



The Forgotten Path of Knowledge

Written By

Hazrat Maulana Shah Muhammad
Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Qadri ﷺ



KHUSHTARI PUBLICATIONS



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إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ط

"Only those amongst His bondsmen who possess knowledge fear Allah."

Holy Qur'an 35:28

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Siddiqui Qadri ﷺ

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to
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Allamah Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim
Khushtar Siddiqui Qadri Razvi ﷺ

who infused in the lives and hearts of the
believers, the practicalities of the Forgotten
Path of Knowledge.

FOREWORD

His Eminence Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Qadri (Rahmatullah Alaih) was not only an eminent scholar, a polished writer, a great orator and a distinguished missionary, but also a refulgent star of the spiritual horizon. His discourse on the "Forgotten Path of Knowledge" deals with a problem which is being widely neglected and ignored today, although its bearing on the life of humanity is most fundamental. Humanity seems to be succumbing fast to the forces of materialism, and it is high time that those who believe in the spiritual orientation of life should do all that lies in their power to fight this menace before it engulfs the world completely. The learned author has rendered a real service in this respect through his scholarly exposition conveyed in his own unique simple style.

His Eminence wrote this discourse in Urdu for the benefit of the Urdu-speaking people. The honour of translating it into English was bestowed upon me, for which I am most thankful to Almighty Allah.

The subject of Islamic Spiritual Discipline is as vast as it is important. Hence, my plan is to follow up this illuminating introductory discourse by my venerable Spiritual Guide with a series of books from my own pen on the theoretical as well as the practical aspects of the Islamic Spiritual Discipline. May Almighty Allah enable me to accomplish this sacred task soon. Ameen!

Fazlur Rahman Ansari

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In every era emerge a few distinguished and great Scholars and Friends of Allah Ta'ala, whose life and service to the Deen of Islam become etched in history.

One such personality of recent times was His Eminence Hazrat Maulana Shah Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Qadri (Rahmatullah Alaih).

Famously known as the '*Roving Ambassador of Islam*', Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui (Rahmatullah Alaih) was born on the 15th of Ramadaan 1310 AH (4th April 1893) in Meerut, India. He was from the noble Siddiqui lineage, being a direct descendant of the first Khalifah, Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh).

His father, Hazrat Maulana Abdul Hakeem Siddiqui Qadri (Rahmatullah Alaih) was a distinguished scholar and a high ranking Aalim of Deen. He was also a devout Sufi Master of the Qadriyyah Spiritual Order. He took special care in the education of his son who completed his visual recitation of the Holy Qur'an at the tender age of 4. He studied elementary Arabic and Persian under the guidance of his father at home and was then enrolled at the local Madressah Arabiyyah Qoumiyyah, where he graduated as an Aalim.

His noble father passed away when he was only 12 years old. Since his mother was a very knowledgeable and pious woman, she undertook the initiative to educate and groom her son to the peak of excellence. He was raised in a cradle of knowledge and piety and he possessed a refined character with an impeccable personality.

He pursued his secular studies at the Islamiyah High School until Matric. In 1917, he enrolled at Meerut University where he

graduated with a Bachelor's degree with distinction.

His elder brother, the erudite scholar, Hazrat Maulana Shah Ahmad Mukhtar Siddiqui (Rahmatullah Alaih) then took him to Bareilly Shareef and handed him over to the great Mujaddid, Ala Hazrat Imam Ahle Sunnat Shah Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Qadri Faazil-e-Bareilwi (Rahmatullah Alaih). Here he was groomed by Ala Hazrat (Rahmatullah Alaih) in many Islamic sciences, including undergoing strenuous spiritual training in Tasawwuf. After he attained spiritual perfection, Ala Hazrat (Rahmatullah Alaih) bestowed on him the Khilafat of the Qadriyyah Barkatiyyah Razawiyyah Silsilah.

He also studied at the Punjab University where he obtained a degree in oriental languages. He was fluent in many languages including Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, German, Japanese, Indonesian and Suhaili.

Since childhood, he had been an influential orator and addressed a huge crowd of Muslims at a Meelad Shareef in Meerut at the tender age of 9 years. This was his first public speech and he spoke on the excellence of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). His speech had the audience spellbound. This was the beginning of the oratory mastery of the *'Roving Ambassador of Islam'*.

Imbibing Islamic as well as western education, he rose to combine the best in ancient and modern disciplines and became a distinguished exponent of the message of orthodox Islam to modern humanity. With these great qualities of head and heart, he travelled continuously for forty years from town to town, country to country and continent to continent, until his efforts of love for the spiritual reform and upliftment of humanity, covered a major part of the world.

Hundreds embraced Islam on his hands and millions belonging to diverse races and nationalities in Asia, Africa, Europe and America received spiritual blessings through his dynamic and refulgent personality. Some of the countries he frequented were the United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, France, China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Burma, Ceylon, Mauritius, Reunion, Madagascar, Portugal, South Africa, Canada, Thailand, Lebanon, East Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Congo, Egypt, Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, South America, Holland, Italy, Belgium, West Indies, Singapore, Suriname, Barbados and Guyana.

In his tours, he met with leaders of every religion and faith, exchanging views not only on religion but also on political and social dimensions. His approach and presentation of Islam won the hearts of many intellectuals and statesmen, who reverted to Islam on his hands. He not only propagated Islam wherever he went, but he also established socio-religious centres that to this day are rendering invaluable services to the masses.

Although he was extremely busy with his international mission of propagation, he still found the time to write numerous books in Urdu and English. He worked with a single-minded devotion for the cause of Islam and humanity.

He was an ardent lover of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and always made Dua to pass away and be buried in the Sacred City of Madinatul Munawwarah. This Dua of his was accepted and on the 22nd of Dhul Hijjah 1373 AH (22nd August 1954), at the age of 63, the noble soul of this great luminary departed in Madinah Shareef. He was buried at the feet of Hazrat Aisha Siddiqah (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anha) in Jannat-ul-Baqi.

THE FORGOTTEN PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

The subject under discussion is 'The Forgotten Path of Knowledge'. We would, therefore, start by defining the word 'Knowledge'. We would define it as a clear perception of truth or a fact. Knowledge is not an end, but a means to an end, and the immediate human end seems to comprise of the acquisition of good and the avoidance of evil.

To know and to understand is a natural yearning in man. With regard to human consciousness and powers of perception, there are two distinct levels. One is that of direct perception¹ or intuition where logical categories play no part. The other is founded on sense perception² and theoretical reason.

Now, with regard to consciousness, recent scientific investigation has led us to the belief that it does not only exist in human beings, but is also to be found in some form among animals, plants, and even among stones. The behaviour of the newly-born fish with regard to swimming and the behaviour of the cub to pounce upon the prey, leads us to belief that they have been gifted by Allah Ta'ala with some form of consciousness. Similarly, the presence of the qualities of attraction and repulsion in certain plants leads us to understand that they too, possess a certain form of consciousness. To call such activity instinctive does not negate the existence of consciousness.

The human consciousness seems to be a richer variety. The human child is without doubt different from the offspring of other forms

¹ Direct perception is the theory that the information required for perception is external to the observer and one can directly perceive an object based on the properties of the object.

² Sense perception is understanding gained through the use of one of the senses such as sight, taste, smell, touch or hearing.

of creation. Its powers of perception and action do not appear to be so well set as those of the other species. But its struggle to harmonise its consciousness and activity with its environment begins soon after its birth. It opens its eyes and tries to see. It moves its hands and tries to grasp. It focuses its attention and wants to hear. In other words, it brings into play its powers of sensation and consciousness. The more these powers develop, the greater becomes its yearning to know things, until the ignorant child of yesterday becomes a great scientist or a great philosopher, speaking about things of the heavens and the earth and passing his judgement upon them.

In connection with this discussion of the different levels of knowledge, I relate here a simple incident. During my travels, I once visited the famous botanical gardens situated in Kandy, in the country of Ceylon. Some of my friends were also there with me along with their children who were of different ages. According to the rules, no one could pluck flowers. But children are not, as a rule, very law-abiding in such matters. Hence, a child who was six or seven years old plucked a rose flower, brought it to his father, and questioned him about it. This fondness for questioning among children is proof of the inherent yearning for knowledge existent in man. The father informed the child that it was a rose. This answer made the child happy. He had received a new piece of information. With pride he showed it to other children, saying, "See, it is a rose." That flower was red in colour.

In the meantime, another child rushed towards a flowerbed and plucked a flower which was similar in form but possessed a yellow colour. He too, brought it to his father and asked him what it was. The father told him that it was a rose.

Now, this other child was a bit older than the first one. He therefore enquired how both flowers could be called by the same name

while their colours are different. The father could not give a satisfactory reply. But the caretaker of the garden, who was an Englishman, explained to the boy that one was the Indian variety, while the other was Australian. All the children seemed to be gratified and happy at this further piece of knowledge and started remarking about the beauty and the smell. Thereafter, one elderly boy asked the caretaker about the use of those flowers. The caretaker was still searching for a reply when a Maulvi Saheb, who had accompanied us, remarked that people prepare rose water and use it in religious assemblies and social functions for the sake of its fragrance. This remark was followed by a statement from a herbal doctor who informed the child that rose leaves were good for removing constipation and strengthening the heart. The caretaker, who had kept quiet all this while, suddenly plucked a fresh flower and informed the children that there were pairs among flowers also, pointing out to the male and the female flower. The children were ultimately thrilled by all this information.

All the informants gave the information according to the extent of their knowledge. Had there been some eminent botanist or chemist amongst them, he would have given still further and higher information about the chemical constituents and properties of the flower. But all those who were there were enjoying the little discussion, and finding them in this enjoyment I asked them, "Did these flowers come into existence by themselves, or did someone else create them?" There were different answers. Amongst the agents held responsible, the following were mentioned: the planter, the sower, the irrigator, and 'mother earth'. But when questioning ultimately exhausted the material causes, they all cried out that Allah Ta'ala created them.

This was a new concept; a concept of reality which is above and beyond the chain of causes, which is the uncaused First Cause. And how did we arrive at it? We arrived by considering the physical

world itself and by plunging into the question of its origin. Our investigation into the physical phenomena ultimately led us to Allah Ta'ala.

At this point I invited the attention of my friends to the fact that if the rose flower was so enchanting, how beautiful and perfect must He be, Who made it and Who brought it into existence?

The little children who were with me did not show much interest in this because of their limited intelligence and undeveloped consciousness. However, the elderly people became thoughtful and appreciated the point.

Now, in this garden which we call the world, is it not a fact that there are persons who, in spite of their powerful intellect and their claims to be expert physicists and metaphysicists, behave no better than the children whom I had referred to just now, contented and happy with the knowledge of a few properties of a few flowers, or, to use the words of a great scientist, "a few pebbles on the shore"?

Today, the teachers of natural science hardly tell their students anything about the Great Architect who made all the things they investigate, and our great colleges and laboratories of science have simply ruled out the very thought of the Supreme Creator. In the discussions of moral philosophy we come across sometimes the idea of God, and certain schools of metaphysics refer to His Existence. But is there any school, any university, any laboratory, which devotes itself to the Really Real, to the discussion of His Attributes and His Being, and to the knowledge of the ways and means of attaining nearness to Him? If such institutions do not exist, (and they do not exist in fact), would it not be true to say that those who claim to possess great intellect are actually behaving like children? They are playing with the toys and running after the shadows, and have abandoned the search for the Great Reality

which should have been their goal of investigation. And not only have they forsaken the road which leads to the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala, they have also forgotten the deeper paths which lead to the true understanding of human personality itself.

Before his death, Aristotle left an advice for posterity and ordered it to be inscribed on the walls of his academy. Other great men, before him and after him, gave the same advice. The advice was:

"O Man know thyself!"

The purpose of the advice was and is that we should try to understand our own selves, should discover and cultivate those powers which have been given to us for penetrating the reality of things, and should ultimately attain the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala.

But how many are there in the world today who pay their attention to this issue? People do go to the houses of worship. But in most cases their approach is formal and ritualistic. Do they achieve the end for which worship has been instituted? Are there any persons who have devoted themselves to these issues?

Dear readers! The importance which a thing enjoys in human life, its knowledge shall also enjoy the same importance, and those who possess that knowledge shall also be graded accordingly.

Similarly, if man is superior to all created things, the importance and status of the knowledge, which relates to him and the possessors of that knowledge, must be assessed accordingly.

There are two aspects of the knowledge about man. One aspect is physical, and refers to his physical constitution, nutrition and the abnormalities, which his physique becomes subjected to sometimes. This last item of investigation gives birth to the science

of medicine. Those who devote themselves to this science are called physicians. There is no doubt that the science of human cure is a noble science and ranks high in importance and those who devote themselves to it also deserve great respect if their motive is that of service and not purely selfish.

But a question arises here, "Is man only an aggregate of bones and flesh?" If it is so, even the dead man possesses flesh and bones. But we call him a dead body, and do not consider him the whole man. Our very first thought about a dead human body makes us feel that there was something essential which is no more there. That something was life. And we are sure that it is not only the flesh and the bones, but life also, which combined together can be properly called man.

Now, what is life? When we speak this word, we are confronted with a number of concepts, and the fact is that we, in spite of all our scientific researches, have so far failed in discovering the reality of life.

The word 'soul' is only a name. What the soul actually is and how it is to be defined, the scientific world has not succeeded so far in telling us.

Our great scientists are silent on this problem. Either they are, so to say, playing with external things and do not pay attention to the basic reality at all, or they pay attention and find themselves incompetent.

Huxley, who enjoys a distinct status in the fields of science and philosophy, admits in clear words, "About the soul we cannot say anything more than that it is the name of a supposed state."

We might now ask, "If we fail in discovering our own reality by

empirical means and if we feel contented with that failure, can we be regarded to have been faithful to the natural yearning for knowledge existing within us? This yearning requires us not to confine our efforts to certain preconceived means but to employ all other means available. For without that basic knowledge, we can neither consider ourselves nor our knowledge as perfect.

If we go further, we come across the next question, which is the question of knowing the great 'source of life' or, in the language of Sir Oliver Lodge, the Unknown. That is the point where the scientists and the philosophers stop, after their strenuous search of casual connection, and at best describe it as the Cause of all the causes or the Primary Intellect.

The fact is that there are numerous universities in the world. They have separate faculties for teaching the various subjects like history, geography, physics, chemistry, mathematics etc. They have separate laboratories for scientific research. But is there any such university or college or school where man could receive proper instruction about the reality of his 'Inner Self', and about the 'Great Reality' which exists in every part of the universe? How can the gates of this knowledge be opened? Where can we find the path of this knowledge?

Allow me to say, and to say with all the force at my command, that there is only one institution where this knowledge can be obtained, namely the Institution of Revealed Religion.

The information which is given to us there is not based on whim and fancy, guess and conjecture, sense perception and logical deduction. No, that path of knowledge is entirely different. It is a path of direct perception. The knowledge emanates from the 'Great Reality' and descends upon the human heart in a special spiritual manner. We have, of course, the right to judge it with our

reason and to see to it that it is not more ideologies or mysteries but something real and true, whenever anyone gives it to us and claims that he has received it directly from God.

However, before accepting it, the readers shall surely like to know the nature of Wahi (Revelation) and Ilhaam (Inspiration). They would like to understand that they are not synonymous with superstition but something tangible and real. They would further like to know the criterion with which to judge the genuineness of certain claims regarding Revelation. Then, they would like to know whether Revelation has reference only to the world of abstract things or whether it can also relate to our practical life and can contribute to our practical well-being. If it is so, it will become necessary to pay attention to it and to take practical steps for the acquisition of that knowledge. The acquisition of that knowledge will further necessitate a complete and comprehensive course of instruction.

So far we have been trying to rediscover the 'Forgotten Path of Knowledge'. Now we shall probe into the nature of Divine Revelation and Spiritual Perception and the ways and means relating to them.

We have been blessed with different sensory organs for the purpose of knowing material things, and every one of these organs has a distinct function. With regard to these organs, the physiologist finds himself confronted with a very vital question, namely, whether they are self-motivated, or they are merely mediums for some faculty which works behind them.

When we consider these sensory organs we find that they have different functions divided among themselves. Every individual organ performs only that function for which it is meant, and this specialisation of function exists in such rigid form that if a certain

sensory organ is compelled to perform some function for which it is not meant, it will not perform it and will furthermore get damaged very soon. Thus, the tongue only tastes and does not see; the eyes only see and do not smell; the ears only hear and do not speak; the hands only grip and cannot perform the function of the feet.

Now, we are confronted with the question, "Do we ever experience any such state in our lives when our consciousness is active and we have perceptions, while our sensory organs of acquiring knowledge are inactive?" I would like to remind you in connection with your state when, after the day's toil, you are resting on your soft bed, your eyes are closed, your hands and feet are enjoying a well-earned rest, your ears are indifferent to the sounds vibrating around them, your muscles are relaxed; in short, your whole physical being is in a state of inactivity. This inactivity increases until you are plunged in deep sleep and become fully dissociated in your consciousness from the physical world.

You are asleep. You are evidently in a state of unconsciousness. But it is a strange type of unconsciousness. Your eyes are closed, but you see. Your ears are inactive but you hear. Your tongue is not moving, but you speak. You walk. You are active. You eat and drink. You have the feelings of happiness and grief, of heat and cold, of sweet and bitter tastes. You are subject to hopes and fears. In short, you have all those experiences which you have in your state of awakesness. And not only do you have those experiences, but you can also remember them just like your experiences in a state of awakesness.

You call this the 'state of dreaming'. But who is the actual subject of this state? Is it we ourselves or someone else? If we ourselves are its subject, does it not clearly show that while we possess the power to perform actions with the help of our sensory organs and

derive experiences from it, we can have similar experiences without employing those organs?

One might say that we started with a talk of reason and consciousness and now we are discussing things which are dreamy. And about the dreams, one might think that all those experiences which we have in our dreams are merely phantoms of thought and nothing more, based on the fact that in our state of awakesness, where thoughts come and wander about our minds and make us happy or grieved, similarly during our sleep, though our sensory organs are inactive, yet our digestive organs and the heart are active, and the imaginative faculty is active too.

We might stay in this thought for a moment. But let us transport our imagination from the physical world to that vast world which is called the 'World of Thought'. In that world we transcend time, and we get this experience of transcending time on a vaster scale during our dreams. How often it happens that we close our eyes at twelve o' clock and in our dream we pass through a vast panorama of events in the background of the past and we experience things in the perspective of the future. Yet when we have finished our journey on the long road of time, open our eyes and cast a glance at the clock on the wall in front of us, we find that we have been asleep for only about ten minutes. What is this mystery? If all this is mere thought, does thought also possess the power whereby we may be able to see the events of the past and the future with full consciousness, while our sensory organs are in a state of suspension of activity?

One might consider it the work of the 'imaginative faculty'. The exactness of this term may not be challenged just now. It may however, be remarked in passing that in the terminology of the experts of metaphysics and psychology, the experience which one has in the state of deep sleep when even the imaginative faulty

becomes virtually suspended, is termed as a flash of spiritual consciousness. That is, the perception which one has in such a state is 'spiritual perception' if it is free from those elements which should be considered as products of imagination. We have not yet arrived at that stage of discussion. Hence we might first consider the notion that the knowledge of oneself can be based only on the knowledge of one's qualities or attributes.

We just realised that in us being there, is a faculty which can help us in traversing certain stages of consciousness and perception without employing the sensory organs. Some people like to call it the imaginative faculty and consider the brain as its seat. But we should try to go further. If we analyse the state of sleep, we will find that sometimes, during this state, we get certain stray and uncoordinated experiences like those we have while day-dreaming. But sometimes our experience is highly integrated and has a meaning. It may be compared to that experience in the state of awakesness when we close our faculties of perception from all sides, concentrate our thought, focus it powerfully on a fixed point, dive deep into the infinite ocean of thought, and find ourselves transported to a world which is very much of a different dimension than this material world in which we live and move.

When the scientist is absorbed in his scientific pursuit and concentrates with full effort on a certain problem, he penetrates into the mysteries and brings back to us valuable gems of knowledge.

The philosopher holds fast to his being the wings of logical thought, closes his mind to all ulterior considerations, soars into the vast expanse of thought and opens before us new and fascinating paths.

This has been mentioned here only to invite attention to the fact

that the preliminary condition of research in the domain of higher realities is complete concentration and undivided interest. It is this, which gives us great discoveries within the domains of science and philosophy. It is this whereby the mesmeriser and the hypnotiser brings about a transformation in the 'thought-world' of his subject. Thus, the suspension of the activity of sensory organs and the complete concentration of mind is the starting point of our activity on the path of knowledge.

We have so far considered the worlds of science and philosophy. Now let us concentrate our attention on that point of thought which refers to the Self-Existing Being. A logician, a philosopher and a scientist can say about Him merely that He is. But in the school of religion we get practical lessons for the purposes of knowing Him. In this regard the first lesson is to divert your attention away from all things and concentrate it on the thought of Allah Ta'ala. This concentration should be such that firstly, your mind should be empty of all other thoughts and secondly all your sensory organs should suspend their activity except in so far as it is in conformity with your mental attitude at the time.

To focus attention on Allah Ta'ala with this complete concentration is known in religious terminology as worship. In this state, the created thing considers himself the slave of the Creator and devotes himself solely to Him, at least during certain special moments.

This is the first exercise of that discipline which forms the basis of cultivation of the spiritual faculty, known among philosophers as intuition.

We have now arrived at a new term, i.e. the 'spiritual faculty' and the readers must naturally be impatient to know its function and the benefits which are to be derived from its cultivation. We will try

to understand it through an illustration:-

What shall we do if we are confronted with the challenge of finding out the taste of an orange and the quality of pleasantness inherent in its taste? Shall we succeed if we employ our hand? No. We shall have to employ our tongue and that too under certain prescribed conditions. The tongue should not be dirty. It should be perfectly clean. It should have no aftertastes of things, whether salty or sweet, that have been eaten before. In short, it should be a neutral recipient of taste. Let us then put the orange into the mouth and allow the juice to be absorbed into the pores of the tongue so completely, that our tongue itself may become, so to say, a piece of orange. Then we shall have a complete realisation of the taste of the orange and its pleasantness.

Similarly, if we wish to know the coolness of ice, the only way open to us is to take a piece of ice in our hand and the correct idea of icy coolness will come to us when the temperature of our hand falls approximately to the temperature of the ice.

Now, I may say without attempting a complete analogy, that if we empty the mind of all ideas and thoughts, concentrate it with singleness of purpose and attention on Allah Ta'ala, have no external form even as a formal focus of attention, keep our minds free of 'minor gods' or associates of God, and cleanse our imaginative faculty (Tasawwur), or in the terminology of the Sufis the spiritual faculty, of all external or internal influences, then the perception of the Divine Attributes will dawn and the veil of ignorance will be removed.

If anyone questions us about the taste of the orange, we may try, but we will not be able to translate the exact taste and its inherent pleasant quality into words. We know it ourselves as a direct experience but words cannot define and express that experience

or the experience of a spiritual reality like the Divine Attributes. We can only have the experience but we cannot describe it truly. As for its genuineness and its beauty, even those who confine their efforts to the very first exercise mentioned before, can have an experience of it which is simply unique.

But remember, the ultimate aim is not only the experience of the taste and its pleasantness. If we eat an orange we will not only add to the experiences of our tongue but we will at the same time provide nourishment to our body, which will ultimately help us in performing many great things. In the same way, though not as a perfect analogy, when we perform the spiritual exercise mentioned above, our spiritual faculty will develop. Just as the development of physical power gives us the strength to overcome weaknesses and attacks of diseases, and enables us to enjoy a more complete physical existence, we will gain in spiritual power by focusing our attention on Allah Ta'ala with single-minded concentration. This increase in spiritual power will lead us towards spiritual perfection which will manifest itself in high and sublime morals and will enable us to fight those diseases which arise in the moral sphere. And the more we advance on that path, the nearer we will be to the concept of the 'Perfect Man'.

This is the 'Forgotten Path of Knowledge'. If we traverse this path, the doors of real knowledge will open before us and we will receive the clear perception of truth. Furthermore, as pointed out at the very outset, knowledge is a means not an end, and the immediate end is the attainment of good and the avoidance of evil.

Islam has defined worship by saying, in the words of the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ

“Undoubtedly prayer safeguards against indecency and evil; and indeed the remembrance of Allah is the greatest.”³

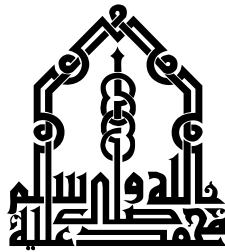
Thus, if the process of focusing attention upon Allah Ta’ala continues and this exercise is performed at certain intervals during the day and the night, even though for short moments, it will produce a two-fold result. On the one hand, we shall have a realisation of our own selves, a clear grasp of the reality of the soul, and a perception of the Attributes of the Supreme Being. On the other hand, our belief in Allah Ta’ala, that He is the Creator of the Universe and that He is Omnipresent⁴ and Omniscient, will be transformed from mere words into a practical and living reality, which will ultimately become a sure means for withholding us from committing cruelties, injustices, indecencies and in fact, all those deeds which take us down to the beastly standards.

Dear Reader! Every teacher of the physical sciences urges his students to perform practical experiments after they have learnt the theory, and it is those experiments in the laboratory which make the knowledge of the student ultimately perfect. Similarly, when we teach metaphysics in the school of religion and give theoretical explanations of such realities as soul or God, we invite humanity to the spiritual laboratory and tell them about the methods of performing practical experiments. Let it be emphasised that just as we can test the correctness of the scientific theory about water by practically preparing water with the help of oxygen and hydrogen, we can similarly test the theory of religion regarding worship and its practical results in reforming our moral life and in illuminating our personality.

³ Holy Qur’an: Surah 29, Verse 45

⁴ The general meaning of ‘Omnipresent’ is to be present everywhere at the same time. However, Allah Ta’ala is not bound by time, which is also a creation of His. Therefore when the word ‘Omnipresent’ is used for Allah Ta’ala it is used in the context of being free from time.

But before experimenting with the exercise to which reference has been made, it is necessary to have the theoretical foundations of our approach corrected because if the foundation is not correct, then the conclusion will also not be correct. Similarly, if a certain formula is imperfect, the result will be nil. Hence, the very first lesson which we receive in the school of genuine religion is directed to the correction of our belief in the Supreme Reality. The success of our pursuit of the religious path of knowledge depends upon the preliminary correct attitude of faith, namely that Allah Ta'ala is One and One Only. That religion alone is true which is based on genuine and authentic revelation from Allah Ta'ala and which teaches side by side with perfect and pure monotheism, that all human beings whether men or women, black or white, wealthy or poor, high-placed or lowly, are equal in their humanity and in their essential relation with Allah Ta'ala.





Raza-e-Khushtar Foundation was founded on the 22nd of November 2007 (11 Dhul Qa'dah 1428) to spread knowledge according to Maslak-e-A'la Hazrat (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) and to dedicate this work to our Beloved Peer-o-Murshid, Qutb-e-Mauritius Hazrat Allamah Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Khushtar Siddiqui Qadri Razvi (Alaihir Rahmah).

Alhamdulillah the work continues to expand, and many lives have been touched in many parts of the world since its inception. The main aim of this foundation is to spread the love of Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as conveyed by the teachings of Maslak-e-A'la Hazrat, and to help the Ummah to become better practicing Muslims, an aspect which is deteriorating with each passing generation.

