

ALI 313: Walking on the Spiritual Path

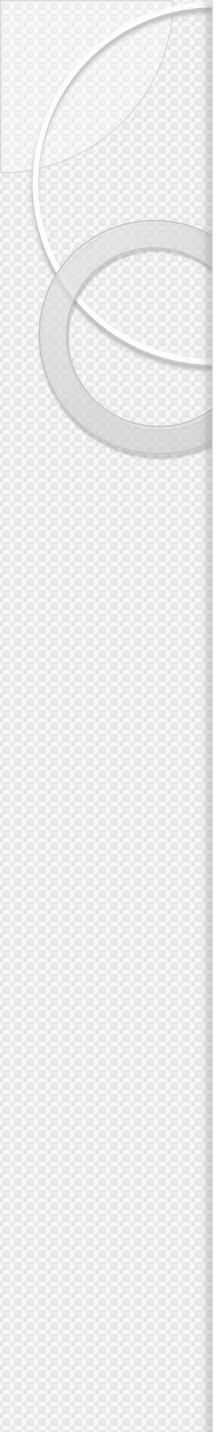
Session Two

Read and Ponder

Certainly, Allah, the Glorified, the Sublime, has made His remembrance the light for hearts which hear with its help despite deafness, see with its help despite blindness and become submissive with its help despite unruliness . . .

There are some people devoted to the remembrance (of Allah) who have adopted it in place of worldly matters so that commerce or trade does not turn them away from it. They pass their life in it.

Nahjul Balagha, Khutba no. 221



Agenda

- Movement along the Spiritual Journey
- Qualities for the Spiritual Journey
 - 1) Love
 - 2) Thankfulness
 - 3) Humbleness

Movement along the Spiritual Journey

A human being goes through different stages;

A child needs a lot of parental assistance. Pleasures consist of play and other physical joys.

A teenager needs relative independence. Pleasures come from friends, games, leisure activities . . . etc.

An adult needs work, stability . . . Pleasures come from socializing, leisure etc. but different from the previous stages.

As a person grows, he/she distances from the needs and pleasures of previous stages. Such is movement towards perfection.

Qualities for the Spiritual Journey

Necessary qualities for a person who walks on the Spiritual Path:

- 1) Love
- 2) Thankfulness
- 3) Humbleness

Love

According to Islamic mysticism, one's knowledge of God as the most beautiful and perfect being and the source of all good things that one has and successively one's love for God who is love and mercy gets so strong and encompassing that it will occupy all one's heart. At the same time, knowledge of one's weakness and deficiencies in front of God gets so intensive and deep that finally he will feel emptiness and nothingness. As such a person loses his sense of *Iness* and becomes selfless, he will be identifiable with every type of goodness. From nothingness, one reaches the position of everythingness. He will feel no limitation or restriction. In a well-known *hadith*, we read that

Servitude to God is a substance, whose essence is lordship.

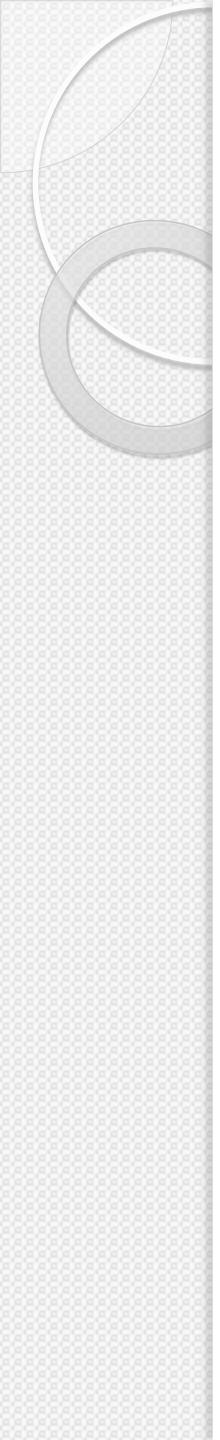
A pure servant of God whose will is melt into His will be able to bring about extraordinary deeds.

<http://www.al-islam.org/perspectives-concept-love-islam-mahnaz-heydarpoor/human-love#human-love-god>

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ
كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

And there are some among men who take for themselves objects of worship besides Allah, whom they love as they love Allah, and those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.

Sura al Baqarah, 2:165



Types of Love

- Love of Allah
- Love for those who love Allah
- Love of that which connects you to Allah
- Love for the sake of Allah

Sweetness of Love

My God,
love-mad hearts are enraptured by You
disparate intellects are brought together by knowing You
hearts find no serenity except in remembering You
souls find no rest except in seeing You
You are the glorified in every place
the worshipped at every time,
the found at every moment
the called by every tongue
the magnified in every heart!
I pray forgiveness from You for
every pleasure but remembering You
every ease but intimacy with You
every happiness but nearness to You
every occupation but obeying You

Whispered Prayer of the Rememberers, Sahifa Sajajdiyya

Thankfulness

Types of Thankfulness

Thankfulness from the heart: knowing that something is a gift from Allah;

Thankfulness with words: declaring that you are thankful for divine bounties;

Thankfulness in practice: doing something with your hands, feet, eyes, etc., as acts of worship. This is practical thankfulness.

Levels of Thankfulness

Some levels are shared by ordinary people: they understand that there are some gifts from Allah that we are thankful for, and try to be pleased and praise Him.

On higher levels, people are not only thankful for what they consider to be *gifts* that Allah has given them, but for *whatever* happens to them. Even a bad thing that occurs to a believer is not caused by a lack of love from Allah (SWT), and so a believer is thankful for that.

Some people are very concerned with Allah's presence: they feel no ease or pain as they do not have any time to think about whether they are in the state of ease or pain. This is the power of love.

Humbleness

What can I bring when I want to come to you?...Can I come with my ears, my eyes, my tongue, my hands, my feet? Is not this the case that all of these are your blessings that you have given me?

My Lord! I am poor in my richness so how can I not be poor in my poverty

Imam Husayn (a)

Understanding Humbleness

Humbleness is a deep feeling of nothingness that can come from knowing that:

- 1) All that we have is from Allah
- 2) We are dependent at all times of Allah
- 3) Change can occur in an instant under the command of Allah