

# Tawba Leads to Forgiveness

Santa Barbara ~ September 4, 2009 ~ from *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*<sup>1</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Muhammad rasūlu-llāh

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Mūsā rasūlu-llāh

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh Allāhu,  
Allāhu, Allāh ~ 'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh

Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām tabārakta rabbanā wa  
ta'alayt yā dhū-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

As salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatu-llāh wa bārakatahu.

My beloveds, you came at a blessed time and on a blessed night. This is a night in the middle of Ramadān. This is a special month because the Qur'ān was revealed in it. Angels come in throngs to the earth. They glorify Allāh and praise Him and they pray for those who are suffering on the earth, those who are sick and poor and homeless.

This place is a blessed place. It is a holy place because it carries the breath of Maryam (Mary) (*radiya-llāhu 'anhā*), the mother of the Messenger of Peace (*'alayhi-s-salām*). 'Īsā (Jesus) was the messenger of justice, peace, love and mercy. This place carries Maryam's holy breath because it is named after her. I smell her fragrance and feel her presence surrounding us now. She blesses our gathering, because when she sees all of you coming like this she considers this to be her wedding. Yes, her spirit can fly across the world. She weeps and she cries out for what is happening to people across the earth, the suffering that many human beings endure today.

There are too many people who have lost their homes, who have lost their jobs, and there is a lot of suffering today. I weep with her and I cry out like her and I pray for those who are suffering.

We are here to carry the message of love, the message of justice, peace and freedom. We wish that every human being would be granted these human rights, regardless of gender, ethnicity or color, for they all come from the same parents: a pair comprised of a male and a female. Our most beloved Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said about the special month of Ramadān that:

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<sup>1</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*. Pope Valley: Shadhiliyya Sufi Center, 2009.

The beginning of it is mercy, the middle of it is forgiveness and by the end there is salvation.

We must have the pure and sincere intention to make use of these blessed days, seek repentance, return to Allāh and follow in the footsteps of the prophets like Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses), ʿĪsā and Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhim wa sallam*). They always renewed their promise to Allāh in Ramadān because it is a blessed month of fasting during which the prophets used to renew their pledge to Allāh.

Know that fasting was ordained for all human beings, starting with the Prophet Ibrāhīm and his followers and on to the Prophet Mūsā and his followers (*ʿalayhim as-salām*). Fasting was ordained for them in that they were ordered not eat and drink during certain times.

Also, the Prophet ʿĪsā, the Messiah (*ʿalayhi-s-salām*), used to fast every other day. His followers followed him for a long time. They, also, would fast every other day. That means that half the year he was fasting. He used to intensify his prayer at this time and weep and cry out and invoke Allāh on behalf of those who were suffering, those who were sick and in pain. This is why Allāh brought healing through his hand. He granted healing for many people.

We are the children of the prophets (*ʿalayhim as-salām*) and we love all of them because we love their message. We carry their message. It is the true message of unity and that is why we do not make separation between the prophets. They are all equal. We are children sitting around the nutritious table of the prophets eating of their food. Your fasting in Ramadān is similar to the fasting that ʿĪsā practiced, that Mūsā practiced and that Ibrāhīm practiced—not only Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhim wa sallam*).

Also, for every fasting person Ramadān is the time to pay one's annual charity, the zakāh. In Islām, you pay it during Ramadān. All the prophets offered extra charity and gave more during their fasting. They asked Allāh to accept their worship, their prayers and supplications, and they gave charity to help others.

Before offering charity you must purify yourself. People should purify their bodies, their hearts, their spirits and inmost secrets. After they purify themselves, then they give more charity.

### **Repentance of the Body**

The purification of the body is known. What does it mean? It means that you do not use your limbs, your hands or your eyes in a way that is not pleasing to Allāh. Your limbs should not be killing or violating someone's rights or doing something wrongful and displeasing to Allāh.

You should not spy on people, for example, or feel envious of others. Your tongue should be purified, too. It should fast from backbiting people and speaking ill of others. It should fast from offending others. Your hearing, your ears, should also fast. All of your limbs and all of your senses have to be purified and returned to their original state through repentance. Repentance is important.

## Repentance of the Self/Soul

After repentance of the body, then there is repentance of the soul. What is repentance of the soul? I will give you an example. Sometimes you see someone in a good state or receiving a blessing and you say, “That is not fair. Why does he have this and I do not? He does not deserve it.” You start to think these thoughts and to feel bad. This is not right. This is envy. It is called jealousy and envy and it is not a blessed feeling. It is not encouraged by the prophets and messengers of Allāh (*‘alayhim as-salām*). You must discipline your commanding ego. Your soul desires to fast, too. This ego listens only to Iblīs, the evil one, the devil.

Sometimes you may hear ideas or have thoughts that are coming from teachers who are not learned themselves, and so they impart incorrect information. They make you think you can see and hear things that are not real. You cannot listen to these teachers because they live in illusion and in pictures. You should not be listening to them or to the devil, the evil one, the shayṭān.

You must know the stations of the soul and go through them, one by one. You must understand the language of each station, of each level, and go through it. Your ego can whisper to you in many ways in accordance with your station or spiritual level, so you must understand the language of these stations.

I have clarified this for you and explained the stations in many of my books, such as *Music of the Soul*<sup>2</sup> and *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*.<sup>3</sup> I have explained how to discipline the ego and how to check it. You should make use of these books. Read them, write them and comprehend them, understand them and follow them—this is how you will purify your soul.

## Repentance of the Heart

Afterward, there is a level of purifying the heart. What is the heart? The heart is something magnificent. It is a house. It is the house of your Lord, the house of God (*subhānahū wa ta’ālā*). The heart is the house of Allāh. Allāh says to His Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*):

My heavens and My earth could not contain Me, but the heart of My faithful believer contains Me.

This means that the heart should be empty of hate, jealousy and anger and should be tranquil and peaceful. It should be full of love and care for others and full of mercy and free of evil. It should be purified of every blemish.

The heart should go through seven levels (stations). Did you study the levels that I wrote about? I am certain that if you study the stations and the teachings associated with each station and apply them to your life, you will move from one station to another. You will be

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<sup>2</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *Music of the Soul*. Petaluma: Sidi Muhammad Press, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*. Petaluma: Sidi Muhammad Press, 2007.

transported from the realm of the material to al-Malakūt, the realm of angelic dominion; later you will move to the divine realm of potency, divine power (al-Jabarūt).

Do not start to claim, “Oh, I am now in this station or that station.” What claim are you making? You claim that you see this and you hear this and you see the unseen. You have to know that the angels have light, but it is an invisible light. Even Iblīs has light but his light is a burning light; it can burn you. Know that the divine light is transparent, subtle and gentle, and it illuminates your spirit and consciousness in an invisible way.

As much as you give Allāh, He will give you back tenfold because Allāh says:

Oh My worshipper, be to Me as I want you to be  
and I will be to you as you want Me to be.

It does not befit God (*subḥānahū wa ta’ālā*) to postpone blessings and rewards for good deeds. He will bless you right away, immediately. Allāh (*subḥānahū wa ta’ālā*) is the Most Generous. He created you without taking anything from you. He gave you life; He gave you everything. Did He give you a child, your son or daughter, and say, “Pay Me back?” He does not ask this of you. Can you claim that you did this with your own power? Not really. If He takes that power from you, you will be unable to do anything. Everything comes from Him. That is why He says in the Qur’ān:

To Allāh belongs everything in the heavens and the earth and in between.  
(24:64)

He created seven heavens and seven earths, so beware of the whispers of the evil one and your own ego and do not obey them. You have to follow the way of the prophets (*‘alayhim as-salām*), the order of Allāh (*subḥānahū wa ta’ālā*), the natural law of Allāh that was revealed to His prophets and messengers. If you follow this way, it will take you from the realm of the divine dominion (al-Malakūt) to the realms of divine potency and power (al-Jabarūt). You will become like light, you will become a holy book walking on earth. After the realm of divine power, you can even ascend more to the realm of divinity (al-Lahūt).

During Ramadān, take the opportunity to purify yourself through giving charity, because giving charity purifies you. In the Qur’ān Allāh says:

And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allāh,  
announce to them a painful torment. (9:34)

This wealth will not benefit them when they pass away and they will be questioned about why they did not help others and share their wealth. It will become a burning fire for them. Know that you will not take anything with you when you perish, when you pass to the next world. Know that all your wealth will vanish. You will not take it with you. Look, many people today have lost their wealth. They lost it in the twinkling of an eye, very quickly. Look at what the prophets (*‘alayhim as-salām*) have told us. They said, “Protect your wealth by giving charity.” When you give charity your wealth will be protected because Allāh will bless you. When you give to Allāh, He must give back.

Why do you not spend for the sake of Allāh (*subḥānahū wa ta'ālā*) and follow the way of the prophets (*'alayhim as-salām*)? If you do you will be protected. There is no prophet or true follower of a prophet who is a miser. Stingy people follow the evil one and their egos. People say about their bank accounts, “We do not have anything now.” You see, they had a lot of wealth accumulated in banks and what happened? Within the twinkling of an eye everything was gone. Then they could not afford to pay their mortgages and their homes were taken away from them. Do you not see this happening?

What is the cause of all this? It is because they accumulated money without sharing it, and so they did not have blessings. They passed by the sick, the homeless and the hungry and did not help them.

However, I say that you are not solely to blame. The rulers of nations who take people’s wealth wrongfully and do not use it the right way to serve their nations are to blame. This happens in many nations. It has been in the law of Allāh since the time of Ādam that everyone should be granted his or her basic rights. Allāh said to Ādam:

Truly, you have (a promise from Us)  
that you will never be hungry therein or naked (or homeless). (20:118)

This is a basic human right and you have to be granted good health when you are sick. It is a basic human right to be healed when you need to be healed, but look at things today. You go to the hospital and you cannot afford to buy the medicine you need to heal. This is what I see.

All of these countries are lost because they do not have mercy for their children, for the people. This deviates from Allāh’s law. This is not in the law of Mūsā, the law of ʿĪsā, the law of Ibrāhīm or the law of Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhim wa sallam*). Allāh asks us to support one other and to grant one other these basic rights. They all taught us to support one other and to grant one other basic human rights. The Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

Have mercy upon those on earth so the He who is in heaven will bestow His  
mercy upon you.

The one who does not have mercy for people will not be granted mercy and will not know how to receive mercy.

In this holy month, we have to take our chance and declare our repentance to Allāh, a sincere repentance—a repentance of the body, heart, soul and inmost spirit. I am sorry to prolong this introduction. Now we will start to read something, but I had to tell you what I feel.

**Next, Sidi had Salih Kent read a special, unpublished teaching on tawba named “Complete Tawba.” The reading begins on page 1 of *The Traveler’s Journey of Healing*, so that everyone can access this special teaching which is so important for Ramadān we have included it at the end of this document.**

**The reading begins at the beginning and continues until, “This is an allusion to the deep and real meaning of repentance—how to repent physically with your heart and with your spirit and how to live in that station. You move forward after you purify and repent with your body**

**and you purify your heart. You purify your body and your heart with tears of regret, promising your Lord that you will not return to what you have done. You promise an absolute promise that you will not return to what you have done before.**

This is the month to do that. This is a blessed month, a blessed day and a blessed night, a special night. Do not lose your chance. Do not lose your chance today to declare a truthful repentance. Repent through your body; repent through your soul, heart, spirit and intellect so that you can attain your spirit's true desire. You will be protected from disease, trouble, all harm and enemies. All of the righteous ones, the virtuous ones, used to wait for this time of year and stay up all night in worship because it is a special time, a blessed time. Allāh promised us that those who wake up at the last third of the night would be blessed and their supplication would be granted.

**The reading continues until, “As mentioned in the Qur’ān, Nūḥ (Noah) said to his people:**

**Ask forgiveness from your Lord for He is the Often-Forgiving.  
He will send rain to you in abundance, give you increase in wealth and sons  
and bestow upon you gardens and bestow upon you rivers (of flowing water).  
(71:10-12)”**

This is the true meaning of repentance, so whoever is ready to declare a repentance—a repentance of the body, a repentance of the soul, a repentance of the heart and a repentance of the spirit—let him come. This repentance will help him walk toward Allāh and be more conscious of His presence, especially on this night as it is a blessed night. Remember that the beginning of Ramadān is mercy and the middle of Ramadān is forgiveness. We are in the middle of Ramadān, which is the time for forgiveness to be granted.

At the end of Ramadān, there is salvation from the suffering of the Hellfire. Allāh, for sure, will bestow His blessing and acceptance upon anyone who makes a sincere, honest repentance and promises Allāh to do his best not to harm himself or another. He will forgive him and bestow His mercy upon him. This night is a chance to erase all of your past sins.

Put your hand on the shoulder of your sister and brother and do not be late. Do not lose your chance because this chance might not come to you again. We might come next year or we might not be able to come. It is all in Allāh's knowledge. Ramadān comes every year but we ask Allāh to grant us mercy and forgiveness and salvation from the Hellfire in this Ramadān, on this night.

Oh Allāh, I direct myself wholeheartedly toward You.



# The Deeper Meaning of Fasting and Tawba

Sufi School East ~ August 28, 2009 ~ from *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*<sup>4</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Mūsā rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ 'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh  
Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām  
wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām  
tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'alayt  
yā dhū-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

...manifest every night in the third part of the night. Allāh calls, "Is there anyone who would like to repent so that I can accept his repentance and forgive him? For I am Allāh and there is no deity except Me, so worship Me alone and establish regular prayer."

This is Ramadān, the month of winning and prosperity. It is called the month of repentance because people are energized during this month. We must energize before the month ends, we must have himma (spiritual yearning) to return to Allāh in repentance, to spend the night in worship asking Allāh for forgiveness. Anyone upon whom Allāh bestows His grace should wake up late at night, or at least an hour before Fajr (dawn) prayer in order to ask for Allāh's forgiveness and to worship Him.

Ask for forgiveness frequently because Allāh has promised forgiveness to those who seek forgiveness while everyone else sleeps. He will forgive those who are standing with their Lord who fashioned them in the best image, and they are the ones who will prosper. Know that Allāh is the most beloved. There is no beloved but Him. All other beloveds are metaphorical. Of course, the love between you and metaphors comes to an end, but the divine love never comes to an end because it is the greatest giving that Allāh has bestowed upon you. It is the gift of Allāh to give you life and He originated you in an excellent way and in the best mold (95:4). He gave you two eyes and two lips and a tongue and He showed you both ways (of good and evil, see 90:10).

Metaphorical pictures are not worthy of worship because they are perishable. We have to love only the Creator because He gifted us with existence itself. He gave us our intellect, our seeing and our hearing. He made you see things that you know of and many things that are invisible and that you do not know. Is He not worthy of your love and your worship? He is the one who

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<sup>4</sup> *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*.

created you in the best mold (95:4). He is waiting for you because you are His beloveds. His door is always open to you.

Allāh has chosen special days in which to bestow His extra grace and gifts. He chose blessed times and blessed places. One of the blessed times is the month of Ramadān, during which Allāh chose to reveal the Qur'ān. For this reason we must glorify this month as Allāh glorified it.

He ordained fasting in this month and fasting has a deep meaning, not just the superficial meaning that most people understand. Fasting is not only to prevent oneself from eating and drinking and sleeping with one's wife. No, fasting means something deeper. There is the fasting of the body, the fasting of the souls, the fasting of the hearts and the fasting of the spirits. There is the fasting of the white intellects, not the black intellects. This will lead you to be a divine human being, not a dirty human being.

Yes, Allāh created you out of clay, or dust, but you must abide by the natural laws of Allāh. Look, Allāh gives you two hands but His law says that you cannot use them for forbidden actions. Do not use them to kill, do not use them to steal, do not use them in something that is not pleasing to Allāh, because they are blessed hands. Allāh gave them to you as a gift. Do not make them dirty. If you steal, for example, that makes them dirty. It is not permissible for you to use your hands for something that is not pleasing to Allāh and that is not in accordance with His laws.

Fasting means to fast from everything that is not pleasing to Allāh. That is the true meaning of fasting, Your limbs should fast and your feet should fast. How do they fast? They fast by never walking to a place or doing something that is not pleasing to Allāh. You do not walk with these feet and try to corrupt relations between people, or use them to do things that are not in accordance with His law. If you do, you will not be fasting.

Some people claim, “We do not eat or drink and we are fasting,” but, no, it is much deeper. Look at your eyes and your tongue. The tongue must fast. How does the tongue fast? It fasts by not backbiting people or saying offensive words or using the tongue in a way that is not pleasing to Allāh (*subḥānahū wa ta'ālā*). He has said:

Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready  
(to record it). (50:18)

One day a man came to the Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhim wa sallam*) and he said, “Oh, Messenger of Allāh, I have asked for the hand of a lady that I would like to marry.” The Prophet asked who she was and the man told him her name. The Prophet said she was a nice lady and that he blessed their marriage. The lady came to visit 'Ā'ishā (*radiya-llāhu 'anhā*) and when she was leaving 'Ā'ishā moved her hand to indicate the woman was very short. The Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

You have backbitten her.

Imagine—she just pointed; she did not even utter a word. She pointed.



Who created the lady to be short or tall? People think it is acceptable to say these things. They do not even think about it, but it is a serious thing. If you said such things in front of a person you would offend them. Another time 'Ā'ishā reported that she said:

“Such-and-such thing of Sāfiyya is sufficient for you.” (may Allāh be pleased with her)  
(‘Ā’ishā meant to say that she was a woman with a short stature).  
He said, “You have indeed uttered a word which would pollute the sea if it were mixed in it.”

Allāh sent our Messenger as mercy for humankind and all the worlds, and that is why he was attentive to people’s feelings. Let your tongue fast. The tongue must not backbite, speak badly or lie. If you do then do not claim, “I am fasting because I am not eating or drinking.” No, your fasting will not be authentic until all of your limbs fast, too.

Your eyes must also fast. You should not look at people with the intention of shaming them or spying on them. Do not use your eyes in a way that is not pleasing to Allāh, glorious is He. One of the gnostics that knows Allāh says:

All of the limbs can lead to the Hellfire and sometimes a spark can cause a huge fire.

Be careful of your gaze, even. Your gaze can lead you to the Hellfire if you look at someone with envious, lustful or jealous eyes; in that case your eyes are not fasting. Fasting is not just to stop eating and drinking. No, it is much deeper than that.

All of your limbs must fast. Your ears must fast and your ears must not listen to that which is not pleasing to Allāh. This is true fasting, whereas to simply stop eating and drinking is metaphorical fasting. You stop eating and drinking except in the evening, What do you do, then? You eat more than you missed during the day when you did not eat. People eat everything and then they have stomachaches and they suffer. Why do you do that? Is this true fasting? This is not fasting. True and deep fasting is actually healthy for the body and it is nutritious to the spirit.

Allāh created the tongue to remember Him. He created it to remember Him, to recite His holy words. Allāh did not give you an intellect so that you could think vain thoughts. He gave it to you to be guided, to help others to be guided, to help people, to support them and to invent things that will help humanity.

Look at the evil ones! They invent things to destroy humanity. They think of things to destroy the oceans, to destroy land, to destroy people; they even use radiation and everything in the universe to destroy life. This is something far from the true humanity with which Allāh created us.

Fasting is really purification. It is an opportunity to purify your body and your soul, because the fasting soul should be tranquil and peaceful. If the soul walks the right path in accordance with Allāh’s law and follows Allāh’s commands for us by avoiding what is prohibited, involving

ourselves in worship, prostrating and bowing down to Allāh in love and treating people with love and mercy, we are following what Allāh wants and wishes for all people.

Allāh wants the human being to pursue goodness and to stop everything that is not pleasing to Allāh. You must be like the honeybee, always energized and excited to do good. Look at our state today. Look at our realities today. We claim to be Muslims, but look deeper—we are all sinners. We must repent and purify our bodies, our souls, our hearts and our spirits, because if the human being really purifies himself, he becomes more glorious than the angels.

Allāh created angels free of desire; they do not have desires. Allāh put all desires within the human being and so he can make choices that can sometimes lead him to sin. That is why Allāh said to the angels, “Prostrate to Ādam.” He commanded the angels to prostrate to the human being, the true human being. He said:

We have honored the children of Ādam. (17:70)

He created us to be His viceregent, not to destroy the earth. He created the human being to spread justice and love and mercy. He did not make him to corrupt the earth, as many corrupters and oppressors do.

We must understand the deeper meaning of fasting and declare our repentance in a sincere, honest way. We must understand that Allāh brought the month of Ramadān as an opportunity for us to reconcile ourselves with Allāh, to establish the connection between us and our Lord. Allāh opens the doors of repentance for us to reconcile with Him and return to Him. Let us, then, take this opportunity and declare a true, sincere and honest repentance. Allāh manifests Himself and sinks to the lower heaven in the last third of each night and calls, “Is there anyone who wants to return and repent? Let him come so that I can accept his repentance.” Allāh hears and He sees, so let us make our bodies, our hearts, our souls and spirits repent a true repentance.

The subtle and deep meaning of repentance is fasting. It is to fast from everything except Allāh. It is to fast from everything except our Lord, our most beloved, our creator who causes us to die and who gives us life. We must follow His commands, His natural laws and we must reconcile with Him. We must connect our bodies, our spirits and our hearts with Him directly and walk the straight path to Allāh.

Do not just claim, “I am a Sufi.” What is a Sufi? A Sufi is a pure one, a person who purifies his body, his heart, his spirit and his inmost secret. Allāh said in a ḥadīth qudsī:

My heavens and My earth could not contain Me,  
but the heart of My faithful believer contains Me.

Where is Allāh in a heart that is full of dirt? No, Allāh only dwells in the heart that is pure. This is the month of purifying yourself: purifying your body, your heart and your spirit. Do not say, “I am a Sufi.” Sufism, the way of purity, means to keep washing yourself and purifying yourself from everything that is not pleasing to Allāh until you become truly pure and full of love, justice, mercy, worship and beauty, as if you are an angel walking on the earth.

This is the true human being that is honored by Allāh. Do not claim to be a Sufi and then denounce or fail to follow the *sharī'a*, the natural law of Allāh, the commands of Allāh. Look, if the tree does not have its outer crust it will not survive, it will die. The *sharī'a* is like the outer crust—you need it in order for you to survive in the right way. It will purify your body and your heart and your spirit. If you just claim, “I am a Sufi” but you do not establish regular prayer, fasting and charity and you do not behave correctly with people then you are actually worse than Iblīs, the evil one himself. You are worse than the devil.

You must follow the *sharī'a*, the natural law, the commands of Allāh, and actualize them. When you actualize them in your life you will come to know divine truth and live up to the divine reality. You must purify your body, your heart and your spirit. This is true repentance, true Sufism, true purity. Allāh says on the tongue of His Messenger (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

Be to Me as I want you to be and I will be to you as you want Me to be.  
Then I will become his hearing with which he hears,  
his seeing with which he sees,  
his hand with which he strikes and  
his foot with which he walks.  
Were he to ask (something) of Me I would surely give it to him, and were he to  
ask Me for refuge I would surely grant him it.  
(If he says, “Be,” then it is.)

The call of fasting is to fast from everything except Allāh. Allāh is the glorious Creator, so fast in the way He asks so that you can actualize what you claim and arrive at the divine reality, the divine truth and live up to it. This is a great opportunity and a blessed, glorified month.

**Next, Sidi had Salih Kent read a special, unpublished teaching on tawba named “Complete Tawba.” The reading begins on page 1 of *The Traveler’s Journey of Healing*, for your ease we have included it at the end of this document.**

**The reading begins at the beginning and continues until, “Allāh created this human being with His divine light and put in it a divine light of love, peace, mercy and unity. For this body to be beautifully pure, it must contain only purity, so do not put anything in it that will bring impurities.**

Oh seeker in pursuit of arriving at the presence of your Lord, know that the worthy murīd (spiritual seeker) in pursuit of arriving at Allāh’s presence has undertaken serious and great work. There are many seekers and they are different. Some are in pursuit of money and wealth and some are in pursuit of a lover, a wife or a husband. Many are in pursuit of the lower realm.

There are many pursuits in this world but there is a difference between the seekers and those in pursuit of material things that are perishable. Material things can live for an hour and some of them can live for months or for years, but what happens in the end? All material things perish. It is ridiculous to pursue this. You want to pursue something that is eternal and that will remain everlasting. I want something that will stay with me forever. I want life energy to dwell in everything that I contain, which means I must contain love, mercy and justice. These

are the everlasting concepts through which you can achieve true and eternal happiness in this life and the next.

How can we achieve this? Can we achieve it by knowing Allāh, the Creator of everything? We must know our Creator and so we must know the path that will lead us to be conscious of Him. We cannot be conscious of Him through illusions, pictures and metaphors. We cannot be conscious of Him through unrealistic thinking.

Know that everything depends upon repentance. Repentance is your first step and it is a continuous step. It is like changing the oil in your car. Can you actually drive a car without oil or when it has a problem? No, you have to fix it in order to drive it. You are like this vehicle and you are full of things that need to be fixed and rectified and washed and cleaned in order to drive. to arrive at the divine presence.

The path to Allāh is full of obstacles and danger and you must continue purifying yourself by walking this path until you become fully conscious of the divine presence. You must purify the body and the soul of their illnesses through repentance, because our bodies and heart and souls accumulate dirt that cause illness. We must purify ourselves and truly follow the divine way by following His commands and His prohibitions. Do not fear anyone except Allāh. Revere Allāh and walk to Him through the essential gate, which is the gate of repentance.

You people, you are in poverty. You are in need of Allāh, your Creator who is self-sufficient. You are in need of Him; you are all in need of Him. We need to make repentance, to ask Him to accept us and to give us the strength to keep walking in the right way. There are those who look at metaphors, images, pictures and illusions and say, “Oh, we see Allāh and Allāh tells us.” No, you cannot claim that. By Allāh, how can you see Him if you are disobeying Him, if you have accumulated veils of sins and dirt? No, Allāh will punish you first and then choose you like He did with the Prophet Mūsā, (*‘alayhi-s-salām*).

When Mūsā arrived at Mount Sinai Allāh said:

Take off your shoes for you are standing in the Valley of Ṭuwa. (20:12)

Shoes are metaphors for this world and the final world. Allāh says, “When you want to come to Me do not be in pursuit of the lower realm or the pleasure of the next realm.” Pursue Allāh for Himself because He ought to be pursued. This is why Rābi’a (*radiya-llāhu ‘anhā*) once said:

Oh Allāh, I do not worship You out of greed for Your Paradise or out of fear of Your Hell.

I worship You for love for You, only for Your sake, because You are worthy of worship.

This is why she also said:

My Lord, I love You with two types of love:  
I love You with a of love of desire  
and I love You because You ought to be loved.  
You are worthy of love.

I love You because You are my God, the Creator, the Provider  
and I will surrender to You totally and follow Your commands.  
May You be pleased, my Lord and everything else around me ruined.  
I do not care; I only want to please You.

This is true worship.

That is why one of the gnostics would say:

I wish what is between You and me is well established  
and what is between me and the world is ruined.  
I only want to please You and I do not care if all others are angry with me.

An attribute of the true lover is true fasting in order to please Allāh by living up to His truth and His reality. This is the true translation of the word “fasting.” Are you ready to do this type of fasting? If you are truthful and you say, “Yes,” then you must ask Allāh to give you the strength you will need, because alone you cannot do it. You must repent to Him for this reason.

Look at what we recite in the Fātiḥa when we pray. We say, “ihdina-ṣ-ṣirāṭal-mustaqīm” which means, “Guide us to the straight way.” We ask for His help because this is the true way. You are now on the path, so you must translate the true repentance and the true meaning of fasting. You must follow it truly and be like Mūsā (*alayhi-s-salām*).

When Mūsā once asked his Lord:

“Oh my Lord! Show me (Yourself) that I may look upon You.”  
Allāh said, “You cannot see Me.” (7:143)

Allāh said this to Mūsā even though he was a prophet and a messenger and a gnostic. He was in the station of existence and so He said:

Take off your shoes for you are standing in the Valley of Ṭuwa. (20:12)

(If you want to see Me) look upon the mountain. (7:143)

Which mountain did Allāh mean? Where is this mountain? The mountain is that which can contain Allāh and it is a metaphor for the human heart.

Allāh says in a ḥadīth qudsī:

My heavens and My earth cannot contain Me.  
Only the heart of My faithful servant contains Me.

The heart of the one who is purified from all sins and has truly repented to Allāh can contain Him. You must purify yourself. Leave this world and the pursuit of the pleasures of this world and the next world and animate yourself; become consumed in your worship of Allāh and your desire for Allāh until you become nothing, like water. When you lose yourself like that in Allāh, then He will revive you.

When Allāh revived Mūsā and brought him back to this life, what did he say? Mūsā said, “I am always in poverty; I am always in need of You, despite all of Your bounty.” Mūsā looked at the mountain, which symbolized the mountain of his life after everything had been purified and he was trained and disciplined.

Earlier, Mūsā lived and studied with the Prophet Shu‘ayb (Jethro). Shu‘ayb taught him how to purify himself and Mūsā stayed with him for about eight years, receiving training and discipline and walking toward Allāh. Then Mūsā arrived at consciousness of the divine presence and spoke directly to Allāh.

Be steadfast and you will have dignity and you will be honored. Be steadfast in following the path and you will have dignity and honor. Fast truly by fasting from everything except Allāh, which means always being obedient to Allāh. When you are working, be in worship. Be conscious of Him and follow His ways. When you are living your daily life and giving everything its due rights in accordance with His law, then you are following His way.

You have to return everything back to its source. Depend upon Him, rely upon Him, put your trust in Him. In this way, He will be with you and He will open the door for you. Through His provision and the causes He gives you, your hand will be able to truly heal in the name of Allāh.

**The reading continues until, “These are some of the meanings I want to open the door for you to understand. I want to help you travel toward Allāh, knowing how to make the steps of the physical repentance, the repentance of the self, heart, spirit and intellect.**

Any beloved ready to make the real tawba in this holy month can come. The door is open for him now to promise Allāh, by this tawba. This is the greatest repentance. It is a serious one because it is in the blessed month of Ramadān. It has a great effect on people when they come and take this opportunity to return to Allāh and to repent. For Allāh has said that there are special times He has chosen. There are special places and special people. Allāh chose Ramadān to be a special time in which to give you the opportunity to repent and return to Him.

This is a repentance that is a serious repentance because it is in the blessed month of Ramadān. It is called “Ramadān repentance,” because it is the glorious and serious repentance of Ramadān. It is a special time that Allāh chose.

Allāh chose to reveal the Qur‘ān during the Night of Power, Laylātu-l-Qadr. This night occurs during the month of Ramadān and it is equivalent to one thousand months of prayer. It is when the angels and the spirits descend to the lowest heaven. During the month of Ramadān, angels descend to earth and fill the earth. The Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu ‘alayhim wa sallam*) said:

“If you pass by the meadows of the Garden, then take your chance to enjoy them.”

The companions asked, “What are these meadows?”

He answered, “They are gatherings where people remember Allāh and repent to Him.”

Oh Allāh, I fully direct myself toward You wholeheartedly.

The reading continues until it is finished.

Amin.

اللَّهُ

## Special Wird for Ramadan<sup>5</sup>

Taken from *The Religion of Unity*<sup>6</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh, Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh, Mūsā rasūlu-llāh,  
'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatu-llāh wa bārakatuhu.

After ṣalāh ('Ishā' prayer) pray two rak'ah<sup>7</sup> of sunna prayer.<sup>8</sup> Then, pray eight rak'ah of tarāwīḥ prayers.<sup>9</sup> This is what the Prophet (ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) took, inshā'a-llāh.

Open your heart to receive. It is important to know this night is very special and very holy, for it is this special month, the month when Allāh in His time sent the holy Qur'ān from Himself to Jibra'īl (Gabriel) ('alayhi-s-salām) through the Prophet Muḥammad (ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam).

This holy month is very, very special. Every moment is a deep prayer for you—when you sleep, when you eat, when you walk. It is a time for deep praying, from the beginning to the end. So open your heart. Open your heart completely, be in the deep sincerity and trust Allāh. Be very present with Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'ālā*).

It is important to know that this praying brings not only other people to pray, but it also brings many, many, many lines of angels to pray with you. This is a deep blessing. They also make the astaghfir for us,<sup>10</sup> and they pray for Allāh to send peace, mercy, justice and freedom for everyone. Allāh sends the angels to pray with you, to send astaghfir for you, and to give you forgiveness and mercy. It is important for you to take your chance and open your heart. Āmīn, Āmīn.

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<sup>5</sup> A “wird” is a specific set of recitations the guide gives to a seeker.

<sup>6</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *The Religion of Unity*. Pope Valley: Shadhiliyya Sufi Center, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Ṣalāh is done in cycles of standing, bowing, kneeling and prostrating. Each cycle is called a rak'ah.

<sup>8</sup> Sunna prayers are additional cycles of ṣalāh that the Prophet Muḥammad (ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) did all year long. They are an overflow of the blessings of the five daily prayers.

<sup>9</sup> Tarāwīḥ prayers are additional prayers (cycles of ṣalāh) that the seeker can do each night during the month of Ramaḍān. The blessings given during tarāwīḥ prayers are extraordinary. The tradition of the Prophet (ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam) was to do at least eight rak'ah per night during Ramaḍān.

<sup>10</sup> “Astaghfir” is tawba, the process of repentance.



Make two rak'ah for the face of Allāh. Min *sharh* Ramadān (it is special for the month of Ramadān). Pray for the face of Allāh, may He accept it. Bismi-llāh.<sup>11</sup> (The group prays tarāwīḥ prayers.)

My beloved children, Bismi-llāh. Out of the favor of Allāh, He sent me to you, my beloved children, and the first time in my life I am away from the Masjid Al-Aqṣā in Jerusalem. It was a divine command that came to my heart two weeks ago, and I know I am the servant of Allāh and He uses me as He wishes. He wanted me to pray the night prayer with you, the 'Ishā' prayer and the tarāwīḥ prayer in this blessed month. It is out of the ultimate wisdom of Allāh to give you a great reward. For this prayer is not only a prayer for yourselves, but it is for all people who are suffering across the earth.

We are all praying to Allāh and directing our service to Him in this special, blessed month. It is the month of the Qur'ān, the glorious Qur'ān. It is the month of the Prophet and all the prophets (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhim wa sallam*). In this month there is one night that is better than one thousand months: the Night of Power or Laylatu-l-Qadr. Laylatu-l-Qadr is the night where all of the angels descend from the heavens to the earth, asking for the mercy of Allāh and for forgiveness for all people.<sup>12</sup>

A divine command came to me to be absent from over there (Jerusalem) and to be with you here, to pray with you so that Allāh may stop the war and the destruction and send His mercy and peace upon all people.

May He send His complete, full mercy upon us  
through the hands of the guided one<sup>13</sup> and 'Īsā (*'alayhimi-s-salām*).

May He rectify the souls of the evil ones and make them transform into good ones so they may  
spread peace across the earth.

May He rectify all the oppressors and the tyrants.

May He support all the suffering and the weak people across the earth.

We are not praying only for ourselves, we are praying also for all people, without separation or discrimination. For all people are brothers and sisters. They are all made from dust, and they came as the children of Adam.

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<sup>11</sup> The Prophet Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) taught that we should say, "In the Name of Allāh" or "Bismi-llāh" before initiating any action. Doing so clarifies the intentions behind our actions so that we do everything in the Name of Allāh, in a prayerful space. Saying Bismi-llāh can also create a clear space and it can open hearts to receive Allāh more deeply.

<sup>12</sup> Laylatu-l-Qadr is the night that the angels bring down Allāh's decrees for the upcoming year. On this night the veils between this earthly world and the heavenly worlds are the thinnest. It is a very holy night, and worship for the entire night is encouraged and brings great benefit.

<sup>13</sup> "The guided one" is al-Mahdī. Verified Sunni ḥadīth reports that the Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said that al-Mahdī will come into leadership when the world is full of corruption, tyranny, and oppression, and he, along with 'Īsā (Jesus) (*'alayhi-s-salām*) will return the world to a state of peace and justice. He will be a direct descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

Everyone must adorn themselves with sincerity and purity, because fasting in this month purifies the hearts and the body. Fasting became obligatory on all the prophets, even before Prophet Muḥammad (ṣalla-llāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam). It was made obligatory upon Moses, Abraham, and all other prophets. It is a way to become closer to Allāh. We ask Allāh to send His mercy upon all people. This fasting became obligatory upon us too, so that we may purify ourselves and ask for Allāh’s mercy.

Those traveling towards Allāh on this path do not sleep, or they sleep very little at night. They keep praying and glorifying Allāh and praising Him, reciting His holy Book and praying for all people. This is why I want to explain to you that the wird we do after ‘Ishā’ and the tarāwīḥ is important, and I want you to exert your utmost effort to do it.

#### How to do the wird after ‘Ishā’:

1. Start by repeating, “**astaghfiru-llāh al-‘adhīm**” 500 times. It means, “I seek Allāh’s forgiveness. I repent and return to Him.”
2. Then say, “**subḥāna-llāh**” which means, “Glory be to Allāh, the Most Glorious.” Repeat 100 times.
3. Then send blessings upon the Prophet and his family by saying, “**Allāhumma salli ‘alā sayyidinā Muḥammad wa ālihi wa sallam.**” This means, “Oh Allāh, send Your peace upon our Master Muḥammad and his family.” Repeat 500 times.
4. Then repeat the name, “**Allāh**” 300 times.

Then you ask Allāh to please accept your prayers and fasting. You can say, “We send praises to You. Please cure our sick ones, rectify our deeds and our children’s deeds, rectify all of our affairs, and purify us, our spouses and our loved ones.”

Whoever does not have a misbaḥa (prayer beads), please bring one. Then start to do the wird, and use the holy spiritual oil.<sup>14</sup> Whoever does not have misbaḥa, bring one and let us all start together. Know that right now you are in prayer. You are in worship. You are in the presence of Allāh. Now we will start in the name of Allāh and start saying astaghfiru-llāh al-‘adhīm. Be careful—the number needs to be correct because there is a secret in the numbers.



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<sup>14</sup> Sidi makes a spiritual healing oil each year that he strongly encourages his students to apply regularly, especially during spiritual retreats (and this wird is a mini-spiritual retreat). Angels love beautiful fragrances, and these oils bring the angels to the wearer because their smell is so beautiful. The spiritual oils and other natural remedies made by Sidi are sold by Inspired Remedies at [inspiredremedies.com](http://inspiredremedies.com).

# Oh Good-Hearted One, Help to Create Change

Morning before Laylātu-l-Qadr ~ Ramadān Retreat ~ from *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*<sup>15</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Mūsā rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ 'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh  
Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām  
wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām  
tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'alayt  
yā dhū-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

My beloveds, we meet on the last morning of this Ramadān retreat. Nobody knows what Allāh will do in the future, but this is a blessed morning and this evening will be a glorious, blessed evening. It will be a beautiful night in which a divine wedding will take place and it will be witnessed by the angels.

Both human beings and jinn will celebrate this divine wedding. They are meeting with Allāh tonight. The angels and all creatures on this earth will celebrate tonight. This includes not only human beings, jinn and angels, but there are creatures you do know about who will also be celebrating. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

Truly, We have sent it (this Qur'ān)  
down in the Night of al-Qadr (decree) (97:1)

What do you know about the Night of Power? It is better than a thousand months. If you do the math this is like eighty-two years. So if you worship Allāh continuously for eighty-two years, that is equivalent to worshipping Him tonight, alone. They say it is on the twenty-seventh day of Ramadān. If you count the letters in Sūratu-l-Qadr you will find there are twenty-seven letters. This means it is on the twenty-seventh day of Ramadān, but the Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

Watch for Laylātu-l-Qadr during the last ten days of Ramadān.

These last ten days are the most honored and beautiful days of the whole year. Any worshipper who spends this night standing in front of Allāh, bowing down, prostrating, remembering, reciting Qur'ān and praying for Allāh, will have all of his sins erased and forgiven and he will

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<sup>15</sup> *The Traveler's Journey of Healing.*

return to be as innocent and pure as he was the day his mother gave birth to him. He will be surrounded by the mercy of Allāh, forgiven, and he will gain salvation from the Hellfire. He must be sincere in his worship, faithful, truthful and honest. The promise he should give to Allāh on this night, in this day, must be the most serious promise, because it is a promise on a blessed, special day and night. Allāh said in the Qur'ān:

Into it descend the angels and the Rūḥ by Allāh's permission with all decrees.  
(97:4)

All of the angels descend to this earth to bless and to pray on behalf of humanity. They pray to Allāh to alleviate the affliction, pain and suffering of those who come to Allāh faithfully, truthfully and with sincerity. They ask Him to alleviate pain and affliction from the earth and to rid the earth of murderers, war traitors, tyrants and oppressors. They ask Allāh to protect the earth from earthquakes, volcanoes and all natural disasters. This is why another name for the Night of Power is the Night of Relief, because Allāh relieves many people from disease, suffering and affliction on this special night.

It is a glorious night that is better than a thousand months of worship. If you calculate that is the equivalent to eighty-two years. This is from the divine giving. This is why you must take your chance and take the opportunity of this night; do not sleep. There is no sleep on this night. There is only remembrance, worship and praying. There is only begging Allāh.

Allāh, glorious is He, reveals Himself to the lower realm on this night. He descends to the lower heaven and makes Himself known. If you could see the angels, you would see how insignificant you are. You are like an atom in comparison to an angel. Allāh says that Jibra'īl (Gabriel) has five hundred wings and one wing covers the whole earth.

Let us prepare ourselves for this night and we will not sleep. From now on you are in a retreat. You should not sleep. It is forbidden for you to sleep until dawn. Then you can pray Fajr and sleep after that, for such is this blessed night. Do not be heedless and forgetful of meeting your Lord tonight. Know that there is the Witness and the witnessed.

The first righteous worshipper, male or female, can attain transformation from the realm of the physical reality to the realm of witnessing. In the realm of witnessing, there is the witness and the witnessed. You will be witnessed by the angels and they will testify on your behalf; also, Allāh will witness you and gaze at you. What a great prize! To gain this direct connection with Allāh on this night is such a great prize. If you are sincere, faithful, honest, truthful, and do not stop with pictures, illusions and fantasies, you will be with Allāh. You will certainly be with Allāh. You will go through a great spiritual experience that you have never had before. You will feel it, you will sense it and you will see yourself out of this metaphorical world, this material world in which we suffer.

The human being in this world suffers from many tragedies and hunger, tiredness and disease, but know that tonight is the Night of Relief. It is a glorious night. I cannot really describe it to you better than Allāh described it for you. Allāh said briefly:

Truly, We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the Night of al-Qadr (Decree)

And what will make you know what the Night of al-Qadr is?  
The Night of al-Qadr is better than a thousand months.  
Into it descend the angels and the rūḥ (the spirit) by Allāh's permission with all  
decrees. (97:1-4)

Who is the spirit? The spirit here refers to the angel Jibra'īl (*'alayhi-s-salām*). The spirit is the angel Jibra'īl (*'alayhi-s-salām*). He is the angel that had the honor of bringing the Qur'ān down to the Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and he is the one who brought the Torah to Mūsā (Moses) (*'alayhi-s-salām*) and he brought the Injīl (Gospel) and handed it to 'Īsā (Jesus) (*'alayhi-s-salām*) and also he gave Ibrāhīm (Abraham) the Scrolls of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā (*'alayhi-s-salām*).<sup>16</sup> He is the honest and trustworthy spirit. When he comes tonight, when he descends to the earth and to the worshippers on this night, it is a great gift for us.

Our retreat will to be with Allāh and His angels. This will not be like any other retreat. Make it a special retreat. It is something greater than any other retreat. Know that we should not waste even a second of this night. Do not think it is like an exercise, like a kind of sport. It is not a kind of sport. It is a physical engagement and an intellectual and a special engagement, a full engagement that transforms the human being from the real of the shadows and the material world to the realm of the Real. This is how you can be with Allāh.

Know that the charity you give on this day and night has a great reward; one thousand-fold rewards and blessings will come to you. Allāh says He can double the reward of your giving. Also, if you plant a seed, you might have seven grains or more and Allāh can multiply that into seven hundred seeds or more.

The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh,  
is as the likeness of a grain (of corn);  
it grows seven ears and each ear has a hundred grains. (2:261)

Know that what you can give today and tonight to help the poor can bring a great blessing for you.

Do not let your sins be obstacles that keep you from repenting and returning to Allāh. Do not be in despair and lose your way. Know that this is the month of tawba, the month of repentance. It is called the "Month of Repentance." Those who have not yet repented, hurry up. Repent before it is too late, before you pass away. Repent and do tawba, because when you pass away you cannot make tawba afterward. The time of tawba is here—now in this world while you are still alive.

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<sup>16</sup> The Scrolls of Ibrāhīm are also known as the "Forty Scrolls" and the "Suḥuf Ibrāhīm wa Mūsā." They are a lost scripture and are generally attributed to Ibrāhīm and Mūsā (*'alayhim as-salām*). They are referred to in the Qur'ān in two places. "Indeed, this is in the former scripture—the scripture of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā." (87:18-19). "Or is he not informed with what is in the pages of Mūsā and of Ibrāhīm, (they) who fulfilled/conveyed all that (Allāh ordered)." (53:36-37).

Allāh said forgiveness is granted in the middle of Ramadān. Mercy is granted in its beginning, forgiveness is granted in the middle and salvation from the Hellfire is granted in the end (ḥadīth). We ask Allāh to forgive us and to save our necks from the Hellfire and to save our loved ones and our children from the suffering of the Hellfire.

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# Special Tawba

Commentary on “The Commanding Nafs” from *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*<sup>17</sup>

September 16, 2007 ~ Taken from *Secret of the Spirit*<sup>18</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh, Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh, Mūsā rasūlu-llāh,  
'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh.  
Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām  
wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām  
tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'alayt  
ya dḥa-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatu-llāh wa bārakatuhu.

I praise Allāh, glory be to Him that He made us living so that we can survive the blessed month of Ramadān and receive the blessing of it. This is the month of the holy Prophet, ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. It is a great month for those who are pious and righteous—for the gnostics who have direct knowledge of Allāh.

It is a month of fasting and a month of staying up all night for Allāh and it is a month of prayer. It is a month of seeking forgiveness; it is a month of remembrance; it is a month of prostrating to Allāh; it is a month of humbling ourselves to Him and staying all night and worshipping Him; it is a month of forgiveness; it is a month of mercy; it is a month of saving us from the Hellfire.

It is good news and glad tidings for those who are present now and who are observing and experiencing it—especially for those who are fasting the month, if they are able to do so. But if the person is sick, and cannot fast at all, then it is okay, but for every day he breaks his fast, every day that he is not fasting, he must feed a poor person two meals a day. The two meals are worth approximately \$30.00, and anyone fasting eats two meals—the meal that breaks the fast and suḥūr, the meal before dawn.

Fasting for us, the people of Allāh, is divided into three categories. There is the fasting of the common people—what is that? You do not eat and drink and sleep with your wife during that month in the morning. It is forbidden because your whole direction should be toward Allāh. Do you know that even animals fast? Animals fast. They do not eat or drink at certain periods and they do not sleep, either. This is the fasting of the common people.

There is another category of fasting—the fasting of the pious, the righteous people. In this category the limbs fast. How do the limbs fast? It means that the person's tongue will never backbite or speak hateful or envious words. He never does this because he knows that he will

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<sup>17</sup> *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*.

<sup>18</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *Secret of the Spirit*. Pope Valley: Shadhiliyya Sufi Center, 2007.

be brought to reckoning, and that there are two watchers over him observing what his tongue says. When you fast, you must never backbite or speak badly about others, or hurt another's feelings. You must never injure a heart with your words.

Your hearing should also fast. It is not permissible to spy and try to listen to what you should not be listening to. Also, your eyes must fast. You must never look at that which is not permissible for you to look at. It is not permissible. It is not permissible, no matter what the case. If your eyes look at what is not permissible you become an adulterer—your eyes commit adultery. Also, you should not be spying, looking at what that person is doing. No, you should not be spying with your eyes.

There is also the fasting of the self, the nafs, which means: if you find something good with your brother or sister, do not envy them. You do not envy and feel jealous of them. You do not act arrogantly with your brother. This is the fasting of the limbs. It is in addition to abstaining from food and drink; you are abstaining from all of these actions.

This is the fasting of the righteous people, of the pious people. If they do something against this and get involved in these types of actions (the wrong types described in the previous paragraphs), then their fasting is null, corrupted.

Whoever wants to sit here must open his eyes and his heart—he must not close his eyes.

There is also the fasting of the abrār, those who excel in good—which means to fast from everything except Allāh; to abstain from everything except Allāh. This is the fasting of the ones brought to divine proximity, al-muqqarabīn, the ones who excel in good, and Allāh is not absent from them for even the twinkle of an eye. Whenever (the one who excels in good) goes anywhere he says, “Allāh is watching me, He is hearing me, He is seeing me.” Whenever he stands up he says, “Allāh is moving me, Allāh is watching me, He is seeing me, He is hearing me.” He does not stand but by Allāh's command. He does not move or go anywhere except by Allāh's command. That does not mean that Allāh is incarnate in him, no. But it means that his direction is fully toward Allāh. He is devoted to Allāh. He does not ask (anyone) but Allāh. He does not pray but to Allāh. This is because Allāh says:

And when My slaves ask you concerning Me then (answer them), I am indeed near.

I respond to prayers when they call upon Me. (Qur'ān 2:186)

For this reason do not go to anyone, a *shaykh* or a guru or whoever, to ask them things. Ask Allāh directly, because He is not far away. He is closer to you than your jugular vein (Qur'ān 50:16), so why are you going to anyone else? If you have a special father, a guide, a *shaykh*, you can ask him to pray for you, but it does not mean that you do not ask Allāh and that you depend upon the other person to pray for you. No, you can have both. You just ask the person to pray for you. This is not *ḥarām*, it is not forbidden.

But do not think that the *shaykh* can ask on your behalf and you can go and forget about Allāh. No, because the *shaykh* is just like you. He is a human being like you. He is not more or less



than you, but his connection to Allāh might be a little bit closer, or stronger, and he might have a deeper understanding than you, so he prays for you.

And when you ask him (the *shaykh*), “Pray for me,” he will. He prays for you and that is okay—that is acceptable. But you must also ask Allāh directly and believe that Allāh will respond to you and accept your prayer. He will answer your supplications because He is the one who created you. Why would He abandon you? He cannot abandon His slaves. Because He is your Creator He will never abandon you.

Your spiritual father has a decree or a place with Allāh because the Prophet, ‘alayhi as-salātu as-salām, says:

There are special people, places and times for Allāh.

What are they? The month of Ramadān is a special time for Allāh. It is a blessed time. The messengers and the prophets and the righteous are not like other people; they are special people. Some places are special for Allāh because they are holy places, or holier than other places, like the Masjid al-Aqṣā or the masjid where the Prophet, ‘alayhi as-salātu as-salām, is buried, or all places of worship. These are blessed places. They are special places because they are distinguished by the remembrance of Allāh.

There is a difference between a place that is full of garbage and a place in which prayer is established and performed, where the remembrance of Allāh is always happening. People prepare these places to worship Allāh and to remember Him, so these are special prayers. Allāh says that He accepts supplications and worship done in these special, blessed places more than in other places.

This is why I tell you my children, my beloveds, that this Ramadān is a blessed Ramadān. It is the Ramadān of pure goodness, and it is the Ramadān of forgiveness, mercy and being saved from the Hellfire. In Ramadān no supplication is turned back. Everything asked is answered. Allāh accepts our prayers and responds to our supplications and invocations, and He is the Healer and the One Who Gives us well being. But we must come to Allāh with our whole heart—our whole and full heart.

We should never let *shayṭān* live in our hearts or enter our hearts. We should never let the lower desires enter our hearts. The one whose heart is still full of the lower realm, full of love of it and its lower pleasures, is full of sins. And I say to him, to whoever has committed this sin, do not stop seeking forgiveness. Keep asking for forgiveness.

If anyone commits a sin, and in Ramadān sits in regret, feels sorrow that he did it, asks for forgiveness and comes wholeheartedly to Allāh with his own soul and spirit, Allāh will look at him.

You must fast for the sake of Allāh. Before you seek the reconciliation and the forgiveness of Allāh, you must repent from that sin. Before you ask anything from Allāh, you must seek repentance. You must renew your repentance first. It does not matter how great you are. Do not keep saying, “I am so good now, I am great.” No, do not say that. Say, “I am a poor slave of

Allāh,” and humble yourself to His majesty, because you are between His hands and He is the One Who is In Control of your affairs.

You must know that Allāh, glory be to Him, accepts repentance and He is the Forgiver, but He also He is the Severe in Punishment. He said in His Holy Book to us:

The one who comes with repentance and a full heart,  
I will transform their bad deeds into good deeds  
and rectify their deeds and his affairs. (Qur’ān 5:39)

This is something important no matter how old you are or whether you are a man or a woman—it applies to everyone. Everyone must seek the forgiveness of Allāh and repent and ask forgiveness for every sin that he or she committed. I ask acceptance from Allāh for you. May Allāh accept your repentance and open your hearts. May He remind you of Himself. May He make you truthful and sincere and honest.

“Tawba is from Allāh’s Wisdom“ on page 34 of *The Religion of Unity* is read.

“As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatu-llāh wa bārakatuhu. This is the first day and the second lesson that I give to you. I am very happy to be among you and to offer all of my love and all of the gifts by Allāh to you. This is because of what I see of your sincerity and honesty and the receptivity I feel within you, that you really want to know the truth. I am directing myself in prayer towards Allāh, asking Him to guide and protect you and to strengthen this love within your hearts so that it may become a pure, divine love. May He protect you from committing sins and making mistakes. May He make you His true lovers and those who carry His message. Āmīn.

Now I am directing myself towards you from the outward mercies that Allāh has bestowed upon me. I would like you to know that Allāh knows it is human nature to commit mistakes and to have faults. The human being is full of desires, what he wishes for, what he wants to accomplish for himself, his heart and his spirit. He is full of the desire to do that in the way he wants it to be. He says, “This is the shortest and easiest way to attain the divine presence.” He thinks it is an easy and simple thing. He does not know that when he rushes to commit these things he will suffer from it and have pain.

Two of Allāh’s attributes are the Most Wise and the Most Merciful. He knows. He knows this is our nature. It is our nature to make mistakes and commit sins. Allāh’s mercy is a must, even though we are full of shortcomings and faults. For this reason He opens the door of repentance and returning to Him. He says, “You are My children and My beloveds. Come to me. All you need to do is repent, return, and to ask forgiveness. I accept your repentance and I forgive you. Promise Me you will not go back and do it again.”

Allāh only delays things, but He does not neglect. And He says to the sinners:

Oh you who believe! Turn to Allāh with sincere repentance! (Qur’ān 66:8)

**That is why you must repent and return to Him. Do not hesitate. Come right away. Come! Come! I am opening the doors. Tawba does not mean that the human should continue indulging himself in sin. But Allāh uses both: He warns and appeals to people with love.**

He is the one who created war and fire. He created water so that people may come to use water in a way that is beneficial and brings peace, safety and security. The human being drinks it, and he makes his animals and plants drink it. For this reason, water is a symbol of love. And He says:

**And We have made from water every living thing. (Qur'ān 21:30)**

**Can anyone live without water? All of humanity, can it live without water? Can animals or plants? Even mountains cannot live without water.”**

There are rocks that cry and there are mountains that are complaining. They are complaining and crying because of the sins people are committing. They seek the forgiveness of Allāh, glory be to Him, and return to Him and seek refuge in Him, and ask Him to forgive people because of their ignorance. This is why you see water gushing from stones and rocks. How it explodes and the rocks crack and fall down and break, because it tries to wash the sins of the sinners. It tries to wash the pain and the mourning of those who are suffering.

This is what happens. This water is the weeping of the mountains. It is a mercy for humankind. It is a mercy for the oppressed and for those who are suffering around the earth. The mountains turn to Allāh, asking Him to wash the sins of the sinners and to wash the pain of those who are suffering.

People do not understand this, but Allāh says:

And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them (Qur'ān 2:74)

The water is the weeping of the rocks, the tears of the stones that people break. But Allāh is the one who pardons and bestows His mercy upon all of creation.

**The reading continues until, “But in spite of all the mistakes we make, Allāh knows us. He knows that we are so weak, and that we are in need of His forgiveness and generosity. This is why He says to us:**

**Say: “Oh My slaves who have transgressed against themselves!  
Do not despair of Allāh’s mercy. Truly, Allāh forgives all sins.  
Truly, He is Often-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur'ān 39:53)**

**What does transgressing the limits mean? That they did not leave anything, but they committed it. He knows we are burdened by our sins, and that we are weak and cannot do it by ourselves. We need His help to continue in life. This is why He told us that He is the Most Merciful. And He said, “I am always forgiving to the one who repents, returns back and is guided.” What happens when someone returns and repents?”**

He is the Merciful, the Compassionate. He described Himself as the Universally Merciful, the Singularly Compassionate. He does not disappoint anyone who knocks on His door. There is nothing in Allāh's realm but acceptance, and there is nothing in Allāh's realm but peace. Allāh does not know anything but acceptance. And He says to us:

Say: "Oh My slaves who have transgressed against themselves!  
Do not despair of Allāh's mercy. Truly, Allāh forgives all sins.  
Truly, He is Often-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Qur'ān 39:53)

He is the Forgiving, the Merciful, the Compassionate. He is not one who imprisons others. He is not one who murders others. He is not one who hates people. No, beauty and purity are Him and they are from Him. Come to Him wholeheartedly. Come to Him with love. The one who comes with a full heart is accepted. If your heart is broken and is afraid of Him, know that Allāh is full of peace and love and mercy and He will accept you. Do not be afraid. Come wholeheartedly to Him, even if your heart is broken.

We care about you more than you care for yourself, and will take care of you more than you will take care of yourself. Do not be afraid and do not be ashamed and do not let anyone prevent you from visiting us. Come to us and we will open the door for you. The door is open for you. Why are you delaying? Why are you not coming? We are calling you. Do not be afraid of the sins you have done because He is the Acceptor of Repentance; but He is also the Severe in Punishment.

Oh Allāh, we ask You for a sincere repentance.

Understand that there is a condition—you must never go back and commit the same sins again. After you regret (your misdeeds), that is it. Do not commit them again and feel regret again. Do not think, "Oh, I will repent now, but I think I will go back and do it again." No. Many people think like that. They say, "I cannot stop now but I will stop tomorrow." I know there are many people like that.

There are many people whose coffins are being prepared right now, and they are unconscious of it. They think that they have tomorrow, yet their coffin is being prepared now. There are many people who do not know if they will live to see the next dawn, because life and death is not by your hand. This is why you cannot say, "Tomorrow I will stop."

Come in haste, come and hurry and rush to repent before it is too late and your appointed time comes. You must come and declare your repentance now. I open the door for you now. This is the repentance of Ramadān. Come to me now and declare your repentance. It is the repentance of Ramadān. It is Ramadān's repentance because Ramadān's repentance is a repentance of forgiveness. It is a repentance that will lead to healing from every disease. It will lead to the healing of every disease whether that disease is a disease of the heart, a disease of the self, or a disease of the spirit. It will be healed if you repent sincerely.

You must be truthful and sincere in your repentance. You must direct your heart fully toward Allāh and stretch your hand toward Allāh. Do not look at me as a human being—look at me with the eyes of your Protector so that He may protect you.

Do not hesitate to offer your most sincere repentance now. If you are not fully confident that you are repenting, then Allāh will not accept your repentance. Be confident that Allāh is watching you, protecting you and healing you. Be confident that He will accept your repentance. Stretch your hand, my son. Stretch your hand, my daughter. Seek forgiveness from your sins. Cry and weep for your sins, because tears erase sins. Tears wash away sins. They wash the heart and clean it. As our Most Beloved said:

Whoever transgressed the limits and crossed the boundaries and then came back, weeping and regretting and feeling sorry,  
his tears will wash away his sins just as pure water cleans all the dirt and garbage. (Ḥadīth)

Sidi gives the tawba promise.

Do not think that this teaching is like all other sessions. It is not. It is a special session in the name of the month of fasting, the month of Ramadān, which is the month of repentance. Do not go far away. Take your share of the blessings of this month. Look seriously at it. We used to sit with our master guide, our shaykh, weeping, and we never let that chance go to waste. We always took our share of blessings from it.

This is the truth. This is the clear reality. The one who comes to Allāh, wholeheartedly, which means with sincere repentance...the beginning of Ramadān is forgiveness; and the middle of Ramadān is mercy; and the end of Ramadān is being saved from the Hellfire. Blessed is the one who fasts in the beginning and seeks His forgiveness, and blessed is the one who fasts in the middle and receives the mercy, and blessed is the one who keeps fasting until the end and is saved from the Hellfire. You must read some Qur'ān as I explain it in my new book. It is entitled *He Who Knows Himself, Knows His Lord*.<sup>19</sup>

I wrote it in six years and it is very deep. You must write it word for word and understand it in a deep way. Do not just read it and understand its surface meaning. Try to understand its deeper meaning. It has deep words, and no one comprehends it except those with deep hearts. I will continue to interpret it—not by the tongue. This knowledge is not to be taken from the tongue or from words. No, it is to be taken by tasting. This knowledge is divine knowledge. It is to be comprehended by the spirit. It must be looked upon by the heart from where it was written. It must be written only by clean hands, by purified hands. You must be truthful and sincere when you are writing holy words. You are writing a precious thing.

I will recite some poetry about this. Whoever wants to marry a beautiful woman does not feel it is hard to pay a precious dowry. He will pay it. That means he will pay (by giving) his full heart to her so that she can accept him. Then why do you want Allāh, yet you do not want to give Him everything? If you want His love, give Him everything. You cannot take anything from Him unless you give everything. Give just a little bit. Try and you will see that He gives to you abundantly. But do not give Him false words—do not pretend. You must give Him truthful words. Give Him sincere and honest words that are full of love, full of mercy.

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<sup>19</sup> *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*.

We are in need of a cup that is full of love, mercy, peace and beauty. We are not in need of the afflictions being sent down to earth. Do you see how afflictions and disasters are affecting people everywhere, people who do not need them? Do you observe and are you conscious of the wrath of Allāh? The climate is changing, the desert is changing, and water is changing, taking people over.<sup>20</sup> Water is also becoming less abundant. Have you noticed that floods and earthquakes are increasing everywhere? All of this is happening without stop these days. It does not stop. Do not think, “Oh we are secure here.” No, Allāh can reach you anywhere. It has reached this land. It has reached everywhere—Indonesia, India, Africa. It reaches everywhere because Allāh warns of Himself, He warns you in His Qur’ān. These disasters even reach to Britain. Sixty years ago there were no floods and nothing like that in Britain. Now, they are experiencing it. Why is this? Because of what your hands earned against yourself. And Allāh pardons many of these sins (Qur’ān 42:30).

Do not say, “Oh it is Allāh who is doing this.” No, it is a natural response to what (the oppressors’) hands have earned (Qur’ān 42:30). Allāh gave you gifts but you did not preserve them, and that is the reason for these afflictions. Did Allāh ever tell you to pollute the water? Did Allāh ever tell you to make air pollution, cut trees, and all other actions that have changed the climate? Allāh never ordered this. Return to Allāh, glory be to Him, to be saved. This book speaks of this, if you read and understand its deeper meaning.

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<sup>20</sup> “Taking people over” indicates that these issues are overtaking people, overwhelming people. They are on a scale individual people cannot control.

# Fasting in Ramadan

September 17, 2007 ~ Taken from *Secret of the Spirit*<sup>21</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh, Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh, Mūsā rasūlu-llāh,  
'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh.  
Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām  
wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām  
tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'alayt  
ya dḥa-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatu-llāh wa bārakatuhu.

After we have entered into the blessed month of Ramadān, we must explain in detail that Ramadān has its manners, its divine politeness and 'adab. Allāh made fasting obligatory upon us as He made it obligatory upon all nations before us. He made it obligatory upon Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses), 'Īsā (Jesus), 'ālayhi as-salām and his nation, for Yaḥyā (John the Baptist), for Ismā'īl (Ishmael), and all of the prophets, 'alayhim as-salām. So fasting is obligatory for every individual who is an adult, man or a woman. Whoever is able to fast, must fast.

Starting from age fifteen everyone must fast unless he cannot for a health reason. For example, if he has a disease that prevents him from fasting. Allāh says in His Qur'ān:

The month of Ramadān in which was revealed the Qur'ān,  
a guidance for humankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion.  
So whoever of you sights the month must fast during that month and whoever  
is ill or on a journey,(you may not fast but you must later fast) the same number  
of days. (Qur'ān 2:185)

He must fast the days he missed when he is well and not traveling. So it is not permissible that we break our fast without reason. If a person is really sick and that sickness is chronic or difficult to treat and he cannot compensate the days, if he cannot fast at all, then he can break the fast. But if he is able financially, he must feed a poor person two meals a day for every day he breaks his fast—the breaking of the fast meal and the suḥūr, the before the dawn meal.

The food must be the same as what you eat in amount and quality; it cannot be less than what you feed yourself and his family. And it is estimated that each meal is \$30. So whoever cannot fast, be it a woman or a man, because of sickness, chronic sickness or being old (elderly people cannot fast either), these people must spend their money to compensate the days that they cannot fast. But the one who occasionally gets a disease in Ramadān, he can fast later, during

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<sup>21</sup> *Secret of the Spirit*.

the days after Ramadān when he is well. He should not be feeding others; he should be fasting because he is able to fast.

Also, the ladies when they get their monthly periods should break the fast. They should not be fasting during that time, but then she can fast these days later when she is not having her menses.

Also, a pregnant woman cannot fast because it is feared that that will affect her child or affect her health. Then the husband or the father of the coming child must feed the poor on her behalf, because she probably is not able to work and earn money and she is not able to fast, so it is the duty of the father to pay two meals per day for the poor.

Also, it is permissible for the nursing woman not to fast because she gives her child and she must feed herself well. But the father must feed poor people on her behalf.

The one who breaks his fast or does not fast without any acceptable excuse, then he is breaking his the covenant he took with Allāh. This is a serious thing. If such a person fasted all of his life, it would not compensate for the days he broke his vow with Allāh. He must then have double the compensation that he should give. So instead of feeding thirty people two meals a day, he must actually feed sixty people and he must seek Allāh's forgiveness, because he did not transgress the limits only against Allāh, but he transgressed the limits against all the messengers and the prophets.

So he must also fast two months consecutively without a break and if he cannot for some reason, then he must feed sixty people. If he does not do so, he will have to answer, be questioned and face the reckoning of Allāh. And he will be questioned and brought to accountability, because fasting is a serious matter; it is something very glorious.

Fasting means to fast from all of your sins, as we explained this morning. The true meaning of fasting is to fast from all sins, but if the person is old, and cannot really fast, if he or she has money, then he must feed the poor as explained—and that is that. But those who did not fast intentionally, without any excuse, but were ignorant regarding these rules, they must offer a sacrifice instead on behalf of the previous year that they did not fast. This is because they were ignorant of the rules, so they must only pay for the previous year.

If any of you did not fast last year without any excuse, he must pay what is equivalent to feeding a poor person two meals a day. I ask Allāh to bestow His forgiveness on him and accept his repentance, but the one who says, "I did not know, I was ignorant," and neglected seeking knowledge of the rules must pay what he should pay. Because he knows that fasting is obligatory and is ordained for everyone carrying the message of unity, and that he will be questioned by Allāh, glory be to Him, on the day when all the physical bodies and souls and innermost secrets and spirits will be demonstrated between the hands of Allāh.

That is why I invite my children, my daughters and sons, whoever did not fast last year to pay the charity as explained. They should do it immediately and not delay it so that Allāh forgives and protects them and protects their bodies.

The chosen Messenger said:



Fasting is self-care, so fast and you will have good health. (Ḥadīth)

It is like caring for yourself. Because the human body is like a machine, like an instrument that must rest. Because the human body is always working, day and night, it does not stop. So it is from Allāh's wisdom that He ordained fasting for us so we can rest this machine. You do not want to rest, but Allāh, the Great Creator cares for you more than you care for yourself. He is so merciful to you, more than you are merciful to yourself. That is why He gave you fasting. So, as the Prophet said:

The one who fasts will have good health and will gain health.

Those who deviate from the command of Allāh are afflicted with many things. Recent scientific research has proven that fasting is a healing for more than fifty diseases. They researched it and modern science proved it to be true. This is why Allāh ordained fasting. He made it obligatory. Our most beloved guide the Prophet Muḥammad said:

The human being does not fill any worse container than his own stomach.  
It is the worst container to fill.  
But if you must eat, let one-third be for food,  
one-third for fluids, and one-third for air. (Ḥadīth)

But what if the human being did not listen to this teaching and filled it to its brim? Then he cannot breathe and he cannot drink. Then he accumulates fat and accumulates things in his body, and what emerges from that are diseases and harmful things.

Even your own bones, eventually, will not be able to carry you if you do not listen to the teaching. Because the bones are created to carry, for example, seventy kilos of something, but then you put double that amount on them so that the bones cannot carry it and will become affected. The arteries, the veins and everything will become affected because it is not created to function like that, and the diseases will afflict you and your heart.

This is what happens, is it not so? And then we say, "What happened to me? Why is my heart not feeling well? Why is my back aching, my head?" We start to complain. Why do we complain like this? It is because of what our hands have earned (Qur'ān 42:30). Ask yourself and question yourself, why? What did I do to get that or to earn this disease? Your stomach does not hold more than two liters, but you sometimes fill it with five liters. This is from you. It is your own behavior. You are the one who is responsible for your own disease. Is this not so?

Allāh cares about you. Allāh wants you to have a healthy body. He wants you to have a sound intellect, a whole heart, a healthy spirit and a beautiful body. He does not want you to carry a diseased body, a sick body. No, it is by your own hands that you are led to this result. So fasting has wisdom in it. That is why Allāh ordained it for us. If you count Allāh's gifts to you, you would not be able to count them (because they are so numerous). But because the human's nature is to be an oppressor, he denies this truth. But understand that Allāh is fair and just, and He knows the secret and the most concealed secret of secrets. Nothing is concealed from Him at all, and He did not create a disease but that He also created its cure. It might well be that your healing is in fasting. So why do you refuse to fast?

There are very subtle things that modern medicine has started to know and apply, but if we had been following what the Messenger taught us, then we would not need this medicine because he said:

We are a group of people that do not eat until we are hungry  
and when we eat, we do not fill our stomach to fullness. (Ḥadīth)

This is the healthy way, and if we follow it we will not need any physicians. Why? Because there will not be any disease. We will be healthy.

The Bedouin who lives in the desert and is raised there do not have the diseases we have. It is very rare, Why? Because they live in a natural way. They are always in the fresh air, and they eat what they plant by their hands. They are simple and natural and they live a long life because of this. Many of them live beyond one hundred years. I know many of them. I know not less than one hundred people that are not less than one hundred years old. I know them one by one.

Those are from the spiritual guide, the *shaykh* of the Bedouin. They eat very little and they eat only what they make by their hands and what they plant in the land by their hands, in the natural way. They do not have the desires that we do. They do not invent things. They walk a lot of long distances. They do not use cars and airplanes; they walk a lot. But if it is a very, very long distance they ride a donkey or a horse.

This does not mean that I am saying not to ride in a car or an airplane. No, because Allāh, glory be to Him, said:

Say: “Who has forbidden the adoration with clothes  
given by Allāh, which He has produced for his slaves,  
and all kinds of *wholesome* food?” (Qur’ān 7:32)

Allāh gave us an intellect, and so we must act accordingly to discern what is good and what is not, what is in balance and what is not. Look at what the human being has made. The human has invented cars, but look how much pollution and gases cars emit into the air, and how they fill the atmosphere around them with all of this pollution. They say, “This is the civilized way,” and, “This is what comes with civilization,” and then it gives us diseases.

Because with all that we invented we have to deal with the gas and the pollution... And in every household you can find three, four, or even five cars. Look when you are here, there are not too many cars and you smell fresh air, but go into a crowded area in the city and you will see what you smell. You will experience that.

Our Prophet told us that every human being must preserve his body, his intellect, his breath, and his spirit because he does not own any of them; it is Allāh who owns them. He gave them to you as a trust. He gave you the body as a trust and the intellect as a trust. You will be questioned, “How did you use your body? How did you use your intellect, your heart and your spirit?” You will be questioned about that.

He facilitated the way for you to have your medicine and your healing whenever you stray from the way, because He said in the Qur'ān:

Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you  
as it was prescribed for those before you,  
so that you may become the pious. (Qur'ān 2:183)

Why? Because fasting is healing and worship at the same time. It is a form of worship, as prayer is. As you pray, you must also fast. But it is also healing for the body.

I repeat again: oh you who are in debt to Allāh, who owe Allāh a debt because you did not fast without excuse last year, you must offer charity instead of these days being wasted and you did not fast. You must do it immediately, now, and do not delay it until tomorrow.

For the thirty days you broke your fast or for any days you broke your fast you must pay that in charity so that Allāh may accept your repentance, protect you and forgive you. And do not listen to those who oppress themselves and others.

Do not listen to your own selves, because your own self will say, "This is too much. Do not do this and do not do that. It is not important to do this." This is Iblīs whispering to your self, to your ego. You must always disobey your nafs, you must always disobey your nafs and *shayṭān* and listen to those who give you good advice. Disobey your self, your ego.

And I want to open the door for you. Whoever wants to pay that charity, the door is open for him.

Allāh also ordained the giving of *zakāh*, the obligatory charity during this month. So everyone must give this obligatory annual charity in this month. Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

And those who hoard up gold and *silver*  
and spend it not in the way of Allāh,  
announce unto them a painful torment  
(it becomes like fuel for the fire by which their own skin,  
backs and face will be burned). (Qur'ān 9:34)

And it will be said to them on that Day, "This is what you accumulated; this is what you accumulated; it will burn you."

Everyone must give the annual obligatory charity in full without reducing it by a penny, because you will be questioned about that. You will be questioned in front of all people on the Day of Judgment. This is why I encourage you to pay your annual obligatory charity in the month of *Ramadān*. I ask Allāh to accept our repentance and bestow upon us the gift of repenting.

The husband must pay on behalf of his wife; in the law of Allāh, he must. That is the authentic and the right way. The woman should not pay her own charity. It is the responsibility of the husband to pay on her behalf. This is the law of Allāh and the law of His Messenger, *ṣalla-llāhu*

'alayhi wa sallam. Allāh put him in charge of that. Allāh put it as a duty upon him to do so in the religion of Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Īsā and all the prophets, 'alayhim as-salām. This is the way.

That is enough teaching for today, you can go. So it is \$30 per day if you broke your fast or you cannot fast. You must pay \$15 per meal, which is \$30 per day, because you must feed the poor person two meals. So anyone who broke one day must pay \$30. Is that clear? If they have the money.

الله

# Spiritual Sawm (Fasting)

Ramadān in Pope Valley ~ Tuesday, September 23, 2008

Taken from *A Righteous Word is Like a Righteous Tree*<sup>22</sup>

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Ibrāhīm rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ Mūsā rasūlu-llāh  
Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh, Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāāāāāh  
Allāhu, Allāhu, Allāh ~ 'Īsā rasūlu-llāh 'alayhim ṣalātu-llāh  
Allāhumma anta-s-salām wa minka-s-salām  
wa ilayka ya'ūdu-s-salām  
tabārakta rabbanā wa ta'alayt  
yā dhū-l-jalāli wa-l-'ikrām

My beloveds, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon you.

This is the last night in the holy month of Ramadān. The month named Ramadān is one from the name of Allāh. As you understand from before, material ṣawm (fasting) refers to fasting from food for the body. However, there is a real meaning regarding this and how you can make ṣawm for your heart and for your spirit. This is the deepest meaning of ṣawm.

Anyone who can stop eating, drinking and sleeping with their spouse is in a state of humility. The human being can stop doing these things, but this is not the real meaning of ṣawm. The real meaning is that the body needs to make ṣawm. The body is like a machine, and your stomach needs to stop and rest. For this reason, Allāh is the Merciful and gives us a chance to learn how to heal our bodies from the many sicknesses we see everywhere.

However, how you make real ṣawm refers to the spiritual. It is how to give your heart and your spirit a chance; more than that, it is to share the secret you carry. How do you give from this secret? It is important to give from this secret through the spiritual. What does "spiritual" mean? It means to walk very deeply in the name of God, to follow His teachings and to read the Holy Qur'ān in order to understand its real meaning. The Qur'ān's real meaning is not found in knowing the verses; it is found in knowing the secrets in the letters. Most people do not understand the Qur'ān. Many big ṣhāykh̄s and Muslims do not understand the secrets in the letters.

Now, everybody is making the outer ṣawm in order to follow what Allāh wants and what He says. It is very important for everyone who believes and follows the religion of unity to make

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<sup>22</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *A Righteous Word is Like a Righteous Tree*. Pope Valley: Shadhiliyya Sufi Center, 2008.

ṣawm. Allāh sent ṣawm to every prophet, to every nation before Muḥammad, 'alayhi-ṣ-ṣalātu-s-salām. There is ṣawm in the religion of Mūsā (Moses), 'alayhi-s-salām. There is ṣawm in the religion of Ibrāhīm (Abraham), 'alayhi-s-salām and in the religion of 'Īsā (Jesus), 'alayhi-s-salām, and in the religion of Nūḥ (Noah), 'alayhi-s-salām. There is ṣawm for all nations, but some people do not perform ṣawm in the right way.

Some people say they would like to give up something for ṣawm, such as not eating meat. No, real ṣawm is to not drink water, to not eat food or anything. Also, your hand likes to make ṣawm by not stealing or hitting people. Your tongue likes to make ṣawm by not saying any bad words about anyone while he is not there. Allāh will judge you about this. The eye makes ṣawm (by not looking at things with envy, hate or desire). All of this that I speak about is outside. Every hand and every ear makes ṣawm.

It is very important for everybody to make ṣawm; however, this is not enough. This is ṣawm for the body, but how can we make ṣawm for the heart? This needs to be deep. Do not use your heart for anything that is bad or to believe in any ideas from outside things.

It is important not to look at people and say, "This person has a lot of money," or something like that. This is jealousy. It is not ṣawm. The real beloveds of Allāh are not jealous. If a person is jealous then he breaks his ṣawm completely. If a person uses his heart to speak behind people's backs, he breaks and loses his ṣawm. If anyone makes bad things through his heart toward another, he breaks his ṣawm.

Ṣawm is very, very special. Do not give a chance for anything else to be in your heart. Ṣawm is only for Allāh. Make your heart true for your beloved Allāh. It is very important to be clean. Do not follow the dirty. You can keep the dirty for yourself. Allāh will not accept this ṣawm from you, I am sure. It is better for you to put this ṣawm in the rubbish. Allāh is clean and He wants you to be clean, to be a really holy place. The heart is the throne of Allāh.

Allāh says:

My heavens and My earth could not contain Me,  
but the heart of My faithful believer, My beloved,  
has been containing Me. (Ḥadīth Qudsī)

If you are a real beloved of Allāh, then I am sure that your heart is clean. Sure, you carry Allāh and His secret. You make ṣawm about everything. Only Allāh is your beloved. Then you begin to trust and to walk deeper and deeper. For that reason, I say, "He who knows himself, knows Allāh." Not only does he know himself, but he knows his heart and how to clean it.

Go deeper then you will see. This heart contains everything. How can it contain Allāh? The heart is not like a vase or something. However, as I said, Allāh knows that nothing can contain Him, not even the seven heavens or the 100,000 worlds that He, subḥānahū wa ta'ālā (glorious and exalted is He), created.

Now you begin to walk spiritually. This ṣawm is spiritual 'ibāda (worship) and it is not only for the body. I am sure that I can keep the donkey three days without food, but he cannot make ṣawm. If you give a donkey food, green or not green (i.e. fresh or not), he will eat it. There are

many human beings who are like this animal. They do not eat during ṣawm, but their tongue does not stop talking about people. It is for this reason that Allāh made ṣawm not only for the body but for all the worlds: al-Mulk, al-Malakūt, al-Jabarūt and al-Lahūt.

Ṣawm is not for just for Ramadān. Allāh wants you to be in real ṣawm all your life. What happens after Ramadān is that people love to eat all the food. What happens? Is this ṣawm? This is not really ṣawm, because he may eat six or seven times more than he did during Ramadān. I am sure he did not taste anything from Ramadān.

It is important to understand the real meaning of ṣawm. Ṣawm gives you mercy. It gives you a new creation through your stomach, because when you are hungry you remember how many people do not have food, how many children do not have milk and how many people have nothing to eat. Ṣawm is like a needle that touches you and wakes you up. Remember, there are many human beings who do not have food. There are many people who die before finding food or water. Remember this when you feel hungry. What do you take from the real meaning of ṣawm? You do not take anything if you do not give, because what you have will not move.

Allāh, subḥānahū wa ta'ālā, says there is Zakāt-ul-Ṣawm (Zakāt-ul-Fitr). The Prophet, 'alayhi-ṣ-ṣalātu-s-salām, said it is important to give this zakāh. Zakāt-ul-Fitr is due before the end of Ramadān and it is about \$15.00 for each member in your family. The purpose of giving it is to ensure everyone will be able to eat on 'Eid-ul-Fitr.<sup>23</sup> It represents about 2 kg of clean wheat. There is nothing inside the wheat and the price of this is about \$15.00.

Zakāt-ul-Fitr is due before the end of Ramadān and it is very important to pay it now, not tomorrow, in order for it to reach the poor people before 'Eid. Maybe they would like to buy some food or clothes for their children and family. The meaning of 'Eid is "returning joy." If we are eating and other people are not eating, then what does this mean?

Give \$15.00 for each member of your family. This is known as "fard" (obligatory) and it is required. There is no way around it. You must give this amount; however, if you would like to give more then you may.

The Ṣūfīs, of course, give more than \$15.00 per person because they have big hearts. Does the one who would like to marry a beautiful woman care about money? No, he gives everything. What is the price from Allāh for the person who would like to go inside a beautiful garden? Everything. Do not only ask Allāh to put us in the Garden, but to put us with Him, face to face. This is what I pray for.

It is as Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya (*radiya-llāhu 'anhā*) said:

I do not pray for You to put me in the Garden  
and I am not afraid of the Fire, but that I find You, Allāh.  
I pray only for Your face.  
I would like for You to put me face to face with You, my Lord.

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<sup>23</sup> 'Eid-ul-Fitr is the 3-day feast at the end of Ramaḍān.

This is the real worship for us. This is the way to purify yourself—giving ṣadāqa and zakāh.<sup>24</sup> It protects you, your children and your family from sickness and it cleans and protects your heart from all bad things. I am not speaking about outside ṣawm; I am speaking about spiritual ṣawm that protects your spirit. For this reason, do not wait until the time you leave (die), for God will judge you when you leave and go to him. Āmīn.

Now we would like to travel with the music of Allāh.

For this teaching Sīdī had Ṣāliḥ Kent read a special, unpublished teaching—a commentary on song lyrics Sidi wrote about 30 years ago.

The lyrics of the song are bold, italicized and indented.

The original commentary on the song lyrics is in bold print.

Sīdī's live commentary is in plain text.

The reading begins, “This is called ‘Shams-ul-Ḥaqīqa, the Light of Truth.’ The lyrics are written by Ibn al-Fārid and it is given the title, ‘The Leader of All Those Who Merged in Divine Love.’

Ibn al-‘Arabī (*radiya-llāhu ‘anhu*) said:

He is just a bird who smelled the fragrance of love, so he went on chanting.

“The One Who Knows All The Reasons”

*If you are one of those who exists in the divine reality,  
the body is like a captive of affliction  
made out of mud to carry the trust.*

Oh human who seeks to walk to Allāh, before walking you must know the reality of your existence and why Allāh brought you into existence. Allāh brought you into existence to make ṣawm. Stop and listen: who are you? Why are you? Do you not to remember how Allāh talked to you when he created the human? Allāh says:

I will be creating a human being out of mud.  
When I finish forming him and fashioning him and breathe into him out of My spirit,  
prostrate yourselves to him. (Qur’ān 38:71)

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<sup>24</sup> Ṣadāqa is voluntary charity above and beyond Zakāt-ul-Māl, the obligatory charity given on a yearly basis. When Sīdī says simply, “zakāh,” he is usually referring to Zakātu-l-Māl.



That was an order for the angels. To whom was the prostration? Was it to the mud? Or was it to the One who put a secret into that mud out of His secrets to carry a divine existence through a divine mirror?

Allāh says through the tongue of the Prophet (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

I created Ādam in My own image (as My own reflection). (Ḥadīth Qudsī)

This means that Ādam, in reality, is a divine mirror. This is why Allāh asked the angels to prostrate to the essence within that true mirror, which was prepared to carry the trust and the message of actualization. Allāh had sent His message and asked the heavens, the earth and the mountains if they would carry that trust.

Truly, We did offer the trust  
to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains,  
but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it.  
But the human bore it. (Qur'ān 33:72)

However, the human being carried that trust. It is a great trust that Allāh deposited within you. It is a very glorious trust, because it has no beginning and no end—it is limitless. It is the sacred words of Allāh, which you carry. Therefore, preserve its reality and protect it within yourself. Live by it and apply it so that you can attain gnosis.

This gnosis leads you to divine love, which contains all secrets and the knowledge of everything. It contains the divine knowledge that Allāh sent to those who love Him. He sends this knowledge to whomever He assigned it to from among those who offer themselves wholeheartedly to Allāh in complete surrender. These are the ones who travel to Him from the realm of creation to the realm of the Creator.

Are you truly that person? Are you ready to know this trust, to receive it and to preserve it? You have to rid yourself of everything that is not Allāh and you must renew your covenant with Allāh. This is very important, for this is the real ṣawm, the deep ṣawm.

Renew the covenant you already made when Allāh spoke to you saying:

“Am I not your Lord?” (Qur'ān 7:172)

You said, “Yes,” and you testified against your own self. You promised to be as Allāh wanted you to be. The Real was a witness, Glory to Him, to His majesty. Allāhu Akbar. He provided you with all that you want. Therefore, have the willpower to carry the real secret, My secret, so that you can leave the perishable world and arrive at the eternal witnessing station, the realm that has no end.”

The meaning Allāh is giving me in this moment is that ṣawm gives you a new creation. In the beginning when He asked, “Am I not Your Lord?” You answered, “Yes.” You gave Him the promise. However, afterward the human being broke that promise more than once. Then Allāh

sent the fard.<sup>25</sup> He sent ṣawm for all beloveds in order that all people could make repentance again.

Give your promise to Allāh once again. What is this promise? How do you do this? You do this through ṣawm. This is not ṣawm of the body, but it is the spiritual ṣawm like your grandfather gave. Your grandfather did not give the promise only with his body. He gave the real ṣawm. This is from the deepest meaning of ṣawm. It is to return to Allāh, to be with Allāh.

Die before you die. When you die before you die, then you take life. You will see, and God will give you a new creation. It is not like this creation. He is deeper than that. If you taste it then you will know.

The reading continues, “You will live a life full of love and knowing. Within every twinkling of an eye in your walking, We will transport you from one station to another until you realize, through this journey, all of the stations you had to go through. Are you listening to what I say? Can you hear me? Did you purify yourself before you came?”

If you are as Allāh wills you to be, and He is the greatest Beloved, then did you offer your spirit as a sacrifice on His altar? Did you truly intend to pray the real prayer, declaring, ‘Allāhu Akbar, Allāh is the Greatest?’ If you truly did, congratulations! I speak to you, then. Allāh says:

I did not create the jinn and the humans  
except to worship Me. (Qur’ān 51:56)

‘Worship Me,’ means ‘to know Me, to follow My commands.’

I say, ‘Yes, your body is captive to dust because it will return to dust. It is only a vessel to carry My message. If that body or form is honest and sincere in carrying this message, I will give him whatever He wishes. This is because he obeyed Me in whatever I demanded.’ ”

“I am the real bride for anyone who gives Me everything. If you would like to accept Me, than I will give to you. However, if you do not follow Me, then how can I accept anything from you?”

The reading continues, “The body is like Nūh’s ship, which is the ship of salvation. If you are truly the captain of your body, then you have arrived at what Allāh wants of you. Beware of turning left and right, and beware of listening to any other but Allāh. Do not listen to this and that. Listen only to Allāh’s words and the secrets that were revealed.

Do not listen to images or pictures. Listen to the voice of Allāh and follow His order. Purify your hearing. Make it a total and a complete purification. It is a true, great emigration from the realm of dense humanity to the realm that is full of gnosis and divine beauty. Make your hearing divine. Make all of your senses divine senses, and then you will attain that which you are seeking.”

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<sup>25</sup> The “fard” is obligatory actions, including the 5 pillars of Islām. The 5 pillars are: 1. testifying to the oneness of Allāh, 2. praying ṣalāh 5 times a day, 3. fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, 4. giving charity on a yearly basis (based upon your assets), and 5. making the pilgrimage to Mecca once in your life, if you are able.

Then you are making the real şawm. This is the real şawm. This is the niche of our Holy Allāh.

The reading continues, “Fast with your seeing until it becomes a fully divine seeing. Fast with your hands until they become divine hands. Then, beloveds, you can continue to sail until you gain the reality of all of the secrets. I have said to beware of turning, so that you will not fall into temptation.

*The body is no more than a captive to dust.  
It was only created to carry the trust.*

While you are walking on this journey, oh human, your heart is longing for Allāh, so please look to Allāh with the eyes of kindness to help yourself arrive on the shores of peace and safety. I ask Allāh to grant you His pleasure to make you as He wishes you to be.

Oh Allāh, take my beloveds from the realm  
of everything other than You,  
to an annihilation in You.  
We have sought medicine in everything  
but we have found no cure  
except nearness from the home  
that is much better than separation.  
Allāh, please, do not deprive me of Your protection.  
Make Your voice and my tongue  
always glorifying You and praising You.  
Make my face facing the realm of witnessing so that I can see You.”

You need to make the real şawm. This is the real şawm.

The reading continues:

*“Have mercy on a spirit that is longing  
and a heart that is mourning because of the fire of yearning.  
Have mercy on the heart that is suffering  
from the fire of yearning for You.  
By the reality of the people of the Prophet’s household,  
have mercy upon us.  
Have mercy, my Lord, have mercy.  
There is no escape  
for Your worshipful slave at the time of affliction,  
except in You.*

This is because the family of Your household are the carriers of the secrets. They are the flames of light.

For You have said:

God is the light of the heavens and the earth.  
His light is like this:

there is a niche,  
and in it a lamp,  
the lamp inside a glass,  
a glass like a glittering star,  
fueled from a blessed olive tree  
from neither east nor west. (Qur'ān 24:35)

It does not belong to anything, except to Allāh, because it is a good tree that has its roots well-established. Its branches reach up to Heaven, producing fruits continuously by the permission of its Lord (Qur'ān 14:24-25). It protects the whole of existence under its shadow and illuminates it by its oil. This is the oil that lit the fire of longing and yearning for Allāh. This is the tree of realization and actualization. Whoever tastes a drop of its oil will be granted eternal life and will be shadowed under the divine lights.

*Oh my Beloved, descend upon Your lover,  
for this passionate love is not easy to bear.*

I am the oil for anyone who does not have it. I have arrived at the station in which you would like to drink the water of life. Whoever created you will dress you in a beautiful garment from that same tree. It is a garment that makes you absent from everything, and you remain with Him. You will be like a drunk who is dancing right and left, remembering and being conscious of Him. This noble station in which He gives you life, after he made you die in His niche, is the station of baqā'."

You have witnessed the One Who can dress you in the dress of purity in which you annihilate from everything else. Therefore, start and remember Him wherever you turn, right or left. Chant His praises day and night. Do not stop until you arrive at that station. It is the station where He gives you life and keeps you in existence after He slays you on His altar.

You offered Allāh a sacrifice similar to the one Ibrāhīm offered, for the Real has said on the tongue of Ibrāhīm speaking to his son:

'Oh my son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you.  
So look what you think!  
He (Ismā'īl) said: 'Oh my father!  
Do that which you are commanded.  
Inshā'a-llāh, you will find me patient.' (37:102-103)

Ismā'īl (Ishmael) (*'alayhi-s-salām*), the slain, responded, offering everything as a sacrifice to his Guardian Protector, so that he could please Him on behalf of all the oppressed on the earth.

Ismā'īl said, 'Oh my father, do as you have been ordered so that you can offer life at that moment to those who have not yet arrived at the real life. This is the real life. There is no death.' "

It is very important for everyone to be a sacrifice for Allāh. Allāh created you to be a sacrifice only for His face—to know Him and to know the real meaning. Allāh does not need your

money, but He likes to give life to all of those who are crying from the deep suffering and do not have anything. This is the real life. This is the real sacrifice when you give. This is the life. Bismi-llāh.

The reading continues, “Through your leadership of the ship of salvation that can sail them to the shore of gnosis, I am offering you this sacrifice, until Allāh grants gnosis to whomever He wills.

*Staying up all night long from love for Him  
becomes a sweet action,  
for He manifests in epiphanies.*

Gnosis is granted after accepting the blessed sacrifice. How, then, can they not rejoice in a meeting where Allāh manifests Himself to them, bestowing His contentment and bestowing gnosis upon them? He accepts their sacrifices on behalf of all people. In this state of ecstatic finding, you can see the beauty of the Beloved when He reveals Himself to you, if He is so pleased with you. Then you can rejoice in His contentment.

After offering everything he had, leaving nothing within, the gnostic is accepted. The gnostics are accepted and they all prostrate to Allāh in gratitude, because He granted them arrival to His presence.

‘If you want to arrive at My presence then you must be very patient and continue to walk toward Me according to the stations that are prepared for you.’ Such are the stations of submission and politeness with certainty, where you drink from the water of divine provision that Allāh has prepared for all seekers. Do exactly what Ibrāhīm did when he declared:

I will emigrate for the sake of my Lord. (Qur’ān 29:26)  
It is He Who guides me. (Qur’ān 26:78)

You can arrive through riding the ship of salvation, Nūḥ’s ship. Allāh said to him, ‘Build the ark. We are watching you. Do not talk to Me about those who oppressed themselves and others. They will be drowned. They are already drowned in the world of illusion that is full of darkness and empty of mercy and security.’ Everyone on earth wishes to have mercy and security, especially the oppressed.

*My Beloved revealed Himself:  
So humble yourself to the One you love,  
for passionate love is not easy.*

‘Open your heart, Our beloved, while you are in Our presence during your prostration.’ Humble yourself and be in complete absence from humanity. It does not shame you to throw away everything Allāh does not want.

Therefore, stand up and hurry to meet your Beloved. Prostrate yourself and drink from the water of life and from the water of being absent from everything except His presence.

For He has told you:

Escape to Allāh, your Guardian Protector. (see Qur'ān 33:48)

You have no other escape but to Him. In His refuge, you are granted safety, security and limitless freedom. It is a true freedom that is within the boundaries of his commands and prohibitions.”

الله

# Bowing to Allah, Most High

Ramadān Retreat ~ October 5, 2007 ~ Taken from *Secret of the Spirit*<sup>26</sup>

## First Kḥuṭba

Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāh, al-ḥamdu li-llāh, praise be to Allāh and may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our master, guide and prophet, Muḥammad, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām, praise be to Allāh, who guided us to this. We would not have been guided except that Allāh has guided us. We ask Him to help us and forgive us and we seek refuge in Him from the worst of our deeds and from the evil of our selves. Whoever is guided by Allāh is the one who has true guidance, and whoever is left to stray by Allāh cannot find a guide.

Allāh, glory be to Him, said that Allāh and His angels pray and send their peace upon the Prophet, ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. All of you who believe, send your peace upon the Prophet, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām. May the peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon our master guide Muḥammad and the other prophets Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses) and 'Īsā (Jesus), 'alayhim as-salām, and all the other prophets and messengers of Allāh. May Allāh be pleased with all the followers in their footsteps to our beloved Allāh. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon all of you. Allāh, Most High, glory be to Him, says:

Truly the Muslim men and women,  
the believing men and women  
the men and the women who are obedient,  
the men and women who are truthful,  
the men and the women who are patient,  
the men and the women who are humble,  
the men and the women who give alms (ṣadaqah)  
the men and the women who fast (ṣawm)  
the men and the women who guard their chastity  
and the men and the women who remember Allāh much with their hearts and  
tongues  
Allāh has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward. (Qur'ān 33:35)

This is the month of Ramadān, and it is the month of blessing and repentance. It is the month of forgiveness and mercy, and the month with which Allāh is pleased. This is the month that can save us, the worshippers, from the Hellfire.

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<sup>26</sup> *Secret of the Spirit.*

This month is coming to an end, so all my beloveds, my beloved men and my beloved women...

Did you ask yourself?  
Did you truly take this chance to become closer to Him?  
Did you take this chance to be with Him and in Him  
in continuous worship and remembrance of Him,  
always conscious of Him,  
being with the closest angels chanting hymns of His praise and glorifying Him?  
Are you seeking Allāh's forgiveness in the early morning before dawn?  
Are you glorifying and praising Allāh early in the morning and late at night?  
Are you one of those who fasted and who truly cared for His fasting,  
and fulfilled its conditions completely and fully without any shortcomings?  
Did your tongue truly fast?  
Did your eyes truly fast?  
Did your hands truly fast?  
Did your feet truly fast?  
Or were you rebellious and stubborn?  
Did you continue to backbite others without listening to Allāh?

There is no word uttered by the human except that an angel records what he uttered. There is an angel recording every good word you say and every evil word you say (Qur'ān 50:17). Were you conscious of your tongue when you were talking? Did you use your tongue in obedience, in worship? Did you use this tongue to seek forgiveness? Did you use this tongue to recite the Qur'ān, the word of Allāh, the Book of Allāh? Because Allāh said in the Qur'ān:

Recite of the Qur'ān as much as is easy for you (Qur'ān 73:20)

The Prophet, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām, said:

I do not say that alif lām mīm are one letter,  
but alif is a letter, lām is a letter and mīm is a letter.  
With each letter you recite, you will have ten rewards. (Ḥadīth)

Reading one letter of the Qur'ān sent down to our Prophet Muḥammad, ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, brings ten-fold blessings. Did you recite Qur'ān or did you use your tongue for hours in backbiting others or speaking vain words that are not pleasing to Allāh and His Messenger?

Oh human being, do you know the affliction that Allāh has prepared for you if you deviate from His way and if you become rebellious against His commands? Ramadān is almost saying farewell to you and you do not really know if you will be alive next Ramadān. How many people are there whose coffins are being created now and they are unconscious of it? People do not even know if they will live to see the coming dawn.

Did you prepare for this journey, this difficult journey you are going to have after you pass away?

Did you prepare with your repentance?



Did you prepare by doing good deeds?  
Did you prepare by fasting and prayer?  
Was your fasting true fasting or was your fasting just to be hungry and thirsty,  
and on the other hand your tongue was as sharp as a knife,  
backbiting people and speaking badly of them?  
Did you accuse others who were innocent of what you were accusing them of,  
or did you spy on people and try to listen to their private affairs?  
Did your ear commit this sin?

All that is left of Ramadān are a few days that you can count on one hand. This is a month of weeping and a month of worship. It is a month where the human being should feel sorrow and regret for his transgressions of the limits set by Allāh. Did you give your charity in full? Allāh says about that those who give charity in Ramadān without any delay are the ones who will find success.

Give your zakāh, especially in these last ten days of Ramadān. Zakāt al-Fitr, the charity at the end of Ramadān, is the charity of fitr, of breaking the fast. You have to give it for yourself and for everyone under your care, on behalf of everyone in your care, because it is a zakāh, a charity that will bring you protection. It will keep you and protect you, your children, and your wife or your husband in all ways. Also, if you broke your fast for a few days you have to give charity in compensation for these days. You have to give what is enough to feed a person in need two meals, and you must also pay the Zakāt al-Fitr on behalf of those under your care whether it is your parent or your wife, and you must do it right away. You should not delay it.

Some scholars say that it must be paid on the first day of 'Eid, but we say it must be given during the last ten days of Ramadān. It is the duty and obligation of every Muslim to give the Zakāt al-Fitr. Zakāt al-Fitr is obligatory for every person: child, woman or man. (If you care for someone who cannot pay) you pay on behalf of those under your care. Allāh will not accept your fasting and bless you unless you pay this zakāh. Zakāt al-Fitr, the charity of breaking the fast and ending the fast, is very important to protect you, your family and your loved ones. This charity goes to those who in need, the poor. It should never go to those who are rich or those who are not in need. It is forbidden and impermissible for them to take it.

Everyone must pay the full charity on his yearly earnings and also the Zakāt al-Fitr.<sup>27</sup> We are talking about two types of charity. I see that some people still have not paid it and I do not

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<sup>27</sup> There are three types of zakāh Sidi discusses in this chapter:

1. Zakāt al-Māl: each year a Muslim is required to give 2.5% of his or her net wealth as charity, and it should be paid as early in the month of Ramaḍān as possible.

2. Zakāh al-Fitr: is paid at the end of Ramaḍān (Sidi is saying to pay it during the last 10 days). In the U.S. it usually costs \$20-\$40 (\$5-\$10 per person in your family).

know why they have not. Do they have a promise from Allāh that they are going to live to see tomorrow or after tomorrow? Do they really know that? Do not delay it then. You have to pay it right away. I invite you to pay this charity and also the Zakāt al-Fitr later, because it is very important. The Messenger of Allāh, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām, gave a ḥadīth about this.

There was a man called 'Abd Allāh ibn Salām. 'Abd Allāh ibn Salām was a great man from the Jewish people, and he was one of the beloveds of Allāh. Once the Prophet, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām, came to the city of Medina this man came to the Prophet, believed in him, and took shahādah.<sup>28</sup> He said, "I bear witness that Allāh is God and that you, Muḥammad, are His noble prophet, messenger, slave and servant."

'Abd Allāh ibn Salām narrated that he asked the Messenger of Allāh, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām, "What is the way to reach the Garden (i.e. Paradise)."

This was the answer the Prophet gave,  
"Feed people and spread peace and the greeting of peace;  
then you will enter the Garden in peace."<sup>29</sup>

This was the answer of the Messenger, the Messenger of peace, mercy, justice and love. He said, "Oh 'Abd Allāh, slave and servant of Allāh, feed people; feed those who are hungry and spread peace and the greeting of peace all over the world. Reconcile those who are fighting; mediate between your brothers and sisters who are fighting."

This is the Messenger of Allāh, the messenger of peace, justice and mercy. He called us to this because he is the message of peace, love, mercy and justice. He said:

Whoever invites people to this way will enter the Garden. (Ḥadīth)

I say this and I seek forgiveness for myself, so please seek forgiveness for yourself as well.

Praise be to Allāh,  
may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Master, our Guide,  
Muḥammad, 'alayhi as-salātu as-salām.  
We ask You by Your Majestic Essence, by the truth of Your Messenger,  
not to let any one of us be deprived, but give him what he needs.  
We send our blessings upon our Master, our Prophet Muḥammad,

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3. If you miss fasting days during Ramaḍān you can make up the days either by fasting them after the month is over, or by offering zakāh to those in need. You give an amount equal to what it would cost to feed a person two meals.

<sup>28</sup> The first of the five pillars of Islām is to bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is His messenger. Bearing witness in this way is known as "taking shahādah." To take shahādah repeat, "Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāh Muḥammadan rasūlu-llāh" three times in front of two witnesses.

<sup>29</sup> The greeting of peace is, "As-salāmu 'alaykum," which translates as, "Peace be upon you."

and all the other messengers and prophets, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, and ʿĪsā.  
We send a continuous prayer and a continuous blessing  
that will never end until the Day of Judgment.

Allāh says in the Qurʿān:

Those who believe faithfully are the ones who are going to prosper,  
they are the ones who are going to attain success. (Qurʿān 33:35 and tafsir)

Who are those who believe? Who are those who will be granted success and prosperity? They are the ones who will be acceptable to Allāh. Allāh explains it in the Qurʿān. He says:

Those who humble themselves in their prayers  
and those who keep the prayer and do not abandon it. (Qurʿān 33:35 and tafsir)

Those who neglect the prayer and are forgetful of it are not acceptable to Allāh. Those who pray sometimes and not at other times are not acceptable to Allāh.

The Messenger of Allāh, ʿalayhi as-salātu as-salām, said the covenant between us and people is the prayer (ṣalāh). Whoever abandons the prayer abandons the way. The one who does not pray is the one who is in disobedience to the Messenger of Allāh and is not accepted by Allāh. Allāh will discharge him from receiving His mercy and forgiveness. But the true faithful believer, the truthful one, is the one who will be granted success and prosperity.

How can the muʿminīn, the believers, be granted success and prosperity? By being humble and being in humility during prayer. Those who are really feeling the presence of Allāh in their prayer, who know that Allāh is seeing them and hearing them, and their hearts are with Allāh will be successful. They are not the ones praying in body only, or thinking about what they are going to do later at work or at home or of other concerns. We are talking about a prayer where the person is fully devoted to Allāh.

When you begin the ṣalāh you say, “Allāhu Akbar,” “Allāh is the Greatest.” It means that Allāh is the Greatest. It means that you say goodbye to the lower realm and all of the concerns that busy you in the lower realm. You are directly in Allāh’s presence; you dwell in Allāh’s presence.

Imagine yourself standing in the presence of a king or governor—you stand politely. You stand with full concentration, alert. Why do you not do that with Allāh? Allāh is the Creator of everything, the King of Kings. You must be polite with Allāh. You must be present in your reading (recitation of the Qurʿān).

When you recite the opening sūra, al-Fātiḥa, you contemplate the meaning of the words. You are conscious that you are speaking directly with Allāh. You bring yourself to consciousness and presence. Those who turn away from Allāh get involved with vain chatter that is not useful. It is not useful for them, for others, for the believers, or for any human being because it tends to corrupt those who listen to it. The words you hear on television, for example, are of that kind of talk. It is vain talk; there is nothing useful in most of it. It is not useful for the body,

the heart, the spirit, or the intellect. It does not mean that our religion, our way, prevents us from listening to television. No, we can listen to what is useful and take what is useful for us, and we must always keep company with good people and listen to good things that will benefit us.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān that those who will be granted success and prosperity are the ones who give charity, the zakāh. They give zakāh because their hearts are with Allāh and with poor people. They feel their pain. They feel sad when the poor are sad, and they feel joy when they see them joyful. These are the qualities of the faithful believer. But the one who does not give zakāh, may Allāh grant us refuge from that, will not be granted success and prosperity. Allāh also says that characteristic of faithful believers is chastity, those who keep and protect their private parts. They protect themselves and are faithful to only their wives and husbands. They do not betray them or look at any other with lust. They are pure and they keep themselves pure.

I ask Allāh to forgive me and you.  
I ask Allāh and His angels to send His blessings upon the Prophet,  
    'alayhi as-salātu as-salām.  
Send your peace and blessings upon the Prophet, oh faithful believers.  
    May Allāh be pleased with the companions of the Prophet,  
his followers, the four rightly guided caliphs and all of their followers.<sup>30</sup>  
    Oh Allāh, please be pleased with all of them and all of those prophets  
and messengers and their followers until the Day of Judgment.  
    May Allāh be pleased with all the scholars and beloveds  
    who follow this way.  
    Oh please, Allāh, forgive our sins and cover our faults,  
and take our souls out of this life while You are satisfied and pleased with us,  
    and do not let any need of ours remain,  
    but fulfill it as long as it is pleasing to you.  
    Please fulfill our needs, if it is pleasing to you,  
our needs for this lower realm and the next life.  
    Please Allāh, overwhelm the oppressors and tyrants and  
    grant victory to the poor, needy and weak  
    who are oppressed across the earth.  
    Please grant victory to those whom You love,  
    those who carry the message of unity,  
the message of lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāh and Muḥammad rasūlu-llāh.  
Please Allāh grant victory and support to the ones who carry the message of peace and love  
and mercy and justice to the whole world.  
Please overwhelm the tyrants, oppressors, murderers and thieves,  
    those who are corrupting the earth and everything green,  
    and who are corrupting people.

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<sup>30</sup> The four rightly guided caliphs were Abu Bakr, Omar, 'Ālī, and Uthman.

Establish prayer, and prevent people from doing what Allāh forbids.  
Allāhu Akbar. Allāhu Akbar.

## Second Kḥuṭba

I ask Allāh for you to have really listened. I hope that you have really listened to the first kḥuṭba in Jum'ah, the Friday speech, and that you really understand your duties. Do not violate Allāh's rights (over you). I hope you will follow the teaching you have just heard because Allāh will bring every human to reckoning. Turn back to Allāh before it is too late because no human knows if he will live for the next hour, the next day, or the next two days. Know that the lower realm, the life of this world, is just a traveling station. The real abode is the final life, the next life. No matter how many years you stay in this life, in the end you will pass away; you will pass away from this life and Allāh will bring you to reckoning. He will question you. He will ask you, "What did you do with the teachings I sent through My messengers and prophets, like Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Īsā, Muḥammad, and Nūḥ (Noah)?" These are the people of unity. Allāh will ask you what you did with the teaching you received. Did you hear the teaching that came from Allāh directly? Or, did you listen to the teaching of shayāṭīn, to illusion and imagination?

You know now with certainty what the real message is. Now you can—you must—follow the teaching of this message before it is too late. Otherwise, you will be standing between Allāh's hands and you will be questioned about every major and minor thing you did. Do not think that when life ends everything will end. This is the life that some people who are ignorant understand. They think that they will live only 60 years, for example, and it will come to an end. Such a person does not comprehend, does not understand, that he will live a next life, another life, and that he will stand in front of Allāh, between His hands, and that he will be questioned. I do not want to mention many details about that now, but by Allāh's will, tomorrow I will give you another teaching. The next teaching will be about the day of standing between Allāh's hands to be questioned, when your actions will be demonstrated before Him.

Be prepared for that day, the day of paying your debt with Allāh. On that day no wealth, no children, no supporters, nothing will benefit you. It will not benefit you if you are strong or tall or have wealth or are healthy; nothing will benefit you. Nothing will benefit you because every human will go singly and stand between Allāh's hands to be questioned. I ask Allāh to grant you success and happiness in this world and in the next, because He is the One Who Responds to Prayer. But whoever would like now to pay Zakāt al-Fitr, the charity of breaking the fast, can come now and give it to Ṣāliḥ Cotten. Whoever also is ready to give the charity for his wealth, Zakāt al-Māl?, can come now. There are two zakāhs—the Zakāt al-Fitr (for the breaking the fast at the end of Ramadān) and the Zakāt al-Māl (for all of your wealth and assets).

The Zakāt al-Fitr, the zakāh for breaking the fast, is paid on behalf of yourself and everyone under your care. For every person give \$20. If you are single with no one under your care you give \$20. If you are responsible for a family, you give \$20 for each member of your family.

Zakāt al-Fitr is a way of begging Allāh to accept your fasting, to purify your fasting even more, and to let your fasting be acceptable. It means, “Oh Allāh, I fasted for You. Please accept it and purify my fasting if it was not perfectly pure, because none of our fasting is pure. Please Allāh, accept and purify our fasting. I obey You. Please accept this and give it to the poor and needy.” This is the meaning of Zakāt al-Fitr. It is different from the zakāh you give if you miss a day of fasting during Ramadān because you are traveling or sick. This is for the end of the fast.

There is the other type of zakāh—the zakāh you pay on all of your wealth. If you saved money paid annually, you pay for that too. It is recommended you pay this during Ramadān. These are the three types of zakāh.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

And those who hoard up gold and silver,  
and spend it not in the way of Allāh,  
announce unto them a painful torment. (Qur'ān 9:34)

It will be said to them, “Taste what you did.”

There is a reason, a wisdom in paying the Zakāt al-Fitr—the zakāh of the end of fasting during the last ten days of Ramadān. In the last ten days there is a feast coming, which means if that if this zakāh reaches the poor early enough, they can celebrate 'Eid. Otherwise, they will not feel the 'Eid, because they do not have the funds to pay for a good meal, new clothes for their children, or toys. This is why it is recommended that you pay the Zakāt al-Fitr in the last ten days. This gives the poor people a chance to prepare meals, pay for clothes, buy things for their children, and celebrate 'Eid with everyone else, not later than everyone else. This is the divine wisdom behind paying it in the last ten days.

Allāh is pure goodness, and so He is the One Who Commands Pure Goodness. He is the peace and the beauty and the mercy. Allāh wants peace and mercy and love and beauty for the whole earth, for everyone, for all people. For this reason give zakāh for the sake of Allāh, purely for the sake of Allāh. Everyone can now pay Zakāt al-Māl on all of his wealth, the annual zakāh. He can also pay the Zakāh al-Fitr, and he can pay the zakāh if he has broken his fast during Ramadān and has not fasted those days. These are three types of charity. It is better to pay it as soon as you can. Do you take for granted that you will live to compensate for the missed days? It is better to pay now just in case. Then you can compensate for the days with fasting if you can, because that is better.

I will leave you now to rest because we are approaching a night that will be full of prayer and remembrance and spiritual practices. You are in need of rest now to be ready for tonight, and I will be with you from now until the end of Laylāt al-Qadr—the Night of Power. I will be with you all of this time, so be prepared for the blessed hours coming up. Take your chance, the opportunity to benefit from the blessings of these coming hours and from the Night of Power, because Allāh says it is peaceful until the dawn. It is the night of peace and the night of souls being saved from the Hellfire. By Allāh's will, I will be with you in every major and minor thing.

Spend these coming days reciting the Qurʿān, because for each letter you recite from the Qurʿān you receive ten blessings, ten-fold the normal blessings. This is what the Messenger of Allāh said. This is why I recite the whole Qurʿān about five times in the month of Ramadān when I am here, but when I am back in Masjid al-Aqṣā I read it, the whole Qurʿān, fifteen times during Ramadān. I do not read it for myself, I recite on behalf of everyone, for everyone asking Allāh to send peace and blessings upon the poor, the sick, and those who are suffering across the earth. I recite it and I weep, I weep bitterly and I pray to Allāh to lift the wars, suffering, disease, and destruction from people. May He grant us peace, and may we achieve it across the world for all people.

This is how I spend my time. Also, when I am in this country I spend it in this way. My whole life is a retreat, especially at night. All my nights are retreats. I am with Allāh in the night and in the morning I am with Allāh, as well. I ask Allāh to accept you and to accept from you. I am certain that Allāh will accept you because you are very fine people. I love you a lot because you are sincere and truthful with Allāh, and honest with Allāh, and you are fully devoted and directed toward Allāh, and Allāh will not turn you away disappointed. Allāh never, ever turns away His beloved from His door disappointed, because He is the Merciful and the Compassionate. Āmīn. Āmīn. Āmīn.

## Complete Tawba

This was taken from *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*<sup>31</sup>

This is a compilation of excerpts from different teachings on tawba, including: “Tawba of the Body, Self, Heart, Soul and Secret” and “Allāh’s Natural Law and Repentance” from *A Righteous Word is Like a Righteous Tree*.<sup>32</sup>

Salih Kent changed this teaching as the summer progressed.

As a result, there is no “standard” version for us to reference.

Below is one version of the tawba teaching that covers the concepts taught throughout the summer.

As-salāmu ‘alaykum, my beloveds. As-salāmu ‘alaykum, all you present spirits—those who came to us to bless our gathering. My beloveds here came knocking on Your doors and all the doors are closed, but with Your bounty, benevolence and mercy, You open the door of repentance to those who have made mistakes. Here they are coming to You and they enter the door of mercy and repentance. I ask You to benefit them from this tawba in the name of Your angels and the spirits of Your prophets (*ṣalla-llāhu ‘alayhim wa sallam*).

All of the prophets said, “All the doors we knocked on were closed. There is only one door that stayed open and that was the door of piety and surrender, filled with lights. That is the door of tawba, repentance.” Allāh said in a ḥadīth̄ qudsī:

Oh My worshipful slave, if you did not make mistakes  
I would create another creation that would make mistakes and that would  
repent to Me,  
and I would give them repentance and forgive their mistakes.  
Oh son of Ādam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth  
and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me,  
I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it.

Oh worshippers of Allāh, if any of you come to Allāh replete with sins that could fill the entire earth and make an honest, true repentance...if you come to the mercy of Allāh with a pure, sincere intention and a clear heart and pure senses, He will open to the door of repentance and

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<sup>31</sup> *The Traveler's Journey of Healing*.

<sup>32</sup> Sidi Muhammad, *A Righteous Word is Like a Righteous Tree*. Pope Valley: Shadhiliyya Sufi Center, 2009.



the door of mercy to you. He will come to you with the lights of His divine lights equal to that which would fill this earth. He will give you a repentance that will purify you.

One should not be stopped from coming forward toward Allāh by something that he or she did, because Allāh says:

Say: “Oh My slaves who have transgressed against themselves!  
Do not despair of the mercy of Allāh.  
Truly, Allāh forgives all sins. Truly He is Often-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (39:53)

At this point, my children and my beloveds, Allāh has made me a servant serving my children, my sons and daughters, and all those who love Allāh. All those who come forward through the door of repentance and regret what has happened in the past and who promise they will not return to what they have done before will be forgiven.

If a person who repents returns to do what he was doing before, it is as if he had been dishonest with his Lord. For this reason, when you declare your repentance to your Lord do not deceive yourself and think that you can repent and go back to that wrong action. Do not think, “As long as this door is open we can make mistakes and come back and repent.” No, this is not how it works. When you take this promise, it is a solid oath. If you break it, it is as if you broke your promise with Allāh, so do not go back to what you have done before. All of the prophets and the Prophet Muḥammad (*ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhim wa sallam*) said:

I ask for forgiveness seventy times a day.

Are you ready for true repentance? If this is the case, Allāh says:

...unless he repents, believes and works righteous deeds,  
for Allāh will change the evil of such people into good,  
and Allāh is Often-Forgiving, Most Merciful (25:70)

This is a small tradition to explain to you how great the door of repentance is. This is the door of the poor who are returning to Allāh. “The poor” here are the ones who are in need of divine mercy and divine love and it refers to the state of those in complete surrender to Him, those who put themselves in a place of humility. The poor come promising Allāh that they are giving everything to Him so that He can purify them with the water of mercy. This is the meaning of tawba.

This day that I am here with you is blessed. I came here carrying love for you and also carrying pain, crying for the pain in my heart for the world because people are suffering all over the world, especially in the Holy Land. The Holy Land is the heart of the world. Jerusalem is the holy heart of the world. It is the city of all of the messengers and prophets in their manifested right creeds and beliefs and their need to be one hand and one heart.

Now, I would like to start to explain how to purify your bodies, selves, souls and hearts, and also how to purify your spirits and intellects so that we can continue our walking toward Allāh

within the boundaries of His law. This walking is not in accordance with illusion, ignorance and fantasy, because we want to be true children of Allāh who sit around His table. Allāh does not want us to continue to live in the illusions of those who claim to know the truth but never know the divine reality because they were raised and trained by Iblīs and his followers. We do not want to follow this. We want to be as Allāh wants us to be—one nation. As Allāh says in the Qurʿān:

Truly! This, your religion (or nation) is one religion (or nation) and I am your Lord. Therefore, worship Me. (21:92)

Today I would like to explain the meaning of repentance. Repentance has steps. The steps begin with repenting physically, which is the repentance of the material realm. The next step is the repentance of the heart. Following this comes the repentance of the spirit and the repentance of the secret. Then, you learn how to arrive at the divine presence and be conscious of the divine presence. In this way, we become true worshippers and believers in Allāh and we learn how to travel from this material lower realm to the realm of divine dominion, al-Malakūt.

We want you to repent so that you can return to the divine presence and become a true child in the divine presence, conscious of the divine presence. In this way you will be happy, you will be more alive, more peaceful and in continuous prayer. You will witness Allāh in the witnessing station. This is an allusion to the deep and real meaning of repentance.

You move forward after you purify and repent with your body and you purify your heart. You purify your body and your heart with tears of regret, promising your Lord that you will not return to what you have done, and you promise an absolute promise that you will not return to what you have done before. You purify this body so that it comes back to the point where Allāh said:

Truly, I am going to create a human being from clay. (38:71)

Allāh created this body, the human being, with His divine light and put in it a divine light of love, peace, mercy and unity. For this body to be beautifully pure it must contain only purity within it, so do not put anything in it that will bring impurities. Then you will be pure in your body and pure from all that Allāh does not want you to be or to have in your body. At that point, Allāh said:

He loves them and they love Him. (5:54)

Allāh loved you before you loved Him when He created you and filled you with His divine fragrance. Allāh is very eager to care for you. Allāh wants you to be with Him—that is why He gave you this light within you and perfected your creation.

Do you not see how He created you and perfected you in the perfect picture that He wanted for you? Has anyone created a hand or an eye or an ear or a leg of yours? No, it is only Allāh; He is the great beloved, the one who loves you and who put a great love within you. You can never

put a limit on that love. How do you contain and care for that love? You have to be honest and sincere. Do not lie, do not kill, do not hate. Be the soft ground. There are tools that Allāh gave in the *sharī'a*, the divine law, to His prophets.

What is the body? The body is the vessel in which Allāh has manifested Himself with His name “the Manifest.” He has manifested within it His names “the Love” and “the Beautiful.” He manifested within it His names “the Clement” and “the Subtle.” How can you destroy these qualities of the divine? Do not be one who is destroyed for not knowing these qualities. It is not lawful for you to destroy these qualities. Do not transgress the divine boundaries and destroy people’s homes. They are divine jewels; there is nothing equal to them. When you steal, you destroy that jewel. When you commit adultery with someone else, you destroy the love and you destroy its container. When you hurt others, you also destroy the divine creation.

Tawba, or repentance, is a mirror that reflects the purity of this light. Our Prophet said to us:

Allāh is beautiful and He loves beauty.

He is beautiful; He loves what is beautiful. Beauty is what the pure divine qualities have manifested in you. Allāh has provided this pure water of love, of life, for you. He gave you this creation and He has also prepared a reward for you, as He says through His Prophet:

I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has ever seen,  
and no ear has ever heard, nor has it occurred to the human heart.

Allāh has manifested in you and He loves to see His manifestation in you. This is a divine mirror, so do not destroy it and ruin it with wrong actions. If you truly smelled the fragrance of the sins in your body, you would see that they smell worse than anything. Sin has a fragrance, a very nasty fragrance that, if you can smell it, is worse than smelling a dead animal that has been dead for some time. If you are a person of intellect, you will not accept this.

Your body is the divine mirror of Allāh. Allāh wants you to exist in a purified state; He wants to keep you clean. We have to be very careful with our bodies because they are the vehicles Allāh created. He ordered you to use your vehicle properly and He taught you how to use it, how to be in it and how to walk in this life. He taught you how to use this vehicle to serve you. He taught you how use your hands, your eyes, your legs and your hearts. This is the true meaning of the repentance of the body.

Allāh said in the Torah, “First, worship Me and do not associate others with Me. Do not kill, steal or commit adultery. Do not lie. Do not betray. Be honest and be truthful.” These are holy words and these words are also confirmed in the Qur’ān. There He said, “Worship Me and establish *ṣalāh*. Avoid all sins and do not steal. Fulfill My promise, and I will fulfill your promise.” It is also there in the Injīl (Gospel of 'Īsā). It is all one message.

For every soul that Allāh created...the prophets are from the light of Allāh and Allāh has bestowed those lights upon you. Allāh said in His book:

Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth. (24:35)

His light fills the seven earths, the seven heavens and the whole divine world. You carry those seven heavens and seven earths in your body. Why do you want to spoil your body with sins and mistakes? Allāh has sent divine commands and He is very eager for you to keep your body pure. He created everything in a precise measure.

As I said before, the sinner, or the disobedient one, has a very nasty fragrance. When he makes a mistake and sins, we smell it and we know it even if he wears the best of clothes and washes with the purest water. We have a deep sense of smell and we have eyes—not the eyes you are looking at. We can see what he has done. If there was permission to tell him what he has done we would tell him, but Allāh has commanded us to protect him and to advise him with politeness and kindness. We will speak to him with a tongue full of love and mercy and advise him with all we have because we are the servants of the divine presence.

We care for this divine body much more than a mother cares for her child. If we are far from your body we pray for your body, we pray for your self, we pray for you, and we pray for the whole world. However, we have a purpose with you. This is the meaning of tawba: tawba is the return to Allāh, the return to the Beloved. What would you do? If you were a woman with a beloved and you gave him your body and you did not know anyone but him, what would you do if that person was not there for you? Allāh says:

Oh human being. (49:13)

He did not say, “Oh man” or “Oh woman.” Allāh has responded to him and told him that He would not lose track of any of your good actions. Allāh created Ādam and from His divine light He created Hawwā' (Eve). Thus, Hawwā' is Ādam and Ādam is Hawwā'.

Be careful when you see illusions or pictures—they are not from Allāh. They are from the *shayṭān*, from Iblīs. In the world of divine truth there is no Iblīs. There is only the one who says, “Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāh,” which means, “There is no deity worthy of worship except Me.” Allāh said to the people of the Book:

Say: “Oh people of the Book!<sup>33</sup> Let us agree that we worship none but Allāh.”  
(3:64)

These are the meanings of tawba and the secrets of tawba, I say this to you and I explain this more deeply for the first time so that you can:

- understand the meaning of the repentance of the body,

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<sup>33</sup> God refers to the Jews and Christians as “People of the Book” in the Qur'ān. They, like the Muslims, were each given a book of sacred scripture.

- understand how to carry yourself from the purity of the body to the world of complete purity,
- understand how to heal yourself, your body and your self, so that you pass forward and start healing with the name of Allāh,
- and so that your prayers are answered.

If you are sinning and killing and stealing and you say, “I see what you mean,” then you do not see. You are blind; you do not understand. You have betrayed Allāh in the body He gave you. You have betrayed this mirror of Allāh. Is not He the Manifest and the Hidden? Are these not His qualities? Why did you destroy the divine home Allāh created in the perfect manner?

Remember, if you defy the orders or commands of Allāh, nothing will be accepted from you. Immediately ask for repentance and forgiveness; I pray to Allāh for Him to accept your repentance. You have to leave the realm of illusion, fantasy, ignorance and confusion that you have learned through others. Throw it away. Then really see the divine reality and live in accordance with it and within the natural laws Allāh created.

We are commanded to help others return to the Garden of Allāh, in which there is no suffering for anyone and no separation from the divine presence. Allāh says through the tongue of His Messenger (*ṣalla-llāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*):

Be to Me as I want you to be, and I will be to you as you want Me to be.

He opened the door for all those who make mistakes, commit sins and suffer a life of misery, disease and pain. Do you see how many new diseases appear today? These diseases did not exist in the past. Our ancestors did not suffer from these diseases and they were healthier. Why? They were healthier because they were living more in accordance with the way of the prophets and messengers.

We must also purify the heart, the self and the intellect. If we would like to completely travel in this pilgrimage to Allāh, then we must follow the way of the Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (*ʿalayhi-s-salām*), who said:

I am emigrating to my Lord. He will guide me! (37:99)

### **Repentance of the Body**

We must follow the steps of repentance. Physical repentance starts with purifying the limbs and the senses that Allāh gave you. The first sense is seeing. Then there is tasting, hearing and touching. All of these senses must be purified. In addition, smelling must be purified.

You have to be responsible for how you use your senses. The person who backbites, lies, speaks badly about others, refrains from speaking good about others, spies on people and/or ruins people’s reputations by speaking badly about them, is not following Allāh’s order. Know that Allāh says:

Not a word does he (or she) utter  
but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it). (50:18)

There are two angels: one to the right of you and one to the left of you, and they record everything you say (see 50:17).

There is also the sense of hearing. Hearing could be used to listen to gossip, but this deviates from Allāh's way. Also, seeing can be used in the wrong way if you look at what people have and envy them, which deviates from Allāh's commands. The envious one looks at what people have and thinks, "Look at what they have. They have so much," and he envies them. This envy hurts people.

An envious one might be driving and see a person who has a better car and think, "Look at what he has. Why can I not have this? It is not fair." He has envy in his heart. The polite way to handle a situation in which you see something you admire is to say, "Mā shā'a-llāh," which means, "Allāh willed it." Mā shā'a-llāh is said to acknowledge that Allāh gave that person a gift.

Be conscious of Allāh. When you see a gift or a talent someone else has say, "Mā shā'a-llāh." Say, "It is Allāh's will, may Allāh bless him." In this way you will always be grateful for that person, wish him well and pray for Allāh to bless him. Want for your brother what you want for yourself.

Anything the hand does for evil will be brought to account. If the hand does anything that deviates from Allāh's command, it will be brought to account. Whoever wants to walk toward Allāh must repent a sincere, honest repentance, and he must never commit those past actions again. He must purify his senses. As mentioned in the Qur'ān, Nūḥ (Noah) said to his people:

Ask forgiveness from your Lord, for He is Often-Forgiving;  
He will send rain to you in abundance,  
give you increase in wealth and sons  
and bestow gardens and rivers (of flowing water) upon you. (71:10-12)

This means that you have to purify your senses and you cannot return to committing wrong actions. Allāh will not accept repentance from someone who harms others, someone who steals, or someone who deceives people and takes their money without right. Allāh will not accept repentance just given on the tongue. He must take action; he must return the money he took from the people he wronged.

If you backbite someone and you want your tongue to repent, it is not enough to say, "Forgive me, Allāh." You must go to the person and say, "I mentioned you in a way that I should not have. Please forgive me." Whenever a person does something that harms another, he must go to that person and ask for forgiveness. Then he must go to Allāh and ask for forgiveness and he should ask for Allāh to help him sincerely repent. Allāh says:

...unless he repents, believes and works righteous deeds,  
for Allāh will change the evil of such people into good,

and Allāh is Often Forgiving, Most Merciful. (25:70)

Allāh says that He will change a person's bad deeds into good deeds if he returns, repents and follows Allāh's commands in the right way. He must do practices to help himself, like praying ṣalāh, giving charity, fasting if he can and treating people with love and gentleness, not causing them any harm with his tongue or in other ways. He must never commit these sins again and he must feel regret for what he has done. Then the repentance is truthful and sincere.

### **Repentance of the Self**

Once a person has done physical repentance, he must go a step higher and make the repentance of the self. This means he must start to be conscious and remember Allāh most of the time.

First, he starts by seeking forgiveness with his tongue. He says, "I seek Your forgiveness, oh Allāh," which means, "I am returning to You and I promise not to make the same mistakes again." Then he continues with, "Please help me to walk straight as I follow You. I promise You to do so." This means, "I will not stop praying ṣalāh, giving zakāh (charity) and fasting, and I will stop myself from harming all others."

At this point, the ṣhayṭān and his children will come and whisper to the self. This is how it starts. It will come to you and say, "This is too much work. Maybe you should not do it. Why do you keep sitting and saying, 'Lā 'ilāha illa-llāh' or doing dhikr?"

He is your enemy! He wants to make you stray from the way. As long as you depend upon Allāh and are with Him, just say Allāh's name, "Allāh!" and the ṣhayṭānic whisperer will run away from you. Allāh says:

Remember Me, I will remember you. (2:152)

When you say "Lā 'ilāha 'illa-llāh," the ṣhayṭān runs away because he cannot stand it. He travels as far as one hundred miles or more away from you, because when the name of Allāh is mentioned, he cannot stand it. Just say, "Allāh, save me from this whisperer." Then Allāh sends angels to help you and they defeat the ṣhayṭān. He says, "Remember Me and I will remember you."

Before you go to sleep you must remember Allāh. When you go to bed, say, "Bismi-llāh. Yā Allāh." Always make your tongue moist from dhikr (remembrance) of Allāh. Keep saying His name as much as you can. When you are in this state there is no room for the ṣhayṭān to come to you because Allāh sends angels to guard you. That is the way.

Continue mentioning the name of Allāh. If you want Allāh to protect you, stay in continuous remembrance and prayer, because prayer is the connection and communication between you and Allāh. Prayer is in His own words, so you are using His words to connect with Him and this protects you.

You have to start to read the Holy Book (the Qurʿān), because when you read His Holy Book, you are having a direct conversation with Him. In this state Allāh sends angels to guard you and He bestows His love upon you (from the water of His love) and He protects you from everything.

He protects you in your workplace. Remember, then, to mention Allāh in your workplace. If you are a physician remember to say, “Oh Allāh, You are ash-Shāfi, the Healer. Please help me heal this patient,” when you are seeing a patient. Do not say, “I have this knowledge and I am going to help this patient.” Do not say, “I see this,” or “I see that.” You do not see anything.

If you have a disease in your heart, how can you heal another person? You have to heal yourself first. Know that when you put out your hand and say, “Allāh,” you are receiving His provision. It is He who becomes the Healer, not you. You heal by the name of Allāh.

Eat in the name of Allāh. If you eat, you must mention the name of Allāh by first saying, “Bismi-llāh.” When you finish eating you have to say, “Al-ḥamdu li-llāh,” because Allāh gave you this provision. If someone does you a favor or offers you food, do you not say, “Thank you?” Why do you not thank Allāh, your creator, who provided us with everything and who is your protector and provider?

We have to start to heal ourselves. The self must become pure and free of hate and separation. The self must have a tongue that is moist with the remembrance of Allāh. The tongue must not speak anything that is not good and you must keep yourself from speaking bad things. You must stop the whisperer and ask yourself, “Would Allāh be pleased with me if I were to steal or if I killed someone or if I betrayed my beloved by sleeping with someone wrongfully? Would Allāh be pleased with me?”

You have to ask this question before any action. “Will Allāh be pleased with me if I pollute the earth, the seas or the rivers? Will He be pleased with me if I steal another nation’s resources?” You have to ask yourself these questions.

If the self purifies itself in that way, then it starts to taste the pure water. It becomes a loving self, a loving soul. This loving soul is fed by the water of peace from Allāh, the pure water. This pure water washes the self. This spiritual water is better than the water you take a shower with because it is pure water, the water that comes from the name of Allāh. Allāh gives us this water. Allāh sends down water from the sky. Is this not true? It is a sign of love that He sends this water to earth. He sends us rain and He distributes it with His mercy.

If your heart was touched and you followed the teaching that I just gave you, then make the repentance of the self. The self has to travel through seven stations. I explained the seven stations in the book entitled *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*.<sup>34</sup> This book explains how to

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<sup>34</sup> *He Who Knows Himself Knows His Lord*.



rectify your self and complete the repentance of the self. You must read it, write it, understand it and follow it, because it is not from me. It is from Allāh.

What saddens me is that I brought these teachings to you. These are divine teachings on how to purify your self and I explained them in detail in these books that you have in your hands. I wrote to you in detail how the self has seven stations and I taught you all of those seven stations. I showed you how to purify yourself and how to walk through them.

Do not say, “Sidi, what is my station?” Your station? You know the station for yourself. “Have I reached fanā’?” No, you have reached the rubbish because you are full of rubbish; you are not full of Allāh. You do not pray and you break everything. You ask, “Have I reached fanā’?” What fanā’? Are you the Mūsā (Moses) of your time? Are you the Muḥammad of your time? No, you are not. Return, read and follow everything that the Prophet says. Follow the practices. Understand their real meanings. This is important: read every book and write every book. In every word there is a deep secret.

Enough. I say to the beloved, “When you give me everything in one moment, then I give you everything in one moment!” This is from a long time ago. How many times have I come to this country? Many times. This is not from me because I am a slave between His hands. Allāh! I explain everything.

Do not buy a book to put it on the shelf. Read it, study it, write it. It will help you know how to walk. Would you travel from here to Tokyo without having a vehicle that can take you there? No, the captain of a plane has to have a course plotted in order to get where he wants to go, and your walking is more precise than the pilot’s course.

### **Repentance of the Heart**

After you complete the repentance of the body and you complete the repentance of the self, then you will take the third step: the repentance of the heart. Allāh wants your heart to be His own throne, because after its purification the heart can contain Allāh. Allāh says in a ḥadīth qudsī:

My heavens and My earth cannot contain Me.  
Only the heart of My faithful servant (after he is purified and repents) contains Me.

This means that the heart should not contain any envy or jealousy. You must be full of love and mercy and want to help others. You must love for other people what you love for yourself. The heart, in that way, becomes pure.

Can you sleep in a house that is full of dirt? Of course, Allāh will not dwell in the heart of a slave or a human being that is full of dirt. He will not dwell in the heart of someone who hates others, envies others or violates others’ rights. Allāh will not come to that heart. Allāh wants your house to be a house of worship, a house of remembrance.

This heart must be the house of Allāh. Nothing must emerge from it except pure goodness and truthfulness, because Allāh does not order you (to do anything) except that which is in accordance with the divine reality. If you purify your heart you will become happy and you will be in submission to Allāh.

### **Repentance of the Spirit**

The heart also has its own seven stations to traverse. After you complete these, the next step is the repentance of the spirit. The spirit is a boundless, limitless realm. It came from the light of Allāh and it is pure. It is the light of Allāh that illuminates all of existence. This light is what sends peace, mercy and love. When you disobey Allāh and deviate from His way, you are full of darkness. You cannot see this light. For this reason, you must be like a holy book walking on earth.

If you are like a holy book walking the earth, you will have a beautiful fragrance that everyone can smell, even as far as one hundred miles away. People will see you and hear you. They will know who you are when you are not being a miser, when you are giving, loving and caring. If you see someone in need, you must help him.

These are some of the meanings I want to open the door for you to understand. I want to help you travel toward Allāh, to know how to make the repentance of the body, self, heart, spirit and intellect.

### **Repentance of the Intellect**

What is the repentance of the intellect? We explained before that the intellect has two aspects: the dark aspect and the luminous, white aspect. The dark aspect only knows how to worship the lower realm, the physical and the material. The white intellect is the divine intellect that guides you toward what is good. You have to discipline this and read with the white intellect.

Excuse me. I have spoken a long time because I wanted to explain so many aspects of tawba. It is not an easy thing, but you have to keep doing it and try to follow all of the commands of the prophets and messengers. This is how we were commanded to convey the message to you. In a ḥadīth̄ qudsī Allāh says (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

There is a self within the body,  
and within the self there is a heart,  
and within the heart there is a spirit,  
and within that spirit there is a secret,  
and within the secret there is a concealed secret,  
and within the concealed secret there is the most concealed secret,  
and within that there is Me.

Do you know who you are? If you reach that, you will know who you are. You are the one who is carrying the divine truth, the divine reality. You should be the divine mirror. You must be the hearing and seeing of Allāh.

He opened the door for all those who make mistakes, commit sins and suffer a life of misery, disease and pain. Do you see the abundance of new diseases appearing these days? These diseases did not even exist in the past. Our ancestors did not suffer from these diseases. They were healthier. Why? They were living more in accordance with the ways of the prophets and messengers (*'alayhim as-salām*). Allāh said in the Qur'ān:

And it is He who sends down the rain after they have despaired and spreads His mercy.

And He is the Protector-Guardian, the Worthy of All Praise. (42:28)

It is Allāh who sends down this water of life to revive life in a dead land. He sent this holy water to earth to produce beautiful fruits, and also to bring life to human beings who live by eating pure, natural fruits and products of the earth. When people eat this pure food their bodies, as well as their souls, become healthy. The *shayṭān* does not approach people if they live in Allāh's way. This water is a symbol of the divine love that Allāh sends down to people and to the earth to revive it so that it can produce life.

This love inspires everything: human beings, animals and birds. This is why all of the animals and birds chant and glorify their Lord through the praises they offer. It is because they know Him. This beautiful bounty of the earth, declaring the presence of the Creator, asks you to be grateful. If you come to Allāh and you open your heart completely, then you accept His reality. Then you will be healthier in your body and soul. Allāh sends down water to save our lives, to revive life, and this water is holy water, the water of life. You do not know the complete secret of this water of the love.

What would happen if this water was prevented from descending to the earth? Would you smell the beautiful fragrances you are able to smell? How would air come to exist? Air exists because of water. Water carries the secret of existence. How dare you violate trees by cutting them down and destroying the mountains! Mountains were created out of wisdom. Everything was created out of wisdom. Mountains serve to stabilize the earth. If this did not happen and there were not enough mountains, the earth would not be stable, for mountains act as pillars.

One of you will come to me and say, "Sidi, make me a teacher." What teacher? You would like to be a teacher? You do not understand anything and you do not walk. How can I make you a teacher or a master teacher? What would happen?

I give you the yearning to know, the yearning to be a teacher. Then, when you clean yourself and your heart, you will begin to teach another. But if you do not read and you do not write and you do not understand, you are false and you contain nothing. Return to be in the real tawba your tongue speaks about. Allāh does not accept what you say with this piece of your tongue. Allāh has said that if you are not following the *sharī'a*, praying *ṣalāh* and fasting, you will not reach, anyway.

My beloveds, follow the divine commands: Do not steal, do not lie and do not burn your parents after they die. Those who cremate their deceased ones...this never came as a wisdom (*ḥikma*) in any of the holy books, the books of Muḥammad or 'Īsā (Jesus) or Mūsā (Moses) (*ṣalla-*

*llāhu 'alayhim wa sallam*). Why do you do that? This is ignorance. This is your father who raised you and brought you up and your mother. Why do you cremate them? Why do you do that? Why do you not care for them as they cared for you? Why do you not put their bodies in the earth that they came from? You take the body and you cremate it and you throw its ashes away. This is worse than what terrorists do. Allāh says:

And indeed We have honored the children of Ādam,  
and We have carried them on land and sea. (17:70)

Allāh has carried the human being, He did not cremate the human being. Anybody who has done this to his parents or a loved one has to give a sacrifice and repent to Allāh, asking for forgiveness for this deed. We pray to Allāh to forgive us. Amin.

Our most beloved Allāh said the following in a ḥadīth qudsī:

My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary works until I love him.  
When I love him I am  
his hearing with which he hears,  
his seeing with which he sees,  
his hand with which he strikes and  
his foot with which he walks.  
Were he to ask (something) of Me I would surely give it to him,  
and were he to ask Me for refuge I would surely grant him it.  
(If he says, "Be," then it is.)

For Allāh says in a ḥadīth qudsī:

Be to Me as I want you to be and I will be to you as you want Me to be.

Beloveds, would you not like to be in this loving state? This love is so glorious. This is the way.  
Amin.

الله