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Wednesday

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Title: [The Chishti Stages of Love: Sadaqāt and Mavaddat](#)

DVD title: The Chishti Stages of Love
Sadaqaat and Mavaddat

Dinner blessing: O one who brings light and lifts darkness; one who awakens the hearts of those who are asleep, one who brings knowledge and casts out ignorance; one who gives life and brings transition; we ask you Allah, giver of all things, to forgive us and give us your love and your mercy; and give us always a straight direction and the ability to find the strength and the discipline to deepen our iman. Amin, amin, amin.

Suhbat: (begins with a question by a student)

Student: Last time, you were talking about the different phases, and you spoke about jealousy as coming after acceptance.

Shaykh: Doesn't that make sense? Close your eyes. I know you must have had one jealous moment in your life. Was it to a stranger, over nothing?

Student: I would have thought that jealousy came before acceptance, as a more base emotional reaction and response.

Shaykh: The second phase of [the 2nd stage is] *ghayrat*, jealousy. “*Whoever becomes jealous on account of jealousy doesn't appreciate anyone, even to utter the name of Allah.*” Does that make sense? I don't know how to explain it. It seems perfectly reasonable and logical to me. If someone coveted something you didn't have or didn't want, why would you have jealousy? If you didn't accept the state of acceptance, in this

case being accepted or accepting to love, why would jealousy come? Even in uttering the name of the beloved, it says. Maybe it will clear it up if I go on. If not, I'll try to clear it up some other way.

[The third phase of the 2nd stage is] *eshtiyāq*: ardor, longing, craving, desiring, yearning. [It is] where the desire to meet the beloved blazes like a fire, consuming everything—a conflagration. The lover complains. *“My longing and patience have passed beyond all boundaries, my Friend.”* You are coming to the point where you have no patience left. There is nothing to contain your love. He says, *“If You are patient in meeting me, then all my strength will be sapped from me. Without You, life is forbidden to me. What life is a life without You, to me?”* Maybe it is easier to understand this in terms of remembering. There is the act of remembering, like doing *dhikr* and *wuqufi qalbi*, and striving to remember Allah everywhere. It takes discipline and effort, focus and direction; but love wipes all that all out. It takes no effort; there is only one focus. It is only about remembering the beloved—nothing else. Everything else is hard to remember.

The poets talk about it being hard to eat, sleep, act, or anything. We have these two sides in us. Love is the catalyst that gives us the experience of total submission and surrender; effortless passion, effortless love, effortless focus, without reason, filled with a lot of fear/*khawf*, fear of loss, of loneliness, fear of aloneness, fear of never having. This all comes with love. The effort to sustain the relationship between the lover and beloved depends on that mutual affection and love. These poets are directing our attention to, if you fall in love with the source of love, Allah; if you allow yourself to attribute those same passions, desires, fears, worries to Allah, to His Prophet, and to His *Awliyā*; then the love for the human being is only a manifestation of that greater love. It's an expression, almost like a metaphor. It's an expression of the love you have for Allah.

Conversely, if you take the love that you have experienced as human beings, even if it's misplaced, even if it's temporary (as most things are in this world), and you use that as a

means of understanding what love for Allah might be, you might drop your guard. All the passions and all the anxieties and fears and jealousies that come from that kind of human love now become attributed to Allah. Then you realize there is nothing but Allah. Of course, our teachers have told us in the old days about *fana fi shaykh*, *fana fi Rasūl*, and *fana fi Allah*. The relationship with the *walī*, with the *shaykh*, with the *murshid* was that relationship of pure love, which was then an allowable form of love and affection—not shirk. But by nature, the *murid* is in submission and obedience to the *shaykh*. It is a form that is fraught with potential jealousy and difficulty, because you are not controlling it. You are at the mercy of the *shaykh*, just like the beloved is at the mercy of the lover, in that sense.

Even with reciprocity, even with that submission, trust, vulnerability and the kindness and sweetness it is accepted with, there is always that angst, always that worry that it could all end. Then there are the realities of physical life. So you develop this love for Rasūlallah (sal) who is the light behind that light, etc. It goes like that. For example, one of the Rules of the Order is: *“I am a friend of the friend of the order, and the enemy of the enemy of the same.”* You would say that if someone uttered a bad word against the *shaykh*. Or, *“Doubts and uncertainties are to be expected. These I will ignore, after I have allowed myself to understand why they exist.”* The intention in love is to overcome all blocks.

You fall in love with a person. They are kind, they are gentle, and they are gorgeous. Everybody looks at that beloved and goes, “Oho-ho! How did that ugly person get that beautiful woman?” Or “Why did that good-looking man take that ugly woman?” whatever that is. Don’t forget the Prophet (sal) purposefully married a very nasty lady. People look and say, “How did that happen?” But they don’t know. That beautiful person that everyone looks at and says, “Oho ho! I wish I could have that person!” maybe has terrible bad breath, maybe gas. We don’t know. You only see what you see. But you are so in love with her, the breath smells like the breath of a fasting person. The

breath of the fasting person is sweet, according to the Prophet (sal). Do you understand? What you see is different.

Now you have jealousy. “Other people want my beloved!” But if they knew she had bad breath, they wouldn’t want her at all. Because only to you is her breath sweet. But from a distance, it all looks beautiful, just beautiful. Allah is telling us that this jealousy is very personal: it has to do with fear and doubts that are inherent in the individual, that they have to feel.

There is a story of a man who traveled a long distance to meet a dervish. As he stayed with the dervish, he noticed that the dervish’s wife was a very nasty woman. She would be harping at him all the time, putting him down, demanding things. After a few days, he says, “You are a great shaykh. Why are you married to this harping woman?” He said, “Because I may have pride in my state. So her harping keeps me humble. I don’t have to think I’m such a great person.”

So this man returns home and marries the worst woman he can find. This woman is so nasty, she is not only nasty to him, but to everyone. One day, someone got so angry at her, they killed her. They saw how nasty she was to this young dervish, and how it carried over to everything else. He allowed her to be so nasty and didn’t stand up to her, and was being humbled and humiliated by her. It was his sister who killed her for berating the brother so much.

He went back to the shaykh and asked, “Why did this happen to me?” The shaykh said, “Had you asked me, I would have told you that this is not for everyone. It is only for the person who needs it. Your selfishness for your own desire for development caused not only your life to be hurt, but other people’s lives to be ruined, and one person to lose their life.” There is a lot of nuance in all of this.

The fourth phase (of the 2nd stage) is *dhikr mahbub*, remembrance of the Beloved. We all know if you love something, you talk about it a lot: My new Mac! My new Mac! My new Mac! I don't love it that much...! It's fine, I like it, and I think I'm doing pretty well at it after 24 hours. But people do that. "My Mac, my car, my poodle." I know someone who, when they talk to their relatives on the phone, only talk about their dog. When you love something, you talk about it. There was a saying that once a lover fell sick, and his friends asked him whether they should call a doctor. He said, "*My physician is the recitation of the name of my Beloved.*" "*Oh, Your name is a healing for all my illness.*" Or you could say, "By your name, I will achieve everything."

It is true. By the name of Allah, you can achieve everything, because the Names of Allah are the attributes through which you achieve everything. If Rahmat is your Beloved, then that is your means. It is also the reason why we give such names to people. The Prophet didn't like shortened names; he liked the whole name. There are many *hadith* on the subject. Don't shorten a person's name. Don't call them by a nickname.

Then there is *tahaiyur* [the fifth phase]: meaning bewildered, astonished. Because of his high rank, the Prophet (sal) called Allah the "Guide of the bewildered." He prayed, "***O Lord, increase my bewilderment at You. When the Beloved is sublime, and it is impossible to have access to Him, what remains there except bewilderment?***" "*You are the king of the realm of beauty, and I am only a poor dervish.*" In other words, "I'm astonished at all of this." You see someone; you love them. You have to have that person. You have that person, and you remain bewildered. "How did this ever happen to me? I'm astonished I have gotten that person to love me." That's what people do. The difference between an ego-maniac and a true lover is, as soon as the ego maniac gets the person to love them, they dump them. But the true lover remains totally in astonishment of that presence.

The person in love with Allah remains totally in astonishment of that Presence around them. That compassion is right there within their reach, and justice is within their reach. Love is within their reach, truth and submission is within their reach. Healing is within their reach. Trust and patience are within their reach. [It is all] just right there—[and they are] astonished. “How did I live before you? O Allah!” “How did I live before that knowledge? Who and what was I before that knowledge?”

I was on Skype today with someone who was telling me, with a lot of intellectual words, how intellect was useless. They said, “Why do you use scientific language as opposed to metaphysical language?” I quickly scanned my Skype and saw that I used scientific language twice, but was using all kinds of mystical terms 20 times more. I said, “Are you missing something here? Why are you tuned to the scientific language so that when you hear one word, it’s as if everything was said that way?” Do you not hear? “And don’t forget, the mysticism of one age becomes the science of the next age. What’s wrong with science? Why is your enemy science?” They questioned, “Why these empirical terms?” I said, “Without empiricism, you’d have a hard time doing a lot of things in life. The question is, do you remember how to balance the qualitative with the quantitative? Do you know how to balance the outer with the inner?” That’s the issue. How conscious are you? Anyway, that’s not what is important.

“You are the king of the realm of beauty, and I am just a poor dervish.” This bewilderment and astonishment and nothing else is all I have gotten out of life. The more I know, the more I see, the more bewildered and astonished I am. You deal with things differently. I came up and told you about the news today. I’m astonished; but I’m not. “Can you believe what these people are doing? Can you believe how they are acting?” That’s what we say. “Isn’t it bewildering how wild they are being?” The more you see, the more you know, the more patient you are and the more wise you are, the more a lover of truth you are, the more a lover of justice you are, the more you are bewildered.

Can you believe what these idiots are doing in the name of patriotism or whatever? You can't fathom it. You want to run away from it. That's exactly how the lover feels. The lover wants to run away with the beloved from everything. Nothing makes sense but the beloved. *"When the beloved is sublime, and it is impossible to have access to him, what remains there except awe and bewilderment?"*

The third stage of love is called *mavaddat*, friendship, love, benevolence. The sign of that is the heart becomes passionate (*hayajān-e qalb o ettisāfe bā-l havā*) and has desire for the Beloved. There are different phases in that moon, also. The first phase is *niyāhat o ezterār*, lamenting, being perturbed. "Oh my God... Oh my, where did she go? Where is he? They left me!" Agony over separation. The Persians call it "moon faced" in their poetry. *"My passion for you, O moon-faced idol. Every hair on my body is lamenting for you."* You can become not only totally bewildered, but totally lost in the Beloved. With that, of course, comes the weeping and wailing. The Prophet (sal), it was said, was always sorrow-stricken and shed tears in his prayers. He would say, ***"O Allah! Bless us with a weeping eye."*** It is so that you feel gratitude for the presence of the Beloved. As soon as the prayer is over, you want to extend it to keep the Beloved there.

I would make the analogy, in my conversation with that person today, because every time I tried to sign off, they said one more thing I had to respond to. I said back nice things, and my *adab* got even better because I was getting more irritated, and wanted to get off. So my *adab* got better.

"O my Beloved, I wept so copiously at separation from you, that from my tears the whole earth turned wet. My tears gradually swelled into a river in separation with You. Come and sit down in the boat of my eye, and go sailing in that river." One begins to realize that their own actions, their own grief, their own passions could create a separation between them and the one they love. You are in this state of nearness, of love; and then your own emotions, yearning, desires, fears and passions create a river of separation

between you and the object of the love. You regret that, and say, “Oh, this *hasrat* (regret, the third phase) is present.”

Regret comes. But this has a much more profound meaning to it. You get to be an old man, like 60. The *shaykh* comes and hands you a book on prayer. And in that book, it tells you not only just how to pray, but all the *hadiths* and everything about missed prayers. It tells what the result of missed prayers are, and what happens if you don’t do the prayer correctly. Now, you are in this system. You are a Muslim. You have bought into the system. It’s not like Mrs. Schwartz going to the butcher and saying, “Ya, Yitzrak, give me 13 cents from the belly.” “Thirteen cents! Thirteen cents is like one slice!” “Have I been a good customer all these years?” “Yeah, I remember once you spent 32 cents.”

All of a sudden you realize, “*Wa’alahi*, I’m 60 years old... 65 years old... whatever it is. 35 years old. I realized it at 35, 40, 45, 50, 60 and 65! I kept realizing the same thing over and over again. Just like every day I get up and say, “I’m going to do my exercises today,” and every night I go to bed and realize that I didn’t do them. I’ve become a terrorista; manana. You have regret; so you shove it away. It’s too late. You forgot about how merciful Allah is; how patient Allah is. You have pushed Allah far away as if Allah is in the *ghaib*, and not in the *dhāhir*. You read in the book that you have to make up those prayers. How can you make up 35 years of no Asr prayer?

So you have regret. When you reach that place of regret, that’s good. It’s not bad. You think it’s bad, because you have regret. But it’s good, because somewhere inside of you, you care. It may be just a little ember, but you care. I know not many of you can relate to this...! You cast this sorrowful look on your wasted life and say, “My God, out of my 63 years, my 35 years, my 26 years, whatever it is, I have wasted (I mean spiritually wasted. Because sometimes the worst things in your physical life are the best things for your spiritual life) forty of those 60 years...” or large portions of it.

And you feel sad over the memory of the time you spent without the Beloved, because you pushed the beloved far away. So you're making *muhasabah*. I'm a kind person, so that goes in that column. But I'm lazy, so that goes in the other column. I did what I promised to people... I never break a promise to people, and they really love me. That's ego, but I fulfilled my promises. But I haven't fulfilled my promises to Allah. Ten black marks on that side, because I've been driven by my worldly desires. I've done a lot of good things, but they are predominantly things I like to do. I haven't done an awful lot of good things I really hate doing. I haven't cleaned out a lot of septic tanks; I really hate that. He likes that, so that's good for him. You push the Beloved far away while you are calling the Beloved. Well, who among us have never done that?

Who among us have not pushed the person we love away while we loved them? "The wrong thing came off my tongue. That wasn't what I meant. O my God, I didn't really mean that." Or, you get so wrapped up in your own self, you become Sidi Ali Grumpus. So you say, "*Worse than death: a life that passes without You. The Day of Judgment: a day that passes without You.*" You push the compassion away, you push the Beloved away. You push the patience away.... and you're lazy, You look and say, "If I would calculate, minus my sleep, how much time I wasted, and how much time I didn't spend in prayer, in meditation, in dialogue with Allah... and I still have these same habits. I'm a good person ... no question... (Everyone here is a good person, doing good things. No question about that—and there is credit for that.) But I regret what I haven't done."

So you have to now renew that, and let the thought of the nearness of the Beloved—those attributes, characteristics and qualities—grab you. You have to contemplate them, *fikr*. *Fikr-e mahbub*, [the fourth phase is] contemplation of the Beloved. This is the stage of intense *muraqabah*. You go into intense deep meditation, and it brings the Beloved close to you in your mind, and you don't push away. When the Beloved is near, when the

patience, kindness, compassion, mercy, love, and justice is near, you embrace it. You wrap yourself in it.

That's why an hour of *muraqabah*, [the fifth phase,] is greater than 60 years of prayer (a saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammed (sal) and by the *shuyukh*). Aha! You can say, "Well, I didn't ever do my Asr prayer, or the few times I did it, I didn't do the *sunnah*. I missed all these prayers, but I have sat in meditation. So I've made up easily 640 years." One hour of mediation for 60 years of prayer...well, you know, it could be a hyperbole.

"I do not desire to think of anyone but You even for moment. For in both worlds, I have only You as a Beloved to hold in my heart." If you don't see anything else, you can see how the poetry supports deep and profound statements. But what are you meditating on? What are you contemplating? Your self-realization? That would be a big mistake. What are you contemplating? You are contemplating carefully the Beloved: compassion, mercy, kindness, love, submission, the Names of Allah. What about in the second circle, what are you contemplating? All the Names of Allah: Ya Jabbaru, Ya Mutahharu.

It was said that once Hazrat Ali (ra) was saying his prayers, and suddenly people witnessed that his face turned pale, and he fell down to the ground. He was unconscious on his prayer carpet. When he recovered, he said, "During the prayer I contemplated Allah and felt ashamed of my shortcomings." And he fainted. He realized all of his shortcomings in the midst of prayer. That's the beauty of prayer if you do it.

That takes us to another stage. What is needed is what is called *ta'alluq*. *Ta'alluq* is that relationship between the attribute and its object, between the name and its manifestation. It is the firm relationship between the name and its manifestation. It is not just Allah, Allah, Allah, or Ya Rahman Ya Rahim, but its manifestation. We'll talk about that later. What is the goal? A time will come when you notice the goodness, the sincerity, the discipline and the love in you are what are prevalent and dominant in your nature. And

the dark things, the vices, evils and things are decreased. The laziness goes; the strength and courage come. Then you say to yourself the thing you feared the most: why did I wait so long to realize this? Since we feel guilt, worry, and anxiety in these things, there must be some sense that there is a difference in the outcome. So, come hell or high water (I assume high water has something to do with Jannah) we should all make improvements. That's the position from the Chishti love point of view, or part of it. Asalaam Aleikum!