



Sufi Message Volume 8
The Privilege of Being Human
Nr 6 Likened to the Light

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DAY 1

Man is likened to the light:

- His soul the glow,
- His mind the flame, and
- His body the end of the flame.
- The heat that comes from the light is the atmosphere of man.
- The smoke that rises out of the light in reality does not belong to the light, it belongs to the fuel. As ignorance in man is troublesome, so the smoke rising out of the light disturbs.

As different lights differ in their degree of radiance, so do different souls. The substance of every man, however, is the same: it is light. We read in ancient scriptures that the angels were made of fire. It is not of fire they were made, it is light. But if we ask the question, "Were the angels made of light and no one else?" the answer will be that all, each and everyone, were created out of light.

PRACTICE: Ya Munawwir, O God, Bestower of divine illumination

- Question: What are the means, except concentration and meditation, to develop and strengthen that light in oneself?
- Answer: Right living.

- Question: What is right living? Is it doing what everyone thinks right?
- Answer: If each person would have his way of right living there would be anarchy. I would consider right living that which is right for one self and for others. If not, those who do good or who do wrong can all justify themselves by thinking that what they do is best. Reason is the slave of man, it always comes and sympathizes with him. One asks, "Have I not done right?" or "Have I not done wrong?", and the reason says, "Yes, you have."
- Question: But once one is failing...?
- Answer: Truth is merciful. One cannot fall but on truth; if one falls, one will only fall in the arms of truth. A seeker after truth has no loss. If apparently he loses something, it is not a loss in the end.
- Question: What does it mean, "to fall in the arms of truth"?
- Answer: If a fall is caused in a certain struggle one has fallen in the arms of that particular struggle. If it is in the struggle for love, then it is in the arms of love that one falls. If it is in the struggle for righteousness, one falls in the arms of righteousness. Just as they say that in a holy war a person gives his life for a holy purpose, and is therefore in the arms of that holy object, so, if a person has fallen in the struggle for truth, he has fallen in the arms of truth.

Besides, the hopeful never fails: both his rise and fall mean success. Failure is the loss of hope. As long as there is hope there is no failure.

- Question: And what of those who do not hope any longer?
- Answer. Then that is the end of success.
- Question: Is there nothing that can help them?
- Answer: A miracle can do something; nothing is impossible. Nothing is more painful than the loss of hope. A hopeless person is a dead person. A person who is

dead with hope is living, but a person walking on the earth without hope is as dead.

PRACTICE: Ya Ghani. To make the situation favorable.

CLOSING PRAYER

DEDICATION OF MERIT

DAY 2

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Signs of Spirituality

The difference between our soul and our body, which sometimes we consider as great as between earth and heaven, is not so great. Soul and body are one light, and therefore the external part of man is expressive of his inner being, and the inner being of man also is dependent in many ways upon his external being. "Inner and outer part of man's being" is a term used for our convenience; in reality there is one being, there is one light.

If a man lacks magnetism, if he lacks enthusiasm and courage, if he lacks power of accomplishment, it is all owing to the lack of that radiance which belongs to his being.

The health of the body, the balance of the mind and the purity of the soul all depend upon the radiance of man's being.

- Health of the body therefore is spiritualism
- Balance of the mind is spiritual, and so is
- The purity of the soul,
- A good atmosphere is a sign of spirituality.
- The power of the word,
- Courage without fear,
- Fearlessness,
- Self-confidence also are signs of spirituality;
- The capability of accomplishing something and
- The strength of struggling along all through life.

All these are the signs of spirituality.

- Question: How can one live so that it is approved by others?

- Answer: It is impossible to live the life that one considers best and that others consider best. But one can do one's best.
- Question: In order to be quite sure to be able to give to another should one not have a great deal of vitality oneself?.
- Answer: Vitality also comes from self-confidence. Very often one will see a person with no extraordinary strength and vitality having more strength than a Sandow. [*Eugen Sandow (April 2, 1867 – October 14, 1925), born Friedrich Wilhelm Müller, was a German pioneering bodybuilder known as the "father of modern bodybuilding".*]

PRACTICE: Ya Azim, To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.

Independence is the sign of self-confidence. It is just like a wealthy person who has wealth enough for himself and who always can give to others. A person with limited means, after one day of generosity, the next day will be broken.

- Question: How can self-confidence, confidence in oneself, in one's own affairs, help another person?
- Answer: Self-confidence gives the power to manage one's affairs better and to help others too.

PRACTICE: Ya Azim, To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.

Suppose a doctor comes to see a patient who is in a bad condition and says, "Oh, you have called me too late; this person has gone very far. Still, as you have called me here, I shall write a prescription." But another doctor may say, "It is never too late. I am sure that all will be well. I shall do my very best, and certainly the patient will recover." He may give the same prescription as the first doctor, but his prescription

will be of much greater value. Why? Because besides the medicine, he has given his self-confidence, which is a million times greater in healing-power than prescriptions.

It is the same in all things. A person may start a business, an enterprise, and someone may come along and take away all his strength by saying, "What a fool you are to have begun this. Have you thought of this and that?" Then all the power and radiance the man has can be lost in a moment's time. Another person may say, "It is a noble undertaking; I am sure you will succeed. Therefore my prayer, my thoughts are with you; I shall do all I can to help you in your enterprise. I wish you success."

PRACTICE: Ya Azim. To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.

CLOSING PRAYER

DEDICATION OF MERIT

DAY 3

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The Purpose of Life

The purpose of the life of an individual is to perfect the light in him, which is his very being. Whatever may be the qualification of a person, whatever be his resources, position and rank, if the light within him is not brilliant, he cannot fulfill the purpose of his life. In the Bible, in the allegory of the ten wise and foolish virgins, the same idea is explained. The foolish ones did not keep oil in their lamps, the wise virgins kept it. The wise ones, therefore, answered the purpose on the day, which was promised and the foolish ones repented. Ten means one, zero meaning nothing: a wise soul and a foolish soul. The wise soul collected all material in order to make his light more brilliant for that day which was the day of the promise. The foolish soul wasted it, and found it absent at the time it was needed.

When we think of our life in the world, in our material strife, in our spiritual struggle - what do we need? We need that light the spark of which is within us, which is our being. Every time when we are without it, when we lack it, it causes us all failure and distress in life, since our health, our balance and the clearness of our vision, all depend upon the light that is within.

PRACTICES:

1. Ya Munawwir, O God, Bestower of divine illumination
 2. Ya Ghani, To make the situation favorable.
 3. Ya Azim, To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.
- Question: How can one revivify a soul?
 - Answer: By imparting one's life to him, just as a lighted candle can light another candle, which is put out. When the fire has gone out in the stove one must bring some other fire to light it again. One has to give from one's own hope; therefore

the one who gives must be powerful enough to give it.

PRACTICE: Ya Azim: To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.

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- Question: When can one consider oneself powerful enough to give?
- Answer: One can judge it by one's own self-confidence because that life one gives from one's own life to another comes from self-confidence. In the Sufi terminology it is called iman. It is the most sacred thing in the whole religion; self-confidence is the secret of all miracles.

PRACTICE: Ya Ghani. To make the situation favorable.

- Question: Is love for one's neighbor not sufficient to help?
- Answer: Love is the substance, by self-confidence one makes that substance, and by the power of self-confidence one is able to impart it. For instance, if one sees a person who is very ill and one thinks, "What can I do, how can I do something?", then one can do nothing. For healing, it is all self-confidence that is needed, for healing oneself and for healing another. Not only for healing, but for all things - in business, in industry, in all work - self-confidence is necessary.
- Question: How can self-confidence, confidence in oneself, in one's own affairs, help another person?
- Answer: Self-confidence gives the power to manage one's affairs better and to help others too.

Suppose a doctor comes to see a patient who is in a bad condition and says, "Oh, you have called me too late; this person has gone very far. Still, as you have called me here, I shall write a prescription." But another doctor may say, "It is never too late. I am sure that all will be well. I shall do my very best, and certainly the patient will recover." He may give the same prescription as the first doctor,

but his prescription will be of much greater value. Why? Because besides the medicine, he has given his self-confidence, which is a million times greater in healing-power than prescriptions.

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DAY 4

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Fuel for the Light

As every light needs fuel, so the light, which is ours, which is our self, needs fuel also. The fuel for the physical part of our life is what we call food, but for the life of the mind intellectual sustenance is necessary. If the body is fed and the mind is not, then naturally that light becomes less. The sustenance of the soul is the divine ideal, which is both love and light. If the soul does not receive that nourishment which is necessary for it, then the soul is starved. The body may be nourished, but it is not sufficient. That is why we see before our physical eyes many famine-stricken souls, but if we saw with the spiritual eyes we would see still more famine in humanity.

PRACTICE: Ya Munawwir, O God, Bestower of divine illumination

What do we learn in Sufism? We learn in Sufism that mysticism which teaches us how to collect the fuel which is necessary not only for the body, but for our mind and soul. By concentration, by meditation, by all other ways of contemplative practices, the purpose accomplished by the Sufi is that purpose which is the longing of every soul.

- Question: One sees people in whom the divine spark of light is more or less extinguished and who still live an apparent virtuous life.
- Answer: An apparent virtuous life is something different. Right living in my sense is not only virtuous living. Right living has a still deeper meaning, for what I call a right life is the first step to that which may be called true life. The third step is truth itself. The mystics say that there are three steps to the goal: right life, true life and truth. A person who loves to live a right life and who tries to do it, even if he is not a contemplative or meditative or religious person, must certainly arrive at that high stage, at that goal which is the ideal goal; for within man there is truth, and the seeking of man is truth. Therefore right living helps him to realize truth.

PRACTICE: Ya Munawwir, O God, Bestower of divine illumination

If I were to interpret the words of Christ, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way", I would say that there is a path in life, a path of going strait, and that path is like walking upon a wire. In the circus they make a show of it. It is exactly the picture: at every step one takes there is fear of falling either to one side or to the other.

Jugglers in India even make a better picture of it. They take two very light bamboos and tie a rope on the top of them. The juggler stands on the rope in a brass tray and his task is to go from one point to the other. While he is travelling thus, his colleagues from below beat drums and sing horrible songs in order to distract his mind. He has to keep his concentration and secure his balance in spite of all the music calling him from below. That is the picture of right living.

PRACTICES:

Recite all Sacred Name (wazifa) 101 times as follows:

- 34 times aloud *Ya-the Sacred Name*,
- 33 times whispering the *Sacred Name* (without the 'Ya' prefix),
- 33 times silently breathing in and out the *Sacred Name* (without the 'Ya' prefix).
 - *Audio file contains instructions.*

1. *Ya Munawwir*. O God, Bestower of divine illumination
2. *Ya Ghani*. To make the situation favorable.
3. *Ya Azim*. To gain force, strength, enthusiasm for the accomplishment of the work.

CLOSING PRAYER

DEDICATION OF MERIT