



The Spiritual Hierarchy
of
Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan

with Commentary

by

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

GATHEKA: According to the Sufi conception, there are several degrees distinguished as different stages of responsiveness; in other words, of higher initiation.

TASAWWUF: The Sufi Message brought to the Western world was offered in a certain form mostly for pupils. This organization, called the Sufi Order, has been established to enable humanity to pass through the stages of receiving the Message and assimilating the Message. There is besides these two a third, that of imparting the Message. Imparting the Message, or the bestowal of blessing, is not confined to a particular form. Everybody is not meant to be a teacher; each one has his or her line of development and evolution. According to that he can at the same time be perfecting himself and offering to the world all for which he is a channel of divine life.

These channels depend mostly upon the way we are responsive and to the degree or extent to which we are responsive. This subject is treated at length in *Cosmic Language*. It is also mentioned often in the literature and in the Gathas on "Kashf" or Insight, that faculty whereby the heart can grow and grow until it becomes an avenue and channel for universal life. Then it may be called a "Chalice."

GATHEKA: Among them there are five principal ones: **Wali, Ghous, Kutub, Nabi, Rassoul**, the sign of Rassoul being the crescent, which represents a responsive heart. People call them Masters, but they are in reality pupils.

TASAWWUF: These five grades and their function are explained in part later. The work of each may be different and those who are sent upon one path are instructed that their whole life and consciousness is devoted, consecrated and concentrated upon that path. It is far more important to have the heart-chalice than to be disturbed about the post in which one functions. As a matter of fact if one reaches even the lowest of these grades he may be said to be beyond the human evolution, to be serving God and the Hierarchy.

The training of Sufic esotericism and concentration enables a person to receive the light and power, the wisdom and knowledge and love from all the universal, and to become a channel of grace, glory, wisdom, joy and peace, as Saum says. This requires an ability to shut out nufs, and the more one can shut out nufs the easier this development becomes, and the further one can help to present the Message to humanity.

Although it is only Rassoul or Nabi, perhaps, who presents a message in entirety, it is necessary to preserve the right spirit among humanity, to keep the teachings fresh in human hearts, to guard the sacred traditions and to keep all things pure. This requires an organization. Just as the water coming from the mountain lake to the city has to be watched carefully by different persons at different places until it is distributed into homes and buildings, so the Message also has to be guarded and kept pure. Once the dust of contamination sets in, it is most difficult to restore pristine purity.

GATHEKA: For, in point of fact, no one in the world is a Master save God. Man's privilege is to become a greater pupil.

TASAWWUF: For just as there is one sun in the sky, and a general power house for each distribution of electricity, so there is one God Who is the Source of All and from Whom and through Whom everything is received. We speak only of the central power house, we do not say that the distributing stations are the source of power. So it is with man. There are men who receive more from God and men who receive less and there are men who receive from other men. But ultimately all receive from God. So in truth God alone is Master and Teacher, although we use the word "Master" in certain limited senses, it has no absolute meaning.

Life on earth may mean a constant process of watching and cleansing and purification. And even if a certain station is reached and a certain accomplishment is made, man can still go higher. His next step is to be able to receive the finer vibrations, vibrations finer than those he has been accustomed to absorb, finer vibrations from perhaps a higher plane, which bring to him deeper or more complete faculties and attributes. So man may rise from state to state and from station to station.

GATHEKA: Therefore none of the Great Ones have called themselves Masters, nor have they considered themselves to be so. What they have known in their lives is the privilege of opening their hearts wider and wider to reflect the light of **the** Master, Who is God Himself.

TASAWWUF: This mystery of heart may be known as the mystery of mysteries. All things have their sway within the heart, and heart has its reign over all things. The Upanishads say that within the heart is a tiny seed, smaller than the grain within the barley corn, yet larger than the universe. Those who have known the awakening of heart may find that there is something very tiny within the body, which, when touched, is a magic key to everything in the universe. To open it, an ever greater responsiveness is needed, to watch at all times for the Divine, however it be revealed.

GATHEKA: The progress of these high Initiates is in their responsiveness, for they have never connected themselves with what they have expressed.

TASAWWUF: Even if they use the word "I," even if they speak in the first person, it is not they that speak. It is the "Father" Who puts the Word into their mouths, as the light filleth the crescent moon—that is, as the heart becomes ever more responsive, so greater light, greater capacity for Baraka, greater wisdom become for the time the possession, if not the property of man.

GATHEKA: Very often parents say something to their child in which there is the voice of God.

TASAWWUF: Parents who may otherwise be unlearned or unwise often feel a deep responsibility for their own children. A love is awakened when they have an infant of their own to care for and that love is the seat of the wisdom and inspiration. Then they say things that they would otherwise not have said, and they do things because they are thinking not so much of themselves, they are thinking of the little one. And in that not-self-thoughtfulness the Divine Voice can utter the right words.

GATHEKA: Very often a kind friend suggests something to his friend out of love and sympathy, which happens to be a Message of God.

TASAWWUF: For when man is silent, God speaks. When the ego is frustrated, there is no obstacle before the Spirit of Guidance. This is always speaking to us within the heart, only we are not always aware of it. Then there is kindness, love or sympathy; the heart is awake and in its few waking moments it reflects the light of God which is there, and then what is spoken is really a Message of God.

GATHEKA: Sometimes a teacher says an inspiring word, which is as a word coming direct from God.

TASAWWUF: This is true of any teacher, in the school, in the university, in class or at home, at the lecture, in the forum. When one addresses others and feels himself positive toward others, he may feel the need of the others and in that deep sense of need and responsibility he may be attuning himself to the Cosmic Voice and Cosmic Language and utter the God-words even without knowing he is doing so.

Of course with the spiritual teacher this may become more of a conscious process. Besides, the spiritual teacher feels the pupils within himself; he does not feel the pupils apart from himself. He guards the pupils as he would his very being and he tries to help the pupils in every way possible, though his ability be small and his influence limited.

GATHEKA: Even from an innocent child a word comes as a warning from God.

TASAWWUF: Jesus Christ said: "Suffer ye the little children to come unto me, ... for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." The little children reflect the angelic condition more than anybody else. They often speak without much thought and yet they can express feeling and wisdom without possessing intellectuality. That is because the mirror of their mind has not become despoiled and dusty, and the inner light is reflected outwardly with less ego-interference. Often when one is in doubt, perplexed, or has some problem; if he keeps very quiet and happens to hear a little child speak or call, even at play, then that is the Voice of God, if he only knew it. God is speaking to him through that child and it is a great privilege to then heed and obey.

GATHEKA: For all faces are His faces, and from all lips it is His word that comes, whenever it comes.

TASAWWUF: This is a great privilege which is before all persons if they only availed themselves of it. Every time there is speech it may be that it is God speaking. Only if there are two voices and one is that of an innocent child or kind friend, or an inspiring teacher, let us say, and the other is the voice of someone else, we must beware not to go contrary to that voice of child or friend or teacher. We have to learn which vehicle has made the greater capacity, which has the greatest responsiveness.

For instance, if we do not know what to do and we hear a certain person say something, it is right to do as that person says. But if the teacher comes along and says something different, it is not that one should doubt the teacher, one should trust the teacher and the teachings before all. And then if one has been following the stranger and the teacher says something different, it is wise to change and follow the teacher in this no matter what one has been doing before. For all words are God's words even when they are not entirely in agreement.

But once the teacher has spoken, we can be sure that that is the right way. And if it should be that the heart speaks within, one must be careful to observe it, and then not go to the teacher. Many get a certain impression and are not sure about it. They go to the teacher and the teacher may say something else which is contrary to the heart or which is not right. Then a conclusion has been made that the teacher is at fault, whereas it is really oneself that has been at fault. If one knew how to recognize the teacher, how to follow the heart and how to obey intuitions, there would be no difficulties or disharmonies in life.

GATHEKA: But those who can respond to Him, they become as His appointed servants.

TASAWWUF: Thus even the ones we call teachers are merely masters in heart-responsiveness. This ability to listen to the "Voice of God which cometh constantly from within" is one of the greatest things in spiritual development, may even be said to be **the** spiritual development. The more we can heed that Voice, which is soundless yet discernible, the more we can trace our own footsteps forward and help others.

GATHEKA: People call them Chosen Ones; God has chosen all, for all souls are near to the Creator.

TASAWWUF: It is only that some have themselves chosen to listen and follow their heart-wisdom. It is there for all. The spiritual training is to enable the disciples to awaken those faculties and that responsiveness in themselves which God has bestowed upon all humanity. Humanity is unique in this, that all, high or low, evolved or unevolved, have this capability and capacity. When the People follow this path of the heart the world will be healed of many of its ills.

GATHEKA: But the soul who is attached to the lips of God as a horn, becomes the herald of His Message, and through his lips what comes, is not his words, but the Message of God.

TASAWWUF: There is a final state of development and that is when at all times one can receive and express. The peculiar thing about this is that it need not interfere with one's personal life. For the perfection of the personal life as well as the perfection of the impersonal life is the life in God, when God expresses through oneself. Whenever and wherever there is perfection in anything or anyone, that is the sign of the Divine Presence.

It is very hard to clear out the ego entirely. Those who serve in a hierarchal capacity have to watch themselves at all times. They observe the breath constantly and do not indulge in much personal thinking or speculation for this dulls the breath and makes it coarser and denser. They have to keep constant observation over the heart. This constitutes contemplation or **mushahida**. Then instead of performing some particular concentration, they keep an inner state in which they are, so to speak, as God Himself, looking upon the particular duty which is before them.

They thus reach a state when they seem to be using the divine eyes and focusing the divine mind in all their endeavors. Then it is that the divine voice speaks through them distinctly. And if they are then entitled to be called Messengers of God it is not because any particular people select them or pay tribute to them. Messengers only exist in the long ago in the one sense that very few people of any time can rightly judge their contemporaries. A Christ may have been little heard of in his day, and a Moses or Buddha much heard of. This is of no consequence. The influence over history and over the hearts of multitudes is paramount.

While today we have certain teachings which are called esoteric or exoteric, which constitute Sufism, and while there are other teachings, esoteric or exoteric, to find the Truth only in these words, or to limit Truth to them, is a great pity. God or Truth cannot be limited. We have to find the Truth everywhere. It is only that the study of these things and particularly the fulfillment of the esoteric practices connected with them that makes possible the awakening in ourselves of the heart-faculties which enable us to fulfill the purpose of our lives.

In that sense then, the Message of God is that which is delivered by all leaders and teachers of Sufism, and by all who are open and aware of the Divinity within. It may be also that one who becomes more wide awake will also discover more in others, ascertain the divinity in them, and find everything in creation the reflector of God's will.

GATHEKA: There are seven grades recognized by the Sufis of those in the spiritual Hierarchy—**Pir, Buzurg, Wali, Ghous, Kutub, Nabi, Rassoul**. These are the degrees which come from the inner initiations—the inner initiations to which one becomes entitled on having the outer initiations which are necessary.

TASAWWUF: The outer initiations form the framework of the Sufi Order as it is known to man. Outside of the Sufi Order there is the Sufi Movement which contains all the teachings of the Message of the age, teachings not necessarily derived from one personality, teachings which are proven by themselves, facilitating the awakening of human hearts, especially those of disciples. Indeed there is only one ultimate proof of the value of the teachings and that a personality may have any right to be called teacher. That comes in the inner initiations.

The outer initiations offer with them certain spiritual practices, practices which are of utmost worth. For they help in the awakening of the heart, in the uncovering of the soul, so to speak, in rising to a higher state of consciousness and evolution, in the further development of character and qualities. The outer initiations are most important to maintain balance and to enable the personality to keep in equilibrium and make proper use of body and mind. If there were only the inner without the outer there would be a tendency to fast, to asceticism, and to disregard human learning and relationships.

After all is said and done the supreme purpose of creation was divine rather than human. God has created humanity in order that He might look upon Himself and enjoy the fruits of His own creation. There is a constant tendency to produce upon earth better and better species and better and better individuals. The work of karma or necessity serves rather to maintain an equilibrium, an equilibrium which might lead toward chaos or stagnation.

God has to work justly to avoid too much destruction. He has chosen to build gradually capacity within His creatures. Each person who is evolved spiritually is entrusted only with what he can safely carry. For life is hard and Allah has not chosen to make it harder for us. We can reach a point where we can offer blessings to the world, when we can inspire others and protect places or persons or things. According to this capacity is one chosen to fill a spiritual and beyond that a hierarchal post.

It is according to capacity and the direction of evolution that persons are called upon ultimately to take one or more of these seven paths. One may or may not pass from one to another. A person who is a cripple may do the finest possible work without passing to a higher grade. A mirror may need more polishing than a window, an astronomer's mirror needs still more polishing. The one who may serve in a smaller capacity may develop a greater degree of perfection in his slight duties than one who is called to a higher post. So it is said of the Hierarchy that "we should make no distinctions or differences between them. "It is not our place to judge; we may study, yes, but our greatest duty is to become so that we may best serve God in that capacity for which we are most fit.

GATHEKA: It is beyond words to express what inner initiation means and in what form it is given. Those to whom the inner initiation is unknown, may explain it as a dream or as a vision, but in

reality it is something higher and greater than that. I can only explain it by saying that the definite changes which take place during one's journey through the spiritual path are initiations, and it is these initiations which include man in the spiritual hierarchy.

TASAWWUF: What are these changes? They are not necessarily dreams or visions, for one type of person may have many dreams or visions, may see wondrous things, be able to communicate even with the higher planes and yet may be limited in his evolution. Why? Because along with his receptivity there may be a lack of discrimination. He may be receiving from within and also he may receive from without. If along with his ability to receive, so to speak, from God, he remains open before mankind and allows all, the ignorant and the learned, the wise and the great and the muddled to lead him, influence him, with all his visionary capacity, he has not changed himself.

For the teaching is that the world is as it is, we cannot change it, but we can change ourselves and we ourselves can be changed. The spirit of God may change us and this change may come in an instant or it may require a long time. It may be conscious or unconscious. Generally, however, it is reflected in the awakening of new faculties and abilities, in a higher and broader and more inclusive consciousness. Also in the acceptance of a higher role of morality, ending ultimately in some attachment—if that word can properly be so used—to the principle of renunciation.

The higher development need not stultify the lower. The inner awakening may not impede outer progress, may even enhance it. For instance, one receiving an inner initiation may thereafter as likely as not improve in business, in art, in knowledge and in human relations. Wisdom is not apart from works. As God is without and within, so the Wisdom of God may manifest everywhere.

No doubt there is a change in the love feeling that with inner growth one may feel less and less apart from others. One may feel the divine spark in all and recognize it in the awakened and the sleeping, in the wise and foolish. This suggests caution but most of all an open attitude without requiring one to follow any line of life. For the initiate is under Grace, not under the law. He makes his own laws and these may be contrary to human laws; the higher always supersedes the lower. This causes much misunderstanding for the disciple cannot always follow the teaching through his intellect. There must be faith and love and hope, as the Christian Bible teaches. Otherwise confusion follows.

When the self adds something to itself which has not been itself hitherto, that may be called an initiation. Thus each step in life that adds something is an initiation. A step, an experience, even pain, is not necessarily growth or evolution or initiation. It is only when there is a marked change in personality. And it is an inner initiation which brings with it a higher and wider consciousness and cosmic feeling, after the old nufs (or old man) has been broken.

GATHEKA: In the life of a Saint or a Master there are five degrees known, and in the last two degrees the progress of the Saint and of the Master is silent, but in the life of a Prophet these seven degrees manifest to view. For a Saint or a Master there is one facility—that he can do his work by avoiding the notice of the world. But the life of the Prophet necessitates his coming into the world.

TASAWWUF: Thus the preparatory studies and practices for all three may be substantially the same. The spiritual practices are not the same, for the Saint follows the line of Jemal, the Master of Jelal, and the Prophet of Kemal. For each line there is a definite course of Ryazat and each brings to the surface characteristics which were probably embedded in the personality and which are most useful in the divine service.

For if one is by nature a Saint, it would be foolish for him to have the training of a Master, and if one were suitable material for the Master, he should not be trained for prophethood. After all, if there is the perfect and complete light of God reflected in the heart, nothing more can be asked in this life or in the life to come. We do make certain distinctions because in the outer world the highest functions have to be performed outwardly by those who are destined to go on the path of Prophet, to fulfill the duties of Prophet.

Saint and Master have each in varying degrees to handle affairs of the world, Saints being more attached to things and places and Masters to events. The Saint touches humanity only in so far as he is approached, especially by the devotees and the ignorant. The Master touches humanity only incidentally and must keep his identity hidden. For by being recognized as Master he will find it most difficult to function so. If the Saint is recognized as Saint, the wise and ignorant alike will be coming to him, so after a certain point he may retire.

Zavaliat has been instituted for elderly people. They can combine its practices along with the fulfillment of the functions of Saint or Master, and be guided and guarded or guide and guard themselves without embarrassment to anyone. The prophet cannot function in Zavaliat. He is exposed whether he is noticed or not. Mostly he is unnoticed which means that on the one hand he is more liable to be ignored or martyred, and on the other hand that he will not be always followed by the multitude.

In the early years of his life the Prophet was ignored, then he was attacked, and finally he was followed by everybody until he had no rest. Then, because he had been properly recognized he could and did withdraw. His mission was complete and perfect and there was no need for his further remaining upon earth. His followers would have been very happy and would have been intoxicated by that bliss and that intoxication which would have hindered their further evolution. The pain of separation at his departure hastened the development of his followers as it has that of the disciples of all times.

GATHEKA: And thus, as he progresses from grade to grade through his life, he cannot very well cover himself, however much he may want to, from the gaze of the world, though the sage of every category—Saint, Master, or Prophet—and every degree—always prefers not being known to the world; and as he progresses, so that desire increases more.

TASAWWUF: The more one can cover oneself, the more one can protect oneself, the better able is he to perform his duties. And these duties include among other things the protection and aid and sustenance for that very humanity which may stand in the way of the servants of Hierarchy. For instance, at a time when the despots of the world seem to be extending their sway, and when many may doubt that there is a God because He permits it, at the time when the Holy Ones want to relieve the situation, they may be hampered mostly by the very people whom they would aid. Thus the aid does not come and the despots remain in power much longer than they would have otherwise.

For there is a method by which every weakness can be overcome and every evil averted. The spiritual practices of the Sufis are not limited in their scope although the devotee may regard them as limited. There is no end to the possibilities before everyone.

But there is a great difficulty before an exposed soul. If for any reason he should call upon another for help and the help is refused, he himself must act in his own capacity. This had made it harder and harder for things to be accomplished. Sometimes a most willing person may refuse his coopera-

tion, then when the holy one performs some menial or lesser duty, just so much power and time and energy is taken away which would be devoted to the higher and mightier activities.

No wonder then that seclusion is sought and silence required! No wonder the sages do not want to speak and wish to withdraw from the gaze of the curious! It is not that they are without heart; it is not in ministering to a few, they may be neglecting the many. The ignorant do not understand this and say that welfare for humanity brings some particular benefit to themselves. They do not want to bestow benefits, they want to claim them. So when they go to the sage they have a tendency to pull him down. He wants to avoid that pull, he prefers seclusion.

GATHEKA: But it is not only out of modesty or humbleness, but also for the protection of the spiritual ideal which is developed in him, for it attracts dangers of all sorts by being exposed to the common gaze.

TASAWWUF: Even the glance of the unworthy may demagnetize. That is why in India the outcastes were not permitted to gaze upon the Brahmans. The Brahmans were supposed to be the servants of Hierarchy. If the shadows of unclean persons fell upon them, or even the shadows of undesirable thoughts crossed the path of their minds, they would be demagnetized and unable to function for all because of the heedlessness of a few. For that reason many munis betook themselves to the mountains and remained silent.

GATHEKA: All beauty is veiled by Nature, and the higher the beauty, the more it is covered. And that makes it easy for a wise person to find out the difference between a true Prophet and a false Prophet, for the one beats his drum and the other tries to keep in the background—if only his work in the world would let him keep back. It is his efforts in accomplishing something that bring him to the notice of the world.

TASAWWUF: For the power of the Saint, Master, and Prophet alike comes in concentration and contemplation. The more they can develop along those lines the better able are they to fulfill their duties. Only for the Prophet action also is necessary. He does not confine his energies to the mental or inner spheres. He has work to perform. Yet for him also some silence and seclusion are beneficial. That is why one may read of the Prophets taking some 10 or 40-day seclusions. For the Saint and Master these seclusions may not be so necessary for they may always be in seclusion or partial seclusion or *Zavaliat*.

There have been many men at all times who have collected followings or accepted plaudits, yet who have had little influence in history or having influence, it has not been in the direction of broadness and compassion. If these qualities are not evident one may be sure it is not a servant of Hierarchy. Besides, every initiate may tell by his heart-reflection. If the heart is uplifted at the thought of someone that one may be an evolved soul. If the heart is depressed that other one is of lesser rank. If there are no emotional outpourings it is very easy to discern.

GATHEKA: However, his longing is to be unknown, for the One who really deserves being known, is God alone.

TASAWWUF: We can read many books of ancient Egypt which were supposed to have been written by "Hermes Trismegistus," which is usually translated: "Hermes, the Thrice great" or the "Triply-greatest." What is the triply-greatest? It is the one who has conquered all the three planes: those of

the hand, the head and the heart—one who is able to contemplate and concentrate and act. Such a one may be on the path of Nabi. He surely is a servant of Hierarchy. Who or what he is otherwise does not matter, his work is all that matters. So this title was used in Egypt, and that of Zarathustra in Persia, and of some Rishi or Muni in India. That did not always mean a personality so much as a state of consciousness and development.

Indeed the greater the effacement the greater the channel for the delivery of the Divine Will. It is a pity, then, when someone is acclaimed in his time, he will be called before the public, make lectures, speeches, give lessons and in that sense be unable to fulfill the highest duty. So there is always a struggle in the life of the Prophet. He cannot give God to humanity. Humanity accepts or rejects him whom they can see while God may remain, in a certain sense, forever unknown to the world that needs Him most.

GATHEKA: The work of the **Pir** is helping individuals toward the unfoldment of their soul.

TASAWWUF: Thus the Pir may work with the wise and ignorant alike. He is not confined to the initiates and in this respect he is not especially a Teacher in the same sense that the Sheikh or Murshid is a Teacher. Yet in another respect he is a Teacher because he helps to elevate one and all. The Pir is not the same as the Saint because the Pir consciously works with people. So also can he be distinguished from the Master and the Prophet. Yet it may be that one who later becomes Sage, Saint, Master or Prophet has served as Pir.

Actually every initiate is to a certain extent a Pir, which is to say, a father or elder brother. He is able to help others and he does that at all times. Many talibs become so interested in Sufism they want to help everybody. They sympathize with those in need, soothe them when they are in difficulties, and try to make each one realize that he has a deep purpose in life, and that that purpose will be fulfilled when he goes upon the journey to God.

GATHEKA: The work of the **Buzurg** is to help by the power of his soul those who wish to advance spiritually.

TASAWWUF: Buzurg is one who may use some conscious technique to help. Thus the Shifayat, who uses the methods of healing and the Sheikh who employs the esoteric methods, may both be regarded as Buzurg. But there are many others who are either not qualified or because of circumstances or by choice do not belong to the path of healing or that of teaching yet desire to help, who are humanitarian and kind by nature or by evolution. They are not hindered from helping people, even using spiritual or esoteric methods when the occasion arises.

The Buzurg may follow the secret path known as **rind** or he may work openly when he may be called a sage, or he may be indifferent. The difference between the path of rind and other paths is that in the former one must be very careful not to be known at any time. Saint and Master have to protect themselves because they have higher spiritual duties. Buzurg may protect himself because he may be a man of the world, doing ordinary worldly things, be in business, be a craftsman or otherwise occupied, and it may be necessary that he devote his efforts in his worldly pursuits. So he has the right to protect himself lest people disturb him and prevent him from attaining in his own line of accomplishment.

Buzurg may use the eye, the heart or the breath to help anyone. He does not, however, make use of prayer, meditation or concentration for another. These are helpful, no doubt, and can be used for another to attain some material or mental objective. But when there is a spiritual goal, one must do these things himself. Otherwise it will be of no help spiritually. Yet the Buzurg is neither compelled to act or not to act. In a certain sense is he like the Bodhisattva, whose aim in life is to help all rise above limitations.

GATHEKA: **Wali** is the initiate whose will has come close to the Divine Will, and he shows it in the harmony which reigns in his own life—harmony with friends, and he himself will be in harmony with the adversary also.

TASAWWUF: This is especially the way of the Saint which everybody might recognize, but it is also the way of the Master, although not so easily recognizable because the Master does not work directly with individuals.

There are two ways of attaining this harmony, in theory, but it does not always turn out that way. The first is to try to be harmonious with everybody, and to say “Yes,” and to be most friendly. This would be excellent if all the world were sane and knowing and there were no obsessed and ignorant. For in general it is right to keep up such an attitude. Only it is not always the attitude of leadership, sometimes it is necessary to bring divine wisdom.

Thus in the healing of a person who is sick sometimes one has to have a bitter medicine and in the treatment of the obsessed one cannot always use a gentle method. But it is not the weak or gentility which constitutes the essence of harmony. If there are inharmonious conditions, there may have to be some change to produce harmony ultimately and it is the ultimate rather than the immediate harmony which is necessary. Of course the wise man can obtain that ultimate harmony more quickly and produce the lasting friendship. And the way to do this is to maintain rapport with God.

One way of accomplishing this is by constant watchfulness over the breath. When that is the case, whoever comes one may regard as an emissary from God. It is not necessary to keep before oneself any thought of friendship or enmity. The friend of the moment may produce the greatest pain and harm, and the seeming enemy may bring a blessing. Besides, all belong to God and the person who maintains friends and enemies in that sense is for the moment not on the path of God. God has no enemies. It is only the foolish who say that we may love one another and love God but do not have to love God’s enemies—God has no enemies although our thought of God which we confuse with the reality may be different from another’s thoughts on the same subject.

Wali tries to justify people and to see from their point of view. This does not mean that he does not correct. It only means that before correcting another he tries to justify his or her point of view. If he does not, if he fails to understand the viewpoint of another, he has no right to make an adjustment. In that case he is by no means powerless to act; in that case he adjusts himself, he tries to uproot any fixity, any hardness in himself which may be blinding him to any sense of justice and right.

Thus the position of Wali with regard to harmony may be said that he is both harmonious and a leader, only his harmoniousness must manifest more and his leadership less. He tries to find the deeper feeling in the heart of another. This does not mean that at times he may not exact disciplines, but those disciplines should be for the purpose of help or awakening another and not to make that

one nearer and dearer to himself. The purpose of the hierarchal is always to bring humanity nearer to God and to the fulfillment of the ultimate spiritual destiny.

GATHEKA: He shows harmony with the changing weather and its different influences.

TASAWWUF: Now it may be asked, does the Wali change the weather or does he change himself? The answer may be neither or both. There are people who complain about each change in the weather. They grumble when it is hot, they grumble when it is cold, whether it is too dry or too rainy, there is still cause for complaint. Mark Twain has said that people are always talking about the weather but they do not seem to do anything about it. Wali does not talk and does do something about it.

For instance there is the adaptation of self to changing conditions. We see that in the birds and animals. When the weather changes they either move away or oil themselves or their fur changes. Cold blooded animals, however, are impervious to changes in climate, they are not so bothered. This shows that either by some change in breath or change in blood conditions we can adapt ourselves so as to be comfortable. There are ways of breathing whereby one becomes warm. There are ways of breathing whereby one may become colder. There are ways of breathing whereby one becomes impervious, and this is generally the best because indifference takes away from one the thought of self, which always is a bother and a hindrance.

The method by breath is to calm it at all times, making it soft and gentle. This makes the body a poor conductor of heat so that it does not so readily become warmer or colder. When the breath becomes still more refined one becomes less conscious of the earthly conditions, is not so affected by them, and can almost become warm or cold by will although no doubt there will be a tendency toward a certain equilibrium which is most desirable.

There is also the method of calming the thought. When one uses this method, or even the adaptive method first mentioned, or that of the breath next discussed, one comes to learn more what the weather really is. Although we are inclined to think that the weather is only the result of physical movements and forces, it is becoming gradually recognized that there are influences of the sun and moon and perhaps also of the stars. The same people who deny astrology may be finding that there is a peculiar relation between movements of Saturn or Mercury or Venus and changes in weather or earthly conditions.

Now if one examined this subject deeply he would find that the weather and the earthly conditions are themselves in part at least affected by the thoughts which emanate from the world. Man's thoughts, singly and collectively, do in some mysterious manner affect the weather. That is why the seasons are so different each year. That is why there are often sudden and drastic changes, which are not permanent, however. The stories of the prophets telling about rain may have been due to foresight or due to control. The more man controls his inner being and becomes master of the mind-world, the more he will be controlling the weather, although it may be quite unconscious. Thus the harmony of the Wali may be due to his changing of self more than anything else, and if the weather around him changes that will also be due to his increasingly harmonious nature.

GATHEKA: And is in harmony with all he eats and drinks.

TASAWWUF: This indicates that at a certain state in spiritual progress one is no longer bound by traditional laws about food and drink. These have been needed for various purposes. Also during the performance of certain esoteric exercises it is advisable to readjust one's diet. But when one has accomplished the general evolution and embarks on the cosmic evolution, which is to say, unites with Hierarchy, it is possible to control bodily chemistry, to absorb the different foods which otherwise might have been injurious. One may even use the thought to prevent people from bringing undesirable foods, or to help them pick out desirable foods—this last being most prevalent until a stage is reached that one's wishes in this respect may be the more easily provided for, **without speech**.

Wali does not take people to task for what they eat. He considers the goodwill of his patrons and hosts above all things. The prayer is, "Bless **all** that we receive in thankfulness."

GATHEKA: He is in harmony with the place he lives and moves about in, and he harmonizes with all atmospheres.

TASAWWUF: This is the accommodation to and mastery of place. Christ has said, "The Son of Man knows not where to lay his head." Yet in his time Christ did adjust himself to all the conditions he met with and he showed that same harmony even to the Samaritans who were not on friendly terms with the Beni Israel of the time. Christ also has said, "Agree with thine adversary quickly." So Wali may be saying "Yes" and outwardly suggesting a harmony. He then works inwardly or not at all to correct another.

He does not interfere with karma when there is no need to interfere. He does not even prevent evil, injustice or tragedy when there is no wisdom in it. But he tries to avoid complaining. He does not want to complain of himself and he will be finding comfort under quite varying circumstances. He does not want others to complain needlessly and incessantly, for this can become a disease. He wants to establish calmness, for calmness is the source of true harmony.

GATHEKA: And so his will becomes the Will of God; in other words, the Will of God becomes his will.

TASAWWUF: This is a universal Will; it is a Will beyond the ordinary understanding. It is a Will which includes all wills. It is not nothing, and it does not necessarily conflict with the will of everybody. The will of every person, no matter how much it may differ from that of another, ultimately finds its way to the Universal or Cosmic Will, which we call the Will of God. This is purposive, directive, full of love and wisdom and is the source of all blessing as well as of grace, glory, wisdom, joy and peace.

GATHEKA: He controls a community, keeping it on the right track.

TASAWWUF: One may ask how a holy man can control a community and what he does in order to keep order and preserve Dharma. This is done by his concentration and attunement. It is possible by concentration to control an area which extends beyond the personality. It is possible by heart-attunement to feel the conditions around one and to control them by watching the surface of one's heart. For the heart is greater than space, and the heart-vibrations can heal just so far as the will can be extended safely through the space.

In addition to this one can, by observing the breath and controlling the breath, extend one's atmosphere out so far as the community under one's protection extends, and by that means radiate goodwill and blessing. One's thought and one's breath may control the atmosphere and behavior of a city or area.

GATHEKA: He does that work, for which he is appointed, mostly in an unknown way.

TASAWWUF: It is unknown for two reasons. First he may not be known by the generality or even those on the path of God. The real services he renders may be secrets even to the elect. The result is that they may judge him. There have been times in history when Sufis, martyred by the ignorant, have also been criticized by their brethren who did not understand their mystical condition or the work or duty to be performed by them.

It is also unknown in that the practices required for this path and these duties are unknown. They are performed mostly in the silence and often it may be that the greater the responsibility, the greater the silence required to be successful in the accomplishment thereof. This makes the path of Wali appear as a lonely path, even as it does one of misunderstanding. Yet because of his harmony to others they may not disturb him even though they are entirely ignorant of his real mission in life.

GATHEKA: The greater a person is in spiritual advancement, the less assuming he becomes, and he avoids every show of piety or spirituality.

TASAWWUF: In other words the Auliya (plural of Wali) may never appear as spiritual teachers. They may not offer advice; they may even claim ignorance on such subjects. Besides, if they offer advice and it is not accepted they may be held responsible for any pain or harm. Therefore in order to avoid that they may, but they do not have to, maintain silence.

Neither is it necessary that they appear in places of public prayer or attend worship of any kind. Their lives are their worships. Some have called this Karma Yoga. To limit it by such a name is to lose sight of the real worth of Wali. It is primarily performing the Will of God, however that Will may manifest, but it is generally performing that Will within a particular area and with a particular purpose in view for which there is some extended concentration. Thus the mastermind is not only one who has inner capacity, he is also one who does, who acts with that capacity for the general welfare.

GATHEKA: **Ghous** is the next grade of initiates. The influence of the Ghous is wider. He gives up his personality wholly to the Divine Guidance.

TASAWWUF: Wali may be working in this world quite disguised, and yet appear as anybody else but without restriction. Ghous has a greater responsibility and generally he may not serve in the world as a worker or business man. His concentrations are more of the nature of contemplation and he has to watch his heart so much that external action, such as that needed in obtaining a livelihood, may hinder him in his more important duties.

Therefore some have taken the path of Fakir or poverty which does not mean so much actually being poor as making no direct effort to collect wealth. In Oriental communities they may be beggars or may live upon the bounty of others. They may even accept wealth but they must not neglect the main spiritual duty which is before them.

GATHEKA: Therefore in the district, wherever this Ghous may be, an atmosphere will be created of protection from all kinds of dangers caused by floods and storms and by plagues and famines, and he helps the spiritual well-being of a community.

TASAWWUF: That is to say, Ghous has a mission which appears as inner and outer. He may be known generally as a sage. He may offer advice or not but disclaims any credit if the advice, when taken, proves to bring success or ease. He must surrender all to God. If he allows any particular attention to be paid to his personality he is already removing himself from office. Therefore Ghous may be kind or unkind outwardly, he may attract people or repel them. He cannot be judged by his behavior. He may have to alter his behavior in order to accomplish his work.

He may disclaim wisdom, knowledge or benevolence. He may enter the path of blame (Malamat) and be blamed by everybody and everything. Yet he will be indifferent. He recognizes the evolution of the generality and understands them without being understood. So his path may seem particularly difficult, although it is not always so.

Sometimes his atmosphere produces such calm and peace that people may recognize it even though in a most indirect manner. He must watch his breath and keep his breath smooth and even. He must avoid harsh breathing; he must try to raise himself above the denseness of earth at all times. He has to watch the surface of his heart as if his heart were the very area over which he has outer protection, which he is guarding—and from a certain viewpoint it is. Thus he prevents storms and havoc, or if they occur he can still help to mitigate damage. For the sage's breath and personal atmosphere extend out into the space, and, according to his breath, so is the condition of that space and all its inhabitants and creatures.

In addition to this protection, which is only one part, he tries to elevate the heart-condition of the inhabitants of his domain. He may concentrate upon one or upon many hearts. He is not restricted or limited, yet he praises God and prays and works incessantly for the welfare of humanity as if they were his own children.

GATHEKA: Kutub is the third degree of a Master, of a still higher grade, whose mind becomes focused to the Divine Mind, and who has, to a smaller or greater extent, power over all elements and influence upon life.

TASAWWUF: According to the Sufi traditions there is always a Kutub upon earth who preserves the spiritual teaching and who is at the head of the reigning hierarchy. He is not necessarily one who brings a new teaching or message but he does serve to preserve that which has been given or revealed. His sway may extend even over the whole of humanity, but more particularly over those who devote themselves to things divine.

For the Kutub it is necessary to have the faculties of Wali and Ghous, such as ability to watch the surface of heart, to keep the breath calm, to raise the vibrations in an atmosphere or prevent undesirable influences from extending their sway. But in addition to that he must have the knowledge of the elements earth, air, fire, water and ether. By that knowledge and by his command which comes in his spiritual growth or through the Grace of God, he can become protector of a great area. Thus it is said of him:

GATHEKA: There is under him a dominion in which he is responsible for the order and peace of souls. He governs spiritually a country or a nation.

TASAWWUF: When we look over the earth today we do not see such peace and we may even wonder whether there is such spiritual protection. Politics aside, we can always find one country, however small in area it be, where the inhabitants are protected though they may be unaware of the nature of their protector. Thus, though Europe may fail, Asia and America may be protected. And though many nations of Asia may give evidence of lack of protection and of spirituality, yet there are some areas where spiritual influences are at work.

For instance, it is not yet proven that Egypt is without a Kutub. There are adepts and many holy men who live in Egypt. Only it may be that under their protection are other nations, other than the one wherein they dwell. Most of the holy men may be living in India or Egypt or Tibet where there is reverential awe for them; that may be why they live there. Yet they may be helping people of nations far away and may be quite familiar with those conditions because of inner rapport.

If we study the history of the world we can find countries which have been protected by spiritual leaders. Thus Turkey extended its sway and remained a great empire as long as recognition was given to the spiritual teachers. But when the Sultans gave themselves to pleasure, decay set in. Kutub may remain quite unknown and even retire from society, yet there have been Sufi Murshids who also served in this capacity, some being recognized in their times and some not even for generations or centuries afterwards, and some not recognized at all of whom it is said, "We kindle the light for those known and unknown who have held aloft the light of truth in the darkness of human ignorance."

As a rule Saint or Master may even become Kutub but to be Nabi or Rassoul the kemalic development is most necessary.

GATHEKA: **Nabi** is the apostle whose spirit reflects the Spirit of Guidance, called in Sanskrit **Bodhisattva**, whose work mainly is the giving of the Message in the form of warning, awakening, preaching, teaching, and inspiring those to whom he may be sent. He comes into the lives of those who are meant to be guided along the spiritual path.

TASAWWUF: There is a general path for those who go forward to this destined duty which is not a very pleasant path because while it brings life it does not always bring immediate comfort. The Saint gives comfort to all and the Master is concentrating upon the well-being of God's children. But there are times when Dharma decays and when an operation may be needed, so to speak, when smoothness is not enough, and where power may not be effective.

The Spirit of Guidance is in all souls and before all, but all are not aware of it. Thus some are sent forward to awaken others and they may do this gently or firmly, in a positive or negative way. Their first approach may be welcome or unwelcome—which does not matter so long as they deliver the Message. Mohammed was most unwelcome in Mecca, was not even permitted to approach At-ta'if and yet was welcome at Yithrab Medina.

GATHEKA: He is sent to the nations when the nations are meant to change their conditions.

TASAWWUF: Nabi is sent to nations only when there is meant to be a change. We find many of them among the Beni Israel and some also among the Arabs of whom records are less common because there were either no written records or these were destroyed. It is generally a people who are somewhat advanced who are visited by the Nabi. He may exhort them to return to their old ways, or offer

them something new. In a sense he is a revolutionist, a revolutionist in a far greater sense than many bearing this name. Yet also he bears in view the great need of humanity returning to God and Divine Righteousness.

GATHEKA: He is sent to a community or a race to give warnings.

TASAWWUF: So much of the Hebrew Bible is filled with the heart's outpourings of those on this path. One view has arisen that only in those times there were prophets, but this is hardly so and is not even the Hebrew view. Mohammed has said that there is always a Guidance before humanity in some form or other and one can hardly say that there were not prophets in India or even in Japan. In that country St. Nichiren performed a service very similar to that of the Nabiim of ancient Palestine, and he saved his country from the Mongol invaders who had conquered so much of the rest of the world.

GATHEKA: He elevates individuals and bears a Divine Message.

TASAWWUF: The work of the Nabi is for the people as well as for areas and he may have disciples. What he gives out is never his, but that of God Who uses him as a channel. Actually everyone can be a channel but until one has learned all the grades of self-effacement and all the stages of realization it is most difficult to perform the duties and fulfill the Mission of Nabi.

GATHEKA: **Rassoul** is the world-Messenger, who comes to the world for all the people in the time of the world's need, and brings with him that inspiration, influence, and power which will harmonize humanity.

TASAWWUF: The Rassoul may be regarded the same as Messiah, the anointed of God, who has been promised as a deliverer of mankind. The Christian people accept Jesus Christ as Messiah which is no doubt correct. But there are a number of characters mentioned in the Bible who are also regarded as Messiah, chief among them being Kings Hezekiah and Cyrus. The deliverers in the times of the Judges were also Messiahs.

Rassoul no doubt represents the Path of Kemal but he includes with it Jemal or Jelal or both. He is not restricted in any way. He may be a spiritual teacher, he may bring warnings, he may manifest in one of a number of ways but always with the effect that he influences and inspires people. Without that inspiration and influence there can be no Rassoul.

GATHEKA: He may be a king or a pauper; in all conditions he will fulfil the purpose of his coming on earth. Answering the cry of humanity, he fulfills the purpose of his mission on earth.

TASAWWUF: Rassoul is subject to no condition. He need not stay on earth after his work is completed. This has caused so much misunderstanding. But Rassoul is not an adept and he comes to bring something. After delivering that which he has been sent forth with, he may withdraw. He may not appear in the manner expected but he will do that which has been expected. Thus although he may work openly and before everybody, that does not bring him recognition or acclaim. It is only after he departs that a loss is felt, and sometimes the shame that comes afterwards awakens human hearts more than his presence.

Rassoul always tries to bring peace and reconciliation, which is most difficult. He not only preaches, he demonstrates love. He may willingly undergo sacrifices although not always for the sake of personalities who come before him; he sacrifices for the sake of his Message and his Mission. He does not lose sight of them. He is, so to speak, at one with them.

Yet it is never to be forgotten that God is Mercy and Compassion. Behind the apparent personality of Rassoul there is a Divine Wisdom which is working every moment. It therefore requires a most delicate constitution, one who can ever be open in consciousness to God and yet be facing humanity. Thus Rassoul is torn in a struggle between heaven and earth, between forces elevating him and those pulling him down. Yet his heart is there to answer humanity's cry, not his own.

He remains on earth until his Message is delivered to whom it is to be delivered, whether in a little corner or before all the world. He cannot be measured by human intellect because his work is almost entirely beyond the intellectual sphere.

GATHEKA: The question: "Where does one receive the initiation of the higher orders?" may be answered that no man in the world has the power to above-said higher initiations. They are initiated by God Himself, and they prove their initiations, not in their claims, but in their works.

TASAWWUF: Some of the greatest harm has been done by false assumption of a spiritual post. There was an aspirant to Sufism in the Sudan in the nineteenth century. After he was rejected in his appeals for the post of Sheikh by the various Sufi teachers he proclaimed himself Mahdi, was followed by some dervishes, and established his own order. The result was fifteen years of havoc and bloodshed. Yet this is only an extreme example of what has occurred over and over again in human history, and people do not learn. False claimants and false Christs arise and delude their followers with false promises, and they even become dupes of their own dupery.

The initiation in the higher sense is always a stepping out of selfhood, however it comes and however high the state of realization or the station of the sage before the initiation. He becomes thereby something that he was not, almost someone whom he was not.

GATHEKA: The soul that rises to that stage where manhood finishes and Godhead begins enters the Initiation of the Spiritual Hierarchy. But the soul which has risen to that stage is neither man nor God. He is not God, because he is limited man; and he is not man, because he is God-conscious.

TASAWWUF: So he may be exposed before man, for his actions depend upon his wisdom, insight and realization. It may even change from moment to moment. He can neither explain nor defend himself. He does what he does because he must, yet he is under no compulsion.

We cannot explain in words the state of consciousness of the Hierarchy, nor can we explain either his methods or his behavior. It may never be the same in any two persons or in any person at two different times. According to the need as he sees it he acts. He will therefore be judged by the ignorant and they will never suspect who he is or what he is doing. And that is often his protection.

Many times you will find that Sufis show their worst side foremost. They may be the very ones performing the highest service. There are numerous instances in Buddhism where a slap or cutting off of a limb has been followed by an illumination. In the end this is all that matters. He has to see beyond all that appertains to the self, even at the risk of avoiding things necessary for the self. One

may then, like Shams-i-Tabriz, be subject to martyrdom or like Mansur-al-Hallaj be tortured at the stake; to the martyr it does not matter, for he is immersed in God. But when that happens the world suffers. It is the ever recurring tragedy of the world, that the very one who comes to bring relief to humanity may suffer at the hands of humanity while those whom humanity follows lead nowhere.

But for Rassoul, nonetheless, he reflects divine qualities and strives ever to pursue the path of perfection, to be an example to all who follow that they may later come to realize what he was asked and what blessing he brought.

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