

al Mureed

يا مُريد

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 fourth name, *al Mureed*– the Desirer. The previous name was *al Qadir* – the Powerful.

### *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*



Of the seven leading names the fourth is *Mureed*, the Desirer.

I don't know whether you knew that *Mureed* is a Divine name. It's not included in the canonical list of the ninety-nine names. Of course, there are many more that are not among the ninety-nine, which are those mentioned in the *Qur'an Sharif*. Murshid also gave Divine names in addition to the ninety-nine. That the word for a disciple on this path is a Divine name, immediately indicates that the seeker is ultimately identical with the Sought. Pir, Sheikh or Murshid are not Divine names – but *Mureed* is. It means the "Desirer" or "Aspirer". It is related to the name *Wadud* – the Loving – which you do find among the ninety-nine names, but *Mureed* has a greater emphasis on desire than on love – the will to attainment.

We are all mureeds. We are all seekers, aspirers, desirers of a reality that outstrips our imagination, but which dwells deeply within our memory, not in the subconscious so much as in the super consciousness. The aspiration, the desire, which is refracted in the motivations that orient our lives, has its original source in universal desire – the desire that moves the stars in their courses, the planets in their revolutions – the desire that has produced this exquisite balance of life on our planet. The same desire courses through our veins, guiding us toward fulfillment.

Although we identify ourselves as the mureed, the desirer, the one walking the spiritual path, we may remember the words of Murshid, that "the one who enters this path is the one who is called by the Spirit". It is the Spirit who desires – in us, as us.

## God is Love:

*Know that before its association with shadowy phenomenal being, the limitless being was hidden. There was no trace from the traceless. By the necessity of its own love for itself, the limitless being descended through a procession of divine and phenomenal emanations. In every creature, by virtue of the constraint of limitation it appears as 'lover', and by virtue of transcending limitation it reveals itself as 'beloved'.*

Shah Kalimullah Jahanabadi

You can think of the words of Murshid that "the human is Divine limitation, and God is human perfection." In the same way, the lover is the limitation of the beloved, and the beloved is the perfection of the lover.

*God plays the game of love with Himself. He himself is His own lover and He Himself is His own beloved. He is not occupied with anyone else, for there is no one else.*

Shaykh Muhammad Chishti

What is so striking in Sufism is the affirmation of desire, which has the consequence of implying the affirmation of this world, and even of limitation. You also find this in certain strands of Hinduism. Very often when we refer to the theory of *Maya*, we think of the notion of arbitrary illusion, delusion; but of course there are schools of thought in Hinduism which affirm *Maya* – illusion – as *Lila*, as Divine play, as the dance of Krishna, which is full of beauty, and would be impossible without the veils of *Maya*.

Dara Shikoh was a great Sufi, the son of Shah Jehan, the Moghul emperor who built the Taj Mahal on the blueprint of paradise as described in the work of Ibn Arabi. In fact, it comes directly out of a diagram from the *Futuh al-Makkiyya*, which was in the library of Shah Jehan. Sufism was intellectually ascendant in Moghul India, and Dara Shikoh sought to bring about a harmonization of Islam and Hinduism in the tradition of his great-grandfather, Akbar, who had founded a new religious movement called *Din-Ilahi*, with the purpose of unifying the various faiths of the empire. Dara Shikoh wrote an important work called *Majma'ul Bahrayn*, the merging of the two oceans. which is a cross-study of the *Qur'an* and the Upanishads. He described them both as oceans that carry a special blessing

at the place where they unite. *Majma'ul Bahrayn* has been translated into English in India. When Arabic Sufi terms are rendered in Sanskrit – he translates *Eshk – Ishq* – as *Maya*.

Again, this is only understandable if one is acquainted with that trend of thought in Hinduism that affirms *Maya* as fulfilling a supreme cosmic purpose that you find very much in the tradition of Tantra in particular.

## Practice: Dharana

This practice is common both to Tantra and to Sufism and relates to the Divine name *Mureed*.

We begin with a moment of silence, following the prescription of the *Vijnana Bhairava*, the classic Tantric meditation manual: “When a desire appears, the aspirant should, with the mind withdrawn from all objects, fix his mind on it as the very self. Then he will have the realization of the Essential Reality.” In other words, we will have a moment of silence, in which we will experience our desire—that in life which compels us, which attracts us, which stimulates our will toward fulfillment. Conventionally, we experience our desire with reference to the object of the desire. As you evoke in yourself the desire, it is natural that the desire expresses itself in you through its direction toward an object. This is simply what we experience every day. The difference in our meditation now is that we subtract the object and experience the desire as an impulse without reference to its object; and we experience that impulse as none other than the very essence of the self.

When a desire appears within the consciousness, then one should identify with the desire in its essential impulse, irrespective of object. Rather than focusing on the object of the desire, identify oneself as the very impulse, the very force of the desire, and then one will have the realization of the essential reality. Because desire is always moving from object to object and progressing toward the most exalted ideal; but the object in a sense is merely the mask which hides the reality of the desire itself, which is the essence of one's own being.

## Practice: Wazifa

### ***ya Habib ya Mahbub ya Muqallab al Qulub***

("O Lover, O Beloved, O Transformer of Hearts")

There is a motion of the body, first turning to the right, *ya Habib*, and then when you turn to the left, *ya Mahbub*, and then turning up, *ya Muqallab*, and then toward the heart, *al Qulub*.

Now we will translate our dharana into a practice of *wazifa*, invocation of Divine names, using names related to *Mureed* that have been transmitted in the lineage of Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan. *Habib* comes from *Hab*—Love. *Habib* is the Lover, the Desirer, the Will-er. As we recite *Habib*, we identify with the force of will that in the course of our life experience, with our maturation and personal development, is transferred from object to object, evolving toward higher designs, while the essential energetic pulsation from the Source of Being remains essential to our life. It is this energetic outflow—the will to accomplish, to fulfill purpose through manifestation—this impulse within which we discover the Divine intention and the Divine Being.

*Habib* is the Lover and *Mahbub* is the Beloved. We recognize the same Being in the aspiring motive force and in the ultimate object of that force — it is one and the same: Love, Lover and Beloved Lord.

*Ya Muqallab al Qulub*. *Qulub* is the plural of *Qalb*. *Qalb* is the heart. *Muqallab al Qulub* means "the One who causes the heart to revolve and transform," because that word *Qalb* comes from the root *Qalaba*, which means to turn and to change and transform. *Muqallab* is the One who causes the heart to revolve.

When we say, *ya Habib ya Mahbub ya Muqallab al Qulub*, we are conscious of the cycle of the Divine desire as it moves alternately through the Lover and Beloved, two phases of a single Being. In the juxtaposition of those two phases something is accomplished in life which is impossible in the state of unity. In fact some Sufis have gone so far as to say that separation is a higher state than unity, because unity is the eternal primordial state, and yet had that been sufficient and complete, separation would never have been born. But there was a need. Yet it is

innately the desire of each of us to seek unity. So it is a paradox, even a dilemma, that God wants our separation even as we want union with God.

## *Walking Fikr:*

*Habib* (right foot), *Mahbub* (left foot), *Muqallab al-Qulub* (fikr-i sirr)

## *Practice: Suluk*

Recognize the Divine desire, however constrained and distorted, in every act of every being.

Murshid has a very substantial teaching on desire and its stages of manifestation. He says, first of all, "The hidden desire of the Creator is the secret of the whole creation. He highlights three major stages in the manifestation of desire. The first could be described as desire, the second as wish, and the third as will. For each of these there is work to do in bringing desire into reality. In a sense it has to do with finding one's direction, discriminating what it is that one values, what is one's motivation, what is one's purpose, what is the direction toward which one is moving – that is the first level of working with desire.

The second level is attained when desire becomes incarnate as wish. From a generalized desire one produces a wish. Murshid says, "if one's desire was not fulfilled, it means that one did not know how to desire." – a very challenging statement. He goes on to say, "Failure is caused by indistinctness of motive," referring to the stage of wish, formulating that general abstract intention and motivation as a more definite wish.

Beyond wish is the level of will. Once you have formulated your desire as a wish, it still needs to be enacted in reality, and that requires will. Murshid says, "When a desire becomes a steady thought, its success is assured." If one can work through each of these stages successfully, then one can enact one's soul's deepest longing as a concrete reality in life. If that manifestation is not possible, it is because somewhere along the line the work has not been done.



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