

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

On the Value of the Sufi's Knowledge of God

Making Right

When the true explanations for behavior become known, it results in the reasoning either being right or seeming right for the action in question. The questioning of an action causes doubt with the possibility of guilt, shame and regret. Instead of knowing it to be from God as either a right action or a mistake for the purpose of learning consequence, we attribute it to a "wrong" self in need of correction through punishment and hence we blame and persecute ourselves.

But even when the reasoning behind the "wrong" action or mistake is analyzed in the light of truth it becomes understood how the mistake was made through a false assumption leading to a mistake which then became obvious because the action proves to be a mistake so that the false assumption could be corrected. Hence the mistake was not a mistake from an evil self worthy of self-punishment but an act of God demonstrating the consequences of false assumptions based on incorrect beliefs and allowing for the correcting of them. Accepting this leads to what is commonly known as forgiveness or absolution from the blame which leads to the sense of guilt and need for self-punishment. All things, even and especially our mistakes, otherwise known as "sins", lead one to understanding God, and in that light all things are forgiven.

So in that light, healing is the process of making right what would otherwise never be, through the demonstration of practical forgiveness.

Your sins are forgiven because news of them reaches the People Who Judge With Mercy.

The Search for the Meaning and Reality of Forgiveness

(The Word, the Meaning and the Reality)

The Meaning of Istighfar in the Sufi Path

Istighfar is a noun. It means "the seeking" of forgiveness, with the emphasis on the "seeking", or the noun. "Isti" is that part. "ghfar" is the object of the seeking, in this case, Ghafara, loosely translated as forgiveness. So Istighfar is the "the seeking of forgiveness", or the "act" of seeking forgiveness. To "do" Istighfar is to "do" the "seeking" of the Forgiveness. In the Sufi path of learning, repetition is the key to understanding. Like anything else, if we "mull it over" or contemplate or think about or repeat something long enough, the meaning of effect will dawn on us. So in the contemplation of Forgiveness, the "seeking" of it if you will, we are given a word or a phrase to repeat until the meaning and therefore the effect of it is truly felt and understood. This word in this case is "Astaghfirullah" meaning and symbolizing the search for or seeking of "the Forgiveness of God".

If looked at properly, this very act (let alone its completion or attainment) becomes one third of the path to the perfection of the being in surrender. Its significance cannot be overes-

timated, for it is foundational to progress on the path of learning and realization. And without a “path”, we have no means, and without means, no arrival.

Learning begins with realization that there is something to learn, an identification, if you will, of some “object” of interest, even if only of curiosity. And even though there are many formulas given, and as “effective” as they may be, their efficacy is highly dependent upon their ability to convey understanding as well as effect, or OUR ability to receive understanding and effect. For example, we may use the formula of a traditional Sufi Oration (wird) quite successfully and with full benefit, day after day never with any complaint and always with the highest of respect, result and joy, and still never fully understand the mechanism by which it works, or even what its ultimate goal might be. Understanding the mechanism, in my opinion, adds an entirely new dimension of reality to the benefit, and bestows the healing power (Baraka) of that understanding upon one and makes it also more easily dispensed.

The Three Parts of the Oration

Using the learning model of Health, Education and Welfare, we may confidently ascribe the whole of Health to Istighfar¹, the whole of Education to Salawat², and the whole of Realization to Tahlil³. Because it is Realization that brings prosperity and Welfare. The engineer does not make his money, build his house and live in prosperity as a student of engineering. All that begins with the realization or the reality of being a successful Engineer. So Sufism maybe the hardest of all studies to master, but the payoff is commensurate to the effort.

So a key teaching is the intent and mechanism of Istighfar, which, if understood properly, returns us to perfect health. For without health, learning is at best distracted, if not entirely off target, as it is in so many tragic cases. And realization, or welfare, will only be partial, because Allah in His Mercy, provides our needs to be used for our own benefit.

So how does Istighfar – the seeking of the Forgiveness of God - return us to perfect health, you might ask?

This is how we link *A Course In Miracles*, New Thought, Christianity, Buddhism, Advaita, Hinduism, Taoism, Sufism and Islam all together - in seeking the Forgiveness of God. But what does it mean, “the Forgiveness of God”. There are two ways to look at it. One is most common but incomplete and the other is less common but manifestly complete. One we seek for ourselves and another we seek in and for others - but also for ourselves. We complete it by dispensing it. We really own only what we give away.

The Common Way

We all seek to be forgiven. We seek to be forgiven by our parents, our siblings, our relations and our friends. As a matter of fact, in the case of the latter we rely upon it. Is it not true that our friends are the ones who forgive us most easily? Not quite so easy in the case of family or lovers, right? Is it any wonder then that in Sufi lore the true saints are referred to as the

¹ The seeking and finding of true divine forgiveness.

² The sending of Gratitude and Blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad and his family

³ The professing of the phrase of divine Unity: la ilaha illa 'llah

“Friends” of Allah? Do we not turn to them for the forgiveness and salvation from our sins that we cannot find anywhere else - and often because we cannot find it anywhere else? In Qur’an it is stated that mankind often turns to God only as a last resort, preferring self reliance in most cases to supplication.

The feeling of relief and joy found in forgiveness is superior to and unlike any other. Forgiveness is manifest love. You know it when you’ve got it, and that’s why we work so hard for it. It is the source of health and vivaciousness itself. Forgiven we feel prepared for anything. It is the essence of healing and its absence anywhere holds us back, still in search for that missing “something”.

“I seek the Forgiveness of God”. This is what is said in the formula symbolizing the “act” of “seeking” forgiveness. This “act” is called Istighfar, and the act consists of the “doing”. The “doing” consists of repetitively rephrasing or re-saying the word “Astaghfirullah”. Now what does this word mean? It means “I” “Seek” “the Forgiveness” “of Allah”. And each of those words and their various combinations has a myriad of meaning, only the simplest and most basic of which we will explore.

I separate “I” and “Seek” simply to note that they have separate meanings and are to be (and can and should be) explored separately. But for the sake of this treatise, I’ll not go into that and simply combine them into the act of seeking. Of greater interest and more pertinent to this theme is an exploration into the meaning of the word “forgiveness”; and then a brief understanding of the meaning of the word Allah, the “Name” of God, and its sociological and physiological implications. And what does “Forgiveness” mean when combined with the word Allah in the way that it is. Ghafrullah - ghfirullah, and how does that meaning impact our lives and sense of realization.

The simplest meaning of the phrase is that I seek the feeling of relief that I get after reciting this phrase any certain numbers of times⁴. Minimally, it is a small sense of accomplishment and relief as in getting a small daily chore out of the way, like brushing your teeth or getting dressed or getting the kids off to school so that you can now buckle down and get to the work of earning your livelihood. The purpose of reciting it in this case is simply to get it done because it’s a discipline that you’ve agreed to after seeing its benefit and not wanting to lose it. This is good. Very smart, and few of us give it much more thought than that. Get up in the morning, make the morning prayers, recite our oration and get into and on with our day. Feeling really great, I might add.

And it never feels quite so good when we miss it for some reason or other, but we count on forgiveness anyway, and soon we’re back in full swing, relatively “unpunished” for our oversight, negligence, or even deliberate avoidance. Right? We count on, even totally rely upon God’s Gracious Forgiveness, even when we do not recognize it or formally supplicate it. Right? Our lives are in total reliance upon that to the point of expecting it even when we “know” or even feel, that we do not in any way deserve it. Even and especially in the case of the person who claims to be a complete unbeliever in anything remotely resembling belief in

⁴ This is, of course, according to intention

anything. He still takes life and the general forgiveness and good nature of everyone in it for granted. Right?

But don't you know that the Forgiveness of GOD is health itself? Forgiveness is such a deep word. The acceptance of it and the dispensing of it is the essence of good health and the absence of it anywhere in your life is a major stone and stumbling block which has the power to cause incompleteness in any endeavor you undertake. If you feel unworthy of the success that you plan on in your endeavors in life, that feeling, however subconscious, will be a greater attraction to you, have a greater power over you, than the desire for the success you project and plan on, and this because of the Forgiveness of Allah which He wishes you to have and know completely. So it is actually the power of God's love that keeps you distracted from your success because your knowledge of His forgiveness is more dear to Him than the success that you project, desire and expect.

This brings a new light of recognition to our practice of repeating the phrase "astaghfirullah" so many times in the morning and evening. Now are we not only "seeking" it (for ourselves), but also realizing it and its importance in our lives, through recognizing and accepting it in every part of our being. This is one part of the forgiveness we seek for ourselves. It is a deeper recognition of the power of recognizing the feeling and liberating effect of forgiveness. It is still part of the limited personal benefit.

Let's explore this aspect a little more before we move on to another. Suppose you have tensions or physical pains in your body. Is this not a cry for attention? What kind of attention are you going to pay it, even if any? Possibly none, by deliberately ignoring it; possibly hostile, by treating it as an enemy to be killed, drugged or done away with in some malevolent fashion, or possibly with curiosity and maybe even forgiveness (sometimes referred to as Love). Nevertheless, it IS a cry for attention, will you not concede that?

If we can concede from experience that nothing heals like Forgiveness, why can we not apply that principle to ourselves and our personal ailments? Why can we not look into them in search of some application for Forgiveness? If it is true that all physical ailments are rooted in unprocessed emotional disturbances, then isn't this an ideal opportunity for the use of Forgiveness? Can we not seek it? Understanding the Forgiveness of Allah as a general (Rahmani) truth (as in His Mercy outstrips His Wrath) that can also be applied specifically (Rahimi - upon supplication, as in we can "seek" it) could be a major tool in our healing arsenal and certainly a power of knowledge to be explored. (*I've written elsewhere on the substantive nature and intentional use of Baraka⁵, but what is the essence and beginning of Baraka if not Forgiveness? And are we not seeking it even now by pondering its meaning and possible application?*)

Now let me go into the meaning of Forgiveness a bit more. Because of our simplistic understandings of the meanings of words, it may be a bit difficult to grasp the full significance of any of them and especially of this one, Forgiveness.

We often think of Forgiveness in terms of correction of error. We think of it in terms of apologizing for mistakes or wrongdoing. Since we recognize that we are often unwilling to

⁵ Barakah - The Magnetic Dynamics of the Blessing; the Substance of Compassion - from *Esoterics of the Sufi Way* - <http://www.surrenderworks.com/library/esoterics/index.html>

admit to mistakes or wrongdoing, we must seek Forgiveness for the millions of mistakes and wrongdoings that we were/are afraid to admit to or in denial of.

The search for Forgiveness is the search for life itself. For what holds us back from it if not our sins? Is it not a sin to BE held back from life? Is that not, in effect, the ultimate punishment, to be held back from life everlasting because of our sins, to be anchored in any form of suffering because of and by our unforgiven sins? Is that not even in its slightest degree the opposite of Heaven? And does it not imply that there is yet still work to be done? And does that work not include the discovering of the stones and stumbling blocks that are holding us back? And will not Forgiveness of self and others be a major tool for the release of those nagging past memories that keep us pinned to the past, unable to move forward until proper attention has been paid to those signs of God's request for our attention?

The Search for the Ability to Apply Forgiveness

Applied Forgiveness is the Act of God and of the God realized. Sins are forgiven because news of them reaches the ears of the People Who Judge with Mercy. We apply Forgiveness from God Realization and we apply it for God Realization. In other words, if you want to realize God in yourself, apply Forgiveness to yourself and others. Applied Forgiveness implies the knowledge of reasoning and a means that can and does absolve from sin, which reasoning and means is God Himself, and the only (temporarily) unforgivable sin is to not seek Forgiveness - for with Forgiveness there is Life in eternity; Forgiveness is the means to salvation from the bonds of temporal life.

"Ghafrullah" means the forgiveness of God - God's Forgiveness. Meaning in this case changes everything. If I mean by saying Istighfar "'Astaghfirullah", I am seeking forgiveness FROM God, that's personal, and it's for me. It is well, and the hadith in this tells us that to thank God without thanking your neighbor is incomplete, and also in the same vein, to seek forgiveness FROM God without seeking it from one you may have offended is also incomplete. And we can feel when we have said "enough" Istighfar to feel good about ourselves again. In fact, we have done a form of penance by the numbered repetitions of a holy phrase of formula. "Enough" for ourselves maybe, but is it "enough" for all of humanity, including the ones who have repeatedly offended, violated and abused you?

When I say "Astaghfirullah", I'm meaning that I am seeking THE Forgiveness OF God, and by that I mean the power and the ability to forgive as God forgives, to bring healing, health and understanding to all mankind. I want to Heal as God Heals and forgive as God forgives. Take another look at the meaning of ghafrullah - it means the Forgiveness OF God. This is the Herculean Forgiveness OF God - not the "personal well-being" Forgiveness that so often satisfies us temporarily until we need to repeat the formula over again.

What I want is the Forgiveness that God Himself uses in His Forbearance, Understanding and Forgiveness of the human situation. This is the Forgiveness that will ultimately put out the fires of hell and extinguish any need for them ever again. This is the Forgiveness that the Dalai Lama singularly refers to as Compassion, the all important missing ingredient for the forgiveness and salvation of the world that Buddhism is aimed to accomplish. In this way I might be able to fulfill my small part in the first "Sunnah", or example, of the Prophets of God, that of

being “A Mercy unto all the Worlds” (Rahmatun lil ‘Alameen). (Oh, yes. “Adheem” means, “capable of doing anything”.)

The Power of Intention

We who think we are powerless think of this phrase in terms of the search of power. So we believe that the emphasis is on gaining power when it is really on gaining purity of intention. We want intention for the power because we want what we want and feel we need the power to get it. So it stands to reason that if we set our intention strongly and powerfully enough, we’ll get what we intend. We use our intention to get what we want.

Ha Ha. Coming from the “wrong” mind, it simply doesn’t work that way. It is the pure intention that gives us the power. It should be restated as the Power of Pure Intention, but since the topic is the Power of Intention, it must also demonstrate the power of all intention. Hence, we get what we want.

The Pure Intention is to share with your fellow being what you have for yourself. This is the Bodhisattvic vow of the Buddhists and the Primordial Promise of Service of the Sufis. (“ubudiyyat, khilafat, “alasta birabbikum”)

This is the intention that will get you the power to fulfill it.

“Wa maa ‘alayna illa al-balagh” -

“And it is only on us to deliver the message” (Qur’an)

Sitting in Intention is paying attention to intention. It is the **Intentional Contemplation** of which I speak, but, it is not the intention of the **agenda-oriented** self that wants to see itself on top of anything or anywhere. It is the intention that intends **Heaven, Pure Land and Salvation/Grace** for everyone. It is (the result of having accepted **Atonement** and) the speeding up of the process for everyone by adopting it for oneself. It is the fulfilling of the **Original Vow** (Tariki Hongen) that anyone who calls on you will be saved. But they must call. Sins are **Forgiven** because news of them reaches the ears of the People who Judge with Mercy. They can be forgotten once they are **integrated** into to the history of the **Miracle** of You. These are parts of the functions of the Christ Consciousness and the Reality held (for all Muslims to see) by the Hidden **Imam**.

Learning this, or arriving to this **Conclusion of Certainty**, has to do with the process of clearing the **subconscious** of its drives resulting from imbedded lesser vows and misconceptions. This is known in Sufism as Ikhlasu Niyyat, or **Purification of Intention**, and is the singular work necessary to reach to Haqiqat, or an understanding of the immutable truth of Pure Surrender. It is most easily accomplished by a process called Sohbet, or selective companionship.

We can and have told the subconscious to do this and do that. However many of the commands we have sent to ourselves were made in times of stress and confusion, and must now be re-evaluated in the light of present knowledge. This process is referred to by some as **Redecision Therapy**. It has to do with the identification and releasing of older more dysfunctional vows in preparation and making room for our primordial vow to have full effect and to

be all that there is left. It is the process of restoring ourselves to the original purity of our primordial vow and recognizing and releasing residual memories of lesser vows. This is the point and purpose of the Sufi path, to become a healer (forgiver) by being healed (forgiven).

In Japanese Buddhism, the difference between Zen and Pure Land is one of Practice and Trust. Islam is Practice and Iman is Trust. The joining of the two is Perfection.

It is my belief that eventually a Sufi will come to the crossroads of Contemplative Realization (practice) and Faith (trust in action) and prefer to join them. After all, when all the practices are said and done, eventually there is only Pure Land, or the silence of love in which we live and dwell.

To stop seeking salvation and become salvation -

In the heaven of salvation we have no further need for forgiveness, its work is done. Yet even after we stop seeking salvation and become salvation, which is the work of all true religions, there is still Practice (Zen or worship) and Faith (Life in Trust, or Pure Land).

Honen and Shinran - Shinran was the student of the teacher of Practice, but rather than teaching the practice that got you there, he taught getting there by being there.

Arab arrogance caused people to reject Arabic but the truth had to reach them somehow, for it has never been separate from us.

To quote the book (parentheses mine) -

"Tariki, as we have seen, means Other Power. Hongen, or "original vow" is the very core of the original teaching of Pure Land Buddhism. (Basically, it's the promise, "if I get it, I promise to give it to everyone." - the vow of the bodhisattva.) At the start of his practice to become a Buddha, the bodhisattva Dharmacharya (vessel/chariot/shari'at/carrier of Truth) made forty eight vows that he promised to realize when he attained enlightenment. Many of the vows are about the Pure Land - a symbolic description of the state of enlightenment - that he would create when he became a Buddha, Of all those vows, Dharmacharya's "original" or essential vow is his promise, once he has attained enlightenment and become Amida Buddha, that any living being who calls out his name will be born into his Pure Land and attain enlightenment. This is the vow that became the core teaching of Pure Land Buddhism." p88 [Reliance upon "Other Power"]

Tariki Hongen: (The Original Vow of the Pure Land) - "Hear us, See us. Become us, Eventually." - This is Certainty.

Zen and Pure Land - Practice and Faith - Samadhi means Realization (of the Pure Land), it comes after and is the result of Practice/Zen (Dhyana meditative contemplation), if that is the intention. So practice IS Realization (Pure Land), AND the means TO Realization (Pure Land). Realization is not taken away. It is the Salvation of the sinner. It is the soul's primordial knowledge of endless eternity shining through the illusion of temporary life.

Fulfillment is not realization, but a prerequisite. Fulfillment is healing, but saved and saving? That's something way beyond fulfillment.

Sitting Quietly in the Power of Your Intention

Finding the Inner adult

Sit in the increasing power of your Inner Adult (Allah), and no longer in the well-analyzed disempowerment of your childhood, “trying” to fix it. It takes faith but it builds it also, and that is important.

When you see a problem and try to resolve it, you are working from a point of disempowerment seeking the power to “resolve” it. This keeps you in the place of disempowerment. Rather than resolve it, which means “fix it to fit in your picture”, make it right by seeing the wisdom in it. We can do this by not being affected by it, not influenced or hurt or triggered. And we do this by staying in the realization of our power (God). Then God will manifest whatever action is necessary and it will not be coming from the “moved” or disturbed you. So it will not be coming from your wounded child’s need to heal self and others, but genuinely from His power, which you are a witness to.

Remember your accomplishment and work from there. Don’t remember your assumed lack of money and work from there. It is not a money problem. That is an escape. What you want to escape from is your own power. You are afraid to recognize it. So are a lot of other people mainly because they’re afraid to recognize their own. Don’t think of the “dissed” you, feeling sorry for him and “trying” to console or reconcile him. See the work that you’ve done through Me and by Me, and stay in your power.

Way to go, my Friend, don’t you see the changes you’re bringing about? Are not the changes faster than you can keep up with them? Are you afraid? Do you think this won’t happen if it is My will? My plan is pure and certain. I will not be frustrated in My plan. And you’ll be there to welcome them, confirm them and send them on their way.

We’re so used to finding and assuming our weakness, it’s as though we take our power for granted but we don’t. We really deny it and do not use it simply because we feel forced into a diminutive play by the false need for humility before others, thinking that they have something we want. Yet that is not real humility before God. And if we still believe that we “want” for something, then playing to our “desires” will always work.

Humility before God is to accept the work and position He has given you. Stay in your power.

It’s time now for you to sit in and own your power. It’s not the same as “standing up for yourself” which is what you’ve been “missing”, and kind of what you’ve “always wanted”. It’s not the same as being your own father and nurturing the wounded, insulted or dejected child. This is a different power as it is truly from, by, in and of God. And only you can subtly detect it, although it is perceivable by others who are detecting it in themselves or in some way looking for it. It’s kind of a missing link. Everyone knows that there should be some kind of payoff for and from this work we’re doing. And everyone equally recognizes its absence. “What’s he got that I don’t have?” is kind of the nagging background characteristic question.

So is it time to come into your power? Have you not tested it enough and seen that it is good? Do you need to fight any more - for the "right" to your power, to "be" in your power? No! That's the wounded, insulted, dejected and rejected child seeking vindication in the eyes of others. Enough of that. Just be in your power, Stay centered and focus on what is more addictive to you than complaining. Be with the millions who get it and who've got it, not with the millions who do not. Say to yourself, "I have my power", and know what it is. Welcome into the world of everyday saints.

Finding your Personal Power

Why you can't have it until you don't need it

Because Allah really IS the Power behind everything and until we have truly Surrendered we will not have the Power of Heaven at our disposal. But the beauty and the power of the power of Heaven is that "we" do not have to use it, only abide in it and welcome others. There are no more urgent needs that define "us" as "needing" power. Our "need" to "use" it has long since dissolved in its own beauty, need having come from the ego's need to prove itself to itself and others, which need dies away when the real needs are discovered and fulfilled through the fulfillment process which denies that filling the needs is the way to fill the needs.

Which comes first - we no longer need it and that's why we have it or we get and therefore no longer "need" it? **This is the power that there is no "use" for.** This is way beyond "forgiveness" and "forgiven", for which there is no longer any use except in terms of description in process.

"There is no death because the created of God is like the Creator. Nothing you can do can change Eternal Love. Forget your dream of sin and guilt, and come with me instead to share the recreation of God's people. And bring with you all those whom He has sent to you to care for as I care for you."

What else is there to do but teach religion? Isn't that what my whole life and website is about? But I really want to make "friends" for Allah.

Unity Teachings

Family Healing and Community Building

by Finding your Light Within

How Ma'rifat (Knowledge of God) helps Children Grow Happy and Healthy

Q. Ali, you mention in your writings that healthy ego development is necessary for the eventual understanding and realization of 'no-separation; i.e. unity'. As a parent, how do we allow for healthy ego development, particularly in the teen years, while at the same time provide our kids with an Islamic orientation that in fact, there is no separation... i.e. how do we avoid confusing the hell out of them??

R. This is a question of responsibility.

There are two kinds of responsibility, real and assumed. By assumed I mean taken on under the presumption that it's the 'right' thing to do. To 'assume' responsibility is a different meaning of the word from to 'assume' that something is true.

I often make the distinction between singular and plural. If we focus on our primary responsibility (singular) the 'other', more secondary responsibilities (plural) will be clear.

If we have not done our "homework"™ ☺, and have not yet learned about our primary responsibility, what it is and how to fulfill it, we will distract ourselves from that negligence by substituting our secondary responsibilities, and making a big deal out of our focus on them.

It is often asked, and we have gone over this several times before, how the fulfilling of our primary responsibility takes care of our lives and all the other 'responsibilities' we have. Well, it doesn't, but Allah does. We do not need to 'focus' on the outward to 'be' in the outward, we already are and all things are done by Allah.

Allah only asks us to pay attention to Him, to 'Know' Him. But when we do neither that nor focus on learning how to do that, we then make myriad excuses for our failure and call them responsibilities, expecting them to be accepted by like minded people as reasonable when in reality they are simply distractions and signs of failure attempting to pose as success to cover over the failure. Qur'an says of this "mankind is in a state of loss (illusion), except those who believe and do right work. "illa-ladhina 'amanu wa 'amilu salihat". Here He puts Iman (faith, trust and knowing) before the doing of righteous deeds.

Raising children is yes a great responsibility, but in the paradigm of it not being the primary responsibility it becomes easier. If we fulfill our primary responsibility to know and trust God we will be fulfilling our primary responsibility to our children not only by example but by teaching, because they will then learn how to do it also, and also learn that in comparison nothing else really matters.

When children realize that nothing else really matters, they become happy and cheerful, and all things 'other' become as play to them. When they can approach the 'other' things in life as play, their chances of success will be greater because there will be no dependence on outcome. Not only will they know what to do in all situations and how to handle or deal with all problems, but they will have zero performance anxiety because they will know that they already please God and their parents and are not at all dependent upon 'success' for love.

No dependence = no attachment to success. No attachment to success = no fear of failure, because in the reality of homework it doesn't matter. No fear of failure = no performance anxiety,

and no performance anxiety = the greater chance of success. The greater the chance of success, the more enthusiasm and foresight will be put into the project, increasing even to the point of guaranteeing the chance of success. And so it goes. And all that from the fulfillment of the primary responsibility to know God.

And imagine - we only need to focus on learning how to do that because our parents neither knew it nor taught it to us. So if we do it now by accomplishing it and staying focused in it and teaching it by example to our children, how much easier our children's lives will be. Imagine how that - the more it is done by the more people - will effect and increase the beauty and peace of the world we live in. Only this will bring about the ultimate harmony that is our eventual destiny.

Q. So what prevents us from seeking the forgiveness OF God, rather than merely forgiveness from God??

R. Not knowing about it. It's as natural as children making excuses for themselves to evade harshness or punishment, but at the same time a sophisticated function of the God-realized heart. We're simply out of practice, and we need to. The personal self is content with the satisfaction of feeling forgiven and doesn't know to seek more. That's why I'm writing about it. It's like the Hafiz poem:

"All your images of winter I see against your sky.
I understand the wounds that have not healed in you.
They exist because God and Love have yet to become real enough
to allow you to forgive the dream."

and also not understanding our power to judge or our use of judgment. We fear and deny judgment even though we use it every minute, judging this, judging that, evaluating, comparing, liking, not liking, etc. But judgment has two functions, and two only, I think. And they are: Mercy and Punishment - do we forgive and exonerate or do we banish and punish? And since people think of judgment only in terms of harshness, criticism and punishment, they deny and reject its use altogether. But to Judge with Mercy... now that's yet another problem. Because first we must learn to accept forgiveness for ourselves, which is not an easy challenge - to forgive ourselves is one of the hardest things to do - and THEN move onto discovering the mechanism and reasoning for forgiving our "enemies". And to do all this in a current "Islamic" framework...? Where it sounds overbearingly "Christian" and not in keeping with the "punitive" side of "God" ..?

This kind of thing takes work. It's like the difference between adjusting to separation with the parents and actually healing them. Adjustment feels just fine; the other looks like more work that one is up to, thank you... And that's simply because until now we simply do not know how to do it or how easy it really is. It may well be the "work" of the age....

How to Satisfy Desire through Trust and Knowledge of God (and be rich in the process)

O Satisfier, O Grantor of Desires. Grant me the means to satisfy all desire,
and the abundance of that means to share with all who still desire.

God is the Satisfier of Desire, the Provider of Means.

“A Solid and Confirmed Inner Connection is the Key to Every Success.”

Contemplate the emptiness, not on what you believe will fill it.

If you concentrate on the “object” of desire, you simply project and objectify, a function of the left brain which thinks in terms of objectivity and linearity, automatically focusing on a projected object, the “project”, or the “goal”, imagining or believing it to be the solution to the problem. However the attainment of the projected “object” will fulfill only the desire for it and not the emptiness from which sprang the desire itself.

But if you stay in the emptiness of the need, which can only be accomplished by contemplating the emptiness, it will be filled for you. This is proven in the leading edge work on Spiritual Healing and the Psychology of Spiritual Fulfillment, as exemplified by the work of A. H. Almaas described in his book called “Essence”. (The Sufis have said, “All you need is need”, and the “fuqara”, followers of the Sufi path, refer to themselves to a person as “the needy”)

Contemplating the emptiness is an important work, essential to true self-fulfillment and not easily learned alone. Those who have mastered it are well worthy of their pay for the work of passing the discipline of its secret to the willing and needy students. They should be well supported by those learners who can afford it because of their willingness to teach those who cannot.

How to satisfy your desire for money without money

Learning how to satisfy your desire without money will bring you all the money you need, for it is the knowledge of how to satisfy desire that the people really need, and its satisfaction that desire itself desires. The “need” for money is a projection of this desire for satisfaction, and without the genuine article it will be only a temporary distraction. This is the secret power of contentment as known by the needy and rich in God. Contentment with emptiness fills.

Understand that desire begins with a feeling of emptiness. We then naturally look around outside of ourselves to see what others have (i.e. money, love, education, wisdom) that we feel missing in our lives, attributing to it the source of their happiness and contentment. This is the initial error in judgment of God that spins us out into the wheel of Maya and illusion that will not let us go until we are dizzy, sick and exhausted from the “search” for spiritual happiness through material means.

Yet it is the other way around. We become materially wealthy through contentment with what is, and this always entails, in the beginning, a deliberate nothing, the ability to detach

completely from the material realm. In some cases, we may even lose everything we have ever had in order to reach the all-important point of true realization from which we may begin our quest for meaningful substance. This is referred to biblically as the building of your castle on the rock of heaven rather than in the sand in illusion.

So the question to you is,
“are we going to do this thing, or not?”

The difference between consecutive and concurrent thinking

From the point of view of left brain linear, or consecutive, thinking, right brain concurrence can only be interpreted as chaos. Hence the “chaos” theory, which is a “theory” attempting to explain the unimaginable, what the “mind” cannot grasp - that there is no chaos, that everything is in order, all running concurrently - i.e. God. Only the vastly underused right brain has the capability of truly realizing this, but as long as the mind is under the influence of the left brained, action-oriented, sympathetic/responsive nervous system, it will predominate and the right brained more “feminine, peaceful, contemplative, “heart-oriented, God-realized, passive, parasympathetic system will not be able to operate in full swing, enabling the faculty of total comprehension, or enlightenment. No enlightenment translates as chaos, in need of control.

Calming the reactive nervous system is the work of all the king’s horsemen and all the king’s men, but no one seems to be able to put humpty dumpty back together again. We’re just a bunch of magic makers with no real solutions at all. And that is simply because from within that viewpoint it is inconceivable to contemplate the possibility of bypassing it altogether. It’s all there is. It’s the best the mind has to offer. It’s the viewpoint from which the only alternative to control is chaos. Concurrent thinking is unimaginable from that place in the mind, as is the possibility of another place. A trained addiction to linear thinking limits possibility even while searching for it.

Concurrent thinking cannot really be imagined, only experienced. The imagination is a product of the realistic, linear thinking mind. Imagination is itself an imagination. We only imagine that we imagine. It is by its very definition, that which is outside of linear projection, and therefore still from it. However, the “experience” of it (concurrent thinking) is by the nature of its very reality, the dropping of all vestiges of the trained linear thinking mind, a daunting challenge even if willingly taken on, which is extremely rarely the case. No one (in their “right” mind) wants to lose anything, and especially all the training into which we’ve vested so much time, money, goal orientation and material interest. Herein lays the enigma of the biblical and true spiritual teaching that in order to gain everything we must lose everything and that who seeks to save himself loses himself and who loses himself saves himself.

Teach the People

What’s more, you cannot do it alone. So it flies in the face of the staunchly determined self reliance of left brain ego-oriented thinking. It absolutely requires a teacher. It requires the presence of someone who has learned it and stepped outside of the trap, because that’s the very nature of a trap, there’s no way out unless you are released by someone else. (There’s a whole

sociological phenomenon behind this piece that has to do with a necessary spiritual reordering and restructuring of society for the benefit and evolution of humanity, but we'll touch on that in another discourse, God willing.)

Even more, every teacher has one, and in the end, all the teachers and teaching link to the spiritual masters of all humanity. So we all have God to thank for the guidance we seek out of the trap of our own isolated and limited existence and into the reality of the God-realized who are the truly the successful in this world and the next.

Take for example the potential of a cancer clearing workshop.

How about Healing Children through Healing Parents, or

How Being Rich in God can make you a Millionaire

Learning how to learn - The Process of Accomplishment

Intentional and Surrogate Healing, How to Find Fulfillment in Life

All of these things appear to be important manifestations of good living and their absence seems to be a cause of pain and suffering. I would call these things "the needs of the people", wouldn't you?

All of them are gained, and more, by supporting and keeping company with the God-realized.

It's not for these "things" that we love God, we love God for himself. It's just that these "things" are a byproduct of the love of God, and natural gifts He bestows from His kindness and generosity. They are not to be used for strictly selfish purposes, a certain percentage needing to be dedicated to the poor and needy, but self-deprivation cripples our ability to help ourselves and our families and serve our communities and our society and our world. So let's make some money teaching the people what they need to know in order to be happy, healthy, wealthy and wise.

**How to be truly rich in God – with Patience,
by letting God satisfy all your desires**

Self Contemplation, Intentional Contemplation and contemplating the emptiness

**The Zawiyya Project
Done with Healing, Time for Education**

Let's get something straight between us.

1. Nothing heals better or faster than Dhikrullah with the 'permission' of a master. Dhikrullah is the formulaic and repetitive remembrance practices that the Sufis offer as their pathway "to" God from out of the morass of the seas of unity into the joys of productive, educating community.
2. The focal point of the communion of souls is the central teacher and/or his or her educated and responsible representatives. "Teacher, teaching and community of students" (Sanskrit: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha) is the fundamental principle of truth and reality.
3. The only reason a person comes to learn from a teacher is to gain mastery of the practices that lead to self fulfillment in God. Natural joy will ensure the life, longevity and perpetuity of the teachings. Mastery of knowledge is secondary. These teachings (of the practice) and their reality are embodied in the hearts of them who carry them and can only be referred to in writing or talking about them.
4. To begin the process of being truly healed in the Sufi way one needs only to be seen by the master. He sees you until you see yourself. This starts instantly but continues forever.

Q. Is healing enough?

A. If it is defined as the joyous and healthy communion that leads to a genuine desire to share the means of attainment, then I'd say yes. But after healing comes education. The difficulty is that people both mistake knowledge for healing and pass off knowledge as the means to heal. Knowledge is not the means to heal, communion is. And practice leads to communion. Knowledge can be beneficial to the healing process if learning and used as something to do while one is getting well - educating the mind concurrently with educating the body. But if it is confused with or substituted for genuine and practical communion, then the "student/teacher" relationship is established and genuine communion is broken. The 'student' of such a teacher will be misled by the quest for power in knowledge from the reality of surrender and the true healing.

This substitution is a typical diversionary practice often done by professional teachers who are afraid to feel themselves fully and therefore substitute learning, education and information for the true healing of themselves and their students. They pass on their own blocks and resistances as healing when in reality it is only a mindset, an attitude or a frame of mind. There are many "professional" teachers of knowledge, even of medicine and healing, who are dying themselves for overload and overvalue of knowledge as real healing.

This distinction is important and well known. Healing IS feeling. If you do not FEEL well you are not well no matter how positive you may think. Dealing with negativity, and particu-

larly negative feelings, is important not in terms of needing to get rid of it in order to BE well and succeed, but in terms of it is our truth and true feeling no matter how much we may prefer to deny it. Recognition of truth changes it, not denial and force. Give up the denial and the real know and the real recognition of the truth becomes liberating, and liberation provides the freedom to change.

The quest for power or escape is the mind's response to not wanting to feel pain or emotions. And Dhikrullah is God's answer to that quest. Starting with astaghfirullah 100 times, we then bless the prophet and his family 100 times and then chant lailaha illallah endlessly until the joy of life returns. "Fa Dhikrullah, huwa shifa'u" - for Dhikrullah is the healing.

Astaghfirullah is for you, so that you will know in the root of your being exactly what you are doing. You are seeking the forgiveness of the divine and holy because of all that you have done that has caused you to feel the pain of separation. This is so you will know this and feel the changing effect of doing it from not having done it. "I am seeking the forgiveness of Allah", is the message we are telling ourselves with this repetition. And it should be repeated until received, but at least 100 times to be sure.

Then we send blessing on the holy prophet and his family. "Allahumma, salli 'ala Sayyidina Muhammadin wa aalihi wa sallim" and this is to heal the wounds of separation from humanity; the relationship of our souls other souls. We can all come together and learn how to relate to one another around this.

Then lailaha illallah 100 times. Repeat the entire process until joyous and blissful. Don't stop until you have reached your goal. Then don't stop.

My brothers in salvation, do not fail to hear my voice and listen to my words. I ask for nothing but your own release. There is no place for hell within a world whose loveliness can yet be so intense and so inclusive it is but a step from there to Heaven. To your tired eyes I bring a vision of a different world so new and clean and fresh you will forget the pain and sorrow that you saw before. Yet this is a vision is which you must share with everyone you see, for otherwise you will behold it not. (abidance) To give this gift is how to make it yours. And God ordained, in loving kindness, that it be for you.

Let us be glad that we can walk the world, and find so many chances to perceive another situation where God's gift can once again be recognized as ours! (Healing Sessions) And thus will all the vestiges of hell, the secret sins and hidden hates be gone. And all the loveliness which they conceal appear like lawns of Heaven to our sight, (Pure Land) to lift us high above the thorny roads we traveled on before the Christ appeared. Hear me, my brothers, near and join with me God has ordained I cannot call in vain, and in His certainty I rest content. For you *will* hear, and you *will* choose again. And in this choice is everyone made free.

I thank You, Beloved God, for these holy ones who are my brothers as they are Your Sons. My faith in them is Yours. I am as sure that they will come to me as You are sure of what they are, and will forever be. They will accept the gift I offer them, because You gave it to me on their behalf. And as I would do but Your holy Will, so will they choose. And I give thanks for them. Salvation's song will echo through the world with every choice they make. For we are one in purpose, and the end of hell is near.

In joyous welcome is my hand outstretched to every brother who would join me in reaching past temptation, and who looks with fixed determination toward the light that shines beyond in perfect constancy. Give me my own, for they belong to You. And can You fail in what is but your Will? I give you thanks for what my brothers are. And as each one elects to join with me, the song of thanks from earth to Heaven grows from tiny scattered threads of melody to one inclusive chorus from a world redeemed from hell, and giving thanks to You.

Once and for All, How to Know Reality!

The essence of my message to you is: You're REAL! But your reality is even more real and beautiful than your Illusion. So keep your company with the People of Reality and not with the people of illusion.

Sufis are people whose hearts are in Heaven and whose feet on the ground. Faith is a clear and certain vision of the future. Your role in it is simply to hold it; to discover it and keep it in your heart. So clear yourself of doubt and unbelief with the remembrance and genuine contemplation, and do good for yourself. Live well and teach others the same. God is present and will always help **you** and guide **you**.

Accept yourself! Accept your Life! Every moment of it is God in action. Purify yourself of disbelief and resistance to Surrender to you life and your reality! Isn't that the point of Sufism and all spiritual paths - Surrender to the One?

You are there (present)! **God** (Allah) is there (present)! Accept your long and beautiful life and do something really good with it - for your Self! Realize your Self! Accept your holy Presence in God (Reality) and trusting God (Reality) to be there and to help you - and be free to build your life, your castle on the Rock of Truth in your Kingdom in the Heaven of your Heart. Even if you fail, your heart will be in the right place.

Surrender includes both accepting reality and letting go of illusion, not one, but both - even though they are the same thing. La ilaha illa 'llah means: No illusions, only Truth.

So Surrender to a life of Peace and Joy and Happiness.

Heal yourself in the physical through Surrender to your (changing) condition and learn your faith that will heal your heart once and for all, with certainty. Protect your self with the Shari'a, the Chariot that will take you across the stormy seas. The Shari'at tells you how to behave in the right way until you reach the heart; until you are transformed, and realize yourself as naturally imbued with all your rights as a free, believing slave (Muslim).

"Islam ad deen al fitr" - Surrender is the way of nature, so follow your purified nature. Fitr comes from fatara, "to Innate."

The only conclusion linear thinking can reach is that reality is not linear. Then it must give itself up to realize. It's the only conclusion worth reaching. Don't let your search for acceptance obliterate your realization of uniqueness. We find our way out of the trap by two acceptances: first that it's a trap, and secondly (more difficult), that we are not in it. Accept that it's a trap - objectify it - "It" - "is" "a" "trap" - "I" am not "in" it. Well, what does that mean? That "I" am

the creator of it. Therefore “I” can create my way out of it. Literally, you can paint a door on the wall and step through it. Accept the emptiness, accept the longing.

Sitting with your dissatisfaction seems to mean being at peace with your conflict. If you’re involved in your conflict, then you have vested interest, you have conflicting interests, a conflict of interests; you are on one side in favor of that and against another, if you are involved with your conflict. If you are at peace with your conflict, then you are not involved with it and you can resolve it. Basically what that means is to find peace first and then resolve your conflict. The process of healing is the process of finding your peace. From there you can resolve what we call residuals. That’s why we surrender first, then we can learn our faith (Iman) from experience.