

Tarbiyatussālikeen

Official Organ of Khānqah Ashrafiyah Akhtariyah

March/April 2011

Issue 11

Rabiul Thāni/J-Ulā1432

THE SEVEN OBSTACLES P.1

The Path that the Devotee has to traverse, In order to reach the Garden of the Lord of the Universe

Imām al-Ghazali (R)

The following brief description of the path that the devotee travels in his journey to Jannah (Paradise) is taken from the introduction of Imām al-Ghazali's Minhaj al-'Abidin ila Jannati Rabb al-'Alamin (The Path that the Devotee has to traverse in order to reach the Garden of the Lord of the Universe).

This path to Jannah is no more than the devotee's actual worship and servitude of Allah, the Almighty. However, in undertaking this journey the devotee is confronted with Seven Obstacles which he needs to overcome if he is to accomplish his goal and reach his destination.

These Seven Obstacles are:

- (1) The Obstacle of Knowledge,
- (2) The Obstacle of Repentance
- (3) The Obstacle of the Barriers
- (4) The Obstacle of the Four Distractions
- (5) The Obstacle of the Forces
- (6) The Obstacle of the Nullifiers
- (7) The Obstacle of Praise and Gratitude.

Each of these Obstacles marks a stage in the devotee's spiritual development and progress, and an improvement in his worship and servitude of Allah. It is these

Seven Obstacles that Imām al-Ghazali goes on to explain in the rest of his book by devoting a whole chapter to each of the Seven Obstacles. Thus, what is presented here is merely a summary of the devotee's path of worship and servitude taken from Imām al-Ghazali's introduction to his book. I hope that through this summarised description of the devotee's path of worshipping and serving Allah the reader will see his purpose in this transitory life more clearly and direct all his efforts and energies to achieve this single purpose while at the same time asking Allah to guide him to the path of worship and servitude and to help him to continue on it until he has reached his destination.

The devotee is first awakened to the idea of worship and to tread its path through a Divine thought planted in his mind and special guidance from Allah. This is what Allah means when He says: "Is he whose heart Allah has opened to Islām and he who is on a light from his Lord (like the one who remains a non-Muslim lost in darkness". It is also this meaning that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) refers to when he says: "The light (of Allah) when it enters the heart spreads and unfolds". It was then

said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, is there any sign by which that can be known?' So he said: "Yes, detachment from the Abode of Deception (i.e. the present world), turning towards the Abode of Eternity (i.e. the After world) and preparing for death before it descends".

Thus, the first thing that crosses the mind of the devotee (when Allah wishes to guide him to Islām) is the following realisation: "I find myself being showered with all kinds of bounties, such as life, ability, intellect, speech and all the other noble attributes and pleasures, as well as being protected from all kinds of harm. Surely, all these bounties have to have been bestowed (on me) by a Bestower who expects me to thank and serve Him ...so if I neglect to do that and He ceases to shower me with His Bounties and makes me taste His Punishment and Vengeance since He has sent a Messenger whom He armed with supernatural miracles which are beyond the power and ability of human beings and who informed me that I have a God who is Powerful, Knowledgeable, Living, Willing, Speaking commanding and prohibiting, capable of punishing me if I disobey Him and rewarding me if I obey Him, Knowledgeable of my innermost

secrets and what goes on in my thoughts ...and He has truly promised (the obedient Paradise) and threatened (the disobedient with Hell) ...and ordered me to adhere to the laws of the Shari'ah", then it will dawn upon his heart that all of this (i.e. reciprocating Allah's Generosity with gratitude) is in fact possible since the mind does not see it as being impossible and absurd at all. At this point he begins to fear for himself and is overcome by anxiety.

It is this thought of fear and anxiety that awakens the devotee (from his slumber) and forces him to accept the evidence and renders all his excuses invalid and (it is this thought which) persistently drives him to inquire and investigate. Consequently, the devotee becomes agitated and anxious and looks for a way to rid himself (of this agitation and anxiety) and achieve peace from what crossed his mind or fell on his ears. However, he finds no other way except to search and inquire with his mind into the signs (pointing to Allah's existence) and to infer from creation the existence of the Creator with the result that he obtains thereby certain knowledge of the Unseen and realises that he has a Lord who has made him duty-bound and who has issued to him c o m m a n d m e n t s a n d prohibitions.

This is the first Obstacle that confronts him in his path of worship and servitude, that is, the Obstacle of Knowledge, in order that he be knowledgeable and informed about the matter.

He, therefore, sets out in search of knowledge (without any delay or making any excuses) by delving into the evidences and through profuse pondering and learning as well as asking the Scholars of the Afterlife who are the Torch Bearers and Guides of the Path, the Shining Lamps of the Ummah (Community), the Leaders of the Imāms - benefiting from them and requesting from them a good prayer for success and assistance in overcoming this Obstacle with the Guidance of Allah.

Consequently, he obtains certain and definitive knowledge about the Unseen, namely, that he has only one God who has no consort and who created him and bestowed upon him all kinds of bounties, and that He has made it incumbent upon him to thank Him. Likewise, He has commanded him to serve and obey Him outwardly and inwardly and warned him against Kufr (Unbelief) and all forms of disobedience and decreed for him reward if he obeys Him and eternal doom if he disobeys and turns away from Him. Having reached this point, this knowledge and certainty of the Unseen now motivate him to serve and worship this Beneficent and Munificent Master Whom he sought and found and Whom he now knows after having being ignorant of Him.

However, he does not know how to worship Him nor (does he know) his duties and obligations as regards serving Him inwardly and outwardly. After having already gained this knowledge of Allah - Glorified is He - he now strives hard mustering all

his energies until he learns the inward and outward religious duties and obligations incumbent upon him.

14 HARMS OF CASTING EVIL GLANCES

By
**Ārifbillah Shaykh Hakeem
 Muhammad Akhtar (D.B.)**

Harm No. 12: Heart attack

Casting evil glances could eventually lead to a heart attack. This is because the heart becomes occupied in a continuous struggle. The beauty pulls the heart to him/her and Allah's fear pulls the heart in its direction. Through this struggle and pain, a person eventually gets a heart attack because this internal conflict causes the heart to increase in size. If he would have protected his gaze then he would not have been caught up in this internal struggle and he would not have had a heart attack.

By giving one's heart to just any stranger leads to having a heart attack. However, one should take note of the fact that there are many causes of a heart attack. Therefore, a person should not have the misunderstanding that anyone who has had a heart attack was involved in casting evil glances. One should take special care and be cautious of this in the case of pious people. One should have a good opinion of them. We have been commanded to have a good thought and opinion of every Muslim.

In short, one should not have an evil thought and opinion concerning anyone. Rather one should worry about oneself. Ponder over this harm that if I cast evil glances then it will eventually lead to a heart attack.

A CONNECTION WITH ALLAH TA'ĀLA

From the discourses
of:

ĀRIFBILLAH SHAYKH HAKEEM MUHAMMAD AKHTAR (D.B.)

LINK WITH A SAINT

Once in the presence of an Ālim Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thānwi (R) said; "It is necessary for every person to establish a link with a saint." The Ālim asked, "Why is it necessary?"

Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thānwi (R) replied, "It is actually Fardhul Ain, because in Suratul Fātiha the verse, *'The path upon whom You have bestowed Your favours.'* Is in fact the alternative or substitute to the preceding verse, which is, *'Show us the straight path.'*"

It is only by following the straight path that we Qualify to receive the favours of Allah, and receiving Allah's favours is the object. This object can only be achieved if we place our hands in the hands of one upon whom Allah has already bestowed His favours, and these are the saints.

Doctor Abdul Hay Arifi (R) once said,
"There is only one way to meet Him (Allah),
Seek the road from those who have already
found Him."

He once said,
"Only they will get Him who have a thirst,
Only they will find Him who seek Him."

Shaykh Jalaluddeen Rumi (R) says, "Your spiritual state has become weak owing to constant sinning and leading a life of neglect. Your soul has become like a rabbit, when it faces your nafs (carnal self), which is like a lion, and a rabbit will never over power a lion. Your nafs is the lion and your soul is the rabbit on account of its spiritual weakness. Strengthen yourself spiritually through establishing a link with a saint."

He further says, "Fly with the wings of a saint,

not with the vulture like wings of the evil nafs. The nafs is like a vulture which consumes filth and carrion. It flies only towards the filth and carrion of material world and should you latch yourself onto its wings, it will surely carry you there. Attach yourself to the wings of a saint, because saints are connected to the celestial world. They will fly you out of the love of this dead world and transport you to Allah. Their wings are free of the evil effects of the vulture. They will carry you safely, not allowing you to fall upon this temporary world. You will witness their blessings with your every eyes."

CLOSENESS TO ALLAH

Shaykh Jalaluddeen Rumi (R) says, "I have become the Royal Falcon, i.e. I have attained the closeness of Allah. I am not a vulture that feeds on carrion. I have repented from that."

When a person reforms from the base and lowly qualities to noble and praiseworthy qualities, and he unshackles himself from this insignificant material world, then he becomes a saint.

Shaykh Rumi (R) says, "People addressed me as 'Molvi', but when I joined the company of Shamsuddeen Tabrezi, people started calling me 'Moula e Rum' (master of Rome) instead of Molvi Jalaluddeen."

~~~~~

## EVIL COMPANION

Mālik bin Dinār (R) said; "A dog is better than an evil companion."

# پھر تا ہوں دل میں دردِ محبت کیسے ہونے

ظاہر میں اہل دل ہیں گو حسرت لیے ہوتے  
باطن مگر ہے دولت نسبت لیے ہوتے

مانا کہ مسیہ گلشنِ جنت تو دور ہے  
عارف ہے دل میں خالقِ جنت لیے ہوتے

صحراؤں میں کبھی، کبھی دامنِ کوہ میں  
پھر تا ہوں دل میں دردِ محبت لیے ہوتے

اک قلبِ شکستہ کے اور آہ و فغاں کے ساتھ  
میں چل رہا ہوں مشعلِ سُنت لیے ہوتے

روئے زمیں پہ جو بھی ہے عہد و وفا کے ساتھ  
وہ ہر نفس ہے سایہِ رحمت لیے ہوتے

جو بے وفائی کر نفس کا اپنے ہوا عتلا  
بیٹا ہے سر پہ سینکڑوں لعنت لیے ہوتے

اپنے تو کیا ہیں غمیں بھی کرتا ہے احترام  
چہرہ پہ جو ہے داڑھی کی زینت لیے ہوتے

اک مسیہِ بختہ حال بھی اختر کے ساتھ ہے  
گذرے بے خوب عشق کی لذت لیے ہوتے

(پامی، انگلینڈ، ۶ ستمبر ۱۹۹۳ء)

(شاعر العربیہ عالم عارف باللہ حضرت اقدس مولانا شاہ حکیم محمد اختر صاحب دستِ ہرکاتیم)



## ACTIVITIES AT THE ACADEMY

- ◆ Five times Salāh with Jamā't
- ◆ Daily educational classes and programmes for the general masses. This includes; Arabic classes, Tajweed classes, Tafseer and Hadith lessons.
- ◆ Social Activities. (Guidance & Counselling services).
- ◆ Regular youth Tarbiyah programmes.
- ◆ Khanqah Ashrafiyyah Akhtariyyah (institute for spiritual reformation).
- ◆ Publication of a bi-monthly journal ATTARBIYAH & Tarbiyatus Sālikeen and other Islāmīc literature.
- ◆ Issuance of Fatāwa (Decrees pertaining to religious matters) and answering queries relating to Masā'il (rulings) of Deen.
- ◆ Drugs prevention and rehabilitation.
- ◆ Public Islāmīc Library
- ◆ Tuition for new Muslims.
- ◆ General propagation of Islām.

## CLASSES AT THE ACADEMY

- ◆ Full time Ālim & Hifz Classes.
- ◆ A Maktab (primary Madrassah) for young children with a revised syllabus suitable to the needs of the today's children.
- ◆ Arabic Classes (adults)
- ◆ Islāmīc Studies Course (adults)
- ◆ Tajweed Classes (adults)
- ◆ Shotokan style Karate Classes (10+ & adults)
- ◆ 24hr Emergency Life Support Course
- ◆ Horse riding Lessons

### Tarbiyatus Sālikeen

#### Editor

Shaykh Mufti Zubair Dudha

#### Published By

Islāmīc Tarbiyah Academy

45 Boothroyd Lane,

Dewsbury. WF13 2RB.

Tel/Fax: (01924) 450422

• www.islamictarbiyah.com

• email: info@islamictarbiyah.com