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Thursday

Title: [Qalbi Salim: The Pure and Radiant Heart](#)

DVD title: Qalbi Salim: The Pure and Radiant Heart
Making the Magnetic Quality Attracting through Obedience

Bismillah ir Rahman ir Raheem. Instead of talking about all the corrupted hearts and the ways in which the heart is distorted, why not talk about the *qalbi salim*, the pure or radiant heart? Then we can begin to understand perhaps the two sides of the grace of Allah. Allah Swt says,

And disgrace Me not on the day when they are raised, the day when property will not avail nor sons, except him who comes to Allah with a heart free from evil. (26:87-89)

This is the heart we need to cultivate. Since Allah Swt has put us in such an environmentally abundant place where many things compete with one another in the soil, we are in an environment that needs a lot of weeding daily, if not more than that—a heart that is free. Allah says in Suratu-l-Sāfāt the same thing. If we understand *salim* and *taslim*, we understand it means safe and secure. It also means a heart that is intact, perfect, complete, a heart that is whole, undamaged. But of course a heart will be damaged many times over. It means spiritually undamaged. The things that normally damage our heart we have to learn are blessings. We have to learn that they are creating a stronger muscle, a stronger organ.

This *qalabi salim* is a heart that cannot harbor hatred, envy, resentment, and revenge. It's

a heart that only feels comfortable and moves us, because our hearts do move us. Do you know that? Has your heart ever moved you from one place to another, even against your will or your better judgment? (I have a heavy-duty mover heart. Mine could work for a moving company.) Have you ever had that experience, where your heart moves you, even against your better judgment somewhere? Did you know that your heart could do that? Your mind is saying, “Ah, ah, ah!” or “This is not going to be pleasant. This is going to hurt. This is foolish,” but the heart moves you. At least, that’s my experience. This whole, secure, heart—the heart that remains whole and undamaged even after it has been attacked—wants to be in a certain kind of company. It feels secure in a certain kind of company.

In a way, it knows its own vulnerability, its own sensitivity and tenderness. So Allah put it behind a cage to protect it. He didn’t put it on our arms, though some of us wear our hearts on our sleeves sometimes (a metaphor for vulnerability). Allah made it physically and symbolically protected; and realistically protected, the organ of the heart. The heart, (if it wanted to want anything independently from anything other than itself), we could say metaphorically, wants to be in a place where it is not agitated, in the company of peaceful hearts. It’s possible that the heart wants to be in the company of peaceful hearts, and the mind wants to be in the company of something else—other kinds of challenges, other kinds of interests, other kinds of material desires. That conflict exists between what the heart wants to move us toward and what the mind wants to move us toward, until we create some kind of resonance, an environment of harmony.

That’s why in Qur’an it says that Allah protects this kind of heart, a heart that comes whole to Him. This attribute of Allah Swt, As Salām, is not just the peaceful. It’s a situation, an environment of peace, a mentality of peace where the consciousness of the heart can be free and can experience. If we want to be aware of the nearness of Allah

SwT, if we wish to be near to Allah or aware of that Divine presence, Allah has created situations and concepts and communities: the *ummah*, and the *jamat* in prayer, and the people on Hajj and *umrah*, and the good companionship. Why? Because if we want to be near to Allah SwT, it means we are perceiving things outside of ourselves.

Allah says, “***Know yourself and you will know your Lord.***” that’s one side of the equation.

Another side is, to know Allah is to be in the company of those who love Allah. This is a *hadith* also, to be in the company of the people Allah loves and protects. It means that we see, symbolically or analogically, in society or creation this idea of relationships—people of common values, belief, thought, culture or language—that they have an almost magnetic attraction to them, an association, a *nisbah* (relatedness). We have all experience that. If you have ever traveled outside the country, where you don’t speak the language, [you look for something familiar], then you hear English [being spoken by someone you don’t know]. It may be someone you would never talk to or have anything in common with anywhere else, but because you are far away, you are attracted. The heart has a magnetic, attractive quality to it.

Many years ago I read something that baffled me. Some pseudo-scientist was talking about attraction of non-metallic objects, using cells as an example, mitosis and meiosis. We don’t think that way, but we do – “I’m attracted by that person. I’m repulsed by that person.” To see out Allah is to seek Allah in the heart of others. There are a lot of things, when we come into contact with other people, that we filter and judge. We don’t like the way they look, the way they dress. We don’t like the way they smell. We don’t like their attitude, or this or that. We filter many, many things through our biases, prejudices, training, experiences, and proclivities. Then we tend to articulate those things as if to make them absolute. Then we create a wall that is hard to climb over, because we have

made an absolute statement about someone. Yet every mystical and spiritual path encourages us to speak well of others. Why?

It has been misused and misguided in many ways. Many Muslims think you should never say anything against another Muslim no matter what they have ever done. If someone blows up other people, then you should never speak ill of them because they are Muslims. Of course they are not Muslim, except by name only. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking on a much more subtle basis. The average person that we unconsciously make all kinds of assumptions and judgments about, we should be open to because they may be someone who loves Allah. They may be someone who in their heart loves Prophet Mohammed (sal). I don't say this in just a simplistic way. They may be directing their life by that love. They may be attracted. Sometimes you can collectively feel that, and you don't have to individually feel it. You can be in *jamat* at a *khutbah* and feel certain things. You can be in the company of those making *dhikrullah*, and you might even know that you can't communicate with some of those people on any level, but their *iman* is strong, and their *hubb* is strong. They uplift you while they are making *dhikr*. You might not even like the sound of it because it is a cultural thing, but their *himma* uplifts you.

The person who has this radiant heart, *qalbi salim*, has a heart that is very accepting and guides the mind, the mouth, to speak good words. Also, when this aspect of our being, of our heart that is so good and radiant—and everyone has an aspect of it (it would be nice if it were a full moon instead of a quarter moon, a complete aspect)—it shows the same face to everyone. We are told that if you bring happiness and joy even to one single person, one single heart, it's better than building all the mosques for worship you could possibly build if you were an insanely rich person. If you just brought kindness and happiness to one single heart, it's better than building any edifice. To win the loyalty and love and trust of a person through your love, through your heart, through your kindness is better

than freeing a thousand slaves. To enslave someone (in the positive sense), to create devotion and loyalty with your love is better than manumitting a thousand slaves.

Think of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) when he was asked, “Why are you called Khalilallah (Friend of Allah)? He said he had three qualities: that he preferred Allah’s commands over anyone else’s, that he was never grieved with what Allah had destined for him no matter what it was, and that he served guests day and night. Rasulallah (sal) said that he was *khalilallah* because he fed people and prayed the *salatul layl* (the night prayer) when people were sleeping, and he never started a morning or evening without meeting others, guests. The Prophet Ibrahim he sometimes would walk for two miles or more to find someone to eat with. He never would eat alone.

When he was thrown into the fire by Nimrod, Jibreel came to him and said, “*Ya, Ibrahim. Do you need some help?*” And he said, “*Not from you.*” He says this to Jibreel. Why? Because he had total trust in Allah Swt. It was under this circumstance that Jibreel revealed this ‘*āyat* to Prophet Mohammed (sal): “**We said, O Fire! Be a comfort and a peace to Ibrahim,**” (21:69) from Suratu-l-Anbiyā. You remember when Azrael, the angel of death, came to Ibrahim to take him, he said, “*Have you seen a friend take the life of a friend?*” Allah said to Azrael to go back and say to Ibrahim, “*Does a friend ever refuse to meet his friend?*” Who is the friend? That’s the heart that is pure. Allah says in the Hadith Qudsi, “***The heavens and the earth cannot contain Me. Only the heart of a mu’min can contain Me.***”

That’s the heart, *qalbi salim*. The core of this kind of a heart is one that is in obedience to its Creator in creation. How does one learn such obedience? The deus ex machina descends. One is uplifted and Allah tells you directly in the ear, “I come to teach you obedience?” Or do we learn it in day to day life, through vulnerability, through love?

How do we get this heart to be so radiant, so luminous, so strong, so safe, so secure, without polishing it with the stone of reality? How do you sharpen the knives in the kitchen: on stone or on metal? One of the two. When you sharpen the knives in the kitchen, do you think that you are sharpening your heart?

This manifestation that is needed to turn on the magnet (let's make it an electromagnet so it has to be flipped on) to make it attracting (although it is attracting anyway), certainly one aspect of it is to learn obedience. [It is] not just obedience, but obedience through servitude, serving the Creator, serving the essence of what is to be understood and learned in every situation . Would that we could learn it in the moment of the situation: sometimes it takes 30 seconds. But there are ways of knowing what a person has learned. You might not like the way they say something. It might rub you the wrong way. You might not like the way they look. You might not understand exactly their language. But a person who is a servant of other people has learned. A person who has *adab* has learned. Their heart is well on the way to being radiant and luminous.

A person who prefers to serve others and be at their beck and call and need, more than even for themselves (though they may complain every once in a while), a person who has that mentality has the magnet on. It is being attracted to the hearts of the believers, and to the belief in the heart of the disbeliever, or the one who is weak in their belief, because that luminous heart has the ability to change other hearts. ***“O Changer of hearts.”*** And a person of *akhlaq*? That person shows the state of their *qalb*. [They are] not a moralist or ethicist who can just speak it, but a person who naturally expresses *akhlaq* and *akīda*—not the subject of it, not the intellectual study of it. But [they are the] one who strives for it, who weeps over not having enough of it.

People actually weep over not being able to give enough love. “Oh, if I only gave more

love, or more time, such and such would not have happened.” Not, “Oh, if they only could have received all the immense love that I have.” Rasulallah (sal) said, ironically, “*The lowest form of knowledge is the knowledge that remains on the tongue.*” But it increases in value when it is translated into action, and eventually becomes the pillar of your life. What touches the heart that’s made of the same substance becomes attracted and part of the heart. The first expression of the *qalbi salim* lies in our behavior toward the ones we love, toward the ones we share our life with, toward our parents. It’s quite natural for us to think about caring for our parents, like Grandma Minkie or Carol or David. It’s natural for us. But we are not stupid. We also know there are people who shun them off to other places. Sometimes it’s unavoidable, because the parents are sometimes not of the kind that will let you care for them.

But we all understand that attraction. That’s where it began in the physical world, and that’s where it ends in the physical world. It’s not just the cycle of time and payback. It’s the natural expression of a kind of heart. If you care for your own parents, you care for others, as we saw here, too. You know this wonderful capability that we human beings have is something that has to be nurtured and developed. It has to be sustained and fed. That is done really by the *nai’ma* and *fadl* of Allah. Just think: if a person can do something good to someone else, or for someone else, without causing any harm, any disruption, any confusion, any doubt, any difficulty for any other person, and chooses not to do it, that reluctance to do that tarnishes the heart. In this construct, we can see that there is that room for choice. There is that room for struggling with the *nafs*. But the heart that is luminous has no question of choice.

We may, every day, not even think about what we could do for someone else, despite the fact that doing something for them would have no ill effect on anyone. We might not even think about it. But when you have such a heart, a heart that is developed through

muraqabah and *tafakkur*, through hardships, through practice, through turning to *iman* in your life, through reaching out beyond yourself, a heart that is developed in this way automatically reaches out to others. You see it; [there is] no hesitation. What is significant about that is that this describes the way Allah Swt deals with humankind, with His creation. Allah has created a system where it is incumbent upon everything that reflects His purity, that Divine truth (we can say him); it's part of the law of the system of harmony that every act of *lutf* is done in dealing with human beings. If there is any possibility for the grace to come upon human beings, there is no way in which it will not come. Maybe we should say there is no way that it is not present. Allah has constructed this system or reality where it is incumbent upon Himself to do every act of grace for human beings. That's the model for us.

To define this *lutf* is very difficult. It is actions on the part of Allah (if one wants to anthropomorphize Allah), which would help bring His creation or creatures (us) nearer to His love, nearer to submission, nearer to obedience, nearer to devotion, to harmony and balance, and within the realm of His attributes. In other words, through justice, kindness, submission, trust, compassion, mercy, peacefulness—these are means through which Allah Swt draws us. That *lutf* is the grace of Allah. That is the beauty of what we can call Allah's grace. That act of drawing our hearts toward all that is good and mandated by Allah Swt in His Own creation upon Himself is the *lutf* or grace of Allah. That's a lot. It's a lot more than it seems, at least to me.

We know how this is developed. There has to be a great deal of self-monitoring. There has to be some degree of self-restraint. There has to be some degree of absolute submission and no restraint. There has to be some degree of effort. There has to be some degree of articulation. We have to use the physical body to do what the heart is urging it to do, as long as it stays in the company of those who are loved by Allah and who love

Allah. So we know what has to be done. All these words and admonitions and prescriptions given by me to you, or me to me (I assure you) have to be acted upon. And none of us has the time to judge others. Our own time is running very fast. But at the same time, we have to interact with others. How we interact should be encouraging and sustaining what is good.

If at times, we have to warn, *alhamdulillah*; if at times we have to reward, *alhamdulillah*. But mostly it is only to be in the company of those who love Allah Swt and work together for the common spiritual good, for the common creative good that we will be polishing our heart, often against things that are rough and difficult. But also we should try very hard to make ease for one another, even if it is not appreciated or understood. But in our hearts we know, "I am trying to make ease." That's why it's good when you pray for someone to say to them, "May Allah give you ease in your life." It's a nice thing to say to someone. It's not quite, "May Allah make your way easy," but to give you ease. It's better than saying, "Make your life easy." So may Allah give you ease, *insh'allah*.
Asalaam aleikum.