

June 3, 2009

Wednesday

Title: [Wuqūfi Qalbi](#)

DVD title: Becoming Spiritually Mature: Wuqūfi Qalbi

*Dinner blessing:* O Allah, we thank You for all our families, for the new baby in the community, for all the children, for our wonderful family from Egypt who are here, the Hassounas. We pray for their health and long life, and total healing. We are grateful Allah for all of the blessings You send upon us, and ask You to make us worthy inwardly and outwardly of these blessings, and to turn our attention more to You and to Your service, by serving Your creation. *Amin.*

*Sohbet:* Let me start at one place, and then I'll get to *wuqūfi qalbi*. Imam al Ghazālī (ra) said, "*The spiritual path is like shooting an arrow at a point you do not see where it will hit. One only knows one's action, but one does not see the target.*" On the spiritual journey, a synonym for life if it is intended to be one that is purposeful, the initiative is to make oneself a desirable commodity that Allah Swt has planted in the fertile ground of His creation. Somewhere along the line, you realize your prayer is that Allah Swt will come in some way and purchase you back. In other words, you try to come to be in a state where you are one of the few in supply, and there is a demand by Allah to have you. So you sell yourself to Allah. It's funny to hear it that way, because we always hear about selling your soul to the devil. Nobody ever talks about selling yourself to Allah Swt. If you weren't separate, you couldn't sell yourself. The illusion of separateness has to be overcome, and the initiative to sell oneself to Allah Swt is the arrow. You aim in the direction you have been told, and you hope it will hit the target, metaphorically.

That's where we the word *bai'at* from, to sell. It is supported in the Qur'an: **"He has**

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**purchased of the believers, their persons and their goods, for theirs in return is the Garden of Paradise.” (9:111)**

According to our Tariqah, a person who firmly makes that intention; who has the *irāda* (will power), and who takes not only the intention but the initiative to surrender him or herself totally to Allah Swt is called a *murīd* or initiate. When that *murīd* attains the goal, usually it is said the seeker has come to Allah.Swt But really, what has happened is the person has awakened in the Divine Presence. And Allah Swt – that whole totality of the system – absorbs the individual. The individual at first is lost in that absorption, but then becomes aware of it. That person is called *murād*, the one who is sought by Allah Swt. The idea of being sought by Allah Swt is an affirmation of the *Rahmat* of Allah Swt. Even though human beings fell from grace, so to speak, from the *Nai'ma* of Allah Swt in the Garden, Allah Swt has always provided a way for us to come back to a state of awareness; hence, we get the idea that Allah Swt seeks the believer as much as the believer seeks Allah Swt.

When we get to that stage where Allah Swt has now seen that the fruit or the grain that has been planted has come to maturity, it has its prime value at this point. That is, through the eyes of the *shuyukh* or *shaykh*, a person can be seen to ripen or mature. And under the right circumstances, with our will and our desire, the person who wants to seek achieves that state of readiness. The harvester then comes to harvest the crop. No matter what the weather is or what the conditions are, the reaper comes to reap the crop. Sometimes, probably more often than we realize, when the conditions have not been met, the crop is turned under. It has little value. If it has value, then it is sold and bought. Of course, everything belongs to Allah, our life and everything. We understand that from a theological and philosophical point of view, but we don't understand it in the way that we feel our life is a trust. We think wrongly that this life's wealth lies in our possessions, and

we risk falling into the trap of unconsciously becoming unaware or turning away from Allah Swt. We flagrantly breach the trust.

I want to stop here on that subject, and talk about the how. What does it take to become spiritually mature and of value? We had talked about the different *wuqūfi*. The primary one is *wuqūfi qalbi*. There are two meanings to it. One is that the heart of the *dhaiker*, when you are making *dhikrullah*, should be aware and attentive to the Presence of the Truth, or Allah Swt. What that means is, when you are making *dhikr* in your heart you should be learning and listening for the essential truth that can be revealed by what you are doing. Khwaja Ubadaiya Utrar (ra) said, “*Wuqūfi qalbi is composed of awareness and presence of the soul towards the truth.*” Your essential being, your soul, that which is always attached to Allah feels its comfort in the Divine Presence. When one is making *dhikr* and one feels a deep and profound comfort and knowledge in what is being revealed, just in the remembrance of God [one gets a glimpse of the Haqq of Allah Swt]. I don’t mean just saying “*la illaha illa ’lah,*” but *dhikr* in many forms. Not just sitting in a circle making *dhikr khafee*, but *dhikr khafee* when you are walking and looking at nature, or seeing miracles like the birth of the baby. You get a glimpse of the Haqq of Allah Swt. A doorway opens; your self disappears for a moment. You are overwhelmed and humbled.

One can say this is an awareness of the true Allah Swt, not the idea of God or Allah Swt as a being. Instead of saying the ‘Truth,’ one can say the True Allah Swt—not the Allah that is created by human beings, not the Allah that is preferred in the circumstance, not the Allah that you construe by your own preferences and desires, but something you have no ability to control. It is the Truth, the True Allah Swt. To the degree our hearts have no overwhelming demands or are relatively free of demands, you are in that moment, that state, or eventually in that station where your heart is free of what you think should

happen. [You are free] of distractions, good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, and free of desire to control.

It reminds me of a story Suleyman Nyang told when he had a stroke a few weeks ago. He's fine now, *alhamdulillah*, but at one point, soon after his stroke, he was in the hospital. He had called his cousin. He was talking and talking to her, and wondering why she wasn't answering him. He kept saying, why are you not answering me? And she was silent. He wondered if he had offended her, or maybe she wasn't on the line. Then he realized that he couldn't hear. He lost his hearing temporarily. Suleyman, being the master of metaphor and simile, said he realized then what it must be like to be in the *barzakh*, trying to tell people what you see and where you are, and not being able to communicate with them. In this case, he flipped it: he was the one in the *barzakh* trying to give instructions and tell people he was okay, but he could see they couldn't hear him.

In this case, the freedom that comes to us in a sense from the “other side,” meaning seeing things in a way that you don't normally see. *Wuqūfi qalbi* is when you go very deeply into your heart, and you yearn to put 100% of your effort into your *muraqabah*, 100% of your effort into your prayer, into your *tafakkur*, into your relationships, into your service to Allah—maybe 110%. Maybe it's like alcohol. 200 proof is pure alcohol. You put 100% into the Shari'ah and the Sunnah as a Muslim, and then 100% into the Tariqah. You become 200 proof grain alcohol. edit. 19:04 I guess what makes a person stand out, if it's 110% or whatever, is that extra percentage. It's that realization, hopefully not at the last minute, that you decide you are going to strive for it. *Wuqūfi qalbi* is not just stopping during the day and putting your attention on your heart and saying, “Allah, Allah, Allah.” It is stopping and putting your attention on the heart and saying, “Allah, Allah” and connecting that “Allah, Allah” with where you are and what is real.

The mystical side of *wuqūfi qalbi* happens when you don't look at the world as a potential resource for all your demands and wants, but you look at creation as an incredible, awesome construction by Allah so that you can become more aware of that Divine Presence and that Truth. That comes from the heart, not from the mind. Bahaudin Naqshbandi (ra) was reported to have said that people should not let their heart be distracted from the *dhikr*. Rather, you should bring the heart back always to the *dhikr*. You should not let your heart be distracted by some problem you are having at work or at home or with somebody. You should not let your heart be distracted by your ego because you did something very well and someone congratulated you, or you did something terrible and you were embarrassed or criticized.

Bahaudin Naqshband (ra) said, "*Habsi nafas, holding the breath, is not as necessary in our Tariqah as in the other Tariqahs. In our Tariqah, in our way of looking, it is both discipline and interactive. We try to create an environment where the heart is free to focus on Allah.*" Heart pause is not just feeling the *fā'id* of light and love overflowing one, but it is a pragmatic state where it is necessary to master the pausing of the heart and reflection in order to make progress and move forward on one's journey. When we speak about these pauses, we begin to realize how interrelated and how realistic these pauses are. They really do have to do with things we are experiencing every day in our lives. They have to do with attraction, or our relationships, our relatedness to creation (*nisbah*), with how we discipline ourselves and how we use time, where we place ourselves, and what time we place ourselves.

All the rules of the Order are very practical. Even, one begins to understand that if you follow these simple guidelines and become aware of them, surrender becomes automatic. It's no longer an intellectual thing. Times have really changed since the time of Nebi Mohammed (sal). The motivations of human beings in society at that time, and for the

first couple of hundred years among the real Sahabah and *taba'ain*, were not the same as the motivations are today. It is not correct to say that everyone has the same motivation. People today are very motivated for worldly things, and very absorbed and involved in things of the world. We fit the spiritual into the world. At the time of Rasulallah (sal), the early Muslims were not involved with the world. The world was an opportunity to spend more time in seeking the truth and knowledge. They were absorbed in spiritual values and practices—not everyone in the world, but the followers of Rasulallah (sal) and the early Sufis. Today it is quite different. The expectations have to be different, and the means have to be changed. Again, it's a pragmatic kind of Sufism.

Change is extremely important; but change for what purpose? If one really intends to surrender oneself to Allah Swt, that intention has to be translated into action. There are a lot of steps that have to be taken. Just like if you go and buy property, do you know how many documents you have to read and sign, and how many steps you have to go through? You have to have an appraisal, this checked out, that done, papers at the bank, so many things. It takes time and effort, and a lot of paperwork, a lot of time and effort to make that transaction successful. How about the transaction between Allah, between the Rabb and the *'abd* when the servant decides to sell himself to his Lord, or when it has been determined that the crop is ripe to be harvested?

The Prophet (sal) made efforts to end slavery. Bilal (ra) was the first slave to be freed. Maybe one of the inner reasons for that was not just some moral and ethical reason, but a very practical one. If all the work was being done by the slave, then the slave owner didn't have to do much, or make much effort. Therefore, until slavery is ended, you wouldn't know what the capacity of the individual was to do their work for society. There was always the intervening force of slavery. Consequently, slavery would have a negative effect on Islam. Allah Swt said, **“O you who believe! Fear Allah, and seek the**

**means to approach Him and strive in His path so that you might attain success.”**

(5:35) All of that is dynamic and active and demanding of us. If we just carried that around with us and looked at it ten times a day, and really made an effort, that would be great. But, of course, we won't do that.

We have to make ourselves available. If you look at life, you realize you cannot wait. It's already Wednesday. Seems like yesterday that the family got back from Iran, and that was Saturday. Yet, every day we feel we have all the time in the world. But when we reflect on it, we realize how fast it goes. We have to find our approach to Allah Swt through our will and our desire to be nearer to Allah Swt, or to be aware of that Divine Presence. If you don't understand what that means, shoot the arrow anyway. Find the means to approach. The means to approach is through our *murshid*, the *shuyukh*, and Rasulallah.(sal) That's the real serious Islam. That's the most important thing in Islam. It's important to know Shari'ah and Arabic, and all these things. It's amazing what people put their effort to do. It is usually what they want to do, especially if one makes the case that it is good and useable, necessary or marketable.

Rather, put the effort into the internal direction. This is the most important thing, because then Allah will provide everything for you. That's the way the truth operates, the way the system succeeds. It is not to get distracted, either by the good or the bad. That takes real courage and trust. We have hundreds of opportunities a week if not a day to do that. It depends on the time, place, and circumstances. What can't change is the yearning, will power and desire of the seeker, no matter what age you live in. What doesn't change is the *bai'at*. What don't change are the practices, but they have a different manifestation in every day and age. What's appropriate [to realize] for now, today, as we all (or most of us) have to work in the world and do things to earn a living, is that it is different to couch it in spirituality and to do it spiritually.

We all have our desires, and some are very good. Sometimes you have to stand back and look and see what is good for the *ummah*, what is right for the *ummah*. Look around at how few people are here. Some are traveling; some are sick. Some are tired. Some have jobs that keep them from being here. It's all changeable. If you do what's good for Allah's *Ummah* and for *suhbat*, everything you need will be given to you, everything you need will be provided for you. Every opportunity you seek will be brought to your door. Wasn't that what I was promised over forty years ago? What hasn't been brought to this door? Almost everything. Metaphorically, you go out and look and have all the good reasons; or go in and look and have all the success. We all have to go out and do some work, and that's fine. That's the world we live in today. There has to be changes and adjustments in that.

When the will, and the *niyyat* is correct, and the *himma* is there, then you only go out as far as you need, and you go in as deeply as you can. That may sound like a boring life, but you know: that's okay too. There are wonderful moments in life. Most of it is boring and repetitive. There were some stories from my family about the trip to Iran, but like all trips, it is over. For those of us who have traveled a lot, we realize that those trips always end. It's almost as if they never happened. You are sitting on top of Mount Shasta one day and the next you are back in Roanoke. It's almost like it never happened. It's what you bring back with you internally. We have the opportunity to work in a way that serves humanity and serves Allah, and we can be reminded all the time, if we allow ourselves to be. All of that is *wuqūfi qalbi. Asalāmu aleikum.*