

Sufism / Islamic Mysticism

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Sufism / Islamic Mysticism

Mysticism is concerned with the nature of reality, the individual's struggle to attain a clear vision of reality, and the transformation of consciousness that accompanies such vision. I've selected quotations from a number of Islamic works which I feel illustrate these issues. There are two ways of viewings these quotations:

1. Browse quotations drawn from a variety of Islamic sources, all of which deal with the same topic. To do this, follow the links [below](#).
2. Browse quotations dealing with a variety of topics, all of which were drawn from the same source. To pursue this alternative, go to [Islamic mystics, theologians and scriptures](#).

Either way, you'll be seeing the same quotations. It's just a question of whether you want to focus on a specific topic or on a specific mystic.

Islamic quotations organized by topic



- **There's a reality beyond the material world:**
 - [Which is uncreated.](#)
 - [It pervades everything.](#)
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- **You approach that reality by:**
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Islamic mystics, theologians and scriptures

Select the hyperlinked name of a mystic, theologian, or scripture in order to view quotations drawn from that particular source. Citations for that source appear below.

['Abd al-Kader](#), a mystic who lived from 1807 to 1883; the latter portion of his life was spent in Damascus.

'Abd al-Kader. *The Spiritual Writings of 'Abd al-Kader*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995.
ISBN 0791424464

[Burckhardt, Titus](#), a twentieth century scholar dedicated to the study of Sufism and Islam.

Burckhardt, Titus. *Introduction to Sufism*. San Francisco: Thorsons (An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers), 1995.
ISBN 1855384582

[Ibn `Arabi](#), a mystic and prominent theologian who lived from 1165 to 1240 C.E. He was born and raised in Spain, but spent much of his adult life in Damascus.

Corbin, Henry. *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn `Arabi*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969.
ISBN 0691018286

[Ibn `Ata'Allah](#), a 13th century Sufi master.

Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah. *The Key To Salvation: A Sufi Manual of Invocation*. Trans. Mary Ann Koury Danner. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1996.
ISBN 0946621276

[Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#), an eighth century, female mystic.

Rabi'a al-Adawiyya. *Doorkeeper of the heart : versions of Rabia*. Trans. Charles Upton. Putney, Vt.: Threshold Books, 1988
ISBN 0939660245

[Jalaluddin Rumi](#), a prominent, thirteenth-century mystic and poet.

Jalaluddin Rumi. *The Essential Rumi*. Trans. Coleman Barks with John Moyne. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995
ISBN 0062509586

Jalaluddin Rumi. *Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*. Trans. W.M. Thackston, Jr. Putney, Vermont: Threshold Books, 1994
ISBN 0939660342

Jalaluddin Rumi. *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*. Trans. William C. Chittick. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1983
ISBN 0873957245

[Vaughan-Lee, Llewellyn](#), a contemporary anthologist of Sufi works.

Vaughan-Lee, Llewellyn. *Travelling the Path of Love*. Inverness, California: The Golden Sufi Center, 1995

ISBN 096345742X

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Glossary of Muslim Terms

accomplishment of His purpose:

Ibn `Arabi believes that God's purpose is to have knowledge of Himself. He possesses this knowledge by knowing Himself through the medium of His creatures. By the very fact of being one of God's creatures, you help Him to fulfill His purpose.

`alam al-shahadat:

The phenomenal world.

Animal soul:

In Arabo-Persian usage, *nafs* ("soul", "self") is used both for the immortal soul of a human, which survives death, and also for the carnal, or lower, soul.

associator:

Someone who offers his adoration to anything besides the one God. Hence polytheists and idolators are associators. However on a more subtle level, anyone who adores God with an impure love is an associator too. For instance someone who adores God, not for His Self alone, but in expectation of some other reward, is also an associator.

baqa:

persistence (often used in connection with [fana](#) to refer to a sort of re-birth that follows ego death; i.e. to persits or endure following death of the ego).

beings who name them:

The beings who name the [divine Names](#) are the vassals or devotees of those Names. In other words, it is the human being who [epiphanizes](#) a Name in the phenomenal world that has it within his power to name that Name, where the Name can be thought of as his divine alter ego or higher self. According to Ibn `Arabi, some (many?) people reject their Name.

Covenant of Alast:

While human beings were subsisting within God prior to creation, God asked them "Am I not (*alast*) your Lord?" And they all answered "Yea! We testify!". At the Resurrection it will be determined whether each individual remained faithful to his original testimoy. In other words, did his actions reflect his pre-creation acceptance of servanthood and God's Lordship? Or did his actions demonstrate that he lived the life of a **denier**, one who's life was a denial of the Covenant of Alast?

dhikr:

The word refers both to memory and to speech. Its literal interpretation is "mention". According to [Burckhardt](#) (p. 63), "it is by an inner *mention* that a memory is evoked". Hence when the Qur'an is translated into English, passages that refer to "remembering Allah" could just as well be translated as "invoking Allah". The injuctions to "invoke Allah" are seen by Sufi masters as supporting the practice of repeating Allah's names.

Dilaram:

Literally, "that which gives the heart repose"; a common term for the beloved ([Signs of the Unseen](#), footnote 110, p. 66)

divine compassion:

In Ibn 'Arabi's works, the Divine Compassion appeases the anguish of being unknown. See the [Sigh of Compassion](#) for more information.

divine Name:

Each Name can be thought of as a bi-unity: an uncreated Lord and a created vassal or servant. These two roles are forever distinct. The [uncreated Lord](#) may be thought of as the *Angel* or the *eternal hexeity* or the *eternal individuality* of a given individual's being. The created individual or servant is seen as an [epiphanized](#) form of the uncreated Lord. As God is indivisible, all of the divine Names are said to be in sympathetic union with one another, yet each Name embodies a unique attribute of the Godhead. Unlike other divine Names, Al-Lah is the Name which is invested with the sum of all the divine Attributes.

face:

Same as [sirr](#)

fana:

This has a number of different meanings, but within the passages quoted here it most often means "ego death".

God created in the faiths:

The basic premise here is that God reveals himself differently within different religious traditions. Typically an individual will affirm the God who is revealed within his religion, but will reject God as He appears in other religions. According to Ibn `Arabi, this denial of the God found in external religions reflects a less advanced level of spiritual development. Ibn `Arabi maintains that after [fana](#) an individual becomes capable of recognizing God's self-revelation in all religions.

Furthermore the devotee who practices [manajat](#) comes to realize that the God who reveals Himself in response to the devotee's own faith has purposely assumed limits in order to establish a relationship with the devotee as his [personal Lord](#).

hadith:

A saying of the Prophet transmitted outside the Qur'an through a chain of known intermediaries. There are two kinds of *hadith*: **hadith qudsi** (sacred sentence), a direct revelation, in which God speaks in the first person by the mouth of the Prophet, and **hadith nabawi** (prophetic sentence), an indirect revelation in which the Prophet speaks as himself.

([Introduction to Sufism](#), p. 117)

Hallaj:

Hallaj was an Islamic mystic who is well known to this day for his assertion, "I am God." He was condemned to death in 922 A.D. His teachings were considered to be so dangerous that it was against the law to copy or distribute his writings for several hundred years after his death.

Hidden Treasure:

This is an allusion to the [hadith qudsi](#) in which God declares, "I was a Hidden Treasure, so I wanted to be known." The universe performs a service as God's mirror in as much as it allows God to behold His Attributes. Mankind fulfills a special role in this universe in that the self-realized saints reflect God's ability to recognize the Hidden Treasure (i.e. God) within themselves.

himma:

The power of the heart.

hypostasis:

a person; The term appears with more frequency in Christian theological works to refer to the three persons of the Christian [Trinity](#).

Iblis:

The figure of Iblis in Islam is similar to that of Satan in Christianity. Although Iblis was an angelic being, his vision couldn't penetrate the outward form of a thing in order to apprehend its inward meaning. When Adam (the first human) was created, God commanded Iblis and all the other angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. Iblis refused to bow down to this new creation of God. Iblis reasoned to himself that he was superior to Adam since he was made of fire while Adam was only made of clay. In this one act of defiance Iblis introduced the sins of pride, envy, and disobedience into the world. When confronted by God, Iblis refused to take any responsibility for his sins; instead he accused God of leading him astray.

imagination (whether referred to as *active*, or *creative*, or *theophanic*):

This term is used widely by Henry Corbin, the translator of [Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn `Arabi](#). When Corbin uses the word *imagination*, he is not referring to fantasy or make-believe. Instead he is referring to the *organ* which perceives spiritual visions. The object of such vision is regarded as real, yet immaterial.

intellect:

This intellect is seen as the seat for the power of discernment; it gives people the ability to see things as they are, to distinguish such attributes as truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness. However in most humans the intellect is unable to function properly because it is veiled by the ego. The original error in judgment comes from identifying the human spirit with its cloak of water and clay (i.e. the body). Following this mistaken identification, the intellect is unable to penetrate the outward form of those objects within its perceptual field. If it could go beyond forms to inward **meaning**, the intellect would discover God in all things. Or as Rumi puts it, "How many words the world contains! But all have one meaning. When you smash the jugs, the water is one" (p. 8 of [The Sufi Path of Love](#).)

While veiled, the intellect is known as the **partial intellect** and it exists in an adversarial relationship with the ego. As an individual's ego "thins out", the intellect becomes better at fulfilling its purpose. In most people, the ego dominates the intellect. However in those individuals who are making spiritual progress, the intellect begins to dominate the ego. When the veil of the ego is altogether eliminated, the human spirit is altogether sanctified. In Rumi's words:

The partial intellect is a denier of Love, even if it pretends to know the mysteries.
It is clever and knowledgeable, but not naughted -- as long as the angel is not
naughted, it is a demon.
(p. 223 of [The Sufi Path of Love](#))

Ka`aba:

The Ka`aba is a building located within the court of the Great Mosque at Mecca. Muslims all over the world face in the direction of the Ka`aba while praying. Pilgrims at Mecca are supposed to

[circumambulate](#) the Ka`aba. The Ka`aba contains a sacred black stone.

lahut:

Divine.

manajat:

Ibn `Arabi conceives of prayer as being an intimate dialog between an individual and his [personal Lord](#). God's prayer is seen as [existentiating](#) his creatures, whereas the devotee's prayer is seen as existentiating his personal Lord. Ibn `Arabi's method of [prayer](#) is presented in detail elsewhere.

mazhar:

A symbol. A symbol is an apparently finite thing that points toward something that's unbounded and indescribable. The knowledge conveyed by the symbol cannot be apprehended in any other way, nor can the symbol ever be explained once and for all. It's true meaning becomes known via [theophanic vision](#).

musalli:

an orant; one who prays. According to Ibn `Arabi, only the individual who is capable of perceiving the Lord's reponse to his prayer is truly a musalli. If an individual does not apprend the divine response, it's because he isn't really present with his Lord during prayer. See [manajat](#) for more information.

nasut:

human, as opposed to divine.

nostalgia of the divine Names:

"Nostalgia" is perhaps a poor choice of words, as it suggests a longing for things past. What this phrase really means is that the latent potentialities within the divine essence (these potentialities are ususally referred to as the [divine Names](#)) yearn to know themselves, and this knowledge is acquired via their manifestation within the created universe.

personal Lord (*al-Rabb*)

Ibn `Arabi states that Allah cannot be known or experienced directly. However Allah is desirous to be known and experienced by His devotees. So He imposes limits upon Himself in order to reveal His attributes. Each qualified manifestation of God is regarded as one of God's many [divine Names](#). When known by one such Name, God is said to assume the form of a personal Lord for a particular devotee. Through devotion to his personal Lord, the devotee can eventually come to know God through other divine Names as well and thereby gain a fuller understanding of the Godhead; however through it all he still maintains a unique devotional bond to his own Lord. Ibn `Arabi regards Allah as being invested with the sum of His attributes or Names, whereas the personal Lord (*al-Rabb*) manifests a particular attribute.

Pharoah:

Moses was charged with freeing God's people from the dominion of the Egyptian leader, the Pharoah. Meanwhile the Pharoah did everything he could to preserve his dominion over them. According to the Koran, Moses' adversary the Pharoah asserted, "I am your Lord the Most High." (Koran LXXIX 24).

From a metaphorical point of view, *Moses* represents the [intellect](#), the *Pharoah* represents the ego,

and *God's people* represents the spirit residing in each person.

Possessor of the Heart:

Those who are pure in heart achieve God-consciousness; they are truly and actually aware of God at the center of their being (their heart). These sanctified individuals are said to be *Possessors of the Heart*.

(p. 36 of [The Sufi Path of Love](#))

As an individual makes spiritual progress, he experiences alternating waves of expansion and contraction. When an individual experiences expansion, this is a sort of union, and it is not uncommon for an aspirant undergoing this relative union to think that he's reached the end of his journey. This mistaken interpretation of his experience may lead him to conclude that he is a *Possessor of the Heart* when in fact he may still have a long way to go.

secret or sirr:

An individual's center of consciousness; the source of an individual's being. At this mysterious point, the individual comes into contact with that which is Holy.

Sigh of Compassion(*Nafas al-Rahman* or *Nafas Rahmani*):

Before the creation of the universe, the [divine Names](#) yearned to be known. In His compassion and sympathy for these Names, God is said to have [existentiated](#) them with a sigh. In other words, it was this sigh of compassion that caused the Names to be [epiphanized](#) or manifested in the created universe. Furthermore this sigh continues to preserve the universe by recreating it at each moment.

shaikh, or shaykh:

A shaikh is a saintly, self-realized individual who serves as a spiritual guide for others. The shaikh's words provide some guidance, but even more benefit comes from simply associating with an individual who has attained such purity of [intellect](#), for it reflects something of God's perfection. Through proximity to the shaikh, the disciple's own intellect is strengthened and gains the upper hand in its spiritual combat with the ego.

Of course not everyone who claims to be a shaikh really is one, and a great deal of spiritual harm is inflicted on the disciples of so-called shaikhs who actually are ego-maniacs. In order to distinguish the charlatans from the saints, the potential disciple must already have purified his intellect to some extent. If the disciple's ego still dominates his intellect, he will be tend to be drawn to these charlatans, and their influence will help his ego to become even stronger. In contrast an individual who has already acquired some humility and made progress in virtue will be able to recognize the genuine saint.

A female spiritual guide is a *shaikha*.

state or al-hal:

Spiritual realization which is fleeting or temporary. Refers to a glimpse of spiritual truths which are more profound than those that characterize a given individual's normal level of realization.

station or maqam:

Spiritual realization which is permanent. The sufi mystic who attains a particular station is said to be established in the truths revealed by that particular level of realization.

surat al-Haqq:

When a spiritual aspirant is sufficiently spiritually developed, his [personal Lord](#) appears to him by taking on a form that may be material or immaterial.

tajalli

[epiphany](#).

tanazzulat:

An instance of [descent](#) from the the One essence into a manifestation within the sensible world. Ironically this descent both reveals and hides the One essence. By transmuting the *Unlimited* into something limited, It assumes attributes by which It can be known. However since the One essence is unlimited, the very fact that It has assumed limits makes It appear to be other than what It is. This paradox is transcended via [theophanic vision](#).

ta'wil:

A vision of reality in which everything seen takes on symbolic meanings. Same as [theophanic vision](#).

To not sleep:

This has one of two meanings:

1. To keep vigil; to spend the hours of the night in prayer.
2. To have reached such a state of purity that even when the body sleeps, the heart continues to contemplate the Beloved. Such a heart is said to be completely and perpetually awake.

Universal Intellect (*`aql-i kulli*):

The intellect that's entirely pure and free of ego, the "Intellect of the intellect." It can discern the meaning hidden within every form, and thus it sees things as they truly are. Although there is only one Universal Intellect, this intellect reveals itself to the saints in varying degrees, according to their capacity.

zahir:

Exoteric meaning. Manifest, self-evident meaning.

General terms often found in scholarly works on Sufism

circumambulate:

to walk around something in a ritualistic manner.

epiphany:

God revealing Himself in His creation. Describes what happens when spirituality *materializes*. This is often referred to in Sufi literature as *descent*. To say that God *epiphanizes* Himself is the same as saying that He reveals Himself in some aspect of His creation. Compare with [theophanic vision](#).

existential:

1. pertaining to existence

2. based on experience
3. pertaining to existentialism

existential:

to bring into existence.

genus:

1. (LOGIC) a class of objects divided into subordinate species having certain common attributes
2. a class, group, or kind with common attributes

gnosis:

Mystical knowledge

gnostic:

Someone who has mystical knowledge

hermeneutics:

A method of scriptural or symbolic interpretation. See [theophanic imagination](#) for more information.

ipseity:

The quality of God as a wholly independent being who is complete in Himself. The term gives emphasis to the paradox that God, without any need to do so, creates and draws creatures to Him through love and knowledge. (Definition courtesy G. Thursby)

ontological:

relating to the branch of philosophy that deals with *being*

presentiment:

a sense that something is about to occur; a premonition

principal:

A defining or essential feature. What is principal may be hidden to ordinary perception but will be revealed to the mystic. (Definition courtesy G. Thursby)

suzerainty:

Lordliness.

According to Ibn `Arabi, it is the vassal's devotion to his Lord which permits the Lord to display or manifest his attribute of lordliness. For this reason Ibn `Arabi's often states that the vassal holds "the secret of his Lord's suzerainty". However Ibn `Arabi also contends that the vassal's love for his Lord is nothing but an expression of the divine love as it manifests itself through the person of the vassal. So it is often said that there is a "secret to the secret of the Lord's suzerainty."

theophanic vision:

Theophanic vision is mediated by [himma](#), the power of the heart. An individual with theophanic vision doesn't just process sensory data. Instead he sees *through* things, gaining an intimation of what the thing symbolizes on a spiritual level. It's as if the each object of theophanic vision were a window into paradise. Viewed in this way, material things are *spiritualized*. This is often referred to in Sufi literature as *ascent* or *return*. Compare with [epiphany](#) and [theophany](#)

theophany:

A manifestation of some aspect of God in the material realm as mystically experienced by an individual.

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'Abd al-Kader Quoted by topic:

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About 'Abd al-Kader

'Abd al-Kader lived from 1807 to 1883. He served as a soldier from 1832 until 1847, when he was imprisoned by the French. In 1853 he was freed by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1856 he took up permanent residence in Damascus. During the Druze's revolt in the 1860's, al-Kader offered the endangered Christians in his community his personal protection. He was deeply respected by the Muslim community for his devotion and spiritual insight. He had many, many visions which revealed the esoteric meanings of different passages of the Qur'an. He shared the insights he gained from these visions with a number of men in his community.

The quotations appearing at this web site were taken from the Kitab al-Mawaqif, a compilation of his many spiritual insights.

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About Titus Burckhardt

Titus Burckhardt is a twentieth century scholar who has dedicated himself to the study of Islam and Sufism. In the work cited here, *Introduction to Sufism*, Burckhardt introduces basic principles, doctrinal foundations, and concepts pertaining to spiritual realization within the Sufi tradition. He also compares and contrasts a number of Sufi concepts with analogous concepts found in the Hindu and Christian mystical traditions.

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**Abu Bakr
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About Ibn `Arabi

Ibn `Arabi was born in southeastern Spain in 1165 C.E. In addition to being a mystic, he was also a theologian. Around age 30 he began a life of wandering, slowly making his way toward the East. He lived at a time when Sufism was at loggerheads with the legalitarian Islam embodied by the doctors of the Law, known as the *fuqaha'*. According to Henry Corbin in *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn `Arabi*:

...{*Ibn `Arabi*} made no secret of his disgust at their stupidity, ignorance, and depravity, and such an attitude was not calculated to win their favor. The tension rose, giving rise to denunciations and arrests; our *shaikh* was in mortal peril. At this critical moment the irreducible antagonism between the spiritual Islam of Sufism and legalitarian Islam became patent. Saved by the intervention of a friendly shaikh, Ibn `Arabi had but one concern, to flee far from Cairo and its hateful, bigoted canonists. Where was he to seek refuge? He returned to Meca (1207).

Ibn `Arabi had enemies amongst the *fuqaha'* all this life, but he also had many important and influential supporters. He died peacefully in Damascus in 1240 surrounded by his family, friends, and his Sufi disciples.

Terminology

Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn `Arabi is a fascinating, yet difficult book to read. It's a very scholarly work and makes considerable use of theological terminology as well as words and phrases drawn from Latin, Greek, and Arabic. In selecting quotations, I've tried to avoid difficult terminology as much as possible. Nonetheless I've been compelled to make numerous additions to the [Glossary of Muslim Terms](#) in order to clarify the quotations taken from this book. I strongly encourage the reader to click on the links appearing within these quotations to access the relevant definitions. Even some words that would appear to be fairly ordinary, such as [creative imagination](#), don't mean what you think they mean.

Central Themes of Ibn `Arabi's Theology

- God in His Divine Essence is unknowable, yet He is free to impose limits on Himself.
- When self-limited, God reveals some subset of His attributes whereby he becomes knowable.

- God in any one of His numerous self-limited forms is what we humans come to know as our personal Lord, and it is with this personal Lord that we establish a relationship based on mutual love.
- Not only do different religions devote themselves to different self-limited forms of God, but each individual also comes to know God in a unique and personal way.
- This personal relationship with God is established through [manajat](#), which is a private, intimate dialogue conducted between an individual and his Lord.

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**Ahmad Ibn
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About

Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah

Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah was a 13th century Sufi Master. In the book cited here, *The Key To Salvation: A Sufi Manual of Invocation*, Ibn `Ata'Allah discusses the Sufi practice of [dhikr](#) at length. The book's Arabic title is *Miftah al-Falah wa Misbah al-Arwah*, which means *The Key to Salvation & the Lamp of Souls*.

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[Select a new mystic](#)**Rabi'a al-Adawiyya**

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About

Rabi'a al-Adawiyya

Rabi'a al-Adawiyya is an Islamic saint. She is believed to have lived from 717 to 801 AD in what is now Iraq. While a poor orphan she was captured by a slave trader who proceeded to sell her into slavery. As a slave she was kept busy with her household duties until night, but once night time released her from her chores she devoted herself to prayer, going without sleep to do so. One night her master caught sight of her absorbed in prayer; he was astonished to see a light miraculously appear over her head which illuminated the entire house. Terrified he went back to his room, where he sat in wonder till daybreak. At dawn he approached Rabi'a, told her what he had seen, and gave her her freedom. Once free she moved to the desert where she devoted herself to prayer. As her holiness became more widely known, numerous individuals beat a path to her door seeking her spiritual direction.

Once she became renowned, she received numerous offers of marriage. In reply to the marriage proposal of the Amir of Basra, she said:

I'm not interested, really, in "possessing all you own,"
Nor in "making you my slave,"
Nor in having my attention distracted from
God even for a split second.

Islam has embraced Rabi'a even though it typically frowns upon unmarried life and withdrawal from society as a path to God.

With respect to his book, *Doorkeeper of the Heart: Versions of Rabi'a*, Charles Upton says:

... the poems and fables in this book are based on sayings attributed to Rabi'a, or stories about her, which have passed through a long line of Sufi historians, commentators, and translators for almost thirteen hundred years, during which time anything that was not already a poem has gotten so close to poetry, through the refinement of re-telling, that I was inspired to take the final step.

In producing these versions of Rabi'a, I have in most cases been faithful to the literal meaning of my English sources. When I departed from the literal, I did so in four ways: by extending a statement into a metaphor; by adding (in a few cases) a new image or statement to bridge a weak place in the original; by radically compressing a loose prose paragraph into verse; and (in a very few cases) by following a spark struck off the flint of the original, when I thought I saw beneath the skin of the text, and wrote what I saw.

(p. 18)

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Jalaluddin Rumi

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About Jalaluddin Rumi

Jalaluddin Rumi lived in Konya, Turkey from 1207 to 1273 CE. Rumi served his community as a religious scholar until a wandering dervish named Shams al-Din of Tabriz came into town. Shams put a theological question to Rumi that caused Rumi to faint dead away. When Rumi regained consciousness, his spiritual life had been transformed. For a year or two, Shams and Rumi were constant companions. Within three years of their meeting, Shams disappears. It has been rumored that some of Rumi's students may have arranged to have Shams killed because Rumi was neglecting them, but nothing is known for certain. Around this time Rumi leaves off preaching to the general public and devotes the remaining twenty-six years of his life to training his Sufi initiates and writing divinely inspired poetry.

In the passage below, Rumi speaks of his transformation:

Passion for that Beloved took me away from erudition and reciting the Koran until I became as insane and obsessed as I am.

I had followed the way of the prayer carpet and the mosque with all sincerity and effort. I wore the marks of asceticism to increase my good works.

Love came into the mosque and said, "Oh great teacher! Rend the shackles of existence! Why are you tied to prayer carpets? Let not your heart tremble before the blows of My sword! Do you want to travel from knowledge to vision? Then lay down your head!

If you are a profligate and a scoundrel, do justice to troublemaking! If you are beautiful and fair, why do you remain behind the veil?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 3)

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About

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee

In *Travelling the Path of Love*, this contemporary author has collected numerous quotations from Sufi masters.

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Uncreated

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi in his Epistle on Unity, the Risalat al Ahadiyah:

... None grasps Him save He Himself. None knows Him but He Himself... He knows Himself by Himself... Other-than-He cannot grasp Him. His impenetrable veil is His own Oneness. Other-than-He does not cloak Him. His veil is His very existence. He is veiled by His Oneness in a manner that cannot be explained. Other-than-He does not see Him; whether prophet, envoy, or perfected saint or angel near unto Him. His prophet is He Himself. His envoy is He. His message is He. His word is He. He has sent word of His [ipseity](#) by Himself, from Himself to Himself, without intermediary or causality other than Himself...Other-than-He has no existence and so cannot bring itself to naught...

(pp. 28-29)

(*Paraphrased*: According to the fundamental formula of Islam, the 'testimony' known in Arabic as the *shahadah*:)

There is no divinity if it be not The Divinity

(*la ilaha ill-Allah*)

which, so to say, 'defines' the Divine Unity. This formula should be translated as here indicated and not, as usually the case, 'there is no god but Allah', for it is proper to retain in it the appearance of ... paradox.

Its first part, 'the negation'..., denies in a general manner the same idea of divinity which the second part, the 'affirmation'... affirms by isolation; in other words the formula as a whole postulates an idea -- that of divinity -- which at the same time it denies as a [genus](#). This is the exact opposite of a 'definition', for to define something means first to determine its 'specific difference' and then to bring it to the 'nearest genus,' i.e. to general concepts. Now as the *shahadah* indicates, Divinity is 'defined' precisely by the fact that Its reality eludes every category...

According to this 'testimony'; God is distinct from all things and nothing can be compared to Him... Now perfect incomparability requires that nothing can be set face to face with the incomparable and have any relationship whatever with it; this amounts to saying that nothing exists in face of the Divine Reality so that, in It, all things are annihilated. 'God was and nothing with Him and He is now such as He was' ([hadith qudsi](#)).

Thus extreme 'remoteness' must imply its opposite. Since nothing can be opposed to God -- for it would then be another 'divinity' -- every reality can only be a reflection of the Divine Reality. Moreover, every positive meaning one might give to the expression *ilah* (divinity) will be transposed *in divinis*: 'there is no reality if it be not The Reality', 'there is no force if it be not The Force', 'there is no truth if it is not The Truth.' We must not seek to conceive of God by bringing Him down to the level of things; on the contrary, things are reabsorbed into God so soon as one recognizes the essential qualities of which they are constituted.

(pp. 53-54)

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(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

... in Ibn `Arabi's own terminology Al-Lah is the Name which designates the divine Essence qualified and invested with the sum of His attributes, whereas *al-Rabb*, the Lord, is the personified and particularized Divine in *one* of its attributes (hence the [divine Names](#) designated as so many "lords", *arbab*).
(p. 122)

... Ibn `Arabi distinguishes between *Allah* as God in general and *Rabb* as the particular Lord, personalized in an individualized and undivided relation with his vassal of love. This individualized relationship on both sides is the foundation of the mystic and chivalric ethic of the *fedel d'amore* in the service of the personal Lord whose divinity depends on the adoration of his faithful vassal... *{It is the passion that the fedele d'amore feels for his Lord which reveals the Lord to Himself.}* And this always individually, in an "alone to alone," which is something very different from universal logic or from a collective participation, because only the knowledge which the *fedele* has of his Lord is the knowledge which this personal Lord has of him.
(p. 94)

All *{the [divine Names](#)}* refer to one and the same Named One. But each one of them refers to an essential determination, different from all the rest; it is by this individualization that each Name refers to the God who reveals himself *to* and *by* the [theophanic imagination](#).
(p. 192)

... the Divine Being is not fragmented, but wholly present in *each* instance, individualized in *each* theophany of His Names, and it is invested in *each* instance with one of these Names that He appears as Lord.
(p. 121)

Paraphrased: The devotee who is faithful to the divine Name that is His Lord recognizes his Beloved in every Beloved and in every divine Name the totality of Names, because among the divine Names there is a sympathetic union.
(p. 134)

The Names... have existed from all eternity: these Names are designated as "[Lords](#)" (*Arbab*), who often have all the appearance of [hypostases](#) though they cannot strictly be defined as such. We know them only by our knowledge of ourselves (that is the basic maxim). God describes Himself to us through ourselves. Which means that the divine Names are essentially relative to the [beings who name them](#), since these beings discover and experience them in their own mode of being... Thus the divine Names have meaning and full reality only *through* and *for* beings... in which they are manifested. Likewise from all eternity, these forms, substrate of the divine Names, have existed in the divine Essence (*A `yan thabita*). And it is these latent individualities who from all eternity have aspired to concrete being *in actu*. Their aspiration is itself nothing other than the [nostalgia](#) of the divine Names yearning to be revealed. And this nostalgia of the divine Names is nothing other than the sadness of the unrevealed God, the anguish He experiences in His unknownness and occultation.

(pp. 114-115)

The "[God created in the faith](#)" manifests Himself no longer in order to impose Himself on the faithful, but in order to express His limits, for these limits are the condition which makes possible *one* among the many divine [epiphanies](#). The gnostic does not receive a ready-made Image of his Lord, but understands Him in the light of the Image which in the course of his [manajat](#), his intimate dialogue, appears in the mirror of his heart as subtle organ.

(p. 270)

The image of the God whom the faithful *creates* is the Image of the God whom his own being reveals... Thus it is *psychologically* true to say that "the God created in the faiths" is the symbol of the Self. The God to whom we pray can be only the God who reveals Himself to us, by us, and for us, but it is praying to Him that we cause the "God created in the faiths" to be himself enveloped in the [Divine Compassion](#), that is, existentially, manifested by it. The theophanies of the "Gods" manifested to the heart or to the faiths are all theophanies of the real One God (*Haqq Haqiqi*). When we are the [musalli](#), this must be borne in mind; he who knows this is the gnostic who has untied the knot of closed, limited dogmas, because for him they have become theophanic symbols.

(pp. 266-267)

Questioner:

How do you know God?

Abu Asa'id al-Kharraz:

By the fact that He is the *coincidentia oppositorum*.

Corbin's commentary:

... the entire universe of worlds is at once He and not-He (*huwa la huwa*). The God manifested in forms is at once Himself and other than Himself, for since He is manifested, He is the limited which has no limit, the visible which cannot be seen. This manifestation is neither perceptible nor verifiable by the sensory faculties; discursive reason rejects it. It is perceptible only by the [Active Imagination](#) (*Hadrat al-Khayal*...) at times when it dominates man's sense perceptions, in dreams or better still in the waking state (in the state characteristic of the gnostic when he departs from the consciousness of sensuous things). In short, a mystic perception (*dhawq*) is required. To perceive all *forms* as epiphanic forms (*mazahir*), that is, to perceive through the figures which they manifest and which are the [eternal hexeities](#), that they are other than the Creator and nevertheless that they are He, is precisely to effect the encounter, the coincidence, between God's [descent](#) toward the creature and the creature's [ascent](#) toward the Creator. The "place" of this encounter is not outside the Creator-Creature totality, but is the area within it which corresponds specifically to the Active Imagination, in the manner of a bridge joining the two banks of a river. The crossing itself is essentially a [hermeneutics](#) of symbols ..., a method of understanding which transmutes sensory data and rational concepts into symbols (*mazahir*) by making them effect this crossing.

(pp. 188-189)

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Uncreated

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Your Saying "*God is Most Great*" does not mean that He is greater than something else, since there is nothing else alongside of Him, so that it could be said that He is greater than it... Rather, the meaning of *Allahu Akbar* is that He is much too great to be perceived by the senses or for the depths of His Majesty to be reached by reason and logic, and indeed, that He is much too great to be known by an other-than-Him for truly, no one knows God but God.

(p. 119)

... the gnosis of God is intermediate between immoderation, which is ascribing human characteristics to God, and negligence, which is denying any attributes to God... The Truth lies in the balance between the two extremes.

(p. 162)

He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward and He is the Knower of all things.

(p. 182)

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Uncreated

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

My Joy
My Hunger
My Hunger
My Shelter
My Friend
My Food for the Journey
My Journey's End
You are my breath,
My hope,
My companion,
My craving,
My abundant wealth.
(p. 47)

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Uncreated

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

God created suffering and heartache so that joyful-heartedness might appear through its opposite. Hence hidden things become manifest through opposites. But since God has no opposite, He remains hidden... God's light has no opposite within existence, that through its opposite it might be made manifest.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 49)

That Oneness is on the other side of descriptions and states. Nothing but duality enters speech's playing field.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 275)

Thy Attributes cannot be understood by the vulgar without analogy, yet analogy increases the mistaken idea of Thy similarity with the creatures.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 277)

The beauty of the Unseen Form is beyond description -- borrow a thousand illuminated eyes, borrow!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 263)

Love makes forms in separation. But at the time of meeting, the Formless shows His head and says, "I am the root of the root of sobriety and intoxication; the beauty you see in forms is My reflection. Now I have removed the veils, I have displayed Beauty without intermediary. Since you have become so interwoven with My reflection, you have found the strength to view the Essence alone."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 266)

We and our existences are nonexistences. Thou art Absolute Existence showing Thyself as perishable things.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 24)

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Uncreated

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

The absolutely Non-Manifested cannot be designated by any expression which could limit It, Separate It, or include It. In spite of this, every allusion alludes only to Him, every designation designates Him, and He is at the same time the Non-Manifested and the Manifested.

(*Mawqif* 132, p. 87)

Allah is in Himself the non-being and the being, the inexistent and the existent. He is at the same time that which we designate by *absolute non-being* and by *absolute being*; or by *relative non-being* and *relative being*... All these designation come back to God alone, for there is nothing which we can perceive, know, write or say which is not Him.

(*Mawqif* 287, p. 85)

Paraphrased: Allah is neither this nor that.

(*Mawqif* 30, p. 78)

Know however that God, in order to manifest Himself by His essence to His essence, has no need of creatures since, with relation to Essence, he is absolutely independent with respect to worlds and even with respect to His own names... On the other hand, when He manifests Himself with His names and His attributes -- which implies the manifestation of the effects -- He needs (*huwa muftaqir*) the creatures...

This relation is ... necessary in order that the divine Names, which are only distinguished by their effects, can be distinguished from one another. At the same time, the divine Names, by the one of their "faces" which is turned toward the Essence, are themselves totally autonomous with respect to worlds. In this respect, they are nothing other than the Essence itself and that is why each of them can be qualified and designated by all of the other Names in the same way as the Essence.

(*Mawqif* 103, pp. 114-115)

Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz said:

I have never known Allah -- May He be exalted! -- except through the coincidence in Him of the opposites. "He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden." (Koran 57:3)

(*Mawqif* 193, p. 111)

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Pervading

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Ibn 'Ata'illah al-Iskandari, in his Hikam:

Behold what shows to thee His Omnipotence, (may he be exalted):

It is that He hides Himself from thee by what has no existence apart from Him.

(p. 58)

...The world is essentially the manifestation of God to Himself. Thus it is expressed in the sacred saying ([hadith qudsi](#)) which brings back the idea of creation to the idea of Knowledge: *'I was a hidden treasure; I wished to be known (or to know) and I created the world.'* In the same sense Sufis compare the Universe to a combination of mirrors in which the Infinite Essence contemplates Itself in a multiplicity of forms, or which reflect in differing degrees the irradiation (*at-tajalli*) of the One Being.
(pp. 59-60)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi, in his Fusus al-Hikam in the Chapter on Jacob:

In truth all possibilities are [principially](#) reducible to non-existence (*'udum*) and there is no Being (or, Existence) other than the being of God, may He be exalted, (revealing Himself) in the "forms" ... which result from possibilities as they are in themselves...

(pp. 60-61)

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Pervading

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

... the "[Sigh of Compassion](#)" flows through the things of the world like the waters of a river and is unceasingly renewed.

(p. 201)

His creation springs, not from nothingness, from something other than Himself, from a not-Him, but from His fundamental being, from the potencies and virtualities latent in His own unrevealed being.

(p. 185)

Everything we call other than God, everything we call the universe, is related to the Divine Being as the shadow to the person. The world is God's shadow...

The shadow is at once God and something other than God. Everything we perceive is the Divine Being in the [eternal hexeities](#) of the possibles.

(p. 191)

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Pervading

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

... persist in that invocation until the unity of the world is subsumed for you in a single sphere, so that with the eye of your heart you will see naught in the two worlds save the One.

(p. 100)

... in everything there is a sign that points to the Oneness of Him.

(p. 142)

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Pervading

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

There's a strange frenzy in my head, of birds flying, each particle circulating on its own. Is the one I love *everywhere*?

(The Essential Rumi, p. 4)

Lo, I am with you always means when you look for God, God is in the look of your eyes, in the thought of looking, nearer to you than your self, or things that have happened to you. There's no need to go outside. Be melting snow. Wash yourself of yourself.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 13)

What do we mean by saying that God is not in heaven? We do not mean that He is not in heaven, but that heaven cannot encompass Him. He encompasses heaven. He has an ineffable connection with heaven just as He has an ineffable connection with you. Everything is in His omnipotent hands; everything is a manifestation of Him and subject to His control. So, He is not *outside* the heavens and the universe but is not totally *inside* them either, that is, they do not encompass Him but He encompasses them totally.

Someone asked where God was before the earth, skies, and Divine Throne existed. We said that the question was invalid from the outset because God is by definition that which has no place.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 221)

All creatures, day and night, make manifestation of God. Some of them know what they are doing and are aware of their manifesting, while others are unaware. However it may be, God's manifestation is confirmed.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 184)

Moses said, "O Lord, are you close enough for me to whisper in your ear or so distant that I should shout?" And God said, "I am behind you, before you, at your right and your left. O Moses, I am sitting next to my servant whenever he remembers me, and I am with him when he calls me."

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, Footnote 209, p. 193)

All pictured forms are reflections in the water of the stream; when you rub your eyes, indeed, all are He.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 43)

The unique God has manifested His sign in the six directions to those with illuminated eyes. Whatever animal or plant they behold, they contemplate the gardens of divine Beauty. That is why He said to them, *Wheresoever you turn, there is His Face* (Koran 2:115).

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 306)

All of these are symbols -- I mean that the other world keeps coming into this world. Like cream hidden in the soul of milk, No-place keeps coming into place. Like intellect concealed in blood and skin, the Traceless keeps entering into traces. And from beyond the intellect, beautiful Love comes dragging its skirts, a cup of wine in its hand. And from beyond Love, that indescribable One who can only be called *That* keeps coming.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 197)

The earth has the external shape of dust, but inside are the luminous Attributes of God. It's outward has fallen into war with its inward; its inward is like a pearl and its outward a stone. Its outward says, "I am this and no more." Its inward says, "Look well, before and behind!" Its outward denies, saying, "The inward is nothing." The inward says, "We will show you. Wait!"

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 21)

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Pervading

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Qur'an:

Wheresoever you turn, there is the face of Allah.
(*p. 170*)

Rumi:

I am nearer to you than yourself to yourself.
(*p. 128*)

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Pervading

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

And He is with you wherever you are ... (Koran 57:4)

Commentary: ... The companionship expressed by "with" is that of the Being and the non-being, for there is no Being other than Allah...

If Allah -- May He be exalted! -- was not, by His very Essence, which is the Being of all that is, "with" the creatures, we could not attribute being to any of these creatures and they could not be perceived either by the senses, by the imagination, or by the intellect. It is their '*being with*' which assures to creatures a relation with Being. Better yet, it is their being itself. This '*being with*' embraces all things, whether they are sublime or lowly, great or small. It is through it that they subsist. He is the pure Being by which '*that which is*' is. The '*being with*' of Allah consists therefore in the fact that He is with us through His essence; that is, through that which we call the divine Self (*huwiyya*), universally present ...

Indications of this divine '*being with*' are contained in the following verses:

- And He is witness of all things (Koran 34:47)
- And Allah, behind them, encompasses them (Koran 85:20)
- Wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah (Koran 2:116)

(*Mawquif* 132, pp. 86-89)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

...In spiritual practices there are always elements which ... offer no foothold for theoretical intelligence ... One can even notice a certain inversion of relationship, for it is those supports which are the least discursive and the most 'obscure' from the point of view of reasoning which, generally speaking, are the vehicles for the most powerful influences of grace.

He who seeks to approach that Reality must overcome not only ignorance and lack of awareness but also the grip which purely theoretical learning and other 'unreal' things of the same kind exert on him.
(p. 86)

Meditation is a 'wise ignorance', whereas (logical, methodical reasoning) which arises from mental individualism is an 'ignorant learnedness.'
(pp. 106-107)

The supreme and incomparable Unity is without 'aspects': it cannot be known at the same time as the world; that is, it is the object only of Divine, immediate and undifferentiated Knowledge.
(p. 55)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi from the chapter on Seth:

It is clearly beyond the faculties of the creature as such ... to know with Divine Knowledge which embraces the archetypes (*al-a'yan ath-thabitah*) in their unmanifest state, these archetypes being only pure relationships (within) the Essence and without form...
(p. 111)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

{The [personal Lord](#)} speaks only in symbols; his eloquence is all in enigmas. And at a mysterious sign of recognition the visionary is overwhelmed by such a power of love that he loses consciousness. When he comes to himself, his Companion reveals to him: "I am knowledge, I am he who knows and I am what is known."

(p. 279)

{There is a Sufi saying,} "He who knows himself knows his Lord." This Lord of his own to whom the *{spiritual aspirant}* attains by self-knowledge..., this Lord ... is obviously not the Godhead in His essence, still less in His quintessence, but the God manifested in the *{aspirant's}* "soul" (or self), since each concrete being has his origin in the particular [divine Name](#) which leaves its trace in him and is his particular Lord. It is this origin and this Lord which he attains and knows through self-knowledge -- or which through ignorance or lack of self-knowledge he fails to attain.

(p. 160)

Averroes (an integrist Aristotelian master):

What manner of solution have you found through divine illumination and inspiration? Is it identical with that which we obtain from speculative reflection?

Ibn `Arabi (a young man about 20 years old):

Yes and no. Between the yes and the no, spirits take their flight from their matter, and heads are separated from their bodies.

Averroes (in a private interview with Ibn `Arabi's father):

Glory be to God who has let me live at a time distinguished by one of the masters of this experience *{i.e. Ibn `Arabi}*, one of those who open the locks of His gates. Glory be to God who has accorded me the personal favor of seeing one of them with my own eyes.

(p. 42)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Imam al-Ghazali:

God is much too great for the senses to reach Him or for reason and logic to plumb the depths of His Majesty. Indeed, He is much too great for anyone but Himself to plumb the depths of His Majesty or for anyone but Himself to know Him. Verily, no one knows God but God. The highest degree of gnosis that His servants can attain is the realization that true gnostic knowledge of Him is impossible for them. Furthermore, no one can know that in its totality except a Prophet of a righteous saint (*siddiq*). As for the Prophet, he has clearly expressed this by saying, "I cannot enumerate the ways of praising Thee; Thou art as Thou has praised Thyself." As for the righteous saint, he says, "The incapacity to attain realization is a realization."
(p. 113)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Rabi'ā al-Adawiyya)

The one who explains, lies.

How can you describe the true form of Something

In whose presence you are blotted out?

And in whose being you still exist?

(p. 36)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Theologians mumble, rumble-dumple, necessity and free will,
while lover and beloved pull themselves into each other.
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 180)

His mental questionings form the barrier. His physical eyesight bandages his knowing.
Self-consciousness plugs his ears.
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 256)

That intellectual warp and woof keeps you wrapped in blindness.
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 66)

The external forms of all created people and things are like goblets, while such things as knowledge, art, and learning are decoration on the goblet. Don't you see that when the goblet is shattered none of these "decorations" remain? The important thing therefore is the wine, which takes its shape from the goblet. Whoever sees and drinks the wine knows that *good works are permanent* [Koran 18:46]
(*Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p. 75)

Someone was saying: "I have studied so many branches of knowledge and mastered so many concepts; yet I still do not know which concept in man will abide forever. I have not discovered it yet."

If it could be known by means of words, there would be no need for the annihilation of individual existence or for so much suffering. You must strive to rid yourself of your own individuation before you can know that thing which will remain.
(*Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p. 203)

The great scholars of the age split hairs in all the sciences. They have gained total knowledge and complete mastery of things that have nothing to do with them. But that which is important and closer to him than anything else, namely his own self, this your great scholar does not know.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 148)

"I know everything permitted and not permitted by the Divine Law." How is it you do not know if you yourself are permitted... You know the value of every merchandise, but you do not know your own value -- that is stupidity... The spirit of all the sciences is only this: to know who you will be on the Day of Resurrection.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 128)

Since cleverness is your pride and fills you with wind, become a simpleton so that your heart may remain healthy. Not a simpleton warped by buffoonery, but one distraught and bewildered in God.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 224)

Intellect is good and desirable to the extent it brings you to the King's door. Once you have reached His door, then divorce the intellect! From this time on, the intellect will be to your loss and a brigand. When

you reach Him, entrust yourself to Him! You have no business with the how and the wherefore. Know that the intellect's cleverness all belongs to the vestibule. Even if it possesses the knowledge of Plato, it is still outside of the palace.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 222)

No creature is without connection to Him, but that connection is ineffable... For within the spirit is no separation or joining, but thought cannot conceive of other than these two... How should the intellect find its way to that connection? For it is in bondage to separation and joining.

Hence Muhammad counseled us, "Do not investigate God's Essence!" That which can be conceived concerning His Essence -- that in reality is not with a view toward His Essence.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 44)

You seek knowledge from books. What a shame! ...

You are an ocean of knowledge hidden in a dew drop...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 64)

I have lived on the lip of insanity, wanting to know reasons, knocking on a door. It opens. I've been knocking from the inside!

(The Essential Rumi, p. 281)

Mysteries are not to be solved.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 107)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Abu Bakr:

Praise to God who hath given His creatures no way of attaining to knowledge of Him except through their inability to know Him.

(p. 167)

Anonymous:

The heart alone knows what the substance of love is, the eye of reason has no power to behold it.

(p. 143)

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Beyond human knowledge and understanding

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

When the sight will be dazed, when the moon will be eclipsed, when the sun and moon will be in conjunction, on that day man will say: "Where to flee?" But there is no refuge. (Koran 75:7-11)

Commentary: "When the sight will be dazed"; when it will be stunned and perplexed. This relates to the moment when the [theophanies](#) begin, for the being has no previous knowledge of what he is now contemplating, no familiarity with what he is seeing.

The "moon" symbolizes the servant in his contingency, and the "eclipse" his disappearance: that is to say, the evidence that his being is borrowed and does not belong to him himself for he "is" only in a metaphorical way...

The sun symbolizes the Lord -- may He be exalted! -- just as the moon symbolizes the servant. Their "conjunction" symbolizes the degree of the "union of the union" (*jam' al-jam'*), which is the ultimate degree, the greatest deliverance and the supreme felicity; and consists in seeing at the same time the creation subsisting by God, and God manifesting Himself by His creation...

The [gnostic](#) then asks "Where to flee?" because of the violence of the perplexity provoked in him by the multiplicity of the theophanies: their diversity, their fleeting character, the rapidity with which they disappear, the abundance of the divine descents (*tanazzulat*) which stun the intellect and plunge it in stupor...

"But there is no refuge" -- there is no shelter, no way out. The gnostic who would leave this [state](#) to find repose is warned that the repose and the [Gnosis](#) are only found precisely where he is. The perplexity increases as the divine descents increase, but it is these divine descents which are the source of spiritual knowledge. This is why the foremost of the gnostics, our Prophet -- on Him be Grace and Peace! -- said "Oh Allah, augment my perplexity with regard to Thee!"
(*Mawqif* 320, pp. 53-55)

The search has no end: the knowledge of God has no end. He can not be known. He can only be known by that which proceeds from Him, as effects of His names, not His [ipseity](#). This is why the following order was given even to the Prophet, although he possessed the knowledge of the First and the Last: "Say, 'Lord, increase me in knowledge!'" (Koran 20:114). And he does not stop saying this, in every state, every station, every degree; in this world, in the intermediate world and in the beyond.
(*Mawqif* 359, p. 134)

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Distinguishing ego from true self

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

The Spirit (*ar-Ruh*) and the soul (*an-nafs*) engage in battle for the possession of their common son, the heart (*al-qalb*). By *ar-Ruh* is here to be understood the intellectual principle which transcends the individual nature and by *an-nafs* the psyche, the centrifugal tendencies of which determine the diffuse and inconstant domain of 'I'.

(p. 26)

Paraphrased: The saying, the 'Sufi is not created', can be understood to mean that the being who is thus reintegrated into the Divine Reality recognizes himself in it '*such as he was*' from all eternity according to his '[principial](#)' possibility, immutable in its state of non-manifestation' - to quote **Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi**.

(p. 26)

'Abd ar-Razzaq al-Qashani from his commentary on The Wisdom of the Prophets:

In so far as man is a possibility of manifestation, but does not see Him Who manifests him, he is pure absence ('*udum*'); but on the other hand in so far as he receives his being from the perpetual irradiation (*Tajalli*) of the Essence, he *is*...

(p. 67)

Paraphrased:... The identity of the 'I' is merely a recollection of the 'Self' (*al-huwiyyali*), the possibility of the being which subsists eternally in the Infinite Essence. That which 'lights up' and knows the transitory nature of material phenomenon and connects them with their archetype is clearly not the individual consciousness but pure and transcendent Intelligence.

(pp. 68-69)

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Distinguishing ego from true self

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

... the totality of our being is not only the part which we at present call our person, for this totality also includes another person, a transcendent counterpart which remains invisible to us, what Ibn `Arabi designates as our "eternal individuality" -- our [divine name](#)...

(p. 173)

... the divine Names are shared by the Lord and His vassal. The Lord is the *{vassal's higher self}*; it is the Lord who acts in him and through him: "When you see the creature, you see the First and the Last, the Manifested and the Hidden."

(pp. 213-4)

... the total being is the union of this Lord and of His vassal... The two dimensions refer indeed to the same being, but to the totality of that being; one is added to (or multiplied by) the other, they cannot negate one another, one cannot be confounded with, or substituted for the other.

(p. 209)

He who knows himself knows *his* Lord... This Lord is not the impersonal self, nor is it the God of dogmatic definitions, *self*-subsisting without relation to *me*, without being experienced by *me*. He is the he who knows himself through myself, that is, in the knowledge that I have of him, because it is the knowledge that he has of me...

(p. 95)

God (*al-Haqq*) is *your* mirror, that is the mirror *in* which you contemplate your self (*nafs, anima*), and you, you are *His* mirror, that is the mirror in which He contemplates His [divine Names](#)...

Here we have a reciprocal relationship as between two mirrors facing one another and reflecting the same image back and forth.

(p. 271)

... the Image is not outside him, but within his being; better still, it *is* his very being, the form of the divine Name which he himself brought with him in coming into being. And the circle of the dialectic of love closes on this fundamental experience: "Love is closer to the lover than is his jugular vein." So excessive is this nearness that it acts at first as a veil. That is why the inexperienced novice, though dominated by the Image which invests his whole inner being, goes looking for it outside of himself, in a desperate search from form to form of the sensible world, until he returns to the sanctuary of his soul and perceives that the real Beloved is deep within his own being; and, from that moment on, he seeks the Beloved only through the Beloved... the active subject within him remains the inner image of unreal Beauty, a vestige of the transcendent or celestial counterpart of his being...

(pp. 156-7)

... he who is the servant of a divine Name is the *shadow* of that Name, his *soul* is its epiphanic form ([mazhar](#)). But in recognizing that this is so the servant does not negate his own existence. There is indeed a [hadith](#) concerning the servant who never ceases to move closer to his Lord; his Lord says of him: "I am *his* hearing by which he hears, *his* eyesight by which he sees..." This servant does not become what he

was not; what happens is that the "luminous shadow" becomes increasingly transparent. Moreover, the possessive adjective "his" refers explicitly to the reality of the servant or rather presupposes it.
(*p. 193*)

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Distinguishing ego from true self

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

... the soul is neither from the East of the world of pure spirits, nor from the West of the world of material bodies. It is of three types: the one that incites to evil; the self-blaming one; and the recollected one.

The soul that incites to evil (*an-nafs al-ammarah bi's-su'*) is that which inclines to physical nature and commands one to engage in sensual pleasures and carnal appetites. It draws the heart toward the lowest region and is the abode of iniquity and the source of blameworthy morals and evil deeds. It is the soul of the masses. It is tenebrous; and for it, the invocation is like a lamp lit in a dark house.

The self-blaming soul (*an-nafs al-lawwamah*) is that which is illuminated by the light of the heart to an extent commensurate with its degree of wakefulness from the slumber of forgetfulness. It is vigilant and begins by correcting its state, which wavers between the Divinity and creatures. Every time something bad issues forth from the self-blaming soul by virtue of its dark nature and character, the light of divine admonition suddenly comes upon it, and it starts blaming itself. The soul repents of its errors, asking God's pardon and returns to the door of the Forgiving, the Merciful...

... the self-blaming soul perseveres in invoking and turning to God in repentance until the power of the invocation triumphs over all those things and expels them. Then the soul approaches peacefulness and does not cease to gather furnishings for the house until the house is adorned with all kinds of praiseworthy things and is thereby made lustrous. The house is then suitable for the descent of the Sovereign Lord into it. When the Sovereign Lord descends into the soul and the Truth is revealed, the soul becomes recollected.

The recollected soul (*an-nafs al-mutma'innah*) is the one whose enlightenment is brought about by the light of the heart until it is stripped of blameworthy attributes and takes on praiseworthy virtues. Then it turns in the direction of the heart completely, following it in its ascent to the regions of the world of Holiness (*`alam al-quds*) far above the world of impurity, diligent in acts of obedience and tranquil in the presence of the "Exalter of ranks" until its Lord addresses it by His words: "But, ah! thou soul at peace! Return unto thy Lord, content in His good pleasure! Enter thou among My servants! Enter thou My Garden!"

(pp. 52-53)

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Distinguishing ego from true self

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Man's duality

Man is called a rational animal; therefore, he is two things. What feeds his animality in this world is passion and desire; but the food for his essential part is knowledge, wisdom and the vision of God. Man's animal nature avoids the Real, and his human nature flies from this world. *One of you is an unbeliever, and another of you is a believer.* (Koran 64:2). There are two personae in conflict in this being. "With whom shall luck be? Whom shall fortune favor?"

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 59)

The body senses are wavering and blurry, but there is a clear fire inside, a flame like Abraham, that is Alpha and Omega. Human beings seem to be derived, evolved, from this planet, but essentially humanity is the origin of the world.

Remember this: A tiny gnat's outward form flies around and around in pain and wanting, while the gnat's inward nature includes the entire galactic whirling of the universe!

(The Essential Rumi, p. 259)

So man is in form a branch of the world, but in attribute the world's foundation. Know this! His outward is made dizzy by a gnat, but his inward encompasses the seven heavens... Whenever you come upon a form, you stop and say "I am this." By God, you are not that! How can you be that? You are that unique one, happy, beautiful, and intoxicated with yourself. You are your own bird, prey, and snare, your own seat of honor, carpet, and roof.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 64-65)

The Ego

This ego is hell, and hell is a dragon not diminished by oceans of water. It drinks down the seven seas, yet the heat of that manburner does not become less. It makes a morsel out of a world and gulps it down. Its belly keeps shouting: *Is there any more?*

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 89-90)

God then answers, "As I have said, your [animal soul](#) is an enemy to you and to me: *take not my enemy and your enemy for your friends.*" (Koran 60:1)

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 63)

The True Self

Just as this brass astrolabe is a mirror of the heavens, the human being ... is an astrolabe of God. When God makes a person to know himself, through the astrolabe of that person's own being he can witness the manifestation of God and His unqualified beauty moment by moment and glimmer by glimmer. That

beauty is never absent from this "mirror."

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 11)

Who knows his soul knows his [Lord](#).

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 59)

Inner War

This mention of Moses has become a shackle on men's minds -- they think these stories happened long ago... Moses and [Pharoah](#) are in your own existence -- you must seek these two adversaries in yourself.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 274)

... the [intellect](#) and the ego, are very necessary for the manifestation of good and evil. Day and night in this abode of dust these two necessary beings are in war and altercation. The {ego} always desires the necessities of the household -- reputation, bread, food, and position... The ego sometimes displays humility and sometimes seeks leadership to remedy its plight.

The Intellect, indeed, knows nothing of these thoughts; its mind contains naught but longing for God.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 165)

The intellect is luminous and seeks the good. How then can the dark ego vanquish it? The ego is in its own bodily home, and your intellect is a stranger; At its doorstep, a dog is an awesome lion.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 35)

Now some men have followed the intellect to such an extent that they have become totally angels and sheer light. They are the prophets and saints...

In some men sensuality has dominated their intellects, so that they have totally assumed the properties of animals.

And some men have remained struggling. They are that group who feel inside themselves a suffering, a pain, a distress, a longing. They are not satisfied with their lives. These are the believers. The saints are waiting to bring the believers into their own houses and make them like themselves. And the satans are also waiting to drag them down toward themselves to the *lowest of the low* (Koran 95:5).

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 86)

The Hidden Treasure revealed

... man is the goal of creation. He has come into this world to display those Attributes of God that are reflected within himself, or in other words, to play his own part in revealing the [Hidden Treasure](#). At the same time he is being tested: Does he remember the [Covenant of Alast](#)? Does he understand and acknowledge that he is displaying God's Treasure, not his own? The idea of the Covenant thus combines the purely metaphysical perspective of the manifestation and theophany of God's Attributes with the more religious and moral perspective of man's awareness and responsibility of his duties toward his Creator.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, Commentary by William C. Chittick, p. 69)

He said, "I was a Hidden Treasure." Listen! Do not lose touch with your own substance, make yourself manifest!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 48)

God tells us, "Just as I wanted to manifest My Treasure, so I wanted to manifest your ability to recognize that Treasure..."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 48-49)

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Distinguishing ego from true self

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

Then God -- may He be exalted! -- said to me, "What are you?" I replied, "I am two things, according to two different relations. With respect to You, I am the Eternal, forever and ever. I am the necessary Being who epiphanizes himself. My necessity proceeds from the necessity of Your essence and my eternity from the eternity of Your knowledge and Your attributes.

"With respect to me, I am pure non-being who has never breathed the perfume of existence, the adventitious being who remains nonexistent in his adventitiousness. I only possess being so long as I am present with You and for You. Left to myself and absent from You I am one who is not, even while he is (*fa-ana mafqud mawjud*)."
(*Mawquif* 30, pp. 77-78)

Paraphrased: Among the degrees of the universal Manifestation, each sentient creature typically experiences an illusory sense of autonomy. At the same time, with or without the creature's awareness, the creature subsists eternally as an "immutable prototype" in the divine Knowledge.
(*footnote* 23, pp. 200-201)

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Understanding the nature of desire

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

Sufiyan:

This is my prayer: let God be satisfied with me.

Rabi'a:

How dare you pray that -- when *you* are not satisfied with God?
(*p. 39*)

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Understanding the nature of desire

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

All your agonies arise from wanting something that cannot be had. When you stop wanting, there is no more agony.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 135)

... desire for the world has deprived man of the Object of his desire.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 36)

Be joyful with Him, not with "others"... Everything other than God is leading you astray, be it your throne, kingdom, and crown.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 182)

In a human being is such a love, a pain, an itch, a desire that, even if he were to possess a hundred thousand worlds, he would not rest or find peace. People work variously at all sorts of callings, crafts, and professions, and they learn astrology and medicine, and so forth, but they are not at peace because what they are seeking cannot be found. The beloved is called [dilaram](#) because the heart finds peace through the beloved. How then can it find peace through anything else?

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 66)

Everything in this world -- like wealth, women, and clothes -- is sought because of something else, not in and for itself... All things form links in a chain *{of seeking that leads}* to God. It is He who is sought for His own sake and who is desired for Himself, not for any other reason. Since He is beyond everything and is nobler and more subtle than anything, why would He be sought for the sake of what is less than Him? Therefore it can be said that He is the ultimate. When one reaches Him, one has reached the final goal; there is no surpassing there.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, pp. 105-106)

All the hopes, desires, loves, and affections that people have for different things -- fathers, mothers, friends, heavens, the earth, gardens, palaces, sciences, works, food, drink -- the saint knows that these are desires for God and all those things are veils. When men leave this world and see the King without these veils, then they will know that all were veils and coverings, that the object of their desire was in reality that One Thing... They will see all things face to face.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 201)

Oh you who cannot bear to be without this despicable world! How can you bear to be without God, oh friend, how? Since you cannot bear to be without this black water, how can you bear to be without God's fountain?... If you should see the Beauty of the Loving God for one instant and throw your soul and existence into the fire... you would see these sweet beverages as carrion...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 245)

Men are divided into a number of classes and have different ranks in this Way. Through combat and effort, some of them reach a station whereby no matter what they may desire inwardly and in thought, *{they do not act on that desire}*. This is within a man's power. But that there should not be within man the itch of desire and thought -- that is not within his power. Nothing save God's attraction can eliminate that

from him.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 257)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

... Renunciation is not made in order to obtain some later recompense, for it bears its fruit within itself, fruit of knowledge and beauty. Spiritual virtue is neither a mere negation of the natural instincts... It takes birth from a [presentiment](#) of the Divine Reality which underlies all objects of desire... and this presentiment is in itself a sort of 'natural grace'...
(p. 87)

In a sense all the virtues are contained in spiritual poverty (*al-faqr*)... This poverty is nothing other than a *vacare Deo*, emptiness for God; it begins with the rejection of passions and its crown is the effacement of the 'I' before the Divinity.
(p. 88)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Invoking brings the heart closer to the hereafter and keeps the world away from the heart, even though the world is around it. Invoking warns the heedless heart to abandon its pleasures and deceptions.

(p. 76)

If a tablet is not wiped clean of it's figures, nothing can be written upon it. A single heart cannot serve as the place for two things, let alone for several things. If the heart is filled with the forms of sensory perceptions, it is rare that it would perceive the meaning of *Allah*, even if one were to say *Allah* a thousand times. When the heart is empty of all that is other-than-God, if one uttered *Allah* only once, one would find such bliss that the tongue could not describe.

(p. 92-93)

When the heart becomes empty, the *mimbar* of the Divine Oneness is placed therein and the sultan of gnosis sits upon it.

(p. 90)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

May God steal from you
All that steals you from Him.
(*Book's dedication page*)

Let me hide in You
From everything that distracts me from You,
From everything that comes in my way
When I want to run to You.
(*p. 46*)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Some one asked, "What is the Way?" I said, "This way is to abandon desires."

Oh lover of the King! Know that your way is to seek the pleasure of that Generous Lord. When you seek the Beloved's desire and pleasure, seeking your own desire is forbidden.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 216-217)

I complained of His jealousy. He laughed and said, "Whatever blocks your way -- remove it!"

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 306)

Since the lover is not suited for "others," let them all reject him -- then the King of Love will make him His sitting companion. When the creatures drive him from themselves, he cuts himself off from their company; he accustoms his outward and inward to sweet-natured Love. But when the creatures accept him, his mind drags him in their direction and his heart turns furtively this way and that toward anyone's love.

When Love sees this It says, "My tresses have thrown a shadow, so the lover smells there the fragrance of musk and ambergris. I will make these two scents the enemy of his mind and brain -- he will have to abandon both..."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 306-307)

What sort of Beloved is He? As long as a single hair of love for yourself remains, He will not show His Face... You must be completely repelled by yourself and the world and be your own self's enemy... So when our religion resides in a person's heart, it stays right there until it takes his heart to God and separates it from everything unworthy.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 215)

Brother, stand the pain. Escape the poison of your impulses. The sky will bow to your beauty, if you do.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 62)

Poverty is not for the sake of hardship. No, it is there because nothing exists but God... Poverty unlocks the door -- what a blessed key!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 188)

Always keep the carnal soul from getting what it wants so that you can attain eternal desire and be delivered from the prison of darkness, for *whoso shall have refrained his soul from lust, verily paradise shall be his abode.* (Koran 79:40-41)

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 64)

Throw a dog a bit of something. He sniffs to see if he wants it. Be that careful. Sniff with your wisdom-nose. Get clear. Then decide.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 258)

Recognize that your imagination and your thinking and your sense perception are reed canes that children cut and pretend are horsies. Deny your desires and willfulness, and a real mount may appear

under you.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 5)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Nuri:

Union with God is separation from all else, and separation from all else is union with Him.
(*p. 205*)

Bayezid Bistami:

Nothing is better for a man than to be without anything -- having no asceticism, no theory, no practice. When he is without all, he is with all.
(*p. 208*)

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Becoming unattached

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

And if you are patient -- certainly that (*huwa*) is better (*khayr*) for those who are capable of being patient. (Koran 16:126)

Commentary: In this verse, Allah consoles his patient servants in their trials by announcing that He Himself is the substitute and the replacement of that which they have lost and which was pleasing to their natural dispositions. In effect, being patient consists in constraining the soul to accept that which is repugnant to it. The soul experiences an aversion for everything which is not in accord with its predisposition in the present instant, even if it knows that it will be beneficial for it later on...

Allah has thus announced to those who patiently bear the loss of that which pleases them -- health, riches, greatness, security, possessions and children -- that "He" [for this is the proper sense of the pronoun *huwa* rendered above as "that" in conformity with the way the verse is usually understood] is better (*khayr*) for them than that which they have lost; for they know that "He" [who is the Name of the supreme absolutely unconditioned Essence] is their inseparable reality and their necessary refuge, and that the pleasing things that they have lost were pure illusions...

He who has found Allah has lost nothing, and he who has lost Allah has found nothing.
(*Mawqif* 220, pp. 45-47)

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Forgetting about preferences

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

(Paraphrased: The way of al-Junayd includes among other things) abstaining constantly from resisting God Most High in whatever happens to one, whether good or bad...

(p. 101)

The signs of the soundness of the servant's love for his Lord are three: absence of self-willing; pleasure in every event which takes place through divine decree; and seeing the perfection of the Beloved in everything and being content with Him in everything through submission to Him in all things.

(p. 124)

Ibn `Abbas said, "[La ilaha ill'Ilah](#) means there is no benefactor, no harmer, no exalter, no debaser, no giver, and no preventer except God."

(p. 156)

Encompass with your mercy and compassion all animals and creatures. Do not say, "this is inanimate and has no awareness." Indeed, it does; it is you yourself who have no awareness! So let existence be as it is, and be merciful towards it with the mercifulness of the Creator in the midst of His creation.

(p. 123)

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Forgetting about preferences

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

For those who realize that everything is from God, everything is the same.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 58)

The Heart-keeper will leave you neither in faithfulness nor cruelty, neither in denial nor acknowledgment. Whenever you turn your heart toward something His Severity will detach you from it -- oh heart, fix not your heart on any place, do not persist!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 239)

Whatever God gives you, be content. At the very moment you become content in affliction, the door of paradise will open. If the messenger of heartache comes to you, embrace him like a friend! A cruelty that comes from the Beloved -- bestow upon it a warm welcome! Then that heartache can throw off its chador, rain down sugar, and be gentle and heart-ravishing... They all put on ugly chadors so that you will think they are dragons. But I am fed up with my spirit -- I worship dragons! If you are fed up with your spirit, then hear their calls of welcome! Heartache can never find me without laughter -- I call the pain the "cure". Nothing is more blessed than heartache, for its reward has no end.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 293-294)

Everyone knows God's Gentleness and everyone knows God's Severity. Everyone flees from His Severity and holds fast to His Gentleness. But God has hidden severities within Gentleness and gentleness within Severity. This is God's trickery, concealment, and deception, in order that the people of discernment -- those who see with the light of God -- may be separated from those who see only the present and outward situation. *That He might try you, which of you is fairest in works* (Koran 67:2).

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 99)

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Forgetting about preferences

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Abu Sa'id Ibn Abi-L-Khayr:

The Sufi is pleased with all that God does in order that God may be pleased with all that he does.
(*p. 5*)

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Not working for personal gain

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

What the Lord expects of His vassal (*marbub*) is that he be the form in which His action and His influx are manifested. The vassal accomplishes His will (acknowledges his Lord) by the mere fact of his receptivity as a form manifesting His [suzerainty](#), and he is acknowledged by Him thanks to the mere fact that he manifests this suzerainty. He has no *action* outside of his *receptivity* which accomplishes the intention of his Lord. The acknowledged is thus at the same time the acknowledger, since he is also the action which establishes his Lord in the [accomplishment of His purpose](#) (which is *you...*). To the Lord belongs the action (to the *{Lord}*, for *{the vassal}* is his action). Of the *{vassal}* the *{Lord}* sees only this assistance by which the being of the *{vassal}* fulfills his design. Thus the *{Lord}* and *{the vassal}* acknowledge each other... The vassal is his God's shield, assuming (as [nasut](#) and [zahir](#)) His negativities (the divine limitation, the limitations of the created God), and God is his shield through being the [lahut](#) in him. A striking aspect of the unio sympathetica is that the divine Compassion answers for your perfection by its divinity, that is its divinity created in you, which is in your ... hidden, "esoteric", and divine condition.
(pp. 311-312)

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Not working for personal gain

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

The most excellent of those who perform good deeds are those who most often remember God in all situations.

(p. 77)

God Most High has said, "Is the reward of virtue aught save virtue?"... Know, O man, that the covenant of servanthood is incumbent upon you, and that the covenant of Lordship is incumbent upon His magnanimity, as He Most High has said, "... and fulfill your covenant, I shall fulfill My covenant."

(p. 159)

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(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

O God,
You know that the only thing I want in this life
Is to be obedient to Your command.
Even the living sight of my eyes
Is service at your court.
(p. 25)

The real work is in the Heart:
Wake up your Heart! Because [when the Heart is completely awake](#),
Then it needs no Friend.
(p. 27)

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Not working for personal gain

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Concern yourself not with the thief-like ego and its business. Whatever is not God's work is nothing, nothing!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 33)

The [shaykh](#) said, *Oh Creator, I am a lover. I sin if I seek aught but Thee. If I should bring the eight paradises into my view or serve Thee for fear of hell, then I would be a believer, seeking safety. For both of these are the body's share.*

A lover's food is love for God -- in his eyes a hundred bodies are not worth a bean.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 216)

Occupy yourself with your own inward self! ... Although in this work you will be lost to yourself and the world, outside of yourself and the world you will be famous.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 336)

Man is like a bow held in the hand of God's Power. God employs him in various tasks. In reality, the agent is God, not the bow. The bow is an instrument and a means. But for the sake of the maintenance of the world it is unaware and heedless of God. Tremendous indeed is the bow that becomes aware of the Bowman's hand!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 58-59)

He does all the seeking, yet His title is "Sought"; He does all the worshipping, yet His title is "Worshipped".

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 210)

We are all lions, but lions on a banner; We keep on leaping because of the wind.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 24)

So behead your selfhood, oh warrior! Become selfless and annihilated, like a dervish! When you have become selfless, you are secure in whatever you do: *Thou didst not throw when thou threwest, but God threw* (Koran 8:17).

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 188)

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Not working for personal gain

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Rabi`a:

I will not serve God like a laborer, in expectation of my wages.
(*p. 110*)

Abu Sa`id Ibn Abi-L-Khayr:

The perfect mystic is not an ecstatic devotee lost in contemplation of Oneness, nor a saintly recluse shunning all commerce with mankind, but "the true saint" goes in and out amongst the people and eats and sleeps with them and buys and sells in the market and marries and takes part in social intercourse, and never forgets God for a single moment.
(*p. 23*)

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Not working for personal gain

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

Turn your face toward the sacred Mosque (Koran 2:144,149,150)

Commentary: The word "sacred" means that a heart which has not disengaged itself from the sphere of the soul and the sphere of created beings is forbidden to penetrate into this place...

"Wherever you are, turn your [face](#)" [toward the sacred Mosque] means, "Wherever you are, in the accomplishment of works of worship or in the ordinary acts of life, contemplate Him -- in what you eat, in what you drink, in him or her whom you marry, always knowing that He is at once the Contemplator and the Contemplated..."

(Mawqif 149, pp. 105, 107)

Everything which is other than Allah is "hidden" in non-being, even if it appears to spiritually veiled beings to be endowed with existence. But the sage does not concern himself with what is non-being and does not make it the aim of his acts.

(Mawquif 4, p. 38)

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Letting go of thoughts

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

We must not seek to conceive God by bringing Him down to the level of things; on the contrary, things are reabsorbed into God so soon as one recognizes the essential qualities of which they are constituted.
(p. 54)

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Letting go of thoughts

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

The realization of [La ilaha illa'llah](#)... is one of the states of the heart that can be neither expressed by the tongue nor thought out by the mind.

(p. 71)

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Letting go of thoughts

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Let go of thought and bring it not into your heart, for you are naked and thought is an icy wind. You think in order to escape from torment and suffering, but your thinking is torment's fountainhead. Know that the bazaar of God's Making is outside of thought...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 256)

Oh heart, sleep from thought, for thought is the heart's snare. Go not to God except disengaged from all things...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 261)

...I sit in the road waylaying the caravan of imagination for the sake of His encounter. Other than the servants of His heartache and the messengers of His salve, I strike the head and feet of anyone who shows his face.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 258)

First give that cup to the talkative ego so that its rational faculty will tell no more tales. Once rationality is blocked, a torrent will come and erase all signs of this world and place.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 321)

Thinking is for the sake of acquisition -- but you have become bestowal from head to foot!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 230)

All day long the kicks of imagination, worry over profit and loss, and fear of extinction leave the spirit no purity or gentleness or splendor, nor any way to travel to heaven. He is truly asleep who has hope in every image *{which passes through his mind}* and converses with it.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 255)

Move outside the tangle of fear-thinking. Live in silence. Flow down and down in always widening rings of being.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 3)

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Letting go of thoughts

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Traditional:

Silence for the ordinary people is with their tongues, silence for the mystics is with their hearts, and silence for lovers is with restraining the stray thoughts that come to their innermost beings.
(*p. 82*)

Al-Junayd:

God speaks out of the innermost being of the mystic while he is silent.
(*p. 12*)

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Letting go of thoughts

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

"Each time that something comes to your mind regarding Allah -- know that He is different from that!"

Commentary: This saying is rich in meaning... The theologians who affirm the absolute transcendence of God through the speculative way -- and not through conformity with the sacred Law -- discuss this saying among themselves thinking that it is a proof in favor of their notion of the absolute transcendence of God. However it does not mean at all what they imagine. Its true meaning is that God is not contained in any one particular belief or doctrine but that He is, in a certain respect, whatever someone say who speaks of Him or whatever each believer believes. Whatever comes to your mind regarding Allah, His essence and His attributes, know that He is that and that He is other than that! He who maintained the saying that we have reported did not wish to say that Allah is not that which comes to your mind, but that He is that and at the same time He is other than that for someone whose opinion differs from yours. Allah is not limited by what comes to your mind -- that is to say, your creed -- or enclosed in the doctrine you profess. For the author of this saying, Allah is other than which comes to your mind 'not for you, but' for him who professes a belief different from yours: both are in fact equally valid...

If you think and believe that He is what all the schools of Islam profess and believe -- He is that, and He is other than that! If you think that He is what diverse communities believe -- Muslims, Christians, Jews, Mazdeans, polytheists and others -- He is that and He is other than that! And if you think and believe what is professed by the Knowers *par excellence* -- prophets, saints and angels -- He is that! He is other than that! None of His creatures worships Him in all His aspects; none is unfaithful to Him in all His aspects. No one knows Him in all His aspects; no one is ignorant of Him in all His aspects.

Those who are among the most knowing regarding Him have said: "Glory to Thee. We have no knowledge except what You have taught us." (Koran 2:32)
(*Mawqif* 254, pp. 127-128)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

It may be surprising that so many Sufi books treat of the virtues when Knowledge (*al-ma'rifah*) is the only goal of the way and perpetual concentration on God the sole condition needed for arriving at it.

... spiritual virtue is a sort of 'symbol that is lived'...
(p. 38-39)

... all spiritual virtues may be said to be summed up in sanctity (*al-wilayah*) which is uninterrupted awareness of the Divine Presence.
(p. 89)

[dhikr](#) is the word used to designate every form of concentration on the Divine Presence...
(p. 63)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

The private, liturgical prayer prescribed by Ibn `Arabi

For prayer is not a request for something: it is the expression of a mode of being, a means of existing. The divine Compassion is the *Prayer of God* aspiring to issue forth from His unknownness and to be known, whereas the *Prayer of man* accomplishes this theophany because in it and through it the "Form of God" (*surat al-Haqq*) becomes visible to the heart. God prays for us, which means that He epiphanizes Himself insofar as He is the God *whom* and *for whom* we pray. We do not pray to the Divine Essence in its hiddenness; each faithful prays to *his* Lord (*Rabb*), the Lord who is in the form of his faith.

The organ of Prayer is the heart, the psychospiritual organ, with its concentration of energy, its *himma*. The role of prayer is shared between God and man, because Creation like *theophany* is shared between Him who shows Himself and him to whom it is shown. In the inner liturgical action which Ibn `Arabi develops, taking as his text the first sura of the Koran (the *Fatiha*), we witness and participate in an entire ceremonial of meditation, a psalmody in two alternating voices, one human the other divine; and this psalmody perpetually reconstitutes, recreates the solidarity and interdependence of the Creator and His creature. Prayer is a "creator" of vision. It is simultaneously Prayer of God and Prayer of man. Through prayer we shall gain an intimation of *who* and *of what nature* is the "Form of God," when it shows itself to the mystic celebrating this inward liturgy.

Indeed to constitute such a dialogue, since by definition it implies two mystic "officiants," the *dhikr*, as remembrance "situated in the present," must not be a *unilateral* and exclusive act on the part of the mystic making himself present to his Lord. The reality of the dialogue implies that there is also a remembrance, a *dhikr*, on the part of the Divine Lord, having his {*devotee*} present to Himself. That is the meaning which Ibn `Arabi gives to the Koran verse: "Have me present to your heart. I shall have you present to myself." (II:147). Understood and experienced in this way, Prayer, because it is an intimate dialogue, implies at its apogee a mental theophany experienced as contemplative vision.

Ibn `Arabi distinguishes three successive moments which correspond to the phases of what we may call his "method of prayer" and provide us with a good indication of how he put his spirituality into practice.

1. First, the faithful must place himself in the company of his God and "converse" with Him.
2. In an intermediate moment the orant, the faithful in prayer, must imagine his God as present in his Qibla, that is, facing him.
3. Finally, in a third moment, the faithful must attain to intuitive vision or visualization, contemplating his God in the subtle center which is the *heart*, and simultaneously hear the divine voice vibrating in all manifest things, so much so that he hears nothing else.

Editor's note: Below in tabular form is the prayer of the faithful (taken from the *Fatiha* of the Koran) and the Lord's response in liturgical form. The prayer is preceded by the ritual invocation: "**In the name of**

Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful":

The faithful	The Lord
Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Creation,	Now my faithful makes me present to himself. Now my faithful makes of me the Glorified One.
The Compassionate, the Merciful, King on the day of Judgment.	Now my faithful sings my praise. Now he exalts my glory and puts his trust in me.
Thee alone we worship, and from thee alone do we await help.	Now there is a sharing in common between myself and my faithful; to my faithful belongs what he asks.
Guide us in the straight path, The path of those to whom You have given grace, Not of those who have incurred your wrath, or of those who have gone astray.	All that belongs to my faithful, for to my faithful belongs what he asks.

In this interior liturgical prayer, the Lord and the faithful devotee deliver each other from their respective solitude. As the Lord states in Ibn `Arabi's *Fusus* (I, 92), "I am known only by you, just as you exist only by me. Who knows you knows me, although no one knows me, so that you too are known by no one." (pp. 248-254)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

For the one who remembers God, invoking unites his dispersed heart and pervades his will and his broken resolve.

(p. 76)

The remembrance of God in the heart is the sword of the novices with which they combat their enemies and repel the afflictions that befall them.

(p. 65)

He whose wealth or children distract him from remembering God is lost; but the one who remembers God experiences delights sweeter than the pleasure of food and drink.

(p. 78)

I seek refuge in Thee from every hope which would distract me.

(p. 190)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

I have two ways of loving You:

A selfish one

And another way that is worthy of You.

In my selfish love, I remember You and You alone.

In that other love, You lift the veil

And let me feast my eyes on Your Living Face.

That I remember You always, or that I see You face-to-face--

No credit to me in either:

The credit is to You in both.

(p. 23)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Prayer does not mean that you should be standing, bowing, and prostrating yourself all day long; the object is that the state that manifests itself during prayer should remain with you constantly, whether asleep or awake, whether writing or reading. In no state should you be void of the remembrance of God...

Petition Him every moment for your needs and be not without remembrance of Him, for the remembrance of Him is strength; it is a wing to the bird of the spirit. If that goal is fully attained, it will be *light upon light* (Koran 24:35). If you are mindful of God, little by little your interior will be illuminated and you will attain release from the world.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, pp. 182-183)

Anything that can be vocalized and has a beginning and an end is a "form", a "shell"; its "soul", however, is unqualifiable and infinite, without beginning and without end... We know that the "soul" of prayer is not only its external form but also a state of total absorption and unconsciousness during which all these external forms ... remain outside.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 13)

A naked man jumped into the water to escape the stings of hornets. The hornets circle around him; when he shows his head, they do not let him go. The water is God's remembrance, and right now the hornets are the remembrance of this woman and that man. Hold your breath in the water of remembrance and be patient, so that you may be freed from old thoughts and inward whisperings! After that, you will gain totally the nature of pure water from head to foot.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 159)

Everyone has turned his face toward some direction, but the saints have turned in the direction without directions.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 23)

Return to yourself, oh heart! For from the heart a hidden road can be found to the Beloved. If the world of the six directions has no door, then come to the heart -- you can make a door. Come into the heart, the place of contemplating God! Though it is not so now, it can be made so.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 37-38)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Abu Sa`id Ibn Abi-L-Khayr:

Recollection is forgetting everything besides Him.
(*p. 69*)

Ma`Ruf Al-Karkhi:

The saints of God are known by three signs: their thought is of God, their dwelling is in God, and their business is with God.
(*p. 43*)

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Redirecting your attention

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

"O my people, I disavow all that you associate [with God]. I orient my face with an exclusive orientation towards Him, who created the heavens and the earth and I am not one of the [associators](#)." (Koran 6:78-79)

(*Mawquif* 183, pp. 93-94)

Turn your face toward the sacred Mosque (Koran 2:144,149,150)

Commentary: This means: "Turn the [divine] [face](#) which is particular to you"...

This face is the secret ([sirr](#)) through which your spirit subsists... It is the source of man's being and the command [formulated in the verse] is in reality concerned with this. God ... does not consider your exterior form but only your heart -- which is the "divine face" proper to each of you, and it is this "divine face" which, in you, "contains" God even though His sky and His earth cannot contain Him... He who turns (toward the sacred Mosque) with his body alone, without also turning this face, has not truly turned...

He who looks with his finite eye only sees finite things -- bodies, colors or surfaces. He who looks with the eye of his hidden spirit sees the hidden things -- spiritual beings, forms of the world of the absolute Imagination, jinns -- all of which are still only created beings and therefore veils. But he who looks with his face, that is to say, his secret (*sirr*), sees the face which God has in each thing; for, in truth, only Allah sees Allah, only Allah knows Allah...

As for the "sacred Mosque" ..., although this term applies literally to the Mosque perceived by the senses, it should be understood as designating the degree which totalizes all the divine Names, that is to say the degree of the divinity which is the "place of the prostration" -- of the prostration of the heart, not of the body.

(*Mawquif* 149, pp. 105-107)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

A Saying of the Prophet ([hadith qudsi](#)):

He who adores Me never ceases to approach Me until I love him, and when I love him, I am the hearing by which he hears, the sight by which he sees, and the hand with which he grasps and the foot with which he walks.

(p. 79)

...the intoxication of love (corresponds) to [states](#) of knowledge which are beyond forms and outstrip all thought.

(p. 32)

... if every virtue is a form of the will, then spiritual love is the will itself transfigured by the divine attraction. Love of God is imperfect and is even inconceivable apart from love of God in creation (in every aspect of His Revelation including pure intellect) and without love of (the very least) creature in God. In a sense it can be said that man must love God first in creation, in His Revealed Word and in His Truth, and then secondly in Himself, in His transcendent [Ipseity](#), and finally in those 'least of His little ones' who require our charity.

(p. 89)

Man's aspiration towards God includes the two aspects expressed in the verse: '*It is Thee whom we adore (or serve) and it is with Thee we seek refuge (or help).*' Adoration is the effacing of individual will before the the Divine Will which is revealed externally by the sacred Law and inwardly by the movements of Grace. Recourse to Divine help is a participating in the Divine Reality through Grace and, more directly, through Knowledge. Ultimately the words: '*It is Thee whom we adore*' correspond to 'extinction' (*al-fana*) and the words: '*with Thee we seek refuge*' to 'subsistence' (*al-baqa*) in Pure Being. Thus the verse just mentioned is the 'isthmus' or *barzakh* between the two 'oceans' of absolute Being and relative existence. (Cf. the Qur'anic verses: '(God) produced the two seas which meet: between the two is an isthmus which they do not pass' (50:19-20)).

(p. 50)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

"Neither my Heaven nor my Earth contains me, but the heart of my faithful believer contains me," this because the heart is a mirror in which the manifested "Form of God" is at each moment reflected on the scale of the microcosm.

(p. 196)

... the divine Beloved, who defines Himself as admitting of no division, as desiring that the soul should love no one but Him and should love Him for Himself, manifests Himself to the soul, that is, produces Himself for the soul in the *physical form* of a [theophany](#). And He grants him a *sign*, which makes it so plain that it is He who is manifesting Himself to the soul in this Form, that the soul cannot possibly deny it... *{The soul}* recognizes that the Beloved *is* this physical Form (sensible or mental, identified by the [Active Imagination](#)); at once in its spiritual and its physical nature, it is drawn toward that Form. It "sees" its Lord; it is aware of seeing Him in this ecstatic vision that has been bestowed upon its inner faculties, and it can only love Him for Himself: this love is "physical" since it apprehends and contemplates a concrete Image, and at the same time a spiritual love, for it is not concerned with taking possession of the Image, but is itself wholly invested with that Image. This conjunction of spiritual love and the natural love it transmutes, is the very definition of mystic love.

(pp. 150-151)

Every servant professes a special belief in [his Lord](#), of whom he asks assistance according to the knowledge he has of himself. Thus the faiths differ with the Lords, just as the Lords differ, although all the faiths are forms of the one faith, just as all the Lords are forms in the mirror of the Lord of Lords...

God is not limited to the manner in which He is epiphanized for you and makes Himself adequate to your dimension *{to receive Him}*. And that is why other creatures are under no obligation to obey the God who demands your worship, because their theophanies take other forms. The form in which He is epiphanized to you is different from that in which He is epiphanized to others. God as such transcends (*munazzah*) all intelligible, imaginable, or sensible forms, but considered in His Names and Attributes, that is, His theophanies, He is, on the contrary, inseparable from these forms, that is, from a certain figure and a certain *situs* in space and time.

(p. 310)

The Lord to his devotee:

Love me, love me alone.

Love yourself in me, in me alone.

Attach yourself to me,

No one is more inward than I.

Others love you for their own sakes,

I love you for yourself.

And you, you flee from me.

Dearly beloved!

... if you approach me,

It is because I have approached you.

I am nearer to you than yourself,
Than your soul, than your breath.
Who among creatures
Would treat you as I do?
I am jealous of you over you,
I want you to belong to no other,
Not even to yourself.
Be mine, be for me as you are in me,
Though you are not even aware of it.
(pp. 174-5)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

The covenant of your servanthood is that you be a servant to God, not to someone else, and that you know that everything except God is a servant to God, as He Most High has said, "There is none in the heaven and the earth but cometh unto the Compassionate as a servant."

(p. 159)

It is impossible that this gnosis resulting in the heart should be achieved by man for any other purpose than to obey God, love Him, and worship Him. This gnosis should be sought for the sake of God, not for any other reason whatsoever, unlike the remaining external acts of devotion, *{which can be}* performed for other worldly interests, such as hypocrisy, praise, and commendation.

(p. 159)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

O God!

If I adore You out of fear of Hell, burn me in Hell!

If I adore You out of desire for Paradise,

Lock me out of Paradise.

But if I adore You for Yourself alone,

Do not deny to me Your eternal beauty.

(p. 42)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

What is Love? Perfect thirst. So let me explain the Water of Life.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 195)

Spend less time seeking water and acquire thirst! Then water will gush from above and below.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 207)

You sit like a dunce and think that if {God} wants, He will give you something. You make no entreaty, while a dog ... will come to you when it is hungry and wag its tail as if to say "Give me something to eat. I have nothing to eat, but you do"... {A dog does not say}, "If he wants, he will give me something to eat." No a dog will beg and wag its tail. You too "wag your tail" and beg God, for before such a donor begging is what is required. If you are not blessed with good fortune, seek your fortune from him who is not stingy and who is possessed of wealth.
(*Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p 179)

Oh friend, Love must have a little pain! The heart must have pain and the cheeks must be a little yellow. Without pain in the heart and fire in the breast, your claim of fervent devotion is a bit insipid...
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 242)

In weeping {the lover} is like the clouds, in perseverance like the mountains, in prostration like water, in lowliness like dirt in the road. But all these afflictions surround his garden like thorns -- within it are roses, the Beloved, and a flowing fountain. When you pass by the garden's wall and enter into its greenery, you will give thanks and prostrate yourself in gratitude...
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 218-219)

When Thou sendest less heartache to me, I grieve and my heart constricts. But when Thou pourest down heartache upon me, I am put to shame by its gentleness. Thy heartache has not allowed me an instant's heartache -- desire for Thee has not allowed me to be water and clay...

Marvellous pain Thou inflictest that becomes the cure of my pains! Marvellous dust Thou stirrest up that anoints my eyes with collyrium!... Suffering for Thee allows no suffering to come to me -- Thy treasure does not let me be a poor and indigent dervish.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 244)

{God says:}

Ways of worshiping are not to be ranked as better or worse than one another. Hindus do Hindu things. The Dravidian Muslims in India do what they do. It's all praise, and it's all right. It's not me that's glorified in acts of worship. It's the worshipers! I don't hear the words they say. I look inside at the humility. That broken-open lowliness is the reality, not the language! Forget phraseology. I want burning, burning. Be friends with your burning. Burn up your thinking and your forms of expression!
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 166)

Prayer differs according to religion, but faith does not change by religion. Its states, its focus, and so forth, are immutable.
(*Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p. 33)

{God says:}

I have a form and image for each of My servants. Whatever each of them imagines Me to be, that I am. I am bound to images O my servants, cleanse your thoughts, for they are my dwelling places. Now try yourself and see what is more beneficial to you -- weeping, laughter, fasting, prayer, or retreat. Adopt whichever of these suits you best and causes you to advance more.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 51)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Hadith:

God Most High hath said, "I give more to the one who is so occupied with My remembrance that he does not ask things of Me, than I give to the supplicants."

(p. 70)

Anonymous:

I offer to Thee the only thing I have,
My capacity of being filled with Thee.

(p. 97)

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Being devoted

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

... Whoever adores Allah through the fears of the fires of hell or in order to gain Paradise, whoever invokes Him in order that his share in the goods of the world be enlarged, or so that people should turn their faces toward him in order that he be glorified, or to avoid the evil which an oppressor afflicts upon him; or further, if he has heard a [hadith](#) of the Prophet according to which he who accomplishes a certain pious work, or recites a certain invocation, will receive from God some recompense -- whoever does this, his adoration is tainted, and it will not be acceptable to God except by virtue of His grace and of His generosity...

God said, "Whoever hopes to encounter his Lord, let him do pious works and, in the adoration of his Lord, not [associate](#) any being with Him." (Koran 18:110) The things which I have mentioned are the "beings" which are associated with God. Now, God is, of all those that are associated in adoration, the One who absolutely transcends all association. That is why He prescribed to all His servants that they adore Him with a perfectly pure faith which implies the desire for no other recompense than His face... (*Mawqif 4, pp. 37-38*)

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Being humble

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Whenever there remains any support for the ego within, even if it be only an atom's weight, then you are pretentious and have a devil who leads you astray.

(p. 101)

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Being humble

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

O Lord...

Once I wanted You so much

I didn't even dare walk past Your house--

And now

I am not even worthy to be let in

(p. 41)

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Being humble

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Your defects are the ways that glory gets manifested. Whoever sees clearly what's diseased in himself begins to gallop on the way. There's nothing worse than thinking you are well enough. More than anything, self-complacency blocks the workmanship. Put your vileness up to a mirror and weep. Get that self-satisfaction flowing out of you!

(The Essential Rumi, pp. 141-142)

Your loving doesn't know its majesty, until it knows its helplessness.

(The Essential Rumi, pp. 143)

Humble living does not diminish. It fills. Going back to a simpler self gives wisdom.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 146)

So long as you have an iota of self-love left within you, no beloved would pay any attention to you. Neither would you be worthy of union or would any beloved grant you admittance. One must become totally indifferent to the self and inimical to the world in order for the beloved to show his face.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 120)

God's Mercy is water -- it moves only towards low ground. I will become dust and Mercy's object in order to reach the All-Merciful.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 209)

What is pride? Heedlessness of the marrow... Not having lifted their eyes to the kernel of the kernel, they imagine the skin to be the kernel. The leader in this way was [Iblis](#), for he fell prey to the snare of position.

Pride always seeks position and property... For these two nurses increase skin. They stuff it with fat and flesh and pride and arrogance.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 90, somewhat rearranged)

To deem oneself exalted is to claim copartnership with God. As long as you have not died and become living through Him, you are a rebel seeking a realm for your copartnership. When you have become living through Him, you are indeed He. That is utter Oneness, how could that be copartnership?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 183-184)

When [Hallaj's](#) love for God reached its utmost limit, he became his own enemy and naughted himself. He said, "I am God," that is, "I have been annihilated; God remains, nothing else." This is extreme humility and the utmost limit of servanthood. It means, "He alone *is*." To make a false claim and to be proud is to say, "Thou art God and I am the servant." For in this way you are affirming your own existence, and duality is the necessary result... Hence God said, "I am God." Other than He, nothing else existed. Hallaj had been annihilated, so those were the words of God.

[Pharoah said, "I am God,"](#) and became despicable. Hallaj said "I am God," and was saved. That "I" brought with it God's curse, but this "I" brought His Mercy, oh friend! To say "I" at the wrong time is a curse, but to say it at the right time is a mercy. Without doubt Hallaj's "I" was a mercy, but that of

Pharoah became a curse. Note this!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 191-193)

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Being humble

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Sufyan Ath-Thawri:

If someone remarks "What an excellent man you are!" and this pleases you more than his saying, "What a bad man you are!" know that you are still a bad man.

(p. 109)

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Invoking that reality

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Sufism makes of invocation, which is [*dhikr*](#) in the strict and narrow sense of the term, the central instrument of its method... To understand the scope of this method we must recall that, according to the revealed expression, the world was created by the Speech of God, and this indicates a real analogy between the Universal Spirit (*ar-Ruh*) and speech. In invocation the [*ontological*](#) character of the ritual act is very directly expressed: here the simple enunciation of the Divine Name, analogous to the primordial and limitless 'enunciation' of Being, is the symbol of a state or an undifferentiated knowledge superior to mere rational 'knowing'.

The Divine Name, revealed by God Himself, implies a Divine Presence which becomes operative to the extent that the Name takes possession of the mind of him who invokes It. Man cannot concentrate directly on the Infinite, but, by concentrating on the symbol of the Infinite, attains to the Infinite Itself. When the individual subject is identified with the Name to the point where every mental projection has been absorbed by the form of the Name, the Divine Essence of the Name manifests spontaneously, for this sacred form leads to nothing outside itself; it has no positive relationship except with its Essence and finally its limits are dissolved in that Essence. Thus union with the Divine Name becomes Union (*al-wasl*) with God Himself.
(pp. 100-101)

Some **Sayings of the Prophet** ([*hadith*](#)) which support the invocation of the Name:

It is in pronouncing Thy Name that I must die and live.

There is a means for polishing everything which removes rust; what polishes the heart is the invocation of God, and no action puts so far off the chastisement of God as this invocation. The companions said: Is not fighting against infidels like unto it? He replied: No: not even if you fight on till your sword is broken.

Never do men gather together to invoke (or: to remember) God without their being surrounded by angels, without the Divine Favour covering them, without Peace descending on them and without God remembering them with those who surround Him.

The solitaires shall be first. They asked: Who are the solitaires (*al-mufridun*)? And he replied: Those who invoke much.

A Beduin came to the Prophet and asked: Who is the best among men? The Prophet answered: Blessed is that person whose life is long and his actions good. The Beduin said: O Prophet! What is the best and the best rewarded of actions? He replied: The best of actions is this: to separate yourself from the world and to die while your tongue is moist with repeating the Name of God.

A man said: O Prophet of God, truly the laws of Islam are many. Tell me a thing by which I can obtain the rewards. The Prophet answered: Let your tongue be ever moist with mentioning God.

(pp. 102-103)

Some verses of the **Qur'an** which support the invocation of the Name:

'Remember Me and I will remember you...' or 'Mention Me and I will mention you...'
(2:152)

Invoke you Lord with humility and in secret... And invoke Him with fear and desire...
(7:55-56)

To God belong the Fairest Names: invoke Him by them.
(7:180)

Those who believe and whose hearts rest in security in the recollection (or: invocation) of God; Verily is it not through the recollection of God that their hearts find rest in security?
(8:28)

Say Call on *Allah* or call on *Ar-Rahman*; in whatever manner ye invoke Him, His are the most beautiful Names.
(17:110)

In the Messenger of God ye have a beautiful example of him whose hope is in God and the Last Day and who invokes God much.
(33:21)

O ye who believe! invoke God with a frequent invocation (*dhikran kathira*)
(33:41)

And call on God with a pure heart...
(40:14)

Your Lord has said: Call Me and I will answer you...
(40:60)

Call on (or: Remember) the Name of thy Lord and consecrate thyself to Him with (perfect) consecration
(63:8)

Happy is he who purifies himself and invokes the Name of his Lord and prayeth
(87:14-15)

(pp. 101-102)

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Invoking that reality

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Paraphrased: At first is remembrance with the tongue only. The [invoker](#) unceasingly invokes with his tongue, striving for the presence of the heart simultaneously, since the heart must consent to be present in the invocation... Then the light of the heart burns away passions and evil spirits. Its own invocation takes hold and that of the tongue becomes weaker; the body and soul become filled with light; and the heart is purified of other-than-God. At this stage temptations cease...

The sign of the invocation's reaching the innermost Self is the absence of the invoker from both the invocation and the Invoked. The invocation of the Self is ecstasy and drowning in it. Amongst its signs is that when you quit the invocation, it does not quit you. That is the exaltation of the invocation in you that rouses you from absence of mind to presence of mind. Its spiritual lights never disappear...
(pp. 47-48, 50)

Invoking the letters of God's Name without presence of mind is invocation of the tongue; invoking with presence of mind is invocation of the heart; and invoking with an absence of self-awareness because of absorption in the Invoked is the invocation of the Self -- this is the hidden invocation!
(p 51)

... the reality of the invocation is when the Invoked takes possession of the heart, and He is One. Separation and multiplicity exist before that for as long as the invoker is in the station of invoking with the tongue or with the heart.
(p. 117)

As for those who are firmly established and are at the end of the path, invocation occupies their hearts at all times.
(p. 100)

Let your invocation be the all-embracing Name, which is *Allah, Allah, Allah*, or if you so wish, *Huwa, Huwa, Huwa*; and do not violate this remembrance. Be careful lest your tongue pronounce it while other-than-He is in your heart. Let your heart be the one who utters, and your ear the one who is attentive to this invocation until the 'speaker' emanates from your Self (*sirr*). When you feel the emergence of the Speaker within you through the invocation, do not abandon the spiritual condition wherein you find yourself.
(p. 108)

Hadith: God Most High has said, "*La ilaha illa'llah* is My fortress; whosoever enters My fortress is safe from My chastisement."
(p. 154)

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Invoking that reality

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

... what is that cry of the ghouls? "I want wealth, I want position, I want respect." If you prevent these cries from rising up within yourself, then you can be initiated into the mysteries. Invoke God and burn away the cry of the ghouls!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 158)

What is sweeter than the remembrance of the Friend? Hey, do not sit idle like this! Invoke!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 159)

His Name is the Spirit of spirits, His invocation the ruby of the mines. His love is in the soul, He is both our refuge and our hope. When I mention His Name, good fortune arrives; then the Name becomes the Named -- without duality, without hesitation.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 159)

Never be without the remembrance of God, for His remembrance provides the bird of the spirit with strength, feathers, and wings. If your goal becomes actualized completely, that is *Light upon light* (Koran 24:35). But in any case through the remembrance of God your inward will be illuminated and you will achieve a degree of detachment from the world. For instance, look at the bird that wants to fly in heaven: Though it cannot reach heaven, moment by moment it soars farther from earth and higher than other birds. Or consider a small box of musk whose opening is narrow: You put your hand into it, but you cannot bring out the musk; yet your hand becomes perfumed and your senses refreshed. So too is the remembrance of God: Even if you do not reach His Essence, yet His remembrance has numerous effects upon you. You actualize tremendous benefits by invoking Him.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 158)

Brother! To be a lover you must have pain! Where is your pain? Sincerity and patience require a *man*. Where is the man? How much longer will your invocation be congealed and your meditation paralyzed? Where are passionate cries and a yellow face?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, 160)

In remembrance, the millwheel of spirits begins to turn through the water of the eyes. Remembrance is the noose of union with the Beloved -- be silent, for madness has begun to boil!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 160)

God surrounds you with word-soldiers both to repel your enemies and to be a means of overpowering the enemy.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 60)

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Invoking that reality

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Kabir:

The breath that does not repeat the name of God is a wasted breath.
(*p. 63*)

`Abdu'L-Qadir Al-Gilani:

At the first stage one recites the name of God with one's tongue; then when the heart becomes alive one recites inwardly with the heart.
(*p. 65*)

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Surrendering

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

You are so weak. Give up to grace. The ocean takes care of each wave till it gets to shore. You need more help than you know.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 70)

When the vulgar set out on a chase, they are hunting pig: They take infinite pains, but their prey is unlawful to eat. Love alone is worth hunting -- but how can you catch it in your snare? Unless, perhaps, you become His prey: Leave aside your snare and enter His!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 206)

The whole world have taken the wrong way, for they fear nonexistence, while it is their refuge. Where should we seek knowledge? In the abandonment of knowledge. Where should we seek peace? In abandoning peace. Where should we seek existence? In the abandonment of existence. Where should we seek apples? In abandoning our hands.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 175-176)

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Surrendering

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Rumi:

You imagined that you would accomplish this task through your own strength, activity, and effort. This is the wont that I have established: expend everything you have in Our way. Then Our bounty will come to you. On this endless road, We command you to travel with your own feeble hands and feet. We know that you cannot traverse this way with feet so feeble. Indeed, in a hundred thousand years you will not arrive at the first way station. However, when you travel this road until your legs are exhausted and you fall down flat, until you have no more strength to move forward, then God's grace will take you in its arms.

(p. 92)

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Grace

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi in his The Wisdom of the Prophets, the chapter on Seth:

... It is clearly beyond the faculties of the creature as such... to know with Divine Knowledge which embraces the archetypes..., these archetypes being only pure relationships (within) the Essence and without form. (*Paraphrased*: However, such knowledge is possible for the creature via participation in Divine Knowledge, such participation being a type of divine aid to the creature)...

(p. 111)

(*Paraphrased*: Spiritual identification with the Divine Subject is realized) 'by virtue of a certain content of the immutable essence of that being, a content he himself will recognize as soon as God makes him to see it.' This is as much as to say that knowledge of oneself flows from the 'Self'.

(p. 112)

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Grace

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

God Most High says, "... if he approaches Me a span, I approach him a cubit; if he approaches Me a cubit, I approach him a fathom; and if he comes to Me walking, I come to him running.

(pp. 59-60)

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Grace

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Grace manifested as Severity

Every heartache and suffering that enters your body and heart pulls you by the ear to the promised Abode.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 238)

He has afflicted you from every direction in order to pull you back to the Directionless.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 238)

In spite of all the world's bitterness, you are passionately and shamelessly attached to it. Know that bitter tribulation is a Mercy!... The cruelty of Time and of every suffering that exists is easier than distance from God and heedlessness. For that cruelty will pass, but distance from Him will not. No one possesses good fortune but he who takes to Him an aware spirit.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 57-58)

God said, "It is not because he is despicable that I delay My gift to him: That very delay is an aid. His need brought him from heedlessness to Me, pulling him by the hair to My lane. Were I to satisfy his need, he would go back and immerse himself in that game. Although he laments to the bottom of his soul: "Oh Thou whose protection is sought!"-- let him weep with broken heart and wounded breast. For I am pleased by his voice, his saying, "Oh God!" and his secret prayers... Know for certain that this is the reason the believers suffer disappointment in good and evil.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 243)

Severity is truly awesome, but once you begin to tremble, that awesomeness becomes soft and smooth; for the awesome shape is aimed at the [denier](#) -- once you become helpless, it turns into Gentleness and Kindness.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 47)

Like fish we say to the Ocean of Life, "Why didst Thou send up waves and throw us onto the driness of water and clay? Thou possessest such mercy, why didst Thou give us such torment? Oh, Thy mercilessness is sweeter than the mercy of all the merciful creatures of the world!"...

The answer comes, "Oh fish! True enough, a fish knows the water's worth, loves the sea, and clings to union with it. But his love is not of the same kind, so hot and burning, with such self-abandonment, with such lamentation and weeping of blood, and with such roasting of the liver, as the love of that fish who has been thrown upon dry land by the waves and for a long time struggles and tosses upon the hot earth and burning sand... How should someone who has seen that Ocean find joy in this life?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 70-71)

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Grace

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Maghribi:

Until the beam of His love shines out to guide the soul,
It does not set out to behold the love of His Face.
My heart feels not the slightest attraction toward Him
Until an attraction comes from Him and works upon my heart.
Since I learnt that He longs for me, longing for Him never leaves me for an instant.
(p. 55)

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The teacher

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

Ibn `Arabi was above all the disciple of Khidr *{an invisible master}*... such a relationship with a hidden spiritual master lends the disciple an essentially "transhistorical" dimension and presupposes an ability to experience events which are enacted in a reality other than the physical reality of daily life, events which spontaneously transmute themselves into symbols.

(p. 32)

Khidr *{is}* experienced simultaneously as a person and as an archetype... To have him as a master and initiate is to be obliged to *be* what he himself *is*. Khidr is the master of all those who are masterless, because he *shows* all those whose master he is how to *be* what he himself is: he who has attained the Spring of Life... he who has attained *haqiqa*, the mystic, esoteric truth which dominates the Law, and frees us from the literal religion. Khidr is the master of *all* these, because he shows *each one* how to attain the spiritual state which he himself has attained and which he typifies...

Indeed, Khidr's "guidance" does not consist in leading all his disciples uniformly to the same goal, to one [theophany](#) identical for all, in the manner of a theologian propagating his dogma. He leads each disciple to his own theophany, the theophany of which he personally is the witness, because that theophany corresponds to his "inner heaven," to the form of his own being, to his eternal individuality (*`ayn thabita*), in other words, to what Abu Yazid Bastami calls the "part allotted" to each of the Spirituals and which, in Ibn `Arabi's words, is that one of the [divine Names](#) which is invested in him, the name by which he knows his God and by which His God knows him... In Semnani's words, we should say that the Khidr's mission consists in enabling you to attain to the "Khidr of your being," for it is in this inner depth... that springs the Water of Life at the foot of the mystic Sinai...

(pp. 60-61)

He ... who is the disciple of Khidr possesses sufficient inner strength to seek freely the teaching of all masters. Of this the biography of Ibn `Arabi, who frequented all the masters of his day and welcomed their teachings, offers living proof.

(p. 67)

All those among the Sufis who had no visible *murshid* (guide), that is, an earthly man like themselves and a contemporary, called themselves Uwaysis. One of the most famous was abu'l-Hasan Kharraqani (d. 425/1034), an Iranian Sufi, who left us the following saying:

I am amazed at those disciples who declare that they require this or that master. You are perfectly well aware that I have never been taught by any man. God was my guide, though I have the greatest respect for all the masters.

(pp. 32-33)

... each person is *oriented* toward a quest for his personal invisible guide, or ... he entrusts himself to the collective, magisterial authority as the intermediary between himself and Revelation.

(p. 33)

All these are matters that cannot be taught uniformly to all, because each man is the measure of what he can understand and of what, in accordance with the "economy" of esoterism, it is fitting to set before

him.
(p. 88)

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The teacher

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Whosoever is determined to seek guidance and follow a path of right conduct must search for a shaykh from amongst those who have realization, one who follows a path methodically, who has abandoned his passions, and who has firmly established his feet in the service of his Lord.

(p. 94)

Extinction is the beginning of the path: it is travelling to God Most High. Guidance comes afterwards. What I mean by guidance is the guidance of God, as described by the Friend of God, Abraham: "Lo! I am going unto my Lord Who will guide me."

(p. 49)

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The teacher

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

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The Shaykh speaks

I am your heart: Seek not your heart from yourself, seek it from me... If you consider yourself other than me, then you do not know yourself; you are full of suffering and tribulation.

Come, you are part of me! Separate not the part from the whole! Cling to your whole, for it is great!...

Without me, you will not be delivered...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 137-138)

Look at *me*! If you gaze at anyone else, for certain you are unaware of love for God! Behold the face that has received its radiance from God! Perhaps all at once you may win good fortune from it.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 344)

Why associate with a shaykh?

If you want dervishhood, spiritual poverty, and emptiness, you must be friends with a sheikh. Talking about it, reading books, and doing practices don't help. Soul receives from soul that knowing.

(The Essential Rumi, p.255)

The old man of your [intellect](#) has become accustomed to childishness by being the neighbor of the ego, which is naught but a veil. Make your intellect the companion of the Intellect of a perfect shaykh, so that your intellect may return from its bad habits...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 138)

Intellect is a man's wings and feathers. If he lacks intellect, then let him find the intellect of a guide...

Without the key of the intellect, knocking upon God's door is a result of self-will, not sound motives.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 125)

Nothing kills the ego but the shadow of the shaykh: Cling tightly to the skirt of that ego-killer!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 193)

When you are with a shaykh, you are far from ugliness, traveling night and day in a ship. Protected by the spirit of a spirit-bestower, you sleep in the ship and travel forward.

Do not break with the prophet of your time! Do not rely on your own skills and footsteps! Though you be a lion, if you travel the Path without a guide, you will be a self-seer, astray and contemptible.

Beware! Fly only with the shaykh's wings so that you may behold the aid of his armies! At one moment the wave of his gentleness becomes your wing; at the next, his severity's fire carries you forward...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 139)

Whoever enters the Way without a guide will take a hundred years to travel a two-day journey...

Whoever undertakes a profession without a master becomes the laughingstock of city and town.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 123)

God does not speak to everyone, just as the kings of this world do not speak to every weaver. They appoint ministers and representatives so that through them people may find the way to them. In the same way God has singled out certain servants so that everyone who seeks Him may find Him within them.

All the prophets have come for this reason. Only they are the Way.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 122)

Still unconvinced

You are obstinate and say, "I am a [Possessor of the Heart](#). I have no need for anyone else, I am in union with God"...

Imagining this polluted thing to be a heart, you turn your heart away from the Possessor of the Heart. Do you really allow that this object fascinated by milk and honey can be a heart? ... Does a heart fall in love with property and position and submit itself to this black water and clay, or to fantasies, worshiping them in darkness for the sake of empty talk? The heart is nothing but that Ocean of Light. Is the heart to be the locus for God's vision, and then blind?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 40)

This man is like [Iblis](#), for his pride and blind imitation make him disdain service to the saint. He says "God is sufficient as an object of my prostration."

Adam answers him, "This prostration is to Him. You see two because you have gone astray and denied."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 84)

Relating to the shaykh

There are guides who can show you the way. Use them, but they will not satisfy your longing. Keep wanting that connection with all your pulsing energy.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 152)

Words are just pretexts. It is the element of sympathy that attracts one man to another, not words. If a man should see a thousand prophetic or saintly miracles, it will profit him nothing if he does not have sympathy with the prophet or saint. It is that sympathetic element that unsettles and disquiets.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 7)

Your old grandmother says, "Maybe you shouldn't go to school. You look a little pale." Run when you hear that. A father's stern slaps are better. Your bodily soul wants comforting. The severe father wants spiritual clarity. He scolds but eventually leads you into the open. Pray for a tough instructor to hear and act and stay within you.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 115)

Insist on the real thing

The imitator gives expression to a hundred proofs, but he speaks from discursive reasoning, not direct vision. He is musk-scented but not musk; he smells like musk but is only dung.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 127)

In their fine exterior you see ascetics, but inwardly -- God does not inhabit the house! For two farthings one can buy three or four assloads of these big ducks!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 145-147)

A disciple who is trained by a man of God will have a pure and purified spirit. But he who is trained by an impostor and hypocrite and who learns theory from him will be just like him: despicable, weak, incapable, morose, without any exit from uncertainties, and deficient in all his senses...

You are the disciple and guest of someone who in his vileness will steal away all your attainments. He is not victorious -- how will he make you victorious? He will not give you light, he will make you dark. Since he has no light, how can others receive light through associating with him?... He has no scent or trace of God, but his claims are greater than those of Seth or Adam. The devil himself is embarrassed to appear before him; he keeps on saying, "We are of the saints and even greater."

He steals many of the words of the dervishes, so that people may think he really is someone... He is destitute of the bread and provisions of heaven: God has not thrown him a single bone...

For years disciples have gathered at this door, depending on his promise of a tomorrow that never comes. It takes time for the inward nature of man to become apparent in his great and small affairs: Does a treasure lie under the wall of the body, or do snakes, ants, and dragons make it their abode? When it finally becomes clear that he was nothing, the seeker's life has passed: How will the knowledge profit him then?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 146)

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The teacher

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Abu Sa'id Ibn Abi-L-Khayr:

Abu Sa'id was asked, "If someone wishes, is it possible to travel the mystic path without a teacher?"

The Sheik replied, "It is impossible because someone is required to guide him along the way..."
(p. 35)

Kalabadhi:

The only guide to God is God Himself.
(p. 45)

Jami:

When it is possible to hear the Beloved speak Himself, why listen to second-hand reports?
(p. 59)

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The teacher

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

Oh, you who believe! Fear Allah, and seek a means of access to Him, and struggle on His way; perhaps you will succeed! (Koran 5:35)

Commentary: ... God commands believers to practice the fear of Him. This corresponds to what is called... the "station of repentance" which is the basis of all progress on the Way and the key which permits one to arrive at the "station of realization"...

After that God says to us: "And seek a means of access to Him"... The means is a (spiritual) master whose initiatic lineage (*nisba*) is faultless, who has a veritable knowledge of the Way, of the deficiencies which obstruct it and the illnesses which prevent the arrival at [Gnosis](#); and who possesses a proven science of healing, and of the temperaments and dispositions and their appropriate remedies. There is absolute unanimity among the People of Allah on the fact that, in the Way toward Gnosis, a "means of access", that is to say, a master, is indispensable. Books can in no way take the place of a master, at least from the time that supernatural inspirations (*al-waridat*), illuminations of [theophanies](#) (*bawariq al-tajalliyyat*) and spiritual events (*al-waqi'at*) begin. When that happens, it becomes necessary to explain to the disciple what in all that should be accepted or rejected; what is sound and what is tainted. However, at the beginning of the Way he can be satisfied with books which deal with pious behaviour and with spiritual combat in its most general sense.

"And struggle on His Way": this is an order to do battle after having found a master. It is a matter of a special holy war (*jihad*), which is carried out under the command of the master and according to the rules which he prescribes. One cannot have confidence in a spiritual combat carried on in the absence of the master, except in very exceptional cases... The dispositions of beings are varied, their temperaments are very different one from another and something which is profitable for one can be harmful for another.

(*Mawqif* 197, pp. 49-50)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Paraphrased: The 'veil' (al-hijab) which has to be rent is *not* the individual human nature, but the act of attributing an autonomous character to this individual nature. Only the Essence Itself is truly autonomous.

(p. 107)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

Indeed as Jalaluddin Rumi also says, each of our [eternal individualities](#) is a word, a divine Word, emitted by the Breath of Divine Compassion. When this Word penetrates the mystic's heart... that is, when the "secret of his Lord" unfolds to his consciousness, when divine inspiration invests his heart and soul, "his nature is such that there is born within him a spiritual Child (*walad ma`nawi*) having the breath of Christ which resuscitates the dead."

(p. 172)

{One of the most characteristic ways that Ibn `Arabi uses the terms "[fana](#)" and "[baqa](#)":} to return to oneself after dying away, to endure after annulment.

(p. 212)

... to be in the state of [fana](#)... does not signify the annulment or destruction of the Sufi's person but an initial test which is intended to preserve him ever after from false discriminations (e.g. to preserve him from the dogmatic embodiments of the "[God created in the faiths](#)"). This experience is prerequisite to the authentic *discrimination* which the mystic will subsequently reintroduce between Creator and Creature (corresponding to the state of [baqa](#)', persistence).

(p. 227)

When the Divine Being is epiphanized to the believer in the form of his faith, this faith is true. He professes this faith in this world. But when the veil is lifted in the other world, the knot (*`aqd*), that is to say, the dogma (*`aqida*) which binds him to his particular faith, is untied; dogma gives way to knowledge by direct vision (*mushahada*). For the man of authentic faith, capable of spiritual vision, this is the beginning of an ascending movement after death.

... in Ibn `Arabi Resurrection must also be taken in the initiatic sense of a new spiritual birth in *this* world. These "resurrected ones" obtain from God something which previously, before the lifting of the veil of ignorance, they had not seen in the Divine Ipseity, namely, an increasing capacity for acceptance of forms *{or manifestations of God}* forever new.

(pp. 205-206)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

Rabi'a's Dream:

{I dreamt about a young girl who led me to a magnificent palace}. The young girl knocked on the door, and someone opened it. Immediately both of us were flooded by light.

... Each *{maiden in the palace}* carried in her hand a serving-tray filled with light. The young girl asked the maidens where they were going, and they answered her, "We are looking for someone who was drowned in the sea, and so became a martyr. She [never slept](#) at night, not one wink! We are going to rub funeral spices on her body."

"Then rub some on my friend here," the young girl said.

"Once upon a time," said the maidens, "part of this spice and the fragrance of it clung to her body -- but then she shied away."

Quickly the young girl let go of my hand, turned, and said to me:

... Your life is the only opportunity that life can give you.
If you ignore it, if you waste it,
You will only turn into dust.

Then the young girl disappeared.

(p. 49)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

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Why be created anew?

When the guests called love come they will not fit into the house *{i.e. the lower self}*, and so it is pulled down and built anew. The king's trappings, his retinue, troops, and camp followers will not fit into the house. This gate is not worthy of those trappings. Such an infinitely numerous retinue can fit only in an infinite space.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 165)

The bliss of annihilation

The mystery of "Die before death" is this: After dying come the spoils. Other than dying no other skill avails with God, oh worker of deception!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 183)

I have been so naughted in Thy Love's existence that my nonexistence is a thousand times sweeter than my existence.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 298)

What a shame, my ass is gone! My ass suddenly died! Thanks be to God: Ass's dung has gone far from my doorstep! The death of asses is difficult, but in my case, it was good luck. For now that my ass has gone, Jesus is beside me. How I have become exhausted and spent looking for pails of fodder! I became emaciated and bent for the sake of my emaciated ass! What that ass did to me, no vicious wolf could ever do. Most of me has been lost, by God, through the pain and heartache it inflicted.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 34)

Death experienced as selflessness

God calls, ... "Come out of your selves quickly, or else every instant will be a shackle, every two paces snares and traps." Come out of ourselves? But to where? To selflessness! Selflessness is meaning, *meaning!* Self-consciousness is names, *names!*

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 174)

Try to dissolve out of selfishness into a voice beyond those limits.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 250)

I will come to myself the instant I am obliterated and made selfless: I am complete only when outside of the five senses and four elements.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 174)

For years I pulled my own existence out of emptiness. Then one swoop, one swing of the arm, that work is over. Free of who I was, free of presence, free of dangerous fear, hope, free of mountainous wanting.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 21)

Selflessness opens the door to non-duality and gnosis

With God, two *I*'s cannot find room. You say *I* and He says *I*. Either you die before Him, or let Him die before you; then duality will not remain. But it is impossible for Him to die, either subjectively or objectively, since He is *the Living God, the Undying* (Koran 25:58). He possesses such Gentleness that were it possible, He would die for you so that duality might vanish. But since it is impossible for Him to die, you die, so that He may manifest Himself to you and duality may vanish.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 191)

To deem oneself exalted is to claim copartnership with God. As long as you have not died and become living through Him, you are a rebel seeking a realm for your copartnership. When you have become living through Him, you are indeed He. That is utter Oneness, how could that be copartnership?

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 183-184)

When you have set in the west, then your light will rise from the east. The heart was dumbfounded by the I-hood of Eternity -- its own I-hood became insipid and disgraced. The spirit became joyful through the I-less *I*; it fled from the *I* of the world. When it escaped from the *I*, then it became *I*. Praise be to this *I* without affliction!... When will this *I* ever be revealed by way of thought? This *I* will only be unveiled after annihilation.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 193)

"You can't imagine how I've looked for something for you. Nothing seemed appropriate. You don't take gold down into a goldmine, or a drop of water to the Sea of Oman! Everything I thought of was like bringing cumin seed to Kirmanshah where cumin comes from. You have all seeds in your barn. You even have my love and my soul, so I can't even bring those. I've brought you a mirror. Look at yourself, and remember me."

He took the mirror out from his robe where he was hiding it. What is the mirror of being? Non-being. Always bring a mirror of non-existence as a gift. Any other present is foolish.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 141)

How to die

Spiritual poverty:

The meaning of dying is need: Make yourself dead in need and poverty, so that Jesus' breath may bring you to life and make it like itself: beautiful and auspicious. When did stones ever become green through spring? Become dust, so that you may grow up as multicolored roses. For years you have been heart-scratching stone -- try for a time being dust!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 282)

The shaykh:

Your sense and thoughts are all fire, but the senses and thoughts of the [shayhk](#) are sweet light.

When the water of his light drips upon your fire, it sizzles and jumps up. As it sizzles and splatters, call it "death" and "pain" -- until this hell of your ego becomes cold.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 240)

Nothing kills the ego but the shadow of the shaykh: Cling tightly to the skirt of that ego-killer!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 193)

Devotion:

You are God's lover, and God is such that when He comes, not a single hair of you will remain. Before His glance, a hundred like you are annihilated... You are a shadow in love with the sun. The sun comes, and the shadow is quickly naughted.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 216)

Love is for vanishing into the sky.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 107)

What is it to know something of God? Burn inside that presence. Burn up.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 62)

Say Bismillar, *In the name of God*, as the priest does with a knife when he offers an animal.

Bismillar your old self to find your [real name](#).

(The Essential Rumi, p. 70)

Grace:

His Image kept on gazing more strongly and obliterated me in its heat. I was naughted by that uproar, naughted, naughted! Both greatness and smallness left me.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 264)

I am scrap wood thrown in your fire, and quickly reduced to smoke. I saw you and became empty. This emptiness, more beautiful than existence, it obliterates existence, and yet when it comes, existence thrives and creates more existence!

The sky is blue. The world is a blind man squatting on the road.

But whoever sees your emptiness sees beyond blue and beyond the blind man.

(The Essential Rumi, pp. 104-105)

Physical death vs. ego death

All of this dying is not the death of the form, for this body is nothing but the spirit's instrument. Indeed, the blood of many an unripe man has been shed outwardly while his living ego fled to the other side. The instrument was broken, but the brigand remained; the ego is alive, but the blood of its mount has been spilled. His horse was killed before he traversed the Path: He remained nothing but unripe, ugly, and distraught. Were everyone whose blood is spilled a martyr, a slain unbeliever would be a saint ...

Oh, there is many a trusty, martyred ego that has died in this world but walks about like the living. The brigand spirit has died, but its sword remains in the hand of the warrior. The sword is the same sword, but the man is not the same man -- the form confuses you. Once the ego has been transformed, the sword -- the body -- is held in the hand of the Bountiful Lord's craftsmanship.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 185-186)

Both a swimmer and a drowned man are in the water; the latter is borne by the water and controlled by it, while the swimmer is borne along by his own power and of his own volition. Every movement made by the drowned man -- indeed, every act and word that issue from him -- comes from the water, not from him... The saints are like this. They have died before death.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 76)

His ego falls like a battered wall. He unites with God, alive, but emptied of Nasuh (i.e. himself).

(The Essential Rumi, p. 163)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Al-Junayd:

Sufism means that God causes you to die to yourself and gives you life in Him.
(*p. 4*)

Rumi:

A certain person came to the Friend's door and knocked.

"Who's there?"

"It's me."

The Friend answered "Go away. There's no place for raw meat at this table."

The individual went wandering for a year.

Nothing but the fire of separation can change hypocrisy and ego. The person returned completely cooked,
walked up and down in front of the Friend's house,
gently knocked.

"Who is it?"

"You."

"Please come in, my Self, there's no place in this house for two."
(*p. 193*)

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Dying and being reborn

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

There are two kinds of death, the death which is inevitable and common to all beings, and the death which is voluntary and particular to certain ones of them only. It is the second death which is prescribed for us in the words of the Messenger of Allah: "Die before you die." The resurrection is accomplished for him who dies this voluntary death. His affairs return to God and they are but one. He has returned to God and he sees Him through Him. As the Prophet said -- on him be Grace and Peace! -- according to a tradition reported by Tabarani, "You will not see your Lord before being dead" and that is because, in the contemplation of this dead-resurrected one, all creatures are annihilated, and for him only one thing exists, one Reality only. Whatever will be the lot of the believers in their posthumous states is prefigured in one degree or another in this life for the initiates. The "return" of things -- considered in relation to [the diversity of] their forms -- to Allah and the end of their becoming, expresses only a change of cognitive status and not at all a modification of the reality. For him who dies and achieves the resurrection, the multiple is one, by reason of its essential unity; and the One is multiple, by reason of the multiplicity in Him of relations and aspects.

(Mawqif 221, pp. 51-52)

God has stolen my [illusory] "I" from me and has brought me near to my [real] "I" ... The colors have returned to the pure primordial white. The voyage has reached its end and everything other than Him has ceased to exist. All attribution, every aspect and all relation being abolished, the original state is re-established.

(Mawqif 7, p. 29)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

If ... the Spirit gains the victory over the soul, then the heart will be transformed into Spirit and will at the same time transmute the soul suffusing her with spiritual light. Then too the heart reveals itself as what it really is, that is as the tabernacle of the Divine Mystery in man.

(p. 27)

Paraphrased: A spiritual [state](#) (*al-hal*) is a passing immersion of the soul in the Divine Light. According to their intensity and duration 'states' are spoken of as 'glimmers', 'flashes', 'irradiation', etc. A spiritual station is a state that has become permanent.

(p. 88)

The vital spirit, called *ar-ruh* by analogy with the transcendent Spirit ... is a subtle modality intermediate between the immortal soul and the body... This vital spirit is relatively undifferentiated; it includes not only the spatially delimited body but also the sensory faculties with their spheres of experience.

Ordinarily man is not aware of it, but in certain states of realization this spirit becomes the vehicle for a diffused spiritual light which may even radiate externally.

(p. 97)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi:

the 'spiritual state' (*al-hal*), the sudden illumination of the heart, is brought about by the reciprocal action of the divine irradiation and the predisposition of the heart. According to the point of view adopted, one or the other of these two poles will appear as the determining factor and the other as determined...

(p. 108)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

[Invoking](#) removes darkness and brings forth radiant lights.

(p. 77)

When the invocation descends into the heart, if there is darkness within, it illuminates it; and if there is already light, the invocation increases the light and intensifies it.

(p. 69)

Whosoever perseveres in the invocation will find that lights come to him constantly and that the veils of invisible things are lifted from him.

(p. 94)

(*Paraphrased:* As long as an individual's heart is filled with the tendency towards what is other-than-God Most High, there is no Certitude about God.)

When certitude about God Most High does occur in the heart...the heart becomes tranquil through the Majesty of God; then it abstains from what is other-than-God. So, it stands weak and is compelled to cry out to God for help. Then He who responds to the necessitous when they cry out to Him, responds to it. That radiant light settles into the heart and the darkness of preoccupation with what is other-than-God is extinguished therewith. Then the reality of the Realm (*al-Malakut*) becomes visible to it, and that is what Harithah meant when he said to the Messenger of God: "It is as if I see the Throne of my Lord distinctly." And the Messenger of God said, "The Light of God Most High is faith in one's heart."

(p. 150)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

I look everywhere for your love--
Then suddenly I am filled with it.
O Captain of my Heart,
Radiant Eye of Yearning in my breast...
(p. 47)

(For more on light, also see [Rabi'a's dream](#),)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

The house of the heart that remains without illumination from the rays of the Magnificent Sun is narrow and dark like a miser's soul, empty of the Loving King's sweet taste. The Sun's light does not shine in that heart, space does not expand, doors do not open: The grave would be more pleasant for you -- so come, arise from the tomb of your heart!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 37)

Wait for the illuminating openness, as though your chest were filling with light, as when God said, *Did we not expand you?* (Koran 94:1).

(The Essential Rumi, p. 255)

The Image of the heart-expanding Moon entered my heart. Since there is neither road nor door, I wonder from whence He came... How happy is my firelike, iron heart as the locus of His Light! Does not a mirror rejoice when purity enters?... The attributes of human nature have been annihilated, the Attributes of God have come!... All pride has gone, all Glory has come!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 264-265)

At the time of union, only God knows what that Moon is! For even during separation, what incredible joy and expansion of spirit!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 244)

Oh my moon, my bright candle! From the time I first saw Thy Face, wherever I sit I am joyful, wherever I go I dwell in the midst of roses. Wherever the King's Image may be, that is a garden and place of contemplation; whatever station I enter, I am wrapped in pleasure. Although the doors of this six-sided monastery are closed, the Moon-faced Beloved sticks His head in my window from No-place.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 298)

How could the rays of God's light fit into the heart? Yet when you search you will find it there, not from the point of view of containment such that it could be said that the light is *in* that place. You will find it *through* that place ...

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 173)

The window determines how much light enters the house, even if the moon's radiance fills the east and the west.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 10)

He is overflowing with God's light -- he has broken the cup of the body, he is Absolute Light.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 314)

... the reality of day is the inmost consciousness of the saints: Beside their noon, day is but a shadow.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 100)

When man receives light from God, he becomes the object of the angel's prostration, since he was chosen...

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 193)

Do you know what shines into the heart's mirror? Only he who knows purity knows the Image displayed there.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 263)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Rumi:

My heart is *light upon light*, a beautiful Mary with Jesus in the womb.
(p. 116)

Al-Hakim At-Tirmidhi:

When one sees the Glory and Majesty of God in His Realm then all the lights become one light and the chest becomes full with this shining light.
(p. 120)

`Abdu'L-Qadir Al-Gilani:

Dear friend, your heart is a polished mirror. You must wipe it clean of the veil of dust which has gathered upon it, because it is destined to reflect the light of divine secrets. When the light from *Allah*, (Who) *is the light of the heavens and the earth* begins to shine upon the regions of your heart, the lamp of the heart will be lit...

It is your private sun, for you are the one *whom Allah guides*...
(pp. 118-119)

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Seeing the light

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

The diurnal sun sets at night, but the sun of the heart never disappears.

(*Mawquif* 172, p. 72)

His light spreads out and this operation expresses nothing other than the ordered unfolding of His attributes over the non-being. What is called "the possibles" are those things which show themselves capable of receiving that light and those which are called "the impossibles" are those which are unable to receive the light. It is to just this that the Prophet -- upon Him be Grace and Peace! -- alluded when He said, "Allah created the creatures in the darkness, then He sprinkled them with His light. Those who were touched by some of this light are on the good way; and those who failed to be touched by it are astray."

(*Mawqif* 287, p. 86)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi, in his Wisdom of the Prophets:

*(Paraphrased: Supreme Union is the mutual interpenetration of Divinity and man;) God, as it were, takes on human nature, while the Divine nature (*al-Lahut*) becomes the content of human nature (*an-Nasut*)... From another angle, man is absorbed and, as it were, enveloped by Divine Reality. God is mysteriously present in man and man is obliterated in God...*

In the first mode God reveals Himself as the real Self which knows through the faculties of perception of man and acts through his faculties of action. In the second and inverse mode man moves, so to speak, in the dimensions of the Divine Existence, which in relation to him is polarized so that to each human faculty or quality there corresponds a Divine aspect.
(p. 77)

(Paraphrased: Regarding the mutual penetration of the Divinity and the perfect man,) **Ibn 'Arabi** compares this penetration to the assimilation of food, which (symbolizes) assimilation by knowledge. God 'feeds' on man and for his part man 'feeds' on God; he 'eats' God... And this recalls the Hindu proverb that 'man becomes food for the Divinity he adores'... (and) the Christian Eucharist clearly symbolizes the same aspect of Union.
(p. 81)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi:

*(Paraphrased: He who receives the 'revelation' of the Essence (*Tajalli dhati*) sees in the Divine Mirror only his own archetypal 'form'. However he understands that it is only by virtue of this Divine Mirror that he sees his 'form'.)*

Commentary:

... The reflected 'form' does not essentially hide the mirror, since the mirror manifests the form and we know implicitly that we see it only by virtue of the mirror. The spiritual point of view inherent in this symbolism is analogous to that of the Vedanta (of Hindusim). This impossibility of grasping the mirror 'objectively' at the same time as we contemplate our image in it expresses the ungraspable character of [Atman](#), the Absolute 'Subject', of which all things, including the individual subject, are only illusory 'objectifications'. Like the expression 'Divine Subject', the symbol of the mirror evokes a polarity whereas the Essence is beyond all dualism such as that of 'subject' and 'object'...
(pp. 111-112)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi)

... the mystic [Ka`aba](#) is the heart of being. It has been said to him: "The Temple which contains Me is in your heart." The mystery of the Divine Essence is no other than the Temple of the heart, and it is around the heart that the spiritual pilgrim [circumambulates](#).

(pp. 279-280)

... the Beloved becomes a mirror reflecting the secret face of the mystic lover, while the lover, purified of the opacity of his ego, becomes in turn a mirror of the attributes and actions of the Beloved.

(p. 71)

God [epiphanizes](#) Himself to the soul according to the essence of that soul, which is at once physical and spiritual. Then the soul becomes aware that it sees God, but through Him, not through itself; it loves only Him, not through itself, but in such a way that it is He who loves Himself; it is not the soul which loves Him; it contemplates God in every being, but thanks to a gaze which is the divine gaze itself. It becomes aware that He loves no other than Himself; He is the Lover and the Beloved, He who seeks and He who is sought.

(p. 332, quoting from the "Futuhāt" by Ibn `Arabi)

What a man attains at the summit of his mystic experience is not, and cannot be, the Divine Essence in its undifferentiated unity. And that is why Ibn `Arabi rejected the pretension of certain mystics who claimed "to become one with God."

What a human being attains in mystic experience is the "celestial pole" of his being, that is, his person as the person in whom and by whom the Divine Being manifested Himself to Himself in the origin of origins, ... the Form in which He knew Himself in that person. What he attains is the Idea or rather the "Angel" of his person, of which his present self is only the terrestrial pole; not, of course, the "guardian Angel" of orthodox theology...

(p. 273)

{The Angel spoken of by Ibn `Arabi} is not a simple messenger transmitting orders... This Angel is bound up with the idea that the Form under which each of the Spirituals knows God is also the form under which God knows him, because it is the form under which God reveals Himself to Himself in that man... {The Angel} is the "part allotted" to each Spiritual, his absolute individuality, the [divine Name](#) invested in him.

(pp. 62-63)

"O serene soul! Return to your Lord, joyful and pleasing in His sight." (Qur'an LXXXIX: 27)

{Commentary:}... the soul is not enjoined to return to God in general, to *Al-Lah*, who is the All, but to its [own Lord](#), manifested in it...

(p. 132)

"Enter my Paradise." (Qur'an XXXIX:29)

{Commentary:}... that Paradise which is none other than yourself, that is to say, the divine form hidden in your being, the secret primordial Image in which He knows himself in you and by you,

the image you must contemplate in order to become aware that "he who knows himself knows his Lord." And to the Gnostic who in this "himself" attains the coalescence of the Creator and the creature, this is the supreme joy..."

(p. 132)

... it is through and in *your* Lord that you can attain to the Lord of Lords who manifests Himself in each Lord, that is to say, it is by your fidelity to this Lord who is absolutely your own, it is in His divine Name which you serve, that the totality of the Names becomes present to you, for spiritual experience does not achieve this totality as one gathers the pieces of a collection or the concepts of a philosophical system. The mystic's fidelity to *his own* Lord frees him from the dilemma of monism or pluralism. Thus the divine Name to which and for which he responds, performs the "function of the Angel"...

(p. 133)

O marvel! a garden among the flames...

My heart has become capable of all forms.

It is a meadow for gazelles and a monastery for Christian monks,

A temple for idols and the pilgrim's [Ka`aba](#),

The Tables of the Law and the book of the Koran.

I profess the religion of Love, and whatever direction

Its steed may take, Love is my religion and my faith.

(p. 135, quoting from the "Diwan" by Ibn `Arabi)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Know that the science of unveiling has no end to it, for it consists in the journey of the intellect in the stations of Majesty, Beauty, Sublimeness, Grandeur, and Holiness...

He to whom the mysteries of [La ilaha illa'llah](#) are revealed draws near to God, and his worship of God becomes sincere. He does not turn to anyone but to Him, nor does he have hope in or fear other than Him, nor does he see harm or benefit except as coming from Him. He abandons whosoever is not He and rids himself of inward and outward associationism (*shirk*).

(*p. 140*)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya)

I swear that ever since the first day You brought me back to life,
The day You became my Friend,
I have [not slept](#) --
And even if You drive me from your door,
I swear again that we will never be separated--
Because You are alive in my heart.
(p. 51)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

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Transitional vs. Permanent Union

William C. Chittick's commentary:

... until the traveler reaches the very highest stages of sanctity, the station of union will be temporary, followed by at least a relative separation. The well-known Sufi terms "expansion" (*bast*) and "contraction" (*qabd*) refer to the experience of various degrees of relative union and separation...

At the highest stages, "union" is equivalent of "subsistence" in God. Subsistence in turn is the other side of annihilation: Annihilation, or the negation of self, results in subsistence, or the affirmation of Self. Union with God is self-annihilation, so separation from Him is self-existence...

... During the spiritual journey, man undergoes consecutive experiences of separation and union, or death and life. But each time he dies and is reborn, he moves closer to the ultimate station of subsistence and "[I am God](#)."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 232-234)

Rumi:

My life is union with Thee, my death separation -- Thou hast made me unparalleled in both arts.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 233)

Farness from Thee is a death full of pain and torment, especially the farness that comes after union!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 245)

Since Thou displayed the garden of Nonexistence, how should we have patience with existence? When a spirit has found union and intoxication, what will be its state in separation's winesickness? How could that house remain standing whose pillar Thou hast broken down through separation? Oh drunken brain, you thought you had escaped from the suffering of winesickness! But in Love, there are union and separation -- on the road, there are ups and downs. Though you know God in one respect, in ten respects you worship water and clay! You still must travel a long journey before you reach the place you seek in your madness.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 325)

What can I say about the stations of those who have attained union except that they are infinite, while the stations of the travelers have a limit? The limit of the travelers is union. But what could be the limit of those in union? -- that is, that union which cannot be marred by separation. No ripe grape ever again becomes green, and no mature fruit ever again becomes raw.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 247)

When the spirit is delivered from infancy it enters union, free of sense perception, ideation, and imagination.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 266)

Expansion of Spirit

Constantly Thy Image is before my eyes -- wonderful dream that I see in wakefulness!

When Thy Image caresses the heart, helpless, it does not fit into its skin from the joy of Thy loving kindness.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 263)

My heart is an oyster, the Friend's Image its pearl -- but now even I am not contained, for this house is filled with Him.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 264)

I said *Oh no! Help me!* And that *Oh no!* became a rope let down in my well. I've climbed out to stand here in the sun. One moment I was at the bottom of a dank, fearful narrowness, and the next, I am not contained by the universe. If every tip of every hair on me could speak, I still couldn't say my gratitude. In the middle of these streets and gardens, I stand and say and say again, and it's all I say, *I wish everyone could know what I know.*

(The Essential Rumi, pp. 164-165)

Oh God, show to the spirit that station where speech grows up without words, So the pure spirit may fly toward the wide expanse of Nonexistence -- An expanse exceedingly open and spacious, from which this imagination and existence find nourishment. Images are narrower than Nonexistence -- therefore imagination is the cause of heartache. Existence is still narrower than imagination -- therefore within it full moons become crescents. The existence of the world of sense perception and colors is still narrower, for it is a cramped prison. The cause of narrowness is composition and multiplicity, and the senses drag toward composition. Know that the World of Unity lies in the other direction from the senses. If you want Oneness, go in that direction!

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 251)

Experience shows that the spirit is nothing but awareness. Whoever has greater awareness has greater spirit... When the spirit becomes greater and passes beyond all bounds, the spirits of all things become obedient to it.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, pp. 31-32)

You shall witness the expansiveness of that other world, where you will be released from the confinement of this world.

(Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi, p. 204)

The Heart's Mirror

Oh, I have seen my beauty in Thy Beauty! I have become a mirror for Thy Image alone.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 264)

The Moses-like saint possesses within his breast, in his heart's mirror, the infinite, formless Form of the Unseen. What does it matter if that Form is not contained by the heavens, the divine Throne, the Footstool, or the Fish supporting the earth? Those things are all delimited and defined, but the heart's mirror has no limits -- Know that! Here the intellect must remain silent, or else lead us astray. For the heart is with Him -- indeed, the heart is He.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 38)

The house of my heart is empty, devoid of desire, like paradise. Within it is no work but the love of God, no inhabitant but the image of union with Him. I have swept the house clear of good and bad -- my house is full of love for the One.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 258)

Once the mirror of your heart becomes pure and clear, you will see pictures from beyond the domain of water and clay, Not only pictures but also the Painter, not only the carpet of good fortune, but also the Carpet-spreader.
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 38)

Duality transcended

How sweet for day and night to sit together, for water and fire to be companions, for Severity and Gentleness to be married, for the dregs to be mixed with the pure. For union and separation to make peace, for faith and unbelief to become one, and for the fragrance of union with our King to be mixed with east wind!
(*The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*, p. 317)

When you see the splendor of union, the attractions of duality seem poignant and lovely, but much less interesting.
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 190)

Man has three states. The first is not to focus on God, but to adore and serve anyone and anything -- woman, man, wealth, children, stones, land. Next, when he acquires a certain knowledge and awareness, he does not serve other than God. Finally, when he progresses in this state, he falls silent: he says neither, "I do not serve God," nor, "I do serve God" -- that is, he leaves both states. In their world no sound comes from such people.
(*Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, p. 207)

Notice how the stars vanish as the sun comes up, and how all streams stream toward the ocean.
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 7)

Amazement

Praise to the emptiness that blanks out existence. Existence: this place made from our love for that emptiness! Yet somehow comes emptiness, this existence goes. Praise to that happening, over and over!
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 21)

When you eventually see through the veils to how things really are, you will keep saying again and again, *This is certainly not like we thought it was!*
(*The Essential Rumi*, p. 168)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Rabi`a:

Love has appeared from Eternity and will continue till Eternity and none has been found in eighty thousand worlds who could drink one drop of it until at last he is united with God.

(p. 202)

Ibn `Arabi:

When the mystery -- of realizing that the mystic is one with the Divine -- is revealed to you, you will understand that you are no other than God and that you have continued and will continue ... without when and without times. Then you will see all your actions to be His actions and all your attributes to be His attributes and your essence to be His essence, though you do not thereby become He or He you, in either the greatest or the least degree. "Everything is perishing save His Face," that is there is nothing except His Face, "then, whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God."

(p. 171)

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Experiencing union

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

...The divine Reality, when it "combines" with the creatures in a strictly conceptual mode, is hidden to the eyes of the spiritually veiled, who see only the creatures. Conversely, it is the creatures that disappear in the eyes of the masters of the Unicity of contemplation(*wahdat al-shuhud*), for they see only God alone. Thus, both God and the creatures hide the other...

... In the same way, when there is the [state](#) of extinction (*fana'*) -- which the men of the way also call "union" (*ittihad*) -- the worshipper and the Worshipped, the Lord and the servant, disappear together. If there is no worshipper, there is no Worshipped; and if there is no servant, there is no Lord. For, when two terms are correlative, the disappearance of one necessarily brings about the disappearance of the other, and therefore they disappear together.
(*Mawqif* 215, p. 100)

The pleasure and the love of God for His creatures constitute the original state. His pleasure and love are the means by which He has brought His creatures into existence and are the cause of that bringing into existence. He who knows that he possesses neither being nor act rediscovers himself in that original state of pleasure and divine love.
(*Mawqif* 180, p. 43)

But, in conformity to His wisdom it was right that afterwards the Prophet should be sent back from the vision of pure Unity and that he should return... toward the separative vision. For, He created man and jinn only that they should worship Him and know Him -- and, if they remained at the degree of pure Unity, there would be none to worship Him. In this separative vision, the Worshipped and the worshipper, the Lord and the servant, the Creator and the creature are again perceived.
(*Mawqif* 253, pp. 176-177)

The first "station of separation" corresponds to the state of the ordinary man who perceives the universe as distinct from God. Starting from here, the initiatic itinerary leads the being first to extinction in the divine Unity, which abolishes all perception of created things. But spiritual realization, if it is complete, arrives afterwards at the "second station of separation" where the being perceives simultaneously the one in the multiple and the multiple in the one.
(*footnote* 57, page 205)

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Experiencing freedom

(Quotations from Titus Burckhardt)

Muhyi-d-Din ibn 'Arabi in his The Wisdom of the Prophets, the chapter on Seth:

In his essential Reality... and in his spiritual function... he knows (in a global and undifferentiated way) all that of which he is ignorant by his bodily constitution (which is subject to the conditions of time and space)... He knows and at the same time does not know; he perceives and at the same time does not perceive (his [principial](#) knowledge being beyond distinctive perception); he contemplates (the Divine Realities in his spirit) and yet does not contemplate (them individually)...
(p. 80)

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Experiencing freedom

(Quotations from Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah)

Among their attributes: renouncing both worlds from their hearts, and preferring their brethren among God's creatures to what they possess; relying upon God Most High in all their affairs; being content with everything that happens to them which the ego detests; and bearing patiently sufferings and separation from one's homeland. They dissociate themselves from creatures without believing that there is evil in them, but rather out of preference for the Creator over creatures. They sever relationships, surmount obstacles, and strive in fulfilling the needs of people after emptying themselves: for whosoever strives to do that before emptying himself is actually seeking leadership and a good reputation.

(p. 128)

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Experiencing freedom

(Quotations from Jalaluddin Rumi)

Try not to understand the work of the pure saints by comparing them with yourself ... By such comparisons all the world's inhabitants have gone astray... They hold themselves up as equal to the prophets, imagining that the saints are just like themselves. They say, "Look: We are human and they are human, both of us must eat and sleep." Out of blindness they do not know that between them is an infinite difference... This person eats food and gives out filth; the other also eats, but his food is transformed entirely into the Light of God. This one eats and gives birth to avarice and envy; the other eats and gives birth only to love for the One.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 144)

No one looks for stars when the sun's out. A person blended into God does not disappear. He or she is just completely soaked in God's qualities.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 114)

The lovers *{of God}* ... have all become one, kneaded together by Love. When a thousand corpses are thrown into the saltmines, they all become salt -- no duality remains, no "man from Marv" or "man from Balkh."

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 219)

The spirits of wolves and dogs are separate, every one, but the spirits of God's lions are united. I refer to their spirits by a plural noun because that one spirit is a hundred in relation to bodies.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 71)

Although those drunk with God are thousands, they are one; those drunk with self-will are all twos and threes.

(The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi, p. 312)

When you are with everyone but me, you're with no one.
When you are with no one but me, you're with everyone.
Instead of being so bound up *with* everyone, *be* everyone.
When you become that many, you're nothing. Empty.

(The Essential Rumi, p. 28)

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 - Browse [additional quotations](#) from Jalaluddin Rumi.
 - Refer to [bibliography](#).
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Experiencing freedom

(Quotations from Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee)

Dhu'L-Nun:

The mystic is the knower without knowledge, without sight, without information, without apprehension, without description, without manifestation, and without veil. They (mystics) are not in themselves and if they are in themselves at all, they exist but in God. Their actions are held by God and their words are the words of God uttered by their tongues and their sight is the sight of God penetrated into their eyes.

(p. 186)

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Experiencing freedom

(Quotations from 'Abd al-Kader)

If the divine Mercy grants him the knowledge of himself, then his adoration will be pure; and, for him, paradise and hell, recompense, spiritual degrees and all created things will be as though God had never created them. He will not accord them any importance, nor will he take them into consideration, except to the extent that it is prescribed by the divine Law and Wisdom. For then he will know Who is the sole Agent.

(Mawqif 4, p. 38-39)

His faith is no longer of any use to him. In fact his faith is only useful so long as he is veiled and has not obtained direct vision and evidence... When that which was hidden becomes evident, when that of which he was merely informed is directly seen, the soul no longer derives any profit from that which it believes but only from that which it contemplates and sees. The [states](#), the intentions, the goals which he had during the phase of faith are transformed. This transformation should be understood as purely inner. As to the exterior of this being, it is not modified even an iota. He continues to behave in a way which is acceptable to the sacred Law and commendable according to customs and natural law, engaging in the activities which conform to his situation and his rank among his fellow men.

(Mawqif 172, p.72)

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Dhikr

Dhikr is the Sufi practice of repeatedly calling out to God. The **invoker** is the person who engages in invocation. The **invocation** is what the person is saying to God; usually the invocation is one of God's names. God is the **Invoked**.

The invoker resorts to this practice in order to pull his attention away from worldly distractions, and to place it squarely before God. Individuals who continually regard God through this practice report that the invocation takes on a life of its own. They experience the invocation as emanating from their own hearts, without their willing this to happen. This experience is described as blissful beyond words.

Several invocations are quoted at this site:

Allah:

God

Huwa:

Pronoun which corresponds to *He* and which refers to God.

Allahu Akbar:

God is Most Great

La ilaha ill'llah:

There is no divinity, but The Divinity, *or*

There is no god but God, *or*

There is no god but Allah

[Select a new topic](#)

Topic:
**Redirecting your
attention**

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#)
- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
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Islamic quotations organized by topic



- **There's a reality beyond the material world:**
 - [Which is uncreated.](#)
 - [It pervades everything,](#)
 - [but remains beyond the reach of human knowledge and understanding.](#)
- **You approach that reality by:**
 - [Distinguishing ego from true self](#)
 - [Understanding the nature of desire](#)
 - [Becoming unattached](#)
 - [Forgetting about preferences](#)

- [Not working for personal gain](#)
- [Letting go of thoughts](#)
- [Redirecting your attention](#)
- [Being devoted](#)
- [Being humble](#)
- [Invoking that reality](#)
- [Surrendering](#)

- **That reality approaches you through:**

- [Grace](#)
- [The teacher](#)

- **You're transformed so that you embody that reality by:**

- [Dying and being reborn](#)
- [Seeing the light](#)
- [Experiencing union](#)
- [Experiencing freedom](#)

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[Select a new topic](#)

Topic:
Uncreated

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Rabi`a al-Adawiyya](#)
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Topic:
Pervading

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
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Topic:
**Beyond human
knowledge and
understanding**

Muslim Quotations

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- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#)
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Topic:
**Distinguishing ego
from true self**

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
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Topic:
Becoming unattached

Muslim Quotations

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Topic:
Forgetting about preferences

Muslim Quotations

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Topic:
**Not working for
personal gain**

Muslim Quotations

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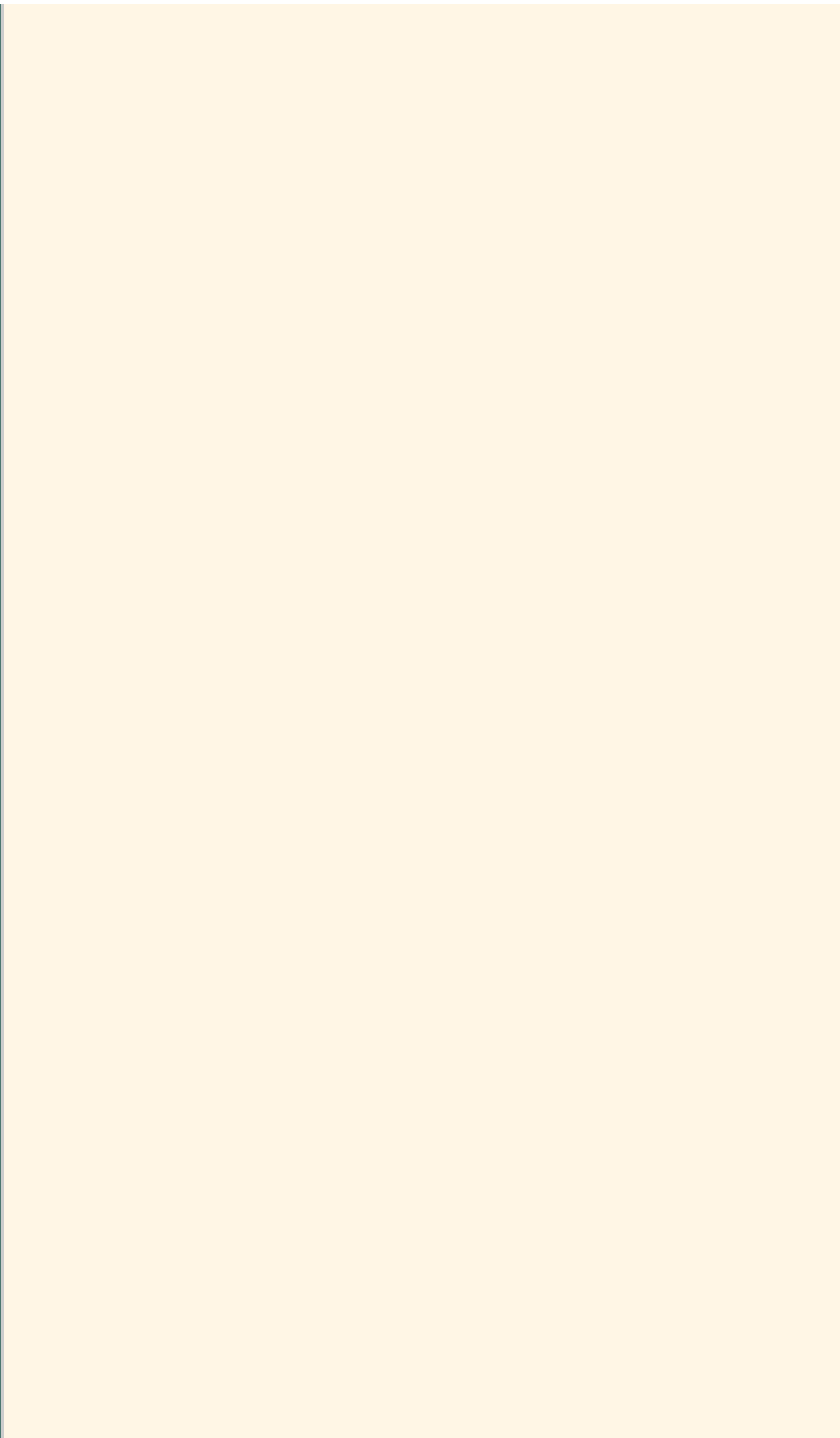
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Topic:
Letting go of thoughts

Muslim Quotations

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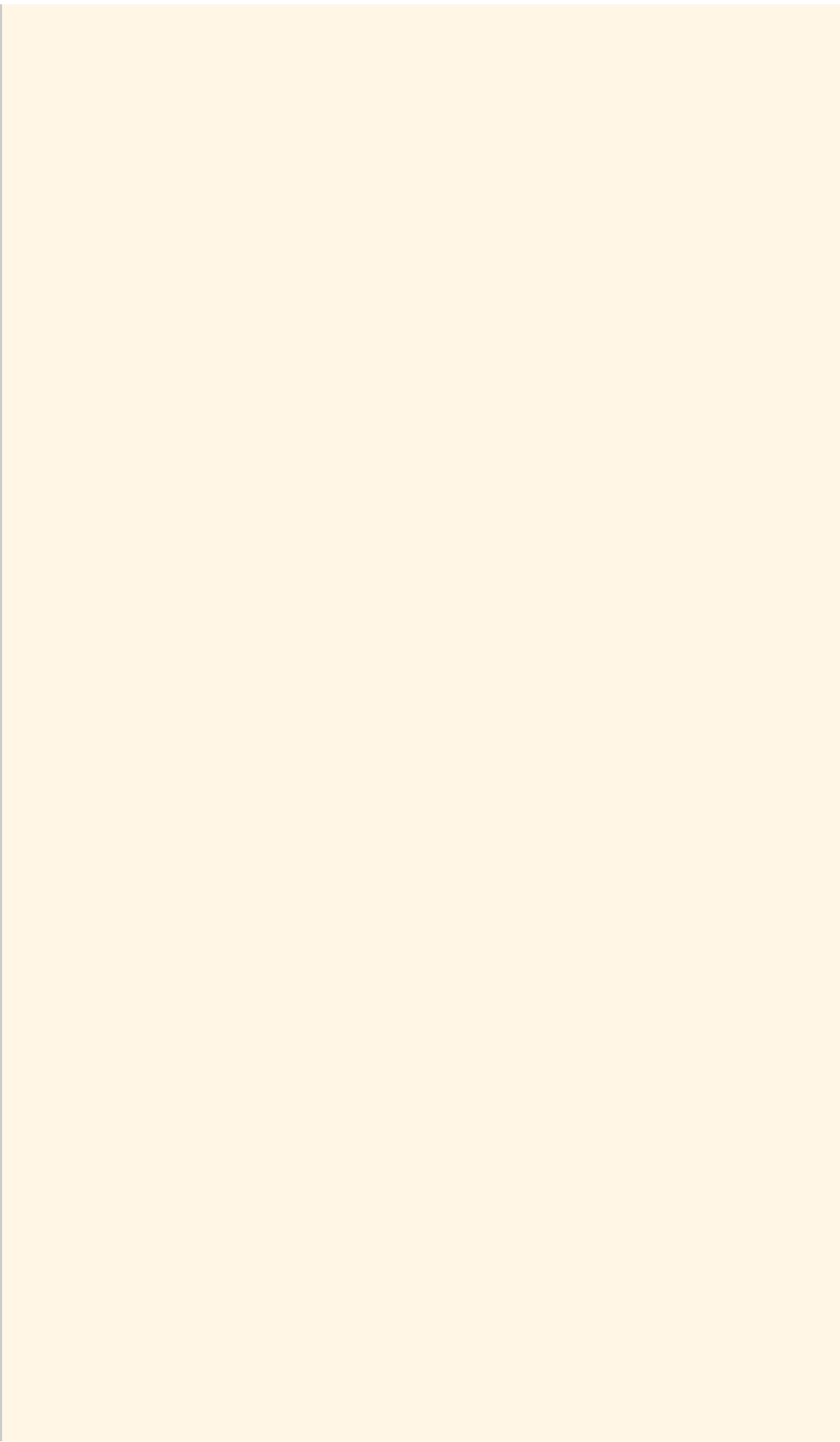
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Topic:
Being devoted

Muslim Quotations

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 - [Dying and being reborn](#)
 - [Seeing the light](#)
 - [Experiencing union](#)
 - [Experiencing freedom](#)

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Topic:
Being humble

Muslim Quotations

- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#)
- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
- [Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee](#)

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Islamic quotations organized by topic



- **There's a reality beyond the material world:**
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 - [It pervades everything,](#)
 - [but remains beyond the reach of human knowledge and understanding.](#)
- **You approach that reality by:**
 - [Distinguishing ego from true self](#)
 - [Understanding the nature of desire](#)
 - [Becoming unattached](#)
 - [Forgetting about preferences](#)

- [Not working for personal gain](#)
- [Letting go of thoughts](#)
- [Redirecting your attention](#)
- [Being devoted](#)
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Topic:
Invoking that reality

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
- [Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee](#)

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Topic:
Surrendering

Muslim Quotations

- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
- [Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee](#)

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Topic:
Grace

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
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Topic:
The teacher

Muslim Quotations

- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
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Topic:
**Dying and being
reborn**

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
- [Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#)
- [Jalaluddin Rumi](#)
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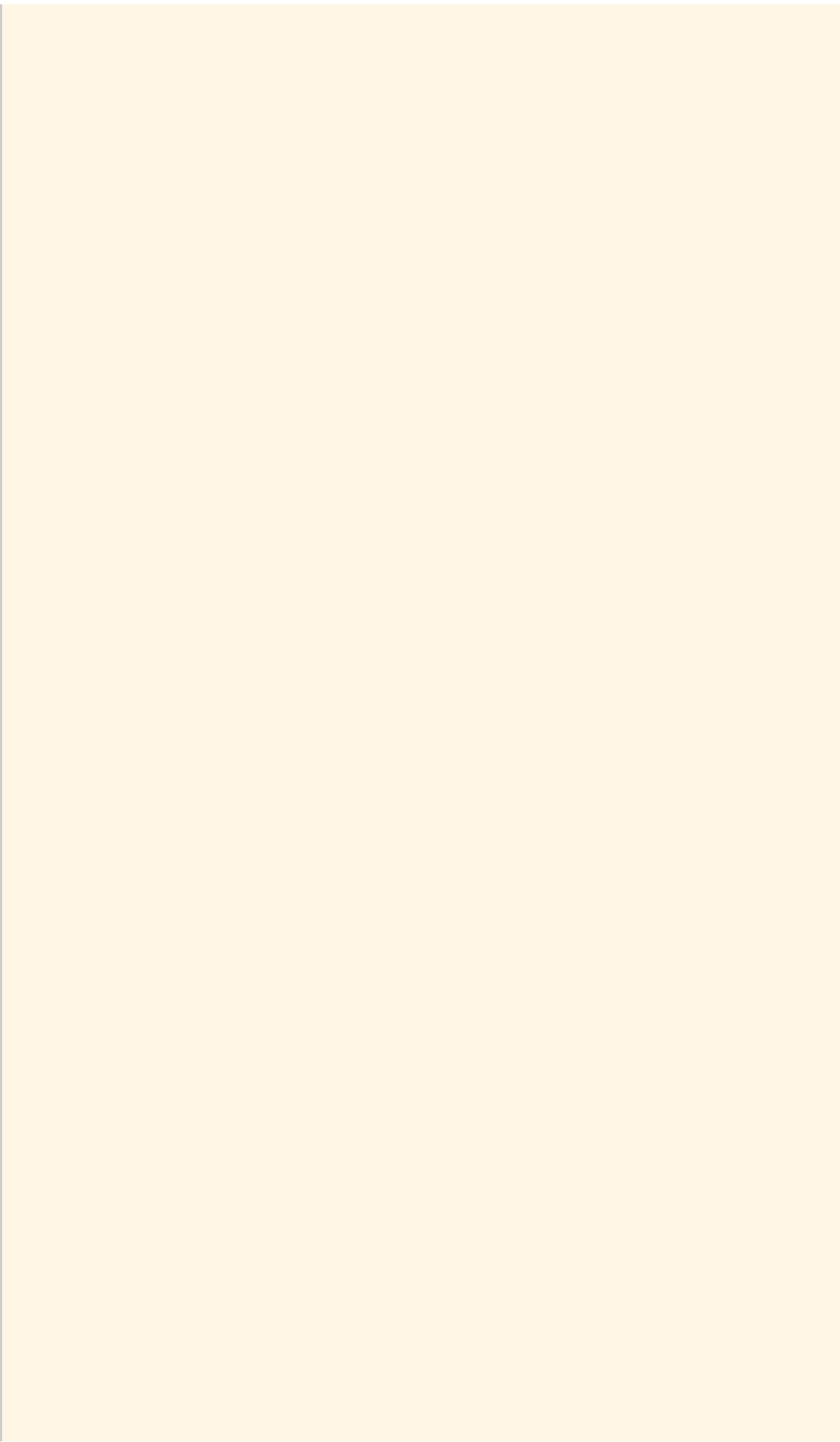
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Topic:
Seeing the light

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Ahmad Ibn `Ata'Allah](#)
- [Rabi'a al-Adawiyya](#)
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Topic:
Experiencing union

Muslim Quotations

- [Titus Burckhardt](#)
- [Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-`Arabi](#)
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Topic:
Experiencing freedom

Muslim Quotations

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