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Thursday

Title: [Cast the Seed in Tilled Ground](#)

DVD title: Sowing Seeds for A Spiritually Focused Life:
There will Always be Those with Idhn/Authority to Guide Those who Seek

We are all familiar with the ‘*āyat* of Qur’an that says, “**Such is Allah’s guidance that wherewith He guides whom He will, and him whom Allah sends astray, for him there is no guidance.**” (39:23) We see this every day and struggle with understanding it. We are familiar also with the ‘*āyat* where Allah Swt says, “**Truly, in remembrance of Allah do hearts find their *sakina*/tranquility, rest.**” (13:28)

Allah says in Qur’an, “**Allah draws to himself everyone who is willing, and guides to Himself everyone who turns to Him.**” (42:13) The implications are that certain people are born with an inclination toward another, more profound level of spirituality than just the basic practices we were talking about last night. One of the conditions required for calling human beings consciously back to Allah Swt with clarity is to sow the seeds in those human beings of spiritual existence, or spiritual life. Whatever our individual destinies may be, we can see in our collective destiny that somehow the seeds were sown in our life for a spiritually focused life. When you go back and ask yourself the question, “How did that come about? On which day of my life did this journey turn in this direction?” Very few of us can answer that question. The children think, “It’s not the same for me. I was born into it, so it’s an accident of fate.” But of course, it is not. It *is* fate; it is not an accident.

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Another condition required of calling human beings to be awaked or awake in the awareness of Allah, of the Divine Presence is to have the means, the guidance, the tools taught to us by an authorized spiritual guide who teaches the rules of Tasawwuf, but moreover transmits to us. Some of you may remember many years ago studying the rules of the *murīd* and the Rules of the Order, and some of the challenges in those rules. Like, “*I surrender to the murshīd, as a corpse in the hands of the bodywasher, glad to do so for I know this is the right way,*” or “*Utter silence of secrets is my oath, and I will respect those who are set over me without question or complaint.*” These kinds of statements are very challenging, especially to someone who is new on the path, but [not necessarily] when you see them in the context of sowing a field for vegetables or fruit of some kind. Mustafa was telling me today he made a row for arugula and some kale for the fall. Things have to be prepared.

[We] struggle with these things and understanding these guidelines. [Though] their origins are thousands of years old, their articulation in this form is over a thousand years old. There are more of them—eighteen of certain rules, and twelve of others. We memorized them all at one time, and contemplated them. They are really preparing the soil for the individual to receive the transmission that comes in an unbroken line from the Prophet Mohammed (sal) down to me, or to some other *shaykh*. The contemplation, study, understanding and trust that come from those rules, guidelines and admonitions, to the degree a person accepts them, studies them, understands them, trusts them, trusts their history is to the degree a person will receive the benefits of the transmission. One needs an authorized and living spiritual guide to teach those rules and guidelines, and to transmit those initiations, the *tajalli bari'ta'ala*.

In accordance with the rules and guidelines of Islam, the true teacher / educator, the one

who takes the *talib* and guides them, the true educator of the souls (*murābi*) is an authorized teacher, one who leads and orients those who commit themselves to this way in the direction that they should go, just like a compass. That orientation and those transmissions are a purification/*atazkiya* that take place, purifying our soul from the faults, and uplifting the qualities of an individual until that individual arrives at the *maqam al ihsan*, the *maqam* of excellence, the *maqam* of beauty. This *idhn* is an absolutely indispensable requirement for transmitting *tarbiya*, the spiritual teaching (education). It has always been a necessity throughout the ages for anyone who taught any kind of religious science to have some kind of *ijāzah*: from the teacher or the scientist they studied those sciences with. It is [analogous to] receiving a degree in college, then a master's degree, and then a Ph.D. degree. All along the way you have an advisor, and in the last degree you have a chairman of your committee who guides you along the way and that you trust. It's a simplistic analogy; but difficult for the person.

Wherever we look, there are these different *idhn* given in these different disciplines. According to the masters of Tasawwuf, the spiritual authority not only, on one level, bears witness to the capabilities or the achievement of the individual to be able to guide, *irshad*, or the *akhlaq* of that individual (their spiritual quality in which they develop the capacity to guide), but above all, it is because of their authorization/*idhn* or *ijāzah* that the *bāraka* flows into the individual, and the spiritual practices bear fruit. Because of that process and that authorization, the capability to awaken the *latā'if* (or the hearts) of those who sincerely aspire is there. In addition, any of us, or any of those people who receive this *idhn* to teach, and to admonish people to remember Allah Swt and to make *dhikr*, are in some part participating in this *tajdid*/renewal. In this case, it is the renewal of the *dīn*, individual by individual (*murīd* by *murīd*).

This authorization is what Allah Swt refers to as **“the clear signs from your Lord”** (40:28) in the Qur’an. An essential point here has to be understood: that is that one should not think, as many people do think in the times we live in, that there are no more qualified or authorized people. In fact, we know historically that whenever there is a state of spiritual degeneracy like we see today, where religion is corrupted, misused and real spirituality is hard to find, where truth has been twisted and where deception rules, and the particular situations in our world today, [this state of spiritual degeneracy] gives rise to the sincere seeker. Just like these situations give rise to the hundred-year *mujaddid*. There are always people who have the desire for knowledge; consequently, whenever there are people who have a desire for knowledge, that desire cannot remain unanswered. It’s the way this universe has been created. If there is a question, there is an answer. If there is a questioner, there is one who has the ability to answer the question.

There was never a point in the history of humanity where there was not the availability of some spiritual guidance, and the opportunity to meet an authorized teacher or teachers. Not only is meeting and *bai’at* present, but even more important and serious is that the *hidayat*/guidance, and *rahmat*/mercy have never abandoned us; and the transmissions we get, or the seeds that are sown in the prepared soil have got to grow. These are seeds that have been tested and tried. Maybe 1 out of 9,000 doesn’t germinate. One of the greatest Sufi teachers, Imam Qushari, said, *“As long as Islam lasts, there is no time in history when there won’t be any masters.”* Similarly, there are quotes from Prophet Mohammed (sal) that indicated the same thing.

In a Sahih Hadith by Muslim, according to Saa’d Ibn Waqas, ***“The Messenger of God (sal) said, “The people of the Maghreb will not cease to know the truth until the Hour comes.”*** Malik also reported that the Prophet (sal) said, ***“The people of the West will***

not cease to know the truth until the Day of Resurrection.” What does Maghreb mean? West, the place where the sun sets. Where do we live? In the West. Again in another tradition of the Prophet (sal) the same thing is said in a slightly different way. ***“A group of my community will not cease to be in the truth in the Maghreb until the Hour comes.”*** You find in this country, people from all countries. You find in this country, this community of seekers. Allah has predicted it, told it. At the time of Prophet Mohammed (sal) what was the West? A place of mystery, undiscovered places. Barbarians came from the West. In reality, it’s very important that if the way cannot fail to manifest itself to those who have real inner yearning, we have to realize that because there is real yearning, there is real guidance. But that guidance has to come from a spiritual authority, a living master. It is actually by virtue of that authority that it becomes possible for one to educate the souls and purify the hearts, and uplift the minds, to transmit to receptive minds the science of spirituality, the education of the masters of Tasawwuf from the beginning of time.

Yet, it’s all based on this *idhn*, this authorization, this *ijāzah*. A person who does not have an *ijāzah* from a direct, living master cannot be in the chain, cannot have their name or the title of *shaykh* or *murshid*. Everything that person would transmit would be like throwing seeds on stony ground. Ibn Abbas al Mursi (ra) said, *“No master manifests himself through his disciples if he has not been determined by his inspirations (waradat) and if he has not received authorization from God and the Messenger. It is by this blessing of bāraka of this authorization and the secret power in it that implies that our cause is sustained and that the state of his disciples is protected.”* We have to ask ourselves: what is it we want? What is it we have to tolerate in order to get it? What is it we have to adjust to in order to get it? There are parameters and directions and guidances, but mostly they are there just to be a buffer, to keep the energy, to keep the

truths, to keep the potential focused.

In a strange way, this *bāraka* (power) that sustains us comes from a simple process that we see repeated again and again in the world we live in. It is a process of matriculation, authorization, and approval. Of course, along with that, there is some trust. One is trusted with information or knowledge. In some cases, a person is trusted with a scalpel. Some people are trusted with laws, and some with extremely volatile chemicals, or nuclear energy. Some people are trusted with information, truth. Some are entrusted with justice. But the trust that comes through the *murshid* comes through a Divine Secret. That's why we say, "*May Allah protect the secrets, khudissseru.*" That Divine Secret is nothing articulated; it is given as a power that a person acquires according to their capacity to focus their attention primarily on Allah Swt. That *bāraka* that comes along with this transmission and this *idhn* has the ability to transform people by virtue of just that authorization.

The authorization has to be earned. Just like when you graduate from a college you get a diploma, I have my *ijāzah* written out, signed by the Shaykh. It is the intention and the creation of that *ijāzah*. I remember when I received it originally from Hazrat (ra), he brought it here to the US and showed it to me. He signed that copy, and then said he wanted to have a better copy made, and when I would come to India that year, there would be another copy—and there was. It's a piece of paper, like many. It represents study, like many diplomas do, but something else happens in that transmission that allows the next *shaykh* or *khalifa* to be able to make that transmission to other people and begin the process with them. It's a very efficient system: age-old and tried. The human ego resists submission or obedience, training or trust. Things happen to hopefully make us reflect upon ourselves, but often those things make us make judgments about other human

beings. Sometimes we feel accepted; sometimes we feel rejected. Sometimes we feel we are not even paid attention to. But the Divine Secret is lying in that authorization. It cannot be articulated, but it is in that.

The Divine Secret that transforms individuals happens by virtue of that authorization that stimulates and awakens the *latā'if*, invigorates the individual, deepens their faith, and constantly renews the propagation of and the affirmation of the teachings of Islam and the Prophet Mohammed (sal) as a light that comes into the hearts of sincere people who aspire to a spiritual life. What the *murīd* receives when he or she commits themselves through the *bai'at*, which marks an entry into a whole new way, is comparable to a seed that is sown in a well-tilled row by Mustafa—that is, in dirt that he understands and knows how to work with. That seed grows, thanks to the spiritual direction of the person, not just a companion on the path, but by the authorized individual.

In addition to that, this authorization, this *ijazah*, this *idhn* has an effect on the seeker when the seeker obeys that teacher, when the seeker follows the sign, when the seeker submits themselves like a corpse in the hands of the bodywasher. [The effect happens] when in fact that *murīd* trusts in the guidance, participates in that guidance, and thereby participates in the ongoing authorization of the *murshid*, the *shaykh*, by virtue of the fact that they have offered themselves to that flow of energy, that they have put themselves in that current, that they have held onto the robe of the *murshid* and they move in that current. To regain one's state in the world, which we all have to do, and not lose one's spirituality lest [one loses] one's faculty of sight, one has to become aware of the efficacy of those rules, like we were quoting earlier.

Why are [those guidelines] important? They are the way in which the soul's garden is

titled. They are the way in which one can call upon another individual to bring their heart and soul into some work, into something beneficial. We say, a person “puts their heart and soul into their work.” The individual’s state, journey, *suluk* becomes in itself a *du’ā*, in itself an invocation, and *ibāda*: a way of worshiping Allah Swt. A person becomes one of those who are faithful to their *bai’at*, to their journey because that person feels good in the company of other seekers. That person understands the necessity of sincere study. That person is nourished by the light of other spiritual beings, individuals. There is no need for that individual to be veiled from what is hidden in the invisible world. So the *shaykh* takes that person for little forays, states, awakenings, journeys, and insights into the unseen world, into the *ghaib*. This can’t be done unless there is that trust, until there is that kind of submission to a very high degree.

Of course it can be done, but not to a high enough degree. It’s true that you don’t miss what you don’t have. You don’t miss the knowledge that you don’t know exists. A person can live happily in this world without developing any intuition or insight, or any spiritual skills, without manifesting any spiritual capability. It’s possible. If you don’t know something exists, you cannot miss it. But if you have a yearning in your heart and realize where you have been placed, or if you are just enhancing your scientific knowledge, your spiritual knowledge, your capabilities as a human being, [you do so] by persevering and by participating.

This isn’t just theoretical. You also know that sometimes when students turn toward the teacher, the teacher allows the student to distance themselves from him. That person gradually, because there is an attraction but no seeming entrance, that person learns to give up certain things. They learn to give up their sense of controlling everything. They give up their sense of fear. They give up their distrust and judgmentalness. They give up

their bias. They give up their unwarranted or limited opinions simply by not getting a response sometimes. Simply by not getting the response you thought you would get, even if you get one. It happens simply because when a person goes beyond the need to just articulate these things, but rather has the experience of those *latā'if* through their meditation, they realize they are not alone. I mean literally, they are not alone—not just not alone because “XYZ went through the same thing I did,” but you are present in the Presence. And you look around and you see others like yourself. They have the faces of these names you know, and other names you know.

When we find ourselves with certain individuals who allow us more freedom, and at the same time train us to awaken our organs of perception so that we make the right choices, we realize that none of what I'm saying is theoretical. What I'm saying is something you experience very single day. But the guidance is not there every day until we turn toward the *murshid*, or we turn and accept our own *bai'at* that we gave, and we renew it, *tajdīd*. Then we get to see what there is to see. We can begin to see all the selections on the menu. We have been given permission to select those selections that are on the menu. We have been given permission to use them. The subtlety of this is very important. All this progress that one can make is made under the umbrella of the *idhn*, the *ijāzah* of the authorized teaching. Just like with the Sahaba, there could make no progress without the Prophet Mohammed (sal). There could be no Medina without the Prophet (sal). There could be no reconciliation in Mecca without the Prophet (sal).

Many people worked hard and many fought in battles. But without that authorization, those battles would have been meaningless and the death toll, like we saw in the early 90's, would be staggering numbers of individuals. We live in a world where people don't understand that they can meet the *waliyullah*. They can meet the good people. They can

sit in *suhbet* and come to know each other better. They can assist each other better. They can go beyond the feelings of anxiety, fear, prejudice, doubt, or however you want to form it. One can open up their lives and heart, because they are on that same path. It is important to have the company of those good people. *Alhamdulillah*. There is more to this, which I won't go into it tonight—the whole issue of taking leave, getting permission, sharing thoughts, asking for advice, seeking others' opinions, taking guidance. Why are these things important? Are they just spiritual cultural ritualistic behaviors? They are not. They are necessary to till the ground for the seed; otherwise, you find yourself for years casting the seed on stone. *Asalaamu aleikum*.