

March 19, 2009

Thursday



Title: [Submitting to the Treasure that is Yourself](#)

DVD title: Teachings of Khwaja Allaudin Attar (ra):
Submission to the Guide and the Practice of Muraqabah

Bismillah. To go on with the teachings of Allaudin Attar (ra), I will read some of them to you. If I feel like commenting on them, I will. Then if we ever come back to this idea of study groups, maybe we will use this as one of the texts.

He says: *“While the realm of the angels remain closed in the eye of the seeker, the realm of annihilation materializes. And while his own essential being is concealed, the annihilation of annihilation becomes manifest.”* So you have this point/counterpoint of “the eyes being closed to the realm of the *malakut*, the realm of the angels,” while our own essential being is concealed from us, but what we can experience is the annihilation of the annihilation, or the manifestation to the state prior to annihilation. Is anything missing here? One of them puts us to the test, asking whether the pupil can forget his own existence through the influence of the spiritual guide: *“When he saw that condition materialize, he was overcome with awe.”* What was that condition? He forgot his own existence through the influence of his spiritual guide. *“When he saw that condition materialize, he was overcome with awe and begged to be delivered from that state. It is necessary to refrain from testing this Sufi community.”* What do you make of that?

He asks the question, then the *shaykh* shows what can happen, then he (you) begs to be removed from that state, so the lesson is: don’t test the Sufi community. Who are you to

test it? What happens when you find the answer to what you are asking [is that] you become fearful. I don't know what the word was that was translated here, but I don't think that awe was probably the right word. I would think "*khawf*" or something would have been the word. Of course, this is telling us something a lot more than something specific. It is telling us about understanding that the relationship between the path, the *shaykh*, and the student is one of when the student asks a question sincerely, a response will come. You have to be prepared, not only for the response, but you have to prepare for the response by asking the right question at the right time. It would be like saying, "I wonder what would happen if I jumped off this bridge?" and then somebody pushed you off the bridge. Well, you are finding out! He goes on in another discourse:

The seeker must cleanse himself inwardly, ridding himself of things that will obstruct the attention of the spiritual guide. Only after that will he be fit and worthy of the Divine Favor. There is no lack and deficiency of Divine Favor. The lack and deficiency are in the seeker.

This is one of these foundational statements about transmission. You can sit and you can receive transmissions, because two and a half or three months have passed (whatever has passed) [and it is time for another transmission]; but what the seeker has to be working on is ridding their self of the things that obstruct the *kashf* and the *tajalli* of the transmitter, the *shaykh*. The words and the forms come to you. If there is no home for them, they don't penetrate you. If they don't penetrate you, they don't become a part of you. So again, we have to look at our own self. The tendency is to say, "I don't know what I am getting from the meditation." Or "I don't know whether I am receiving the transmissions." People say it with good *adab*, and they say, "It is probably me." But anyone who says, "It is probably me," they don't really mean it. They mean it with, "It is

probably me, but I don't know if it is me, but maybe it is me, but I doubt it is me, but of course I should say it is me, but it might be me, but of course if it is me, it is not my fault it is me. It must be some other reason that it is me. And if it is me, can you fix it?"

I think it is important because it is not that a transmission has no dimension to it. It is a Favor of Allah (Swt), you know. This is also the *Fadl* of Allah (Swt). It is coming to you, but you have to be able to receive it. I guess it would be like in baseball where the catcher likes to watch the ball come out, but he never holds his mitt up. The natural thing that a person does is question. First you say, "I am not worthy of the divine favor." But people don't say that for any length of time because people don't think that they are unworthy for any length of time. Then we think that "Well, maybe it is not the divine favor. Maybe the problem lies with the *shaykh* or the problem is, "I'm not fit for this path," or all this other stuff. But there is no deficiency in the divine favor. It is very clear. It is always coming to you.

When we say, "*wasila ti'alaik*, my means to you," [meaning] the Prophet is our means, what does "our means" mean? He is like a track that leads to Allah (Swt). Something is there. It is an actual means, an actual vehicle to Allah (Swt). Well the same thing: this transmission, this *tajalli barati'Allah*, Khwaja Allaudin Attar (ra) is talking about, means we have to make ourselves worthy to receive this transmission. When we do receive it, then we will see that this *fadl* is there. The *fa'id* is there. It is overflowing. Then he goes on, "*The seeker must always ponder his humility and wretchedness in the presence of the spiritual guide.*" "Let's take five minutes to start on wretchedness." "That is too long." "You are right. How about 30 seconds?" "No, let's take five seconds." "Okay. Now let's take an hour to talk about our worthiness." Why is that? He goes on:

As the seeker must understand, the goal can only be reached through compliance with the guide's instructions. He must know that every direction is closed apart from the path of approval. The seeker is obliged to be fully aware that unless he preserves the attention of his guide, his personal effectiveness and value amount to nothing.

Well, a lot can be said about keeping the attention of the guide. Again, the opportunity is to come with the right understanding. I guess I should speak about Hazrat. I cannot remember a time when I was with Hazrat, that I was not listening to my own thoughts. I cannot remember, ever, even when I was laughing and playing with him, that I was not measuring or watching what I was thinking, watching what I was saying, but not out of fear. It was just the fact of who he was that made me think about what I was saying, how I was saying it, how could I say it better, how miserable, how ill-equipped I was to say the things I was saying. What was I trying to prove, and what was I trying to get him to understand what I was saying as being important? Was it more important to me that what I was saying was important, or that I say nothing and listen, or ask a private question and listen? What was I doing after I left his presence? Because there was a residual. How was acting after I left his presence? Was I justifying things? Was I re-stating things in my own mind? What were the things that stuck with me that I wanted to go back and say in a different way?

For instance, I left there tonight (Shaykh gave a talk in Lynchburg) and the one major point I wanted to make tonight, I forgot to make. I kept remembering while the Rabbi was talking; and then when he stopped talking, I would forget it. It was a simple point. It was just a point that I really wanted to say to them, "How many of you remember what it

was like forty years ago when Jews and dogs were not allowed in the country clubs or certain places? And [remember] when, if you were a Jew, you were always looking over your shoulder, and everybody hated you? Behind your back, they talked about you, and they thought that you were always trying to get their money or get their whatever....so how can you not understand how Muslims feel?” That is what I wanted to say tonight, but I never said it, unfortunately. Well, it is like that. It makes you remember.

By the way, the correlative of that is not that the Shaykh is thinking any of that. Just because you are thinking about what you are thinking about, and it is pointing out to you your state, your wretchedness or your humility; or [just] because you or I are trying to understand what the instructions are, [trying] to be compliant, and accept[ing of] the fact that every other path is closed except for the path of approval from the Shaykh, it [does] not [mean] that the Shaykh is thinking that, at all. The only time the Shaykh thinks that is when it is egregiously breached, and says, “Gee. That is too bad. I cannot make any progress with that person.” or “There is no way that I can teach that person.” It is not a power thing at all. It is the way I felt in front of Hazrat. It was not the way Hazrat was feeling towards me. He was not thinking, “Oh, look how humble he is.” or “Whoa. He is really reflecting on himself in my presence.” [There were] maybe two or three times that I can remember that he made a comment to me about, “Ah, now you understand what I have been trying to tell you.” “I can see that now you understand.” So he was watching, but he was not thinking what I was thinking. My assumption was probably that he was thinking what I was thinking.

And yet, what does it mean? He says, “*The seeker must be fully aware that unless he preserves the attention of his guide, his personal effectiveness and value amount to*

nothing.” What does it mean: “...*the attention of the guide*”? You could be doing egregiously terrible things and have the attention of your guide. What is the word we are looking at here? What do you think the word was in Dari when this was written? What is the word? *Tawajjuh. Mutawwajjuh.* What is *tawajjuh*? Just attention? It is facing. It means to face. It means the face, “*wajh.*” You are looking at the face of the guide, and you are facing the guide, and you are turning and paying attention. “*Main mutawajjuh.* I pay attention.”

“...*he preserves the attention of his guide.*” What does it mean: “...*the attention of his guide?*” The guide is paying attention to you. Of course. The guide is also looking at your face. He is facing you. You keep your face to him. It is true, absolutely true. You don’t turn your face away when the guide is speaking, things like that. But it is also metaphorically true. Metaphorically, what does it mean? It is that second stage of *ihsan*: you know that you are being seen, being watched. And you *want* to be watched, or you are not guided. Isn’t that true? How would you like to be a resident in your first year of brain surgery, and you notice while you are in the operating room doing your procedure, your senior member of the team, your teacher is playing with his Ipod. It would make you a little nervous. You want to be watched, because you want to learn. You want to be watched, but, psychologically, in the world that we live in today, watch means judged.

In that timeless world of Shaykh Allaudin Attar (ra), historically, being judged was fine. It was okay, because you were in the presence of the *shaykh*, in the *tariqah*. You were already accepted. You were already a *murīd*. You were there for that purpose. It was not a sideline. It was not something else. You might be a rug dealer. You might be whatever you might be: a carpenter, a mosaic maker. But because you were accepted, you wanted

the judgment of the *shaykh*. You wanted to know. Is that not true in every learning situation where the good student wants to know? I am sure that when Musa started flying, he was anxious to solo, but not on the first day.

“For those who embark on this path, the first necessity is to pass beyond all existence.”
What does that mean? It means that everything that is happening to you, your existence, is there as a means to get to somewhere else. You are not wedded to this existence as you know it, or as you control it. Then he goes on and says,

Whatever the seeker has to his credit in the way of obedience and worship, or knowledge or insight, he must throw it all at once into the desert of non-existence, and he must bind his heart, because it is the seeker’s personal identity that obstructs his path. Not everyone can achieve this, since he cannot pass to total knowledge from his own partial knowledge. Let him accomplish this in order that he may submit his own will to the will of the Judge, and his own value to the power of the Truth.

This is the way a Sufi worships. All the other things we do are means to get to this state of worship. In the *Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī Tarīqah*, the way to coming to non-existence is through *muraqabah*. You pray. You recite Qur’an. You make *du’ā*. You do the things that we do in the *khatim*. But you experience non-existence in *muraqabah*. That is why drifting is so important, and to put all your knowledge and all your effort and everything that you are doing. You pray the best way that you can pray. You do your *wudu* exactly correctly. You have the right attitude when you do your prayer. You have the right attitude when you read the Qur’an. You care about people. You present your problems to Allah. You say, *“Astaqfirullah”* before sit in your *muraqabah*. You say the things

you say with sincerity, and then you drift. You leave yourself.

It is in that state of non-existence that you submit your will to the will of Allah. Now, you may know that is what is happening because I'm telling you that is what is happening. But you may not know it in the moment. [It is] just like when you go to sleep at night. The Hindus used to call sleep "baby death," because you die, or you may as well be dead. When you are dreaming, you say, "You don't dream when you are dead." "Do you know that?" Dreams are very real, right? You just don't wake up from them: this is the first stage of *fana*. This is chosen, semi-controlled *fana*/annihilation. What happened to the problems of the day? What happened to your questions? What happened to your wants or needs? What happened to your desires? What happened to your fears? What happened to your worries? What happened to the countless things that were on your mind? They were annihilated in your *muraqabah*. They were gone—for the most part—and you are drifting. They are gone. You pass beyond your existence. That is what it means. Temporarily, you pass beyond your own existence. You are existing, but you have passed beyond it. If you say that you don't exist anymore, that would be a different statement. Your existence is there, and you have gone beyond it. We drove past Lynchburg and we are on our way to Roanoke. Lynchburg is still there. We passed beyond it.

He is telling us that you have to accomplish this in order to submit your own will to the will of the Judge, and your own value to the power of the Truth. This is the state in which the Will of Allah and the Power of Allah will come to you. We haven't talked about being aware of it, but it will be there. "Oh, but meditation is really hard." Actually it is very soft. "I don't know if I am making any progress." Of course, because we don't want

to know. We don't want to be in a state of knowing yet. You want to be in a state of going beyond your existence. It is not important that you know, yet. You will read the signs later.

It is like me saying, "I am out at the lake and I am out on the dock. I am fixing the boat or I am fishing, and I have my shirt off. I don't now if I am sunburned until I go inside." You don't know until after. You are preoccupied with something else, then you will see the result. You will see the result. A child in school learns something. Over and over something is drilled in their head. Allaudin gets it into their head with calculus or non-linear geometry, or trigonometry. Then, they are driving to Washington and they see this bridge. Allaudin says, "Well, that is calculus. That is three dimensional mathematics." I watched that bridge being built on Route 395. They built it from two sides, like this [until it meets in the center]. You are an engineer. So how do you get [the two arching sides] to meet? They are hanging in space. How do you get them to meet? I mean, I'm sure they can be a foot or two off, and in the pouring there are ways of dealing with it; but it cannot be that much more than that off, otherwise they are not going to meet in space, right? All of a sudden you say, "Ah! That is calculus. I am seeing it in reality. There it is!" You had to see it here first. You had to deal with it here first.

Allah had to put it into us. When? When are we receptive to this kind of knowledge? In your meditation. You are not receptive to this same kind of knowledge in reciting Qur'an, or [in making] *du'ā*, or [in] *khidma*. *Astaghfiruallah*, but you are not. That is a different kind of knowledge. Only in *muraqabah* can this kind of knowledge come to you, and you don't know it until you see it. When you see it, you say, "Ah. That is what Allaudin was teaching." It has to do with everything, everything. Everything you see has

another meaning.

How do you achieve this annihilation? He says,

There are two ways of achieving this annihilation. One of them is to practice whatever has been commanded by the Messenger (sal) the bringer of the Sacred Law, and to prefer the Will of the Truth to his own desire. Many people have reached this goal simply by adhering to the outer aspect of the Sacred Law.

Total submission: Sacred Law

This condition is relatively rare, however, for the following reasons. Since a human being is not omnipotent, his lower self resorts to every bold device and avails itself of every license, even reserving a share for itself in some of the commandments. He thus finds life, and stays far distant from the degree of “die before you die.”

You don't want to give up control. It is very, very difficult to just follow the *Sharī'ah* and the *Sunnah*, because you are interpreting it, always interpreting it for your own advantage. There is no real surrender. You become enamored in learning it and spouting it and preaching it. He goes on.

The seeker needs a guide endowed with Muhammadan light (Nūr-i-Muhammad). For by giving his heart to him and annihilating his own being in his, the pupil may reach the highest level of annihilation and so attain the ultimate goal.

“I turn my attention to my heart and my heart turns to the Divine Essence through the heart of the Shaykh.” That little phrase means an awful lot. It is a kind of reliance that is a chosen reliance. In other words, it is not that I don’t make any effort, but I find the refuge there. He says,

In the view of the masters of realization (Khwaja Khwajagan), it is therefore absolutely necessary to submit to the guide and to seek in him the manifestation of destiny as a real experience. If the genuine seeker and pupil exhausts his own being and the being of his spiritual guide because he is endowed with sincere intent, though he may look for his self, he can no longer find it because in his non-existence, he can see himself as nothing other than the reality of his spiritual guide.

I wish I could sit here and tell you that this is what happened to me with Hazrat. What I can tell you is that I am still trying to make it up. It is very hard when the guide is gone because you cannot see the *wajh*, the face. *“This being the case, to the extent of his capability and aptitude, the seeker will display reflections and flashes from manifestations of which the spiritual guide is the mirror.”* He will see from the response of the spiritual guide, his own state, his own illuminations, his own brilliance. The problem is that people think that they are seeing it in their own mind. *“That was the greatest idea in the world. I am really smart. I am really brilliant. I’m really this. I’m really that.”* Very few people utter those words, but most of us think it. But it has to be verified. This is the verification. We see these flashes, *hal*, or enlightenments, moments of enlightenment in the wisdom of the guide, and in the response of the guide, and in you seeing yourself—[I am going] back to that other point that I made earlier—seeing yourself in the presence of the guide. *“Such a view of reality will appear in that mirror*

that his lower self and his outer world will be totally wiped from his sight.”

Well, again, where can this happen? A lot of confusion comes from this. That is why other teachers have made other kinds of distinctions. One of the confusions that comes from this is that you only judge yourself against/in the physical presence of the guide, as opposed to sitting in *muraqabah* with the guide. When you are sitting in *muraqabah* with the *shaykh*, and you are drifting, and the moment come when you rise in that consciousness, that is a reflection from the *latā'if* of the *shaykh*. This is what Khwaja Allaudin Attar (ra) is saying. Then you are in that circle with the *shaykh*. He quotes Shaykh Pasha, who was a *qutb*, in sort of a Turkish dialect.

Because you must know this treasure, know that this treasure is you. You must stick to your judgment completely, for you are in its domain, unless your judgment extend from East to West together with the Truth. Wherever you may be, the Lord of Truth is with you. Beneath the sky, the face of the earth is a perfect home. Let it be complete for you, the ownership of the abode.

I don't know how much time we have to go through that. I don't know that you are confused by that. The only way that we can ever understand that the treasure that we are seeking is within us is when we give up, when we go beyond the sense of existence in the *nafs ammāra*. The only way we can do that is when we are seeing our accomplishments reflected back to us in the mirror of the heart of the *murshīd*. That companionship in *muraqabah* is not the same as the companionship just in the physical world. In the physical world, we experience the humiliations and the joys, the strengths and the weaknesses of our *nafs*. But in *muraqabah*, we are seeing clearly the reflection in the heart of the line of the *shuyukh*. We are in the company of the *shuyukh*. I know these

words sound like they are real words, and they sound like they mean something, but you don't get the meaning. They sound like they are supposed to mean something, but you don't quite get the meaning.

The meaning is this: one part of our self is seeing when we are in the physical presence. That has a lot to do with the *nafs ammāra* and the ego, and the way we communicate, and the way we act, and the things that block the *tajalli*, the transmission. When you are sitting in *muraqabah*, what you are receiving from the *shaykh* is a reflection of the light. Whatever light you have achieved, whatever knowledge you've achieved will be reflected back at you. You will see (even if you won't say it this way) the upliftment that you get from the *muraqabah*, eventually, is the testimony that this is the treasure that you are seeking. It is not distracted. It is not distorted by the physical world, by the physical reality. You are sitting in *muraqabah*, and a wave of happiness comes to you, or a wave of light comes to you, or you think of something in a way that you never thought of it, and a gratitude comes to you, or exaltation comes to you, and you realize that this is a reflection. You cannot see it in yourself; you can only see it reflected. Why? Because that is the system we are in. That is how Allah created this system.

We don't see Allah. We see the reflections of Allah. We see the expressions of Allah. We see the expression of Allah in everything that is created. We see the qualities and attributes of Allah. Here [on this drum] is a skin of an animal. At one point it was going around, "Baa. Baa." Now it is going (creates sound from the drum). Right? It is only doing that because it is interfacing with me. It is into another system. In the previous system it was going "Baa, baa, baa," and the skin was keeping it warm, and keeping the organs within itself. In this system (creating sound from the drum) it (the skin) is serving

me. In one system we are physical human beings. When we shift through *muraqabah* and our sincerity, now we become submitted to the One Who is playing us. We are doing something that we were not initially created for, but was our potential. How long will this drum last? Well, it will probably last a lot longer than the animal that gave its life for it. It is in another time frame. It is in another system with another purpose. But it is still made out of the same thing.

It looks like a human. Smells like a human, acts like a human, but it is no longer a human, not in *muraqabah*. You are not human. And you are reflecting what? Since it is in submission, it reflects whatever I want it to reflect. (Starts to play the drum in a specific rhythm.) Is it happy? It is not happy. Is it sad? It is not sad. Is it fulfilled? It is not fulfilled. Is it unfulfilled? It is not unfulfilled. It has become absorbed by the plan that plays it. That is *fana*. Can you say that this animal was created to become a drum? Yes and no. It had the potential to become a drum. Someone chose for it to become a drum. It became a drum. Is this a boy or girl drum? We don't know. It does not matter anymore. Everything was annihilated. The only thing that was left was what was needed to be left to fulfill the purpose that it needed to fulfill. Nothing else exists. Got it? See how long you keep it. I understood that only after thirty years of *muraqabah*. Actually, I understood it only after five or six years of serious *muraqabah*. *Asalām Aleikum*.