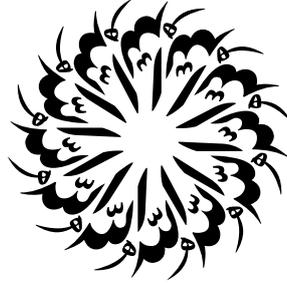


# PEARLS OF SPIRITUALITY

gleaned from the writings of Imām Aḥmad Riḍā Khān al Qādirī رحمته الله

released on the occasion of the 93rd ‘urs of the Imām



## I | Ignorant Ṣūfīs

The noble friends of Allāh ﷻ state – “an ignorant ṣūfī is *shayṭān*’s joke.” Similarly, a *ḥadīth* of the noble Messenger of Allāh ﷺ informs us –

“A single jurist is severer upon *shayṭān* than a thousand worshippers.”

[Tirmidhī and ibn Mājah]

Those who remain ignorant yet strive hard in their worship are merely made to dance by *shayṭān* upon his fingers. He places bridles in their mouths and tangs in their noses, and thus drags them wherever he wishes, whilst they convince themselves that they are accumulating good deeds.

Sayyidunā Junayd al Baghdādī رحمته الله states – “my spiritual guide, Sayyidunā Sirrī Saqtī رحمته الله supplicated for me thus – ‘may Allāh ﷻ grant you the knowledge of *ḥadīth* and then make you a ṣūfī, and may He not make you a ṣūfī before granting you the knowledge of *ḥadīth*.”

[Iḥyā' ‘Ulūm ud-Dīn; V1; P13]

Sayyidunā Imām al Ghazālī رحمته الله states – whilst explaining this statement – “here, Sayyidunā Sirrī Saqtī رحمته الله meant that the one who steps into the field of *taṣawwuf* [spirituality] armed with the knowledge of *ḥadīth* is victorious, whereas the one who ventures forth without knowledge is merely (– Allāh forbid! –) placing himself into destruction.

Sayyidunā Abu-l Qāsim Junayd al Baghdādī رحمته الله states – “the one who has neither memorised the Qur’ān, nor written *ḥadīth* (meaning the one who lacks the knowledge of the jurisprudence) shouldn’t be followed by

seekers of the path (of *taṣawwuf*), nor should he be taken as a *murshid* [spiritual guide,] as all our knowledge of *ṭarīqah* is in obedience to the Book and *sunnah*.”

Sayyidunā Sirrī Saqṭī رحمته الله states – “*taṣawwuf* is the name of the coming together of three qualities: firstly, the light of his (meaning the spiritual traveller’s) gnosis should not extinguish his light of asceticism. Secondly, he should not utter anything esoterically which exoterically contradicts the Qur’ān or noble *ḥadīth*. Finally, none of his miracles should be a means of him revealing that which Allāh سبحانه has forbidden to be revealed.”

[Risālat ul Qushayriyah; P13]

Sayyidunā Shaykh Shihāb ud-Dīn as-Suharwardī رحمته الله states – “that ‘*ḥaqīqah*’ [spiritual reality] which contradicts the *sharī‘ah* [sacred law] is not in reality *ḥaqīqah*, but rather plain heresy.”

[Awārif ul Ma‘ārif; V1; P43]

## II | The Definition of ‘*ilm* [sacred knowledge]

The definition of an ‘*ālim* [religious scholar] is that he –

1. is aware of the correct ‘*aqā'id* [creed] in their entirety;
2. has a firm, independent resolve;
3. and is able to extract his necessities from the corpus of religious literature without the help of another.

(*ilm* is not merely attained through the study of books,) but rather is also attained by discussion with the people of knowledge.

[Malfūzāt; P58]

## III | The meanings of *bay‘ah* and *ṭalab*

In becoming *ṭālib*, one’s intent is merely the acquisition of spiritual bounties, whilst the meaning of *bay‘ah* is “to sell oneself entirely.”

[Malfūzāt; P228]

## IV | Conditions of *bay‘ah*

The *bay‘ah* should be upon the hand of such an individual who embodies the following four qualities – in the case of him lacking even one of these qualities, *bay‘ah* will not be valid upon his hand –

1. he must be a *sunnī* with the correct creed;
2. he should possess at least such a level of knowledge that enables him to extract his necessities from the corpus of religious texts without the help of another;

3. his chain back to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ should be continuous and unbroken;
4. and he should be free from open *fiṣq* [transgression.]

[Malfūzāt; P228]

## V | *Bay‘ah* in our times

Nowadays, people take *bay‘ah* only as a trend, remaining ignorant of its true meaning. *Bay‘ah* can be understood by means of the following account -

A *murīd* [disciple] of Sayyidunā Yaḥya al Munīrī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was once drowning in the ocean. Sayyidunā *Khidr* رَحِمَهُ اللهُ appeared to him and said - “give me your hand, I will rescue you.”

He replied - “I have already given my hand to *Shaykh* Yaḥya al Munīrī, and will now not give it to anyone else.”

Thus Sayyidunā *Khidr* رَحِمَهُ اللهُ disappeared, to be replaced by Sayyidunā Yaḥya al Munīrī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ who rescued him.

[Malfūzāt; P228/9]

## VI | Renewing one’s *bay‘ah*

The practice of renewing one’s *bay‘ah* dates from the blessed era of the noble Prophet ﷺ, with the Messenger ﷺ himself taking *bay‘ah* from Sayyidunā Salāmah bin Akwa' رَحِمَهُ اللهُ three times during a single gathering. They when headed for *jihād* [battle] when *bay‘ah* was taken the first time, and Sayyidunā Salāmah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ pledged his allegiance then.

After a short while, our Master ﷺ said - “Salāmah, will you not take *bay‘ah*?”

When Sayyidunā Salāmah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied - “my master, I have already done so,” the Messenger ﷺ said - “once more.”

Thus Sayyidunā Salāmah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ took *bay‘ah* again. When all others present had finished pledging their allegiance, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said once more - Salāmah, will you not take *bay‘ah*?”

He رَحِمَهُ اللهُ replied - “my Master, I have already done so twice.”

The Messenger ﷺ said - “once more,” and thus he took *bay‘ah* for the third time in that gathering.

[Kashūl Faqīr Qādirī; P48/9]

## VII | Bay'ah from more than one shaykh

(It is possible to leave a shaykh and take bay'ah upon the hand of another) in the case of there being some discrepancy (with regards the pristine sharī'ah) in the first shaykh. Otherwise it is not permissible, though one can always renew bay'ah.

‘Adī bin Musāfir رضي الله عنه says – “whoever comes to me, I accept his bay'ah regardless of his *silsilah* [spiritual lineage,] with the exception of those pledged in the Qādirī way, for no one leaves the ocean for the river.”

## VIII | Acquiring the rank of *fanā fis-shaykh*

(The rank of *fanā fis-shaykh* is attained by the following spiritual practice –)

Envisage that your shaykh is present in front of you, and that your heart is situated below his. Visualise that the spiritual bounty and luminosity of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is descending upon the heart of your shaykh and from there, cascading upon your heart. After a period, one will reach such a state where he will clearly see his shaykh upon every surface he sets his eyes upon, to such an extent that he will not be separated even during *ṣalāh*. Thus, your shaykh will remain with you in every state.

[Malfūzāt; P234]

## IX | Benefits of reciting one's *shajrah*

Amongst the benefits that will be attained by reciting one's *shajrah* are –

1. memorisation of the continuous spiritual chain which reaches back to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ;
2. invoking the mention of the pious, which brings about the descent of Divine mercy;
3. conveying the rewards of one's deeds to each Spiritual Master individually, which brings about their generous spiritual focus;
4. the mentioning of such luminaries in times of safety will ensure they in turn come to his aid when times of calamity strike.

[Aḥkām e Sharī'at; V1; P80]

## X | The acceptance of *wazā'if*

To achieve the effect of *wazā'if* [litanies] and *a'māl* [exercises], (the fulfilment of) three conditions is essential –

1. Confident Expectancy

For the heart to be free from such anxiety where one is constantly deliberating whether it has had an effect or not. Rather, one must trust wholly in Allāh ﷻ that He will definitely accept (this action). It is mentioned in *ḥadīth* that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ stated -

## ادعوا الله وانتم موقنون بالاجابة

“Supplicate to Allāh in such a state that you remain certain of its acceptance.”

[Sunan at Tirmidhī; V5; P292; H3590]

### 2. Patience and Forbearance

For one not to become fearful with the passage of time, where one thinks - “even after so many days, no effect has become apparent!” This itself will come to be the cause of (the action) not being accepted! Rather, embrace the mindset that without doubt, Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ are about to generously favour you! Allāh ﷻ states -

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا  
اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ﴾

﴿ If only they were content with that which Allāh and His Messenger have given them, and say,

“Allāh is enough for us - He will give us some of His bounty and so will His Messenger - to Allāh alone we turn in hope” ﴾

[Sūrah al Tawbah; V59]

## يستجاب لا حدكم ما لم يعجل فيقول قد دعوت فلم يستجب لي

“Your supplications are accepted as long as you do not hastily say - ‘I supplicated but it is yet to be accepted’.”

[Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim; P1563; H2735]

3. With regards permission (to act upon) the entirety of my (meaning ‘Ālā Ḥaḍrat’s ﷺ) *wazā’if* [litanies], *ā’māl* [exercises] and *ta’wīzāt* [amulets,] I have stipulated the condition that one must remain regular in offering the five daily *ṣalāh* with the congregation in the *masjid*. And with Allāh is *tawfiq*.

[Fatāwā Raḍawīyah; V23; P558]