



Three Types of Tajalli: Light from the Unseen  
Comes with the Removal of Humanity's Hijab

Dinner blessing: *Bismi-Llāhi-r-Rahmāni-r-Rahīm*. O Allah, You present before us so many good opportunities, like you are showering this rain upon us, blessing after blessing. We ask You to expand that blessing, as greedy as we may be, and expand the blessings on those who are ill among us, and to continue to shower upon them health and well being, and opportunities for healing so they can participate more and more in the work and in the service. Ya Allah, the work enterprises are very important to us. We ask You, as we prepare for numerous trips abroad, that Your Light and Your Love, and the peace that comes from *ihsan* radiate upon those whom we meet, and upon the delegates who travel with us, and upon those who are receiving invitations. May they come and receive light: *nūr* upon *nūr*. We ask You, Allah (swt), as we approach the time of the *mawlid*, to help us remember the blessings of Rasūlullāh (sal). We ask You to give us safety, open hearts and open minds as we travel to Charlottesville this week, and attempt to speak even more about Your Divine Will. Blessings upon Matt and his family and their new home. May they have many, many years of happiness, peace and prosperity, love and health in their home, *inshā'a-Llāh*. Amin.

Suhbat: *Bismi-Llāhi-r-Rahmāni-r-Rahīm*. Often, we speak about light and *tajalli*. I want to talk a little more about *tajalli*. One contemporary Sufi defined it in a way I like very much: “lucent manifestation” – not just light. What most people don't realize is that we see by light. We don't think about that very much. We have angst about darkness. We see the beautiful lights in this room from the birthday party, and it brings us joy. We use light to increase our sensitivity to beauty; yet, there are different aspects of light. Sometimes we say things like “the light of truth” or “the light of justice.” We differentiate some degree of quality or qualification. When we speak in terms of *tajalli* and Sufism, we are also speaking in a way of its opposite, which is “*istitar*” / veiling.

What it means in a general sense is that the *kashf* (the uncovering of the light, truth, *haqq*, Allah's reality, truth) is revealed in the sun of the sanctified essence of the Divine, which is seen as distinctively different than the human attributes. Yet, within human attributes there is some hint of the Divine, the sacred. Those human attributes have been covered, blocked, or veiled, precisely because of the humanness of human beings, as opposed to the divineness of human beings. "*Istitar*" means the veiling the light of the Divine Reality / Truth by means of human attributes. In other words, as human beings, we don't realize it, but we cast shadow upon ourselves. We do that in various ways: people of dark character. People cast shadow upon themselves out of fear, anxiety, or out of guilt, many psychological or social reasons. We also cast shadow on ourselves by our arrogance and our egos.

Some historically would say that *tajalli* is the removal of humanity's *hijab* / veil. *Istitar* is humanity's way of blocking the view, creating a wall between ourselves and the *ghaib* / the divine, transcendental unseen world. We cannot see into the *ghaib* because of the qualities of our humanity. So the journey for the human being is to make their humanity more Divine, or we might say in English, humane. As we consciously and intentionally seek to mold ourselves more in the way of the Divine, the light from the unseen within us, like a pillar, comes spouting forth its *fayd*. *Fayd* is a whole other subject. Just to say that *fayd* is carried by the *awliya-Llāh*. The effulgent, overflowing energy and light, *fayd*, is the *tajalli* from the unseen as it comes through the *awliya-Llāh*/saints, through the tradition in Sufism, through the *shaykh*, passed down from *shaykh* to *shaykh*. Sometimes there are many in a line, or sometimes just one. But the light continues on, just like you light one candle from another when one gets low and ceases to convey any more light.

There are different types of *tajalli*. Often people get confused and think that light is light, and there is no difference in the light that comes from any dimension. That's not true. The *tajalli* of the *Dhat* / Divine Essence is significant. Each element of form of *tajalli*

has its own ‘*āyāt* / signs. The sign of the *tajalli* of the essence /*dhat* is if there is anything at all remaining of the *salik* / traveler / seeker, then the light of that Divine Essence finishes off whatever human attributes are left in that individual. [Whatever human attributes are left] are shadowed by the luminosity or manifestation of the light of that Divine Essence. We say, that individual loses oneself in oneself, only later to find oneself in oneself : *fana*. What happens is, momentarily, the heart becomes enlightened and the world becomes suspended. One attains to this *hal* of the heart, which eventually becomes a station /*maqamat*.

For example, Sidna Musa (as) when he was on Mount Sīn, was exposed to this *tajalli*. The bush was burning, and the light comes, this lucent manifestation. When Allah appeared as light in that mountain, we say in Islam through the Qur’an that He made the mountain fall to dust and Moses fell unconscious. This happened because Sidna Musa asked to see Allah, without any *istitar*, *hijab*, unveiled. Since Musa was not completely *fana* at that point because there were traces of humanity still in him, the parts that were the human attributes were absolutely shattered, and the rest of him was poised, ready to see Allah (swt). Had he completely been transformed, then after his *fana* (disappearance in the Absolute), he would have been able to see eternity: the everlasting absoluteness of Allah (swt) and the Divine Essence by the very same light that enlightened the mountain. But he wasn’t able to do that.

He wasn’t able to do that because he had other things to do. It was because of that, in a sense, that he wasn’t allowed into the “promised land.” He couldn’t go the whole distance in this life; yet, he was endowed with this light, and he brought a message of light to the people. He carried engraved stones of light, the commandments, which was the antithesis of what he found: the golden calf. He found the manifestation of people’s imagination of idolatry made out of gold, and he was carrying the real gold: the stone carved by light. The calf is supposed to bestow blessings upon the people. The commandments are injunctions to people on how to act in order to get blessings. One is

passive and one is active. The prophet Musa returned from the mountain with the rules, the *shar'īah*. This came directly from Allah (swt), written by His Finger in light on stone. This is what you have to do to be deserving of who you are. This is your spiritual GPS, even though you have been wandering around in the desert for 40 years—and it's not a very big desert, I might add.

On the one hand, you have the commandments from light, and on the other hand, you have the commandments from human weakness. Human weakness creates idols and puts a material value on them. They made them out of gold... and no one has ever questioned where they got the gold. You have this truth that is carved by light. It means the veil has been rent. And Musa swooned, and went into an altered state where the *baraka* was so strong there was almost nothing left of him. This becomes now a metaphor for the journey of the Sufi in life. Isa (as), a couple thousand years later, went up on the mountain with his followers; they all went into a deep slumber. He stayed awake and spoke to Allah (swt), while everybody else is slept. The metaphor is clear. The Prophet Muhammad (sal) has his heart removed and washed with *zemezem* water. When it is placed back in him, the last of the veils are removed, and he is purified. There are no veils left. He is totally transparent.

The second time it happens to him, he ascends in Isra Miraj to the throne, to within two bows length of the throne. Nothing can accompany him: not Buraq, who was sent with him, and not Jibreel, who came with him, whose wingspan is the width of the universes. He cannot come. Only the person who is purified can come, those who worship and serve Allah, as if they were seeing Allah, HUUU—*ihsan*, as you know from the Hadith Jibreel. In this status, where the light of *dhat* comes, the *walis* or *awliya-Llāh* (who are not prophets) can only reach the stage of enlightenment (if you want to call it that, or *tajalli/* evanescence), if they achieve what we would call perfect or near perfect obedience to the Prophet (sal) and to Allah (swt).

*Sidna Umar was circling the Ka'ba when someone greeted him, but he didn't reply. The person afterwards complained, and Sidna Umar said, "We, you and I, were together attempting to see Allah in that place. Greetings are deeds caused by human attributes. Where there is tajalli, there are no human attributes."*

He was basically saying to not come down to the state of humanity when you are in the presence of Allah. The man was still in a state of human attributes, but Sidna Umar was beyond the state of human attributes. He was in the state or the station that Sidna Musa was in when he received the light on the mountain, and that the Prophet (sal) was in when he was in the cave and received the blessings of *islam, iman, ihsan*. When he rises in the Miraj to nearness to Allah, he transcended all the stages, meeting all the prophets on his way, and returning back to Sidna Musa who sent him back again to speak to Allah (swt). This is the *tajalli* of *dhat*. But it's not the only *tajalli*.

One could say, "That's great. Terrific. You've given me a lot of knowledge, Shaykh, of something I will never attain to. Thanks a lot. " There is also the *tajallai* of the *sifat* / attributes of Allah (swt), the affirmation, the signature of the *qadīm*/ pre-existent. In Sufi terms it means what has existed from the beginning of time. What existed from the beginning of time was the *Dhat* / Divine Essence. But that Divine Essence has to come through something. Just like the light comes from the light bulb, it has to go through something that translates into a quality that can be recognized in this created world. Believe it or not, there is light you cannot see that has no expression in the created world. We should believe it, because we know there are frequencies of light we cannot see in this world. And everything that Allah (swt) has in the *batin* is also in the *dhahir*. Everything that is in *ghaib* is in the *dunya*.

Everything is a metaphor for everything! There is light that cannot be seen. But to see light, we have to take something that cannot be seen, which we call lumens and electrical current. We put it in contact with something of this world like gases or filament, some

metal, which glows from the heat of that and gives light. Each Attribute of Allah is a different quality or frequency of light and has a unique effect on us. This lucent manifestation, through the *sifat* of *jelal*, for example, gives a state of majesty or power. Through *rahmat*, a person of *rahmat* glows with the lucent manifestation of compassion or mercy. With a person of *‘adl/justice*, one may say, “The light of justice shone upon this person.” In a court, a judge may say, “You’ve thrown new light on this case.” We all think we know what that means, but what does it mean? It means that light has something to do with justice and truth.

These are all attributes of Allah that are reflected (again, a light metaphor) in the world. The goal of this light in the physical world, the *tajalli sifat*, is to make the human being humble. By being able to see through the attributes, one sees that the attributes in this world are only reflections of something greater. Where? Somewhere else in some other dimension. Once Allah (swt) makes this *tajalli* toward some object, it will be submissive to Allah (swt), to Huuu, to It. When the light of Allah (swt) comes to a metal, it melts, if it comes in a certain form of light. An electric furnace can melt metal, for example. If Allah (swt) sends the *tajalli* through the *sifat* of *jamal* (beauty), then love, mercy, grace, benevolence, one feels the beatitudes of Allah (swt), the intimacy of Allah. With beauty and love and grace, there is a sense of *uns/intimacy*.

*Uns* is related to *insan*. What is *insan*? People, person, humans. It shares the same root: intimacy and human beings. Intimacy in this case doesn’t just mean physical intimacy, but intimacy with Allah (swt). It is important to realize that because there are these different types of *tajalli*, it doesn’t mean in any way that Allah (swt) is subject to any kind of change. There is no variance in Allah (swt), just because you see variance in the light. That becomes very important as one becomes a *salik* / traveler. [It becomes important] to realize that the light coming from that Divine Essence manifests itself according to the circumstances that are required. Shaykh Araqi said, “*One Divine Face, and infinitely many mirrors.*” We have all had that experience where we stand in front of

many mirrors. There is only one you; but depending on the position of the mirror, you see different positions of yourself. You think you are only in one position, but from another perspective, you are in a number of positions. Though you are still, you are in many positions.

Then there is also something called the *tajalli* of the *fa'al*. In this case, *fa'al* means Divine actions. The 'āyat of this *tajalli* is when a person stops seeing the deeds of creation and people as somehow a manifestation of their own self. That is to say, you no longer see the deeds of other people in terms of just good or bad, benefit and loss, right and wrong. You see that there are things to be praised, and things that blame, but you realize that the deeds, the actions of the Divine override the actions of human beings. The person who uses the tool that Allah (swt) has given us, which is *tawbah* / repentance; who sees oneself by the light of the Divine, who rebukes oneself in the *nafsi lawwama*, who no longer is justifying their actions by just their desires, and who repents becomes free of their weakness, disease, sin (whatever you want to call it).

In other words, they see that whatever actions they attribute to themselves are really subservient to the Will of Allah. They come to the desire to come near to the Will of Allah more than to justify or excuse their own actions. So you see that there are things we can actually do work on. Reversing the process, the first thing a seeker begins to see is this *tajalli fa'al*, then the *tajalli sifat*, then finally the *tajalli* of the *dhat*. When you become very, very aware of the Divine Attributes / *Sifat* of Allah, and your mind and attributes are very much taken up with those Qualities and Attributes of Allah, and not with your own state or actions or desires, then you know you are at the stage of *nafsi lawwama*, the rebuking self, as an example. Another way of looking at that is the obvious way: a person's actions are closer to them than the attributes behind those actions, and being aware of that; and the attributes are not as profoundly important to us at the Divine Essence.

We have to become aware on this journey, as a conscious journey, that we are in the presence of the Divine; that we are somehow in the corridor/*majaz*, through which the light travels, and we have to uncover our covering, and remove the *hijab* /veils that are blocking us. First we need to become aware / *muhadhara* of the Divine Presence. Our hearts are feeling that Divine Presence. We are observing the Divine Deeds of Allah (swt) in the world around us, and we are feeling that wherever we are, Allah is present. Having come to that *mukashf* / removing the veils, this is the concept of the *sifat*, of the Divine attributes. We begin observing the secret / *sirri* of Allah, the secret of the light behind what we are seeing. It's not that we are seeing objects, or that we are feeling the Divine Presence. We are seeing the Divine Secret, which is not a secret but more like it is hidden. There is some truth this light is carrying. When you come into contact with it, things become clearer. Truth stands out from untruth, as Allah says in Qur'an.

Then there is the *mushahdah*, the witnessing. This is the *tajalli* of the *dhat*. You come to the state where you observe clearly the distinction between the human being and Allah (swt). You see clearly the difference between the Divine and the human, which of course is the exact opposite of what happens at the fall of Adam (as), where there is no clarity or difference between Allah and human beings. Some people have said the sign of the *tajalli* of Allah upon the secret is you no longer try to interpret it. You don't try to explain. All the explanation you did heretofore in order to point people or yourself in the direction of that Divine Isharat is no longer necessary. There is no *tafsir*, no explanation, no exegesis, no *midrash* that needs to be done. All you have is sight. You comprehend by the light, the reasons behind things. You are not seeing in the way you saw before. This is where the Sufi really diverges from the religious person, or the person who is caught up in theology.

The Sufi sees what the Divine Secret unveils—seeing versus thinking, seeing versus reasoning, seeing versus rationalizing—seeing the difference between the day and night. The Sufi sees with the light of Allah (swt). This is *mushahad* / witnessing, because you



are not subsisting on your own self any longer. Your subsistence depends on Allah. The vast majority of human beings, globally, no matter what they call their religion, really believe that their subsistence depends on their own self. We believe that. Throughout our day, we believe that. "I have to earn more money. I have to get more power. I have to do this and that." "I have to do." That doesn't mean we are irreligious or unspiritual people. We have angst, fear, and human concerns. Seeing is different.

Seeing is believing, we say. What are you seeing by? You are seeing by the light of Allah. You are seeing by the light of the Attributes of Allah. If you turn your attention away from the Light of Allah (swt), by what light are you seeing? You can say, "Of course, we are always seeing by the Light of Allah, because that's where all light comes from." It's true, but in reality, you think you are seeing from your own light. You are sure about it, in fact. But when you see by the Light of Allah, you come to the stages where we have submitted and surrendered, and you realize the limitations of your own sight. You realize that the average person, if exposed to that light, will become blinded, will lose their direction. Just like a million watt spotlight they have at amusement parks or car openings: if you look at it, it will blind you. People turn their eyes away from it, because it hurts their eyes. They think they are seeing through their eyes, and they haven't developed their heart.

As long as the *shahid* / the eyewitness has not entered into that state of *fana*, the solution in this world, that person will not be seeing with the Light of Allah. It was narrated that Majnun's tribe interceded with Laylah's tribe, in order to try to get a meeting between these two lovers. Laylah's tribe responded that there was no problem with such a meeting; however, Majnun couldn't possibly bear seeing the beauty of Laylah. So they were protecting Majnun by not letting him see Laylah. When they finally let Majnun get a little glance of Laylah, as soon as his eyes saw the corner of her cloak, he fainted. He couldn't even bear seeing a patch of her clothing, let alone her. Hence, every path has a journey, and certain people journey on that path and others don't. Of course, we could

say that everyone sees by the Light of Allah; there is only the light of Allah. That's true. But the light coming through the veils is a lot different than the light not coming through the veils.

One of the reasons why Prophet Muhammad (sal) commanded that his wives be in hijab after he passed was not because he was afraid some of the people of the tribes would hit on them. It was because they were left with his *nūr*. After all, they were his wives, and they had a certain *nūr*. They had to be veiled from the rest of the people. People who cast their eyes upon them, either in reality or metaphorically, they would be not able to see the beauty. The metaphor of that is they would be reduced in the eyes of the people to something common. Their wisdom, knowledge and *baraka* would be compromised. Whereas, if they were kept separate, behind the veil, since the lowest tendency of human beings is to reduce others to their level, they would be kept at a higher level in the minds of people, and therefore able to receive the *baraka* and *tajalli* from those women. At least, that's one explanation. I didn't get to where I really wanted to get to tonight, but let me just sum up some things.

When Allah (swt) makes *tajalli* of *fa'al*, or when Allah (swt) makes *tajalli* of the *sifat*, or when Allah (swt) makes *tajalli* of the *dhat*, people are veiled at different levels. Due to the necessity of arriving (at some point, for some people) at the level of *hikma* / wisdom, and given the fact that the people of wisdom spread their wisdom as a mercy to others (like the Prophet Muhammed (sal) was a mercy to others) these people who were chosen (who are *murad*, who are called to the Divine Presence), though they are left with some traces of the *nafs* / lower self in order to stay in this world, they all become the sole source both of the veiling / *istifar* and the unveiling. The *awliya-Llāh* become, in a sense, a mercy from Allah to humanity. But because there is still some *nafs ammāra* left, or *nafs amara*, *nafs lawwama* or *nafs mulhama*, they are kept centered, because they know there is still refinement to take place.

Though the light coming from them is so strong, and it is transformational to the world and to other human beings, still there is a quality of knowledge of oneself that remains and keeps a person humble and I would say, sane. For the sake of others they forgo the level of *fana* / of dissolution into the light for something else, which we call *jam*, or *jami jam*. Instead of going this route of *fana*, and remaining lost in that swoon, if you will, the person returns in *jam* (Divine togetherness). Why? It is for the purpose of benefitting others who are not as gifted spiritually, or not as developed spiritually, who have not had the opportunity to develop spiritually. One naturally, if they have really attained to the *tajalli* of *fa'al* and *dhat*, returns to this *jam* / togetherness or *suhbat*. The Haqq, Truth, the Reality, the sublimeness of this state is an unveiling.

A person who returns, walks among the people of this world and lives in this world (and every tradition talks about it) sees through the veil. They have access through the veil. They become some element of the Mercy of Allah (the Prophet (sal)), from their own self, and they continue to better themselves. They continue to work diligently on themselves, and to seek the Divine Presence themselves. To others, it seems they are just being a model of behavior. To themselves, they feel they have this last vestige of *nafsi ammāra* and *nafsi lawwama*, to deal with, so they remain humble. Periodically, they drown in the *jami jam*, and they get a glimpse again of that exalted state, and then return again. Even the Prophet (sal) said that he asked for veiling, so he wouldn't drown in the sea of *shuhud* / seeing. The Prophet Muhammed (sal) said,

***Verily, there has come unto you a messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He, Muhammed, is anxious over you to be rightly guided. For the believers, Muhammed is full of pity, kindness and mercy.***

This state, *inshā'a-Llāh*, can become a station. The mercy that Allah is speaking about (sending the Prophet as a mercy) has fulfilled its job. It has brought us to a state of

awareness of the Divine Presence and a yearning *inshā'a-llāh* to move from one station to the next station on this journey. Now, you have other responsibilities. Now you have light that you see by. So you have to keep an “eye out” (an ‘*āyat*, if you will) for danger. There are always dangers on the path. There is danger on the path to Divine knowledge, on the train so to speak. There could be something lying across the tracks ahead of you that you don’t see yet. But you know that such things are possible, so you keep your “eye out” for aberrancies, for dangers, for distractions. Just the consciousness to keep an eye out for potential danger, or potential changes, or potential instructions even, just the consciousness to do that is at least 3/5 of the journey, because it never stops.

I have been criticized by members of my own family at times, that on long journeys I might be saying too many silly things, or not saying anything at all. Because when we are on a journey, there is an awful lot going on in our minds, and also a lot of distraction. Sometimes you can get into the zone where you are just driving where nothing is happening. There are no words, no thoughts coming. You are not seeing anything, but you are seeing everything. You are seeing by the *tajalli* of Allah (swt). You are seeing by the inner light, even the worldly things.

I have given this example so many times about meditation, how you drive somewhere and you don’t remember how you got there. You know you drove there, but how did I get here? I don’t remember anything about the drive, no red light, no car in front of me, but I arrived here. What did you see by? You saw by the light of Allah. You were totally submitted and surrendered when it came to driving—God alone knows what’s on your mind. But you arrived safe and sound, because you did everything you needed to do. You were no longer saying, “I’m doing everything I needed to do.” You just did it. That’s another worldly example of surrender, trust and knowledge, power and responsibility, clearness and direction, and an understanding of what was necessary and a fulfilling of your intention and duty—all without thinking.

Yet, you had to learn all those things, going through the period where you were telling yourself, “Put my foot on the brake, put my foot on the accelerator...” when you were 16 years old. You go from there to total absence of thought about driving. You may have been thinking about dinner, or work or something else, but it doesn’t matter. You are on automatic. In a way, that is the goal of the Sufi: to go through the process, ask all the questions, learn all the rituals, learn all the meanings, and then absorb it so that it comes out in the appropriate way at the appropriate time under the appropriate circumstance. If a person comes to you and says, I’m having trouble in my marriage. My spouse and I are thinking about separating. Then all your friends give you all kinds of advice, and tell you what they thought about it. But the Sufi doesn’t necessarily talk about that.

The one of light, the one who has *tajalli* talks about values, about the *sifat*, about your commitment to Allah, talks about the value of your word, speaks to you about justice, mercy and compassion, until whatever the problems are, are put into proper perspective. When they are put into proper perspective, they are this big (very small) compared to the blessings of Allah (very great), and you see very clearly. What is presented to you are your desires against the Will of Allah, your desires against the challenge to change your own self and clean up your own act, so to speak. That doesn’t mean there are no reasons for divorces or things like that. Abuse is a reason, for example. But when you are talking about people who just have desires, and the light is coming from their own ego, instead of from Allah (swt), then what happens? The Sufi speaks about the *tajalli* and the *sifat*. That’s just an example. If you follow the *tajalli*, the *sifat*, you realize Allah (swt) is with you, and that’s the goal. I’ll just give you that one example. *Asalaamu aleykum*.

Student: Sometimes we talk about people having an animal nature. It seems it would be human nature to overcome their animal nature, but it seems we are even leaving that idea behind. Would you speak about animal nature in this context?

Shaykh: We'll just call it the lower nature. Why it's called animal nature is that animals don't make choices, that we know of, in the same way human beings make choices. Each animal has one purpose: to fulfill its nature. A lion doesn't want to become a bird; a bird doesn't want to become an elephant. It is not a want; they are motivated by survival, and if they are in comfortable circumstances, they have other attributes and qualities they can give out. So I just call it our lower nature, or that we are motivated by our desire, where the light is so unclear that we think we are the source of the light and the power. There is nothing we cannot do. We are deserving of everything, and everything is an entitlement. (That sounds very Republican).

It's the lower nature where our desires are mixed with the world only, not the attributes. If the Attributes of Allah (swt) show at all in us, they are perverted. Like you act compassionate in order to get something, or merciful in order to get something. You hide behind what you call justice, but it's not really justice. You are unjust in the name of justice. We see it all over the world we live in today. There is no habeas corpus, no rights of citizens. They are all abridged. We bend the laws and the rules. That is the lower nature of human beings, and they justify it by material things. We don't want to lose our "freedom," so we take freedom away. The hypocrisy is very, very strong. There is no real light coming to rend that veil.

We used to feel in society that justice had a very strong light. So strong that the woman who represents justice is blindfolded, so she cannot see; therefore, she will only be influenced by the weight of the evidence and not by preferences. This is the way of human beings in the world we live in, and that's why people who try to live by values and the way of Allah (swt) are different, and sometimes persecuted and silenced, and why forces want to divide them. One of the reasons why the British, especially, wanted to bring down the Ottoman Empire was because, with all its faults especially in the latter years, united Muslims. That's very dangerous. All those people united under the

influence of one leadership? Very, very dangerous. So they practiced divide and conquer.

There is a political aspect of this, too, that caused the political Islam that we see today. It lacks light; it lacks the *tajalli* of *sifat*. There is virtually no light of the qualities and attributes. People say there is, but there isn't. It's like the Iranians letting the hikers out of prison. Are we supposed to consider the Iranians merciful because they did that? It was simply political. They put it out as, "See? We're being compassionate and merciful and letting them go even though we know they are spies." But there is no compassion and mercy in it. They hide behind these qualities. Just because you can name them doesn't mean you live them.

Student: What is the difference between *nūr* and *tajalli*?

Shaykh: *Nūr* is the light itself, and *tajalli* is the transmission of the light, the effulgence. *Fayd* is all the effulgence. *Nūr* is all the light, the Nur of Allah. In modern terms, you would say about *tajallia* "click on push." Information is pushed toward you. It's directed.

Student: ...You have talked about *tajalli* in the three types... I was asking myself, how is this useful to me as a student, tomorrow? What will I do with this information?

Shaykh: That's the problem when I talk like this. I should be telling you how to use it.

Student: I got a sense from the example you gave. You said we should be encouraged not to dwell on the qualities, but more on the essence...

Shaykh: The divine essence is always present. The light of that essence is what comes through. The essence cannot be seen except what comes through the *sifat*. I gave the

example of the light bulb. You can't see the electrons, only when it comes into contact with gas or the filament do you see the light. You cannot see the Divine Essence; only when it comes into contact with the Attributes that Allah created in this world do you see it. Then it has to be converted into actions and deeds.

Student: That was clarifying, thank you.

Shaykh: The way you use it is you gather information and try to remember. That's *dhikr*. You make *dhikr* and make *dhikr*, and strive to identify what is happening in your life, right in front of you, until that *basira* / insight comes. Then you begin to see that wheresoever you turn there is the light of Allah. You do that because you are trying to remember Allah, *dhikr*. The core of everything, every spiritual path, the core of Islam and Sufism is *dhikru-Llāh* / remembrance. Everything reminds you. It's boring after 35 year, and I commend you for listening that long. But that's what it is: *dhikr*. And I don't mean *lā ilāha illa-Llāh*. That's only one form of *dhikr*. Everything is to remember Allah, everything: your problems, your joys, your happiness, your sorrows, the beauty, the ugliness, your strengths, your weaknesses, the *suluk*, the journey. That's the journey, to understand that there are these different aspects of light. The more the veil is removed, the more the light is seen, the more it illumines. *Asalaam aleikum*.