possible then feel His presence" (Bukhari). The Qur'an and Sunna are the basis of this applied Sufism. "Be Godly people" is a Qur'anic directive (3:79). Success is defined for those who purify their *nafs* (91:9). There will come a Day when neither wealth nor sons will benefit anyone, except who comes to Allah with a sound heart (26:87-89). The Prophetic traditions repeatedly mentioned the importance of the purification of heart, such as "Verily, in the body there is a morsel of flesh which if it remains intact, the whole body remains intact: however if it corrupted the whole body is corrupted. Surely it is the heart."

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1. Abu-al Qasim al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., B.R. Von Schlegell, entitled, Principles of Sufism, (Pakistan: Suhail Academy Lahore, 2004), p. 302

## 1. Moral Analysis of Sufism

Morality is inseparable part of Sufism. The Sufis lead a virtuous life and their souls become more disciplined on the Divine path. But they do not interpret morality in terms of theoretical principles or doctrinal knowledge. Morality, for them, is wholly concerned with the discipline of the soul.

In other words, it is the training of the soul which results in the attainment of ethical virtues. In this context, Abul Hasan al-Nuri says: “Sufism is not composed of practices and sciences, but it is morals, i.e., if it consisted of practices, it could be acquired by effort, and if it consisted of sciences, it could be gained by instruction: hence it is morals, and it is not acquired until you demand from yourself the principles of morals, and make your actions square with them, and fulfil their just claim.”<sup>1</sup> Some Sufis interpret the morality of the saints in terms of human conduct. Such as-Muhammad bin al-Qassab stated: “Sufism consists of noble characteristics shown at a noble time by a noble man among noble people.”<sup>2</sup>

Again Muhammad b. Ali b. Al-Husayn b. Ali b. Abi Talib says: “Sufism is goodness of disposition: he that has the better disposition is the better Sufi.”<sup>3</sup> In this context, Hujwiri says, that goodness of disposition is of two kinds: towards God and towards men. The former is acquiescence in the Divine decrees; the latter is endurance of the burden of man’s society for God’s sake. These two aspects refer to the seeker (*talib*).

On the other hand, certain Sufis recognize the moral conduct of the saints in a more general sense. For example, Shaykh Murtaish says: “Sufism is good nature.”<sup>4</sup> This is of three sorts: firstly, towards God, by fulfilling His commandments without hypocrisy; secondly, towards men, by paying respect to

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1. Ali Bin Uthman al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, Eng. tr., R. A. Nicholson, (New Delhi: Taj Company, 1991), p. 42

3. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., *Principle of Sufism*, p. 303

3. *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, p. 39

4. *Ibid.*, p. 42

one's superiors and behaving with kindness to one's inferiors and with justice to one's equals and by not seeking recompense and justice from men in general; and thirdly, towards one's self, by not following the flesh and the devil. Whoever makes himself right in these three matters is a good natured man. That is, a Sufi does not follow the dictate of lower self, rather he follows a moral path and loves God and His creation.

In this context, Abu Nasr al-Sarraj, an early writer on Sufism, says that Sufis pursue their moral ideals to such an extent that they reach the state of perfect purity in their inward as well as outward behaviour so that they do not die an unclean death.<sup>1</sup> Sarraj observes that the Sufi's quality of 'good manners' shown towards society is a chief mystical mark which distinguishes him from the rest of his fellow men.<sup>2</sup> Similarly Abul Abbas al-Nahawandi says: "Tasawwuf (Sufism) is, to keep one's state hidden and to bestow honour on one's brother"<sup>3</sup>. It means that, a Sufi is one who adopts a moral attitude towards the mankind in the real sense and such attitude is humanistic.

There are different opinions among Sufis regarding the moral ideal which they intend to acquire. Such as- Abu Bakr al-Kattani regards the virtue of good temper as the highest moral attribute. He says: "Tasawwuf is but good morals (*Khuluq*); whoever surpasses you in good morals, surpasses you in purity."<sup>4</sup> Concerning the ideal values, Abu Hasan al-Nuri says: "Tasawwuf is freedom, generosity, absence of self-constraint and liberality."<sup>5</sup> Al-Junaid considers the virtue of large heartedness and magnanimity as the most significant value of life to be achieved by the mystics. He describes the Sufi's quality of magnanimity

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1. Abu Nasr al-Sarraj al-Tusi, *The Kitab al-Luma, fil Tasawwuf*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, (London: Luzac & co. 1914), chapt. LXIV, p. 145

2. *Ibib.*, p. 144

3. Farid ad-din Attar, *Tadhkirat al-Awliya*, Eng. tr., R. A. Nicholson, Vol. 2, London, 1905, p. 320

4. Abu' al-Qasim al- Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., by Alexander knysh, entitled *Al- Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, (Doha: Center for Research on Muslim Contribution to Civilization, 'n.d'. p. 290

5. Farid ad-din Attar, *op. cit.*, p. 55



thus: “The Sufi is like the earth– every kind of abomination is thrown upon it, but naught but every kind of goodness grows from it.”<sup>1</sup> He also adds that the Sufi is like the earth– both the righteous man and the sinner walk upon it; like the clouds which give shade to all things and like the raindrop which waters all things. In fact, Sufism is not achieved by much praying and fasting, it is achieved through the sanctity of the heart and generosity of the soul.

According to early Muslim saints, the moral perfection of the soul is acquired through control over the desires of the lower self. To them, seeker of God has to train himself through self-mortification, such as Abu-Bakr al Shibli says: “Tasawwuf is the control of the faculties and observance of the breaths.”<sup>2</sup> Abul Hassan Nuri says: “The Sufis are they whose spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal trait; and released from concupiscence, so that they have found rest with God in the first rank and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him”<sup>3</sup> Again, Abu Hafs Haddad holds: ‘Tasawwuf is wholly discipline’ This means that the seeker has to subdue his worldly temptations in order to realize his inmost self.

Here it is mentioned that, those (Sufi) who have followed Qur’anic mysticism, determined the moral ideals of the saints in terms of the teachings of Prophet (SAW). For example, al-Ghazali says: “To be a Sufi means to abide continuously in God and to live at peace with men: whoever abides in God and deals rightly with men, treating them with unfailing kindness, is Sufi.”<sup>4</sup> The right attitude towards one’s fellow-men is that he should not lay burdens upon them, according to his own desire, but rather burden himself according to their desires. In dealing with others, he should, treat them as he would wish them to treat him, for the faith of God’s servant is not made perfect unless he desires for others what

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<sup>1</sup>. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah, Eng.tr., *Principle of Sufism*, p. 304

<sup>2</sup>. Farid ad-din Attar, *op. cit.*, p. 60

<sup>3</sup>. *Al-Hujwiri, op. cit.*, p. 37

<sup>4</sup>. M. Smith, *Reading from the Mystics of Islam*, (London: 1950), p. 62

he desires for himself. Such a description of the Sufi's mode of life is based on the Qur'anic teachings that God loves those most who love their brethren. Sufi Abu Abdullah mentioned the following ethical virtues of the Sufis: "The saints are those who are recognizable by the loveliness of their speech, and fine manners, and submission of generosity, shown little opposition and accepting the excuse of everyone who excuses himself before them, and perfect mildness towards all creatures-the good as well as bad."<sup>1</sup>

Junaid also interpreted 'Tasawwuf' in the light of the moral code prescribed by Traditions and Religious Law (*Shari`ah*).<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the Sufis regard that to acquire the love of God as the *Summum bonum* or highest good of life. Dhul Noon al-Misri believes that the Sufi's love to God goes with God's loves towards him. To him, Sufis are folk who have preferred God to everything, so that God has preferred them to everything.<sup>3</sup> A true Sufi is a sincere lover of God since he is loved by God. The most important quality of the lover of God is his complete detachment from sensual desires. Hence, Abul Hasan al-Nuri says: "The Sufi is he that has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything."<sup>4</sup> Hence, the Sufis believe that a Sufi is absent from himself and present with God. In the language of Hujwiri: "The lover is he that is dead (*fani*) in his own attributes and living (*baqi*) in the attributes of his Beloved."<sup>5</sup> That is, after complete detachment from the worldly passion, Sufi experiences the state of perfect union with God and eternal subsistence of his soul in Him, which is the *Summum bonum* of his life in this world.

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1. Abdar-Rahman Jami, *Nafahatul-Uns*, ed. w, Nassaw Lees, (Calcutta:1890)

2. Farid ad-din Attar, *op. cit.*, pp.11-15; He says, "Tasawwuf is : to purify the heart from the recurrence of inborn weakness, to take leave of one's natural characteristics, to extinguish the attributes of humanity, to hold aloof from sensual temptations, to dwell with the spiritual attributes, to mount aloft by means of the Divine sciences and to practice that which is eternally the best, to bestow sincere counsel on the whole people to faithfully observe the Truth and to follow the prophet in respect of the law."

3. *Ibid.*, p. 10

4. *Al-Hujwiri, op. cit.*, p. 37

5. *Ibid.*, p. 32

## 2. Relation of Sufi Moral Values with Religion

According to the Qur'an human being possesses two aspects related to morality, that is, good and evil or right and wrong. The following verses testify how closely moral values are connected with true religion.

1. "We have indeed created human being in the best of mould; then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low" (95:4-5).
2. "By the time (through the ages); verily human being is in loss; except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of patience and constancy (103:1-3).
3. "Help one another in righteous deeds and God fear and do not help in sin and transgression.
4. "There is no good in most of their secret talks, except those of the men who enjoin on giving charity, doing good deeds or doing good to the people."
5. "O believers, keep firm one another in righteous, bearing witness for God even though it is against your parents and relatives."
6. "So set your face steadily and truly to the Faith (Religion). Establish God's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: No change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by God. That is the standard religion. But most among mankind do not understand" (30:30).

In the above verse (30:30), a number of points is connected with human being and his moral status. Abdullah Yusuf Ali explained the verse in the following way:<sup>1</sup>

Here, 'true' is used in the sense in which we say, "the magnetic needle is true to the north." Those who have been privileged to receive the Truth should never hesitate or deviate, but remain constant, as men having knowledge.

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1. Yusuf Ali, Abdullah, *The Holy Qur'an*, Text, Translation and Commentary, (Delhi: Kutub Khana Ishayat-Ul-Islam 5<sup>th</sup> ed.1979, Vol. 1 & 2, pp. 1059-60

God originally created man with some noble qualities, such as innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and endowed with true understanding about his own position in the world and about God's goodness, wisdom and power. But man slips from his position because of unconscious stepping into tracery of customs, superstitions, selfish desires, and false teachings. This may make him aggressive, unclean, false, slavish, hankering after what is wrong and forbidden and deflected from the love of his fellow-men and the pure worship of the One God. The missions of the prophets were to cure human being from this crookedness and to restore human nature as per the will of God.

Yusuf Ali also added that 'true Religion (*Din Qaiyum*) includes the whole life, thought, and desires of man. The 'standard Religion' or the straightway thus contrasted with the various human systems that conflict with each other and call themselves separate religions or sects. But God's standard Religion is one, as God is one.'

From the above verse of the Qur'an and its interpretation, it is entailed that the revelation from God is the best source of morality. Except revelation other standards develop ignorance and ultimately fail to give any comprehensive and all embracing moral direction. Hence, the Sufi follows Qur'anic moral direction with its outer and inner meanings.

### **3. Enjoining Good and Prohibit Evil**

Ethics of Sufism is complimentary to Islamic ethics. One of the characteristics of Islamic ethics is to inspire man for moral action and to discourage to perform immoral actions. In another word, enjoining good action and prohibit evil action. And for this reason the Muslim nation is called the best nation (*khairan Ummahtun*). Again, for this action all the prophets were sent to the world. In this context al-Ghazali says: "Had it been closed, Prophethood would have been meaningless, religion lost, idleness reigned, ignorance spread and disturbance prevailed, dangers and calamities appeared and mankind

destroyed.”<sup>1</sup> Not only Ghazali, but also Abdul Qadir Jilani, Sharfuddin Maneri and other prominent Sufis have pointed out the Qur’anic approach to moral instructions. All the great Sufis and their followers tried their best to abide by these instructions. The verses of Qur’an, Hadith, and the sayings of the Sufis concerning this are given below.

### **God says:**

1. “You are the best of people, evolved for mankind; enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and believe in Allah” (3:110).
2. “Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity” (3:104)
3. "Those who are unbelievers among the children of Israel are cursed by the tongues of David and Jesus Christ, son of Mary. This is because they committed sins and transgressed. They did not prohibit them to divert from evil deeds. Evil is what they did.” In this verse, God says that they deserve curse as they give up prohibiting the evil doings.

### **Sayings of the Prophet (SAW)**

1. If some people commit sins and if there are other persons fit to prohibit them and still they do not do it, they do not do any religious act. Soon punishment from God will fall on all of them.<sup>2</sup>
2. Except enjoining good and forbidding evil and making *Zikr* of God, every word of man does harm to him and not benefit. He also said: God will not surely punish the pious men for the sins of the people as long as they prevent them from wrong doing.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Imam Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-id-Din*, Eng. tr., Al-Haj Maulana Fazlul Karim, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service Vol. 2, 2004), p. 195

2. *Ibid.*, p.196

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198

3. If a man be present at a place where there is danger, he shall not speak there but truth, because he will not die before his fixed time and he will neither be deprived of his fixed provision.<sup>1</sup> From this Hadith, it appears that it is not lawful to enter a place of oppression and sin and be present where sins are being committed if he is not able to prevent it. Because, the Prophet (SAW) said: ‘Curse descends upon that person who remains present there, i.e., to be present at a place where sin maybe committed is unlawful in case if he is unable to prevent it.

### **Wise Saying**

Hazrat Ali Said: The *Jihad* which begins before you are the Jihad of your hands and then the Jihad of your tongue and then the Jihad of your heart. When your heart does not enjoin good and prohibit evil; it becomes enveloped with darkness and its upper portion goes towards its lower portion.

From the above mentioned Qur’anic verses and sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and of the saint it appears that enjoining good and prohibiting evil is compulsory, for every Muslim. In another word, injunction of moral action is an essential aspect of Sufism as well as Islam. If some of the people do not do it, all will be sinners and in the long run, all will be ruined, that is, if immoral activity prevails in society, then the destruction of the society is inevitable. Hence, the Sufi enjoins right action and prohibits evil action in order to maintain peace and solidarity in society. If men give up evil action and proceed to good action then in one hand, society turns into an ideal society; on the other hand, his moral and spiritual development is achieved.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 196

## 4. Moral Training of the Sufi Life

According to Sufi, the highest good or ideal (i.e., love of God) is achieved through one's love for God as demonstrated by one's conduct in this world. But the intensity of love towards God is conditioned by one's knowledge of God. Thus, it follows that knowledge is the highest *Saada*, the supreme end in this world, for it leads to perfect love.<sup>1</sup> But knowledge of God can only enter into a pure heart, that is, a heart which after being purged of the vices, has adorned itself with good qualities. In another word, moral purification is needed to acquire the knowledge of God. The Sufi believes that the heart of man is a mirror in which he can see the vision of God. But the heart is polluted with the dust of worldly desires.<sup>2</sup> Hence, to see the vision of Reality it is essential that the soul (*nafs*) should be cleansed completely. The Sufis recommend training of the soul for self-mortification. In this context Abul Hasan al-Mazayyin says: "Tasawwuf is submission to God."<sup>3</sup> It implies that the truth (*al-Haqq*) is attained when the aspirant abandons his lower self (*nafs*) and develops his pure self.

Junaid believes that since the Sufi's mission is to experience Godly qualities, he should guard himself against his association with human attributes. He said: "It's (*of Tasawwuf*) essence is an attribute of God and its formal system is an attribute of mankind."<sup>4</sup> That is, its essence involves the annihilation of human qualities whereas its formal system involves on the part of man the continuance of self-mortification (*mujahadat*), this continuance of self mortification is an attribute of man. A Sufi abstains from everything related to lower-self because, it conceals God.

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1. M. Umaruddin, *The Ethical Philosophy of al-Ghazali*, (Aligarh: The Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1962), p. 86

2. The Sage Maimun b.Mehran said: "When a man commits a sin, a black spot falls on his soul. When he makes repentance, it blots out. Again, when he commits a sin, the spot increases. Thus, if sins are committed one after another soul becomes dark and that is the seal on soul." Imam Ghazali, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, 2003, p.13

3. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., *Principle of Sufism*, p. 305

4. Al-Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 36

It is not easy to abandon the *nafs* even for a moment. The theorists of the system (Sufism) have evolved a method of practice to abandon it and to lead the novice to the realization of knowledge of God. This practice is of four stages which is based on moral training. The stages are: (i) *Shari'ah* (ii) *Tariqat*. (iii) *Marifat*. (iv) *Haqiqat*.

***Shari'ah***: For moral purification of the soul the Sufi Shayks at first prescribe the novice to follow the path of *Shari'ah*. It is concerned with the observance of outward manifestations of religion. *Shari'at* has prescribed the observance of certain practices such as--*kalimah*, *Salat* (Namaz), *Sawm* (Roja), *Hajj and Zakat*.

In addition to these, the *Shari'ah* also enjoins other duties for a disciplined life in this world. It should be remembered that the ritual practices in Islam, are not ends in themselves. They aim at the purification and perfection of the soul. The ritual and rules prescribed by the *Shari'ah* are the easiest method suited for the people at large. But there is another higher method, a more difficult yet surer, which is known as *Tariqat*. This is the path of the Sufi. In fact, it is the way of the moral devolvement of a Sufi.

***Tariqat***: *Tariqat* is the second stage of the way to union with God. In this path in addition to religious observances, a seeker must seek a spiritual guide, called Shaikh in Arabic *and Pir* in Persian. A seeker receives instruction from him on conduct, control over passion and inner purity. A seeker must earnestly love his *Shaikh*. When he is admitted by his Shaikh into a Sufi order, he must observe its rules such as- service, humility, vigils in vacations, occasional fast as directed by his Shaikh. As a novice, he must obey all the directions of his Shaikh without any argument, doubt or hesitation. He has to annihilate his will and judgment completely by surrendering it in the will of his Pir. This is called *fana-fi-Shaikh* or annihilation in the Shaikh. When the novice has observed all the rules of *Tariqat* to the satisfaction of his *Pir* he is given a *Khirqah* or Sufi garment. So we can say,



the rule, method and religious practice which are inculcated by the Shaikh and followed by the disciple, constitute the path– *Tariqa*. Accordingly, the path has no fixed and uniform character; its details are determined by the individuality of the teacher. The existence of different Sufi orders testifies this divergence.

***Marifat***: The third stage *Marifat* signifies a condition of knowledge akin to inspiration. It is concerned mainly with immediate experience. It is the ecstatic contemplation of God by the divinely illuminated heart for the effacement of individual self and permanent existence in the Divine Self.<sup>1</sup>

***Haqiqat***: The fourth and final stage is *Haqiqat*-Truth. In this stage the novice sees the truth. It is the most difficult of all to attain. Only the utmost degree of purity and spiritual thought can make this possible.<sup>2</sup> After annihilation of all desires, ambitions and earthly ideas a novice becomes a saint. When all four veils are removed and he is free to commune directly with God, the Divine Sun, of whom he is but a spark.<sup>3</sup> The stages of the journey of the path have been variously described by the Sufis; such variation is perhaps to be explained by the fact that Sufis claim that there are various ways leading to God.

According to the oldest comprehensive account of Sufism, *Kitabu'l Luma fit-Tasawwuf* of Abu Nasr al Sarraj (d. 378 A.H), the path consists of seven stages (*maqamat*) and ten states (*ahwal*).<sup>4</sup>

Seven Stages are: (i) Repentance, (*tawbah*), (ii) Abstinence (*wara*), (iii) Renunciation (*Zuhd*), (iv) Poverty, (v) Patience (*Sabr*), (vi) Trust in Allah (*Tawakkul*) and (vii) Satisfaction (*rida*),

The states are: (i) Meditation, (ii) Nearness to Allah, (iii) Love, (iv) Fear, (v) Hope, (vi) Longing, (vii) Intimacy, (viii) Tranquility, (ix) Contemplation, (x) Certainty,

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1. Saiyed Abdul Hai, *Muslim Philosophy*, (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, 2nd ed. 1982) vol. i. p. 154

2. Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, *Islamic Sufism*, (Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 1998), p. 27

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *The Kitab al-Luma*, pp.12-21

Farid-ud-Din Attar, Umar bin Mohammad Shahabuddin Suhrawardi, al-Kharraz also mentioned different stages and stations. Among them, the description of Sarraz is more acceptable. But it is not sufficient for the purification of the soul. To be purified i.e., for the acquisition of nearness of Allah at first the seeker (*Salek*) have to remove evil desire of human character, which is as a hindrance for the acquisition of love of Allah. According to Imam Ghazali, evil qualities are numerous. But main root of all evil qualities are: Miserliness, Show (Ria), Envy, Anger, Greed for food, Harms of tongue, Love of wealth, Love of power.<sup>1</sup> If a man can save himself from these ten fundamental evil qualities, he would be saved from destruction.<sup>2</sup> To him (al-Ghazali), in order to achieve the nearness of Allah which is the *Summum bonum* of Sufi life, one should have eradicate the evil qualities from the heart and noble qualities must be established in their place by turns, under the guidance of a Sufi Shaikh. These salvative noble qualities are numerous but among them ten are basic qualities.<sup>3</sup> Such as: (i) Repentance, (ii) Patience, (iii) Thankfulness, (iv) Satisfaction, (v) Fear of Allah, (vi) Hope of Allah's Grace, (vii) Abandonment of the world, (viii) Sincerity, (ix) Correct Behaviour and (x) Love.

In addition to those noble qualities Imam Ghazali also mentioned some salvative good qualities. These are: Poverty, Intention (*Niat*), Truthfulness, *Muhasaba* and *Muraqaba*. It is mentioned that each of these qualities is called a station.<sup>4</sup> Again, each station is constituted with three elements, such as

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1. Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Kimiya-e Sa'adat*, Bang. tr., Abdul Khaleq, (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh, 3rd ed., 1989), p. 25

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. The state (*hal*) and stage (*maqam*) were two technical Terms of Sufism. State involved a changing psychological condition while stage was relatively permanent. It constitutes the ascetic and ethical discipline of the Sufi. These can be acquired by one's own efforts. Each of the stages is the result of the stage preceding it. Their resemblance with each other has confused even the mystics. The same thing has been described as stage (*maqam*) by one and state (*hall*) by the other. According to Hujwiri: "Station" (*maqam*) denotes anyone's "standing" in the way of God, and his fulfillment of the obligations appertaining to that "station" and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection so far as lies in man's power. State (*hal*) on the other hand, is something that descends from God into a man's heart, without his being able to repel it when it comes, or to attract it when it goes, by his own effort." Hence station belongs to the category of acts, state to the category of gifts. (*Al-Hujwiri, op. cit.*, p. 181)

knowledge, states and action. Among these three roots, knowledge is the beginning root. When knowledge of a station is appeared in the heart, a state is originated. The state inspires the heart for true action.

At last we can say that for the *Summum bonum* of Sufi life— union with Allah, a novice must have moral purification (i.e., from the very beginning Sufism is related to morality). For that, he must remove all evil qualities of soul. Though different Sufis have explained the evil qualities of soul in different ways but there are some fundamental avoidable evil qualities which are accepted by all of them. Moral development truly means removing all evil qualities from the soul that only make a novice capable to reach high Sufi station (*maqam*).

## **A. Evils to Be Avoided**

A novice in the path of Sufism is need of removing the following evil qualities to become a true Sufi.

### **i. Miserliness**

For the fear of decrease, saving wealth and property and not to donate anyone is called miserliness. Miserliness is an evil quality of human nature. It destroys man, for a miser is far away from God. About the consequence of miserliness, God says: ‘...Soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks. Like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgment’ (3:180). God says on the oath of His Glory and Honour: “No narrow minded man and miser shall enter into Paradise”. In the same way the Prophet (SAW) said: God is displeased with three persons— an old fornicator, a miser who gives troubles and a proud man having big family.<sup>1</sup> Again, he said: ‘Save yourselves from miserliness because the nations before you were destroyed by it. Miserliness enjoined them to tell falsehood and so they spoke falsehood. Miserliness enjoined them to make

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1. Abu Hamid-al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-al-Din*, Eng. tr., Al-Haj Maulana Fazlul karim, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, vol. iii, 5th ed, 2003), p. 224

oppression and so they oppressed. Miserliness enjoined them to cut blood connection and so they cut it off".<sup>1</sup> He also said: No believer should be miser and coward. Miserliness deprives man from the pleasure of God i.e., kindness of God and it is not possible to acquire love of God without the kindness of God. On the other hand, from the ethical point of view, miserliness is not acceptable, because moral life is the life of truthfulness, righteousness, benevolence etc. welfare of others is prime here. So for the pleasure of God as well as to lead a moral life we should remove miserliness. The medicine of miserliness is based on knowledge and action. To know the evil of miserliness and the rewards of charity and generosity is the medicine based on knowledge.<sup>2</sup> To give in charity, in spite of unwillingness, is the medicine based on action.<sup>3</sup>

## ii. Pride

Pride is a nasty disposition. Generally feeling thyself superior to others is called pride. Pride is of two kinds, open and secret. Secret pride is the name of feeling of superiority. When it is expressed in action it is called open pride (*Takabbur*). Feeling of superiority in mind is called self-conceit (*Kibr*). When it is expressed in action, it is called pride.<sup>4</sup> Hazrat Ibn Abbas explained it by saying that pride is a feeling of superiority over others. If it is expressed in words or behaviours, it is called *takabbur* or pride which is the outward expression of self-conceit.<sup>5</sup> In another word, to think oneself greater in comparison with other people and to look upon them with contempt, is a sense of pride. Pride is bad for two reasons:<sup>6</sup>

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1. Abu Hamid-al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-al-Din*, Eng. tr., Al-Haj Maulana Fazlul karim, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, vol. iii, 5th ed, 2003), p. 224

2. *Ibid.*, p. 233

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 294

5. *Ibid.*, p. 298

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-302

1. The first reason is that pride and superiority are due only to the Highest Lord. Man, being naturally helpless, is not able to do anything. How can he claim pride under these circumstances? Whenever a man wants to take pride he wants to set up partnership with the attribute of God which he cannot do. For this reason God said: "Pride is my garment and glory is my shirt, whoever quarrels with me about these two matters, I'll destroy him." Again, He says: "He who takes pride over the servants of God, commits sin to God; God does not love those who are proud."

2. The second reason is that pride calls one to disobey the injunction of God. The devil is the best instance of this pride. Pride is shown in religious and earthly matters. Religious matters are education, divine services and honesty. Earthly matters are pedigree, beauty, power, wealth and lordship. For these matters, pride arises.<sup>1</sup>

About the consequence of the pride Prophet (SAW) said: "He who has an atom of pride in him will not enter into Paradise." The Prophet (SAW) also said: "He who thinks himself great and discloses pride in his behaviour will meet with God in His enraged condition." From the ethical point of view a man of good behaviour considers himself inferior to others and give preference to others than himself. But the behaviour of a proud man is opposite to it. A proud man cannot have love for others what he loves for himself; as there is pride in him he cannot give up hatred, he cannot stand on truth, he cannot control his anger, he cannot accept admonitions. Hence, he is not safe from the accusation of the people. The worst thing in self-conceit is to receive no benefit from learning, not to recognize truth and not to follow it. That is, pride renders man into a lower animal and ruins the rationality of human being. So, concerning their punishment God says: "Enter the door of Hell and live there in. How bad is the place of the proud" (37.72). The medicine of pride based on actions is to behave with humbleness and modesty.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 303

### iii. Self-Praise

The harm of self-praise is great as it breeds pride. Self-praise is the attribute of God. It makes one forgetful of his sins. He who does not understand the harm of his actions, almost all his efforts goes in vain. He who has got self-praise is cheated by his own opinion. Because self-praise arises out of the following thinking– 'I am a perfect man, I am a man of receiving gifts, I am good, I am intelligent etc.' He does not feel joy at the gift of God, but considers it as his own quality for which he takes pleasure. He ascribes these attributes as his self acquired attributes and not the gifts of God.<sup>1</sup> There is hope of return behind self-praise, i.e, if after giving charity to a man, one who wants a return of good and thinks that he has done a good deed, commits self- praise,<sup>2</sup> as God says: Do not seek much return after doing good to anybody. Self-praise has been condemned by God and His Prophet. On the other hand, from the ethical point of view self-praise is not acceptable, because ethically a man should help others, inspiring by the law of duty for duty, not for hope of something. Moreover, we should express gratefulness to God that He has given us the impulse to do good actions, and we should fear God, for He can take away His gift. Hence, when fear of God will remain in one's mind, self praise will be vanished.

### iv. Showing (*Riya*)

The wish to show virtuous action or divine services to the people is named *riya* or showing. The real meaning of *riya* or show is to showing good conduct in order to attract respect from the people.<sup>3</sup> Followers of the religion sometimes become prey to *riya*. That ultimately destroys all their good actions. There are five modes of expression of showing:<sup>4</sup> (i) by outward bodily limbs, (ii) by signs and gestures, (iii) by words and actions, (iv) by following and (v) by outward causes.

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1. Abu Hamid-al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum-al-Din*, Eng. tr., vol. iii, 2003), p. 324

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 266

4. *Ibid.*, p. 267

The worldly men also express *riya* by these five methods. The object of showing is to earn name and fame.

Showing is opposite to worship. The only purpose of worship is to acquire the pleasure of God. But in the aspect of showing, acquisition of pleasure of men and his dignity is mixed with the pleasure of God. In the same way, showing goes against true morality. The object of moral action is good will. Any other will should not be behind it. Hence, if the purpose of worldly good action is to acquire name and fame or to acquire wealth it will never be considered as a moral action.

Showing is a great evil and it is hated by God. One should take utmost care to remove it. There is no cure of the disease of showing without bitter pills. There are two modes of treatment of this disease. One mode is to uproot the root of showing and the second mode is to remove from mind what arises in there.<sup>1</sup> The root of showing is greed for rank and power. There are three causes of this greed for rank and power- (i) love of praise, (ii) feeling from agony of accusation and, (iii) to wish to have what is the possession of men.<sup>2</sup> For these reasons, showing is searched and these give encouragement. So the medicine of removing *riya* is based on such knowledge that can stop his destructive disposition. Secret divine services and services for mankind with an intention that people should not know these, may be regarded as the medicine of removing *riya*.

## **v. Anger**

Anger is a fleck of fire. God has created the passion of anger from fire and kept it concealed in human mind.<sup>3</sup> Whenever, anything stands against one's wish anger is enhanced in such a way that the blood of heart spreads through all of his veins and as a result his eyes become red and his face became reddish. The birth place of anger is heart. The food of anger is revenge and greed.<sup>4</sup> The result of

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1. *Ibid.*, pp. 272-273

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 148

4. *Loc. cit.*

anger is hatred on account of which a man is ruined.<sup>1</sup> Once Hazrat Abdullah-b. Amr asked the Prophet (SAW): What thing will save from the wrath of God? The Prophet (SAW): said: “Don’t express your anger.” In an occasion the Prophet (SAW): said “Anger destroys faith as condiment destroys honey.” He also said: “If a man gets angry he roams near Hell.” Hence, ideal man never tolerates excessive anger. For, he knows that the prosperity of life largely depends on the subdual of anger.

From the above discussion, it is clear that anger is contrary to lead a moral life. Moral life is a peaceful life which is stimulated from reciprocal respect and love; where there is no greed, deceit and vengeance. But as the root of anger is revenge and greed, it brings displeasure and turbulence in personal and social life. Hence, to lead a moral life we should remove anger at any cost.

In order to subdue the anger we need to know the usefulness of anger and to understand the sayings of Qur’an and Hadith-concerning the benefit of subduing anger and punishments of being angry. According to Sufis, the causes which grow anger are self-conceit, self-praise, jests and ridicule argument, treachery, too much greed for too much wealth, name and fame.<sup>2</sup> If these evils are united in a person, his conduct becomes bad and he cannot escape from anger. So these things should be removed by their opposite things.

## **vi. Envy**

Among the harmful qualities of human mind, envy is the most heinous. It arises from anger. If anyone possesses wealth and happiness and that’s why displeasure grows in another mind and he wishes that his wealth and prosperity would be destroyed, his happiness and peace would be gone away then it would

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1. Concerning this Imam Ghazali, says: Excessive anger is harmful. This prevails upon good qualities. Such a man then goes out of intellect, religion and divine service. He then loses his sense of right and wrong and the power of right and good thinking. He then loses his power of freedom, and becomes a man of afflicted with danger. (*Ihya*, vol.3 Eng. tr., Fazlul Karim. p. 149)

2. *Ibid.*, p. 152



be called envy. Prophet Zacharia said, “God says: An envious man is enemy of My gifts, dissatisfied with God’s decree and dissatisfied with the division of My gifts which I have distributed among My servants”.<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (SAW) said: “The greatest of what I fear for my followers is the increase of their wealth for which they will envy one another and quarrel with one another.” He also said: “As fire destroys fuel, so envy destroys virtues”. So envy is unlawful under all circumstances, because envy to another person means to express the dissatisfaction with God’s Law; and to look down upon the law of His distribution.<sup>2</sup> There are seven causes of envy. These are: (i) enmity, (ii) dislike of another’s good, (iii) pride, (iv) to express wonder, (v) fear of failure of object, (vi) greed for name and power and (vii) narrowness of mind.<sup>3</sup> But the real cause of envy is the love of the world.<sup>4</sup> Those who love the world envy one another for wealth, riches, power, name and fame. The religious persons do not have such greed and as such they do not have envy.

Hence, to live a moral life or walk on the path of religion, everyone should give up envy. It is mentioned that sign of a moral man or a lover of God is that he desires the goodness of created beings of God, and at any circumstances he expresses satisfaction with Divine injunction. But an envious person desires the harms of created beings which is, in a sense, opposite to true religious life.

## **vii. Greed for food**

No other desire in the human mind is as strong as greed for food. It is the root of all longing. In fact, belly is the container of greed and the breeding ground of disease and disasters. Because in case of satisfaction of belly, sexual passion

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1. *Ihya*, vol.3, Eng. tr., Fazlul Karim. p. 168

2. *Ibid.*, p. 169

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172

4. *Loc. cit.*

rises high and it encourages companionship with woman.<sup>1</sup> Desire for name and fame grows from greed, and then come the evil attributes of hatred, clash of interests, pride, self-conceit etc.<sup>2</sup> These can be removed by hunger.<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (SAW) said: “Do not make your heart dead by taking excessive food and drink as the heart is like a field of crops. When there is excessive water in a field, crops damaged.”<sup>4</sup> Again, he said: Of all the virtuous deeds which descended from Heaven to earth, the greatest is hunger. Of all the evils which have descended from Hell to earth, the worst is eating with heart’s content.<sup>5</sup> In short, belly and sexual passion are the doors of Hell and their root is eating with satisfaction.<sup>6</sup>

But humility and break of heart are the doors of Paradise and their root is hunger.<sup>7</sup> Hence, for the purification of soul or to achieve the love of God, we should give up the greed for food and take food for physical fitness. i.e., we should fill one third of our belly with food, one third with water and one third should remain empty.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, to lead a moral life we should control greed for good; because, significance of human life depends on altruism not egoism. But the greed for food encourages egoism. Since, a voracious man cannot sacrifice for other and he always remains busy with himself.

He who wishes to walk on the path of religion or to lead a moral life, he would observe the following rules to control the greed for food and drink. His first duty is that he shall not eat except lawful foods. Besides this, there remain three duties to be observed, in connection with food- quantity of meal, time of meal and

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1. *Ihya*, vol.3 Eng. tr., Fazlul Karim, p. 76; In a word, attachment to the world is a cause of destruction of a man and the cause of this attachment is belly and sexual passion, and the cause of sexual passion is full satisfaction of belly. (*Ibid.*, p. 87)

2. *Ibid.*, p. 76

3. Hunger makes the heart soft, pure, conduct fresh, and sight sharp. It removes pride and enjoyment from heart as a result therein sweet taste of *jikr* and *Monajat* is felt. (*Ibid.*, pp. 82-83)

4. *Ihya*, vol.3, Eng. tr., Fazlul Karim. p. 77

5. *Ibid.*, p. 80

6. *Ibid.*, p. 83

7. *Loc. cit.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 86

kinds of meal.<sup>1</sup> For removing the greed for food, one should follow the rules and teaching of the Prophet (SAW) concerning this. He should always remember that there are abundant rewards in giving up greed.

### **viii. Harms of tongue**

Tongue is a great asset of a man and a wonder out of the wonderful creations. Though it is insignificant, its power is unlimited, its sins are heinous, its virtues are great; infidelity and faith do not find expression except through tongue.<sup>2</sup> It is the last limit of sins and virtues. No other organ has got such power to express the mind. It may be said to be the agent of intellect. The dangers of tongue are useless talks, excessive talks, quarrels, obscene and bad talks, curse, laugh and jokes, ridicule, to disclose secret talks, false promise, falsehood, backbiting, cheating, slander, hypocrisy, praise, carelessness etc.<sup>3</sup> All these are prohibited in Islam. Concerning the danger of the tongue the Prophet (SAW) said: “Beware, those who make exaggeration in talks are ruined; nothing worst has been given to man than long talk.”<sup>4</sup> Concerning the useless talks the Prophet (SAW) said: “The man who holds useless talks about sins for most part of time will be a greater sinner on the Resurrection Day”. Another harm of tongue is quarrels and disputes, which are unlawful. The Prophet (SAW) said: Do not quarrel with your brother, do not cut jokes with him and do not break promise with him.<sup>5</sup>

Obscene talk or unnecessary talk does not appertain to Islam. He who is best of all in character and conduct is best of all in Islam.<sup>6</sup> The Prophet (SAW) said: Beware, bad talks are objects of hatred; those who are prone to backbiting, excessive cursing, obscene and excessive talks are not true believers.<sup>7</sup>

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1. *Ihya*, vol. 3 Eng. tr., Fazlul Karim. p. 88

2. *Ibid.*, p. 102

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p.111

5. *Ibid.*, p. 109

6. *Ibid.*, p.111

7. *Loc. cit.*

Another danger of tongue is false-speaking and false oath. These are great sins and heinous faults. The Prophet (SAW) said: Be careful of falsehood as it is the companion of the sinners and both will be in Hell.<sup>1</sup> He also said: “Falsehood is a door of hypocrisy” Many people are accustomed to backbiting and very few men are free from it. God says: “Do not backbite one another. Do you like to eat the flesh of your dead brother? Rather you abhor it” (49:12). The Prophet (SAW) said: “Beware of backbiting as it is a more heinous sin than fornication”.

Cheating, slander, and hypocrisy are also heinous sin. God says: “A slander, going about with calumnies, hindering all good, transgressing beyond bounds, deep in sin” (68:11-12). The Prophet (SAW) said: On Resurrection Day, the worst men to God will be the liars, the proud and those men who entertained hatred in the mind of their friends.<sup>2</sup>

From the above discussion, it is clear that many major sins or immoral actions of men occur from tongue. So, the success of human life is largely depends on the controlling of tongue. Those who will able to control the tongue would be escaped and in worldly life they will able to lead a virtuous life.

The remedies of harms of tongue are based on knowledge and action. It must be understood that death is standing in front and that every word uttered will be accounted for. Every breath is a valuable asset. This is the medicine based on knowledge: The remedy based on action is to adopt silence;<sup>3</sup> because there is no rescue from them except silence. Hence, the Prophet (SWA) said: He who is pleased with Islam shall take the silence; he who keeps silent, gets salvation.

## **ix. Love of wealth**

Love of wealth is the greatest danger in the world. One of the dangers of wealth is that it cannot satisfy anybody and nobody is safe even if he possess

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 119

2. *Ibid.*, p. 139

3. *Ibid.*, p. 107

enormous wealth and riches.<sup>1</sup> God says: “O believers! let not your wealth and children divert you from the remembrance of God. Those who do that are indeed the losers” (63:9). God also said: Your riches and children are a trail. In this context, the Prophet (SAW) said: Love for wealth and greed for power breed hypocrisy as said grass grows in the earth.<sup>2</sup> For this, a man should be free from thoughts other than God.

The medicine of greed for wealth has been prepared by three ingredients—patience, knowledge and action.<sup>3</sup> During the use of this medicine, the ingredients come through the following five prescriptions:<sup>4</sup>

1. To adopt middle path to earn provision and to cut short the expenditure.
2. One should not be anxious for future if he gets his present necessary things at ease. He should curtail his hope.
3. To know the merits in contentment, dishonour in depending on others and disgrace in greed. When knowledge of these things will grow, eagerness for contentment will grow.
4. To think about the wealth of the irreligious people of the Jews, Christians, Bedouins and then to look to the prophets, friends of God and their saying and wise counsels and then one should adopt a way for himself.

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1. *Ihya*, Eng. tr., vol. iii. p. 204; Moreover if he loses his wealth, he becomes poor and poverty leads to infidelity. If his wealth becomes enormous, it leads him to irreligiousness. Its ultimate result is loss. (*Loc. cit.*)

2. *Ibid*, p. 205; in fact, the harms of wealth are of two kinds worldly and religious. The religious harms are of three kinds:

i. Wealth leads to sins and opens the doors of sins and thus one is ruined.

ii. It leads to the happiness of enjoying lawful things which is the first step to the path of sin.

iii. Another harm of wealth is to be forgetful of God and nobody is free from this danger. Man forgets God in his engagement of maintaining his fortunes and wealth. And the thing which keeps a man forgetful of God is harmful. (*Ibid.*, p. 210)

3. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

4. For detail, see *Ihya*, Vol. 3. Eng. tr., p. 214

5. Not to hoard wealth and riches. Opposite of greed for wealth is to take poverty. For the love of God or to lead a moral life one should remain poor, because greed for wealth always leads man to immoral actions. On the other hand, poverty stands against evil desire.

In fact, wealth is like a black snake. There is venom in it, again it also bears venom absorbing very beneficial nectar. But he who fails to distinguish venom from nectar definitely he will be destroyed.

Henceforth, unlimited desire for wealth which destroys our believes, should be avoided and we should try to earn limited wealth only for meeting our basic needs. Moreover, as love of wealth and love of God is opposed to each other, it cannot be existed simultaneously in a heart. So, in order to acquire love of God or lead a moral life we should remove love of wealth from our heart. It is mentioned that unnecessary greed for wealth encourages man to commit different kinds of immoral activities and makes a man egoistic.

Another evil desire of human soul is love of the world. Generally pre stage of death is called world. In other word, the thing which gives us pleasure before death, increases our greed and gives us taste is called world.<sup>1</sup> According to law, world is the name of that state which is hindrance to the life after death. In the Holy Qur'an God combines the world among five things. "God says: Know you all that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying in rivalry among yourselves, riches and children" (57:20).<sup>2</sup> About the purpose of the creation of world God says: I have created whatever is in the earth as adornment in order to try who among them is best in action. In fact, love of the world is the root of all sins. It is an enemy of the friends of God and also an enemy of the enemies of God.<sup>3</sup>

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 195

2. In another verse, seven things have been counted as vain desires. God says: Men have been given the vain desires of women, children, hoarded wealth of silver and gold, houses of good quality, quadrupeds, and crops (3:14). these are things of this world's life.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 181

Jesus Christ said: “God created nothing so obnoxious than the world. He did not look at it on the day He had created it.” The Prophet (SAW) said: The world is more hateful to God than a dead goat. So, those who have no faith in God only can search for wealth of this world. The love of both this world and the next would not remain united in the heart of a believer just as water and fire cannot remain united, i.e., the next world cannot be acquired unless this world is given up. Hence, for the attainment of love of God, or to lead a moral life we should abandon the love of world and in order to remove the daily needs we should involve in the world as much as we need.

## **B. Desirable Noble Qualities**

In the Sufi way of life after removing the evil qualities of the soul, for moral development a novice try his best to acquire some noble qualities. Such as-

### **i. Repentance (*Tauba*)**

Repentance is the first stage of the mystical wayfarers and the first station of the seekers of God.<sup>1</sup> If the Sufi concept of repentance is thoroughly analyzed it will be revealed that this is primarily the exercise of morality. Repentance means abandoning the sins and resolving never to return to them, i.e., *tauba* is the firm determination to give up sin in the present and future and repentance for past sins.<sup>2</sup> In the Arabic language the true meaning of repentance is ‘return’. Repentance thus is to return from what is blameworthy, according to the Divine Law, to what is praiseworthy.<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (SAW) said: “Remorse is repentance.” The scholars of the Prophet (SAW)’s Sunna have said that there are three conditions of repentance, such as remorse for acts contradicting the Divine Law, immediate abandonment of the sin and resolve never to commit similar acts of disobedience.<sup>4</sup> These conditions are essential for repentance.

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1. Abu’ al-Qasim al- Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., by Alexander knysh, entitled *Al- Qushayri’s Epistle on Sufism*, (Doha: Center for Research on Muslim Contribution to Civilization, ‘n.d’. p.111

2. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya, Ulum-id-Din*, Eng. tr., by Al-Haj Maulana Fazlul Karim, Vol. iv, (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, revised ed. 2004), p. 12

3. *Al-Qushari, Al-Qushayri’s Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p.111

4. *Loc. cit.*

According to al-Ghazali, repentance consists of three elements-knowledge, condition and action.<sup>1</sup> Knowledge of *tauba* is necessary for repentance as the harms of sin are very severe. When we will know it with true faith, we will then become repentant for losing an object of love. When repentance prevails over the mind, another condition arises in mind which is called will or desire. It has got connection with present, past and future actions. It's connections with present means that he wills to give up every sin, every prohibited thing and to do all compulsory duties. It's connection with past means that he wills to expiate his action which he should not have done. Its connection with future means that he determines to be careful, so that there should be no further omission of compulsory duties and to give up sins up-to death.<sup>2</sup> Hazrat Sahal Tastari said: "To change bad habits into good habits is *tauba*. Solitude, silence and eating lawful things are conditions of the perfection of *tauba*."<sup>3</sup>

Dhu' I Nun Misri said: "There are three kinds of repentance (1) the repentance of the common is from sin; (2) the repentance of the elect is from forgetfulness; (3) the repentance of the prophets is from seeing that they are unable to reach what others have attained."<sup>4</sup>

*Tauba* cannot be earned without curable medicine. The medicine of *Tauba* is the mixture of some ingredients such as, sweetness of knowledge and bitterness of patience.

Greed and negligence are the causes of engagement in sins or immoral actions. Carefulness is opposite to negligence and patience is opposite to greed.<sup>5</sup> Negligence is the root of all evils. God says: "They are negligent, there is no doubt that they will be losers in the next world." So, the seekers after truth, at

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1. Al- Ghazali, *Ihya*, Eng. tr., vol. iv. p. 10

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 42

3. Quoted in *Ibid.* p. 11

4. Al- Kalabadhi, *Kitab al-Ta'arruf li Madhab al-Tasawwuf*, Eng. tr., A. J. Arberry, entitled, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979 rpt.) p. 81; Al- Sarraj, *The Kitab al-Luma*, Eng. tr., p.13

5. Al- Ghazali, *Ihya*, Eng. tr., vol. iv. p. 52



first, have to acquire the knowledge concerning bad effect of sins. Then they should be determined to give up sin in the present and future and repentance for the past sins.

From the above discussion, it is clear that there is a close linkage of the Sufi concept of repentance with morality. Because repentance is to return from what is blameworthy to what is praiseworthy, in another word, from immorality to morality. Through repentance we repent for our past evil actions, at the same time we are determined to do noble actions.

## **ii. Abstinence (*Wara*)**

The Sufi doctrine of abstinence is virtually a higher form of moral philosophy. Abstinence means refraining oneself from something, especially from indulgence. In reply to question about abstinence Hadrat al-Shibli said: “In reality there is no such thing as abstinence: if one is not abstinent regarding what does not belong to him, that is not abstinence, and if one is abstinent regarding what does not belong to him, how can that be called abstinence, when it is yet with him and he with it? It consists of restraining the appetite, being generous and doing good.” According to the Sufis, it may be of three types:<sup>1</sup>

1. Abstain from what is devious i.e., neither plainly lawful nor plainly unlawful. Concerning this al-Qushari said: “Abstinence is giving up whatever is dubious and whatever does not concern you,” which means giving up that which superfluous.<sup>2</sup>
2. Abstaining from whatever one’s consciousness does not allow. As Yusuf b. Ubayd said: ‘Abstaining is leaving behind every dubious thing and examination of self with each moment’.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Al- Sarraj, *Ibid.* pp. 13-14

2. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p.129

3. Al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, p, 34

Abstaining from anything which diverts attention from Allah; As Ash-Shibli commented: “*Wara* is that you abstain from everything other than God the Most High.”<sup>1</sup> The real state of abstinence is experienced by those aspirants who seek complete detachment from that which is other than God.

Concerning the merit of abstinence the Prophet (SAW) said: “Be scrupulous (abstinent) and you will be among the God’s greatest servants.”

For moral perfection, abstinence is an important element. Morality teaches us that we should only take those things which our conscience permits. But abstinence encourages us not only give up those things which conscience does not allow but also dubious, superfluous and the things which diverts our attention from goodness. Hence, it is seen that abstinence encourages a devotee to altruism and it also refers the denouncement of egoistic hedonism, that is, desires for carnal pleasures.

### **iii. Renunciation (*zuhd*)**

Renunciation is a subtle station. It is the basis of spiritual progress as well as morality, because every sin (immoral action) originates in the love of this world, and every act of goodness and obedience springs from renunciation.<sup>2</sup> The Prophet (SAW) said: If you see a man who has been graced with renunciation of this world and eloquent speech, seek his company, for wisdom has been taught to him. From the sayings of the Prophet (SAW) we can say that renunciation means to give up the world. So to give a definition of renunciation al-Junaid said: “It is keeping your hands free from possessions and your heart from attachment to this world.”<sup>3</sup> But folk’s opinions differ regarding the nature of renunciation.<sup>4</sup>

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 33

2. According to Sufis the idea of renunciation is derived from Qur’an: "That you may not grieve for what escape you, nor rejoice in what has come to you" (57:23), because the renouncer does not delight in anything he has of this world, nor is he sorry about losing something of it. (Al-Qushari, Eng. tr., Al-Qushayri’s Epistle on Sufism, p.135

3. Al-Qushari, Eng. tr., Al-Qushayri’s Epistle on Sufism, p.136

4. *Ibid.*, pp.134-135

1. Some of them argue that, one should only renounce that which is prohibited by the Divine Law, because the things which are lawful have been made permissible by God.
2. Others say that, renunciation of that which is forbidden is an obligation, whereas renunciation of that which is lawful is a virtue.
3. Still others says that, one must not abandon that which is permitted to him by God on His own accord, nor must he seeks that which exceeds his needs. Instead, he must preserve that which has been apportioned for him by God. According to Ahmad b. Hanbal, Renunciation can be of three different kinds.<sup>1</sup>

**First:** Abandoning that which is prohibited by the Divine Law, which is the renunciation of the commoners.

**Second:** Abandoning excess which is lawful, it is the renunciation of the elect.

**Third:** Abandoning that which distracts God's servant from God most High, it is the renunciation of the Gnostics.

The marks of renunciation are (i) to preserve calmness while losing property, (ii) cutting short hopes and (iii) keeping trust in God.<sup>2</sup>

When a renouncer of the world does not desire for unachieved things and leaves those which belongs to himself; even removes its thinking from his heart, then for God's grace, his heart becomes averse from world. A true renouncer of the world has no interest to this world nor to the next world. He does not look for pleasure and wealth of this world and the next world except God. To be disinterested to all the things of this world and the next world except God is a true renunciation.

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1. Al-Qushari, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p.134

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-135

From the above discussion we can say that for moral progress renunciation is an important element. Because the essence of renunciation is to renounce loving things completely and detached away from self interest which is the basic element of altruism. So renunciation leads men to altruism.

#### **iv. Poverty**

Poverty is supposed to be the most important stage of the mystic path, because it is the real mark of detachment from everything. The follower of this station is called a *fakir*, i.e., a poor man or a dervish (or a mendicant). The meaning of poverty is not to possess what is necessary to remove wants. Not to have thing what is not necessary is not poverty.<sup>1</sup> The poor is one who has renounced the world. He is not attached to anything and nothing is attached to him. It is same for him whether he has got wealth or not. Actually, he becomes free from all expectations in relation to things other than God. He is liberated from the bondage of evil and attains spiritual qualities. According to Sarraj, there are three classes of poor men.<sup>2</sup>

1. Those who possess nothing and do not seek outwardly or inwardly anything from anyone and if anything are offered to them, they will not accept it.
2. Those who possess nothing and do not beg either directly or indirectly but if anything is offered to them they accept it.
3. Those who do not possess anything but when they are in want they beg to a brother Sufi and atone for the act of begging by their sincerity.

Concerning the merits of poverty, the Prophet (SAW) said:<sup>3</sup> (i) The poor are the best among my followers, and the weak among them will first roam in Paradise before all.

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1. Al- Ghazali, *Ihya*, Eng, tr., vol. iv. p. 157

2. Al-Sarraj, *op cit.*, p.15

3. *Ihya*, Eng, tr., vol. iv. pp. 158-60

(ii) The poor man who is the dearest to God is he who remains satisfied with what is with him and with the provision God gave him. (iii) The patient poor are those who will be companions of God on the day of Resurrection. About the sign of the poor one, Runwaym (a famous Sufi) declared, "It is submitting the soul to God's ordinances." In this context Al-Qushayri says: There are three signs of the poor one: (i) he protects his inmost being, (ii) he performs his religious obligations, and (iii) he conceals his poverty.<sup>1</sup> He also says: The very least that is required of a poor one in his poverty is four things: (i) a knowledge that leads him, (ii) an abstemiousness that restrains him, (iii) a certainty that sustains him, and (iv) a remembrance that brings him intimacy.<sup>2</sup>

The above discussion testifies that the life of a poor man is similar to the life of a moral person. For moral life, we have to need such an attitude which has no attraction towards the worldly objects and its carnal pleasure, and we can acquire this by following the path of *fakir*,

## **v. Patience**

Patience is an important stage on the mystical journey to God. A patient devotee of God is prepared to suffer from everything in order to reach his goal. He heartily accepts whatever comes from the side of God, and during the period of affliction and suffering in his separation from God, he lives with patience.

God has praised those who adopt patience and has mentioned about patience more than several times in Qur'an.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Al-Qushayri, *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, p. 291

2. *Ibid.*, p. 295

3. God Says:

i. "And We appointed from among them, Leaders, giving guidance under our command, so long as they preserved with patience. ..."

ii. "I will give full rewards to those who being patient to do good works" (16:96).

iii. Take to patience, God is with the patient (2:249).

Patience means to keep satisfied with decree of God, i.e., the meaning of patience is to keep away from every distractive and injurious thing.<sup>1</sup> (i.e., immoral activity). To define patience Dhu'l-Nun said: "Patience is staying away from acts of disobedience, keeping quiet while sipping the agonies of misfortune and showing contentment when poverty invades the arena of your livelihood."<sup>2</sup> In fact, patience is to behave in adversity in the same way as one behaves in times of well being, i.e., patience is making no distinction between a state of blessing and a state of sufferings, in either of them, the servant's mind remains unperturbed.

Hazrat Ibn Abbas said: Three kinds of patience is mentioned in the holy Qur'an:<sup>3</sup>

- i. To have patience in doing compulsory things ordained by God.
- ii. To keep oneself away from forbidden things of God.
- iii. To have patience at sudden dangers and difficulties.

According to al-Qushayriah, patience can be of different sorts: patience with what one has acquired through one's own deeds and patience with what one has not acquired through one's deeds. Patience with what one has acquired can be of two kinds: endurance of that which God the Most High has commanded and endurance of that which He has prohibited. As for patience with what one has not acquired through one's deeds, it is one's endurance of the hardships decreed for one by God, which cause one's suffering.<sup>4</sup>

It is mentioned that according to Qushayri, patience for the sake of God is suffering; patience by God is subsisting in Him; patience in God is a trial;

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1. *Ihya*, *op. cit.*, p. 77

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p.197-98

3. *Ihya*, *op. cit.*, p. 76

4. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p.197. Regarding the meaning of the words of God, "O believers, be patient and persevere in your patience and hold on to God" (3:200), Qushayri said that patience is lower than persevering in patience, while persevering in patience is lower than holding on to God, It is therefore said: "Be patient with your souls in obeying God most High; persevere in patience with your hearts; while facing misfortunes for the sake of God; hold on to God with your innermost selves in striving to God. (*Ibid.* p.199)

patience with God is faithfulness toward Him, and patience without God is harshness (toward you).<sup>1</sup>

Though patience is troublesome, yet it is possible to acquire by the medicine which is a mixture of knowledge and action. There are two modes to make strong religious impulses for patience:<sup>2</sup>

Firstly, mind should be given the lesson that satisfaction of carnal desires is temporary but one can gain everlasting supremacy by patience in dangers and difficulties. Though, dangers and difficulties are short, and remain during life time but their rewards will remain forever.

Secondly, one should be habituated from childhood to fight against lower desires and passions, as a boy is trained in physical exercises from boyhood to become an athlete.

From the above discussion, it is clear that for moral life patience is an important element. Moral life is the life of suffering and destitution. In such a life, one needs to be patients in all circumstance.

## **vi. Trust in God (*Tawakkul*)**

*Tawakkul* is the central doctrine in the Sufi path of purification. Sufism cannot be acquired without reliance on God. *Tawakkul* is complete resignation to the will of God and full confidence in His grace and benevolence. In this station, the follower of the path completely trusts in God and leaves himself entirely on His mercy. He feels that everything is caused by God and he himself is the possession of God.<sup>3</sup>

The basis of God's reliance is one's genuine faith in the unity of God. The other possible secondary sources are the concept of predestination, man's

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ihya, op. cit.*, pp. 80-81

3. There are many verses about *tawakul* in Qur'an (5:23; 3:159; 65:2) and Hadith of the Prophet. The prophet says: If you trust in God as you should, He would sustain you even as He sustains the birds, which in the morning go forth hungry and return in the evening filled. In this way there are many Hadith concerning the benefit of *tawakkul*.

weakness and sinfulness against the overpowering might and fear of God. These things inevitably lead man to put trust in God.<sup>1</sup>

According to al-Ghazali, the meaning of God's reliance is the intermingling of intellect, *Shari'at* and *Tauhid* in a proportionate manner.<sup>2</sup> According to Qushayriah, trust in God is reliance on what is in God's hand and despairing of whatever is in the hands of men.<sup>3</sup> In the same way, Dhu'n Nun said: "Trust in God is to give up planning for yourself and to abandon (reliance on your own) power and ability. The servant is capable of trust in God only when he has realized that God -knows and sees his condition".<sup>4</sup> According to Sahl, one who trusts God is distinguished by three signs: he does not ask, does not refuse, (when given) and does not hold on what was given to him.<sup>5</sup>

Concerning the essence of trust in God, Muhammad b. Ata says: It is when anxiety about things of this world does not prevail over you, despite your dire need of them and when your reliance upon God prevails in you despite your dependence on such things."<sup>6</sup> Master Abu Ali al Daqqaq says:

The one who puts trust in God goes through three stages:

(a) trust in God, (b) surrender to God, and (c) relegation one's affairs to God.<sup>7</sup> The one who practices trust in God, relies on His promise; the one who surrenders himself to God, is content with his knowledge of God; and the one who relegates his affairs to God, is satisfied with His decree. He also says: "Trust in God is the characteristic of the ordinary believers, surrendering oneself to God is

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1. Darshan Singh, "The Nature and meaning of Tawakkul in Sufism", Mohamed Taher ed. *Sufism Evolution and practice*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publications pvt. Ltd. 1997), p. 20

2. *Ihya*, *op. cit.*, p. 209

3. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Principle of Sufism*, p.123

4. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p.180

5. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 181; He also says: Trust in God is the beginning, self-surrender is the middle and relegating one's affairs to God is the end. (*Loc. cit.*)



the characteristic of the elect; and relegating one's affairs to God is the characteristic of those who have achieved unity with God.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Moral significance of trust in God**

The basic element of Sufi morality is *tawakkul*. It is a basic concept for understanding the nature of the Sufi path. In the systematized Sufi path *tawakkul* is just one step in the forward journey, but in actual practice, its importance is far greater.

In its actual practice, the Sufi path may be described in two categories, i.e., ‘asceticism’, and ‘love’. The *nafs* in the Islamic faith represents the lower self, base instincts and material nature of man. It is the cause of all blameworthy actions, sins and base qualities. In the Sufi sense, the holy war is defined as struggle against the perverse nature of the *nafs*.

The goal of the Sufi is to achieve nearness of God by the bonds of love, and the way of the Sufis is to tame the *nafs* by mortifications in order to put it into service to reach the goal. Now, *tawakkul*, the central doctrine of the Sufi path refers both to the discipline and the goal. It incorporates both asceticism and divine love. In relation to *nafs*, *tawakkul* is asceticism and in relation to God *tawakkul* is love of God.

In Sufism, a mere attitude of trust does not mean anything unless it is practiced in active life. Hence, Junaied b. Muhammad has said: *Tawhid* (i.e. the pure monotheistic belief in God) is a saying of the heart while *tawakkul* (i.e. the complete reliance on God) is a doing of the heart.

### **vii. Good conduct**

Morality is the science of behaviour. Man's moral character is expressed through behaviour. He who has good behaviour is called moral and whose behaviour is bad is called immoral (i.e., good conduct is related to morality.)

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1. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 182

Hence, for Sufi, practice of good moral character is an important aspect. All the prophets and saints were the possessor of good conduct. Concerning the importance of good conduct Imam Ghazali says that good conduct is the half of religion, fruit of the efforts of God-fearing men and important quality of the worshippers of God. On the other hand, bad conduct is ruinous poison, dangerous wound in brain and much condemned evil.<sup>1</sup> Bad conduct is also a disease of soul which ruins the everlasting life. Hence, God says: He who purifies the soul is successful and he who fails that corrupts it. (9:9-10).

### **Merits of good conduct**

The Prophet (SAW) was praised for his good conduct. God says: ‘you are upon sublime character.’ Again, the Prophet (SAW) said: ‘I have been sent to complete the best of conducts.’<sup>2</sup> Good conduct will be heaviest of all attributes in the Balance on the resurrection Day.<sup>3</sup> God will not throw one into Hell whom He gave good temperament and good appearance. Again, the Prophet (SAW) was once asked: A certain woman fasts all days and prays all nights, but she has got a bad temper and gives trouble to her neighbours by harsh words. The Prophet said: “There is no good in her and her place is in Hell.”<sup>4</sup> Abu Ali al-Daqqaq says: “God favoured His Prophet (SAW) with many excellent qualities. However, none of them is more praiseworthy than his good moral character,”<sup>5</sup> for God said: “Whoever is given wisdom has been given abundant good” (2:269).

In fact, foundation of Islam is good conduct. God created good conduct as the best thing. And He has given it to men. Moreover, God preferred this religion for Him. There is no good in our religion except good conduct and benevolence.

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1. Imam Ghazali, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 51

2. *loc. cit.*

3. Once a man came to the Prophet (SAW) and said: “O Messenger of God, what is religion? He replied: Good conduct. Then he came to his front and asked: O Messenger of God, What is religion? He replied Good conduct. Then he came by his left side and asked: What is religion? He replied Good conduct. Then he came by his back side and asked the same question and he replied the same. Then he said looking at him: Not to be angry is good conduct. The Prophet (SAW) was asked: what is misfortune? He said: Bad conduct.” (*Ibid.*, p. 52)

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p.252-53

Among the believers who are best in good conduct is best in faith. Good conduct removes all faults as the ray's of the sun melt snow. A man will get high rank and honourable place in the next world by dint of his good conduct even though he had little divine services. Hazrat Junaid said: "Four virtues raise up a man to highest rank though his divine service and learning are little- (a) patience, (b) modesty, (c) generosity and (d) good conduct."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, bad conduct destroys divine service as condiment destroys honey. Hence, the Prophet (SAW) said: A man reaches the lowest stage of Hell for his bad conduct.

### **What is good conduct?**

Sufism is related to good moral character. In this context al-Kattani says: "Sufism is good moral character. Whoever surpasses you in moral character has also surpassed you, in Sufism."<sup>2</sup> Again al-Wasti said: "Good moral character means that one shows no enmity towards anyone, nor is shown any enmity by anyone due to one's intimate knowledge of God."<sup>3</sup> When a man asked the Prophet (SAW) about good conduct he recited the following verse: Take to pardon, enjoin good and keep away from the illiterate (7: 199). By explaining good conduct, the Prophet (SAW) said: "Good conduct is to join the tie of relationship with one who cuts it off, pardon one who oppresses you."<sup>4</sup>

Concerning this he also says that fear God wherever you are, if you commit an evil, do a good action soon after it. As a result, the evil will vanish.<sup>5</sup> Hence, it is clear that good moral character is the servant's greatest virtue, by means of which the true essence of man is known. Here it is mentioned that human nature is rooted in soul and actions flow out of it. If good actions come out of soul, it assumes good conduct and if evil actions come out of it, it assumes bad conduct.

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1. Imam Ghazali, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 54

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*, p. 253

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. Imam Ghazali, *op. cit.*, vol.3, p. 51

5. *Ibid.*, p. 52

Hence, there are four things- (i) to do good or bad action, (ii) to possess power to do these actions, (iii) to have knowledge of both, and (iv) to become either of the two actions, good and bad. Owing to one's attachment to either of them conduct arises.<sup>1</sup> A man is said to have good conduct if he has got in him all the above qualities proportionately. Here it is mentioned that according to al-Ghazali, there are four basic qualities of good conduct: Knowledge, bravery, patience and power of adjustment or judgment. Other qualities are their branches. Nobody was blessed with all these qualities except the Prophet (SAW). Thus, it is said that one is closed to God in proportion to his closeness to the Messenger of God.

In a nutshell, we can say that good conduct comprises the following qualities-shame, to consider calamity as little, to wish good of all, truthfulness, little talk, much divine service, little shortcomings, patience, contentment, kindness, abstaining from begging, curse, rebuke, back-biting, hatred, miserliness, haughtiness, pride etc. to love for God and hate for God. These qualities are called good conduct, and these qualities are also related to morality. Those who combine within themselves all of these traits are worthy to be powerful leaders (guides) among human being whom all creatures obey and follow their deeds. In Sufism a devotee must have to practice these qualities in order to reach his goal.

### **Methods of improving conduct**

In the matter of conduct, middle course is good. It keeps the soul pure, and if there is any drifting away from this middle course, it causes the disease of soul. The treatment for the diseases of soul is to remove from soul the evil natures and habits and to bring in good natures and habits. The medicine of every evil action is to act to its opposite. For instance, illiteracy can be removed by learning, miserliness by charity, pride by humility and greed by patience. Similarly, the diseases of soul can be removed by the bitter pills of patience and good actions. The diseases of body end with the death of body, but the diseases of soul will last

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1. Imam Ghazali, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 54

after the death as soul is everlasting. Appropriate medicine of soul is to give up all kind of immoral thought and action and make the habit of doing moral action. It can be prescribed by a spiritual physician or guide. He must, at first, be acquainted with the diseases of his disciple and then cautiously treat them. If a disciple earns unlawfully, he must be told to give it up. When the open sins are removed, the guide should look to the removal of his inner faults, character and conduct. The ordinary means of removing the diseases of soul is to act against its low desires. Thus, we can see there is close relation between morality and good conduct.

### **viii. Truthfulness**

Truthfulness is the foundation of Sufi path. Through it, its (Sufi path) perfection is effected and its correct order is achieved. It is the subject of both theory and practice, i.e., words and deeds. Mere utterances have no value as it is a kind of hypocrisy which is against the teachings of the Qur'an (2:44), (61:2-3). Truthful person comes immediately after the rank of prophet hood. For God said: "And with those whom God has blessed: the prophets and truthful ones" (4:69, 71). Truthful Person is near to God. Hench, Ahmad b. Khadrawayh said: "Whoever wishes God to be with him should be truthful, for God said: "Surely God is with the truthful ones" (2:153).

The minimal requirement for truthfulness is that one's outward actions and inward thoughts are equal.<sup>1</sup> That is, "the trustworthy" (*sadiq*) is one who speaks the truth, whereas the "truthful" is one who is veracious in his words, deeds and spiritual states. It is said three things never elude the truthful: Sweetness of character, awe of God and grace.

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1. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 223

Different Sufis define truthfulness in different ways:

- i. Al Qannad said: “Truthfulness (*sadiq*) is preventing your mouth from uttering things that are prohibited by God.”<sup>1</sup>
- ii. Abd Al-Wahid b. Zayd said: “Truthfulness is to be loyal to God in all your actions.”<sup>2</sup>
- iii. Abu sa`id al-Qurashi said: “The truthful one is he who is ready to die without being ashamed of exposing his innermost secrets”<sup>3</sup> for God said : “Long for death, when you speak the truth” (2:94), (2:88)
- iv. Abu Ali al daqqaq said: “Truthfulness means being with other people in the same way as you consider yourself to be or considering yourself to be as you are in yourself.”<sup>4</sup> In fact, truthfulness is a perpetual obligation (*fard da`m*), without it, occasional obligation(such as fasting, hajj) will not be accepted.

Truthfulness is the sword of God that cuts through everything it falls on. Concerning the benefit of truthfulness, al-Qushayri mentioned that God revealed to David: “David, whoever has trust in Me in his innermost self, I will make him trust worthy in the eyes of My creatures.”<sup>5</sup> He also mentioned: “Hold on to truthfulness when you fear that it will harm you, for in reality, it will benefit you. Give up a lie when you think that it will benefit you, for in reality it will harm you.”

Concerning the signs of truthfulness, al-Harith al-Muhasibi said: “The truthful person would be unperturbed, if any respect for him disappeared from the

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1. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 223

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 225

5. *Loc. cit.*

hearts of people as long as his own heart remained virtuous. He would not want even one grain's worth of his good deeds to be known to people; and yet, he would not mind if people were to observe any of his wrongdoing. ...”<sup>1</sup> Again, Al-Khawwas says: “You will never see the truthful man except performing his obligation or engaging in a good deed.”<sup>2</sup> Al-Kharraj making an elaborate discussion on truthfulness links it with sincerity (*Iklas*) and patience. To him, truthfulness is closely connected with sincerity and patience rather these three principles are interconnected.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the dignity of truthful person is very high. Their rank is next to prophet. It is also a way to achieve the nearness of God. A truthful person's inner most thoughts are in harmony with his speech and deeds. He does not say or act anything against the Law of God (i.e. they always act moral action and avoid immoral action). In all circumstances he remains devoted to God and engaged in good action. He considers the problems of other people as the problem of himself. He is trustworthy to all creatures. Man never affected by the truthfulness, but lie or deception is the source of immorality or misfortune. Hence, in brief, we can say truthfulness is the basis of moral action. Through it, as man's own goodness is gained, in the same way, other people of the society is also benefited.

### **ix. Satisfaction (*Rida*)**

Satisfaction denotes a condition in which a spiritual traveler is always pleased with whatever providence sends to him. As Ruwaym b. Ahmad said: “Satisfaction is accepting divine decrees with joy.”<sup>3</sup> Whoever wants to attain the abode of satisfaction must adhere to that which satisfies God.

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, p. 224

3. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 209

Satisfaction is of two kinds: (a) the satisfaction of God with man, and (b) the satisfaction of man with God.<sup>1</sup> Human satisfaction really consists in Man's performing the command of God and submitting himself to His decree. The satisfaction of God proceeds to that of man. Because, man's satisfaction is connected with God's satisfaction and subsists there by. Hence, God says: "God is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him" (98:8). It is related in the tradition that Moses said: My God shows me an action that I could perform in order to satisfy you. God made a revelation to him saying: "O son of Imran My satisfaction lies in your satisfaction with My decree". i.e., when a man is satisfied with God's decrees it is a sign that God is satisfied with him.<sup>2</sup> On the Divine path this satisfaction is supposed to be higher than any other stations. But some *shaykhs* treat soul's satisfaction as one of the spiritual states (*hal*) or a gift of God rather than a station (*maqam*) to be achieved through spiritual training.<sup>3</sup>

A synthesis of the two views is possible. It would be stated thus— at the beginning (of the Sufi path), the servant acquires satisfaction, so it is a station, while at the end it becomes a state and, therefore, it can no longer be acquired, i.e., divinely bestowed. So, it may be called either a station or a state.<sup>4</sup> When a man takes God's choice, and abandons his own choice, he is delivered from all sorrows, because satisfaction expels sorrows, curse, heedlessness, and purges the heart from the thoughts relating to other than God. Hence, al-Qushayri has said: "Satisfaction is the greatest gate of God".<sup>5</sup> It implies that he who is graced by satisfaction, will receive God's most perfect welcome and will be granted the highest proximity (with Him). In the case of morality, all goodness lies in satisfaction. But he, who puts any value on this world, and its carnal pleasure, will

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1. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 177

2. Al-Qushayria's Epistle on Sufism. Eng. tr., p. 207

3. For detailed, see *Al-Qushayria's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 206; Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 179; *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, p. 163

4. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p.206

5. *Ibid.*, p. 207



never attain satisfaction. So, if a man wants to lead his life according to the Divine rule (or moral rules) he will have to acquire satisfaction of God. Here it is mentioned that the way of morality is the way of hindrance and sufferings. A moral person has to satisfy with his state whether he is in troubles and afflictions. Hence, by practicing this state one can easily lead a virtuous life.

#### **x. Vigilant awareness or meditation (*muraqaba*)**

*Muraqaba* means the servant's constant realization of the Lord's awareness of all his states. The Sufi authors refer to the traditional saying of the Prophet (SAW): "Worship God as if you see Him, for if you do not see Him, yet, He sees you." Here the Prophet (SAW) has indicated the state of vigilant awareness, because vigilant awareness is the servant's knowledge of the Lord's constant awareness of him.<sup>1</sup> So his constancy in this knowledge is vigilant awareness of his Lord and this is the source of all good for him. He will arrive at this stage only after he has completed the stage of self-scrutiny (*muhasaba*).<sup>2</sup> For when he takes account of what he has done in the past, corrects his inner state in the present, follows the path of Truth, takes good care of his heart in dealing with God, stays with God in every breath he makes, and observes God in all his states, he will then realize that God is watching over him. That is, He is close to his heart, He knows all his states, watches all his actions and hears all he speaks. Whosoever neglects all of these is shut off from attaining God.<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the merit of vigilant awareness, a Sufi said: Whosoever is aware of God in his thoughts, God will protect his limbs from any sin.<sup>4</sup> Again, Ibrahim al khawwas said: "Watchfulness brings about awareness of God, and

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1. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, op. cit., p.158

2. *Al-Qushayria's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 203

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 204

awareness brings about the dedication to God of one's innermost self and one's outward action".<sup>1</sup> The sign of vigilant awareness is choosing what God chooses, making great what God makes great and belittling what God belittles.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, we can say that the best things that a traveler of a Sufi path has to observe are self-scrutiny, awareness of God and guiding his actions by the knowledge of the Divine Law.

In the case of moral development, vigilance awareness is a very important element. It leads a devotee to the path of inner truth. In vigilance awareness, a devotee of God is aware of God in his thought, i.e., he thinks that God is watching all his actions. Such existence of God in his thought abstain him from taking part in any kinds of immoral activities. Hence, we can say, vigilance awareness protects one's limbs from committing any kinds of sin.

### **xi. Fear (*Khawf*)**

Fear is a painful state of mind. It is a sentiment which is related with the future, for a man fears that something undesirable might befall on him or that something pleasant might get away from him.<sup>3</sup> Fear of God means that one fears His punishment either in this life or in the Hereafter.<sup>4</sup> God has made fear as a duty for His servants, demanding, "Fear Me if you are believers" (3:175);

"Take not two Gods; there is only one God so fear Me alone."

God praised the believers by attributing fear to them, saying:

"They fear their Lord above them" (16:50).

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 205

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, p.160

3. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., *op. cit.*, p.143

4. Here it is mentioned that Al-Sarraj in his famous book *Kitab al-Luma* said that three kinds of fear is mentioned in the Qur'an: The first kind of fear appears in the heart on account of the thought of God's vindictiveness. The second kind of fear occurs because of the thought of separation and distance from God. The third kind of fear is felt on account of knowledge of Divine Majesty. Such a fear of God is the fear of the real devotee of God.

The root of fear is knowledge and its fruit is fear of unlawful and doubtful things.<sup>1</sup> God has given specialty to fear by keeping His relation with it. He says: “God will not accept its flesh and blood, but He will accept from you *Taqwa* or God fear” (37:22). For this reason, He again says: “The most honourable of you are one who is the most God fearing.” (49:13)

The signs of the fearful heart are expressed in bodily organs and nature. Smoothness, body being yellow, falling into swoon, crying and weeping are the signs of fear on body.<sup>2</sup>

### **Stages of fear**

The lowest sign of fear is to abstain from unlawful and prohibited things. The fear which keeps away from unlawful things is fear of sin. If the proportion of fear is excessive and it keeps one away from doubtful things, it is called *Taqwa* or self-abnegation. And the fear which gives advice to give up everything in excess except what is absolutely necessary for a man is called *Taqwa* or God fear.<sup>3</sup> *Taqwa* is a higher stage of fear of unlawful things; because it keeps away not only from unlawful things but also from things of doubtful nature. *Siddiq* is a higher stage than *Taqwa*. A *siddiq* possesses other three qualities: (i) fear of unlawful things, (ii) fear of doubtful things, (iii) fear of losing a moment without remembrance of God and possessing other qualities as mentioned above.<sup>4</sup>

The object of fear is to give encouragement to perform good actions. Through (God) fear, God guides His servants to the path of knowledge and action, so that they may attain nearness to God. So, the benefits of fear is to take care, to give up unlawful things and doubtful things, to make efforts for divine service and to engage in *Zikr*, *Fikr* and such other things which takes near to God. According to Sufis, in the following way, we can generate God fear in our heart.

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1. *Ihya*, vol. iv. Eng. tr., *op. cit.*, p. 135

2. *Ibid.*, p. 132

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 133

**First:** To acquire true knowledge about self, God and His punishment.

**Second:** If a man fails to acquire true knowledge about the nature of self and God, he has to adopt the companionship of God fearing man and to avoid the companionship of worldly people for generating the God fear.

In the case of morality, God fear helps a man to lead a moral life. It helps man to refrain from unlawful and doubtful things. We have already mentioned that fear is expressed through bodily organs and nature. If fear is expressed in bodily organs, the body cannot move to commit sins as it remains confined to virtuous acts and prepares for the future after repenting for the past misdeeds.

If fear is expressed in nature, a devotee controls his passions, gives up pleasures and enjoyments. His desires are then burnt and his limbs come under control. There come then in mind modesty and humility and there go away pride, conceit and hatred. He then engages himself in meditation, taking account of actions and making efforts for moral and divine service. Hence, from the above discussion, it is clear that, there is a close connection between the Sufi doctrine of fear and morality.

## **xii. Hope (*Raza*)**

Nearness to God is also experienced through *raza* or hope in God. Hope is an important station among the stations of religion and a condition of those who search for God. Hope is perfected by state, knowledge and action. Knowledge is cause and state is its fruit. State again leads to action. Out of these three, state is called hope.<sup>1</sup> Hope means to wait for a dear thing.<sup>2</sup> According to Qushayriah, hope occurs in regard to something that is anticipated in the future.<sup>3</sup> He also said:

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1. *Ihya*, vol. iv. Eng. tr., p. 122

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism*. Eng. tr., p. 149

“Hope is trust in the bounty of the Generous and Loving One.” Whoever takes faith in his heart, performs divine service, purifies the heart from the thorns of bad conduct and wait for the mercy of God unto his death, his waiting is called hope.<sup>1</sup>

God says: “Those who have got faith, those who migrated and fought in the way of God can hope for God’s mercy” (2:218).

This means that, those who act to the contrary cannot expect to have God’s mercy as they do not walk on the way of God. So the Prophet (SAW) said: “He who leads his life according to his low desire (instinct) and yet hopes for Paradise is a fool”. Ihya-b.-Ma’az said: “To me that person is more a fool who hopes for forgiveness but remains engrossed in sins without doing virtuous acts, who hopes for the fruit of Paradise after sowing the seeds of Hell, who hopes for the rank of the pious by doing sinful acts.”<sup>2</sup>

According to al-Sarraj there are three kinds of hope:<sup>3</sup> (i) hope in God, (ii) hope in the abundance of God’s mercy and (iii) hope in God’s recompense (*thawab*), i.e., some aspirants hope for His kindness, while others hope for some reward from Him. But the perfect form of hope is that when the seeker of God hopes for nothing except the realization of identity with Him.<sup>4</sup>

In the case of morality, hope is also helpful. Because, he can hope for God’s mercy who fights on the way of God i.e., who purifies himself inwardly and outwardly, avoids sins and does virtuous actions. On the other hand, who leads life to the dictates of low desires, yet hopes the success of life, is a great fool. In short, who leads the live according to the dictate of moral law, can hope for success in life.

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1. *Ihya*, vol. iv. Eng. tr., *op. cit.*, p. 122

2. *Ibid.*, p. 123

3. *Kitab al-Luma*, Eng. tr., p. 18

4. *Ihya*, vol. iv. Eng. tr., p. 122

### xiii. Love or Mahabba

Love is the natural inclination towards objects that gives pleasure. In another word, love means preferring the Beloved over all that is familiar. Love of God is the essence of Islam<sup>1</sup> and supreme end of man in this world<sup>2</sup> It appears from several passages in the Qur'an that God loves man and that God's love of man precedes man's love of God. God says:

- i. "God loves them and they love God" (5:55).
- ii. "Verily, God loves the repentant and those who purify themselves" (2:222).

In the same way the Prophet (SAW) said:

- i. No one will be truly faithful till God is dearer to him than all else.
- ii. When My servant continuously seeks My favor by works of supererogation until I love him, and when I love him I am his hearing and his sight and his hand and his helper.
- iii. The Apostle also said: God loves to meet those who love to meet Him and dislikes meeting with those who dislike to meet Him.

Some Sufis think that *Mahabbat* is derived from *hubb*,<sup>3</sup> meaning "a Jar full of stagnant water", because when love is collected in the heart and fills it, there is no room there for any thought except of the beloved, as Shibli says: "Love is called *mahabbat* because it obliterates from the heart everything except the beloved."<sup>4</sup> Concerning this Junaid said: "Love means that lover takes on in the Beloved's attributes in place of his own."<sup>5</sup> So God revealed to Jesus, "If I look into someone's heart and I find no love there for this world or for the afterlife, I

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1. M. Umaruddin, *The Ethical Philosophy of Al- Ghazali*, (Aligarh: The Aligarh Muslim University Press. 1962), p. 122

2. The shayks and the Sufis like sumnum – Al-Muhibb regards all the *maqamat* or the stations on the journey to God as the stages of love and treat love of God as the only criteria of God-realisation.

3. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 305; According to Qushayri, love is called 'hubb' because it bears the burdens of glory and disgrace that come in the path of seeking the beloved.

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Al-Risalah al-Qushari*, Eng. tr., *Principles of Sufism*, p. 330. In the same way Abu Abdallah al-Qurashi said: The inner reality of love means that you give all of yourself to the One you love until nothing remains of you for you. (*Loc. cit.*)

fill it up with My love.<sup>1</sup> God's love of man is His good will towards him and His having mercy on him.<sup>2</sup> For love is one of the names of His will (*iraddat*), like 'satisfaction, 'anger, 'mercy' etc. and His will is an eternal attribute, whereby He wills His actions. In short, God's love towards man consists in showing much favour to him, and giving him a recompense in this world and the next, and making him secure from punishment and keeping him safe from sin, and bestowing on him lofty "states" and exalted "stations" and causing him to turn his thoughts away from all that is other than God.<sup>3</sup> When God peculiarly distinguishes anyone in this way, that specialization of His will is called love.

On the contrary, man's love towards God is a quality which manifests itself in the heart of the pious believer, in the form of veneration and magnification,

He becomes impatient and restless in his desire for vision of Him and cannot rest with anyone except Him and grows familiar with the remembrance (*dhikr*) of Him, giving up the remembrance of everything besides.<sup>4</sup> Repose becomes unlawful to him and rest flees from him. He is cut off from all habits and associations, and renounces sensual passion and turns towards the court of love and submits to the law of love and knows God by His attributes of perfection.<sup>5</sup>

According to al-Sarraaj there are three forms of love.<sup>6</sup> The first is the love of the vulgar (*al-'am mat*), which results from God's kindness towards them as men naturally love their benefactors. The second form of love, which is the love of the sincere (*al-sadiqun*), is produced by the majesty, omnipotence and omniscience of God. The third form of love is the love of saints and gnostics, (*al-siddiqun wa'l arifun*) which results from their knowledge of the causeless eternal Divine love: hence they love God without any cause for loving Him.

For moral development, love of God is very helpful. To acquire love of God one needs to be repented for his past sins and to purify himself. The Sufis'

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1. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, p. 305

2. *Ibid.*, p. 307

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. Hujwiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-308

5. *Loc. cit.*

6. *The Kitab al-Luma*, Eng. tr., p. 17

love means lover takes on the beloved's attributes in the place of his own attributes. That is, to acquire love of God at first a devotee has to annihilate his own attributes, then he has to acquire praiseworthy attributes of God, which are the best expression of moral virtues. Again, when a devotee proceeds to acquire the love of God, God keeps him safe from sins. That is, all kinds of immoral acts and gives him lofty states and also turns his thought away from immoral actions. Moreover, to acquire love of God, lovers himself cut off all his bad habits and renounce sensual passion and submit to the God. Hence, we can say the way of acquiring the Love of God, is the way of acquiring moral perfection. In ethics moral perfection is merely a theory but in the case of Sufism, it is real, i.e., in the case of morality it is defined only by words whereas in Sufism it is a real practice.

## **5. Some Characteristics of Sufi Morality**

If we analyze the Sufi Way of life, i.e., moral training of Sufi life we can observe some characteristic of it, which is discussed below.

### **i. Asceticism**

Asceticism or renunciation (*Zuhd*) is one of the basic teachings of Sufism. This means leading an ideal life which is free from all kinds of worldly greed and desires. Greed for wealth and desires for exalted positions are the roots of all immoral activities. These hinder human beings from achieving his ultimate goal. It is mentioned in the Qur'an:

“Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence) and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of the world's life; but in nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to) (3:14)

But inspired by the Qur'an and the life style of the Prophet (SAW), the immediate successors of the Prophet (SAW) led the life of renunciation, i.e., a life



which is free from worldly desires. They strictly followed the moral code of Islam. Because of this, in early works of Sufism they have been remembered with much veneration and regarded them as the leaders in the path of Sufism. We get a pen picture of them in al-Kharraj's writings (a famous Sufi author). He writes:<sup>1</sup>

When Abu Bakr succeeded to the leadership, and the world in its entirety came to him in a basement, he did not lift up his head on that account, or make any pretensions; he wore a single garment, which he used to pin together, so that he was known as 'the man of the two pins.' Umar b. al-Khattab who also ruled the world in its entirety, lived on bread and olive-oil; his clothes were patched in a dozen places, some of the patches being of leather; and yet there were opened unto him the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar. As for 'Uthman' he was like one of his slaves in dress and appearance; of him it is related that he was seen coming out of one of his gardens with a faggot of firewood on his shoulders and when questioned on the matter he said: 'I wanted to see whether my soul would refuse.' When Ali succeeded to the rule, he bought a waistband for four dirhams and a shirt for five dirhams; finding the sleeve of his garment too long, he went to a cobbler and taking his knife cut off the sleeve level with the tips of his fingers; yet this same man divided the world right and left.

Hence, it is clear that the immediate successors of the Prophet (SAW) as well as early Sufis gave more importance on asceticism. But one cannot reach to the state of asceticism or renunciation without a strong commitment to moral life. For reaching to that state, one has to pass such a life which is free from egoism and selfishness, even more than that.

## **ii. Kindness**

Sufism is a generous moral theory, which is not confined in any special class or tribe. The Sufi, in all circumstances, gives more importance to others than

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1. Arberry, A.j., *Sufism an Account of the Mystics of Islam*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1969. p. 32

himself. And always desires for other's goodness instead of himself. Ibn-al-Arabi, alludes in one of his letters about the wilderness and liberality of Sufi morality. He writes: "kindly moral character (*husn al-akhlaq*) is obligatory ... for the Prophet (SAW) said: 'Indeed I have been sent to bring to fulfillment noble traits of character.'... and since it is impossible by human effort to be of a noble character that please all creatures ... God introduced Himself into companionship with His servants. ... So, you are able to undertake a noble morality only by the companionship of God exclusively. Do what pleases God and avoid what displeases Him, whether toward Him or toward others, for conduct toward others is counted among the things that please God. So undertake a noble morality only with God. ... For, all Muslims and non-Muslims benefit by those who are attentive to the presence of God. God has a claim on every Muslim in their conduct with all God's creatures, without exception from every class of angel, jinn, human, animal, plant, mineral and in animate creature, whether believer or not."<sup>1</sup>

The above quotation of the Ibn-al-Arabi indicates a dynamic moral concept that is not limited to command and to prohibit but extends kindness to all things apart from considerations of communal identification or even physical nature. Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi spells a long list of moral qualities that Sufism engenders.<sup>2</sup> He says that, anyone with a Sufi affiliation should aspire to a moral level that minimally holds to "abandoning one's right to requital, mercy to those who treat one unjustly, and supplication (*du'a* to God) on their behalf."<sup>3</sup> Such qualities of justice, forbearance and generosity as expounded in Sufi manuals were not merely ideals but the followers of the Sufi way have implemented those ideals in their daily lives. Hence, the seeker of a Sufi path not only should be content with obeying the law but also he has to be conscious about the requirements of justice– the spirit of the Law and the virtues of generosity, connected with each point of Law.

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1. Ibn Arabi, *al-Wasaya*, (Damascus: Dar al-iman, 1997 pp. 57-58

2. For detailed, see, Abu Najib Al-Suhrawasdi, *Kitab Adab al-Muridin*, ed. by M. Milson, (Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977), p. 19

3. *Loc. cit.*

### iii. Selfless love

The Sufi does not love God for fear of Hell or hope of Paradise or satisfaction of another object. They love God only for God. In this context, the mystic of 12<sup>th</sup> century Abdalusia, Ibn al-Arif said: “Both the legal duties of *Shari'ah* and spiritual stations of *Sufiyya* are worthless unless informed by a complete orientation toward God at every moment, regardless of activity of circumstance.”<sup>1</sup> A Sufi must be other centered (not self centered), i.e., altruistic in order to be God centered. The necessity of other oriented out look of the mystical life is suggested by abu Hafs-al Suhrawardi, Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, Sharfuddin Maneri and others. Abu Hafs-al Suhrawardi says: “Whoever claims possession of something, his altruistic preference is not sound, since he considers his self to be more entitled to the thing by possessing it. However, altruistic preference is the mark of those who consider all things belong to God.”<sup>2</sup> Good actions, if performed for self-interest (for example, generosity for the sake of fame) become morally dubious. So, many Sufis criticize to observe religious practice for reward and punishment. For example, Shekh Arslan criticizes religiosity oriented to law as one of self-interest (that is, seeking to gain a reward by performing God’s commands) and praising instead religiosity oriented to love as one of selflessness. Here question is not one of religious duty but of motive in performing it.

In fact, Sufism was fundamentally anxious with the greed unwittingly imposed by the religion’s theory of reward and punishment. Hence, we can see the popular story of the early female mystics Rabia al -Adawiyya (d.801). There was a saying that Rabia reportedly went about with a bucket of water in one hand

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1. Ibnal-Arif, Mahasin al-Majalin, *The Attractions of Mystical Sessions*. ed. and trans. by W. Elliot and A.K. Abdalla, (Amersham: Avery Publishing Company, 1980) p.

2. Abu Hafs, Al-Suhrawardi, Kitab *'Awarif al-Ma 'arif* (Cairo: Matabat al-Qahira, 1973. p. 250

to douse the fires of Hell and a torch in the other to burn the gardens of Paradise, so that people would love only God without concerning for recompense due them for performing their religious duties. Similarly, the Persian mystical poet Attar speaks of the promise of Heaven and threat of Hell as forms of bribery, a distraction that keeps believers from pursuing God alone.<sup>1</sup>

The Sufis are vigorously concerned about the matter of commercial exchange which is not only limited in the region of spirituality rather they refuse the idea of exchange in the case of morality. To them, morality should be regardless. The key goal of Sufism is to eliminate the impurities of the heart. Such as greed (*hasad*) that poses obstacles to selfless moral action. As the self or self-regarding orientation is the source of both individual and communal disharmony, hence, the Sufis advice that it is to be eliminated. He has to cut the cycle of pride and vengeance and all other human vices that ‘self’ can engender. For Sufism, all of this requires an undivided and cautious attitude toward religion itself, and it has been Sufism’s refusal to limit religiosity to either action defined by law (*Islam*) or belief defined by creed (*iman*) that creates the possibility of kindness (*ihsan*) which is regardless of anticipated gain or loss.

Hence, Abu Hafs al-Suhrawardi writes: “When the light of mystical certainty touches the innermost parts of the people (Sufis) close to God and takes root there, the heart is composed in all areas. The heart is partly composed with submission to the law (*Islam*), partly with adherence to the creed (*iman*) and entirely by the light of kindness (*ihsan*).”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Farid al-Din Attar, *Mantiq-u Tagr. (The Conference of the Birds)*, Eng. tr., A. Darbandi and D. Davis, (Harmonds worth and New York: Penguin Books, 1984), p:157

2. Al-Suhrawardi, Abu Hafs, *op. cit.*, p. 235

#### iv. Altruism

All the Sufis bear an altruistic attitude. It is testified by the Sufi manuals. The Sufi prefers other to himself. Hence, the Sufi manuals is the consensus that the morality of Islam culminates in kindness (*ihsan*) toward others, regardless to outward status, rank or association, resulting in an altruistic attitude toward other creatures, even one's enemies is found. Concerning the distinction between the morality of the outer life (justice) and that of the inner life (kindness) al-Qushyri says: "The outer aims of morality is to straighten moral character (that is, a moral range limited to the prevention of behaviour at odds with the law), on the other hand, the inner aims of morality is to purify moral character (that is, a moral range not limited to the prevention of antinomian behaviour and productive of a good not circumscribed by law)".<sup>1</sup> Concerning this interiorly based morality Abu Hafis al-Suhrawardi says: "Getting along with all flocks, Children, neighbours, friends, all people entirely, constitutes the moral character of Sufism, for by enduring insult and injury, the essence of the soul is made to manifest."<sup>2</sup>

Long before Abu Hafis al-Suhrawardi, Sufism had already specified with other centered kindness i.e., altruism. Altruistic preference as described in an anonymous manual on Sufism-*Kitab Adabal Muluk fi Bayan al-Haqaiq* in the tenth century:<sup>3</sup>

As for the moral qualities of the Sufis: kindly, soft spoken-peaceable of cheerful countenance and joyful appearance, loving the poor and showing an altruistic preference for them, even if they (the Sufis) are in great difficulty and privation, as God said: "They prefer others over themselves even if privation is their lot" (59:9). Altruistic preference (*ithar*) constitutes one of the moral qualities of the Messenger of God (SAW), the members of his family and his companions. They devoted themselves to his character, since he was the best of people in moral character, as God

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1. Al-Qushari, al-Risalah al-Qushayriah, ed.by al. Jarrah, (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 2001, p.159)

2. Al-Suhrawardi, Abu Hafis, *op. cit.*, p. 245

3. Radtke, B. (ed.), *Kitab Adabal Muluk fi Bayan al-Haqaiq*, (Beirut: Franz steiner, 1991), pp. 44-45

said: “Indeed you are of great character” (68 : 4). And Sufis imitate the Prophet (SAW) in everything, even his character, for it is said that Sufism is kindness. There are signs of the moral character that belongs to Sufis, as he (SAW) said: “Man truly outstrips by his kindness the rank of those who fast and pray (that is, other-centered kindness has a moral status superior to action prescribed by law).” Those who fast and pray do so only for themselves (that is, to assure their own standing before God). Kindness extends beyond that to the other (*ilal-ghayr*), for it is by it (that is, other-centered kindness) that the believer is made to rejoice and the heart of every Muslim is gladdened. Thus, the end of Sufism is kindness: By kindness, the infidel comes to desire Islam, the ignorant are swayed from their ignorance, God comes to be beloved by His creatures, charity and social harmony are achieved, and all good is realized.

## **v. Humility**

Humility is an excellent quality for every Muslim. But the Sufis give more importance on humility. For God says: “Successful indeed are the believers, those who humble themselves in their prayers.” (23:1-2). Again, “The servants of the compassionate one are those who walk on the earth in humility” (25:63). The meaning of this verse is that, they walk in submissiveness and humility. To discuss the nature of humility, al-Qushayri mentioned the several traditions of the Prophet (SAW), and quotes the views of the number of Sufis who put emphasis on humble nature of man. Humility is opposite to arrogance. Hence, the Prophet (SAW) said: “The one who has as much as a mustard seed of arrogance in his heart will not enter into Paradise.”

‘I have been sent as a mercy not a torment’, this saying of the Prophet (SAW) was considered to be closely connected to the Sufi concept of humility. In this context, Abu-Hafs al-Suhrawardi says: “Whoever knows the hidden depths of his soul, does not covet prestige and honour and travels path of humility. He does not quarrel with those who criticize him and is grateful to God for those who

commend him. ... What is the height of humility? Leaving your house and deeming all whom you encounter as better than you.”<sup>1</sup> That is, humility is submission to God and submissiveness is surrender to God and forswearing objection of divine wisdom. Hasan al-Basri noted: “Humility is constant fear accompanying the heart.”<sup>2</sup>

According to Qushayri, “Among the signs of humility in the servant is that, when he is provoked, offended or rejected, his duty is to meet all that with acceptance.”<sup>3</sup> He also said: Dignity lies in submissiveness and one who seeks it in pride will never find it.”<sup>4</sup> Ibrahim b. Shayban stated: “Honour lies in submissiveness, dignity lies in piety and freedom lies in contentment.”<sup>5</sup> Abu Yazid was asked, “When has a man reached submissiveness?” he replied, “When he does not attribute a station or state to his self and considers none among mankind worse than himself.”

All the prophets and Sufis have practiced act of humility. Anas b. Malik reported, “The Messenger of God (SAW) used to visit the sick, accompany funeral processions, ride a donkey and accept invitations from slaves.” Being inspired by the example of Prophet (SAW) Sufis also used to practice humility. Such as- Al-Qushayri mentioned: “Abu Sa’id al-Khudri used to feed the camels, sweep the house, mend sandals, sew clothes, milk the sheep, eat with the servant, and help him to grind when he was weary. And shame never prevented him from carrying his goods from the market to his family. He would shake hands with the rich and the poor and be the first to extend greetings.”<sup>6</sup> Abu Nasr al-Sarraj al Tusi reported, “Abu Hurayra was seen while he was governor of Medina with a bundle of firewood on his back, saying, "Make way for the governor.”<sup>7</sup>

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1. Al-Suhrawardi, Abu Hafis, *op. cit.*, p. 240

2. *Al-Risalah al-Qushayriah, Eng. tr., Principle of Sufism*, p. 86

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 90

5. *Loc. cit.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 88

7. *Ibid.*, p. 91

Qushayri also stated that al-Hasan b. Ali once passed by a group of youths who had some pieces of bread. They invited him to be their guest, and he dismounted and ate with them then he brought them to his house, fed them, clothed them and said, “I am indebted to them because they did not gain any more than what they offered to me while I gained more than that.”<sup>1</sup>

Hence, it is clear that a Sufi (a humble man) does not differentiate between the rich and the poor. He behaves equally to all. He does not express arrogance or pride on his knowledge, wealth and pupil. He does not express anger; even he is insulted or disgraced by others. But he thinks himself trivial. He does not consider any work as mean. But he performs any work humbly and devotedly. Moreover, Sufis are simple with regard to food, tender in character, noble in disposition, goodly of company. They are sorrowful without frowning, humble without arrogant, generous without being extravagant. They were gentle of heart and compassionate with each Muslim. That is, they always bear a humble attitude.

In the above discussion, attempts have been made to find out pin-pointly, the core teachings of Sufism, which are found to be closely connected with moral teachings. Though diversified points have been included in the discussion, the main object was remained to bring out moral elements inter-woven in this. It may also be added that Sufi ethics always upholds altruism, and there is no scope of egoism and selfishness in Sufi concept of morality.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 94



## CHAPTER V

### Morality in Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani's Writings

Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani was an authority, in the field of Islamic knowledge. He is regarded as an Imam in religious matters, theology and law, and also considered as one of the leaders of the Shafai and Hanbali schools of Islam. In fact, he was a great preacher of Islam and a Sufi of the highest rank-known as al-Ghawth al-Azam after whom the Qadiri order is named.<sup>1</sup> He was accorded complete acceptance by the jurists (*Fuqaha*), the spiritual paupers (*Fuqara*) and all the common people.<sup>2</sup> He was one of the supporting pillars of Islam, and the source of benefit to both the elite and the ordinary folk. He was someone whose prayer was to be answered surely, readily moved to tears, constant in the practice of remembrance (*dhikr*), frequently engaged in contemplation, tenderhearted, always of good cheer, kindly by disposition, generous of hand, remarkable for knowledge, noble in traits of character, and noble by lines of descent, as well as having a firm foothold in worshipful service (*ibada*) and the exercise of independent of judgment (*ijtihad*).<sup>3</sup> He never restrained his tongue from enjoining what is right and fair, and forbidding what is wrong and unfair, whether his targets were the Caliphs, the Viziers and the Sultans, the judges, the privileged few, or the people at large.<sup>4</sup>

#### 1. Biography

##### Succession

Hazrat Sayyed Abu Muhammad Muhiuddin Abdul Qadir Jilani (mercy of Allah be upon him) was born on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan-al-Mubarak in 470 A.H. /1077-8 A.D. in the village of Naif, in the district of Gilan in Persia (Iran), South Caspian Sea and died in 561A.H. /1166 A.D.<sup>5</sup> He belonged

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1. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed., H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramens (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1974) p.5.

2. In fact, he made fiqh (jurisprudence) and *tasawwuf* (mysticism) complementary of each other, thus brought jurists and mystics together.

3. Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Yahya at-Tadifi, *Necklaces of Gems*, (A Biography of the Crown of the Saints, Shaikh Abdul-Qadir al-Jilani), Eng. tr., by Muhtar Haolland, (Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, INC, 1998, printed in India, n.d.p.27.

4. *Ibid.*, p.28

5. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.5

to the family of noble saintly parents. His father Hazrat Abu Salih Jangi Dost was descended in the direct line of Hazrat Sayyed Imam Hasan (R.A), the grandson of the Holy Prophet (SAW). His mother was Umm al-Khair (mother of goodness) Fatima, the daughter of Shaikh Abdullah as-Sawmai was descendant of Hazrat Sayyed Imam Hussain (r.a.). He was thus undisputed Hasani and Hussani Sayyed and descendant of the Holy Prophet (SAW).<sup>1</sup> His mother had an abundant share of goodness and righteousness. Shaikh Abdullah Sawmai, the maternal grandfather of Ghawth al-Azam, was also an eminent religious scholar and an accomplished saint of his time.

The marriage of Sayyed Abu Salih and Sayyeda Ummul Khair Fatema makes an interesting episode of morality on account of the apple which had been eaten by Sayyed Abu Salih during his religious exercise; at the bank of a river.<sup>2</sup> He had not taken any food for three days when suddenly he saw an apple floating down the river. He caught hold of the apple and in hunger, he consumed it. But he felt embarrassment since he did not seek the permission of the owner of the apple. Accordingly, he started walking along the bank of the river in the opposite direction of the current of water. Ultimately, he reached a vast garden and a tree laden with apples in all the branches near the bank of the river. Sayyed Abu Salih assured that the apple must have come from this tree and he reached the owner, whose name was Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai. Sayyed Abu Salih begged pardon for eating the apple without permission. Sayyed Abdullah placed the condition that Sayyed Abu Salih must act as a supervisor of his vast garden and work for twelve years and then he will consider about the forgiveness for eating the apple. Sayyed Abu Salih gladly agreed and after completing the twelve years of service he came to Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai to seek the pardon. But, Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai put another condition that Sayyed Abu Salih will be granted pardon only if he accepts his daughter in marriage. Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai described the defects in his daughter as a girl who is lame, crippled, deaf, and dumb. But, Abu Salih gladly accepted to marry the daughter and he was married with Sayyeda Ummul Khair Fatema. When Abu Salih entered the nuptial chamber, he found the girl

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1. Muhammad Riaz Qadri, *The Sultan of the Saints, Mystical Life and Teachings of Hazrat Shaikh Syed Abd al-Qadir Jilani R.A.*, (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, ed. 2013), p. 7

2. *Ibid.*, p.197

was a paragon of beauty. He became confounded and hurriedly came out of the bride's chamber thinking that he had entered a wrong room. His father-in-law Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai was waiting there and caught hold of him in a fearful state. Sayyed Abdullah Sawmai explained to him that his daughter had never set her feet outside the courtyard of the house and therefore he attributed her as lame. She had not seen any other man except her household people, therefore she was blind. She had never spoken any word which was against the truth, therefore she was dumb. She had never done anything against the law of the Almighty Allah, therefore she was crippled. Abu Salih was extremely glad to learn about these attributes of his wife. Hadrat Abu Salih (r.a.) al-Hasani and Hadrat Ummul Fatima (r.a.) al-Husseini being married with these most blessed and heart warming circumstances. Abdul Qadir Jilani was the son of the righteous parents.

### **Childhood**

Hadrat Abu Muhammad Sayyedona Abdul Qadir was born when his mother was of 60 years of age. Concerning his miraculous birth His mother relates: "My son Abdul Qadir was born in the month of Ramadan. No matter how hard I tried, he refused to suckle in the daytime. Throughout his infancy he would never take food during the month of fasting."<sup>1</sup> His father Abu Salih died when he was a child and he was raised by his maternal grandfather Abdullah Sawmai. He was given basic religious education under the care of his mother and maternal grandfather. His maternal grandfather also died when he was a student of five years old in Maktab in Jilan. The Ghawth Pak was very shy and quiet by nature and was always found to be in a mood of contemplation and meditation. Since childhood he was a *wali (saint)* of Allah, which he could understand through the different miraculous events of his childhood. So, when he was asked 'When did you first become aware that you were the Saintly friend (wali of Allah)?'

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1. Hazrat Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Kitab Sirr al-Asreer, wa Mazhar al-Anwar*, English tr., Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, entitled, *The Secret of Secrets, The Manifestation of Lights*, , reprint in India, n.d. p. xiii; It is related that his mother used to say: "... Abd al-Qadir would not suck my Brest during the daytime of Ramadan. The new moon of Ramadan was hidden by clouds, so people came and asked me about him and I told them: 'He has not sipped a breast today'. It thus became obvious that the day was the first of Ramadan". (*Necklaces of Gems*, p. 10)

He replied: “I was just a ten years old boy at the time, still in our home country (of Jilan). I used to leave our house to go to the elementary school, and I could see the angels walking along all around me. Then, when I arrived at the school, I heard the angels say: Clear a space for the saintly friend (*wali*) of Allah, so that he can sit himself down!”<sup>1</sup> The Shaikh also said: “I was a youngster in my family and whenever I went outside intending to play with the other boys in the neighborhood, I would hear a voice telling me: ‘Come toward Me, O blessed one!’ I would run away in a panic from that sound and hurl myself into my mother’s lap.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Journey to Baghdad**

As Abdul Qadir Jilani was a saintly friend (*wali*) of Allah since his birth, his every act was performed by the Divine instruction. So, after having learned the basic teachings in religion and other subjects he expressed his desire to mother to be permitted to go to Baghdad which was the largest education center in the Islamic world to acquire future knowledge, to perfect his faith and purify his soul at the hands of the learned men and saints of the town.<sup>3</sup> The aged mother with a heavy heart unwillingly agreed and permitted her son to leave for Baghdad for higher studies. She gave him forty gold coins which were sewed in the shirt’s sleeve under his armpit. He started for Baghdad in the year 488 A.H. (1096 A.D.) at the age of eighteen.<sup>4</sup> At the time of his departure his mother instructed him to always speak the truth under any circumstances whatsoever.<sup>5</sup> When she stepped out of the doors to bid him farewell, she said: “O my son, away you go, for I have

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1. *Necklaces of Gems*, , p. 34; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. x iv

2. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 35; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. x iv

3. In this context he related the following story: “One day, on the eve of *Id al-Adha*, I went to our fields to help till the ground. As I was walking behind the ox, it turned its head and looked at me and said, ‘You were not created for this!’ I was very afraid and ran home and climbed up on our flat roof. As I looked out I saw the pilgrims gathered of the plain of Arafat, in Arabia, right in front of me. I went to my mother, who was then a widow and asked her, ‘send me to the path of Truth, give me permission to go to Baghdad to acquire knowledge, to be with the wise and those who are close to Allah’. My mother asked me what was the reason for this sudden request. I told her what had happened to me.” (*The Secret of Secrets*, p. x iv)

4. *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed., H.A.R. Gibb et al., vol.1(Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1980) p.69

5. In fact, while leaving home his mother advised him to observe strictly the following instructions. (i) Obey God’s commandments, (ii) Abstain from forbidden things (iii) Always be pleased with the Divine decree and (iv) Always speaks truth come what may. (*Biographical Encyclopedia of Sufism*, p.124). A close study of the remaining seventy one years of his miraculous life is testament to the fact that he never lost sight of his mother’s treasured advice and always remained steadfast to her loving words of wisdom.

detached myself from you for the sake of Allah, knowing that I shall not see this face of yours again, until the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>1</sup> Hadrat Ghawth Pak left his home town with the caravan of fellow travelers and at a place called Hamadan they were attacked by a group of sixty robbers. When one of the robbers inquired him if he had any valuables or money, the robber was told that he had forty gold coins. He gave same answer to several robbers. Then the robbers reported the matter to their chief and presented the boy before him. He told the same thing to the leader of the robbers. This great act of honesty softened the leader of the robbers, Ahmed Badwai to a state of humility and he asked Abdul Qadir why did he disclose the presence of forty gold coins? When he could easily have denied it, and thus he can save his money. The boy Abdul Qadir replied him that he had made a promise of truthfulness to his mother, regardless of the circumstances. Hearing these words the chieftain began to weep, and said through his tears: “You did not betray your mother’s covenant, whereas I, for so many years up to this present day have been betraying the covenant of my Lord”. He as well as his fellow robbers repented for their sins and crimes, and renounced the profession of robbery. This was the first example of Sayyedona Muhiuddin Abdul Qader Jilani who brought light to the misled and sinful people and guided them to the right path through his great moral character. Here it is mentioned that, once he was asked by someone what brought him to his high spiritual level, he said, “The truthfulness, which I promised to my mother.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, from his early childhood; his truthful character had a great impact upon anyone who chanced to meet him.

Ghawth al-Azam reached Baghdad in 488 A.H.<sup>3</sup> It was a quite strange place to him. There was none to whom he could approach for shelter. The forty gold coins had already been finished and he was facing starvation because he was in principle, averse to seeking help from others. He was roaming citadel of the Cibra in search of lawful livelihood but he had to abandon the place and while returning to the city of Baghdad he met an unknown person who had come from Jilan.

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1. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 33; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xv

2. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xiv

3. See, *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 11

He was searching for Abdul Qadir Jilani to hand over some gold coins which had been sent by the old mother of Abdul Qadir through him. The stranger handed over the gold coins to Abdul Qadir after being sure of his identity. After getting the gold coins he returned back to the ruins of Cisra and distributed the gold amongst the saints who were there in search of lawful victuals. In this way, he spent many years of starvation, poverty, hardship and need. This condition was continued for many years even after he was a student at the reputed Nizamia University where he completed the education in eight years in 496 A.H.<sup>1</sup>

### **Meeting with Hazrat Hammad al-Dabbas**

When Ghawth al-Azam entered Baghdad, it was his practice to see the saints and holy men frequently in order to gain divine knowledge and blessings in their company. Once, while he was walking in the street of the city he came across a *khanqah* which belonged to Shaykh Hammad al-Dabbas (d.523/1131), who was the Qutub of his time. The Shaykh knowing by divine inspiration of his coming opened the door and called him to come in. Ghawth Pak said, "As I came to his door, he said, "Tell me, what did you wish from Allah? What did you pray for yesterday"?<sup>2</sup> Ghawth Pak was ashamed and couldn't find words to answer him. The man looked at his face and slammed the door with such violence that dust was raised all around him.<sup>3</sup> Hadrat Abdul Qadir sat the locked door which was opened next morning and he entered the Khankah of Shaykh Hammad al-Dabbas. The shaykh stood up to greet Ghawth Pak. He cast a glance of Divine Love and affection on Ghawth al -Azam (which created unbreakable spiritual radiation in him) and called Ghawth Pak, al-Bazi'-I-Ashab (white falcon).<sup>4</sup> He also said, "O my son Abd al-Qadir, good fortune is ours today, but tomorrow it will be yours,

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1. Abd al-Qadir Jilani, *Fatuh-ul-Ghaib*, Eng. tr., compiled and edited, Professor .Z. Haider, entitled, *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, (Dhaka: Friends International, 2005) p. 201

2. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xvii

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.5

do not ever leave this path”.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Shaykh Hammad became his first teacher in the sciences of mysticism<sup>2</sup> who introduced him to Sufism.<sup>3</sup> From him he received his basic training, and with his help he set out on the spiritual journey.

### **Higher Education**

As soon as Abdul Qadir’s period of higher education at Jamiah in Baghdad began, an era of neverending hardships and sufferings started.<sup>4</sup> After gaining spiritual link in the company of Hadrat Hammad al-Dabbas, Ghawth Pak got admission at the Jamiyah of Hadrat Shaykh Abu Saeed Mubarak bin Ali Makhzoomi near Bab-al-Azadj in Baghdad. It was a school of Hambalite Fiqh. This institution was renowned for its high standard. There were several eminent scholars in this school whose reputation had attracted by large number of students from all over the Islamic World. Here he studied with great perseverance, in spite of constantly finding himself in great financial difficulties. Poverty and hunger did nothing to reduce his eagerness for knowledge. He reached an outstanding level of understanding in fiqah (jurisprudence), tafsir (commentary of the Holy Qur’an), Sunnah of the Holy Prophet, Hadith and adab literature. Ghawth Pak had already memorized the Holy Qur’an. He studied fiqah and fiqah ushul under Abu Khathab Mahfuz, Abu Sa’id al-Mubarak al-Makharrimi and Abu al- Wafa b.al-Akil. His teacher in mysticism was Hammad bin Muslim al-Dabbas. His teachers in Hadith were Abu Jafar Muhammad, Abu Ali ibn Qasim, Abu Abdullah Imam and Abu Yahya ibn Ali. He went to them and they have big influence in his life. In addition, he also learned about manners (*adab*) to shaikh Abu Zakariya Yahya Ali al-Tibrizi. His teachers were justly proud of him.

His teacher Abu Sayeed Mubarak used to say, “You Abdul Qadir: the time is very near when people shall flock around you and you will infuse new life into *Deen-e-Muhammadi* and all the creatures of the world shall benefit from you.”<sup>5</sup>

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xviii; *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 12

2. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xviii

3. *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.69; Ghawth Pak studied under many teachers but whenever he could not understand any secret of mystical science, he would meet Shaikh Hammad who would explain and enlighten him. (*The Secret of Secrets*, p. xviii)

4. The period of higher education of Ghawth-e-Azam in the domain of Islamic learning is expanded over nine years from 488 A.H. to 496 A.H.

5. *The Sultan of the Saints*, p. 66

In the year 503 A.H., when Ghawth Pak was about to complete his education, Abu Sayeed predicted, “This Ajami youth shall be a highly respectable saint and at his call all the saints will acknowledge his superiority.” History bears witness that this prediction came true.

### **Asceticism and Self-Mortification**

At the age of 26 Ghawth Pak was attracted toward mystical path for which he had to undergo a long period of ascetic practices and self-mortification. During this time how much hardship he had to put up with, he himself described it in his *sermons*. He says: “I stayed in the deserts and ruined areas of Iraq for twenty five years, as a solitary wanderer. I did not get to know my fellow creatures and they did not get to know me. My only visitors were groups of the men belonging to the invisible realm (*ghaib*) as well as some of the jinn. I used to show them the way to Allah.”<sup>1</sup> The charms of this world, its ornaments and its desires kept coming to him, in all their shapes and forms but Allah would always protect him from being influenced by their attraction. In another sermon,<sup>2</sup> he said: “I spent fifteen long years in complete isolation, wandering about in the deserts and wastelands of Iraq. Throughout all of forty years, I would perform the dawn prayer (*subh*) with the ritual ablution (*wudu*) of the late evening prayer (*isha*). Then (after the late evening prayer), I would recite the Qur’an from the opening Sura-standing perched on one leg, and with my hand in a socket knocked into the wall, for the fear of falling asleep-until I came to the end of the Qur’an, around the approach of the daybreak (*sahar*).”<sup>3</sup> He also said: “I stayed for a long period of time in the ruined areas of the big cities, taking my lower self sternly to task by applying the method (*tariq*) of spiritual discipline. Thus, I spent one year eating food from the dumps, without drinking any water, and one year drinking water. Then I spent a whole year by drinking water, without eating food from the dumps, and another year without eating, drinking, or sleeping.”<sup>4</sup> According to some of his biographers,

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1. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 29

2. He delivered this lecture in 558 A.H, at the lectern in Baghdad.

3. Quoted in, *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 76; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xxxii

4. Quoted in, *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 42; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xvi



he lived in the jungles and lonesome places for twenty five years. The actual period of his secluded life is more than 15 years as he went into seclusion after 496 A.H.<sup>1</sup> Some historians also count ten years of his ascetic practice during his academic life when he used to go into jungle off and on for reflection and medication.<sup>2</sup> However, it is not possible to count exactly the details of his seclusion. He would often visit *Kankh* to seek aloofness to engage himself in prayer and devotional practices. He spent eleven years in *Schuster*. Here one day *Satan* tempted to delude him, but by the grace of Almighty Allah he was saved. Then he spent eleven years in a tower called *Burj Ajami* treading spiritual path.<sup>3</sup> Ghawth Pak also spent sometimes in the ruins of *Aiwan Kasra* and *Madain*. One day during his stay at Barj Ajami he decided that he would not touch a morsel of food until and unless someone put food into his mouth. Abu Sayeed Mubarak, his spiritual teacher through spiritual experience knew his determination and came to the tower and took him to his house and fed him with his own hand.<sup>4</sup>

## Initiation

After traveling in pursuit of the truth for about 25 years Ghawth Pak returned to Baghdad in 521/527 A.H. His spiritual journey toward Allah had completed. He had passed the stages of *Shari'ah*, *Tariqat* and *Haqiqat* and arrived at the stage of *Marifat* (gnosis). He had acquired knowledge of God and attained lofty rank in the realm of Sufism under the guidance of Shaykh Hammad al-Dabbas. Besides this he had gained spiritual benefit from Shaykh Abu Sayeed Mubarak. Both were worthy spiritual preceptors. But still at this time Ghawth Pak had not been formally initiated in systematic Sufi order. When Ghawth Pak was taken to the house of Abu Sayeed, he fed the former with his hand and invested him *Khirqah* of discipleship,<sup>5</sup> blessed him with the highest spiritual status and made him his *Khalifa* (the chief spiritual successor). At this time Abu Sayeed

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1. 33. M. Riaz Qadiri, *Mystical Discourses of Ghaus-E- Azam*, (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, ed. 2010), p. 23

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 77

4. *Necklaces of Gems*, pp. 77-78; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xxxii

5. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.6

said, “O Abd al-Qadir! This robe is the same which the Apostle (SAW) gave to Hadrat Ali (r.a.) and Ali gave it to Khawaja Hasan Basri.”<sup>1</sup> He also relates that in order to bless and be blessed he invested Ghawth Pak robe and Ghawth Pak invested him too with a robe.<sup>2</sup> Although Ghawth Pak learned knowledge of God (Sufism) from Shaykh Hammad al-Dabbas, he was systematically initiated in spiritual order by Shaykh Abu Sayeed Mubarak with the award of cloak.<sup>3</sup>

## **Preaching and Exhortation**

Ghawth Pak had no other activities except his service at the Jamia. He was advised by Khawaja Yusuf Hamadani to preach in public,<sup>4</sup> but he was unwilling and felt shy to preach in the presence of learned men of Baghdad. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal 521 A.H/1127 A.D. before noon prayer, he saw the Holy Prophet (SAW) in dream who inquired of him why did he not speak? He said, “I am but a Persian how can I speak with the beautiful Arabic of Baghdad.” The Holy Prophet (SAW) said, “Open your mouth.” He opened the mouth and Prophet (SAW) breath seven times into his mouth and advised him to go and address mankind and invite them to path of God. Afterwards Hadrat Ali spat six times into his mouth.<sup>5</sup> On account of miraculous effect of the saliva of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Hadrat Ali (r.a.) an unfathomable ocean of Divine knowledge was opened to his innermost heart. After this, the eloquent and loud sound words and phrases began to burst out from his mouth.<sup>6</sup> In the beginning his audience were very few. In short time the number increased up to seventy thousand. His audience comprised not only mankind, but jinn and hidden men are reported have been his audience. Other invisible creature would also attend in large number. Different kinds of people came to him to learn different things. They were Sufis, scholars of

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1. The spiritual lineage of Qadi Abu Sa‘id passes through Shaykh Abul-Hasan ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al- Qurashi, Abul-Faraj al-Tarsusi, al-Tamimi, Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Shibli, Abul Qasim al-Junayd, Sari al- Saqati, Mruf al-karkhi, Dawud al-Ta’i, Habib al-‘Ajami, and Hasan al-Basri, to Hadrat ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. Hadrat ‘Ali took the clock of service from the hands of Muhammad (SAW) and he from the archangel Gabriel, and he from the Divine Truth. (*The Secret of Secrets*, p. xix)

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.6

5. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xx; *Necklaces of Gems*, pp. 51-52

6. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xx; *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 52

jurisprudence, men of wealth as well as men of letters. Some came from lands as far off as Mesopotamia, Persia and Egypt. His sermons are said to have effected the conversion of many Jews and Christians to Islam, as well as of many Muslims to the higher moral life.<sup>1</sup> For a period of forty years (1127-1165) he delivered sermons and gave instruction in religious science and for thirty five years he also acted as *mufti*, giving his legal opinion on a variety of issues.<sup>2</sup> He thus harmonizes a profound knowledge of Islamic Law with a mystical passion for spiritual life. Once during a sermon under the Divine command and in entire temperance Ghawth Pak proclaimed, “My foot is on the neck of all the saints.”<sup>3</sup> These words asserted and determined the spiritual status of Ghawth Pak as the king of the saints.

### **Mystical Discourses**

Ghawth Pak used to deliver sermons thrice a week: on Friday mornings and Monday evenings in his school, on Sunday mornings in his monastery.<sup>4</sup> During his sermon surrounded place looked like plain of Doomsday filled by weeping, moaning and imploring public on account of Divine fear. Thousand, would tear their clothes and looked half dead. In this context Abul Faraj al-Jawzi, a contemporary writer says that as a result of his urgings, people gave up their evil ways and began set their feet upon the straight and narrow path of the good and the right.<sup>5</sup> Here it is mentioned that, by listening his powerful words, the members of his congregation sometimes breathed their last due to overwhelming emotion they experienced.<sup>6</sup>

Abdul Qadir’s works are all religious in character and largely consists of reports of his sermons or addresses. Among them following are best known:<sup>7</sup>

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1. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p.6; At his hands more than five thousand Jews and Christians became Muslims. More than a hundred thousand ruffians, outlaws, murderers, thieves, and bandits repented and became devout Muslims and gentle dervishes (*The Secret of Secrets*, p. xxxi)
  2. Shattanawi, *Bahajat al-Asrar wa Ma’din al-Anwar*, (Cairo: 1925-1926) p. 95; *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xx.
  3. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. xxvii.
  4. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 6
  5. Quoted in, Farida Khanam, *Sufism an Introduction*, Goodword, w.w.w. good word books.com, p.116
  6. *Loc. cit.*
  7. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 6

01. *Al-Ghunya li-Talibi Tariq al-Haqq* (That is, Sufficient to the Seekers of the Truth), a ritual and ethical treatise.
02. *Al-Fath al-Rabbani* (The Revelations of the Divine), 62 sermons preached in the years 1150-1152.
03. *Fath al-Ghaib* (The Revelations of the Unseen), 78 sermon on various subjects.
04. *Hizb Bashair al-Khairat* (Mystical prayer).
05. *Jila' al-Khatir* (Purification of the Mind), a collection of discourses.
06. *Sirr al-Asrar* (The Secret of Secrets), Sufi explanation of the fundamental duties of Islam.
07. *Al-Mawahib al-Rahmaniya wa'l Futuh al-Rabbaniya*.
08. *Yawakit al-Hikam*.
09. *Al-Fuyudat al-Rabbaniya fil-Awrad al-Qadiriya* (collection of prayers).
10. *Khamsata Ashara Maktuban* (Fifteen Letters)
11. *Malufuzat* (Utterances of Shaikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani)
12. Sermons included in the *Bahjat al-Asrar* and other biographical works.

In these works Shaikh Abdul Qadir figures as a proficient theologian and an earnest, sincere, and eloquent preacher. Many a sermon is introduced into his *Ghunya*, which also contains an account of the 73 Islamic Sects, grouped in ten divisions. His doctrine in this work is strictly orthodox, and the tone uniformly sober.<sup>1</sup> The sermons, which included in *al-Fath-al Rabbani* are some of the highest pieces of Islamic literature. The spirit which they breathe is mainly charity and philanthropy. The preacher would like “to close the gates of Hell and open those of Paradise to all mankind.” He employs Sufi terminology very rarely. The general theme of the sermons is that a period of asceticism is necessary. During this time the aspirant can wean himself from the world, after then he may return and enjoy his portion of the world and convert others to the righteous path.<sup>2</sup> The Sufi doctrine is that everything, whether it be the prizes of this world or the next is a veil between the aspirant and the God, and that the aspirant’s thoughts should be

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Loc. cit.*

directed to the God only, is also a leading topic. He said little about himself and had no arrogant strain. He emphatically claimed that he only spoke with divine authorization. He can easily discern the serious from the triflers among his audience. So he called himself “the touchstone of the people of the earth.”<sup>1</sup> Concerning his very well known book *al-Fath al-Rabbani* and *Futuh al-Ghaib* D.S Margoliuth said: “some of the very best in Islamic literature,” These sermons exemplify his Sufi concerns, strict observance of the *Shari'ah*, (law of morality) unconditional submission to the message of the Prophet (SAW), cultivation of the virtues of faqr, *tawakkul*, control of base and lewd desires, and fighting against one’s ownself before waging a religious war with weapons.<sup>2</sup> These ideas have established his image as a scholar-Sufi (moralist) who made a strong effort to reconcile the mystic elements of Sufism with orthodox view.

## Character

Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani occupied a authoritative position in the fields of Prophetic Tradition (*Hadith*), Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and religious exhortation (*Waz*), and in the sciences concerned with the facts of real experience (*ulum al-haqaiq*). He had an excellent manner (*samt*). He normally maintained a dignified silence<sup>3</sup> but he was clamorous against unjust actions. He used to address rulers openly and frankly on such matters, in public situations, from the pulpits (of the mosque), and at special gatherings and receptions. He would rebuke anyone who made friends with tyrannical oppressors. Since he was acting entirely for the sake of Allah, he would not care the censure of any critic. His lofty moral character is mentioned below.

Although the greatest of all saints Sayyedona Ghawth al-Azam had reached the highest level of comprehension, cognizance and revelation of Divine matters, but he was very humble, patient and extremely forbearing in his dealings.<sup>4</sup> He used to show his love and favours to the children and the young people. He used to honour and revere the elders and used to take the lead in

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. Quoted in, *Islamic Culture, An English Quarterly*, Hyderabad-India: The Islamic Cultural Board, January, Vol. Lxxvi, No.1, p. 60

3. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 28

4. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, p. 206

offering salutation to them. He was friend of the weak, old and ailing and entertained the poor with politeness. But he never showed respect to a prince or rich or even the Caliph. He never used to visit them in their palaces. He was so delicate minded and affectionate in heart that his eyes would filled up with tears whenever there were discussions involving admonitory, compassionate and pitiful conditions of grief.<sup>1</sup> He was generous to the extreme, and gracious, openhanded, liberal and favoured those who were poor and miserable. He favoured those who were in want particularly the poor and the miserable.<sup>2</sup>

He was an embodiment of courtesy and politeness. Children used to love him and he used to embrace the beggars and wash their clothes. He used to be involved in almost all the household work including cooking. He did not like arrogance and pride. He never liked tall claims and earnestly avoided useless conversations but he never tolerated any words against the laws of the Divine ordainment. Visiting of the sick and infirm was his daily routine. He used to go to their houses for consolation, and prayers for the recovery of their illness. When he found anybody absent from meeting for a few days, he used to send messenger to take information whether the person concerned has fallen ill. It was his usual habit to benefit the poor by any means. So, for the donation to the poor he used to change his dress daily and put on a new dress.

He was embodiment of generosity, grace and forgiveness. He used to overlook the mistakes and shortcomings of other peoples particularly of his students and disciples. He never exposed in the public the defects and blemish of others. He had great respect for the relationship amongst all categories of people. He often used to say that if vice and wickedness are revenged with vice and wickedness then this world will be full of people who will be worst than blood-thirsty murderous animals.<sup>3</sup> This is the present picture of the world where people appear to be behave like animals and create havoc and chaos in the society.

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1. *Ibid.*, 207

2. His dress used to be made of costly fabric as the old one is to be donated to the poor and miserable person next day.

3. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, p. 209.

The then Grand Mufti of Iraq Muhyi'd Din Abu Abdi'llah Muhammad ibn Hamid al-Baghdadi provides a vivid description of Shaikh Abdul Qadir's character in the following way: "Shaikh Abdul Qadir was quick to shed tears, intensely affected by the fear of the Lord, and imbued with a great sense of awe. He was someone whose prayer was sure to be answered. His entire bearing was aglow with reverence. He was honourable in his traits of character, and noble in his lines of descent. He was the furthest of all people from immoral behaviour, and the nearest of all people of the Truth. He was extremely stern in his response, whenever the sanctuaries of Allah were violated. He was never angry on his own account, and he never supported the cause of anyone other than his Lord. He never turned the beggars away empty handed, even if all he had to give him was one of his only pair of shirts. Enabling grace (*tawfiq*) was his guiding principle, and readiness to help was his mainstay. Knowledge (*ilm*) was his instructor, and nearness (to the Lord) was his educator. Mutual conversation (*muhadara*) was his treasure, and direct experience (*marifa*) was his stronghold. Preaching was his counselor, and observation was his ambassador. Intimate friendship (*uns*) was his confident, and entertainment was his breath of fresh air. Truthfulness was his banner, openness was his stock in trade, and tolerance was his professional occupation. Remembrance (*dhikr*) was his chief minister, and reflection (*fikr*) was his entertaining companion. Spiritual disclosure (*mukashafa*) was his nourishment, and direct witnessing (*mushahada*) was his medicine. The good manners of the Sacred Law (*adab ash-sharia*) were his outward form (*zahir*), and the attributes of reality (*awsaf al-haqiqa*) were his innermost contents (*Sarair*)."<sup>1</sup>

In the works of Ibn Arabi (b. 1165) Shaikh Abdul Qadir is mentioned as a just person, the *Kutb* of his time, the ruler in this path, the authoritative judge of the men, and one of the *malamatiya*.<sup>2</sup> He also mentioned that Abdul Qadir praised God in the womb, and he had a rank which placed him over all beings save God. The *Bahdjat al-Asrar* contains the narrative of many miracles performed by the Shaikh and authenticated by chains of witnesses.<sup>3</sup> In this context Ibn Taimiya

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1. *Necklaces of Gems*, p. 83

2. Quoted in, *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 6

3. *Loc. cit.*

(D.1328) declared that they satisfied the requirements of credibility, though others were less credulous. But the book (The *Bahdjat al-Asrar*) is condemned by Dhahabi as containing frivolous tales, whereas Ibn al-Wardi copies it.<sup>1</sup> It is mentioned that the *Bahdjat al Asrar* begins with a list of persons who heard him saying: “My foot is on the neck of every saint”. He similarly proclaimed that he made out to have the possession of seventy gates of knowledge, each one of them broader than the distance between Heaven and earth, etc. Such kinds of statement were criticized by many scholars. But the late followers of Shaikh Abdul Qadir like the author of the Persian treatise *Makhazin al-Qadiriya*, while endeavoring to restrict the universality of the first of these sayings and tried to show that Abdul Qadir was justified in uttering it;<sup>2</sup> and pious writers (such as Damiri) only found in it the evidence of Abdul Qadir’s dignity.<sup>3</sup> These sorts of sayings do not seem to be found in the genuine works of the Shaikh (though there are parallels to them in the poems, ascribed to him), and these are probably due to the enthusiasm of his followers.

Abdul Qadir was acclaimed as the greatest Sufi of all times. In recognition of his spiritual accomplishments praise continued to flow from the pens of Muslims in every age. So Martin Lings writes: “It would perhaps be true that no one since the death of Caliph Ali (R.A.) had exercised in person a spiritual influence of such far-reaching dimension as did Abdul Qadir”.<sup>4</sup> In fact, he had reached supreme stage of morality. The moral traits which had been mentioned by the philosophers, about all of them were present in his character. So by practicing his characteristic truly, we can mould our moral character.

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 7

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. Martin Lings, *What is Sufism*, London: Unwin Paperbacks, 2nd ed. 1981, p. 112



## 2. Moral Teachings of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani

Ghawth al-Azam had been devoted himself to preach moral education, spiritual training and sanctification for forty years, from 527 to 566 A.H.<sup>1</sup> A large number of students, mystics, novices, servants, jurists above all, people from all walks of life would assemble at his Jamia (Madrasha) and afterward at eidgah to get religious knowledge, spiritual influence and blessings from his sermons. Ghawth al-Azam would speak on the variety of subjects and topics. His sermons reflected the universality of his thought, mastery and deep knowledge in Islamic learning. His ineffable spiritual glance was enough to cleanse outer and inner defilements of the public. His upright discourses were equally beneficial for the mankind,<sup>2</sup> jinns and other hidden creatures. His sermons and teachings are incorporated in *Fatha-al-Rabbani*, *Futuh-al-Ghaib*, *Sirrul-Asrar*, *Ghaniyat-al Talibin* etc.

Regarding the great success and efficacy of his speeches an Orientalist, Alexander knysh commented in the following way. “Abd-al Qadir’s fiery orations and irresistible charisma encouraged members of the non-Muslim religious communities of Baghdad to convert to Islam en mass. He also exerted beneficial influence on his Muslim followers, many of whom repented publicly of their sins in the aftermath of his moving sermons. He spoke in simple terms that were accessible to the rank-and-file believers. His moral discourses illuminated their everyday moral problems and provided them with dignifying solutions, which he traced back to the precedents established by the heroes of early Islam. As with al-Ghazali’s *Ihya*, Abd al-Qadir’s Sufism was driven by a clear communal agenda: to morally uplift his fellow Muslims and to guide them on the path to salvation. In pursuit of his goal, he carefully avoided the metaphysical speculations that were advanced by some contemporary Sufi theorists and played down the sensational and individualistic aspects of mystical experience exemplified by al-Bistami and al-

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1. For a period of forty years (1127-65) he delivered sermons and gave instruction in religious sciences and for thirty five years he also acted as mufti, giving his legal opinion on variety of issues: (*Al-Bahajat al-Asrar*, p.95)

2. Of his numerous pupils many were afterwards famous as saints, while some (like the Biographer Samani) acquired distinction of another sort. (*Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 6)

Hallaj. And yet, Abd-al Qadir's simple pity was thoroughly inward-looking; it gave his listeners room for infinite self-improvement that was aimed at reaching the stage when one's 'secret thoughts and evident words and actions will be at one'. He called upon the Muslims to embark on the greater *jihad*, one that, in accordance with a famous *Hadith*, should be waged against the enemy within every believer, that is, against his lower psyche with its destructive passions and uncontrollable drives which bar man from God's grace. In a similar vein, Abdul Qadir presents the believer's obedience to God's will, as expressed in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as the only authentic expression of his love for God".<sup>1</sup>

Political landscape of Islamic world was bleak in Ghawth al-Azam's time. He was observing the condition patiently and doing his best to elevate the political, social and religious conditions of the country. He fearlessly spoke on the evils and relentlessly lashed at the wrong-doers and pseudo scholars. Once in his address he referred to such personalities. "You scholars and pious people! How long will you remain hypocrite and sycophant only to please the kings to acquire financial benefit and satiate your lust for power? You and most of the kings are cruel. O Allah! Destroy these hypocrites and condemn them."<sup>2</sup>

This chapter comprises some selected quotations and extracts from his sacred and splendid sermons placed under significant headings which morally uplift the Muslims and to guide them on the path of salvation. As Ghawth Pak was a preacher and Sufi, so at first we discuss his thinking regarding Sufism (*tasawwuf*), which is the moral philosophy of Islam.

## **2.1. Morality is the Essence of Tasawwuf**

Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani is known best for his outstanding contributions in the field of mysticism (*tasawwuf*). He has specified the meaning of Sufism by saying: "Sufism is believed to al-Haq (Allah) and well behaved to the creatures.

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1. Alexander knysh, *Islamic Mysticism, A Short History*, (Leiden, Boston, koln: Brill, 2000) pp. 180-181

2. *The Sultan of the Saints*, pp. 233-34.

Means that Sufism set two primary relationships between man and God with sincerity in worship, and between man and man with good manners and straight morals.” To him, Sufi is one who's inward and outward has become pure and serene through following the Book of Allah and the Sunna of the Messenger of Allah (SAW).<sup>1</sup> He also said Sufism consists in fighting in a Jihad against *nafs* which is greater than the holy war fought with weapons. Thus, conquering the hidden *shirk*, i.e., the idolatry of self and in general of creaturely things; in recognizing in all good and evil is the will of God and living in submission to His will, according to His Law.<sup>2</sup> Then he will have no choice and volition at all. To him, Sufism is a spiritual experience. It is not obtained by words but from dervishes.

To discuss the nature of tasawwuf Shaikh Jilani discussed the meaning of four consonants of tasawwuf, its principles, true nature of *faqir* (Sufi), qualities of a Sufi Shaikh or Guide (*pir*) and above all the characteristics of a true disciple. If we analyze these topics we can easily understand that, the main spirit of tasawwuf is purification of soul, i.e., moral purification. For that some Sufis has defined the Sufism as good nature,<sup>3</sup> good morals<sup>4</sup> or goodness of disposition.<sup>5</sup> In another words, Sufism is the building up of good habits and keeping of the heart from all evil desires and passions. Hence without being moral no one can be a Sufi, i.e., endeavouring for being a Sufi is the endeavour for becoming a moral man.

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1. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Gaylani, *Jila'al-Khatir*, Eng. Trans., Professor Shetha al-Dargazelli & Dr. Louay Fatoohi, entitled, *Purification of the Mind* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, ed. 2006) p. 146
  2. *The Encyclopedia of Islam* vol. 1. p. 70; When someone's heart becomes pure and serene, the Prophet (SAW) will become an ambassador between him and his Lord, as was Gabriel; and he will see the Prophet (SAW), in his dreams, commanding him to do this and prohibiting him from doing that. *Purification of the Mind*, p. 146; Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Gaylani, *Malfuzat*, Eng. tr., Muhtar Holland, entitled *Uttenances of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani*, Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, INC. 1998, p.14
  3. Murtaish says: "Sufism is good nature" This is three sorts: Firstly, towards God by fulfilling His commandments without hypocrisy. Secondly, towards men, by paying respect to one's superiors and behaving with kindness to one's inferiors and with justice to one's equals. Thirdly, towards one's self by not following the flesh and the devil. Whoever makes himself right in these three matters is a good natured man." (Ali Bin Uthman al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, Eng. tr. Reynold A. Nicholson, (New Dillhi: Taj company, ed. 1991 p. 42)
  4. Muhammad b. Ali says: "Sufism is goodness of disposition: he who has better disposition is the better Sufi." (*Kashf al-Mhajib*, p. 39)
  5. Al Kattani says: "Sufism is but good morals, who ever surpasses you good morals surpasses you in purity." (*Kashf al-Mhajib*, p. 42)

### a. The meaning of four consonants of tasawwuf

According to Ghawth Pak the word 'tasawwuf' (Islamic mysticism) consists of four consonants (t,s,w.f)<sup>1</sup> which denote four states of a Sufi. These states also express moral qualities of a noble man. Such as–

The first letter of tasawwuf-‘t’ (ت) stands for *tawba* (the repentance). This is the first step to be taken on the mystic path to initiate journey. It has two dimensions: outward and inward repentance. By outward step means repentance in words, actions and feelings, i.e., to keep one’s life free from sins and evils and to incline towards obedience; to flee from opposition to *Shari’ah* or immoral activities and to act according to its injunctions (morality). By inner, repentance means cleansing of the heart of all sorts of defilements (filth) and its total affirmation to the exoteric laws (*Shari’ah*) of Islam. In a brief, repentance means to be aware of the wrong and to abandon it; and to be conscious of right and to strive for it.

The second consonant of word tasawwuf-‘s’ (ص) stands for ‘*safa*’ (purity). It denotes the state of peace and joy. It entails two steps: the first is the purity of the heart, and the second is the secret center (*sirr*) of heart. Purity of the heart is the cleanliness of the defilements (filth) and impurities that often found in it. These are: the desire for excessive food, drink, sleep, an idle talk, and other worldly attraction like hoarding wealth, excessive sexual passion, excessive love of family and children. The only way to purify the heart from all such impurities is remembering Allah. The purity of secret center (inner most being) is achieved by cleansing the heart from everything other than God, by sustaining His love, by repeating His Divine Name permanently with inward tongue. When the heart and its centre are in a state of peace and joy, then the second stage is gained.

The third letter ‘w’ (و) stands for ‘*awilayat*’. This is the state of sanctity of the lovers and friends of Allah. This state depends upon inner purity. The substance of *wilayat* is that ‘assimilate in oneself the traits of Allah, i.e., the best moral qualities. Holy Prophet (SAW) has said: “Assimilate the manners of God

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1. *The Sultan of the Saints*, pp. 239-240; *The Secret of Secrets*, pp. 42-43

and behave in accordance with them.” It means shake off human attributes, i.e., all kinds of evil qualities and replace them by divine attributes.<sup>1</sup> When the truth comes and falsehood vanishes, the level of *awliyat* is completed. And thus a person becomes moral being through burning the immoralities.

The fourth letter ‘f’ (ف) stands for ‘*fana*’, i.e., the annihilation of self. When human attributes are wiped out, there remain divine attributes. Here what happens is that the believer realizes God and becomes one with Him. That is, the temporal being finds its true existence by realizing the eternal secret. The way of realizing His truth is to gain His pleasure and obey His agreement. When one does his deeds in accordance with His approval he comes close to His truth. Hence, Allah says: The good words and good deeds rise to Allah.

## **b. Foundation of tasawwuf**

Tasawwuf is the cleansing of heart from all defilements (filth). It is not acquired through long discussion, but through going hungry and giving up choicest and loving things, and acquiring noble qualities. According to Shaikh Jilani the initiation of the spiritual pauper (*fuqara*) is not through knowledge but with gentleness and tenderness, because knowledge is the cause of frightens and ferociousness whereas gentleness and tenderheartness creates friendship. To him, foundation of tasawwuf or Islamic mysticism is based on eight moral qualities that were belong to the great prophets:<sup>2</sup>

1. Generosity and munificence like that of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him).
2. Satisfaction and reconciliation of the Prophet Ishaque (peace be upon him).
3. Sufferance and endurance of the Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him).
4. Prayers and supplications of the Prophet Zakaria (peace be upon him).
5. Austerity and humility of the Prophet Yahiya (peace be upon him).
6. Gorgeous woolen and silken apparels and dresses of the Prophet Musa (peace be upon him).

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1. Such as, repentance, patience, renunciation, satisfaction, fear of Allah, hope of Allah, trust in Allah, sincerity, love of Allah etc. In this context Allah says through His Prophet: "When I love my servant I become his eyes, his ears, his tongue, his hands and his feet. He sees through Me, he hears through Me, he speaks in My name, his hands become Mine and he walks with Me." (Quoted in *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 42)

2. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets, sermon- 75*, pp.179-80.

7. Perambulation and pilgrimage of the Prophet Isa (peace be upon him).
8. Penury and contentment of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

By practicing these noble qualities, a spiritual pauper (novice or faqir) becomes a Sufi or a moral being.

### c. The true nature of a faqir

The Sufi is also called faqir. Faqir has no separate existence of his own being. He sees through God, hears through God, talks through God, walks through God, grasps through God. Ghawth Pak has said, there are four letters in the word faqir: Fay, Qaf, Y and Ray ( ف , ق , ی , ر ) which denote four characteristics of faqir.<sup>1</sup> Such as:

Fay, ف stands for annihilation in God.

Qaf, ق stands for strengthening the heart by the recollection of Allah and perseverance in His acquiescence.

Y ی stands for remaining hopeful of Divine grace and beneficence and to fear Allah and be righteous.

Ray, ر stands for imploring heart, cleansing its defilement and turning aside all the desires and be engaged in devotion. These characteristics in some way also relate to morality.

Addressing a big gathering of Dervish, (*faqir*) Ghawth al- Azam said: 'I admonish you to fear God and obey Him. Observe exoteric law of Islam and keep purity of heart and cheerful appearance, fulfill your duties and obligations, shun harmful things. Forbear afflictions, tribulation, indigence and poverty. Keep in view the sanctity of the spiritualist, have good dealing with the fellow-members of the society, be graceful to the youngsters and give them good counsel. Discard enmity, and avidity in worldly affairs, and be equipped with the spirit of sacrifice and preference to others. Refrain from hoarding. Shun the company of those who do not belong to fraternity of *Auliya*. The reality of *Faqir* (spiritual poverty) is that we should not extend hand of mendicancy to the people like us. And the reality of richness is that we should not stand in need of people like us'.<sup>2</sup>

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1. *Mystical Discourses of Ghaus-e-Azam*, p. 66.

2. Quoted in, *Ibid.*, p. 67;

Regarding the reality of *Faqir*, the Holy Prophet says, “Those who are sincere are always in great danger.”<sup>1</sup> This is the condition of *Faqir* who has left his being and is annihilated. Hence, Abdul Qadir Jilani authentically has said *Tasawwuf* is a life-long struggle for purity as well as morality.

#### **d. The moral qualities needed to be a true guide**

The seeker who has just entered the spiritual path, it is not possible for him to relate to Allah or to his Prophet (SAW). He must need the instruction and example of a guide in the form of a living teacher (*pir*). Such a teacher is close to Allah and inherits the prophetic wisdom. Their teaching illuminated the heart of the being through shedding light on their path. One finds the inspired soul in oneself through them.<sup>2</sup> As a true guide the qualities Shaikh Jilani achieved were inherited from Prophet (SAW). Hence, he says, a spiritual teacher (a true guide) is not true teacher unless he passes twelve qualities. He who does not possess the following twelve qualities is not fit for the rank of sainthood.<sup>3</sup>

1. Two of these qualities are from the attributes of Allah: Concealment of sins and compassion and forgiveness.
2. Two from the Holy Prophet: Love and gentleness.
3. Two from Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique: Truthfulness, honesty and sincerity, as well as devotion and generosity.
4. Two from Hazrat Umar Farooq: Justice and imposing the right and preventing the wrong.
5. Two from Usman ibn Affan: Humility and night vigils.
6. Two from Ali ibn Talib: To learn knowledge and courage.

All of these qualities are moral qualities. Hence, those who bear these qualities are moral being as well as a Sufi. So we can say becoming a Sufi means becoming a perfect moral being.

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1. Quoted in, *Loc cit*.

2. *The Secret of Secrets*, pp 111-113; Allah says: He is the Raiser of levels, the Lord of the Throne of Power. By His order does He send the (inspired) soul to any of His servants He pleases, that he may warn (men) of the day of meeting (their Lord). (23: 15).

3. *The Secret of Secrets*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

### **e. Moral virtues needed to be a true disciple**

According to Shaikh Jilani there are ten virtues<sup>1</sup> which must be found in those who are engaged in ascetic practice and self-mortification (*Fana*). If they keep them up and master them by Allah's grace, they will attain noble stations.

1. The first virtue is that the servant must not swear by God whether truthfully or falsely, intentionally or unintentionally. When this practice gets root in him, God will open for him a door of His Light and he will realize the benefit of the habit of not swearing and will feel spiritual elevation in his rank.
2. He should avoid making joke intentionally or by fun, or by telling a lie. If he practices this firmly, and makes his tongue habituated to it, God will make his chest spacious and purify his mind.
3. He should not make promise with anyone before hand; and if he had already done it, he should not break it. It is a kind of falsehood to make a promise and not to fulfill it.
4. He should refrain from cursing any thing in the creation or send harm to anyone even to a particle or less than that. This is the attribute of the righteous, truthful and the veracious folk. This guarantees good end of life under Divine protection and exaltation in spiritual rank.
5. He should avoid imprecating people even if anyone has done injustice to him. He should not abandon his relationship with the oppressor and never think of taking revenge of the wrong actions. He should not correspond the words and the deeds of his adversary. For sake of pleasing the God, he should tolerate the oppression and adopt endurance and humanity. This quality of character elevates his spiritual rank; he attains a noble position in this world and the hereafter, and earns love and affection in the hearts of all the people.
6. The sixth virtue is that a person should not bear witness against those who are believers accusing them as seeking co-partner with God or for creating disunity and hypocrisy. This virtue makes a devotee to come closer to the mercy of God.

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1. Abd al Qadir al-Jilani, *Futuh al-Ghaib*, Eng. tr. S. Z. Haider, entitled, *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, Dhaka,: Friends International, 2005, *sermon*- 78, pp.185-191; Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Al- Ghunya li-Talibi Tariq al-Haqq* Eng. tr. from Arabic, Muhtar Holland, entitled, *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*. (Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc.), 1995, vol. 5, pp. 108-111



7. He should refrain himself from the causes of outer and inner motivation for sinful acts, and protect his organs of the body from indulging in criminal and guilty deeds. Such efforts bring forth reward and recompense in this world immediately.
8. The eighth virtue is that a person should not place his own burden on anybody else, whether rich or poor or the burden is small or large. On the contrary, the virtuous person should bear all the burden of other created beings on a voluntary basis whether it is needed or not. By the virtue of this quality man can observe Divine command and prohibition in true sense. When a man reaches at this stage God transforms his heart into a state of heedlessness to others and reliance on Him.
9. He should not have any expectation or greed to the people nor feel any kind of temptation in his heart for anything held by them. Surely it is a rank of great honour, self-sufficiency, complete trust and pride. This is one of the big gates of the asceticism in the domain of reliance on God and a sign of attachment to God.
10. The tenth virtue is humility (or politeness) which elevates the novice to high position and lofty spiritual rank. It is the root and branch of perfect obedience to Allah. It entails that the servant of God does not see anyone inferior to himself, he rather sees superiority in others over himself. There is nothing superior to the virtue of humility. This virtue enables a man to get rid of the pride, enmity, back-biting, slander, useless conversation and limitless urge for passionate desires from the heart of a person. When a devoted person adopts the principle of humility (politeness), the Almighty Allah shall save him from the troubles and tribulation of the passion. He will be awarded the position of a guide and path-finder to render advice in favour of the Almighty Allah and he will be considered as a friend of merciful Allah.

The above discussion also signifies morality as a pre-condition to become a true disciple in the path tasawwuf.

## 2.2. Significance of Worldly Life

Whatever is attained through one's ability is the world. What ever is ordained by the king is not world. Again, whatever is bare necessity is not world. A house to live in, a dress to cover the body, eat to satisfy one's belly and take a wife for mental peace are not called world. Dependence on creatures leaving the God is called world."<sup>1</sup> In a brief, whatever is except God is world. And keeping contact with God and averse from argumentation, and ignorance, honour-dishonour is called *akhirat*.

Concerning the nature of worldly life, Allah Says: "Know you that the life of this world is but play and amusement" (57:20; 6:3). To explain the verse Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani says: Play and idle talk and ostentation are for ignorant youngsters, not for intelligent adults,<sup>2</sup> i.e., world belongs to ignorant people who are mentally deficient. Because, Allah has not created us for play and idle talk or passionate desire. This life is a place of moral struggle for the life of hereafter which is far more important than the transitory pleasures of this life. This world is built upon work. If one labours in it, he will receive the remuneration, and if one does not work he will not receive it.<sup>3</sup> The Prophet (SAW) Says: "This world is the planting ground of the hereafter, so those who plant goodness will harvest bliss, while those who plant evil will harvest remorse". The believer (*mumin*) makes his lower self (*nafs*) weary in this world, so he will surely find his rest in hereafter.

The real condition of this world is that it is loaded with troubles involving harshness, ignorance, difficulties and animosity.<sup>4</sup> So one should not pay attention to the perishable material wealth. The principle capital of this world is full of the difficulties and tribulations and the bounties are the antagonistic of this principle.

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1. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Al-Fath ar-Rabbani wa al-Fayjur Rahmani*, Bng. trans., by Fazlur Rahman Munshi, (Dhaka : Taz Company Ltd. 2006) p. 98

2. Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Al-Fath ar-Rabbani*, Eng. tr. Muhtar Holland, *entitled, The Sublime Revelation*, (Florida: A- Baz Publishing, INC). Indian Print, n.d. discourse-65, p. 441

3. *Ibid.*, 239: It is the domain of deeds and the endurance of adversities. It is the domain of toil, while the hereafter is the domain of relaxation.

4. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, sermon- 45, p.116

The fruit of this world is bitter but effect is useful. Nobody can get to the sweetness of this fruit until he has not tasted the bitterness and swallowed it. Nobody can get the honey until he has drunk the bitter water of tribulations. In another word this world is the moral ground for hereafter. Those who will lead a moral life here, they will be happy in hereafter. Therefore, those who adopt patience with the tribulation of this world will gain the good luck of blessings and bounties of this world.

A perfect faithful person (*mumin*) who is wise does not get entangled in the pleasure, luxury and comfort of this world. Instead, *mumins* desire to have the comfort of the hereafter

According to the Shaikh, we should remember that nothing blocks us from direct receiving of Allah's grace and favour except our reliance upon people and connections with creations. Thus, creatures are obstacle to gaining a proper livelihood, in keeping with the exemplary practice of the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) is reported as having said: Accursed, accursed is he whose trust is in a creature like himself. Concerning this Shaikh Jilani says: as for someone who trusts in a creature similar to himself, he is like a person clutching at water; he opens his hand and sees nothing in it. In fact, creatures are powerless to cause one's injury or bring one's benefit; in such matters they are merely instruments of the Lord. He may deal with us and with them as He sees fit. Then pen has run dry on Allah's knowledge of what is due to us and what we owe.

Summing up the above discussion we can say that according to Jilani the world of the hereafter was veiled from our eyes by the present world. The more we involve in this world and all its attractions, the denser will be the veil (*hijab*) between us and the unknowable world of the afterlife. If one does not separate himself entirely, both physically and mentally from the attraction of the surrounding world, he will remain dormant as a spiritual being. Hence, constant moral endeavour and an intelligent approach are essential for spiritual progress. He holds that the beginning of spiritual life is to transcend the natural urges, tread the path of law and then to move onwards to one's destiny and still onward to

come back to the natural urges, but only in one condition that is, the preservation of the law. Hence, a devotee should transcend his urges of nature in the matter of food and drink, dress, marital relations and place of residence, tendencies, and habits and to honour the injunctions and prohibition of law. In worldly life, we should have only intention in our heart to achieve the pleasure of Allah. Then we will definitely receive our share and there will be no other co-sharer. For that, we should adopt the guidance and leadership of the Holy Book and follow the traditions of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW). But anyway we should not bow down to the desires of our passion. And by following these we can succeed in our life.

### **2.3. Mankind has been Created for Moral Living**

Allah created mankind from the light of Muhammad and He created Muhammad from His own light, i.e., the Apostle is the first descent of Divine light. From the light of Mohammad (Perfect man), Allah has created the rest of creation comprising pen, intellect, souls and Angels etc.<sup>1</sup>

Allah declares it in a holy tradition by the tongue of the Apostle: “I have created the soul of Muhammad (SAW) from the light of My Essence.” This is revealed by the Messenger of Allah in these words. “Allah first created my soul. He first created it as a divine light; Allah created the pen first; Allah first created the intellect.” What is meant by all this is that His first creation is the hidden Reality of Muhammad (SAW), *Haqiqat-e- Muhammad'yya*. He is also called by many beautiful names. He is called *Nur*, the Divine Light, because he was purified of the darkness hidden under the attribute of the might and wrath (*Jalal*) of Allah. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, “There has come to you from Allah a light and a perspicuous Book” (5:15). The Prophet (SAW) is called the ‘Total Intellect’, (*aql al-kull*) because he saw and understood everything. He is called the pen (*al-qalam*) because he spread wisdom and knowledge, and he poured knowledge into the realm of letters i.e., brought in black and white.<sup>2</sup>

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1. M. Riaz Qadri, *Illuminations of Abd al-Qadir Jilani*, New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 2010 p. 41

2. *Ibid.*, p. 6

Thus, the soul of Muhammad (SAW) is the essence of all beings, the beginning and the reality of the phenomenal world. He indicates this with the words, "I am from Allah and the believers are from me." Allah created all souls from the soul of Muhammad (SAW) in the Domain of Divine (*alam-e-Lahut*) in the best of forms. Muhammad (SAW) is the name of all humanity in the realm of souls. He is the source, the home of each and every thing.<sup>1</sup>

Four thousand years after the creation of the light of Muhammad (SAW) Allah created the Heavenly Throne (*arsh*) from the light of the eye of Muhammad (SAW). Then He created the rest of creation from the Heavenly Throne. Then He sent the souls to descend of the lowest levels of creation to the realm of this corporeal world which is the domain of matter and bodies. "Then we make him descend to the lowest of the low" (94:5). He (Allah) caused the souls to descend first from the Domain of Divine (*Lahut*), i.e., the realm of manifestation of Divine Essence to the Domain of power (*Jabrut*) which is the realm of Divine Names and Attributes. Here Allah dressed the souls in robes of light. These souls are called 'Sultan souls'. Clothed in the light, these souls were descended to the realm of Angels. There He clothed them with the brilliant robes of angels. There they were called 'spiritual souls'. Then He caused them to descend to the corporeal world which is the world of matter, water, fire, earth, and they became human souls. Then from this world He created the bodies of flesh. After these stages Allah ordered the souls to enter into their bodies and by His command they entered.<sup>2</sup> Coming in worldly life the souls started binding themselves to the flesh and forget their source and their convent.<sup>3</sup> But Allah is merciful, the source of all help and security for His creation.

Concerning the purpose of creation Allah says: "And I have not created the jinn and men except that they should worship Me" (51, 36) In this context Ghawth Pak says that, men are created so that they might know Him.<sup>4</sup> When one knows

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1. *Loc cit.*

2. *Loc cit.*

3. When Allah created them in the realm of souls, He had asked them, "Am I not your Lord"? and they had answered, "Indeed".

4. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 9

Him truly, he can able to praise Him truly. According to Ghawth Pak, the wisdom which one needs in order to know Him can only be attained by lifting the black curtain covering the mirror of one's heart, cleaning that mirror and shining it. Then the hidden treasures of divine beauty may begin reflecting in the secret of the heart's mirror. Shaikh Jilani also says that the purpose of creation of this universe is to discover, to see the hidden treasure. In this context he mentioned that Allah says through His Prophet (SAW): "I was a hidden treasure, I Willed to be known, I created the creation so that I would be known". Consequently, the divine purpose in the creation of man is for him to acquire wisdom, to know his Lord.<sup>1</sup>

There are two levels of divine wisdom: one is to know Allah's attributes and manifestations and the other is to know Allah's Essence.<sup>2</sup> Trough religious knowledge man can acquaint with the exterior manifestation of Allah's Essence reflected in this world of attributes and names. After one becomes accomplished in this he advances to the realms of divine wisdom and comes to know the truth. For this, at first stage one must leave everything that is not in accordance with religious precepts i.e., errors-mistakes in good behaviour and character must be eliminated.<sup>3</sup> To achieve this one must practice doing things against the wishes of one's ego. But one must do these things only for Allah's sake and only His pleasure. Allah says: "... So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds and associate none other in the service of his Lord." (18: 110). Here it is mentioned that Allah would be known in this material world through His attributes (which is moral) manifested in His creation. But the vision of His very Essence is left for the hereafter. There, the vision of Allah will be direct as He wills, and it will be the eye of the Child of the heart that sees Him. This vision will be possible for those who would acquire moral purity by following His orders in this material world. This vision would be the best form of pleasure in the hereafter. Thus, success of life depends on morality.

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1. *Loc cit.*

2. *Loc cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 10

## 2.4. Morality Lies Behind the Very Nature of Man

Man is the mount of Creator. God owes His existence i.e., manifestation to mankind, and human owes his existence to his Creator.<sup>1</sup> It explains very much in the *Hadith qudsi*, “My Heaven cannot contain Me, nor can My earth, but the heart of My believing slave can contain Me”. And “The heart of man is the Throne of God,” – the place which is His residence. God also said, “I haven’t revealed Myself in anything as I am revealed in human being.” Again He says: “Man is my mirror and I am His mirror”. It refers to a tradition: “Believer is the mirror of the Believer, and God is the Believer”. In this context Mansur Hallaj said, “Heart of the believer is like mirror; when you look into it, you will see God.”<sup>2</sup> It has the same meanings. “I am the secret of man and he is My secret.” Again, Bismati says, “I and Thou signify duality, and duality is an illusion, for Unity alone is Truth (*al Huqq*). When the ego is gone, then God is His own mirror of me.”<sup>3</sup> “So Mansur Hallaj said,” I saw my Lord with the eye of the heart. 'I said,' who art Thou? He answered: 'Thou.'<sup>4</sup>

In mystical literature, it is held that the phenomenal world is itself not being, wherein are reflected, as in a mirror, the various Attributes of Being.<sup>5</sup> With regard to man, he is the soul of the world-the microcosm. While other creatures reflect only single Divine Attribute, man reflects them all. He is an epitome of the universe, and so by introspection he may see in himself reflections of all the Divine Attributes of the “fullness of the Godhead.” However, this realization is not possible unless phenomenal self is annihilated, i.e., not being (all shorts of impurities) is annihilated, and nothing is left but Being. When the mystic annihilates all phenomena, including his self which veils the face of “The Truth,” he united with “The Truth”, seer and seen are identified.<sup>6</sup> So a mystic has said, “To see or talk about Divine Unity (*Tawhid*) is polytheism, since duality exists

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1. *Illuminations of Abd al-Qadir Jilani*, p. 38

2. *Ibid.*, p. 24

3. Quoted in, *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc cit.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 39

6. *Loc cit.*

here. *Tawhid* is that you are nullified-you exist no more, only He exists.” Mahmud Sabistari says:

Not being is the mirror of Absolute Being  
Therein is reflected the Shining of “The Truth”  
You are that reflected eye, and He the light of the eye,  
In that eye His eye sees His own eye.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, man being the epitome of all the Divine Name and Attribute is the microcosm, and the world is ‘the great man’. Moreover, God is not apart from him (man). He is with him (man). That is, all his deeds and actions and movements are through Him as the soul causes body of the man to action and movement.

God manifests Himself in the semblance of human being to see Himself in the phenomenal shape. God Himself is the best lover of Himself. His own love is so passionate that He does not care for anything. So, purpose of human being should only be achieving His love. As Allah is pure man should also be pure. That is, by removing all his impurities man can achieve His love.

## **2.5. Purification of Heart**

Heart is a part of a human soul. It is a transcendental entity. When it is cleansed of dross and defilement, all of our conditions become perfect. To discuss about the heart Ghawth Pak at first mentioned several traditions of holy Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) has said: “In man there is a lump of flesh; when it is in good condition all his body remains in good condition and when it degenerates, his whole body degenerates. Remember that lump of flesh is the heart.” He also said, “The heart of man is Throne of God.” Everyone knows that heart is the dwelling place of God, or it is mirror in which God reflects Himself. But no one can gain such a heart who has not completely cleansed from the defilement of nature.<sup>2</sup> To explain the nature of heart Ghawth Pak also mentioned a verse of Holy Qur’an. Here Allah Says: “But those who were blind in this world, will be

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1. Quoted in, *Illuminations of Abd al-Qadir Jilani*, p. 39

2. *Ibid.*, p. 107



blind in the hereafter” (17:72); here it is not the blindness of eyes in one’s head but the blindness of eyes of one’s heart that will prevent one from seeing the light of hereafter.<sup>1</sup> The only cause of the heart becoming blind is heedlessness, or engaged in immoral activities which makes one forget Allah and one’s function, one’s purpose, one’s promise to Him, while one is in this world.<sup>2</sup> The principle cause of heedlessness is ignorance of the reality of the Divine Laws and orders. What keeps one in this stage of ignorance is a darkness that completely covers one from the outside and fully invades one’s inner being. Some of the properties of this darkness are arrogance, pride, envy, miserliness, vengeance, lying, gossiping, backbiting and so many other hateful traits. It is these traits that reduce the best creation of Allah to the lowest of the low.

To get rid oneself from these evils one has to clean and shine the mirror of the heart. This cleansing is done by acquiring knowledge, by acting upon this knowledge, by effort and valour, fighting against one’s ego within and without oneself, by ridding oneself of one’s multiplicity of being, by achieving unity.<sup>3</sup> This moral struggle will continue until the heart becomes alive with the light of unity and with that light of unity, the eye of the clean heart will see the reality of Allah’s attributes around and in it. At this stage one will have the yearning and longing to return to the true home, and when the time comes, with the help of the most compassionate, that pure spirit will go to join Him.<sup>4</sup>

To him, the heart has two eyes,<sup>5</sup> one is smaller and the other is bigger. With the smaller eye one is able to contemplate Divine Names and Attributes. The bigger eye, through the light of Divine Unity, contemplates light of Divine Essence in the Domain of Divine (*lahut*). But human can get these ranks after self abnegation when he has been freed from carnality and appetite. A servant can have access to this domain in proportion to his spiritual enlightenment.

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 55

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, p.56.

5. *Loc. cit.*

Ghawth Pak also Said four things are conducive to soundness of the heart: 'The first is checking to make sure one has something fit to eat. The second is undisturbed devotion to worshipful obedience (*ta'a*). The third is the preservation of honourable dignity. The fourth is giving up everything that distracts him from Allah.'<sup>1</sup> In this context Ghawth Pak also said: "O people, die before you die. Die as far as your lower selves and your wills are concerned". Death has no certain time, it occurs frequently. Hence, one should prepare oneself before its arrival and then he will have died before his death. He also added that death is a remedy for the diseases of the lower self and a benefit over its head. By remembering it one can overpower his lower self. That is, we must cleanse ourselves from our worldly attributes, which are egoistic and egotistical. After this special kind of death, the heart will be revived. When the heart has been revived, nearness to the Lord will come. Again, when the heart becomes sound and draws close to the nearness of the Lord of Truth, He causes the river of wisdom (*hikam*) to flow through it, for creatures to put to good use. To keep the heart alive one should obey the command of the Lord of Truth, avoid His prohibition, to be patient in danger and be pleased with His arrangement. Thus, the Holy Spirit will be able to get back to its previous closeness and intimacy with Allah.

Here it is mentioned that concerning the purification of heart the opinion of Ghawth Pak is similar to modern philosopher Hegel. For self realization or perfection Hegel has mentioned two maxims. One of them, "Die to live." According to Hegel the maxim means that the self must die as a narrow, private, individual and live the richer and wider life of the spiritual universe beyond Him. He does not advocate destruction of sensibility for the higher life of the self, but its regulation by reason. To him man's higher spiritual life is attained through the transformation of his lower impulses. Here it is also mentioned that for the soundness of heart Ghawth Pak has also mentioned the "Preservation of honorable dignity." It is also similar to Hegel's another maxim, "Be a person", that is, control

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1. *Utterances of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani*, p. 34

and organize your animal instincts, passions and desires in such a way as to make them means for the realization of your true self or personality." To explain it Hegel says that the difference between men and animal, animal has only individuality but man has individuality as well as personality. For the quality of individuality animal thinks only for itself. But man thinks for himself as well others. By helping others, by distributing himself among the others man can achieve self-satisfaction. It is the main characteristics of man. According to Hegel, for the acquisition of perfection man has to give up his self interest for the interest of others; that is, he has to be a person, And thus he can able to preserve his dignity. Ghawth Pak had also expressed the same view. For the purification of the heart he stressed on giving up egoism and prefers altruism.

## **2.6. Knowledge as a Source of Morality**

Knowledge is the most valuable and honourable things of the world. No worldly things are comparable to it. According to Abdul Qadir Jilani, "Certainly the most honourable of valuable things, the highest, the priceless Jewel, the most profitable object of trade among men, is knowledge. Only with wisdom can we attain the unity of Allah, Lord of all the universes. Only with wisdom can we understand and follow His Messengers and His Prophets (peace and blessings be upon them). The men of knowledge (the wise men) are the pure servants of Allah whom He has chosen to receive divine message. He has preferred them to other men by virtue of the grace He has poured upon them."<sup>1</sup> Allah most High praises the possessors of wisdom in His Qur'an: Certainly those of His servants who are possessed of knowledge fear Him. (35:28). Our Prophet (SAW) praises them, saying: 'The holders of wisdom are the heirs of the prophets. The inhabitants of the Heavens love them, and upon this earth even the fishes in the seas, praise them until Doomsday.'<sup>2</sup>

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 3

2. He also says: On the day of the Last Judgment Allah will gather men together, then separate the wise men from among them, and say to them, "O people of knowledge, I gave you My knowledge because I know you. I did not give you wisdom to punish you on this day. Enter My Paradise; I have forgiven you." (*Ibid.*, P. 4)

## Kinds of knowledge

According to Abdul Qadir Jilani outer (exoteric) knowledge of things that are self evident is divided into twelve sections and inner knowledge is also in twelve sections. These portions are divided among the common people and the special (elect), servants of Allah in proportion to their potential and degree of their spiritual state. All these sciences are summed up in four sections:<sup>1</sup>

The first section concerns *Shari'ah*, the precepts of the religion regarding commands and prohibitions and other manifest duties and obligations concerning temporal world.

The second section concerns the inner meaning and reason for these precepts, and it is called the science of conceptual knowledge of things or mystical science (*Sufism*).

The third concerns the hidden spiritual essence itself, which is called Divine wisdom or gnosis.

The fourth section concerns the inner essence of this essence, which in Sufi terminology called the knowledge of Reality or Truth. The perfect man must learn and know all of these and find paths leading to them.

In this view, the Apostle has said, “The religion is a tree: mysticism (*Tariqat*) is its branches, wisdom is its foliage and truth is its fruit.” The Holy Qur’an, with its commentaries, explanations, interpretations and analogies contains them all.<sup>2</sup>

The true servant of Allah (who has knowledge of God) is obliged to fulfil Allah’s orders and to abstain from what He forbids. He is also obliged to oppose his ego and the lower dictates of his flesh,<sup>3</sup> i.e., a wise man is a man of moral. The basic opposition of the ego to religion is in the form of imagination and illusions contrary to reality. On the level of mysticism, the treacherous ego encourages one

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 26.

2. In the book al-Majma the words *tafsir*, ‘commentary’, and *ta’wil*, interpretation through analogies are defined thus: ‘Commentary on the Qur’an is clarification and elaboration for the understanding of the common people, while interpretation through analogy is clarification of the inner meaning through inspired reflections experienced by the true believer. Such interpretation is for those special servants of Allah who are firmly established, constant in their spiritual state and well grounded in the knowledge that enables them to form true judgments’. (*loc. cit.*)

3. *Ibid.*, p. 27; this idea of Jilani is comparable to Socrates' theory of knowledge. Because Socrates has said, 'knowledge is virtue,' i.e., a man of knowledge can not commit sinful acts. In the same way, Jilani things that, a man of knowledge ignoring Qur’anic order can not engage in offence.

to agree with and to follow causes and propositions that are only close to truth, even to follow prophetic messages and declarations of saints.<sup>1</sup> On the level of wisdom, the ego tries to push one to claim sainthood, even divinity. Allah says: "*Seest thou such a one as taketh for his god his own passion*" (25:43).

But the level of truth is different. Neither the ego nor the Devil can reach there— even the angels can not set foot there. Anyone but Allah who approached there would burn to ashes, as the angel Gabriel said to the Prophet (SAW) at the edge of that level, when he declared, '*If I take another step, I will burn to ashes*'.

The true servant of Allah is free from the opposition of his ego and the Devil, because he is protected by a shield of sincerity and purity. So it becomes easy for him to lead a moral life.

Man cannot attain the truth unless he is pure, because his worldly attributes will not leave him until the essence is manifested in him. His ignorance will only leave him when he receives the knowledge of Allah's Essence. One cannot obtain this with knowledge; only Allah without intermediaries, can teach it. It is mentioned that, in another sermon Ghawth-e-Azam classified knowledge into two types:<sup>2</sup> Divine and human—one is acquired from human beings and another is revealed by Allah which is termed as *Ilm-e-ladunni* or inspired knowledge. Ghawth-e-Azam has emphasized to acquire both the knowledge as their attainment leads one to perfection: material as well as spiritual. Allah Most High is Himself the teacher of inspired (Divine) knowledge. The lovers of God attain such knowledge (As He gave Prophet Khidr). It is actually knowledge of the Reality, which causes Divine union. True learned man is one who receives such knowledge through inspiration. Without this knowledge one can not become wise even if he reads a million books.

For the clarification of nature of the true knowledge Ghawth Pak mentioned an example of Ghazali. Ghazali has made use of the sayings of the famous Mystic Abu Yazid al-Bastami including his words: "The learned man is

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. Illuminations of Abd al-Qadir Jilani, p. 109

not he who studies from a book, for in that case (since the Prophet (SAW) did not study), the Prophet, (SAW) would be ignorant but he who takes his knowledge from his Lord, when He desires it, without study or instruction; this is the man learned in spiritual things.”<sup>1</sup> According to Ghawth Pak, the Sufis therefore care chiefly for the knowledge bestowed on them by God (*al-ulum al-ilhamiyya*) not that acquired by academic study and thus they do not urge men to study human writers knowledge or to pursue what human writers have written.<sup>2</sup> Instead they claim that, the way to God is the elimination of vices, purification of the heart and sanctification of the soul after which God takes possession of His servant’s heart for inner enlightenment. Such enlighten man is true moral being. Hence, we can say way of acquiring true knowledge is the way of leading moral life.

By analyzing above discussion we can say that, Shaikh Jilani has considered knowledge as the most valuable and honourable things. He has mainly considered wisdom as a source of knowledge. Through it man can know Allah. As a result he fears Him, obey His command and prohibition. Moreover, a man of wisdom opposes his ego and the lower dictates of his flesh. Above all, he can purify himself from all evil desires and vices. Here it is mentioned that concerning the source of knowledge he not only mentioned wisdom but also mentioned Law, intuition (*kashf*), *ilham* and revelation. And side by side for the well development of human being he has recognized worldly and divine knowledge.

## 2.8. Good and Evil

Good and evil are the fruits of the two branches of the same tree. That is, good and evil depend on the actions of the Almighty Allah. It is He who introduces these acts and spreads it out among the creation.<sup>3</sup> The Almighty Allah has said: “It is the Almighty Allah who has created you and your action” (37:96). Again the Almighty Allah has said: "In reward of your own deed, enter the

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1. *Ibid.* p. 97

2. This kind of worldly knowledge is necessary only to the extent that it is useful. Yet for the sake of one’s ego i.e., for name and fame one is ambitious for worldly knowledge.

3. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, sermon- 27, p.74

Heaven" (16:32), i.e., He related the effect of actions with the people's performance and for this reason made them enter the Paradise.

As sources of all good and evil are only God, we should never complain to anyone about our luck, whether he be friend or foe. Moreover, we should not accuse the Lord for treating us badly and making us suffer misfortune. We should rather proclaim our gratitude for Him, because there is none who is not bestowed with the blessings of the Almighty Allah at any moment. The Almighty Allah has himself declared that the bounty of the Almighty Allah is endless and that there is no account of the limit. Thus, it is incumbent not to look toward the created beings for redress and safety of the troubles. If we seek redress from people, we have to act according to the compulsion of religion. We should not recognize any other party, for none has any power to bring us loss or gain, income or expenditure, honour or disgrace, promotion or demotion, poverty or affluence, movement or rest. All events and actions are manifested by His order and permission. Everything lasts as long as He determines. To him (Jilani), we are all aware that for every action there is fixed time and all calamities come to an end and there is no room for change in this matter.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, we should politely and silently observe patience. Even if we are in such calamity as is beyond our power of endurance, we should observe patience. If we do not have the power to agree and comply with the Will of the Almighty Allah, even then we should acquire the habit of our custom for agreement and contentment.<sup>2</sup> In this way we will reach the goal of annihilation of our self in the contemplation of the Almighty Allah.

In this view Abdul Qadir Jilani says: Possibly you might not have heard what the Almighty Allah has said: "In spite of the fact that you may not have the natural instinct for strife or struggle against evil propensities, it is incumbent on you to fight against the evil intention (2:262)". We must not consider some action to be disfavoured, it may be that the action is for our betterment. The thing which we consider as good for us, it may be possible as the harbinger of evil for us. Only the Allah is aware of our good and evil. We do not have any knowledge

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1. *Ibid.*, sermon- 34, p. 90

2. *Ibid.*, sermon- 18, p. 54

in this regard.<sup>1</sup> If we accept the obedience of the Almighty Allah and realize the significance and importance of the Divine order, the Almighty Allah shall protect us from the evil forces and bestow His grace on us. We will be saved from all evils in this world and the hereafter.<sup>2</sup> The Almighty Allah has mentioned about the ultimate evils: Verily we have saved Yousuf (peace be upon him) from all evils and indecency because he was amongst the pure, loyal, sincere and obedient servants (12:24). That is, if we are try our best to be moral, Allah will save us from all kinds of impurities. About the worldly evils, the Almighty Allah has said: "If you are a perfect believer (*mumin*) and a grateful obedient servant, you will not be put into retribution" (4:147). So a *mumin* and the grateful people do not have any danger from evil forces, because such person are farthest away from the tribulations and nearest to welfare and composure.<sup>3</sup> They are in the position of great abundance of blessing for their being grateful persons. The Almighty Allah has said: If you are grateful you will be bestowed with plenty of rewards. (14:7)

Here it is mentioned that, trials and afflictions always not bad, because it removes all types of evil. In this context Abdul Qadir Jilani says, "When the rays of the firm belief and faith can extinguish the fire which is in the lot of every sinner in the hereafter, why the fire of troubles and tribulations shall not be put out in this world for you."<sup>4</sup> But those persons who have been chosen by the Allah and those are absorbed in the love of the Almighty Allah have another standard of judgment. Such people are necessarily placed in trial and afflictions, so that all types of evils are vanished from their minds and their hearts are made holy. They acquire the nature of isolation from the mankind because of the tribulations. In this way they feel peace, tranquility, comfort, repose and safety.<sup>5</sup> In this vein, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said: We the Messengers of the Almighty Allah are placed to much greater hardship of trials and tribulations as compared to other mankind".

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1. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, sermon-18, p. 55

2. *Ibid.*, sermon- 27, p. 75

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Loc. cit.*



When trials and affliction are imposed? In this context, Jilani says: if the heart and mind are under the subjugation of the devil and the carnal desires reign supreme then under the influence of such deeds, the limbs and the body is plunged in many kinds of evils, going astray and indulge in sinful acts.<sup>1</sup> That is, impurity brings course, one the other hand, if heart is cleansed and purified then it becomes ready to accommodate the concept of the unity of the Almighty Allah, Divine revelation and exalted knowledge. The chest is now in a ready position for the sojourn of the secrets and descent of astonishing incidences. The attainment of these qualities is due to the involvement in tribulations and afflictions.

In a nutshell, we can say that all men are included in one or another of the two classes: either obedient or rebellious. The classes of people, who are at peace, content and happy, do good deeds in a state of obedience to Allah. And those who are in a state of insecurity, doubt and misery are rebellious against the prescriptions of Allah. Here obedience and rebelliousness respectively mean good and evil. These are present in every man, yet they do not stay as they are. The good may turn into evil and the evil into good. So our the Prophet (SAW) says: ‘While the one in whom good is dominant finds salvation, peace and joy, and becomes good, and the one in whom evil is more than good becomes evil; the one who recognizes his errors and repents and changes his ways will have his state of rebelliousness transformed into obedience and devotion’.

Therefore, everyone should Judge himself either he is obedient or rebellious. If the rebellious (immoral) characteristics dominate him, he should try his best to over come it. He should try hard and soul for the transformation of his selfish and egoistic character into spiritual state. Moreover, if we tolerate the calamity befall on us we will be able to annihilate our lower self. Again, if we accept the commands of Allah, He will protect us from all evils. And thus he can turn our immoral character into moral.

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1. *Ibid.*, sermon- 27, p. 76

## 2.9. Some Qualities that are Needed to Remove

For the acquisition of the nearness of God or to be a true Muslim Shaikh Jilani prescribes to remove some evil qualities which helps man to be moral.

### Lower self or passion

Self (*nafs*) is very important concept in Sufism. It is assumed to be something like ego but has a wider meaning to it. Human being in its simple form is made of worldly side which is called *nafs* and Heavenly side which is soul.<sup>1</sup> The central idea of Sufism is taming of *nafs* so that it does good. According to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, the self (*nafs*) is what keeps man screened from God. In order to achieve the nearness of Allah, at first we have to need remove this obstacle. Abu Yazid al-Bistami once said: “I saw my Lord in a dream, so I said to Him: ‘What is the way to you, O Creator God?’ He replied: ‘Leave your own self and come hither!’ So I sloughed it off as a snake sloughs off its skin.”<sup>2</sup> According to Shaikh Jilani, the eye of the Lord was only on the self, not on anything else. He ordered man to leave it behind because this world and what it contains, as well as everything whatsoever apart from the Lord of Truth is subordinate to the self.

The lower self is “given to commanding evil” (*ammara bi’s su*, 12:53) this is its natural disposition.<sup>3</sup> The self and the truth (*haqq*) are incompatible. This world and the hereafter are incompatible. When a person sticks with his own self, he misses the opportunity of sticking with the Lord of truth. When a person sticks with this world, he misses the opportunity of sticking with the hereafter. In this context Hadrat Mansur Hallaz said: “Subjected yourself (*nafs*). For if you can ascend on it you will be succeeded, otherwise riding on you it will endanger you”. So we must struggle against the self (*nafs*) under all circumstance. We should melt it down through struggle, for when it has melted and faded it will become

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1. *Method and Manners in the Qadiri Sufi Path*, Geylani Islamic Cultural Centre, www.qadiriyya.com; www.kadirileriz.biz. p. 4.

2. *The Sublime Revelation*, discourse-49, p. 309

3. According to Abd al-Qadir Jilani: “We have two master: One is Allah ,the Creator and another is our own self (*Nafs*). Both of them command to us. Our own self or passion is the creation of the Almighty Allah and it is under His command.” [*Fatuh-ul-Ghaib*, Bangali trans., by Mowlana Mohammad Kamrujjman, (Dhaka: Taz Company, Ltd., 2002), p.199] But it is antagonistic to the Almighty Allah due to the carnal desires, pleasure, sensual lust and the pride of possessions.

meekly subservient to the heart; then the heart will become meekly subservient to the innermost being (*sirr*); then the innermost being will become meekly subservient to the Lord of the truth.<sup>1</sup>

Here it is mentioned that, idolatry is not the only form of attributing a co-partnership with the Almighty Allah. But any worldly act for the fulfillment of the passionate desire of soul, love of worldly need and absorbed in some worldly objects are also equivalent to make a partnership with the Almighty Allah.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in moral life all goodness lies in waging total war against the self (*nafs*) under all circumstances. If we are in a state of true devotion, therefore, we must oppose the self by not getting involved with people, whether their behaviour be unlawful, merely dubious or even well-intentioned, not depending or relying on them, neither fearing them nor pinning any hopes on them, and not coveting any worldly advantages they may enjoy.<sup>3</sup> We should separate ourselves from creatures in all earnestness. At the same time we must not forget the love for the created beings and the principle of endeavour for human welfare. In case we forget this principle, we will be designated as a member of the community who believes in violence.

According to Shaikh Jilani a person has no right to designate himself as a devoted person to Almighty Allah unless he has forsaken the following characteristics of desires and passions:

“Lust, delight, the comfort for food and drinks, clothing, marriage, riding, conveyance, housing, authority to govern, any knowledge, out of the host of different branches of knowledge, science and techniques, including any one of the type such as Jurisprudence, theology. ...The desire for the termination of poverty and the intention to become wealthy and rich, desire to be protected from the

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1. *The Sublime Revelation*, discourse-43, pp. 72-73

2. Here it is mentioned that the hypocrites, infidels, non-believer and sinful people never struggle against the passions. They are used to be obedient to the passionate desires and are in conformity with the devils. In addition to infidelity and seeking copartner of the Almighty Allah, they are used to commit many other types of sinful acts. (*Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, sermon- 67, p.164.)

3. *Revelations of the Unseen*, sermon-10, p. 29

troubles and calamities, longing for safeguard from loss and earning of profit are not the criteria to be in the group of devoted persons.”<sup>1</sup> All these things are worldly affairs in which the person wants to reside with peace, tranquility, repose and composure. Therefore, it is necessary for a perfect *mumin* to uproot these characteristics from the bottom of the heart. In order to uproot these natural characteristics a person should control the passion and agree to remain in the position of non-existence, of poverty and in continuous want.

From the above discussion we can say that in worldly life lower self or passion is the greatest enemy of man. Except the Lord of the Truth, all things of the world are subordinate to it. It commands only for evil doing and encourages egoism. It does not care for the betterment of others. So, all goodness lies in war against it. Hence, Shaikh Jilani extremely opposed egoism and encouraged us to fight against passion. At the same time he stressed on altruism. To him, if we deny the welfare of human beings we will be included in that community who engages in violence and destructive activities. So, for the betterment of life we should act in accordance with Divine orders as well as innate or inwardly orders not to the nature of desires.

## **Envy**

Envy is a bad companion of human being According to Shaikh Jilani, it was envy that demolished the house of *iblis*, destroyed him, rendered him one of the people of the Fire and made him cursed by Allah, by His angels, by His prophets and by His creatures.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, a conscientious person should not be involved in envy. Concerning envy Allah says: Do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace? (4:54) Again, Prophet (SAW) says: “Envy consumes good deeds as the fire consumes Firewood”. In this context one of the learned scholars said: “How good is envy! How just it is! It kills its owner first”. The person who is envious is in fact someone who is objecting to Allah and disputing with Him with regard to His

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1. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets, sermon- 54, p.133*

2. *Purification of the Mind, p.206*

action, His creatures and His distribution of shares. An envious person envies his Muslim brother for his wife, his children, his house and his worldly possessions, although all of those are already created for his brother and he has no share in them.<sup>1</sup> Hence, in this worldly life we should avoid this evil quality.

## **Hypocrisy**

Hypocrisy is a great sin. To him hypocrisy was no lesser a sin than polytheism. Hypocrites would bring down God's wrath upon themselves. Even a scholar (*alim*) who did not live up to his knowledge was branded a hypocrite.

Concerning the nature of hypocrite the Shaikh Jilani says, the hypocrite is involved with his lower self, passion, his natural inclination, his devil and his worldly interests.<sup>2</sup> He never leaves their service. He never says anything that contradicts what they say. His whole concern is with eating drinking, dressing up, indulging in sexual intercourse and amassing properties. He does not care in what way he gets all that. He ensures the prosperity of the body and his worldly affairs but ruins his heart and his religion.<sup>3</sup> He pleases creatures but dissatisfies the Creator. The longer his hypocrisy lasts, the harder and darker his heart becomes that he would remain unmoved and undisturbed by any admonition, would learn no lesson from any advice. Hence, one of the righteous persons is reported to have said: "The hypocrite remains in one and the same state for forty years, while the truthful person changes forty times everyday."<sup>4</sup>

To him, the hypocrite has a clever tongue and a clumsy heart.<sup>5</sup> All his knowledge is in tongue. This is why the Prophet (SAW) said: "The most that I fear for my nation is a hypocrite with a clever tongue." It is the habit of the believer to reflect first and then speak, while the hypocrite speaks first and then reflects.<sup>6</sup> The tongue of the believer is behind his mind and his heart, while the tongue of the hypocrite is in front of his mind and his heart.

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1. *Purification of the Mind*, p. 206

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184

3. *Ibid.*, p. 184

4. *Ibid.*, p. 183

5. *Ibid.*, p. 177

6. *Ibid.*, p. 178

The efforts of the hypocrite are totally dedicated to cultivating his relationships with creatures and undermining his relationships with the Creator. They treat Allah, His messenger (SAW) as their enemies. But they forget: Allah has full control over His affairs. (12:21)

Hypocrites are not able to understand the truth. Hence, if they want to comprehend and understand the truth, they should repent from their hypocrisy, act with sincerity and renounce worldly interests and anything apart from God. The first stage of this business is declaring that “There is no God save Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah,” and its last state is seeing as equal stone (gold) and clay.

In a nutshell, hypocrites should force themselves into performing acts of obedience and refraining from acts of disobedience and reprehensible deeds and then this enforcement will turn into a natural inclination. And thus they will be able to remove their hypocrisy.

## **Injustice**

Injustice is a great sin. It destroys him who commits injustice. It darkens the heart and face. Hence, Ghawth Pak advised: “Beware of the prayer of supplication of a person who has been wronged., Beware of the weeping of a person who has been wronged and of the burning of the heart of a person who has been wronged”<sup>1</sup> The believer will not die until revenge has been taken from the person who did him injustice, until he has witnessed his death, the orphan hood of his children, the seizure of his properties and the transfer of his authority to someone else.<sup>2</sup>

Ghawth Pak advised the people refrain from idle gossip, amassing worldly goods and quarrelling over them. Because, men will be punished at the Resurrection on account of the worldly goods that they have in their hands if they do not give of them the dues of the poor and the needy and spend the rest in obedience to Allah and in His worship.<sup>3</sup> Men should always remember that they

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1. *Purification of the Mind*, p. 192

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

are trustees of those properties which belongs to them. The poor and needy persons have right over that property. Hence Allah says: And spend of that whereof He has made you trustees. (57:7). That is, Allah has informed man that he has been appointed trustees of the wealth but he has considered it as his personal property and engaged in mutiny, becoming rebels against Him. He has not commanded him to spend all of it on charity but appointed for the poor a specified entitlement which is the obligatory alms, expiatory gifts and votive offerings.<sup>1</sup> One should discharge his obligations toward the poor at first then discharge his obligations toward the family and relatives.

To him, man has a Creator who will certainly make him stand before Him, call him to account, interrogate him about what he did, be it insignificant or major, including the things that are as tiny as atoms. Hence, man should maintain justice in all his works. He should always remember that injustice ruins countries, cuts off lineages, and darkens heart and faces and decreases sustenance.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning injustice of financial affairs Ghawth Pak advised not to approach usury. It is comparable to war against the Lord.<sup>3</sup> It causes the blessing to disappear from the properties. Hence, one should lend a gold coin for one gold coin. If anyone is able to give a loan to a poor person and after sometime donate it him for the sake of Allah, it will be a praise worthy act. One should not turn away a beggar. He should give him whatever he can. For giving a little thing is better than deprivation. Moreover, if one has nothing at all to give, he should not chide him, but send away using kind words and never break his heart.<sup>4</sup>

To him, this world is changing with respect to all aspects, as it changes day and night alternatively. Moreover, everything has an opposite counterpart: well-being and affliction, good and evil, affluence and poverty, life and death and honour and humiliation etc. All of these things are opposites. When one of them arrives its opposite departs, and in the end there is death. The Prophet (SAW)

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1. *Purification of the Mind*, pp. 192-193

2. *Ibid.*, p. 193

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

is reported to have said: “Each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is responsible for his flock”. The father will be held responsible for his children and his wife; the children and the wife will be held responsible for him. Every master will be held responsible for his slave and every slave will be held responsible for his master. There is no one among men who will not be held responsible in dividedly.<sup>1</sup> Hence, to deal with one another one should avoid injustice. One should make every effort to give the rights to those who are entitled to them. To make a peaceful society hence Ghawth Pak advised: “Show mercy toward one another. Do not backbite one another. Do not subjugate one another. Help each other, ignore any wronging between yourselves and do not expose each others faults. ... Command that which is right and forbid that which is wrong, without prying or spying”.<sup>2</sup>

In the matter of trade shaikh Jilani also advised to behave justly, and avoid all kinds of injustice. He said: “When you weigh some goods, tilt the balance in favour of the customer, for thus Allah will tilt the Balance in your favour on the Day of Resurrection”<sup>3</sup> It has been reported that the Prophet (SAW) once borrowed a few silver coins and when he settled the debt he said to the man who weighs: “Weigh and tilt the balance in favour of the creditor.” Hence, when anyone of us borrows something from another person we should maintain justice and should pay him back some thing that is better than what he borrowed from him and some extra. In sum up we can say that Ghawth Pak stressed on justice of all walks of life. At the same time he is encouraged altruism as well utilitarianism.

## **2.10. Some Moral Actions and Virtues Needed for Achieving Spirituality**

For the spiritual development of man as some bad qualities should be removed, at the same time he must also performs some virtuous actions. Such actions broaden the mind, rise sense of fellow-felling, honesty, sincerity above all encourage him to lead a moral life.

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 194

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 79; *Mystical Discourses of Ghaus-e-Azam*, p. 61



## A. Moral Actions

### Charity

Charity is a beautiful gift and a good deed. It purifies one's heart and property, and helps him to acquire the pleasure of Allah. There are two kinds of charity. One is prescribed by the *Shari'ah*, i.e., sacred laws and the other by *Tariqat* i.e., spiritual charity. *Shari'ah* prescribes charity or donation from the lawfully earned money in this world. After spending certain amount for the use of family, a specific percentage of the excess money should be distributed to the poor and indigents every year at appointed time. Spiritual charity is that which is taken from the provision of journey (viaticum) collected for the life of the Hereafter.<sup>1</sup> This is given to the spiritually poor, the wayfarer on the Divine path who are in the need of it. Charity is giving alms to the poor as Allah has ordained: “*Charity (Alms) is for the poor and the needy*”. (9:60). Whatever is given for this purpose, passes through the hands of Allah Most High before it reaches the needy. Therefore, the purpose of charity is not so much to help the needy, for Allah is the Satisfier of all needs, but to let the donor's intentions be acceptable to Allah. Those who are elect and close to Allah, devote portion of their spiritual earnings to the sinners. The Almighty manifests His mercy and forgiveness in proportion to the prayers, the hymns, the fasts, the alms and the pilgrimages of His servants who intend to sacrifice the rewards they may hope for as a result of their worship of Him.<sup>2</sup> Allah in His mercy covers and hides the sins of sinners as a reward for the devotion of His good servants. The generosity of these faithful ones is such that they keep nothing for themselves, neither the reputation of being good nor the hope of recompense in the Hereafter. He is in the state of total bankruptcy, because he is truly generous. Allah loves those who are generous up to the point of being totally bankrupt to the world.<sup>3</sup> The benefit of charity is that Allah repays at least ten times to the ones who gives. “*He who does good shall have ten times as much as return.*” (6:160). Another benefit of Charity is its cleansing effect. It

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 79

2. *Mystical Discourses of Ghaus-e-Azam*, p. 61

3. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 62

purifies one's being, one's property. If one's sensual passions are purified and blameworthy attributes cleansed, the spiritual purpose of charity is accomplished. Allah Says: And those who are free from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity.

Hence, we should give charity, for Allah's sake, to Allah's servants. Even though manifold rewards are promised, we should not do it for the return. We should give all gifts and charity accompanied by care, love and compassion; not as a favour or expecting thanks from others.

## **Fasting**

We have already mentioned that the aim of all the sermons and discourses of Ghawkh Pak is to morally uplift the people. For that, he mentioned inner and outer meaning of fasting which is very suitable for moral progress. According to *Shari'ah*, fasting is to abstain from eating and drinking and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset, while spiritual fasting is, in addition, to protect all the senses and thoughts from all that is unlawful.<sup>1</sup> It is to abandon all that is disharmonious, inwardly as well as outwardly. The slightest breach of that intention breaks the fast. Religious fasting is limited by time, while spiritual fasting is forever and lasts throughout one's temporal and eternal life. This is true fasting. Concerning this Prophet (SWA) says, 'There are many of those who fast who get only hunger and thirst for their efforts and no other benefit'. 'There are also those who break their fast when they eat, and those whose fast continues even after they have eaten. These are the ones who keep their senses and their thoughts free of evil and their hands and their tongues from hurting others.'<sup>2</sup> It is for these that Allah Most High promises, 'Fasting is a deed done for My sake, and I am the one who will give its reward.' About the two kinds of fasting our Prophet (SWA) says, 'The one who fasts has two satisfactions. One is when he breaks his fast at the end of the day. The other is when he sees', i.e., sees the new moon-marking the end of the fast and beginning the festivities of the holiday. The ones who know the inner

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 82

2. *Loc. cit.*

meaning of fasting say that the joy of breaking the fast is the day when the believer will enter Paradise and partake of the delights therein, and the meaning of the greater joy of seeing is when the faithful sees the truth of Allah with the secret eye of his heart.<sup>1</sup>

There is also a third kind of fasting which is worthier than these two kinds of fasting. It is the fast of truth which prevents the heart from worshipping any other than the Essence of Allah.<sup>2</sup> It is performed by rendering the eye of the heart blind to all that exists, even in the secret realms beyond this world, except the love of Allah.<sup>3</sup> For, although Allah has created all and everything for man, He has created man only for Himself. He says ‘Man is My secret and I am his secret’. That secret is a light from the divine light of Allah. It is the centre of the heart, made out of the finest of matter. It is the soul which knows all the secret truths; it is the secret connection between the created one and his Creator. That secret does not love nor lean towards anything other than Allah. If an atom of anything other than the love of Allah enters the heart, the fast of truth, is broken. For that reason Allah says: ‘Fasting is only for Me, and only I give its reward.’

## **Friendship**

According to Islam friendship is only for Allah. It’s criteria is the dictates of the Holy Qur’an and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). According to Abdul Qadir Jilani, if we feel in our heart love or hate for any person, we must examine his actions. If his conduct and actions are in accordance with the dictates of the Almighty Allah and the Prophet (SAW) our love with that person stands in good stead.<sup>4</sup> If his acts and deeds are against the dictates of the Holy Qur’an and the traditions we should observe animosity with him.<sup>5</sup> So that we do not become a victim of our own lustful desire for love and hate. We have been asked to oppose our carnal desires. The Almighty Allah says: Do not follow your carnal desires because these desires misguide you to be deviated from the path of Allah (28:36).

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1. *The Secret of Secrets*, p. 82

2. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, sermon- 31, p. 83

5. *Loc. cit.*

Concerning the instability of friendship (love), sometimes complains arise,<sup>1</sup> such as the person whom we love, either may disappears or dies. Some other factors come in between or somehow we may develop animosity with him. So we must not make our friendship with juveniles, women, heretics, rich people and the common folk, for it is a sure way to lose our religion. We should be content with very little of what this world has to offer. We should not pay special attention to anyone until it is clearly appear to us that he possesses these five characteristics:<sup>2</sup> (1) He prefers poverty to affluence (2) He prefers the hereafter to this world. (3) He prefers humility to haughty pride (4) He is keenly aware of what is done in secret and what is done in public (5) He is prepared to face death.

Here it is mentioned that a blind can not lead a blind, i.e., a friend should be an enlightened person. Hence, Abdul Qadir Jilani says that we should be beloved of the Almighty Allah and are the recipient of His blessings, because He has created human being only for Himself (His worship) (51:54). So, those who consider the Almighty Allah as the beloved, He also loves them (5:54).

Concerning the nature of beloved (friend), Ghawth Pak says, when any obedient person has been selected as beloved of Almighty Allah, the person is subjected to trials and tribulations. In this condition if he observes patience the Almighty Allah keeps him under His protection, i.e., He keeps him safe from all kinds of worldly troubles and evils.

From the above discussion it is clear that God is our only friend. For He can save us, enlighten us, purify us, and protect us from all kinds of troubles and immoral actions. Above all, He can guide us in the simple and straight way.

## **Humility**

Humility is part and parcel of Islam. It is one of the main conditions of Iman (true believer). So Ghawth Pak advised his followers to practice true devotion, to be ready at all times to fulfil his duty to his parents, his elders, his younger, his family, his neighbours as well as society, for Allah looks with

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1. *Ibid.*, sermon-32, p. 84

2. *Ibid.*, sermon-32, p. 84

favour upon His servant when he acts accordingly. He says: “Be careful not to hurt the feelings of yours elders. Be on your best behaviour with your fellow creatures and always adopt a humble attitude towards them”. Prophet (SAW) has said: “If a person is humble, Allah will raise him up but if a person is arrogant, Allah will put him down.” So it is important for us to cultivate good manners all circumstances, regardless to whether we are dealing with righteous people or with immoral character. We must accord favourable treatment to all our fellow creatures, be they young or old, little or great. We should never regard them with anything less than a sympathetic eye. Ghawth Pak not only stress on outer humanistic attitude but also inner. So he says “Do not indulge in coarse laughter, for such laughter arises from heedlessness and it causes the heart to die.” As Allah’s Messenger has told us: “If only you know what I know, you would surely laugh every seldom and you would surely weep very often,” i.e., here he has meant that life is not merely play and game, it is full of action (duty), duty towards God and duty towards creatures. Here it is mentioned that existentialist philosophers also stress on humanism but humanistic attitude of Ghawth Pak is wider than that of them, in his moral teaching Ghawth Pak also mentioned some usefulness of humility:

1. Humility raise up, while arrogance brings down.<sup>1</sup> The prophet (SAW) said: “When someone behaves with humility with Allah, Allah raises him up.” Allah has some servants who do righteous deeds that are as great as the mountains, like the deeds of the predecessors, yet they humble themselves to Allah and say: “We have done nothing that will cause us to enter Paradise. If we will enter, it will be through the mercy of Allah and if He will deny us admission, it will be account of His justice.” They stay in His company standing on the foot of bankruptcy. So, for the success of our life we should be humble.
2. According to Ghawth Pak ‘the more you humble yourself the more you became prominent, get raised up and gain a higher status.’<sup>2</sup> So, if we do not behave with humility, this will indicate our ignorance of Allah, His

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1. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 201

2. *Loc. cit.*

Messenger (SAW), His saints, His Law, His knowledge, His power, His status, His world and the His hereafter. Hence we should act sincerely.

3. The vain person is ignorant. The person who behaves arrogantly with creatures is ignorant. Humility is from Ar-Rahman and arrogance is from Satan.<sup>1</sup> The first one who behaved with arrogance was Iblis, so he was cursed, hated and deprived. Hence, if we want to be moral, to be respected, and to be dutiful we should be humble.

### **Lawful earning**

Lawful earning is the first condition of all kinds of prayers (such as fasting, pilgrimage). Sacred Law (*Shariha*) has made it clear to all what is lawful (*halal*) and what is unlawful (*haram*). If our heart tell us no, it is unlawful and if our heart tells us yes, it is lawful.<sup>2</sup> If it is stay silent and says neither yes nor no then it is dubious (*Shubha*).<sup>2</sup> Taking the unlawful things increases the intensity of sleep and there is no well being involved in sleeping, All kinds of base and worst things are associated with sleep. So that any person who remains busy in eating, drinking and sleeping more than what is necessary; he is shorn of all good qualities, piety and virtues.<sup>3</sup> To Him, the unlawful thing surrounds the person in the sphere of darkness just as the wines renders the wisdom and intelligence of a person. When the faith is lost in the darkness, the offering of daily prayers, worship, sincerity and loyalty are of no use. So the first condition of pure heart is lawful earning.

Unlawful earning deadens the heart and lawful earning enlivens it.<sup>4</sup> One type of *morsal* radiates our heart and other darkens it. One *morsal* absorbs us in worldly life and other in the hereafter and a third type of morsal alienates us from both. To express the importance of lawful earning Ghawth Pak mentioned the example of Amirul Mominin Umar and Siddiq a-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with them). Hazrat Umar had declared that out of ten things which have been

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Utterances of Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani*, p.95; He also said: That, which is unlawful (*haram*) is coexistent with your lower self (*nafs*), that which is dubious (*shubha*) is coexistent with the heart (*qalb*), and that which is unambiguously lawful (*halal tilq*) is coexistent with purity of the innermost being (*sirr*).

3. *Conquests of the Divine Secrets*, op.cit., sermon- 49, p.124

4. *Ibid.*, p. 125

declared as lawful, he had left aside nine things for the fear of being doubtfully unlawful. Amirul Mominin Siddiq Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him) said that he abandoned seventy doors of lawfully declared things for the fear of being involved in sin. These honourable personalities took precautionary measures to save themselves for the fear of committing sin.

Hence, Ghawth Pak advised his flock to live on what they earned by honest means and by their own efforts and to share what they earned to others. But he advised them neither to become completely dependent on those from whom they gained their livelihood, nor to be too reliant on the arts and crafts by which they earned their living. He kept strictly away from rulers, holding them to be unjust and exploitative. He necessarily abhorred any dealings with temporal powers, considering them to be counter to the true spirit of religion. Although the Abbasid Caliphs anxiously sought his blessings he constantly discouraged any interaction with them. He used to say: As you are, so shall be your rulers. So he advised the people to reform their own thinking and conduct, so that their rulers might also be virtuous.

Summing up the above discussion we can say that lawful food create good conduct and desire for divine worship in man. It helps man to acquire Divine obedience and moral excellence.

## **B. Moral virtues**

### **Absolute trust in the Lord**

Trust in the Lord is a precondition of *Iman* (belief). Concerning this Allah Says: And when someone puts all his trust in Allah, He will be enough for him (65:3), He also says: "And put all your trust (in Allah), if you are indeed believer (5:23). Concerning this Prophet (SAW) says: If you really and truly placed all your trust in Allah, He would sustain you as He sustains the birds. They start the day with their bellies empty, and end it with their bellies full."<sup>1</sup> According to Shaikh Jilani, the real meaning of absolute trust (*tawakkul*) is delegating one's all

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1. Quoted from, Shaikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Al Ghunya li-Talibi Tariq al-Haqq. Eng. trans.*, Muhter Holland, entitled, *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, (Florida: Al-Baz Publishing inc. vol. 5 1997). p. 122

affair to Allah, making a clean escape from the murky darkness and gloom of personal choice and self management, and advancing to the arenas where the divine decrees (*ahkam*) and foreordainment (*taqdir*) are experienced directly.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the nature of trust in God Ibrahim al-Khawwas said: “The real meaning of the absolute trust in the Lord is the detachment of fear and hope from everything apart from Allah”<sup>2</sup> Again, Al-Junaid said: “Absolute trust means that you devote yourself totally to your Lord and that you turn your attention away from all those who are beneath Him”.<sup>3</sup>

Al- Nuri said: “It means that you let your self management become absorbed into His management (*tadbir*), and that you are perfectly satisfied with Allah as a Trustee (*Wakil*), as a manager (*Mudabbir*) and as a Helper (*Nasir*)”.<sup>4</sup>

Abu Ali ar-Rudhbari said: There are three stages in the development of absolute trust in the Lord, namely: (i) When he is granted a gift, the recipient is grateful, and when he is deprived, he is patient; (2) as far the servant (of the Lord) is concerned, to be deprived and to be granted a gift are one and the same; (3) deprivation combined with gratitude is what he likes best of all, because he is aware that this is Allah’s preference on his behalf.<sup>5</sup>

Concerning the nature of Absolute trust Shaikh Jilani Said, a devotee must be convinced that there is no possibility of changing the allotment of destiny (*qisma*). That is, whatever has been allotted to him cannot by pass him and he can never obtain what has not been allotted to him.<sup>6</sup> In this vein the Prophet (SAW) said: “Allah finished of the creation, the assignment of subsistence and appointment of the times of things. The pen with which He wrote down everything that will happen until the Day of Resurrection has already run dry”. Again the Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: “Even if the servant says: ‘O Allah! Do not provide for me’ Allah will provide for him despite his wish”.

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, Vol. 5, P. 115

2. *Ibid.*,P. 117

3. *Ibid.*,P. 118

4. *Loc. cit*

5. *Ibid.*,P. 117

6. *Ibid.*,P. 115



What one earns in return for his work is from Allah, and earning broad beans without exerting efforts is also from Allah. The creatures have nothing to do with this. But as long as the lower self has not been made calm by striving, it would not believe in this and would not relinquish its greedy keenness and persistence on obtaining things. His heart will then become reconciled to this and he will feel confident in relying on the promise of his Lord.

There are three stages to putting one's trust in the Lord, namely:

(i) the basic sense of trust (*towakkul*) (ii) the act of surrender or resignation (*taslim*), (3) the act of delegation (*tafwid*).<sup>1</sup> The person who is at the stage of basic trust (*al-mutawakkil*) is one who feels confident in relying on the promise (wa'd) of his Lord. The person who is at the stage of surrender or resignation (*sahib al-tasim*) is one who is content to rely on His Knowledge (*ilm*). The person who is at the stage of delegation (*sahib at-tafwid*) is one who is happy to accept His judgment. Here trust is an initial stage (*at-tawakkul bidayah*), surrender or resignation is a middle stage (*at-taslim wasat*) and delegation is a final stage (*al-tafwid nihaya*).

In another word, trust is the attribute of the believers, surrender or resignation is the attribute of saints, and delegation is the attribute of those who realize and affirm the Divine Oneness.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the way of trust in Allah Ghawth Pak mentioned a Hadith: "A man once rode into a town on a fine she camel of his, and he said: 'O messenger of Allah, shall I just leave her unattended, and put my trust in the Lord? So the Prophet (SAW) told him: hobble her feet with a rope, and put your trust in the Lord."<sup>3</sup> That is, precondition of trust in God is to take a measure at first.

Here some difficulty may be raised in relation to the material means and the decree of Allah. Concerning this Ghawth Pak says: There are only two ways to make a living: either through working while adhering to the requirements of the Law or through trust.<sup>4</sup> In this process the limbs and organs of the physical body,

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, Vol. 5, p. 115

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, P. 124

4. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 30

and all the external faculties (*zawahir*), actively involved in the instrumental process in compliance with the commandment of Allah, while the inner being (*batin*) remains calmly reliant on the promise of Allah, i.e., earning through work is beginning and trust is the end. There is no incompatibility between the two because it constitutes the actualization of faith. So, to reject the validity of material acquisition is tantamount to rejecting the validity of the Sunna, and to reject the validity of absolute trust is tantamount to rejecting the validity of faith.

In moral life the significance of absolute trust in God is that, the man who truly believes in the allotment of destiny and tries his best to acquire it and also believes that if there is something in his fate he must be able to achieve it. Then there will be no possibility to indulge in immoral actions for such a man.

### **Goodness of moral character**

Good moral character (*al-khulq al-hasan*) is the most excellent of all the virtues of the servant. Through it essential nature of men are made manifest. According to Shaikh Jilani, human being is privately disguised by his physical constitution (*Khalq*), and publicly revealed by his moral character. He also said: Allah has distinguished His Prophet and His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW) by endowing him with certain miracles (*Mujizat*), charismatic exploits (*Kramat*) and exceptional virtues (*fada'il*). Yet He has not praised him for any of his special qualities, to the same extent as He has praised him for his moral character."<sup>1</sup>

The basic guidance of goodness of moral character (*husn al-khuld*) is found in the Holy Qur'an. Addressing His Prophet (SAW) Allah says:

And you are indeed of a splendid character (68:4). To explain the verse Ghawth Pak said, when Allah extolled him on account of his moral character (*Khulq*), He did so because he behaved with noble generosity in both the material and spiritual realms of being (*al-Kawnain*). Because he was completely satisfied with Allah.<sup>2</sup>

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, p. 126-227

2. *Ibid.*, P. 117

In this vein Ghawth Pak also mentioned that, there is a tradition narrated by Anas ibn Malik, who said: Someone asked: ‘O messenger of Allah, which of the believers (*mu’minin*) is the most excellent in faith (*iman*)? To this he replied:

“The best of them in moral character”<sup>1</sup>

In this context great mystic Dhu’n Nun-al Misri said: “Of all people one who has the worst moral character is the most worrying.”

To describe good moral character Ghawth Pak said, “Good moral character (*al-khulq al-hasan*) means attaching little importance to that which is withheld from you and attaching great importance to that which is granted to you.”<sup>2</sup>

In relation to Allah goodness of moral character (*husnal-khulq*) means that one carry out His commandments and respectfully observes His prohibitions. That is, to obey Him in all conditions and circumstances, without believing that one is entitled to receive compensation from Him. The mark of goodness of moral character is the prevention of serious harm and toleration of nuisances.

The reward of goodness is nothing but goodness (55:60). The Prophet (SAW) said: “keep to good manners in your social relationships with people so that when you are dead, they pray people to confer mercy on you, and when you are alive they miss you.” Hence, good manner is good virtue to others. On the other hand, bad manner is very detestable, They are a source of fatigue of their owns and a source of harm of others. So Ghawth Pak advised, ‘maintain a connection with person, who cuts you off, give to the person who deprives you and pardon the person who deprives you. In this way a man can connect with his Lord, because these morals are among the morals of Allah, if one become good mannered in the company of the law and cultivate good behaviour with Him, God will love him, open to him the door of nearness, seat him at the table of Him, favours and generosity.

Concerning the nature of goodness of morals Ghawth Pak mentioned another tradition: The prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: “Gabriel has said

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, Vol. 5, P. 126

2. *Ibid.*, P. 128

to me: ‘Allah will not treat mercifully anyone who does not show mercy toward people;’ i.e., Allah treats with mercy, those of his servants who are merciful. Hence, if a devotee wishes for mercy from Allah, he should weigh out the price for it. Its price is nothing other than showing mercy toward His creatures, being compassionate toward them and treating them with good intention. The knower of Allah treats with mercy every creature from the point of view of knowledge. He shows mercy toward someone, and not others from the viewpoint of the Law. Because, where Law differentiates, knowledge unites.

### **Thankfulness**

The basic guidance on thankfulness is found in the Holy Qur’an, where Allah says: If you are thankful, I will surely give you more; but if you are ungrateful My punishment is terrible indeed (14:7). In the simplest term, thankfulness (*Shukr*) means that one does not disobey Allah by misusing His gracious favours.

The true nature of thankfulness (*haqiqat ash-shukr*) is the acknowledgment of the benefaction of the benefactor (*ni‘mat al-mun‘im*), with an attitude of humility. In accordance with this meaning, Allah has described Himself as being the most thankful One (*ash-shakur*).<sup>1</sup> He rewards His servants for their thankfulness. For the recompense of thankfulness is also called thankfulness (*shukr*) just as Allah has said: And the recompense of an evil is an evil just like it (42:40)

It has also been said that the true nature of thankfulness is the act of praising the beneficent person by mentioning his beneficence (*ihsan*). The servant’s thankfulness (*shuqr*) to Allah is therefore expressed through the praise he offers to Him, by mentioning His beneficence toward His servant. And the thankfulness of Lord of Truth toward His servant is expressed through the praise He confers upon him; by making it known that he has acted beneficently for His sake.<sup>2</sup>

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, Vol. 5, P. 133

2. *Ibid.*, P. 134

Furthermore, the beneficence of the servant represents his worshipful obedience to Allah, while the beneficence of the Lord of truth represents His bestowal of gracious favour (in‘am) upon His servant. Here it is mentioned that, thankfulness in true sense includes both mention by the tongue and acknowledgment by the heart of the Lord’s bestowal of blessings.<sup>1</sup> To express thanks by the tongue means one should admit that all the bounties and boons are God given which has no concern with his own self, his efforts, power or skill. God is the Causer, the Creator of these things and distributor. He is Exalted and Glorious. On the other hand, thankfulness of the heart consists in believing with firm conviction that whatever is with one in the form of blessings, benefit external and internal pleasures in his movements and repose, are from the Almighty Allah. And one's thankfulness by tongue will express what is in his heart.

Thankfulness of a devotee is expressed through his detachment from all that is not Allah and his total absorption (*fana*) in Him. Again it is expressed through the acknowledgment of his own inability, deficiency and ignorance, and then through his humble submission to Him in all conditions and circumstances.<sup>2</sup> The person who is simple thankful (*Shakir*) is someone who gives thanks for what is available (*mawjud*) while the person who is very thankful (*Shakur*) is someone who give thanks for what is unavailable (*mafqud*).

From the above statements it is clear that, Allah is the only bestower. Hence, thankfulness consists in observing His commands and shunning his prohibitions which are the basic source of moral principles.

## **Patience**

Patience (*sabr*) is a pre-condition of faith. He who has no patience, has no religion nor faith. In another word, the head of religion is patience and its body is action.<sup>3</sup> Hence, the Apostle says: “Patience has the same relation with the faith as the head has with the body.” No deed can be completed without having patience under the decree of Allah. Hence, Shaikh Jilini advised-be patient, be steadfast

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, P. 135

3. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 48

and practice pious restraint. For spiritual as well as moral development it is a great virtue. Concerning this Allah Says:

"O you who believe, be patient, strive with patience, remain steadfast and fear Allah so that you may succeed (3:200). Again.

"And endure patiently (O Muhammad) Your endurance is only by the help of Allah" (16:127).

In this vein, Prophet (SAW) says: "Patience ought to be exercised at the first shock" He also says: There is no good in a servant of the Lord whose property does not depart, and whose body does not get sick. Whenever Allah loves a servant of His, He is sure to put him to the test, and when He puts him to the test, He admonishes him to be patient.<sup>1</sup>

The basic noun *sabr*, (patience) means not to make any distinction between the state of grace (*nima*) and the ordeal of tribulation (*mihnal*), and both are experienced with equanimity (*sukun al-khair*). In another word, patience (*sabr*) means remaining steadfast in loyal obedience to Allah, and accepting the agonies of His affliction with a broad and expansive feelings.<sup>2</sup>

In this context Dhu'n Nun al- Misri said: "Patience (*sabr*) means refraining from acts of non-compliance, remaining calm when swallowing the lumps that form in the throat as a reaction to misfortune, and demonstrating spiritual affluence despite the advent of poverty in the sphere of material livelihood."<sup>3</sup> The most excellent recompense for worshipful service is the recompense for patience. Allah has told us: "And we shall surely pay those who were patient their wage, according to the best of what they did" (16:96). He has also told us: "Surely the patient will be paid their wages in full without reckoning" (39:10)

### **Kinds of patience**

There are actually three kinds of patience (*sabr*).<sup>4</sup> Such as—

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1. *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth*, Vol. 5, p. 140

2. *Ibid.*, P. 143

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Ibid.*, P. 141.

1. Patience for the sake of Allah: This kind of patience is exercised in the course of carrying out Allah's commandments and respectfully observing His prohibition. Here the servant plays an active role.
2. Patience in bearing with Allah: This kind of patience is exercised while one is undergoing the effects His decree and His actions. Here the servant has no active role.
3. Patience in anticipation of Allah: This kind of patience is exercised while one is waiting for that which He has promised, in the way of sustenance.

Patience causes success, spiritual elevation and honour. But lovers of God have to endure afflictions which be fall them on the Divine path. Hence, they should not hate it, nor complain with anyone if calamity befalls on them. When a servant perseveres in patience, forbears afflictions and engrosses in His adoration and worship, the Almighty Allah casts a glance of compassion on him and makes him and his family rich from a source he could never think.

### **Importance of patience**

According to Jilani we should be patient with the harm of the creatures and neighbours, for much goodness lay in patience. He also said, all of us are commanded to practice patience and are responsible for ourselves and our flock. The Prophet (SAW) said: "Each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is responsible for his flock. Patience is the foundation of good. The Prophets and angels were tested with afflictions and they endured them with patience. When our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) endured with patience, he was raised up to the seventh Heaven; he saw his Lord and drew near to Him. This was possible for him after he firmly laid the foundation of patience. All good things are obtainable through patience for that Allah mentioned it and stressed its importance by the saying: "O you who believe, be patient, strive with patience, remain steadfast and fear Allah so that you may succeed (3:200)."<sup>1</sup> Hence, by following the foot steps of the Prophet (SAW) and the saint of Allah, we should also be patient with destiny until suffering, transfers into certitude.

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1. Hence Allah says: And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty) and He will provide him in a manner beyond all exceptions. (65: 2-3) p.56.

Patient removes poverty and brings affluence, so Shakh Jalini said to the poor: "O you who are poor, endure your poverty with patience and then affluence will come to you in the world and in the hereafter".<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: "The poor who endure their poverty with patience are the companions of Allah on the Day of Resurrection." Hence, those who endure their poverty with patience are the companions of Allah in this world by their hearts and at the Resurrection by their bodies.

The righteous (truthful) person offer thanks for the blessings he receives, endures with patience the punishments, carries out the commandments and keeps away from the prohibitions. Thus his heart is developed inwardly.

From the above discussion we can say that patience removes lustful desires, eradicates the person's bad habits, eliminates his reliance on means and overthrows the false gods. Hence, we should follow them who are patient. By perfectly following them in words and deeds, in our private and public lives, in body and in essence we can be a virtuous man.

### **Truthfulness**

Truthfulness is the supporting pillar of every deed and completion of every act. Success of human life depends on it. Allah says: "O you who believe, be careful of your duty to Allah, and be with the truthful" (9: 119). In this context Prophet (SAW) has said: "When the servant of the Lord never ceases to tell the truth, and makes truthfulness (*sidq*) his constant pursuit, he is eventually recorded in the sight of Allah as a champion of truth (*Siddiq*). But when he never ceases to tell lies, and makes falsehood (*Kidhb*) his constant pursuit, he is eventually recorded in the sight of Allah as a professional liar".<sup>2</sup>

The word *Sadiq* (truthful one) is derived from *Sidq* (truthfulness). The word *Saddiq* (exceedingly truthful) is the intensified form of it, The *Siddiq* is someone who makes such a constant practice of *sidq*, that it comes to be his regular habit and his natural disposition, and truthfulness (*sidq*) becomes the

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1. 239. Purification of the Mind. p. 46

2. *Ibid.*, P. 157.



predominant aspect of his character.<sup>1</sup> The lowest degree of truthfulness is that one's inner being and outward actions are in harmony, i.e., there is affinity between the two. Hence, simple truthful person is one who tells the truth in his verbal statements, while the champion of truth is one who is truthful in his words, deeds and inward state. Three things are never lacking in the truthful one: (1) graceful charm, (2) dignity and (3) lively sense of humor.<sup>2</sup>

### **Peculiarity of truthfulness**

1. The truthful person never backslides. The person who is truthful in his belief in the Oneness of Allah never backslides on the advice of his lower self, his passion or his devil.<sup>3</sup> The truthful person never listens to blame and never allows it enter his ears. The person who is truthful in his love of Allah, His Messenger and His righteous servants never turns back as a result of listening to the words of someone who is a hypocrite, hated and disappointed. The truthful person does not know other than the truthful one and the liar does not know other than the liar.<sup>4</sup> The aspiration of the truthful person is high in the sky. He cannot be harmed by anyone's words.
2. Truthful person seeks only God. If the truthful person meets all creatures he would not like to look at anyone apart from his Beloved. This world does not seem valued to the eyes in his head, the hereafter does not seem valued to the eyes of his heart and nothing seems valued to the eyes of his innermost being apart from the Almighty God.<sup>5</sup> His heart is at the door of his Lord and his innermost being has entered into His presence.
3. The lover who is truthful in his love always plunges into dangers in the quest for his Beloved.<sup>6</sup> If he faces an inferno, he throws himself right into it. He swoops at what others would not dare even approach. It is his truthfulness that prompts him to do this. It is his love and impatience with

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1. *Purification of the Mind*. P. 158

2. *Ibid.*, P. 159.

3. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 55

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Loc. cit.*

6. *Loc. cit.*

being distant from his Beloved that prompt him into this. Afflictions reveal truthful one and the liar and distinguish between them.

At last we can say that, truthfulness is the sword of God; it cuts through anything upon which it is brought to bear. It keeps us from that which is unlawful. Again, truthful person is daring one, who speaks the truth even in situations of grave danger. He is fully prepared to die. Hence, if anyone wishes for Allah to be with him, he had better marks truthfulness his constant practice, for Allah is with those who are truthful. In this regard it is mention that, when Shaikh Jilani was asked by someone what brought him to his high spiritual level, he said: "The truthfulness which I promised to my mother."

### 2.11. Love of God

God has created man only for Himself. It is a heinous crime to associate any entity with Him. Almighty Allah has said: Those who consider the Almighty Allah as the beloved, He also loves them (5:54). He further said: "Verily we have created mankind and jinns only for my worship" (51:56). It is commonly holds that men cannot love God unless He loves His servant, or in other words Divine love always precedes man's love for his Creator. It means that, there is reciprocity between man and the Divine Order in the sense that man cannot love God and turn to Him unless God first loves man and turns "His Face" toward him.<sup>1</sup> This basic truth is asserted in a famous *Hadis qudsi*, "If My servant longs to meet Me, I long to meet him. And if he abhors meeting Me, I abhor meeting him." Hence, Abdul Qadir Jilani in his moral teaching inspired people to love God other than anything else. For the development of Divine love in the heart of man Shaikh mentions some characteristics of Divine love.

1. Almighty Allah has not made for any man two hearts within his body (33:4): a heart that loves the Creator and a heart that loves creatures. The lover has no eyes (heart) with which he looks of other than his Beloved. In this context Ghawth-e-Azam mentioned the example of Layla and Majnu.<sup>2</sup> To him, Majnun Layla<sup>3</sup> became truthful in his love for Layla as his heart would not

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1. Mystical Discourses of Ghaus-e-Azam, p. 99

2. Purification of the Mind. p. 21

3. Majnu Layla means "The mad lover of layla.

accept other than her. One day he came across some people who asked him. "Where did you come from? He replied: "From being with Layla." They asked: "Where are you going to?" He answered "To Layla". Hence, there can be no heart in which both the love of this world and hereafter can co-exist. When someone loves Allah his heart becomes a total longing for Him, a total detachment of anything apart from Him and a total extinction in Him.<sup>1</sup> All his concerns become one concern as that had in Majnun.

2. The lover becomes beloved if he purifies his heart from anything other than Allah (God).<sup>2</sup> As a result he would not wish to leave Him for the sake of anyone else. The attainment of the heart to this spiritual station comes about by performing the obligatory worshipping duties, patiently refraining from prohibited and dubious things, obtaining the permissible and licit things without passion and lustful desire, practicing total renunciation, refusing to comply with the lower self, passion and Satan, above all, purifying the heart totally. In this context Ghawth Pak says: "If you wish for attainment to Him, give up this world, the hereafter and everything from beneath the Throne down to beneath the surface of the earth. Each one of the creatures is a veil except the Messenger; for he is the door."<sup>3</sup>
3. The lover is Allah-fearing,<sup>4</sup> polite and good mannered. If he achieves good manner, he will enter through the door of nearness. Abiding the Law refines his behaviour outwardly, while the Knowledge of God refines his behaviour inwardly. When the person acquires good manners through the Law, Knowledge will take care of him, give him authority, make him a commander, enrich him and enable him to judge properly.<sup>5</sup> Hence, when someone behaves with ultimate politeness and obedience, he will be befriended and brought near the special station.<sup>6</sup> He will become one of the

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1. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 148

2. *Ibid*, p. 22

3. *Ibid*, p. 148; and whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it and whatsoever he forbids abstain from it (59:7).

4. *Ibid.*, p. 29

5. *Loc. cit.*

6. *Loc. cit.*

groups of loved ones. In this context Ghawth Pak says: The believer has a light by which he sees (God). In the same way: The knower who is drawn near is (also) given a light by which he sees his nearness to his Lord and sees the nearness of his Lord to his heart.<sup>1</sup> He also sees the spirits of the angels, the spirits of the prophets, the hearts and spirits of the truthful and their spiritual states and spiritual stations.

4. The lover has no property, no worldly interest, and no treasury, no will or house in relation to his Beloved.<sup>2</sup> They all belong to his sought After One, to his Beloved. The lover is owned by his Beloved and is a humble servant in His hands. He and all his possessions belong to Him. When the surrender of the lover to his Beloved becomes complete, the Beloved will return to him what He had received from him and make him in charge of it.<sup>3</sup> The servant becomes free, the humiliated one becomes exalted, the remote one becomes near, the lover becomes beloved.<sup>4</sup> When Majnun Layla remained patient in his love for Layla, love turned to her and Layla became Majnun and Majnun became Layla. It is something that is indescribable. It is something beyond the comprehension of all creatures except a few individuals among them. These are the most intelligent persons.
5. The person whose heart becomes sound and attached to his Lords, consider as equal: gold and clay, praise and blame, sickness and good health, affluence and poverty, good fortune and bad fortune in this world.<sup>5</sup> When this has become true to someone, his lower self and passion will die, the fire of his natural inclinations will die out and his devil will be humiliated. At this stage, he will be called “great” in the heavenly kingdom and all creatures will come to be under the feet of his heart and seek protection under his shadow.

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1. *Purification of the Mind*. p. 150

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25

3. *Ibid.*, p. 25

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 23

6. When someone loves Allah he loses his will because the lover can have no will above the will of his Beloved.<sup>1</sup> The lovers feel no rest in their hearts even if they enter a million Paradises until they see their Beloved.<sup>2</sup> They do not wish for a created thing but they wish for the Creator. So when Allah loves one of His servants, He fills his heart with ecstasy (*wajd*) and an ardent longing (*shawq*) for Him. Their bodily forms are the bodily form (*suwar*) of ordinary human beings, but their hearts are with the decree of destiny (*qadar*) and their innermost beings (*ajrar*) are in the company of God.<sup>3</sup> When their hearts see Paradise in wakefulness or in sleep they do not look at it with a twinkling of an eye. They look at it as they look at lions, shackles and prisons.

In a nutshell we can say love of God relates to purification of the heart, or self control (*wara*) of a devotee. And thus, it is related with morality. In another word, practice of morality is the practice of self-control.

### 3. Sum up

From the above discussion we can sum up the moral thinking of Abdul Qadir Jilani as follows:

The mankind is smeared with filth and sinful acts and in this condition he is incapable to reach to the destination of the Almighty Allah. As long as a man is not purified from foulness of faith, of his sinful acts, and forsaken the blunder, and has also discarded completely the carnal desires, he will not be able to reach to the doorsteps of the Allah. The spiritual connection with the Almighty Allah can be established only if the person purifies himself from all filthy things, and entertains the cleanliness of self-purification in all respect. In another words, for the spiritual connection with the Supreme Being, one should be free from all kinds of immoral actions.

Most of the moral standards of ethics stress on self-control, such as perfectionism. The moral teachings of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani can be compared

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 24

2. *Ibid.*, p. 23

3. *Utterances of Shaikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani*. p.14

with it. The main point of perfectionism is self-realization which means making of self perfect. In this context William Lillie says: "In morality as the phrase self-realization reminds us, the perfection with which we are concerned is the perfection of the individual self, and every individual counts."<sup>1</sup> According to perfectionism, perfection or self-realization is the highest good. The well being of the self arises from the subordination of impulses and desires to reason. Happiness springs from the harmony of desires brought about by reason. In the same way Abdul Qadir Jilani in his whole moral teachings stressed mainly on purification of the self and opposition of egoism. To him, the true servant of Allah that is, man of wisdom is obliged to fulfil Allah's orders and abstain from what is forbidden. Through his wisdom he opposes ego and the lower dictates of his flesh. Hence, it is said a wise man is a man of moral.

Ghawth Pak stressed on social justice. To him, man is the trustees of those properties which belong to them. The poor and needy persons have right over those properties. If they do not give the dues of the poor and the needy they will be punished for that. Hence, one should discharge his obligations toward the poor at first, then discharge his obligation toward the family and relatives, i.e., a man should maintain justice in all his activities. He should always remember injustice that ruins countries, cuts off lineages, and darkens hearts and faces and decreases livelihood.

Ghawth Pak encouraged altruism. Altruism holds that it is the moral duty of an individual to seek the good of other individuals with no regard for his own. Ghawth Pak used to hold same view. He says that one should lend something for someone. If anyone is able to give a loan to a poor person and after sometime donate it him for the sake of Allah, it will be a praise able act. One should not drive away a wanted person. He should give him whatever he can. Thus, we can see Ghawth Pak always advises human beings that they should seek other's goodness instead of themselves.

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1. William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1961, p. 196

Abdul Qadir Jilani has opposed egoism. Egoism holds that every person should seek his own personal gratification. It is argued that man is essentially egoistic or selfish. The supporters of this theory do not find any altruistic tendencies in man. According to Shaikh Jilani Sufism consists of fighting against lower self (*ego*) which is greater than that of the holy war with weapons. Ego debar a man to follow the dictates of Lord. The true servant of Allah is free from the opposition of his ego and devil. He cannot attain the truth unless he becomes pure. Worldly attributes are the causes of his impurity. Without receiving the knowledge of the Essence of Allah one cannot leave his worldly attributes. For that, he needs at first moral purification. Here it is mentioned that, purity of heart means cleaning the defilements and impurity often found in it. These are: the desire for excessive food, drink, sleep, and talk, and other worldly attractions like hoarding wealth, excessive sexual passion, excessive love of family and children. The way of gaining the purity of the heart is removing everything from it other than Allah. Thus, in moral life all goodness lies in waging total war against the self under all circumstances.

Ghawth Pak stressed on the brotherhood of mankind. So he advised not to hurt anyone but to behave justly with all the fellow creatures and adopt humble attitude to them. He thinks that, success of man depends on humility because through it man becomes prominent and gain higher status. At the same time, he advised honest living. To him, unlawful earning deadens the heart and lawful earning enlivens it. Such deaden heart encourages man to commit all kinds of evil deeds and remains busy with eating, drinking and sleeping. One the other hand, lawful earning makes us humble and modest.

The shaikh considered that in every aspect of human life truth must be prevailed. He considered truthfulness as the supporting pillar of every deed. It keeps us from unlawful action, and proceeds to lawful action. In fact, man's dignity and success depends on truthfulness. Ghawth Pak also praises some moral

virtues, such as— patience, contentment, thankfulness, goodness of moral character. But he extremely encouraged goodness of moral character. To him, good moral character is the most excellence of all the virtues of a servant. Among the man, the best is he whose moral character is good. On the other hand, among the person who has the worst moral character is the worst one.

To him, every man must necessarily fall into one of two categories of situation: either he is far away from the presence of Allah, or he is in close contact with Him. If he is far away from Allah, he should always remain conscious about his activities. He should always make attempt to restrict the self from all kinds of evil thinking that lead to moral degradation. The lifelong striving of a true seeker of Allah for a self-mortification is seen in the famous maxim of Hegel— 'Be a person and die to live.' To the Shaikh in order to become a true Sufi self-annihilation should always be with the person; he cannot take relieve it, at any moment of life. Moreover, he must observe the rights of creatures (*huquq al-khalaq*), and the rights of the Truth (*huquq al-Haqq*). Thus, he will be able to get close to Him, and will receive the highest honour and the greatest glory.



# CHAPTER VI

## Morality in Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri's Writings

Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A) was the most renowned spiritual leader of Indian Sub-Continent in the middle age. He was a great Sufi (mystic) who rose to the highest stage of spiritual attainments. He was a true follower of the traditions of the Prophet (SAW), who followed the *Sunnah* (traditions of the Prophet (SAW)) minutely. He had absorbed from the spirit of the Divine knowledge and was deeply immersed in the great sea of divine unity, but he remained steadfast in keeping with the norms of *Shari'ah*. He was the most talented Sufi of his time but he did not have any airs of his spiritual attainments.

### 1. Profile

#### Birth and Childhood

Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri is known popularly as Makhdum-e-Jahan.<sup>1</sup> His name was Ahmad, his father's name Yahya, he was given the title Sharaf-ud-din (Glory of the Faith), and Maner<sup>2</sup> is his birthplace; the appendage Maneri to his name signifies this. He was born on Friday, Sha'baan 29, 661 Hijri/1263 A.D.<sup>3</sup> and died in 782 Hijri/1380 A.D.

Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri's father Yahya Maneri was revered for his upright life. He led an exemplary life under the guidance of the Suhrawardi

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1. He is also known as Shaikh-ul Islam wal Muslimeen, Sultan-ul-Mahaqqiqin and Makhdum-ul-Mulk.
  2. Maner is a small township of the Bihar province in India, and is situated about 25 kilometers west of Patna, the capital of the state of Bihar, India.
  3. Syed Sadrul Hasan, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, (Karachi: Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 2005), p. 10; Matiul Imam's Dissertation: *Matiul Imam's Dissertation on the life of Makhdum-e-Jahan Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri*, Eng. tr. by Muhammad Zafirul Hasan, Published in Mehr-e-Neemrose, (Karachi 5, October issue, 1972), p 28; *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. C.E. Bosworth 'et al'. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), p. 131.

Sufi Shaikh Taquiuddin of Mahsum in Bangal.<sup>1</sup> His wife Bibi Razia was also under the influence of another renowned Suhrawardi Sufi, her own father Shihabuddin Jogjot (the light of the world) of Jethuli near Patna.<sup>2</sup> His grandfather, Maulana Muhammad Tajuddin, known as Taj Faqih, a contemporary of Shahabuddin Ghori, was also a celebrated scholar and mystic who had emigrated to Maner in Bihar from the town of Al-Khalil in Syria.<sup>3</sup> From his father's side Shaikh Sharfuddin was descended from one of the Prophet's uncles, Zubair Ibn 'Abdul Muttalib, belonging to the Hashimite clan of the Quraish of Mecca; and from his mother's side he came of the lineage of Imam Hussain (R.A). Thus, he was a lineal descendant of the Prophet (SAW) from his mother's side.<sup>4</sup> Shaikh Sharfuddin had three other brothers whose names were Shaikh Khalil-ud-din, Shaikh Jalil ud-din, Shaikh Habib-ud-din. He also had one sister.<sup>5</sup>

Makhdam-e-Jahan was a born *Wali* (Saint). His parents had sensed it in the very beginning. It is reported that during the month of *Ramadan* (fasting) he would not accept feeding during daytime. While he was still an infant, his mother one day left him alone in the house for sometime and when she returned, she was scared to find a saintly person sitting by his side driving away the flies.<sup>6</sup> When she reported about this to her father, Qazi Shahabuddin Pir Jagjot he consoled her and said that the saintly person was in fact, khwaja Khidr (Rah A) and advised her not to leave the child unattended, in future.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Masood Ali Khan and S. Ram 'ed', *Early Sufi Masters: Sharafuddin Maneri and Abdullah Ansari*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd. 2003), p.3; Paul Jackson S.J., *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1987), p.33
  2. Syed Zamiruddin Ahmad, *Sirat-ush-Sharaf*, (Patna: al-panj press 1901), p.42; Quoted in, Paul Jackson, *The way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p.33
  3. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Eng. tr. Muhiuddin Ahmad, (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Vol. I, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1977, p. 257.
  4. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, pp. 257-258.
  5. *Early Sufi Masters: Sharafuddin Maneri and Abdullah Ansari*, p. 3; *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p. 33.
  6. Makhdam Shoab Firdausi, *Manaquib-ul-Asfia*, Eng. tr. into Urdu by Mohammad Ali Arshad Sharafi, (Bihar Sharif: Maktaba-i-Sharaf, Bait-us-Sharaf, Khanquah Moazzam, 2001), p. 264; Quoted in, *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p. 34; *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 6;
  7. *Loc. cit.*; Abdullah Shattaar (Rah A) says that he saw the appellations used for different *wali*, (saints) written on *Arsh* (The throne of Allah): Sultan-ul-Arifeen was appellation given to Bayzeed Bistami (Rah A) and Sultan-ul-Mahaqqiqin was appellation given to Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A) [Muhammad Moinuddin Dardayi, *Tarikh-e-Silsila-i-Firdausia*, Bihar: Kitab Manzil, Bari Road, Gaya, 1962, p. 148, Quoted in, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p.7.]

## Family's Arrival in Maner

The great grandfather of Makhdum-e-Jahan, Imam Taj Faquih (Rah A), was an inhabitant of Quds Khalil, a locality of Bait-ul-Maqdis. Once he had a vision of the Prophet (SAW) who (SAW) directed him to go the Maner and wage the holy war to help out a Muslim Arif Momin, living there, who was being tortured by the *Raja* (ruler) of the place. The Prophet (SAW) further said that he (SAW) had also directed some Muslim rulers to join him in this mission. In response to this, the Imam set out on the assigned mission with his wife and his two sons—Makhdum Israel<sup>1</sup> and Makhdum Ismail. Many other joined him on the way. When this caravan of *Mujahideen* (those who struggle in the way of Allah) reached Maner, they fought against the *Raja*. The *Raja* was defeated and fled with his family; perhaps he was spotted by some *Mujahid* and was killed. Thus, Imam Taj Faquih (Rah A) took over Maner.<sup>2</sup> The Imam stayed in this place for some time. During this period, his wife passed away. He was very much grieved by the demise of his wife. Furthermore, he felt uncomfortable with the strangeness of the place, and so he went back to his home in Baitul Maqdis, leaving behind his two sons in Maner.<sup>3</sup>

## Education

As Shaikh Sharfuddin grew in years, he was sent to school. After the fashion of the day, he was given elementary education following the traditional *curriculum* of the time, which was far from satisfactory. His higher education was conducted under the guidance of Shaikh Sharfuddin Abu Tawwama (Rah A) who was an outstanding scholar of his time.<sup>4</sup> He was not only an authority in religious and mundane learning, but also was equally proficient in some occult sciences, such as Heimia, Seimia and Chemin (alchemy). He came from Bukhara. During the reign of Ghyasuddin Bulban, he became a highly popular and respected person in Delhi;<sup>5</sup> but he had to leave Delhi because of the king's displeasure somehow

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1. Makhdum Israel is the grandfather of Sharfuddin Maneri.

2. *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, pp. 11-12;

3. *Ibid.*, p.12.

4. *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 55.

5. *Loc. cit.*

incurred by him. Some historians have reported that Sultan got afraid of the popularity of Shaikh Sharfuddin Tawwama (Rah A), which he thought, might eclipse his regal authority over the people. So the Sultan ordered him to go to Sonargaon.<sup>1</sup>

However, Shaikh Abu Tawwama (Rah A) proceeded to Sonargaon. On his way to Sonargaon, he passed through Maner. In Maner, he was enthusiastically greeted and hosted by Shaikh Yahya (Rah A). He stayed there for a few days. This provided an opportunity to Makhdum-e-Jahan to see Abu Tawwama (Rah A) closely. Thus Shaikh Sharfuddin, who hankered after knowledge, came across a distinguished scholar in Abu Tawwama and was also highly impressed by the piety and learning of him.<sup>2</sup> He said to himself that it would not be possible to investigate the religious sciences except in the service and company of such an investigator of reality.<sup>3</sup> So he requested his parents to let him accompany Shaikh Abu Tawwama to Sonargaon for higher education under his tutorship; and with the approval of his parents he went along with the Shaikh to Sonargaon.<sup>4</sup> Speaking of his teacher, in *Khwan-i-Pur Ni'mat*, Shaikh Sharfuddin writes: Maulana Tawwama was such a learned man that his fame had spread throughout India. There was nobody who entertained to doubt about his learning.<sup>5</sup> Shaikh Abu Tawwama (Rah A) set up an educational centre (Madrasah) and Khanquah in Sonargaon in the year 668 Hijri.<sup>6</sup>

This, however, seems to be controversial; this would mean that Makhdum-e-Jahan was seven years old when he came to Sonargaon. This is unlikely, for it is difficult to believe that at such an early age Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A) had

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1. This version however, is hard to believe: Ghyasuddin Bulban was a very intelligent and competent ruler, endowed with true passion for the religion. Thus, it would be unfair to associate him with bad feelings towards Shaikh Abu Tawwama (Rah A). A more probable explanation is that he aroused the envy of the Local *Ulma*; he was a newcomer, who no doubt had succeeded in stealing their religious lime light. (*The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p.56; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., vol. I, First Pub. 1978 1, p. 229.
  2. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, p. 259.
  3. *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p.39.
  4. *Manaqib ul-Asfiya*, P.131. Quoted in, *Ibid.* p. 40.
  5. Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri, *Khwan-i-Pur Ni'mat*, Eng. tr., Paul Jackson, S.J., entitled, *A table Laden with Good Things*, (Delhi: Idearah-i –Adabiyat-Delli, 1986, p. 19.
  6. *Tarikh-e-Silsila-i Firdausia*, p. 141. Quoted in, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 56.

the maturity to appreciate the erudition of Shaikh Abu Tawwama. It is also reported in other versions that most probably he was 18 years old when he came to Sonargaon.<sup>1</sup>

In Sonargaon, Shaikh Abu Tawwama (Rah A) took extra pains to impart knowledge to Makhdum-e-Jahan. In Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A), the Shaikh found an extraordinary student, outstandingly bright and so devoted to studies that he would hardly spare time even for taking meals. When Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A) completed his education, the Shaikh wanted him to teach the mundane occult knowledge. Makhdum-e-Jahan however, declined and said that the Islamic education was good enough for him. Under the tutorship of Shaikh Abu Tawwama (Rah A), he not only studied the Holy Qur'an, *Hadith*, *Fiqh*, (Islamic jurisprudence), etc. but, also the book on *Tasawwuf*.<sup>2</sup> After he had completed his education here, he got the news of the sad demise of his father, Makhdum Yahya (Rah A). It is reported that Makhdum-e-Jahan was so intensely devoted to his studies that he did not even open the letters he received from home. He used to put them aside and would not read them, for the fear that they might contain some news that might be disturbing and thus distracting from his studies.<sup>3</sup> It so appears that after having completed his studies, he started looking at the letters received from home. It was a coincidence perhaps that one of the letters containing the news of the sad demise of his father had arrived in time. He urgently left for his home, and carried along with him his little son Sahikh Zakiuddin.<sup>4</sup> This was the year 690 Hijri, the year of the demise of Makhdum Yahya (Rah A).

## Search of Spiritual Mentor

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1. *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 5. For detail, see *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, pp. 37-39.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Sirat-us-Sharaf*, p. 46; *Nuzhat-ul-Khauatir*, Vol. ii, p. 9 (Quoted in *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. I, p. 260).

4. When Makhdum-e-Jahan was a student in sonargaon, he may be married to the daughter of maulana Abu Tawwama named-Bahoo Badaam. From this marriage the Makhdum had three children, one of them was the son, Shah Zakiuddin who survived, the other two were daughters who passed away in Sonargaon while they were still infants and were laid to rest in Sonargaon by the side of their mother. [For detailed, see, *The Life and Techings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya maneri (Rah A)*. p. 60-70]

When Shaikh Sharfuddin returned to Maner<sup>1</sup> with his son he was overwhelmed with his urge for his spiritual attainments. Here it is mentioned that, in Sonargaon he had already studied the books on Tasawwuf but now he wanted to take it up practically. In search of a spiritual mentor, he decided to travel to Delhi. So he gave his son to the care of his mother and sought her permission in search for truth (i.e., spiritual guidance). As the mother herself was a great mystic she permitted to go. In the journey, his elder brother Shaikh Khaliluddin (some named him Jaliluddin) accompanied him. In Delhi, he visited quite a few *Mashaikh* (Spiritual leaders), but was little impressed, and was disappointed to the extent that he said, “If this is Sahikh (Spiritual leadership), I too am a *Shaikh* (spiritual leader).”<sup>2</sup> He then went to Sultan- ul-Mashaikh Hadrat Nizamuddin Aulia (Rah A). But he told Makhdum-e-Jahan that he was not destined to become one of his disciples. At last he met Sheikh Najib-ud-din Firdausi and became his disciple. Khwaja Najeebuddin Firdausi (Rah A) said that he had been waiting for him for the last twelve years.<sup>3</sup> The Khwaja took his *bait* (covenant to become the disciple). His elder brother too became Khwaja’s *mureed*, according to some versions. The Khwaja gave Makhdum-e-Jahan some instructions, and handed over to him the *Khilafat* nama (permission to carry forward his teachings) that he had written some twelve years back on the instruction of the Prophet (SAW). Thereupon, Makhdum-e-Jahan said: “I have not yet performed any service for you, nor have I learnt from you now to travel along the way. How can I do what you are authorizing me to?”<sup>4</sup> The Khwaja said his training was destined to be done by the Prophet (SAW), and that he should not worry. The Khwaja then bade him and his brother farewell, and instructed them very particularly not to return if they heard any untoward news on the way. Makhdum-e-Jahan was still within the

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1. According to Paul Jackson it is obvious that Sharfuddin spent many years in Sonargaon while Shamsuddin Firuz Shah was reigning there (1301-22 A.D.) and that he continued to remain there for a short period after his death, under Qutlugh Khan. No other sultan is mentioned in any of the Sonargaon reminiscences that have so far been traced in the source material. In the light of what has been presented here, we can say that Sharfuddin was in Sonargaon from about 1304 until 1323 A.D. So he returned to Maner with his young son probably 1323.

2. It seems that the careful guidance of his learned teacher had enabled Shaikh Sharfuddin to recognize the worth of mystics by their piety and spiritual attainment.

3. *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p. 65.

4. *Loc. cit.*

limits of Delhi that he heard of the demise of Khwaja Najeebuddin.<sup>1</sup> Complying with the parting instructions of the Khwaja, he carried on his journey to Maner.

### **Meditative Travels in the Jungles**

On the return journey from Delhi, Makhdum-e-Jehan's heart was overwhelmed with a feeling of grievous emotions, which overpowered him ever-increasingly as days passed. When Makhdum-e-Jahan reached the jungles of Bihiya (District Shahababad, Arrah, Bihar), he was overwhelmed with ecstatic trance at hearing the voice of a peacock, and fled into the jungle and disappeared. His elder brother tried his best to find him, but he failed.<sup>2</sup> He, therefore, continued his journey to Maner taking Makhdum's luggage with him, and told his mother all about what happened. The mother listened calmly and showed great fortitude at this God-ordained happening. Little is known about Makhdum-e-Jahan's life in the Bihiya jungles. Most probably he spent some thirty years in the jungles of Bihiya and Rajgir.<sup>3</sup> No one knows what he did in the jungles. Nothing is known about the rigour of the devotional prayers which he passed through there. In fact, here he led an ascetic life. Concerning this he said: "I had not eaten a cooked meal for thirty years. As the need arose, I used to eat something from the jungle. After my natural functions had ceased for some years, I had a nocturnal emission. It was extremely cold weather. I went to the water-side. The thought came to me that I would perform my ablutions with sand and then perform my prayers. Afterwards I thought: 'My carnal soul is seeking refuge in the Law!' Immediately I rushed into the water and fell unconscious. When the sun rose, I came to my senses."<sup>4</sup> It is so stated that someone saw him in the Bihiya Jungles leaning against a tree, quite

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1. The date of the death of Sheikh Najibuddin Firdausi which is given in *Sirat us-Sahraf* and generally accepted is A.H. 691 (1292 A.D.). But researcher Paul Jackson denied it. The only other date given for death is A.H.733 (1332-33) (Sarwar, *Khazinat ul-Asfiya*, part ii, pp. 287-88) Paul Jackson thinks that it is correct. He Says: We have an invaluable piece of evidence to corroborate this date, found at Najibuddin's tomb and recorded in the early twenties by the Archeological Survey of India. (*List of Muhammadan and Hindu Mounments of the Delhi Province*, Archeological Survey of India, 1920, vol. III, p. ii, entry no. 185); Here we find white marble inscription above the grave with the date, '13th Muharram, 733.' (5 October, 1332) This is the correct date. For detailed see, *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p. 35

2. *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p.71

3. Makhdum-e-Jahan spent twelve years in the jungles of Bihiya, and thereafter a still longer period in Rajgir jungles. Thus, he spent a total of thirty years in the jungles. According to other versions, this period is reckoned as forty years.

4. *Manaqib ul-Asfiya*, p.136. Quoted in, *The Way of a Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri*, p.80

still and lost in deep meditative thoughts to the extent that the ants were freely moving, in and out, through his throat.<sup>1</sup> He had become quite lean and weak. This event is stated in *Waseela-e-Sharif us Zareea-i-Daviat*.<sup>2</sup> After a very long time people spotted him in the Rajgir Jungles. When Nizamuddin Moolee, a disciple and *khalifa* of Nizamuddin Aulia (Rah A) heard of it, he went to visit him; thereafter Nizamuddin Moolee and others began visiting him frequently in the Rajgir jungles. When Makhdum-e-Jahan found people frequently coming to the Jungle, he said to them that this jungle was the abode of wild animals and it was not safe for them to visit him in the jungle. He therefore, proposed that he would himself come to Bihar Sharif on Fridays.<sup>3</sup> Thus, he started going to Bihar Sharif every Friday. He intended to meet his admirers there and then go back to the jungle. Sometimes he would also stay for one or two days in Bihar Sharif. When this arrangement continued for some time, Nizamuddin moolee proposed to Majd-ul-Muik, the governor of Bihar that he had in his possession some money, perfectly lawfully earned, with which he would like to build a resting place for Makhdum-e-Jahan so that he could stay there on his Friday visits. Thus a rest house was built where Makhdum-e-Jahan used to rest.<sup>4</sup> After the rest house was built the event was celebrated hosting the general people, and on this occasion Nizamuddin Moolee and his companions requested Makhdum-e-Jahan to be seated as a *sajjada* (the seat for a spiritual leader) for the guidance of people. He conceded this request, and told them, "My brothers, your company has at last drawn me to be seated in what is an idolatrous seat." Later on, by the instruction of Sultan Mohammad Tughlaque, Majd-ul-Mulk built a *Khanquah* for him and allotted some areas of Rajgir for the Khanquah. Now this *Khanquah* became the centre of guidance in Islamic knowledge and spiritualism.<sup>5</sup>

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 268

2. Syed Shah Farzand Ali Sufi Maneri, *Waseela-e Sharaf us Zareea-i-Daulat*, corrections and footnote added by Muhammad Tayyed Abdaali, (Patna: Kitab Manzil, n.d.), p. 23; It is mentioned that Makhdum-ul-Mulk had a cell of his own at Rajgir, before he settled in Bihar. His cell-a miraculous cell, existing over 600 years, still bears eloquent testimony to the spiritual greatness of its occupant. After Makhdum-e-Jahan had settled in Bihar, he often came to Rajgir and stayed there for some time. (*The Calcutta Review*, vol. Lxxi, April-June issue, 1939, p.203)

3. *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 81

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. Manaquib-ul-Asfia, op.cit., pp. 268-69); Quoted in, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p.82



When Makhdum-e-Jahan assumed the formal chair of a spiritual guide and mentor, people were attracted towards him and the number of his admirers and disciples increased constantly with time. He taught them high principles of moral.<sup>1</sup> This is also a great test, for only the very accomplished ones who lead a life consistent with the motto 'Die before you are actually dead', even though they may be surrounded by admirers.<sup>2</sup>

When Makhdum-e-Jahan settled down in Bihar Sharif, his family members also left Maner Sharif and joined him in Bihar Sharif. His mother was still alive, and she too came over to him. Makhdum-e-Jahan had chosen for himself to lead a life of hunger and deprivation. For his mother, he had made arrangements for taking care of her daily needs, and had deputed Hazrat Choolhai, one of his disciples to look after her.<sup>3</sup> It is stated that when the *khanquah* was established on the instructions of Mohammad Shah Tughlaque, Makhdum-e-Jahan was made to occupy the *Bulghari Mussallah* (prayer carpet) presented by the Sultan. The period of his life, which he spent in Bihar (about sixty years) is reflected in his utterances, and those are preserved till today in the form of letters which serve as a guide to seekers after truth. Makhdum-e-Jahan had a large circle of disciples and devotees. He taught them high principles of morality. From his *Khanquah*, many seekers of truth attained the enlightenment of Allah's closeness, many of those who had gone astray found the right path, many needy and troubled people were provided succours and relief, many people in authority received constant guidance. Here it is mentioned that though the founder of Firdawsiyya order is Shaikh Ruknuddin Firdawsi (Rah A) his order got prominence through the hand of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri.

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1. The period of his life, which he spent in Bihar (about sixty years) is reflected in his utterances, which are preserved till today in the form of letters and which serve as a guide to seekers after truth.

2. *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 82

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-6; Makhdum-e-Jahan had earmarked some amount for the daily needs of his mother, which Hazrat Choolhai used for bringing something for her daily consumption.

## **Character**

Though Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri was a profound scholar, he was very affable in manners and humble in mind. He was devoted to truth, uprightness, piety and humanity. He looked upon himself as the servant of humanity and discharged his duties to the best of his power. Fear of God, self-abnegation, love of fellowmen, etc. qualities glorified him most. Self-introspection was a prominent phenomenon of his life which sanctified him. His characteristics are given below.

## **Annihilation of self**

The most visible trait of Makhdam Yahya Maneri's sublime character was the annihilation of his self for the love of God. Every word of his letters and discourses signifies the earnest desire and passionate love of God.

Makhdam Yahya Maneri once gave expression to his own self abandonment in these words: "Wholly overtaken by the illusions of Satan, I know neither anything about my own self nor find any trace of Islam in me."<sup>1</sup> In a letter which Makhdam-e-Jahan wrote to a friend, he laid emphasis on the importance of shedding tears over one's own vicious self. The letter quoted here perhaps throws light on the conflagration consuming his heart.

"No sound is closer to the Lord than that of a person be wailing over his sinfulness! Today it is fitting that the righteous ones of this Way to the Lord of religion should learn lamentation for sin from Uways Qarani. O brother, anyone who is not crying and lamenting at very moment of his life is a vain person, full of negligence with respect to the Day of Resurrection. He is as good as dead. He should be full of grief over the opportunities of today that are lost as a result of insatiable appetites. How can there be knowledge of God if life is limited to maintaining and seeking position and dignity, observing commands and

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1. Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri, *Maktubat-e-do Sadi*, Eng. tr. Paul Jackson, S. J., entitled, *In Quest of God, Maneri's Second Collection of 150 Letters*, (Gujarat: Gujarat-Sahitya Prakash, 2004), letter no. 94, p. 198

prohibitions, practicing disdain and negligence, honour, worldly pride and self-flattery?”<sup>1</sup>

In another letter he plainly laments thus over himself: “We are ill-starred, afflicted and abased; greedy as hogs, we are mad after our desires; attuned to force of habit, we are the negligent and heedless who witlessly move in a groove; we are really listless and thoughtless; and our presumption that we follow *Tawhid* or that we tread the path of God-moved souls is simply an indication of our temerity and crass ignorance. Even the Jews and fire-worshippers, cathedrals and pantheons feel ashamed of us.”<sup>2</sup>

Having arrived at the point of annihilation which effaces the existence of the lover, he was unconcerned with the praise and reproach of the people. In a letter he says: “What have the ecstatic to lose or gain by the adulation or denunciation of the multitude? To them, these make little difference. They do not consider him worthy who is acclaimed by the people nor is a fellow villified by the masses is regarded by them as wicked: to them only he is virtuous who meets the approval of the Lord and only he is vile who is censured by God.”<sup>3</sup> To express the importance of self annihilation Makhdum-e-Jahan said: “Since you have reached the threshold of your Lord, your self should be cleansed of all earthly defilements and desires. Even if you done a thousand crowns of royalty, how would you conceal the reality of your self– your beggarly countenance and forlorn complexion? Dust that settles over a thing gets always washed away: but the gloominess of your subliminal self can never change itself.”<sup>4</sup>

## **Excellent morals**

The moral conduct of Sheikh Sharfuddin was the very image of the Prophet (SAW)'s character,<sup>5</sup> which is praised by God: “Lo! thou art of excellent

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1. Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri, *Maktubat-e-Sadi* Eng. tr., Paul Jackson, S. J., entitled, *The Hundred Letters*. (New Yourk, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1980), letter no. 11, p. 54

2. *Maktoobat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 31, Eng. tr., of the extract Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit Vol. 1*, p. 276

3. *Ibid.* p. 276

4. *Maktubat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 27, Eng. tr., of the extract Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit Vol. 1*, p. 276

5. *Manaqib-ul-Asfia*, p. 137

character.”<sup>1</sup> Makhdum-e-Jahan considered that it is essential to form one’s morals and behaviours in the mould of Prophet’s character which is revealed by his letters. In fact, it brings forth his own moral precepts and rules of conduct. He writes: “In truth and reality virtuous conduct consists of the moral code followed by the learned among the followers of mystic path. They adhere to the injunctions of the *Shari’ah* and measure the excellence of their performance with the yardstick of Prophet (SAW)'s conduct. Whosoever does not make a search for the rules of the *Shari’ah* can never hope to attain anything through the path of mysticism”.<sup>2</sup>

In another letter he says that “the more one follows the path chalked out by the *Shari’ah*, the more one becomes virtuous in conduct; and the more one attains moral excellence, the more one is loved by God. For moral rectitude is the bequest of Adam and a gift from God, there is nothing godlier for the believer than virtuous code of conduct nor an adornment as exquisite as this. Good moral conduct really means acting on the precepts of God and the *Shari’ah* brought by His Prophet (SWA); for the behaviour and deportment of the Prophet (SWA) were winsomely pleasing. Whoever claims to follow the Prophet (SWA) should pattern his life after him.”<sup>3</sup>

The life sketch of Shaikh Maneri depicted by his biographers shows that the constant aim of his endeavours was to follow the Prophet (SWA) of Islam. In moral conduct, brotherly love and compassion for his fellow beings, regard for the interests of other people and in consoling the broken hearted people he had all the earmarks of the Prophet (SAW)'s character.

### **Kindliness**

Makhdum-e-Jahan was kind hearted. His kindliness extended to all men, whether friends or foes, poor or rich. In a letter he writes it as an inborn virtue and motivating power of the gnostics and men of God, perhaps, he had himself

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1. *Al-Qur’an*, 67:4

2. *Maktubat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 59, Eng. tr., of the extract Mohiuddin Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 279

3. *Loc. cit.*; also see, *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no 59, p. 238

imbibed this quality in the journey of his spirit. Depicting the characteristics of a true mystic he says:

“Like the glorious lamp of the Heaven his benevolence goes out to all, young and old; he remains hungry and unclad but feeds and clothes others. He cares not for the injustice done to him nor for the malevolence of those who are hard upon him. Instead, he intercedes for them, repays goodness for evil and gives thanks for abuses. Do you know why does he do so? Being himself saved and secured, his heart is filled with a desire to do good to all. Like the sun which shines over-mountains and vales, his benevolence encompasses friends and foes alike; in humility he is like the earth trodden by all; in generosity he is like the river whose lofty surge benefits the friends as well as enemies. Independent of every attachment, the downpour of his benignity showers over the East as much as over the West. He finds everything indwelling in God as manifestations of the same Creator and endowed with qualities assigned by Him. Whoever lacks these qualities of spirit cannot lay a claim to be a traveler on the path of mysticism.”<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Maneri was, like other mystic preceptors, an embodiment of charity and benevolence. Overflowing with the spirit of humanity he considered it a grievous sin to injure the feeling of others. He always concealed the faults of others and if he was ever told of the lapse or misdeed of someone, he immediately came out with an explanation on behalf of the person reported to have committed the misdeed.

### **Renunciation of worldly ties**

Like other great mystics his heart was so filled with divine love that there remained no love for anything else. History testifies that he had accepted the *jagir* granted by Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq in order to save Majad-ul-Mulk, the governor of Bihar from the wrath of the Sultan. But he returned the *jagir* as soon as Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq ascended the throne. Thereafter, he never took any interest in the extension or renovation of the monastery that Sultan Muhammad

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1. *Maktoobat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 24, Eng. tr., of the extract Mohiuddin Ahmad, *op. cit.*, p. 180; also see, *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no 24, pp. 97-98

Tughlaq got constructed for him. It is related that, once Sheikh Hamid uddin a close friend of the Makhdum-e-Jahan came to him midnight. Makhdum-e-Jahan came out and sat down in the courtyard with him. After a while Sheikh Hamid uddin said, “The courtyard will look nice if this platform is extended. Makhdum-e-Jahan immediately got up and replied, “I thought that you had come in the dead of night to seek solution of some religious problem but I find that I was wrong. You want the platform to be extended. Actually you ought to have suggested that this idol- house should be brought to ruins.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, we find that there was no attraction of worldly affair, in the heart of the Shaikh.

### **Lofty ideals**

The attempt of life is to achieve the unachieved piety of the soul upon which Shaikh Maneri had always had his eyes set. This is amply expressed by his letters to his friends and disciples. He always told them that only those whose aims were worthy, aspirations high, designs wise and purposes steadfast could hope to reach the goal of a soaring ambition. He wrote to one of his disciples: “Howsoever spiritless you might be, my brother, you ought to have courage to look upward. There is nothing in the world that can dampen the eager desire of a man: the lofty aspirations of man are really too burdensome even for the earth and Heaven, empyrean and the mighty Throne, Heaven and hell.”<sup>2</sup>

Zamir ud-din, a disciple of the Makhdum, has made a correct assessment of Makhdum Yahya Maneri’s lofty and insatiable ambition in *Sirat-us-Sharof*. “He had,” says Zamir ud-din “always his gaze fixed on what was still to be achieved, for whatever he had already achieved lost its importance in his eyes. His soaring ambition and courage always spurred him to attain higher and higher stages of sanctity.”<sup>3</sup> And he desired that others too should have the same courage and lofty aspiration. In a letter he says: “Supposing both the worlds were brought at your threshold and you were told that all these belong to you, and that you might do whatever you like with them. You should, however, be careful not to lose sight of

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1. *Sirat-us Sharaf*, *op.cit.*, p. 123; Quoted in *Maktubat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 59, Eng. tr. Mohiuddin Ahmad *op. cit.*, p. 281

2. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, p. 282; also see, *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no 4, p. 24

3. *Quoted in, Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, p. 283

that which is beyond this world and the next and which constitutes the only means to reach the Real Beloved".

### **Enjoining the right course**

Though Makhdum Shaikh Maneri had renounced all worldly desires and relationships and passed beyond the stages of *separation* and *isolation*, i.e., abandonment of all cares and worries, but he was, always anxious for the welfare of the poor and afflicted. We find him corresponding with the then rulers to restore justice to whom it had been denied and asked them to adopt the path of virtue and equity. Once Khwaja ‘Abid of Zafarabad, who had been deprived from his property, approached Makhdum Maneri for his help, then he wrote a letter to Sultan Firoz Sharqi in which he first quoted the Traditions of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions expressing concern to see that justice is done to everybody. Thereafter he wrote: “Thanks be to God that today he graces the throne who is the hope of the oppressed and the miserable and who is handing out even justice to everyone. It is for this sublime trait that the Prophet (ASW) has said: “A moment spend in dispensing justice is better than sixty years given out to prayers.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Serving as a mentor**

The most important quality of a mentor is that he should be most affectionate and caring, moreover he should be devoted to the service of others. Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A) was endowed with both these qualities. As for his affection, the interest of everybody— no matter what religion he belonged to, whether he was rich or poor, whether he was his disciple or not, whether he was good or bad was dear to his heart. Everybody came to him—some would be suffering from some disease, some would have some worldly needs, some would be caring for the Hereafter, some would like to come to the fold of Islam and he was all the time available to serve them all. He would write prescriptions for the diseased persons; some such prescriptions were written in the style of *doha* (Hindi verse of two lines). For some of the needy, he would pray to Allah; if need be, he would also invoke miracles but as he was very reluctant to display miracles such

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1. Sirat-us Sharaf, p. 144. Quoted in, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, p. 285

persons were generally referred to Miran Jalal Diwana,<sup>1</sup> a disciple of the Shaikh. The love and affection that saints of Allah (those who are close to Allah) have for the humanity at large are unimaginable. In this context Makhdam-Jahan (Rah A) writes:

Now look at the greatness of these *Awlia Allah*: you will find that it has no bounds. Believe me, the dirt of their feet serves as the choicest vision-enhancer (*Kuhul-ul-Jawahir*, the traditional eye-remedy made of pearl), and their sayings give life to the dead heart just as the rain, in the spring season, gives life to dead earth and turns the dry plants into a blooming garden. Whatever they say enlivens the lifeless hearts; whatever comes from God-conscious people is bound to move one's heart. If on the one hand their words enliven one's heart, their actions and attributes help resolve people's trouble and difficulties. They are the chosen people amongst the Prophet's (SAW) *Ummah*; they are the great devotee of the Prophet (SAW). Their love and affection enlightens every place and embraces everybody. They would not eat themselves but will feed others; they will not put on good dress but would provide dress to the needy, they would patiently hear the harsh words of others; they would bear the tyranny inflicted upon them but, rather than taking revenge, they would stand in support of them; they would be kind to those who would be unkind to them; they would wish well to those who would call them names. Do you know why they behave so selflessly? The only reason why they behave this way is that Providence has provided them complete protection from bad behaviour and sinful acts. The prophets are *masoom* (those whom Allah has so ordained that they cannot commit sins), and the *Aulia Allah* are *mahfooz* (those who may falter, yet are protected from committing sins). These are the people from whose heart blows the breeze of Providence's blessings which freshen up the mind and heart of people. Their love and affection can be compared to the light coming out from the sun which benefits everybody, friends and foes alike. In humility, they are like the earth, which is trampled down by everybody but it does not complain. They cannot think of taking revenge from anybody. They

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1. Shoaib Firdausi, *Manaqib-ul-Asfia*, Eng. tr., into Urdu, by Dr. Mohammad Ali Arshad Sharafi, (Bihar Sharif: Maktaba-i-Sharaf, Bait-us-Sharaf, Khanquah Moazzam, 2001), p. 273, Quoted in, Syed Sadrul Hasan, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, (Karachi: Bazm-e-Firdausia Trust, 2005), p. 183



would be prepared to be the bread-winner of the whole world but for themselves they would depend on nobody. They are generous like a river, which provides water to friends and foes alike. Listen, if the attributes described above are not to be seen in the person following the *Tariquat* way, be sure that he has not taken even the first step in this way.<sup>1</sup>

If we observe profoundly we would be convinced that whatever Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A) has been narrating in the foregoing are, in fact, the description of his own self. In respect of service to humanity, it would be pertinent to exemplify a particular aspect of it. Makhdum-Jahan (Rah A) had good relations with a number of elite and people in authority. But these relations had no personal motives; the prime objective was to help the common people who often had some needs to be fulfilled by such people of authority. For them, Makhdum-Jahan (Rah A) used to write to them persuading them very admirably to help the poor and the needy people.

In a nutshell, we can say that a seeker of Allah must possess some sublime characteristics, such as selflessness, generosity, humbleness, humanity and altruism. As a mentor Makhdum-Jahan was endowed with all of these qualities.

### **Compliance with Sunnah**

Makhdum-e-Jahan was strictly and persistently followed the *Sunnah*. In this respect, he exemplified the very earliest Muslims. He stressed upon it in his writings and speeches; a lot of his writings are available in this context. He considered *shari'ah* and compliance with *Sunnah* as the foundation of *Tariquah* and would not tolerate even a slight deviation from it. It was due to his strict compliance with *Sunnah* he was gifted with high morality in all aspects of personal and social life. Thus, he appeared as the minaret of morality. He was extremely humble and considered himself to be the lowest of the low. He considered it to be the sign of *awliat* (saintliness).

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1. *Maktubat-e-Sadi*, letter no. 24, Eng. tr., of the extract Syed Sadrul Hasan, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184

Not only he himself meticulously followed the *Sunnah* but also the enjoined his disciples and persuaded them to comply with *Sunnah*. In *Tohfa-i-Ghaibi*, he says: Following the words of the Prophet (SAW) is *shari'ah*; to follow his practices is *Tariqat*; to follow his spiritual state is *Haqiqat*.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, whosoever perfects himself in all these three qualifies will be blessed by Allah. In the Holy Qur'an, God says: "If you want that Allah loves you, follow the Prophet (SAW), Allah will love you" (*al-Qur'an*, 3:31). Hence he was so deeply devoted to *Sunnah* that even in the last hours of his life, he would allow no relaxation in this respect.<sup>2</sup> His whole life was so much *Sunnah*-compliant that he had become the living symbol of the Prophet's (SAW) way of life—the manners, morality and ethics. If we judge his behaviour from the different aspects of high ethics, he appears to be gifted with all these qualities: munificence, affection, modesty, and face-saving for wrong doers. He was also not concerned with other's praise or criticism of him and was completely free of lust and selfishness.

He was highly generous, he would give away, whatever he received, immediately to the people present. For example, the contents of the purse presented to him by Sultan Feroze Shah was distributed instantly amongst the people.<sup>3</sup>

### **Perseverance and humility**

One of the greatest traits of Makhdum-e-Jahan is perseverance. In the pursuit of the way to Allah Makhdum-e-Jahan never lost heart; he showed unyielding courage and perseverance, and he also persuaded his disciples not to lose heart. In his letters, one can see many instances in this regard. He also considered himself humiliating and used to say that Sharfuddin has attained nothing. In a letter addressed to Shaikh Maghrabi, his humility is amply exemplified. Some excerpts (its translation) from it is presented below:

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1. Syed Zamiruddin, *Seerut-us-Sharaf*, p. 150 Quoted in, Syed Sadrul Hasan, *op.cit.*, p. 187

2. It is reported that during those hours when he was performing *wadhu* (ablution), he missed to wash his face, and on being reminded of it by Shaikh Fariduddin, he performed the *wadhu* afresh, (Quoted in *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, p. 187

3. *Seerut-us-Sharaf*, p. 153. Eng. trans. of the extract Syed Sadrul Hasan, *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)* p. 187

To Shaikh Maghrabi (Rah A), greetings from Sharaf Maneri who is ashamed of his wrong-doings and his faults, and yet is alive. This wretched person often wished to go out of India to sit in the company of Muslims and to benefit from serving the dervishes. Perhaps this way might become a proper *Muslim*. But unfortunately I could not make it. Allah knows better the present state I am in. I do not know what will happen in the future. My affectionate (brother), I am in a strange situation. There are some who call me Shaikh and become my disciple. Some address me as *Malik-ul-Mashaikh*, others call me *Qutub-ul-Aulia*, while the fact is that I have not yet had the glimpse of *Musalmani* (i.e. being a Muslim), and have not yet been able to get rid of the distracting ways-the non-believer's way of the egoistic self. Now what else can I do except taking refuge in the company of friends, sit under their feet, and request them very humbly that they may kindly favour me with something from the Divine favours and blessings they have had. Also, I would request them to find some moments from their precious time in the company of Allah to pray for me, and, in fact, pray persistently until they get me the blessings and favours of Allah.<sup>1</sup>

It is also related that once a number of *Mashaikh* (illustrious mystics) were gathered in a place, and each one was expressing what his coveted desire was. When it was Makhdum-e-Jahan's (Rah A) turn to speak, he said that 'his real desire was that his name gets obliterated from this world as well as from the other world'<sup>23</sup>. It would be worthwhile to reproduce here his supplication to Allah: It is worth noting how humbly a servant is addressing his master, the Lord. And what a loving way it is to invoke Allah's Pleasure and Blessing!

From the above discussion we can say that Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri occupied a unique position in Sufism. He practiced what he preached. He was devoted to truth, rectitude, piety and humanity. He look upon himself as the

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1. *Maktubat-e-do Sadi*, trans Syed Naeem Nadvi, Karachi: Madina Publishing company, n.d., letter no, 94. p. 435. Quoted in *The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri (Rah A)*, pp. 191-192

servant of humanity and discharged his duties to the best of his capability. He Prays:

O Allah, You are my sustainer; You are powerful and I am helpless. O Allah, You are my Master, and I am Your servant. O Allah, I am the most helpless amongst those who are helpless. O Allah, I am the most illiterate and ignorant. O Allah, I do not know how to invoke your favours. O Allah, You know my helplessness. ... You may please free me from the captivity of *Nafs-e-Ammara* (lowly self) and bless me with the urge to seek Your Forgiveness in all earnestness, for I dread to think of being produced before You for justice. O Allah bless me with the guidance to worship. You, for without your guidance, it is impossible to worship You.

### **Works of Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri**

The author of the *Sirat-e-Sharaf*, mentioned some major works to be attributed to Mukhdum-ul-Mulk. They are as follows:

1. *Maktubat-e-Sadi*-i.e., letters of Shaikh Sharfuddin written in reply to those of Qadi Shams-su-Din, governor of Jusa, arranged by Zain Badr-i-'Arabi, the chief disciple of the Shaikh. These letters dated from A.H. 747.
2. *Maktubat-e-do Sadi*- Compiled in the form of a book. Important learned man, who happened to be amongst the disciples of the Shaikh have been addressed in these letters, for instance, Shaikh 'Umar Qadi Shams-ud-Din, Qudi Zahid, Mawlana Sadr-ud-Din including sultan Firuz Shah.
3. *Maktubat-e-Bist-wa-Hasht*—These are the remaining letters of the Shaikh addressed to Mawlana Muzaffar-ud-Din. The Makhdum instructed before his death to bury these letters with him in his grave. But some of the letters remained and have come down to us the present form.
4. *Ajwiba*— These are the letters in reply to the questions raised by the loving disciples of the Shaikh on Sufism.

5. *Fawai' d-i-Rukni*– This treatise written for helping a seeker after truth.
6. *Irshad-ud-Talibin*– A treatise written for helping a seeker after truth.
7. *Irshad-us-Salikin*– A treatise on Unity of Being (*wahdatul wujud*).
8. *Rasala-i-Makkiya*– A treatise on self-introspection.
9. *Madan-ul-Maani*– A book containing the discourses on Sufism, given by Shaikh Sharfuddin and collected by Zain Badr-i-'Arabi between 15th Shaban 749/1348 and the end of Shawwal 751/1350.
10. *Lutfu 'l-Ma'ani*– An abridged from *M'adan-ul-Maani*.
11. *Mukh-ul-Ma'ani*– collected by Shihab-ud-Din Halifi. The Date of its compilation is not known.
12. *Khwan-i-Pur Ni'mat*– Collected by Zain Badr-i-'Arabi. It serves as appendix to the *M'adan-ul-Maani*.
13. *Tuhfa-i-Ghaybi*– Another treatise collected by the same Zain-i-Badr.
14. *Sharh-i-Adab-ul-Muridin*– A commentary on the *Adab-ul-Muridin* of Diyauddin Najib Suhrawardy by the Shaikh. It was begun on Friday Rabi I A.H. 765 and completed on Tuesday Dhil hijja A.H.768.
15. *'A qui'd-i-Ashrafi*– It deals with the tenets of Sufis.

These works are mostly devoted to Sufistic topics. No. '1' which is generally available, contains one hundred letters. They deal with all problems relating to Sufi doctrine. Another important work, *Madan-ul-Ma'ani*. A careful study of these works gives us a clear insight into the Sufistic teachings of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri. The style of these works is very simple. The ideas are higher and Sufistic, as well as moral in tendencies. The texts are enriched with apt quotations from the Holy Qur'an and the traditions and sayings of the Sufis. The purpose of these works is to uplift people morally and spiritually.

## 2. Moral Teachings

Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri was a Sufi of eminence. By virtue of rigid discipline and devotional exercise for many long years, he attained perfection. His heart was the mirror in which he could behold the unseen face of the True Beloved. He took upon himself the task of serving humanity. He cared nothing for worldly influence and affluence. He lived a most ascetic life. His heart was full of human kindnesses. He was very affable and humble in mind. He loved and respected his disciples. He was extremely tolerant in his views. He was above bias and bigotry. He served humanity in a most loving fashion. His assembly was the meeting place of scholars and men of letters of all shades of opinion. He taught them high principles of morality. His teachings were based on exoteric and esoteric sciences. All aspects of his teachings cannot be accommodated in such limited space. One of the most important aspects of his teachings is moral development of human being which is presented in the following discussion.

### 2.1. Abandonment of the World

According to Shaikh Maneri, The abandonment of the world is the fountainhead of all worship. The world in true sense has no value to God. In the language of Ahmad Maneri: ‘If the world had any power, loyalty, beauty or value then men of insight and knowledge would not have passed it by in order to reach God. In addition, the prophets and saints, who are the most excellent of men, would not have pronounced a triple divorce against it’.<sup>1</sup> The saying of the Apostle, “God Most Exalted has not created anything less pleasing than the world, and since creating it, He has not looked at it,” also proves the disvalue of the world. Since the world veils God from the people it has been disfigured by a curse.<sup>2</sup> One needs to be careful at this point that the goods of the world in so far as

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1. The divorce formula becomes effective and irrevocable only when the word *talaq* (divorce) is pronounced three times.
  2. Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri, *Maktubat-e-do Sadi*, Eng. tr. Paul Jackson, S.J., entitled, *In Quest of God, Maneri's Second Collection of 150 Letters*, (India: Gujrat Sahitya Prakash, 2004) letter no. 45, p. 176; If the world shows its face to anyone, then he passes his time in fulfilling the desires of his selfish soul and in living a life of ease and luxury. He is thus bound hand and foot. Such a one is accursed. (*Loc. cit.*)

they are needed are not accursed, but only what is an excess of what is needed is cursed.<sup>1</sup>

## **Nature of the world**

Concerning the nature of world Shaikh Maneri said, whatever is in the world can be divided into three categories.<sup>2</sup>

The first is whatever, in both appearance and reality, relates solely to the world. In no way can it be for the sake of God. It consists of :

- a. Every kind of sin, which neither intention nor in purpose can be for His sake.
- b. An overabundance of lawful things. This is the root of all failures and sins. Although it is lawful, nevertheless such abundance fills and satisfies one's selfish soul, just as all sins do.

The second category, in both appearance and reality, in a sense directed toward God, but in intention and purpose, is for the sake of the world. This group is purely divine, but may be turned to selfish use by an impure motive. For example, meditation, prayer and asceticism are for the sake of the world to come; but if these are practiced with the object of gaining the respect of the people then it will be condemned and accursed.

The third group is apparently worldly but really divine.<sup>3</sup> Such as— eating for the sake of the Divine service; marriage with the object of begetting a child who shall repeat “There is no god but God, and Muhammad (SAW) is the messenger of God.”

Again, Shaikh Maneri mentions that religious scholars have divided the world into three categories:<sup>4</sup>

The first is that of necessary with regard to food, clothing and a place to stay.

The second refers to what is needful.

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 74, p. 306; *In Quest of God*, letter no 5. p. 07

3. The third category is that which as far as appearances are concerned, is directed toward this world but, in purpose and intention, is for the sake of God and is, in consequence, not really restricted to this world. (*Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 74, p. 306.)

4. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 5, p. 17

The third pertains to what is superfluous to one's real needs, being concerned with self-embellishment, boasting and seeking superiority over others. This has no end.

In short, the world is that which gratifies the cravings of desire in the present, and is of no use after death. On the other hand, whatever is found in it that helps towards the world to come is not worldly. He who appropriates the world to the limit of bare necessity (food, garment, and a dwelling-house) has succeeded; whereas he who seeks luxurious living exposes himself to endless troubles.

According to Shaikh Maneri there is a consensus among believers and unbelievers, sincere people and hypocrites, that the world is corrupt. Its stock in trade consists entirely of disturbances and calamities.<sup>1</sup> The claim to divinity, made by both Pharaoh and Nimrod, sprang from the world. The destruction of Balaam, son of Beor, and of the ascetic Barsisa,<sup>2</sup> came from the world, and all the troubles that befall the sons of Adam today come from the world. It is related that when the messenger Adam in Paradise ate from the wheat plant-which was forbidden, he quickly experienced a natural urge. He began to look around for a place to meet his need. He heard a voice: "O Adam, Paradise is no place for that! you will have to leave it and go to the world. Out there you can attend to your need somewhere."<sup>3</sup> Thus a wise man said: "The world is Adam's privy." In a privy (toilet) there is no question of happiness and pleasure or of comfort and delight. This is an indication of the fact that a believer ought to live in the world as if meeting the call of nature. In other words, he has to fulfil his basic necessities with a hundred fold aversion, dislike and unpleasantness, not with longing and

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1. Holy men have said that if all evils were collected in one house, love of the world would be made its key. On the other hand, if all virtues were collected in one house, enmity towards the world would be made its key. (*Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 75 p. 311)

2. The name of a great devotee in Islamic lore who was finally misled by Satan.

3. *In Quest of God*, letters no. 10, p. 33; In this context Maneri also Said 'The world is nothing, for when God addressed the world, He said: "O nothing". If someone remarks that the world is beautiful and is something, he then goes ahead and calls it something. In fact, by itself the world simply has no value at all, even though it exists. This is because its existence depends on the creative activities of another. The existence of something which depends on the creative activity of another can by no means be said to really exist. (*Sharafuddin Maneri, Ma'din ul-Ma'ani*, compiled by, Zain Badr Arabi, Eng. tr., Paul Jackson, S. J., entitled *A Mine of Meaning*, Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2012, p. 234)



happiness. He also added that if anyone cannot be content with bare necessities of life, he should be content with what he actually needs in order to find deliverance from the troubles and calamities of the world, and occupy his self in getting ready for death.

Here it is mentioned that according to the tradition: “The love of the world is the fountainhead of all sin.” It was not said, “Possessing the world is the fountainhead of sins.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the heart, not the hand, is the abode of love. If somebody were to possess the whole world yet there was no love for it in his heart, then the lusts, pleasures and desires of his selfish soul would cause no fear.<sup>2</sup> For example, the messenger Solomon (A.) possessed the whole world from east to west. Since there was no love for it in his heart he experienced no harm.

In spite of all these defects and a hundred other similar ones, there are some advantages of it. It (world) is a field prepared for sowing seed for the next life. Here as one sows so he will reap. So Makhdum-e-Jahan advised his followers: as for as you can use hands and tongue, pen and paper, money and substance to cultivate this field.

### **The way of abandonment of the world**

To Shaikh Maneri, service or worship of the Lord is impossible without renunciation of the world. When the body works for the world and the heart longs for it how can we serve Him? The heart is one; it cannot attend to two things at the same time. The world and the Lord are wide apart as east and west. The more you approach the one, the farther you recede from other.<sup>3</sup> It is related that Abu Darda said: “I wished to bring together this world and the next, as well as worship and trade, but it was utterly impossible. When I turned my face toward the next world, I abandoned this one; and when I engaged in prayer, I abandoned trading.” Hence, for a devotee abandonment of the world is a crying need.

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1. Quoted in, *In Quest of God*, letter no. 10, p. 33

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 75 p. 309; In practical language Sharfuddin’s point is that people who are very busy with the affairs of this world tend to have little time for those of next.

According to Shaikh Maneri, renunciation is two fold:

1. Human renunciation, i.e., the renunciation which can be achieved by a man. It consists of three stages.
  - a. Ceasing to seek for the worldly objects one has not.
  - b. Casting off worldly objects one has.
  - c. Ceasing to entertain worldly desires in the mind.
2. Superhuman renunciation i.e., it is not within the power of the slave. It consists in complete indifference to the world. It can be accomplished with the help of the Divine Grace, by one who has achieved success in all the three stages of Human renunciation. The second is the true renunciation according to the sages, because the expulsion of worldly desires from the mind is the most difficult task.<sup>1</sup>

According to Shaikh Maneri, renunciation is the basis of virtue and progress. The wise have said: Asceticism or detachment is the foundation of all riches and root of all pleasing states and favoured stages.<sup>2</sup> It is the very first stage for disciple, since the foundation should be firm and stable. All other stages can be built in a proper fashion upon it. It is related that Khwaja Junaid said: “There are three types of asceticism.

1. One is the abandonment of what is forbidden; it is the asceticism of the ordinary people.
2. The second is the abandonment of an over abundance of what is lawful; it is the asceticism of the elect.
3. The third type is the abandonment of anything that might draw the attention of the servant away from God; it is the asceticism of the Sufis.

All of these steps cannot be put into practice by a person without abandoning the desire of his possessions, for it is the quest of things that brings trouble in its wake. Shaikh Maneri has made this clear by referring to Solomon (A.) who, though possessed dominion and wealth, was detached from the world

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 75 p. 310

by heart. If someone does his best in this matter, and removes all desire of possessions from his heart, he is then granted by the grace and bounty of God, that type of detachment which is not within his own power. According to a number of sages, this is genuine detachment.

Summing up the above discussion we can say that Shaikh Maneri's view about worldly life is that we should live in this world in such a way that we may have much or less possession but the heart should be totally free from any longing for it. We have to remain equal in its gain or lose. That is, our heart will be free from the thinking of enjoying worldly pleasures and luxuries. This attitude will save a person from all kinds of immoral intentions and deeds which subsequently will help him to lead a true moral life, at such a state that an individual's heart is free from the allurements of the world.

## **2.2. Importance of Knowledge in Moral Life**

Knowledge is one of the corner stones of Sharfuddin Ahmed Yhaya Maneri's ethical system. Morality or good conduct is not possible without it. knowledge results from the functioning of intellect or reason which is the innate rational faculty of man; the faculty which distinguishes him from animals. "Salvation comes from knowledge, destruction from ignorance. Heavenly ranks and wonderful powers are acquired through knowledge, but one falls into the very depths of hell and the greatest of tortures and punishments due to ignorance."<sup>1</sup> No one except a believer places his feet in the court of knowledge, for "God is the protecting friend of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light (2:257), i.e., from ignorance to knowledge. On the other hand, nobody is found standing on the threshold of ignorance except the unbeliever: "As for the unbelievers, their patrons are false gods who lead them out of light into darkness," (2.257), i.e., from Knowledge to ignorance. Just as a believer should flee from wretchedness and unbelief, so too should he flee from ignorance as well as from

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 55, p. 222; Shaikh Maneri also added, "Whoever does anything without knowledge gets entangled with self because that is what the hypocrites teach. It is tantamount to treading the path of Satan Everything should be undertaken with knowledge and a firm conviction that whatever is in accordance with the plan of God will eventuate." (*A Mine of Meaning*, p.38)

ignorant persons.<sup>1</sup> It is an injunction of the Law that “A wise man is my friend while an ignorant one is my enemy.”<sup>2</sup> As it is obligatory to flee from ignorance and the ignorant, so it is a duty to seek association on with scholars and knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

Worship requires knowledge, which serves as its axis and pivot. All kinds of success and degradation depend on it. Scholars have said: knowledge and worship are two valuable substances, which are the causes of everything that we see and hear: Indeed, it is by reason of them that scriptures were revealed and messengers sent. It should be known that whatever is apart from these two works can be considered a useless endeavour leading nowhere. It is simply idle worthless chatter.<sup>4</sup> Hence, Khwaja Hasan Basri said: “The seeking of this knowledge is valuable, for it explains worship; conversely, one should pay attention to worship, since it clarifies knowledge.”<sup>5</sup> Knowledge has priority over worship because it is the source and guide of worship. Hence, Prophet (SAW) has said: Knowledge directs action, and action follows Knowledge.” He also said, “The sleep of a learned man is better than the prayer of an ignorant one.” And again: “A person who acts without Knowledge does more damage than good.” And further: “God inspires the fortunate ones with Knowledge, while He deprives the unfortunate one of it.” The misfortune of the latter stems from the fact that they have not gained knowledge, have acted in ignorance. For such activity there will be no reward in the life to come.

The knowledge that emphasizes individuality or egoism is verily a hindrance. The knowledge that leads to God is only true knowledge. In the language of Shaikh Maneri: “Every form of Knowledge that is sent to you through your faculties is, for you a veiling of the Truth; whereas all knowledge sent to you

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1. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 20, p. 60

2. Quoted in, *loc. cit.*; Those who, without knowledge, have undertaken this work and become saints, first of all had knowledge infused into them. At that moment they were granted sainthood. The knowledge that was first infused into them was mystical knowledge. Knowledge of the way was implanted within them without their having acquired it. (*Khwan-i Pur Ni'mat*, p. 7)

3. Here scholars and Knowledge mean those who are concerned with the life to come, not with worldly scholars and worldly Knowledge.

4. Sharafuddin Maneri, *The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 37, p. 144

5. *Loc. cit.*

through Him is Truth itself.”<sup>1</sup> In another letter, he says: In fact, search for knowledge means that acquire those knowledge which is not for post, position, leadership and worldly success but only for God’s pleasure;<sup>2</sup> precondition of it is moral perfection.

According to Makhdam-e-Jahan, the learned are confined in the prison of the senses, since they gather their Knowledge through sensuous objects. And he who is bound by sense-limitations is barred from super sensuous Knowledge. Real knowledge wells up from the fountain of life and thereof, a *salik* (novice) need not resort to senses and groupings. The iron of human nature must be put into the melting-pot of discipline, hammered on the anvil of asceticism, and then handed over to the polishing agency of the Divine Love, so that the latter may cleanse it of all material impurities.<sup>3</sup> It then becomes a mirror capable of reflecting the spiritual world, and may fitly be used by the king for the beholding of His own image. By this Maneri means cleansing human heart from all kinds of impurities that block it from receiving Divine illumination. Knowledge involves exertion,<sup>4</sup> i.e., struggle with self and asceticism, just as purity is required for ritual prayer. There should be no activity without Knowledge, just as there should be no ritual prayer without purity.

## **Kinds of knowledge**

There are two types of knowledge<sup>5</sup> one is acquired knowledge which a person learns from experts or picks up by studying their books. The other type of knowledge is that which wells up within a person's breast.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 41, p. 158

2. *Maktubat-e-say-Sadi*, Maktubat, no. 271, p. Bangoli trans. Mowlana A.K.M. Fazlur Rahman, (Dhaka: Taj Com. Ltd. 2011), p. 271

3. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 41, pp. 150-159

4. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 20, p. 59

5. *Loc. cit*; *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 55, p. 222; Accademic knowledge is called *ilm az-Zahir* and (*ilm al-oarsat*) inheritated knowledge is called *ilm al-Batin* (or unseen knowledge). *Ilm az-Zahir* is one thing and *Ilm-al-Batin* is another thing. *Ilm az-Zahir* is knowledge of worldly life and *ilm-al-Batin* is *ilm-al-Mukashafa* (or knowledge of unseen). A salik can acquire both kinds of knowledge. When evil qualities are eradicated from the heart, only then *ilm-al-Mukashafa* or *ilm-al-Batin* will be manifested in the heart. As a result, the act which a salik previously only heard and believed now its importance and internal significance would be manifested to him.

These are three kinds:<sup>1</sup>

1. One is that which is joined to the hearts of the Messengers from God. This is called revelation (*Wahy*).
2. The second kind is joined to the hearts of the saints. That is called inspiration (*Ilham*)
3. The third kind is that which through the medium of the breasts of the Messengers, reaches the breasts of the righteous, or which reaches the breasts of disciples through the medium of the breasts of their spiritual guides. This is the meaning of the tradition, “A spiritual guide is related to his disciples as a prophet to his community.”<sup>2</sup>

In another letter he mentioned that there are three kinds of knowledge:

- a. External knowledge (*Ilm-e-Zahir*)
- b. Internal knowledge (*Ilm-e-Batin*)
- c. That exists between God and man

Externalist scholars speak about external knowledge. Internal knowledge is for people with an interior disposition. The third type is that which is a secret between God and its recipient (that the very reality of faith). This type of knowledge should not be shared with any scholars. Here is mentioned that, in *Qut-ul-Qulub*, Imam Abu Talib Makki also mentioned such three kinds of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Al-Ghazali in his writings also divides knowledge in this line.<sup>4</sup>

In order to explain the nature of knowledge Shaikh Maneri has discussed about knowledge and intimate knowledge. In this context he refers to the opinion of Ainul Quzat, a famous Sufi. Shaikh Maneri said: “Ain ul-Quzat has given priority to intimate knowledge over knowledge<sup>5</sup> and placed it in the fourth stage and given it fourth rank. The first is imitation; the second is effort; the third is

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1. In *Quest of God*, letter no. 20, p. 59.; *Maktubat-e-say-Sadi*, Maktubat, no. 271, p. Bangoli trans. Mowlana A.K.M. Fazlur Rahman, (Dhaka: Taj Com. Ltd. 2011), p. 272

2. In *Quest of God*, letter no. 20, p. 59.; *Ibid.*, letter no. 93, p. 196

3. *Ibid.*, letter no. 102, p. 208

4. Dr. Kawthar Mustafa, *Al-Ghazali's Theory of Knowledge*, (Dhaka: Ramon Publissers, 2003) p. 43

5. *Marifa* and *ilm* are terms respectively translated as “intimate or mystical knowledge” and knowledge.

knowledge after knowledge and the fourth stage is intimate knowledge. This group has passed beyond imitation and effort and has acquired knowledge. Ain ul-Quzat says that he has gone beyond knowledge and has attained intimate knowledge.”<sup>1</sup> According to Shaikh Maneri, “there is a difference between knowledge and intimate knowledge. Knowledge involves knowing each thing. Knowing something by itself is called knowledge. If that very knowledge becomes a person’s habitual state, then it is called ‘intimate knowledge’. This is because a person knows something and that has become his habitual state. He is then considered to be a mystic.”<sup>2</sup>

According to Shaikh Maneri knowledge is required at every stage of religious life. He says that the knowledge which will carry one to the gates of sultans and kings or make one a Qazi or an exponent of the law, it is not real knowledge. Real knowledge is the knowledge of the life to come, and the way to God, not the knowledge of worldly objects.<sup>3</sup> It will preserve us from worldly theologians as well as Satan.

Shaikh Maneri classified all actions into two categories. One comprises those actions which lead one towards God, such as all forms of devotion and worship; while the other consists to whatever leads one away from God, such as all sins. It is very important for every person to know about these two kinds of knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Otherwise he will commit mistake concerning what should do or not to do. Like knowledge and actions, our heart is also adorned with two qualities.<sup>5</sup>

One category of qualities leads closer to God. All qualities of this nature are praise worthy. Such as – repentance, self-control, trust in God, pleasing Him and paying homage to Him, and so on. The other category of qualities leads far away from God. This includes all blameworthy qualities such as love of the world, possessions and rank, envy, jealousy and arrogance, avarice and others similar to

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1. *A Mine of Meaning*, p. 40

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 2, p. 5

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 6

these. It is most necessary to have grasped both of these types. Because without these knowledge, it is not at all possible to become a man of action, i.e. moral deeds and there can be no attaining one's goal without action.

The Ethical significance of knowledge is that those Sufis had knowledge, they must have acted out of knowledge. They knew and understood what they were doing. Because of our defects it appears to be against acceptable behaviour. This is an example of inadequate knowledge, and also of our not being aware of that knowledge. It could also be expressed in another way. As long as a person is in the realm of knowledge, it is incumbent upon him to act within the limits of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> He will not be excused if he neglects it. On other hand, if a spiritual state overcomes knowledge and a person is seized by a mystical state then he will act according to the imperative of that state, not those of external knowledge. He would be excused. Because there is an example of this in the law.<sup>2</sup>

In short we can say that, knowledge can distinguish the truth from the falsehood in judgments, the right from the wrong in beliefs and the good from the evil in actions. Through knowledge we can grasp all abstract and universal truths and acquire exact nature of Creator and His creation which is good for all times, places and conditions.

### **2.3. Curbing Lower Self as the Foundation of Morality**

To explain the characteristics of the lower self we are in need of analyzing the nature of man. There is a controversy among the intellectuals as to what human nature is. What, in fact, is signified by the word man? The knowledge of this is obligatory for every seeker. Because, anyone who is ignorant of himself would be even more ignorant of what is other than himself. The law has this to say: "Whoever knows his self knows his Lord." In other words, anyone who grasps the nature of his self by virtue of its mortality also perceives God, through His attribute of immortality. In short, everyone who fails to understand himself

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1. *A Mine of Meaning*, p. 42

2. For detail, see, *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43



will also find the Almighty veiled from him. So every man should have the knowledge of himself.

Concerning the nature of man, the Shaikh Maneri at first mentioned opinions of different mystics groups, which are given below:<sup>1</sup>

1. One group says: “Man is nothing but spirit.” This is erroneous, for the spirit lies hidden in the body. Spirit itself is not called man.
2. Another group says that the name ‘man’ is given to the combination of spirit and body, just as black and white horse is designated by only one word, ‘piebald’. This too, is erroneous. The proof is that God Almighty called Adam a man when he was still nothing but lifeless dust.
3. There is a group of false Sufis who say man is a divine secret whose body is his talisman.
4. There is also a group that says that all the natures that are compounded within us is called ‘man’

According to the investigators of truth, the perfect man consists of three constituents: one is spirit, another is the lower soul, while the third is the body.<sup>2</sup> In this context Maneri says: “Man is a microcosm of the entire world, that is to say, both this world and the next.”<sup>3</sup> In another word, man is the epitome of the whole Universe, and is composed of the spirit (soul), the lower soul (*nafs*) and the body. He bears the characteristics of all the worlds. This world is water, dust, air and fire, and man is composed of phlegm, blood, bile, and melancholy. At the same time, man is a sign of the next world, of Paradise, Hell and the Heavenly courts. His spirit anticipates Heaven on account of its refinement; his animal soul hell on account of its baseness; while his body presages the celestial courts.<sup>4</sup> We can say that it is the spirit that draws the believer toward Paradise, for in this world it exemplifies Paradise; while his animal soul impels him toward Hell, of which it is the prototype in this world.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 81, p. 331

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 331-32

4. *Ibid.*, p. 332

## Nature of lower self

There is also a controversy about what exactly constitutes the lower soul. The seekers of Truth in this group have two opinions about the matter.<sup>1</sup> One faction says that, the lower soul is an essence within the body, similar to the spirit. The other faction maintains that it is a quality of the body, like life. They say that both bad behaviour and displeasing actions stem from it. These are of two kinds. One is sin itself, and the other, blameworthy ways of acting, such as pride, envy, avarice, vanity, hypocrisy, anger and similar things.<sup>2</sup>

After analyzing the different views of the Shaikhs, Maneri says: “The lower soul is an essence, not simply a quality. It does, however, have qualities and we can see them clearly.”<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Maneri further adds that, selfish soul wants rivalry with God in its claims and intends to be His equal. Such as, God Most Exalted wants everybody to attribute everything freely and generously to Him. The infidel soul wants everybody to attribute everything to it liberally and generously.<sup>4</sup>

Concerning the nature of selfish self, he also mentioned the mystics' views. To them, there are three common idols: love of the pleasures of the belly; love of the desires of the flesh; and love of wife and children. There are also three special idols: love of goods; love of position; and love of external adornment. The seventh idol is the infidel soul,<sup>5</sup> which is the origin of all a person's idol,<sup>6</sup> i.e., “the selfish soul is the greatest idol.” Thus, the Law calls the struggle with one's selfish soul– “The greatest struggle(*Jihad-Akbar*)”. “Let us turn from the lesser struggle to the greater one.” An unbeliever can be driven off with a sword, and a demon can be driven effortlessly far from oneself, but the infidel soul is an internal enemy. No one can drive it far away, nor can anyone find respite from its evil.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 71, p. 330

2. See in detail, *Ibid.*, p. 332

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 84, p. 179

5. *Ibid.*, p. 178

6. Ahmad Maneri Spoke up: "Spiritual masters have written about veils in various books. They mentioned four: people; the world; Satan and the selfish soul. People hinder our devotion to, and worship of God. This world conceals the world to come. Satan downplays religion. One's selfish soul acts as a veil with regard to the Lord. Four veils can be enumerated but, if you examine the matter, they all stem from one root, one's selfish soul. ... Hence, it is clear that the selfish soul is the root of all these distortions. ... In fine, whoever has brought his selfish soul to heel has been liberated from them all." (*A Mine of Meaning*, p. 215)

## **Effect of lower self**

Infidel soul hankers after the goods of this world and loves the pleasures and delights of the world. Its entire endeavour is to accumulate goods and acquire name and fame. The love of goods and fame inevitably leads a man astray, as happened to Nimrod and Pharaoh. But when the seeker of the truth has decapitated this infidel soul with the sword of struggle and becomes free of its lusts and desire then he becomes a true *Muslim*. So, the saintly people say that a hero is not the person who fights with apparent enemies, attacks infidels and becomes victorious, but a real hero is one who defeats his own selfish soul. This may be considered to be the highest state in Sufi ethics.

The calamity of lower soul strikes more lethally and swiftly than an infidel, and more frequently than the deception of Satan and his cunningness. This enemy is loved by man,<sup>1</sup> He considers anything wicked in his lower soul to be praiseworthy. So, if we consider the matter closely, we can easily understand that the root of all the discord, infamy baseness, destruction, sin, calamity and immorality with which mankind is afflicted from the very origin of creation till the Day of Resurrection, is the lower soul.<sup>2</sup> Since it is an internal enemy and source of all immoral actions, best effort is required to drive it out.

## **Subduing lower self**

To avoid the effect of lower self is very difficult. Hence, it is necessary for a disciple to follow the middle way.<sup>3</sup> This means that the animal soul should be looked after and nourished as much as is needed to enable it to do its work, while it should be weakened and kept in check to the extent needed to prevent it from transgressing divine commands. Whatever does not conform to this rule is wrong.<sup>4</sup>

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 83, p. 339

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 340

4. It is reported in sacred tradition that once seeing Abdullah Masud, who had by ascetic practices weakened his body, his feet having become incapable of motion, his eyes having sunk in their sockets, Mohammad (SAW) said: "O Abdullah your animal soul too has some rights over you! If you intend to destroy it, you will be caught and fall into sin." It has been indicated that the subduing of one's lower soul must be undertaken in an intelligent manner, lest it be destroyed or gain ascendancy over a person, or become refractory. (*Loc. cit.*)

According to Shaikh Maneri, those who are skilled in this matter enumerate three means by which the animal soul can be tamed.<sup>1</sup>

1. One is to keep it away from all lustful desires and pleasures just as unruly cattle become docile once they are deprived of fodder.
2. The second is to place a heavy load of devotion upon it. Just as an ass when it has a heavy load upon its back, becomes docile.
3. The third is to beg for help from Almighty God, and fly to Him for protection, otherwise there is no escape from its wickedness.

Afterwards Shaikh Maneri says: “When you show some accomplishment in using these three approaches, your animal soul will change from revolting against you to being obedient to you. While it is in this state, hurry up and put the bridle of Godly fear upon its head, and you will gain peace from its wickedness.”<sup>2</sup> In order to explain God fearing (*Taqwa*) Shaikh Maneri mentioned the Qur'anic commentary of Imam Zahid, where it is mentioned that Godly fear is of two kinds: One is the root and the other its branch. The root is abstinence from infidelity by accepting the faith; its branch means abstinence from sin by the practice of submission.<sup>3</sup> So, Godly fear implies abstinence from everything that might be harmful to our faith. In this context Shaikh Maneri also mentioned that two things have to be feared to strengthen the fear in God. One is what is simply forbidden and sinful, while the other is an over abundance of lawful things.<sup>4</sup> Because, it frequently happens that an overabundance of lawful things draw a man to what is forbidden and sinful.

Here it is mentioned that, subduing one's lower soul refers to the transformation of the qualities of the soul, not to the extinction of the soul itself,<sup>5</sup> as it is impossible. But its existence need not be regarded as dangerous after it has been subdued by inner discipline.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 83, p. 339

2. *Ibid.*, p, 341

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc., cit.*

5. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 84, p. 344

For subduing one's lower soul hunger (fasting) is praised by one and all because it is quite clear that mind of a hungry man grows sharper, his understanding clearer, and he himself healthier.<sup>1</sup> In this context Abu Jafar said, "The belly is such an organ that if it goes hungry, all the other organs and faculties are content and no longer prone to sin, but if it is full, all other faculties have their appetites whetted for sin."<sup>2</sup>

So we can say that words and deeds of a man depend on how much he eats and drinks. If even a morsel of forbidden or doubtful food that enters his belly, all the words and deeds that proceed from him are unlawful and unbecoming, i.e., food and drink are the seeds of words and deeds, for both the latter originate from the former two.

The venerable Sufis have said that it is an extremely difficult task for the disciple to bring the belly under control, for it is the source and mine of each and every sin.<sup>3</sup> So, reforming our belly is very important. For this first of all, a disciple has to watch on the forbidden or doubtful things. Then he should be careful about abundance of lawful things.

In a nutshell, we can say that according to Maneri, the lower self is an essence not simply a quality. It can easily be brought under control by ascetic practices but it cannot be completely destroyed for its essential nature. There need not be any fear from its existence, when it has been subdued by a disciple. It is like a dog that barks and bites. When it is subdued by austerity then it is lawful to keep it. But this dreary forest cannot be traversed without the grace and favour of Almighty God and the shade of the riches of a compassionate spiritual Master. Here it is mentioned that, the significance of moral life is subduing the lower self and act according to law of reason. Hence, the Sufis stress on controlling the lower self and removing egoism.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 84, p. 344

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345

3. *Ibid.*, p. 344

## 2.4. Service

Highlighting the importance of sincere service to human being Shaikh Maneri says that service is a wonderful work. It is one of the doors leading to blessing and mercy. Many promises are associated with service. Concerning this Prophet (SAW) says: “God looks after the needs of His servant as long as His servant looks after the needs of his brother Muslim.” Hence, as far as possible, one should be occupied with work, making use of our hands and tongue, pen and paper, money and goods in order to bring comfort to hearts.<sup>1</sup> In this context Maneri says: “It is good to adhere to the measure of fasting, ritual and supererogatory prayer you are accustomed to, but no work will be more profitable for you than that of bringing comfort to hearts.”<sup>2</sup> He also adds a hundred prayers and fasts will not achieve what can be achieved through a single service to a believers.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, working for the Muslims and exerting oneself with the affairs of the people is great wealth. Even the service to non Muslim has been appreciated in many places. This is the task of the prophets.

### Benefits of service

The Shaikh says that an important task of the disciple is rendering service. In service one acquires many benefits and special favours that are not found in any other form of devotion or submission. One is that a person’s selfish soul perishes. Pride and haughtiness are removed from his countenance and, in their place, humility and submission appear. A person becomes well mannered, and his behaviour improves considerably. He learns both the theory and the practice of the group. Gloom and heaviness are removed from his soul. He becomes gentle, lighthearted, and radiant, both internally and externally.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it morally uplifts a person from baseness.

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1. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 72, p. 151

2. *Ibid.*, p. 108; It is mentioned that according to the Law of Islam the service which is rendered to one’s mother is superior to four things: Prayer, fasting, alms giving and pilgrimage. *Khwan-i-Pur Ni’mat*, p. 40

3. *Ibid.*, p. 57

4. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 71, p. 293

According to Shaikh Maneri, the person who engages in service acquires numerous benefits. “A wise man was asked how many paths there were that led to God. He replied that every particle of existence was a path that led to God, but there was no other path that could lead a person in a better fashion closer to God, than that of bringing comfort to hearts.”<sup>1</sup> Concerning this Makhdum-e-Jahan says: “This is the way I found what I was seeking and this is what I have bequeathed to my disciple.”<sup>2</sup> Hence, there is no prayer or submission more excellent or more beneficial than that of serving one another.

It is related that when the Prophet (SAW) was asked, "What is the most excellent offering of all? He replied: “The service of a slave in the way of the Lord, or providing the shade of a tent on the way of the Lord, or providing transport for someone on the way of the Lord.” In another place he said: “Being quick to assist widows or the poverty stricken is like fighting a holy war on the Way to the Lord, or like observing the fast by day and keeping vigil by night.”<sup>3</sup> Again he says: “Whoever meets the need of a Muslim brother will have seventy of his own needs met by God.” “Whoever clothes a believer with a garment will be clothed by God most Exalted with a thousand robes on the Day of Resurrection. God will also meet a thousand of his needs and will attribute to him a year’s worship. He will also forgive his sins; even if they are as many as the stars of Heaven.”<sup>4</sup> How can this wealth be found in supererogatory prayer and fasting? So Shaikh Maneri mentioned that, a holy man was told in an assembly: “The king of this city stays awake at night and performs supererogatory ritual prayer.” He replied: “The unfortunate man has lost his way and has undertaken the work of others. Those present said “O Shaikh, how could this be so?” He replied: “Because the path that he should be travelling is that of providing various kinds of food to the hungry and different kinds of clothes to the naked; of filling desolate hearts with consolation; and providing the necessities of life for those in need.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 71, p. 294

2. Quoted in, *Loc. cit.*

3. He also added: “God will also give him light for every hair on his body and will remove from him the torments of the grave. He will write a decree preserving him from the fire of hell and enabling him to cross the bridge of Sirat and will provide protection from the troubles of That Day”. (Quoted in, *In Quest of God*, letter no. 72, p. 152

4. *Loc. cit.*

Performing supererogatory prayers and keeping vigil at night is the work of dervishes. Everyone should work according to his own vocation”.<sup>1</sup> Makhdum-e-Jahan also says: “Find a heart that is broken and fill it with consolation. This would be better than passing the night in vigil. Anything which is broken has no value except the human heart. The more broken it is the more valuable it is”.<sup>2</sup> It is related that Moses, engrossed in communion with God, said: My God, where should I look for you?” The reply came: “Seek Me close to the broken hearted.” He said: “My God, today there is no heart more broken than mine.” The reply came: “I am there.”<sup>3</sup>

The leader of a people is the one who serve them.<sup>4</sup> A famous Arab was asked: “How did you become a leader?” He replied that he served the people and thus became a leader. It is said that the coveted position of the Prophet’s Caliphate and the high status that Abu Bakr (RA) was blessed by service of the Prophet (SAW).<sup>5</sup> Thus, all mystics have initially passed through this stage and have put themselves at the service of others very devotedly and at the end were raised themselves to the position where others cherished to serve them, i.e., their approaches always remained altruistic.

Here it may be mentioned that there are some preconditions concerning service, without which true service is not possible. Otherwise it will be the service of inordinate desire instead of human service. These are:

1. A precondition of service is to abandon entirely one’s own wishes, desires and control over one’s affairs, and to live according to the desires of the group. Disciples should serve each traveler and sojourner according to the nature of his visitor’s needs.

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1. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 72, p. 152

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. Amongst the mystics, it is a popular saying that “Those who serve more, get more honoured and become more loveable; people have admiration for them and the loving eyes are turned towards them. (Quoted in, *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 71, p. 296)

4. *Loc. cit.*; Again, Rabia of Basra received so much wealth and so many blessing for giving a little water to a thirsty dog. (quoted in *In Quest of God*, letter no. 72, p. 152)

5. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 71, pp. 294, 295



2. The second precondition of service is not to consider one as important or favoured. Whatever belongs to the disciple should be viewed by him as the common property of all. To the extent that he is able, he should spend himself, his goods, and even his own desires and inclinations for the sake of others. In all circumstances he should give preference to the group over himself. He does not refuse any of its members in any matter, unless it be something forbidden by God. A disciple should behave toward all as a slave does toward his master.
3. The final precondition is that the disciple should consider that it is incumbent upon him to be grateful for whatever service he performs on behalf of anybody. He should do whatever he can for the group, utilizing every opportunity for advancing their good. Any disciple who does not devote himself to service, but is greedy for others to serve him, will not become perfect. Instead, he becomes heavy at heart.<sup>1</sup>

From the above discussion we can say that service is a very important aspect in the ethical philosophy of Shaikh Maneri. As a practical mystic, Shaikh Maneri like his predecessor laid particular stress on the service of humanity, as a part of mystical discipline. It is well known among the Sufis that whoever is more devoted to service is held to be dearer and more tender hearted, as a result of which people are more inclined to pay attention to such a people. A genuine Sufi, therefore, is one whose life is dedicated to the service of others. By illustrating the traditions of Prophet, sayings of the saints and different events Maneri tried to prove that service is better than traditional prayers. Through it man can purify himself, improve his morality and lead a peaceful social life. Therefore, we too should feel privileged to have this opportunity and be ever hopeful. In a nutshell, we can say that Shaikh Maneri strictly propagates the moral philosophy of altruism, egoism has no place in his ethics.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 70, pp. 293, 295

## 2.5. Social Ethics

Man is a social being. He lives in a society; he spends his life amongst the people. In all state of life he has to come in contact with others people, co-religionist, or people of different faiths. In a society, the way a person interacts with others is called the social ethics. The life of Allah's Prophet (SAW) has set the standard of high morality and lofty ethics, and the believers (the Muslims) are required to abide by this standard. Makhdum-e-Jahan (Rah A), in letter no. 59 of *Maktoobat-e-Sadi*, wrote under the heading 'Lofty ethics', gives a brief account of the Prophet's (SAW) lofty ethics; an excerpt (its translation) from it is presented below:

The essence of good ethics lies in carrying out the injunctions of Allah (SWT), and following the ways of the Prophet (SAW):

For his way of life, his behaviour and deeds were all delectable. Therefore, whosoever is his follower; it is incumbent upon him/her to follow him (i.e. the Prophet (SAW)). Thus it is necessary that one must behave nicely with others, relatives and non-relatives alike; one must not be unkind to others, so that the mutual regard for each other is maintained. Neither should one misbehave with others, in order that the pleasant relationship is retained. One should always be smiling, and should talk less. One should be the first to salute others, for the Prophet (SAW) used to salute his companions no matter how many times in a day he would meet them. One should be generous with whatever one has, for never in the life of the Prophet (SAW) there was a day when at the end of the day there was saved a *diram/dinar* in his possession. If perchance there was saved something, he would not retire to his room until he gave it to somebody. Never should one speak a lie, or call names, or speak against somebody in his absence. One should refrain from indulging in extravagance, or extra formality in one's own functions, for good ethics requires simplicity and informal approach. Never should one be untruthful in one's attitudes, deeds, and words; and in pursuance of *Shari'ah* one should be very sparing in his talk, food intake, sleep and dress, and should always keep one's spirit high. One should not be a miser, nor should have temptations for anything. One should avoid suspecting others, and keep one's mind free of damaging thoughts, and must, under all circumstances, try to emulate the Prophet's (SAW) way of life. One should avoid bad behaviour, in fact, one should not indulge in bad behaviour which may have semblance of Satanic behaviour, and

never should he/she indulge in bad behaviour and lowly talks like those of Satan. The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have advised us to get closer to those who might like to distance themselves from us, and to forgive those who might be cruel to us. Allah's instructions to the Prophet (SAW) had been to preach to people with wisdom in soft and pleasant language. ... Anas (RA), reports that he spent ten years in the service of the Prophet (SAW), but never was he reprimanded for anything: he says that whenever he did good work he (the Prophet (SAW) would bless him, and if something wrong happened at his hands he (SAW) would say: 'Allah's will had it so designed'. The Prophet (SAW) looked after his horses, and fed them himself, he used to stitch his clothes himself, and used to help his servants in doing their jobs; he used to repair his shoes himself; he used to clean the floor with the broom and would light the lamp himself. If he asked somebody to do something which he failed to do because of ignorance, he would not like people to reprimand him with unkind words. Never did the Prophet (SAW) use bad words or taunting words. He always had a smiling face, and he would be the first to greet with salutation if a Muslim approached him. He would sit amongst his companions informally, allowing no distinctive position for himself, so much so that the stranger found it difficult to spot him out. He respected his Companions, and would not address them with their first names; he would rather call them with their filial appellation. In case someone had no filial appellation, he would assign him one such name. If anyone, from amongst his companions or even others, would call him, he would promptly respond. If he happened to pass through the gathering of children, he would salute them. He would always try to cover up the sins or the wrongs of the Muslims. ...“He would always take care of the rights of the children, and the slaves, as enjoined by the *shari'ah*. In his missionary work for preaching the *Deen*, he patiently tolerated the harsh words and even violence of the addressees. He would never let go a beggar without offering him something: if he did not have something available to give, he would say, “Allah willing, I shall give you.” He would never show resentment in matters that concerned him personally, and in the propagation of Allah's *Deen*, he made unrelenting efforts, and worked undauntedly and without relaxation. He would help his friends who would be in trouble or be sick; if he did not see them he would go to see them at their homes. If any of his servants fell ill, he would perform their jobs on their behalf. He would do the shopping for others; he would accept the invitations and gifts from free people, as well as, the slaves, no matter if it was merely a draught of milk. ... Whosoever, be he a free man or a slave (man or woman), called him for help, he always made himself

available. If someone would come to him while he was praying, he would cut it short and attend to him first and then attend to his prayers again.

Whosoever would come to him, he would receive him with great courtesy.<sup>1</sup>

All these have been reported by Abu Saeed Khizri (RA), and can be seen in the books of Prophet (SAW)'s traditions. These are just a few examples of the Prophet (SAW)'s lofty ethics that have been adopted by those who have been practicing the Mystic way. Shaikh Maneri through his writings relentlessly tried to promote this ethical practice.

The norm of a society is largely determined by the life pattern of the general, the common, and middle class people, who are little concerned with the hair-splitting issues of high learning. For the convenience of these people, Makhdum-e-Jaha (Rah A) tried to present the essentials of the social teachings of the *Deen* in simple language, in order that the people at large got education in ethics, so that the society at large got properly cultured and became symbolic of Islamic society. *Fawayed-ul-Murideen* contains a large collection of Makhdum-e-Jahan's (Rah A) discourses based on these teachings. In this book Shaikh mainly highlighted the following topics: children's obligation to parents, parent's obligations to children, obligation to the relatives, obligations towards neighbours, wives' obligations to husbands, husbands' obligations to wives, privileges of slaves and servants, Muslim brotherhood with reference to *Huqooq-ul-Ibad* (rights and privileges of the people).<sup>2</sup> By illustrating these topics Shaikh Maneri has shown how closely the social behaviours of a disciple or a person is related to morality.

## **2.6. The Importance of Intention in Morality**

The value of a disciple's act lies in his motive or intention. To Shaikh Maneri, intention is related to deeds and actions as the soul is related to the body, and light to the eye. As the body without life or the eye without light is useless, so

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1. *Maktubat-e Sadi*, Letter no. 59, Eng. trans. of the extract Syed Sadrul Hasan, *op.cit.*, pp. 275-279

2. For detailed, see Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri, *Fawarid-ul-MuriDeen*, trans. in Urdu by Syed Shah Qasimuddin Ahmad Sharafi-ul-Firdausi, (Bihar Sharif: Bait-us Sharaf, Khanquah-e-Moazzam, 1408 Hij.), p. 82-106; Eng trans. of the extract, Syed Sadrul Hasan, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-292

the acts of a disciple without a pure motive are mere forms. They would simply be expressions of habit and convention.<sup>1</sup> Venerable Sufis consider habit and convention as pride, not submission, leading to destruction rather than salvation.<sup>2</sup> As long as a disciple treads the path of habit he is a devil, a hypocrite and not a dervish. A valid motive arises from purity. When the motive is not biased by worldly attractions, it is called ascetic purity by the Sufis. When the motive is not biased by heavenly attractions, it is called spiritual purity.<sup>3</sup>

It is said that the motive of a man is according to his knowledge and wisdom.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, concerning this the position of Law is: On the Day of Resurrection, men will be raised according to the purity of their intention. If desire and love of the world predominate in the heart of a man, all his acts will be worldly even his prayers and fasts.<sup>5</sup> “There are someone among you who hanker after the world” (3:151). Their reward is: “And a gulf is set between them and what they desire” (34:54). This is their stain. There is nothing left for them except useless labour and frustration.

If desire and love of heaven predominate in the heart, all his acts will be heavenly— even his eating and sleeping.<sup>6</sup> Their reward is the gardens of Paradise.<sup>7</sup> Again, there are others, of loftier aspiration, caring neither for earth nor for heaven, but for God only.<sup>8</sup> “It is you alone whom I worship” (1:4) can be ascribed to these people. “My prayer and sacrifices, my living and dying are for the sake of the protector of the worlds (6:163). The praise of these people has been aptly depicted in the Qur'an: And they desire His face (18:28). They have no desire except to meet God. There is no other reward for them except, “You are our True Friend.”<sup>9</sup>

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 31, p. 120.

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri, Letters from a Sufi Teacher*, trans from the persian, Baijnath Singh, (London: Golden Elixir Press, 2010) p. 33

4. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 31, p. 120

5. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 03, p. 09

6. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 03, p. 09; *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 31, p. 120

7. The garden of Paradise is for those who have faith and do good works (18:107)

8. *Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, Letters from a Sufi Teacher*, p. 34; *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, p. 120

9. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters, op.cit.*, Letter no. 31, p. 121

Hence, we should look within ourselves to see what we find there. Is love and affection for God predominating? or love and affection for Paradise? or love and affection for the world? Because, whatever captures ones attention in this world, will prove to be what he enjoys for all eternity.<sup>1</sup> This is the meaning of the saying of the Prophet (SAW): “He looks at your hearts and your intentions.”

The importance of intention knows no bounds. For, the recompense for any good work performed by the believer has to be limited because the work is limited, while the recompense for a believer’s good intention is unlimited, for there can be no limit to the intention of performing acts of submission and good deeds.<sup>2</sup> “The good intention of a believer is better than his work.” This would mean that, if someone has a good intention and desire, but for some reason, he is unable to perform the work he will be benefited for that. For example, a sick person is unable to perform the pilgrimage; a weak man cannot go out to fight on the way of God; and a poor person cannot bestow alms, but if they bear good intention the reward and recompense would certainly be the same as that of other person who performs all these works.<sup>3</sup> From this it is proved that the abode of intention is the heart, not clay. So the action of a person is evaluated through intention, not his performance.

The science of intention is a very refined and subtle. Hence, the deeds and actions of a man should be ruled by right intention. As far as possible he should be awoken and alert, and fix to ascertain the real nature of his intention. To him, every action of a man should have a intention and purpose. If one is interiorly filled with love of this world, his intention and purpose will be of this world and, his actions will also be worldly. He will be raised up with worldly mined in life after death. No matter how much he prays, fasts, goes on pilgrimage or gives alms, it will all be tinged with worldliness. On the other hand, if his inner disposition is only for God, i.e., love for what lies in store for him, and that is the purpose and intention of his actions then, whatever it be eating, drinking or

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1. Each person is weighed in the scale of his intention, which is dependent on his sincerity.

2. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 3, p. 10

3. Loc. cit

sleeping, it will be related to the world to come; And he will be raised up with men of uprightness.

The above views of Shaikh Maneri are based on Prophetic Tradition: "Every action is evaluated through intention." Here we find striking similarity with Kantian ethics. Immanuel Kant, a German Philosopher says: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a Good Will."<sup>1</sup> To him a good will is good not because of what it performs or effects, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of the volition, that is, it is good in itself.

## 2.7. Controlling of Bad Habits

In a Sufi way of life, a disciple has to try his best to purify his behaviour and to change his base qualities into praiseworthy ones. If it is neglected, it must breed dangers and difficulties. Man has all the qualities that is found in the animals. His resurrection will be determined by his predominant quality, not by his outer body on earth, i.e., he will turn into the form of the corresponding animal. In the language of Shaikh Maneri: "Whatever quality becomes predominant in this life will be the one in accordance with which the order will be given tomorrow that he be raised in that form, rather than in his present human form."<sup>2</sup>

For example, the person who is overcome by rage in this life will be raised on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a dog. The man who succumbs to lustful desires will be raised as a pig. Whoever is overcome by pride will be raised as a leopard. If anyone indulges in sly behaviour now, he will be raised as a fox and so on for other similar qualities.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics*, Eng. tr. Thoman Kingsmill Abbott, (London and Bracels: Longmans, 1962, p.10)

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no: 72. p. 297

3. It is related in a Prophetic tradition that the Friend of God (Abraham) will see Azar (his father) on the Day of Resurrection, as he is being carried off to hell. He will say: "O Lord, could there be any greater disgrace than this, that I am standing here in this open space and Azar is being borne off to hell? In the world I had declared, "Do not disgrace me on the Day of Resurrection" (26:87). Meanwhile, Azar had changed in form from a man to a hyena, for this was in keeping with his disposition while on earth. Abraham was told: "What relationship do you have with this hyena? How can you have any affinity with him"? (Quoted in, *Ibid.*, p. 297)

On the Day of Resurrection many men will be seen in bestial form, and many beasts in human form.<sup>1</sup> The dog of the companions of the Cave will rise in the form of man, owing to its human qualities, while Azar had the form of a man but the qualities of a hyena. Again, though Mount *Uhud* is a rock on the Day of Resurrection by changing its form it will stand in human form.<sup>2</sup> From these we should realize that we should not rely on appearance. Everything will be changed into its correct form. Those endowed with the inner eye know that all beings, even the mineral, pray or every particle of dust in the air is full of the Light of Divine Love.<sup>3</sup>

In worldly life, man is confronted with a great difficulty and frightening task.<sup>4</sup> So we should not be heedless in this life, but slowly and steadily should discipline ourselves so that we can overcome the part of our animal nature. It would be a mighty achievement if we can overcome it in this life.

With the controlling of bad habits Shaikh Maneri has also given importance on abandoning the harming of others. To him a disciple should not complain against, revile, or curse anyone. Even if a person is guilty of cruel and oppressive behaviour, as far as possible a disciple should accept gracefully his life and possessions otherwise others will have to suffer.<sup>5</sup> One should not act in such a way that anything unbecoming or saddening occurs to the dervishes or others. We should bear in mind that ‘Nothing befalls us except that which God has decreed for us’ (9:51). We should also be attentive not to be at enmity with anybody, nor to allow anyone to have any claims upon us.<sup>6</sup>

According to Ahmed Maneri, the rights of man are more demanding than the rights of the Lord. But in the observance of the rights of others, a person should proceed maturely according to the conditions and act according to the demands of the Law. He should not consider his own manner of proceeding only

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1. *Ibid.*, pp. 297-298

2. Concerning the mountain of *Uhud* the Apostle said, “*Uhud* is the mountain which loves me and of which I am fond” will, on the Day of Resurrection, be brought into the row of the righteous, for the virtue of the righteous has predominated in it. (*Ibid.*, p. 298)

3. “All things in heaven and on earth are engaged in praising God” (59:24)

4. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no: 72. p. 299

5. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 30, p. 77

6. *Loc. cit.*



by observing particular fast, ritual prayer or pilgrimage, but rather he should do all his duties according to the command of God.<sup>1</sup>

Summing up the above discussion we can say that in his ethical teachings Shaikh Maneri with a detailed discussion in the light of Islamic teachings has given more importance on inner aspects of human being, i.e., giving up carnal desire and to acquire praiseworthy qualities. At the same time he has stressed on giving oneself full attention to the rights of others.

## 2.8. Practicing Truth

Eating lawful food and speaking the truth are the two basic foundation of Sufism. As a practical Sufi Shaikh Maneri also has gives importance to them. To him, truth is the Sword of God on earth. It may not be laid on anything without cutting it. True faith consists in ceasing to desire anything save Truth. In another word the reality of faith means seeking absolutely nothing except God (truth),<sup>2</sup> as has been said: “Worship God, and associate nothing with Him” (4:36). The proof of the truth of one’s claim would be that, if he finds anything other than God, he does not accept it, but if he does accept it, he will be proved to be an imposter.<sup>3</sup>

Proof is necessary for truth. In order to distinguish the righteous man from the false one, and to separate the mere claimer from genuine investigator of Reality, inevitably there is need of proof and demonstration.<sup>4</sup> In this context Ahmad Maneri mentioned that Imam Shibli was once apprehended on the suspicion of madness. A group of people came up to him. He asked them who they were. They replied: “We are your friends.” He began to pelt them all with stones so they all fled. He called out: “O lying tongues, you claim to love me.

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1. One should endeavour to please the God through work (moral actions) not through Mecca or Medina; mosque or hermitage; solitude or privacy; religion or particular rite; not self-struggle or asceticism, not in journeying or staying put. He should give full attention to his work. (*In Quest of God*, letter no. 16, p. 71)

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 56, p. 264

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *In Quest of God*, letter no. 16, p. 51

Why are you fleeing from my unjust action?”<sup>1</sup> This incident proves that a claim alone, apart from proof and demonstration, would be false. Shaikh Maneri also mentioned that the hypocrites say: “We bear witness that you are the Apostle of God” (63:1). These words of them are right and correct, yet they are bereft of proof and demonstration. So, when righteous words are not accompanied by a righteous state, it is false,<sup>2</sup> as God Most Exalted says. “The hypocrites are liars” (63:1).

There is a sign or proof for the correctness of every correct thing. As for instance Shaikh Maneri mentioned that one day the Apostle (SAW) saw Harisa and asked: “How did you pass the morning?” He replied: “I passed it as a true believer.” This was a claim on the part of Harisa about the genuineness of his faith. Inevitably, without proof and demonstration, the Apostle did not let him go. He said: "There is a sign or proof for the correctness of every correct thing. What sign or proof is there of the correctness of your faith” In proof and demonstration of his claim he said: “I have shunned the world. I fast by day and spend the night in vigil. I am like a dead man. I see the gold and silver, marble and bricks of that lane. The divine throne is manifest to me and I see the lane along which the inhabitants of Paradise are visiting one another, as also those in hell who lament and complain to one another.” The Apostle said: “Hold fast to what you understand is necessary.

From the above description it must be clear that we should not believe anyone on the strength of a claim without proof or demonstration. Without proof such claimants should all be accounted as liars. Gold and silver are tested by fire so that the pure might be separated from the impure, in the same way, a believer is repeatedly tested by misfortunes so that the sincere person may be distinguished from the hypocrite; and the truthful person or man of moral from the liar or immoral. All the difficulties which are faced by man in this world constitute this testing, whether it be misfortunes and grief, or blessings and comfort.

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1. *Loc. cit.*

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52

## 2.9. Associate with Good Companions

Holy company is an important discipline for the disciple. It is very effective for moulding the nature and habit. On the other hand, being alone is destructive for a disciple. Hence it is laid down by the holy saints as binding upon a disciple. The desire-nature of man consists of certain ingrained tendencies which are affected by the tendencies of one's association. Ahmad Maneri says: "Association makes a deep impression. It is a total attack on a person's temperament and habits, to such an extent that a falcon, by associating with men, becomes wise, and a parrot learns to speak, while a horse, because it associates with men in its training, loses its animal traits and takes on those of men."<sup>1</sup> There are many examples of this sort of thing. Association overcomes not only innate habits but also one's created temperament.<sup>2</sup> It relates to the ways of behaviour that characterize the group, since all the group's affairs and influence develop in the context of mutual interaction. Hence, for a disciple association with a good company is an obligatory duty. In this context the Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: "A man chooses the religion and path of his friend. Take note of who his associates are". If his companions are good, then he himself, even though he is bad, will become good, because their magnanimity will effect a change in him. On the other hand, if he associates with bad companions, he too, will become bad, because his situation encourages him to be satisfied with what is bad, and even though he was good, he will end up by becoming bad.<sup>3</sup> In this context Malik ibn Dinar said: "Do not associate with any brother or friend if you derive no benefit there from, for your faith or for the world to come. Such company should be considered as forbidden for you".

Concerning the proper way of associating with others Maneri says: "Your associates will either be senior to you or junior to you. If you associate with your

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 70, p. 289

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

elders, you should be the one to derive some profit from their company. If, on the other hand, you associate with people younger than yourself, then they should profit from the contact and learn something from you that will deepen their faith. If you also learn something from them, then your faith too will be deepened.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet (SAW) has said: “Make many men your brothers (friends) for the sake of their good behaviour and upright dealings, for your God is full of life and bounty.” It is for this reason that the Lord does not like to see His slave tormented in front of his brothers.

To discuss the companionship or friendship Shaikh Maneri also discusses the social ethics. The rule of society is to behave with each according to his position in life. With reference to elders, to serve them; not to speak before them save when necessary, and then only with their permission, and after they have finished if they are speaking; not to sit on an elevated seat in their presence. With reference to equals to live in harmony and to share one’s wealth with them (not as a loan but as a free gift). With reference to younger to treat them with love and kindness.<sup>2</sup> Concerning general ethics he says, elders to be treated as one’s own parents, equals as one’s own brothers, the younger ones as one’s own children. None should be asked for anything, but each to be helped.<sup>3</sup> Life should be rendered agreeable to all. Not to oppose others except at the call of religious duty. Without purity every action of a believer is mere habit and custom. That is, precondition of becoming a Muslim or a faithful person is purity.

From the above discussion we can say that, man's righteousness rests on his friends. If they are virtuous will elevate him by their virtues and if they are vicious, will degrade him by their vice. Hence, a disciple should associate with those who are endowed with best moral virtues. He should associate with those who are strong in religion, integrity, morality and moderation.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 70, p. 290

2. *Ibid.*, p. 291

3. *Loc. cit.*

## 2.10. Acquisition of Purity

Man's worth is measured by his purity.<sup>1</sup> It is purity which makes a man respectable. It is the storehouse of all blessings and virtues. Islam is based on purity, and cannot tolerate the slightest stain. There is a saying in the Law: "The foundation of peace rests on purity".<sup>2</sup> God does not support any corruption or does He display His beauty to anyone who is unclean. For a long time punishment has been meted out to the unclean.<sup>3</sup> 'No one can touch the Qur'an except the pure' (56:79). It is mentioned that God is pure and none but the pure can approach Him. The impure (i.e., immoral) are beyond the light of Islam and misfortune has been poured upon them.<sup>4</sup>

To describe the nature of purity Shaikh Maneri mentioned three stages of purity.<sup>5</sup>

First: First of all it is necessary that one's clothes body and food be pure and lawful.

Second: Purity of the senses, i.e., one's five senses should be restrained from sin and disobedience.

Third: The purity of the heart; i.e., renunciation of all evil qualities, such as uncharitable, envy, avarice hatred or jealousy etc.<sup>6</sup> To be pure a devotee has to pass above mentioned three stages one by one.

When the first form of purity has been attained, a disciple has taken one step along the path of religion. When he has acquired the second type of purity, he has taken two steps along the path of religion. When he has attained the third type of purity he has taken three steps along the path of religion.<sup>7</sup> At this stage the

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1. In both worlds purity forms the threshold of riches and happiness while corruption and pollution are discarded along the way by all prophets and righteous people (*Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 29, p. 115).

2. Quoted in, *Loc. cit.*

3. *Loc. cit.*

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 16; *In Quest of God*, letter no. 19, p. 58; Ahmad Maneri also Mentioned that Ain-ul-Quzat divided purity into four kinds: 1) External purity pertaining to the body; 2) purity of the senses; 3) purity of the mind from imaginations; and 4) purity of heart. One should first attend to purity of the body and then become engrossed with heart. (*A Mine of Meaning*, p. 103)

6. To him, just as a disciple should be purified of reprehensible qualities, so also should he be purified of praiseworthy qualities. A person is purified of reprehensible qualities by abandoning them. On the other hand purification of praiseworthy qualities is achieved not paying attention to them. It is mentioned that Just as reprehensible qualities constitute a veil for disciple, so also taking notice of praiseworthy qualities acts as a veil. For a mystic's paying attention to anything except God is polytheism (*A Mine of Meaning*, p. 105)

7. Purity of heart as a prerequisite for genuine mystical knowledge. In a sense even thinking about the world is a form of pollution, for the world is polluted in so far as it is not God, and thinking about it is polluting in so far as it takes our hearts and minds away from God.

reality of repentance appears. This is when the genuineness of disciple is established. This is called a revolution i.e., changing from a state of defilement and impurity to one of purity. At that moment, the sun of the reality of faith arises in the disciple's heart and Islam shows its beauty to him and the door to intimate knowledge is flung open within his breast.<sup>1</sup> Without this purity however, every action, that he takes may be called mere habit and custom, preformed imitation of one's parents. This is not Islam, neither is it religion. Shaikh Maneri again mentions that purity is of two kinds, external and internal.<sup>2</sup> Internal purity emerges from the corner of the breast. That is an uncontaminated grace. By itself it is sufficient. Moreover, it is something rather special. The prophets and righteous one are distinguished by it. On the other hand, external purity involves struggle. It pertains to ordinary people.<sup>3</sup> This form of purity begins with a person's dress. i.e., when a person wishes to attain this purity he begins with his dress.

From the above discussion it is revealed that according to Shaikh Maneri for religious as well as moral development all kinds of purity are indispensable. Without it moral and religious development are totally impossible; i.e., just as prayer without purity cannot be correct. So, mystical knowledge of God without purity of heart is impossible. Just as clean water is required for purity of body, at the same way purity of heart is indispensable for true insight into the Divine unity. Here it is mentioned that, to lead a moral life purity of the heart is much needed than any other form of purity.

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1. *In Quest of God*, Letter no. 10. p. 58

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 29, pp. 116-117; *In Quest of God*, p. 58.

3. *In Quest of God*, Letter no. 10. p. 58

## 2.11. Love of God

Man is the greatest creation of God. Out of love God has created everything in earth for him. Hence Maneri says: The wealth of water and dust is no small matter. The labours of Adam and mankind are not without significance.<sup>1</sup> Because Adam was appointed God's Vice-regent (2:30) and Abraham was called 'the Friend of God' (4:125), and Moses was told 'I choose you for Myself' (20:40) and people have said that 'He loves them and they love Him' (5:54). He also added that if the sun of love had not shown upon Adam and mankind, then man's activities would have been merely of the same value as those of other creatures.<sup>2</sup> That is, man's dignity lies on God's love for him. In another word, love of God is the most desirable thing in this world as well as world to come. It is the origin of all happiness and spiritual wealth and results in abundant goodness.

Concerning the nature of love theologians are divided among themselves. A group of theologians contends that affectionate love of the Lord, is the sum total of attributes.<sup>3</sup> Because if the Qur'an and the Traditions had not been in agreement, its very existence with respect to God would be an impossible idea for the human intellect to grasp. Hence, they affirm the love of God, believe in it but they hesitate in practicing it. Another group of religious scholars says that, love is the inclination of the soul. It refers to desire, wish and intimacy. These are physical qualities and hence they are not applicable to God.<sup>5</sup> They explain, the love of a servant as worship while love of the Lord is said to be grace and guidance. The Lord's love for a servant, in their opinion means that He bestows many favours upon him and grants him merit both in this life and in the next, and keeps him safe from the punishment to come.<sup>6</sup> He also keeps him opposed to sin. In this context, Shaikh Maneri says: a servant's love for the Lord is a quality

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 46, p. 185.; Footstool and throne, tabiet and pen, heaven and hearth-all are at his service.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 186

3. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 48, p. 192

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. *Loc. cit.*

6. *Loc. cit.*

found in the heart of the believer, i.e., the love of the creatures for God is nothing but the obedience to God, his respects to Him, seeking His pleasure, and showing impatience in the quest for His vision.<sup>1</sup> Without Him, he cannot rest content with anyone. Moreover, he makes a habit of remembering Him except anything else and cuts off from all forms of desire and affection and accepts the King of love.<sup>2</sup> Here it is mentioned that loving for the sake of God means that a person loves someone because God loves him. Love is the conformity of the lover with the one He loves and with the one He hates.<sup>3</sup> The Lord loves everything that is lawful, hence a believer should also love all such things; the Lord detests everything that is unlawful, hence a believer should also detest such things. So it has been said that the most intimate degree of love is conformity of the beloved not the desire of Heaven or the fear of Hell.

### **Kinds of love**

According to Maneri love is of two kinds:<sup>4</sup>

1. One is the love of kind for kind. It is an inclination of the soul and consists in taking pleasure in a friend. The essence of the beloved is sought by way of bodily union.
2. Another is the love of the attributes of God. The lover of God rests in one of the attributes of His beloved. He feels affection when he hears the speech of the Beloved. According to Maneri, man can acquire passionate love for God. To him, when the lover attains the highest point of love he becomes free from lusts and sensual desires, and independent of union and separation, nearness and distance, and pleasure and pain.<sup>5</sup> He does not rely upon himself but completely relies on God. At this stage the name “passionate love” (*Ishq*) is acquired. Shaikh Maneri agrees with this group.

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1. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 48, p. 193

2. *Loc. cit.*

3. *A Mine of Meaning*, p. 271

4. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 48, p. 193

5. It is said: As long as your thou-ness remains in you it is you-you and He-He. When your-thou-ness is completely removed from you it will be He. (*A Mine of Meaning*, p. 272.)



## Acquisition of love of God

All believers in principle are partners in love by virtue of their participation in the root of mystical knowledge. Two things are necessary for its acquisition. The first is to sever all attachments to the world and to expel the love for anything other than God from one's heart. The second is to foster intimate knowledge of the Lord and nourish its hold over one's heart. This would be after purifying one's heart of all passions.<sup>1</sup>

He further says that passionate love (*Ishq*) cannot be attained with the help of imagination and intellect; it comes through Divine illumination.<sup>2</sup> God generates it in the heart of the lover. It runs like an electric current through the body. It brings light to eyes, hearing to ears and quickness to action.

Concerning the nature of passionate love (*Ishq*) Maneri also added: "As long as a person worships, he is called 'a devotee'; as long as he knows God, he is called a 'wise man'; as long as he perceives God, he is called a 'Gnostic'; as long as he turns away from all that is not God, he is called an 'ascetic'; as long as he lives righteously, he is called a 'sincere one'; as long as he treads the path of friendship, he is called an 'eager one'; and when he throws away all created beings in order to accept Him, he is called a 'friend'; and as long as he makes a gift of himself while witnessing Him, he is called 'a lover'; and when he becomes such that both his annihilation and his permanence perish in His existence once and for all, he is called a 'passionate lover.'"<sup>3</sup>

## Signs of the lover of God

Concerning the signs of God's Friends Maneri at first mentioned the traditions of the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) says:

1. When God Almighty befriends someone:

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1. Here it is mentioned that according to Maneri the believers by virtue of their faith, are friends of the Lord. As it is said: 'God is the friend of those who believe' (2:25). Again he considers all unbeliefers as enemies of the Lord on account of their unbelief as it has been said: 'God is the enemy of unbelievers' (2:98)

2. Sharafuddin Maneri, *The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 48, p. 195

3. *Ibid.*, p.194

- a) He rains calamities upon him, and when someone displays diligence in his love for Him, He puts him to the test (*Iftana*). The meaning of '*Iftana*' is that God snatches property, wife or children of His lover. When the lover patiently bears these sufferings, God makes him '*Ijtaba*'. After '*Ijtaba*' the lover attains the stage of '*Istafa*'. The meaning of '*Istafa*' (Selection) is that God makes His servant specially favoured so that he acquires many kinds of qualities effortlessly. And at the stage of '*Istaba*' (Purity) he is cleansed of his faults and makes him shy away from anything other than God.
  - b) God makes him preach to himself and gives him divine knowledge from His own heart so that he might give himself orders with regard to what is commanded and prohibited.
  - c) He grants him an insight into the faults of his own soul.
  - d) He abandons his sin and his sins do no real damage, i.e., God grants him the gift of repentance before he dies.
2. He feels intimacy in prayer with the Beloved and perfect happiness when alone with Him.
  3. With regard to inner sign he who loves God, there is no other thinking in him except God. And with regard to external matters, he should carry out what is commanded and refrain from doing what is prohibited.<sup>1</sup> It is also said that whoever does not possess following three special qualities is not a friend of God:<sup>2</sup>
    - i. He prefers to converse with God rather than with men;
    - ii. he prefers sight of God to that of men;
    - iii. He prefers to devote himself to God rather than to be engaged in serving men. Moreover, he shows no distress of mind at the loss of anything except God.

From the above discussion we can say that, love of God is closely connected with the purity of heart. Love as mentioned earlier, is regarded in Sufi ethics as

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1. *A Mine of Meaning*, p. 277

2. *Sharafuddin Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, letter no. 47, p. 189

*Summum bonum* but there is no way to reach at the state of Divine love without being moral. A lover is freed from all kinds of evil desires and worldly pleasures. He is graced with Divine light, through which he can easily grasp the inner meaning of facts. As a result, he uses all his inner and outer organs for the pleasure of God and as well as for the well being of creatures.

## **Sum up**

From the above discussion we can sum up the moral teachings of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri in the following ways:

In worldly life Shaikh Maneri has forbidden to indulge the worldly pleasure and enjoyment. Attraction to the object of world is the cause of immoral action, troubles and afflicting of human beings. But he does not encourage asceticism rather he insists on removing worldly desire from the heart. With such mental state one should live an active life. Human being should try his best to use his all organs, wealth and property to cultivate this world for future life.

In his ethical teachings, Makhdum-e-Jahan has given utmost importance on knowledge. To him, knowledge is the foundation of morality. It helps man to distinguish right from wrong. It is more important than worship because it is the source and guide of worship. Through knowledge man can acquire salvation, Heavenly ranks, and power. On the other hand, ignorance brings destruction. Moreover, a wise man is the friend of God and ignorant man is His enemy. So, it is obligatory to man to be free from ignorance and ignorant and to get associated with scholars.

Like Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani he has opposed egoism. To him, ego or lower self is the greatest enemy of man which hankers after pleasure of the belly, pleasure and delight of the world, wife and children, post and position and external adornment. To him, love of the above things inevitably leads a man to astray. On the other hand, when a man is free from the desire of the lower self or egoism, becomes a virtuous man. To get rid from the fetter of the lower self, Maneri has suggested to give up forbidden or sinful things and doubtful things.

To acquire the love of God or to live a virtuous life Makhdum-e-Jahan has given importance on eating lawful things. To him, man's behaviour (words and deeds) depends on what kind of food he eats and drinks. If he eats forbidden or doubtful food all the words and deeds that proceed from him become unlawful, i.e., whoever eats forbidden and doubtful things is excluded from good action. Even if he does something good it is not acceptable to God and he gets no benefit from such action. On the other hand, in moral life no one will be benefited from the words of such man.

Shaikh Maneri has emphasized on social ethics. In this case he has considered the life of Prophet (SAW) as the highest standard of morality and lofty ethics. To him, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to follow him. Prophet Mohammad (SAW) was humble, frugal, averse from worldly wealth and pleasure, benevolent, truthful, compassionate, patient, fellow-feeling, tolerant of others view, amiable, generous, bountiful, accomplished, humanist, above all, he prefers other goodness to himself. Hence, to live a moral life one should practice the above mentioned qualities of the Prophet (SAW).

For evaluating man's actions Shaikh Maneri has mentioned the intention. A valid motive arises from purity. It is mentioned that on the day of Resurrection men will be raised according to the purity of their intention. If desire and love of the world predominate in the heart of a man, all his actions will be worldly, even his prayer and fasting. And if desire and love of hereafter predominate in the heart, all his acts will be heavenly even his eating and sleeping. Hence, man's intention is the expression of his internal state.

Makhdum-e-Jahan's moral philosophy is altruistic. He has given importance on the service of human being as well as his right. To him, the right of man is more important than the right of the Lord. For the right of the Lord is observed by repentance and seeking forgiveness, but the right of man remains until person concerned has been satisfied or he has been forgiven. Mere ritualistic worship of God is not the only duty of man rather it is the basic duty of a man to perform his duties to whole created beings and to bring happiness for them. To him, there is no other path that could lead a person in a better way closer to God, than that of bringing happiness in the heart of a human being. Hence, we can say

that by helping humanity, a man can become a leader and reach the pinnacle of spirituality.

Shaikh Maneri has emphasized on building good moral character. For that he has mentioned the need of association with good company and living a social life. By associating with good company a devotee can overcome his inherent defective habits. A man chooses his friend's religion and path. If he associates himself with good companions he will become good and if he associates himself with bad companions he will also become bad. Maneri has also added that, Satan dwells with him who is alone but remains distant to those who live together with the men of piety.

To him, man is measured by purity. It is also the foundation of Islamic creed, as it is closely connected with faith (*iman*). God is pure and he does not display his beauty to none but pure. To be pure not only one's five senses would have to be pure but also his heart has to be pure. It is mentioned that, man's resurrection will be determined by the predominating qualities of his character, not by his own body on earth. That is, goodness or the badness of human conduct will ascertain the form of man in the day of Resurrection. Morality includes purity without which nothing can be regarded as moral. Without purity observing ritual of Islam is a mere habit or custom. There is no connection of it to Islam. Hence, who are impure or immoral are beyond the border of Islam.

To him, man's dignity lies on God's love for him. Love of God is the most desirable thing in this world as well as world to come. It is the source of all happiness and goodness. Because, lover of God is opposed to act immoral activities and He gives up all kinds of desire and affection other than Him. God is pure, so he loves everything that is pure and dislikes everything that is impure. Hence, lover of God should also love those things which God loves and dislikes those things which He dislikes. That is, human should become pure in conformity with Divine attribute.

In this way Makhdam-e-Jahan proves that Sufism is closely connected with morality. No spiritual progress is achievable without a high moral mindset.

# CHAPTER VII

## Concluding Remarks

We may now conclude our discussion by summing up the findings throughout the thesis.

In chapter one— 'Introduction', we have tried to highlight the main theme of the dissertation i.e., 'morality'. Hence, we have discussed the nature and source of morality, relation between religion and morality, development of morality, morality in different mystical traditions, and above all we have discussed the scope and purpose of the thesis. Here we have shown that general morality and mystical morality interweave each other. Though general morality can exist independently, the main source of moral Law is God and the speeches of his Messengers and their way of life. In comparison to general morality, religious morality is wider and comprehensive. General morality to some extent is theoretical but religious as well as mystical moralities are both theoretical and practical. At the same time, intention is accepted as the final subject of moral judgment. If we consider the history of ethics we can see that conscience was regarded as the subject of moral judgment in one stage of ancient society. In Plato's philosophy we find absolute form of mystical ethics. According to Plato highest idea is 'Absolute Good.' It reveals 'Himself' in everything that truly exists. It is the source of all truth, knowledge, beauty and moral goodness which is an object of mystical faith rather than of rational intuition. He has also declared, "Reason is the proper regulator of human action." Again, there is similarity between the morality of Sufis and the concept of 'well being' of Aristotle. To him, by regulating the emotion and desire through reason man can fulfil his true function. Like Sufis he also thinks that well being is not attainable in a single moment but requires whole life for its realization. Again, Aristotle's concept of a

perfect man is somehow similar to the term 'Sufi'. Because he says that it is possible to achieve perfection through habitual practice of those tasks which signify man as a man.

Again, ethics of medieval thinkers was influenced by Christian Church. It resembles to the Sufi ethics. For example, medieval philosopher Augustine said: "Happiness is the Supreme good and it is truly possible only in the vision of God in after life." He also added that moral virtues are inseparable from the theological virtues. Like Sufis, for moral judgment, medieval philosopher Thomas Aquinas also gave importance to appropriate circumstances and intention.

Theory of intuitionism of modern philosophers is also similar to Sufism. The '*kashf*' of Sufis is somehow like intuition. As like as Sufi, Martineau says, conscience or intuition is the speech of God. Hence, for moral judgment of human behaviour the command of conscience is considered to be correct and absolute. At the same time, intuitionist philosopher Kudwarth considers that moral law is inferential as well as God gifted, inevitable and axiomatic principle.

In chapter two– 'Islamic Concept of Morality', we have tried to give an overview of morality in Islamic concept. We have at first discussed the meaning of *akhlaq* (morality) from the Islamic point of view. In Islam it is used to indicate a set of religious and moral qualities or a habit which are gained through the repetition of a certain action by an individual. Islamic ethics discusses the way of purification of the soul by removing vices from it and adorns it with some virtues. It also ascertains the moral obligation of human beings.

To Islam, morality sets some principles by practicing which, man can distinguish between good and evil. Its aim is to achieve the nearness of Allah as well as happiness and salvation by purifying the soul. Its highest ideal is 'create in oneself the attributes of God.' The origin of Islamic ethics is the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). The fundamental of Islamic ethics are: belief in Allah, Day of Judgment and virtuous deeds, which would be rewarded in the Day of Judgment.

According to Islam, evaluation of man's action is based on three bases: motive of the action, the essence of the action and consequences of the action. Those actions which enjoy all these aspects are regarded as moral and virtuous. It also considers reason as the unique authority of morality.

**In chapter three-** 'An Overview of Sufism', we have tried to give a pen picture of Sufism. Here we have discussed nature of Sufism, the origin of word Sufi, relation between Sufism and *Shari'ah*, origin and development of Sufism and Sufi Doctrines. By discussing the above topics we have tried to prove that Sufism is the integral part of Islam originated from the Qur'an and Sunnah. We have also shown that Sufism is the moral philosophy of Islam.

**In chapter four-** 'Relation between Sufism and Morality', we have endeavoured to show how Sufism is related to morality. For that, we have discussed moral aspects of Sufism, relation of Sufi moral values with religion, enjoining good and prohibit evil, moral training of Sufi life, and above all some characteristics of Sufi morality. Sufis have interpreted morality in terms of human behaviour and from moral perspective defined Sufism as goodness of disposition. Goodness of disposition is related to endure the burden of society as well as welfare of human being, acting justly with fellow men, and not to follow the dictates of flesh or lower self, rather follow the injunction of Divine Law.

**In chapter five-** 'Morality in Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani's Writings, we have at first discussed the biography of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani which was founded on struggle for being moral or a lover of God. Later on we have discussed elaborately his moral teachings. Abdul Qadir Jilani has reached the pinnacle of Islamic spirituality but he was humble, patient and extremely forbearing in his dealings. He used to show his love to all classes of people in society, except oppressors or tyrannical rulers. He was the embodiment of courtesy, politeness, patience, generosity, humbleness, forgiveness, courageous behaviour, and above all truthfulness, but far from all evil traits of human nature. He has related Sufism with morality. That is, the concepts which are related to



Sufism are also related to morality. For the purification of soul the ways which have been prescribed by Ghawth Pak is similar to the German philosopher Hegel.

**In chapter six**– 'Morality in Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri's Writings', like previous chapter at first we have mentioned the profile of Shaikh Sharfuddin Ahmed Yahya Maneri and afterward his moral teachings. Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri was an illustrious Sufi saint of Indian-subcontinent in the early fourteenth century A.D/eight century of Hijra. He was an erudite Islamic scholar who followed the Sunnah of Prophet (SAW) to the very letter. He practiced what he preached. The principles which are related to Sufi doctrines found practical illustration in his life. The moral conduct of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri was the very image of the Prophet (SAW)'s character. Ceaseless aim of his venture was to follow the life of Prophet Mohammad (SAW). In the aspect of moral conduct he was kind hearted, benevolent, humble, renouncer, well wisher of the poor and afflicted, affectionate mentor, and above all servant of humanity.

To clarify his moral teachings we have at first illustrated his view about the world, its bad effects, importance of renouncing the world and how one can lead a moral life by leaving worldly desires. At the same time we have mentioned the importance of knowledge in moral life. In the discussion of nature of knowledge, the difference between knowledge and intimate knowledge is mentioned. The knowledge which fulfils man's practical purpose or the knowledge which inspires man to live an ideal life and connects him to his Creator is true knowledge, according to Shaikh Maneri. To him, a genuine Sufi is one whose life is dedicated to the service of humanity.

## **Core Findings**

Now we shall humbly present the core findings of the thesis.

1. Sufism is the moral philosophy of Islam. It is the way of building noble character. To analyze the different definition of Sufism it is seen that Sufism is directly linked with good character and ethics. That is, morality is indissoluble

part of Sufism. An initial condition of Sufi life is to lead a moral life. Morality for them is totally related to the purification of soul. It is the training of the soul which results in the attainment of moral virtues. Hence, some Sufis explain the morality of the saints in terms of human conduct. To the Sufis, goodness of disposition (conduct) is of two kinds: towards God and towards men. Latter is related to the welfare of human being. Again, some Sufis define Sufism as good nature which includes fulfilling the commands of God, showing kindness and doing justice to human being and not to follow the command of flesh. In fact, Sufism prescribes some ethical responsibilities or duties which are expressed in terms of duties to Allah as well as duties to fellow men. So morality of Islam as well as Sufism is the combination of such duties which keep us away from evil doing and directs us to the right path.

2. Attaining moral purification is the basic theme of Sufism. Hence, Sufism stresses on purity so vigorously that some Sufis take Sufism in the sense of purity. The Sufis cultivate moral ideals to such an extent that they can reach the state of perfect purity inwardly and outwardly. As a result, they do not die an unclean death. That is, a Sufi practices morality up to death. Like other Sufis Abdul Qadir Jilani and Sharfuddin Maneri have given more importance on purity. According to Ahmad Maneri, man's worth is measured by his purity. God is pure and none but the pure can approach him. That is, those are impure or immoral are far from Islam. He also adds just as without purity, prayer cannot be correct, so also without purity of heart mystical knowledge of the Lord is impossible. Hence, purity i.e. morality is the precondition of Sufi life.

3. There is no place of violence, revenge and vindictiveness in Sufism. In other words, non-violence, large-heartedness and magnanimity are the most significant virtues of Sufi life. A Sufi is generous to all classes of people. In all circumstances, he gives importance to others than himself. And always desires for others' welfare. In this context, al-Junaid said; "Sufi is like the earth- both the righteous man and the sinner walk upon it, like the clouds which give shade to all

things and like the raindrop which waters all things. To be a Sufi, a devotee should maintain some moral qualities which include abandoning one's right to requital, show mercy to those who treat one unjustly and supplication on their behalf. Moreover, they believe that he who kills a man unjustly as if he commits the killing of whole humanity. Qualities like non-violence, forbearance and generosity as illustrated in the Sufi manuals were not mere ideals but the Sufis have carried out those ideals in their daily life. Hence, it is seen that a Sufi does not exhibit violence, envy and hatred; rather he shows non-communality without distinction of caste and creed. Thus, by showing forgiveness and love to all creatures he proceeds to his goal.

4. To the Sufis curbing lower self is the foundation of morality. Moral perfection of the soul is acquired through control over the desires of the lower self. In worldly life lower self or passion is the greatest enemy of man. Except God all things of the world is subordinate to it. It commands only for evil doing and encourages egoism. Hence, the central idea of Sufism is the attempt of taming the lower self (*nafs*). For removing lower self Skaikh Maneri has suggested to give up forbidden or sinful things and doubtful things. At the same time, he stressed on fasting as well as the ascetic practice and removing egoism.

5. Enjoining good action and prohibiting evil action is a basic duty of a Sufi. According to the Qur'an, human being possesses two aspects related to morality, that is, good and evil or right and wrong. There are many verses in the Qur'an (3:110, 3:104, 95:4-5, 103:1-3, 30:30) which testify how closely moral values are connected with Islam. The Sufi follows Qur'anic moral directions with its outer and inner meanings. Hence, Ethics of Sufism is complementary to Islamic Ethics. Islamic Ethics inspires man for moral action and discourage to perform immoral action. Enjoining good action and prohibiting evil action is one of the basic characteristics of Islamic as well as Sufi ethics. For that reason, Muslim nation is called the best nation (*Khairan Ummah*). Al-Ghazali, Abdul Qadir Jilani, Sharfuddin Maneri and other famous Sufis have pointed out the

Qur'anic approach to moral instruction and advice people to act upon it. These teachings of Sufism are very helpful to maintain peace and order in society.

6. Sufi morality is based on knowledge. Like great philosopher Plato and others, the Sufis stress on necessity of knowledge. All kinds of success and degradation depend on it. Morality and good conduct is not possible without it. According to Shaikh Maneri the ethical significance of knowledge is that those Sufis who had knowledge they must have acted out of knowledge. Knowledge can distinguish the truth (right) from falsehood (wrong). Through knowledge one can grasp all abstract and universal truth like the knowledge of God. Again, according to Shaikh Jilani, only the wisdom can attain the unity of Allah and the wise men are the pure servants of Allah whom He has chosen to receive divine messages. A man of knowledge is obliged to fulfil Allah's orders and can purify himself from all evil desires and vices, i.e., a wise man is a moral person.

Here it may be mentioned that, though Abdul Qadir Jilani and Sharfuddin Maneri and other Sufis classified knowledge in different ways they put importance on both Divine and human knowledge. One is acquired from human beings and other is revealed by Allah which is termed as *Ilm-e-ladunni* or inspired knowledge. Sufis care chiefly for that knowledge which is bestowed on them by God not that which is acquired by academic study or physical organs. To them, knowledge involves exertion, i.e., struggle with self or asceticism. They claim that the way to acquire the knowledge of God is the elimination of vices, purification of the heart and sanctification of the soul after which God takes possession of His servant's heart for inner enlightenment. Such enlightened man is true moral being. Hence, we can say the way of acquiring true knowledge is the way of leading moral life. Here it is mentioned that, Shaikh Jilani mainly considers wisdom as the source of knowledge at the same time also mentions Law, intuition (*kashf*), *ilham* and revelation as source of knowledge. And for the well development of human being he recognizes the necessity of worldly as well as divine knowledge.

7. Practicing good moral character is an important aspect of the Sufis. All the prophets and saints have given importance on good conduct and they were the possessor of good conduct. According to the Prophet (SAW), it is more important than prayer and fast. He also adds, among the believer that person is best whose conduct is best, i.e., it is the most excellent of all the virtues of the servant. Al-Ghazali has called it half of religion. To him, good conduct includes four basic moral qualities- knowledge, bravery, patience and power of judgment. Other qualities are their branches. Good conduct removes all faults as the rays of sun melt snow. On the other hand, bad conduct is ruinous poison which destroys divine service and creates turbulence in the society.

8. Sufism stresses on humanism and considers service of human being as a great virtue for a novice. Prophet (SAW) has called it the most excellent offering of all. By following him like other Sufis Makhdum e-Jahan also stresses on it. To him: "It is good to adhere to the measure of fasting, ritual and supererogatory prayer you are accustomed to, but no work will be more profitable for you than that of bringing comfort to hearts." He also added: "A handed prayers and fasts will not achieve what one work of a believer will." In fact, in service one can acquire many benefits and special favours that are not found in any other form of devotion or submission. It removes person's selfish soul, pride and haughtiness and in their place humility, submission and well manner appear. Hence, all the Sufis try their best to bring comfort to the hearts of others and take it as one of the distinguished stage of moral purification as well as to acquire the love of God.

9. Lawful earning and speaking the truth are the two basic foundations of Sufism. Like other Sufis Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Sharfuddin Maneri have stressed on them. According to Shaikh Jilani, lawful earning is the first condition of all kind of prayers. To him, unlawful earning deadens the heart and lawful earning enlivens it. Again, Sharfuddin Maneri says that the effects of words and deeds depend on how much one eats and drinks. If even a mouthful of forbidden or doubtful food enters one's belly all the words and deeds that come from him are unlawful and immoral.

Again, Truthfulness is also the foundation of Sufi path as well as morality. The dignity of truthful person is very high. Their rank is next to the prophets and they are inheritors of Divine Attributes. Success of human life depends on it. A truthful person is truthful in his words, deeds and inward states. That is, when one's inner being and outward actions are in harmony, he is called a truthful person. A truthful person does not follow the advice of his lower self or passions. Rather in all circumstances he remains devoted to God and engaged in good action. He considers the problems of others as the problems of himself.

The dignity of the truthful person is so high that he cannot be harmed by anyone's words and deeds. In this regard it may be mentioned that when Shaikh Jilani was asked by someone what brought him to his spiritual position, he said: "The truthfulness which I promised to my mother." Hence, it is clear that truthfulness is the basis of morality as well as spirituality.

10. Asceticism or renunciation (*zuhd*) is one of the fundamental teachings of Sufi ethics, because every sin (immoral action) originates from the love of this world and every act of goodness and obedience springs from renunciation. The Sufi writers have mentioned in their writings different verses of the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet (SAW) about the evils of love of the world. So inspired by the Qur'an and the life style of the Prophet (SAW) and his immediate successors all the Sufis have given more importance on practicing an ascetic life. To them, renunciation means leading an ideal life which is free from all kinds of worldly greed and desires. This idea of Sufism is similar to the view of cynics. They held that the good life consisted in being independent of human desires and their satisfaction. According to Antisthenes, the founder of the cynic school, only pleasure does not help us to achieve freedom. Poverty, painful toil and disrepute are positively useful as means of progress in spiritual freedom and virtue.

11. An important virtue of Sufi ethics is justice. According to Islamic ethics, the virtue of justice demands that people should be uniform in their words and deeds, in judging between man and man rightly, in dealing with others to deal

justly and to fulfil due obligation of others. Like ancient Greek philosophers Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and others have stressed on justice and condemned injustice. According to Shaikh Jilani, injustice is a great sin which destroys him who commits it. According to Islam, man has been appointed trustee of his wealth, others have right over it. But if he uses it only for his personal interest, he will become a rebel against God. Hence, in social life a person should meet the rights of others at first. Moreover, human being would be accounted or interrogated for that he did in the worldly life. At the same time, in the society every man is responsible for his subordinate. Hence, Shaikh Jilani says that man should maintain justice in all his works and show mercy toward others and avoid injustice in dealing with others. In the same way, Ahmed Maneri has discussed the social behaviour of human being, i.e., social ethics. Where he stressed on social justice and has taken the life of the Prophet (SAW) as the high standard of morality and lofty ethics and advised his followers to follow him in all aspects of life. Hence, being influenced by the Qur'an and Sunnah every Sufi has made a habit of acting justly in all affairs of life.

12. Humility is inseparable part of Islam and a primary condition of Sufi way of life. Humility is submission to God and its total submissiveness would be surrender to God. In the Holy Qur'an God has encouraged people to be humble. All the prophets have praised it and practiced it in their way of lives. Being encouraged by the Qur'an and Sunnah, Sufis have taken it as one of their principles. In this context, Shaikh Jilani Says: "Humility elevates the novice to high position and lofty spiritual rank. It is the root and branch of perfect obedience to Allah. It entails that the servant of God does not see anyone inferior to himself, he rather sees superiority in others over himself." Again concerning the humble nature of Sufi, Shaikh Maneri says: "In humility, they are like the earth, which is trampled down by everybody but it does not complain. They can not think of taking revenge upon anybody. They would be prepared to be bread winner of the whole world but for themselves they would depend on nobody. They are generous like a river, which provides water to friend and foes alike."

To him, if these attributes are not seen in a novice he has not taken even the first step in the way of *tariqat*. So it is a common phenomenon to the Sufis in all circumstances to behave humbly with all people irrespective of young or old, rich or poor, insignificant or great, and righteous or sinner.

13. In Sufism, there is no place of egoism at all. According to egoistic hedonism, the pleasure of the individual is the moral standard. The individual ought to seek pleasure and welfare only for himself. Hence, this view of egoistic hedonism is completely against the ethics of Islam as well as Sufism. According to Islam, those who do not prefer others to himself are not true Muslims. Hence, in all circumstances Sufis opposed egoism and encouraged human being to fight against lower self or passionate desires, at the same time they give more importance on the goodness of others than that of themselves. For this reason, to the Sufis, egoism cannot be a moral standard.

14. Sufism strongly upholds altruism as the basic principals of morality. According to this theory, it is the moral duty of an individual to seek the goodness of others with no regard for his own. Sufi manuals testify that morality of Islam includes duty toward others regardless to outward status, rank or association, resulting in an altruistic attitude toward other creations, even one's enemies. A Sufi keeps good relation with flock, children, neighbours, friends, and above all with all people. Moreover, he endures insult and injury of others. Thus, his essence of soul is manifested. In this context Shaikh Maneri said, "Like the glorious lamp of the Heaven his benevolence goes out to all, young and old; he remains hungry and unclad but feeds and clothes others. He does not care for the injustice done to him nor for the malevolence of those who are hard upon him. Instead, he intercedes for them, repays goodness for evil and gives thanks for abuses. ... His heart is filled with a desire to do good to all." To him, whoever lacks these qualities of spirit cannot lay a claim to be a traveler on the path of Sufism.



Like other Sufis Shaikh Jilani also stressed on altruism. He says: "The virtuous person should bear all the burden of other created beings on a voluntary basis whether it is needed or not." He also adds that, a devotee should not imprecate people even if anyone has done injustice to him. He should not abandon his relationship with the oppressor and never think of taking revenge of the wrong actions. For the sake of pleasing God, he should tolerate the oppression and adopt endurance and humanity. According to him, we must not forget the love of the created beings and the principles of endeavour of human welfare. In case we forget this principle, we will be designated as a member of the community who believes in violence. Hence, it is very distinct that by heart and soul a Sufi is altruistic.

15. To the Sufis acquiring the love of God is the *Summum bonum* or highest good of life. This idea of Sufism is also related to morality. The most important quality of the lover of God is his complete detachment from the carnal desires. Hence, it is said Sufi is he who has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything. In another word, the lover is he who has lost his own attributes and has acquired the noble attributes of his Beloved. According to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, the lover becomes beloved if he purifies his heart from anything other than Allah. To him, this spiritual station is attained by performing the obligatory worshipping duties, patiently refraining from prohibited and dubious things, obtaining the permissible things without passion and lustful desire, practicing total renunciation, refusing to comply with lower self and Satan, and above all purifying the heart. To him, the person who has attained the purity of his heart and has attached to his Lord consider gold and clay, praise and blame, sickness and goodness of health, affluence and poverty, good fortune and bad fortune in this world equal.

From the above discussion it is obvious that moral standard of Sufism is similar to perfectionism of Hegel. According to this theory self-realization or perfection is the highest good. It means rational control of feelings, impulses and

desires in accordance with virtue of moral excellence, i.e., self-realization means full development of the soul of man by bringing solidarity with the help of reason in the desires. Sufi ethics supports this view, because it thinks that a devotee should try his best with all his wealth and organs for the welfare of other human beings. He always seeks happiness for others instead of himself. Therefore, it can be said that Hegel's theory of perfectionism has a close relation to the moral standard of Sufism.

But if we analyze perfectionism and Sufism minutely we can see Sufism has a wider connotation than perfectionism. For example-

Perfectionism stresses on self pleasure as well as pleasure of others. According to this theory, endeavouring for the pleasure of others, man also gets pleasure. But to the Sufis, it is the basic virtue for them to seek goodness of others in all circumstances. Moreover, a Sufi not only seeks the goodness of human being but also stresses on the goodness of the whole created beings. For example- there is a saying of Prophet (SAW): It is a sin to pluck a single leaf of a tree unnecessarily. The Sufis abide by this saying word to word.

Again, according to perfectionism, man's goodness is related to the goodness of society. So, the perfectionists say that man can achieve his own highest goodness through the highest goodness of society. If we compare this idea of perfectionism to the Sufism, we can see that the Sufis also give more importance to the goodness of society than that of self-goodness. The Sufis not only tell the goodness of others rather they practically engage themselves for the goodness of others. The biographies of the famous Sufis consolidate this.