

Purity & the Heart



“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” This purity of heart is not only in thought, feeling, and action, but it is the purity which in the Eastern language is called Safai, from which word “Sufi” has been said to come—to make the heart pure from all that is besides God. In other words, the heart must see and realize all as God, and God as all.

The greater the purity developed in the heart the greater becomes the power of man.

To attain to the purity which is the seeking of the mystic one must be able to purify one’s spirit from every thought and feeling, however deeply impressed or engraved in one’s heart. The mystic goes as far as purifying himself from his identity, by removing it for a certain time and by putting something else in its place. From beginning to end the whole process of spiritual development depends upon this.

The Winged Heart

a newsletter for

The Sufi Order International (Toronto)

An Interfaith Approach To Spiritual Growth

Volume 13, Number 1

March — May 2004

*These quotations were selected from the works of
Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan*

Purity of the Heart

The real purity is experienced not by means of the outer ablutions nor by keeping away evil thoughts, but by keeping the heart pure from feelings which disturb the rhythm of the mind and thus upset the whole spirit. Feelings have a greater power than thoughts. If evil thoughts are monsters, evil feelings are as demons. Such feelings as the desire of robbing someone of his rights or his belongings have a very disturbing effect upon the spirit. Before such a feeling is put into action the effect is more, while it is being put into action it is less, but afterwards the effect is most. Life rightly and honestly lived has inner struggles, but by adding to it feelings that disturb life’s tranquility one only adds to one’s troubles in life, which then become endless.

Purity of heart must not be considered a virtue but a necessity, a necessity not only to be considered for the good of others, but for one’s own life. The feelings which produce that weakness in the heart take away strength from the eyelids, the glance drops instead of the eyes firmly gazing straight. Nothing in the world, however valuable or rare, can make up for this loss. The main thing that must be remembered is that the soul is pure and the lack of purity it cannot bear without feeling restless. The spirit has a tune and a rhythm. When it is out of tune and out of rhythm, if the riches of the whole world be given to it, it is worth nothing. It is purity and peace which is the soul’s constant seeking.

Keeping the Heart Pure

As the rust is natural to the iron, and as the milk turns sour, so the heart can become rusted, and its feeling, which by nature is as pure as milk, turns sour. Then nothing in the world is tasteful to that person, and life with all its beauty becomes worthless. It is this condition which must be avoided. An adept must keep his mind pure from rust.

The rust comes from allowing the heart to bear malice and spite against anyone, by having hatred and prejudice against anyone, by wanting to take revenge, by looking down upon another with contempt, and by the feeling of jealousy, rivalry, or envy. The heart wants a constant care to keep it from getting rusted, for the nature of this life of illusion is such that some little unimportant things, which are not of the least value, coming from the outer life, the heart may be affected by, and the rust may be produced as

the mere touch of water can produce rust upon the iron. Once the feeling has become soured it is as difficult, if not impossible, to turn it sweet again as to make sour milk sweet.

A soul has brought from heaven its love for sweet. It may after coming on earth develop a taste for salt, sour, or bitter, but its innate longing is always for the sweet, and what its life needs most is not sugar, which is required in some degree for physical health, but the sweet which is the original property of this heart and which is needed most for his true happiness and real well-being.

Purity of the Heart

He alone is capable of removing from the heart of another doubt, deceit, fear, or malice whose heart is already pure from these things or who, at least, can empty his heart of these things. There is a weakness of the heart and there is a strength of the heart. The heart’s weakness is caused by things it contains which enfeeble it, such as doubt, deceit, fear and malice. The absence of these things produces that purity of heart which in itself is a power. This power could be increased by faith, hope and righteousness.

Purity of the heart causes its expansion, and the lack of purity makes it narrow. The mystic poet of Hyderabad, Asif, says, “If the heart is large, it can be largest of all things.” Besides it is purity alone which opens the doors of the heart. All that hinders that purity stands as a closed door of the heart.

The pure-hearted may seem to be thinking, saying or doing simple things. And yet there is a beauty and charm in all they do, for there is nothing more attractive than light itself. All that is besides light depends upon the light to show out its beauty; light is beauty in itself. Purity of the heart is the only condition that allows the inner stream to rise. The pure-hearted see deeper, though they say little. There is no pretense about them. What they know they know; what they don’t know they don’t know. The pure ones make all pure, for to them all is pure. Their presence makes everything pure. As the pure water is the best tonic so is the contact of the pure-hearted person. In the spiritual path when one is able to accomplish this thing there is not much then that remains to be accomplished.

Purify the Mind from Fear

To purify the mind from fear is of great importance, and this can be best done by analyzing what causes one fear. Fear is an outcome of long-collected problems unsolved. When once a person looks his own problem in the face he gets an insight into the cause of fear, and as in the sun many germs are destroyed so the germs of fear are destroyed by the light of intelligence. Fear comes from weakness to face the consequences of one's condition, attitude and deeds. Once a person has solved the problem how he will meet the consequences the fear is done with. The best way of getting over the fear of swallowing a bitter pill is to swallow the bitter pill and to experience by it that it is not more bitter than it is.

Fear comes also by being too cautious for one's health, morals and reputation; also by being too considerate of the feelings of those one loves, and too regardful of those under whose influence one is; also by taking too much to heart what others say. Fear very often remains in the heart of man in the guise of virtues, and very often a timid one is taken for a righteous one. But the timorous well-doer is worse than a fearless sinner.

The best practice one can make is to speak with oneself, with one's own fear; to dispute with it, and to root out the reasons on whose foundations it rests. What generally happens is that all things one fears, one fears even to think of them. But the solution of getting above fear lies

in analyzing the cause of the fear and so making it non-existent. Man by nature possesses a tremendous power hidden in his heart, the power which waits constantly to become manifest. This power is hidden by fear. The day when fear disappears this latent power manifests to view.

Keep the Heart Free from Poison

Antipathy turns into malice, and malice culminates in bitterness. To possess it in one's heart is like possessing in one's heart a poison, a poison that clouds wit and produces obscurity. If one keeps one's heart free from malice one has accomplished a great deal, for it is in the clear heart that the light from above is reflected. Often without an intention on one's part malice enters, of which man is unconscious. Often the man who possesses malice is quite innocent, for his heart is reflecting the malice which is projected from another heart. It is therefore that care must be taken to keep one's heart free from the impressions and influences coming from others. The question how can one avoid this is answered thus, that the heart will focus itself to a person or to an influence which is akin to its own quality; that is the nature of the heart.

Therefore even if the impression came from another, for the influence of another the man who reflects it is responsible. To make the heart reflect good qualities one must prepare it, one must train it; for it is the good quality of heart that will keep away undesirable impressions and thoughts, and will only reflect good impressions and desirable influences. As a practice of purifying one's heart is to repeat every morning and every evening, "My thoughtful self! Reproach no one, hold a grudge against no one, bear malice against no one; be wise, tolerate, considerate, polite and kind to all!"

Coming Events

April 16-18, in Rochester, NY: Friday eve thru Sunday afternoon. The Foundation Retreat with Aziza Scott and Sharif Graham. Tuition is \$150 US (\$100 US for Canadians). Scholarships and work-study are available. For more information or to register, please [redacted]

June 2-6, near Ottawa, ON: The Dervishes Banquet, with Pir Zia Inayat Khan, Aziza Scott and Wajid Gallien. Please see the enclosed brochure for details.

June 18-20, in Buffalo, NY: A three day intensive with Shahabuddin Less. For more information, please contact [redacted]

Sept 18-19, in Rochester, NY: A weekend with Shahabuddin Less. For more information, please contact [redacted]

October 22-24, in Niagara Falls, ON: Annual dance retreat with Radha Bukho and Akbar Manolson. For more information, please contact [redacted]

Activities

The Message Class: provides an opportunity to experience the teachings and practices of the Sufi Order on an ongoing basis. These classes, based on teachings given by Hazrat Inayat Khan and Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, are deepened through the use of complementary meditation practices which may use the breath, light, Dhikr (remembrance of God) and Wazifa (mantra).

Classes in the Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan are held, in *Toronto*, each *Wednesday at 8:30 pm* and, in *Brampton*, every *Thursday at 8:00 pm*. The last meeting of each month is dedicated to the practice of Dhikr. For this evening only, no instruction is offered.

Dhikr: means remembrance of God. Participants unite in intensive exploration and experience of this central practice of the Sufis. *If you have never been to Dhikr, please call in advance.*

Healing Circle: Open to members of the Sufi Healing Order. The Healing Circle is held in Brampton, at 9:30 am, on Saturdays. If you wish to attend, please phone [redacted]

Universal Worship Service: [redacted]

Contact Information