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The practices for the seven leading names have been given by Pir Zia for the whole membership of the Sufi Order to participate in over successive lunar cycles, beginning on the new moon. These are the commentaries for the fifth name, *al Basir* – the All-seeing. The previous name was *as Sami* – the All-hearing.

The Seven Leading Names

I would like to focus on one grouping of the 99 names, which have been highlighted by the classical Sufis as being especially important. They are the names which refer to aspects of the consciousness of God; so the Sufis have given them priority and have called them the *al asma al ayima al sabaha*, that is to say the seven leading names. There is a kind of hierarchy within the names in terms of the order of ontological precedence. Within that hierarchy these seven are considered to occupy a special position. At the Abode of the Message, we have been working with these names successively one after another for the last year. And I have composed instructions based on Murshid's teaching and Pir Vilayat's teaching and the teaching of the ancient Sufis for each of the names including practices to do relating to each of the names. I hope you will find these are names you can use in your own work. Most of them I think you will be familiar with.

Zia Inayat Khan

Ya Basir

Of the seven leading names the sixth is Basir, the All-seeing.

Murshid writes in the Gayan:

Why have I two eyes if not to behold thy glorious vision?

Why have we the eyes in our heads which are the product of inconceivable processes of outer voices. Just imagine the evolutionary processes that have given rise to our visual perception. Why have we these eyes? Is it to recognize praise so that we can consume food that is needed to sustain the body? Yes! But why sustain the body – to reproduce and produce more humans who can hunt and eat. But what is the summum bonum. Why have I two eyes if not to behold thy glorious vision? In the words of Sheikh Najm-al-din Qubra:

The opening of the inner sight begins in the eyes, then in the face, then in the chest, then in the entire body.

This is a hint from a master of meditation that will aid us in our practices

Practices

Wazifa

The first practice is the wazaifa ya *Basir*, 21 times, followed by the *fikr*, the silent invocation, followed by *fikr-i-sirr*, the experience of the inner essence of the practice, after this continuing the mental act of invocation.

Shughl of the eyes.

Closing only the eyes, the index fingers are placed very gently on the place where the eyelids meet, just lightly resting on the eyelids without pressure. It is very important not to exert pressure; otherwise the retina could be damaged. Breathe very deeply but softly, hold without strain expanding the torso, not closing the glottis. Holding the breath, feel that one is looking at the universal light which is the cause of the One, the cause of the whole manifestation, out of which have come all the visible forms of this world before our view. Then exhale, without releasing. Do this two more times, inhale and hold and exhale. Three breaths total. These are daily practices. And this sheet will be available to all of you.

Shughl of the mirror

This is a practice which is to be done only once in the course of the month. I cite the hadith, "The faithful is a mirror to the Faithful." That means God; one of the divine names is "the Faithful." This hadith is interpreted by the Sufis to mean that the faithful devotee of God becomes a mirror to God Him/Herself. Look into a mirror from a close distance for no more than 10 minutes. Keep the eyes relaxed and the gaze steady, not studying the image, scanning the image. The gaze should be diffuse and steady, taking in the whole of the face. See your

face as the reflection of the eternal face, just as you see in front of you on the surface of the mirror a reflection of your face. Now invert your consciousness and see your own face as a reflection of something more multidimensional than your own face, its eternal archetype.

The next stage of this practice, can be done not only once but as often as possible, when interfacing with another person, conversing, recognize his or her face as a reflection of the divine face, just as you had done with your own face in the mirror. One may think of the words of Murshid, "Souls unite at the meeting of a glance." Murshid also says that the first desideratum, the first requirement in insight, in developing insight, is sympathy. Sympathy is the key to inner perception. When through the awakened sympathy of the heart, you can recognize the face of the one before you, not merely theoretically but visually as a practice, with definite concentration of the imagination, as the reflection of the eternal face, then the practice is effective.

Having achieved this, the third stage is to walk in nature, in a forest, and consider the forms that surround you, the trees, the rocks, the water, the sky, and espy the eternal face in all of the myriad living forms, beyond the human form. Quoting the words of the Koran, "Wherever you turn, there is God's face."

Third eye (latifa khafiya) practice.

Begin with the *wazifa*, *ya Basir*, 33 times

Then silently as *fikr* on the exhalation, *Basir*.

Then *fikr-i-sirr*, discontinuing the invocation.

Let the breath be soft and deep and rhythmic, the body relaxed with the back straight. When ready, exhale deeply, inhale, close the eyes with the index fingers and hold. Visualize the light which is the source of the whole manifestation.

Repeat twice. Remove the fingers.

Be conscious of the light that surrounds you and permeates the body. The sun is not an object in the sky, but we live and move within the body of the sun, and our bodies are the stardust of the galaxies. The body absorbs and emits light, the body is transformed into light that fills the atmosphere, hurtling through space at 186,000 miles per second. In certain conduits and centers, the light predominates in the body and it is particularly strong within the skull in the brain and in the optic nerve – in the eyes. The eyes receive light but also project light of a high frequency, which we may be aware of now as we exhale, projecting the glance like the lamps of a car into the dark, illuminating the dark, converging at a point approximately 50 meters in the distance. Become aware of the light that descends as a shaft through the crown center, a vertical beam of light irradiating the crown, which is refracted in the pineal gland and shines forward through the forehead and can be immediately sensed as soon as one is attentive to it. It is sensed first as a tingling sensation between the eyebrows. Now visualize this third beam projecting forward, intersecting with the light of the two eyes as they converge. This light exists not merely on a horizontal plane but it is the refraction of the celestial light that descends through the crown center, cosmic radiation which is constantly impinging upon us from above from the inner reaches of space which links us to the hierarchy of celestial lights, the intelligences, vast beings of complex electromagnetic patterns whose intelligence is of a different and perhaps higher order than our own, each communing with the light that is still vaster and more abstract, culminating in the Light of Lights, the luminous core of all being.

Upon inhaling, turn the eyes upward, with the consequence that the third eye itself becomes inverted, hold the breath and foist consciousness up into the celestial sphere and then release and exhale and feel how the light of the glance and of the third eye in particular is augmented by the descending light of the heavens. Practice this for just several breaths.

As you turn your eyeballs up, you gently rest the tip of the tongue against the palate of the mouth, toward the posterior of the palate. And exhaling, let your countenance be like the countenance of the sun, the archangel of the sun. As Pir Vilayat says, it is not a hypnotic or scrutinizing glance, it is an effusive and generous glance, just casting light.

Discontinue suspension of the breath and return to a natural rhythm of inhalation and exhalation, remaining conscious of the light of the third eye and its projection into the distance, and when ready, open the eyes, but resist the temptation to focus upon objects. Instead remain conscious of the light that passes through the third eye and which extends into the distance, illuminating all that comes before it. It may help at first to keep one's eyes only slightly ajar and as you inhale again, close the eyes.

Pir Vilayat's Instructions

Think of your eyes as headlamps of a car as you inhale, and project those beams forward in the dark as you exhale. Concentrate on a beam of light that descends through the crown center like a shaft of light and then is refracted forward as a beam through some point in the forehead at the pineal gland. As you exhale, that beam is aimed at the spotlight created by the convergence of the beams of your two eyes. Now connect up your glance with the whole hierarchy of beings of light and know that your glance is like an extension of the light that sees instead of the light that is seen, the light of the hierarchies of the beings of light, of the pure luminous intelligences. It's important to draw the light from very high up, not just concentrating the horizontal beam of the the third eye, but linking it up with the shaft of light that descends. That will give a tremendous intensity and penetration to your glance. Now as you inhale turn your eyeballs upwards and immediately the third eye will turn itself upwards. Your consciousness will rise in the fountain of light at the top of the head and you'll reach right up. Exhale once more and bring all that light down and through the third eye. Instead of concentrating on the light emitted by your physical eyes, concentrate entirely on the third eye. This is the secret of looking into the souls of people. Do not simply identify with the beam that emerges from the pineal. You have to link it up with the spirit that descends, otherwise you develop a kind of hypnotic gaze. The Sufis call it "generous light." It's not an inquiring ego light; it's a loving light. The glance is set now; when you open your eyes you should be able to keep your eyes at infinity and not allow your eyes to be focused by the objects in front of you. You don't "see," you just cast light. It's a very wonderful practice and it's important because that's the way of using light to commune with people.



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