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Thursday

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Title: [The Qur'an: The Physical Expression of Divine Light](#)

Dvd Title: The Qur'an and Kalam:
The Physical Expression of Divine Light

This journey that we take every day, every minute, every word that we speak, is not only an *'āyat*, a representation of the Light of Allah (swt), but it only happens because of the Light of Allah (swt). Like most human beings, we look for big delineators and bolts of large amounts of information that are separated by space. It's like, if I have a discussion on this subject, and I go and meet someone else and have another discussion on that subject, space happened in between. But every word originates in the *bātin*, in the light or energy or force of Allah. Then it goes through a process through the *'ālam al-mithal* whereby it takes its sound and form and name. It has a name because it has a meaning. The name 'dog' is different than the name 'cat.' Every word, including the ones I am speaking right now, originates in the darkness and they come out into the light.

My brother Tayie sent me today the video he did on the subject of Adam and Eve that he was working on when he was here. In that piece, he talks about the brain, which is totally dark, totally protected from the light. The brain never sees light like our eyes to or our skin does; yet light comes from the brain. The *kalima* – what does *kalima* mean? Words. What is *kalam*? Speech. When these words emerge from us, from our tongue, they give us knowledge. They enlighten us, we say. As far as the relationship of the human being and Allah's word is concerned, that relationship is based on the *nūr*/light, which is what some call the "lucent manifestation."

We as Sufis feel that though the words come from the brain, the light emanates from the heart. Why does it emanate from the heart? Because Allah (swt) says that He resides in the heart of the believer. Of course, not all people are believers, and even though all

words come from light, not all words carry the light very well. This light is felt within and observed by the mind, which then transmits this lucent luminosity from deep within the heart into spoken words. Similarly, the observation of optical lights, colors, frequencies, intensities, polarization are also the Nūr of Allah. This Nūr of Allah's Words is perceived in the form of concepts and meanings, thoughts and memories through our cognitive capabilities. This takes form and is translated into spoken words. Just like the colors and the hues are not the light itself; so too, words that are spoken, sounds, meanings, and thoughts are not the Words of Allah, but come from the light of it. So we can say that the mind is a kind of translator that translates the Nūr from within the heart into speech.

Since the origin of Allah's Words that we know in the Qur'an is from, in a sense, another universe; those words when they are projected onto the heart vis-a-vis the Light (the Nūr), translate that Nūr (that Divine Light) from one universe into words that fit this universe. We would say they are some kind of concept or will of Allah that becomes (as I say in the video piece) digitized if you will into electronic signals. In that form, it can move from one universe to another, and then it is re-constituted if you will into this universe, translated into the terms of this world. Anyone who knows more than one language knows that you cannot translate anything perfectly. There is nothing wrong with the transmission where it originates, but we are never going to translate it exactly correctly. We can hope that it reflects the meaning.

I have on my ipod, the Qur'an. It's there. This thing doesn't live. It's a machine. It can store and read. It can sound out and play the Divine Words through a digital process, but the origin of those words is in physical form in this world as soon as they exit the speaker. Then they touch our minds, and maybe our hearts, and they get re-translated from that world to the physical world, manifesting in the physical world and then translating back into the non-physical. This process is what the Sufi is involved in, as a conscious process.

We cannot say that because the Qur'an is being uttered by this machine that it is a believer. It must be a believer because it speaks the Qur'an? In the same way, a person who doesn't believe in Islam can still read and quote the Qur'an. In this case, the words originate in the world, within a human being's cognitive processes or brain cells. They come out on the tongue, and then are directed to where they are directed. Then they become sluffed off like anything else that needs to be recycled. Translating this cognitive, physical form in the world into speech heard in the world necessitates that it doesn't reach a higher stage. The idea is, "Oh, I spent all this time getting this off the Internet, translating it and printing it out, then giving it to you. Please, don't ask me, Shaykh, to go backwards." This is what is not uttered. "I have already done my time."

When a Sufi reads the Qur'an, or hears the utterances of the divine names of Allah, that Sufi translates that lucent manifestation from some other "universe" into spoken words. When these words are translated (the Nūr/Light is placed on them), then they have a physical effect, because they are physical words. We know that. You can read something very beautiful and you can weep. You can hear something and you can get angry. Words have a physical effect. When we are sitting in this Ramadān listening to or reading Qur'an, we should remember that this Qur'an has entered into the universe from the original Nūr of Allah (swt). Just like, if you go see the meteor showers tonight, you are seeing something happening right in front of your eyes. But when you look beyond them into the stars, we are seeing the light that started emanating thousands of years ago and is present with us today.

So too, the light of the Qur'an was revealed, I believe, in total on the Laylatu-l-Qadr, perhaps in a moment. Then over 23 years it was seen or heard, and for the next 1431 years it is seen and heard. Allah has spoken very directly these words, and they emerge in some parts of what we call the Qur'an. The angels then spoke these words, and they also emerge as some part of the Qur'an. They said, "**Not one of us but has a place**

appointed. And they are ranged in ranks of service. And we are verily those who declare Allah's glory." The Archangel Jibreel spoke words, and those words emerged as some part of the Qur'an. **"We descend, but not but by the command of our Lord."** Then the Prophet (sal) spoke words, and the words emerge as some part of the Qur'an. **"Now have come to you from your Lord proofs. If anyone will see, it will be for the good of his own soul, and if anyone is blind, it will be for their own harm. I am not here to watch over your doings."** "See, blind, hear, watch."

If you could go into someone's brain and zap it so that the connection between what their eyes were looking at and what was registering in the brain, and what was going to come out on the tongue was broken, it would be as if what they were looking at didn't exist, because the brain had not received that, and could not translate that into a form that was acceptable by a human being. Theoretically, you could put your finger in the fire and get burned, but the brain wouldn't be seeing the fire. So the analogy is, you have eyes but you don't see. In the same way, we can be blind to the results of our words – the good they can do, or the harm they can do. As soon as they are uttered, they have power, a force. So do expressions. Some people know each other well enough that they can just look at each other and know exactly what they mean. They are standing next to each other, and some imbecile comes up to them and says, "Will you vote for me?" You look at the person next to you and say, "Sure." You hear the words, but they don't reflect the truth, because they are created in the world.

The words of Allah (swt) always reflect the truth, because they emanate from Allah (swt). You have to see the Qur'an as Nūr, and you have to see the Nūr of the Qur'an as being exchanged with us every day. Some of it you take into your dream, into your sleep. But when the light comes, then everything around it becomes totally illuminated, pure, clean, orderly. Some Companions of the Prophet (sal) spoke, and those words came out as part of the Qur'an also. Sidna Umar (ra) has said similar things. He said, *"Take you the station of Abraham as a place of prayer."* He may take to himself the spirit of some

characteristics that are greater than one's own self. Every process has many, many steps to it. A person who might be a soldier on the battlefield doesn't necessarily make a good President, as we have found out many times over. It's very important that we understand that what is uttered by Allah, we are to come into harmony with. Anything that is uttered by a human being, even though it may be in the Name of Allah, we should avoid and stay away from, because it will only pull at the fabric of the *ummah*, whether the general Islamic *ummah* or the *ummah* here.

This light that exists within the darkness, unless you are sitting in a bathtub and you are Archimedes and the light bulb goes off over your head (I saw that in a cartoon once). He said, "Eureka! I've found it!" He wasn't talking about his rubber ducky. His mind was always working, working and he was standing somewhat back from his mind and he said, "I found it." As we read this Qur'an, see what part of you responds to it, what part of you becomes more aware in the light. Hear the words or translate them as you read Qur'an along with our recitation, for example, at Taraweeh. You will find that you have many "Aha" moments. "Aha, why didn't I see this before?" Yet, we are exactly where we are supposed to be. We are in a place where we have observed something the incorrect way of doing things. We have seen that the light has been dissipated in the physical world, and now the light keeps coming to us. We have to now put the effort in to change our own habits.

The Qur'an gives us that assistance during Ramadān. It's not just you have to struggle with your anger and your this and that, and change this and that. Concentrate on the light that is coming to you. So much has been said in the Qur'an, and much has been said outside of the Qur'an motivated by the Qur'an. As long as they are linked by our soul and by the purpose of our existence, then we will not just be satisfied, but we will feel fulfilled. That's a guarantee. All of us, when we have trouble with the practice or the fast or the recitation, whatever it is, it is because we have been distracted. We are not seeing the light. But there is something else.

Where does the light take form first? It takes form when it is expressed, on your tongue. That's where the light gets translated into form. Hence we have the ladies striving to give us beautiful *tajwidī* Qur'an recitation. And that's why, during Ramadān, our words count a lot. Are we going to use our words to carry photons of truth from one place to another, from our heart to our *rūh*, through our heart from Allah, from that endless cosmic place of new meanings, new life, from the point in the unseen where things are given birth? Then it becomes mature with a perspective and a point of view. Hopefully, in the interim, the light of Prophet Muhammed has touched each soul, and each one of us has a yearning for more understanding and knowledge, *inshā'a-llāh*.

Remember that the Qur'an is the physical expression of the Divine Light. The Qur'an is the Nūr. It is the Nūr of the Yawmi Qiyama, the Day of Judgment. It's the Nūr of every interaction. Your word is, literally, your bonding agent. So try very hard to understand this. Don't forget what happened to the ladies who used their tongues incorrectly. Remember that story? The Prophet puts a bowl in front of them, and they vomited out flesh and blood. It was suspected they weren't fasting. The Prophet said, "I know they are fasting, so let me see what's happening." They were gossiping, backbiting. You see things are not always good that come from the light, but they have a good purpose. Avenging has a good purpose; destroying has a good purpose. All these have good purposes in the context of Tasawwuf.

When we sit down and do our practices, and make our *muraqabah* and make *fikr*, we have to be confident that what I am doing, I am doing for the right intention. When we read Qur'an, we have to read it with the right intention. That's why I go slowly enough to read the English. It should be translated immediately into your own language, so you understand what is transpiring. A lot is transpiring within us. Allah (swt) is praising Allah (swt) (in a strange way), forever and ever until the Yawmi Qiyama. It's not like there are two Allahs. You can have pride. You can do something and be proud of it, and

congratulate yourself. If we can congratulate ourselves, and we are created by Allah, isn't it possible that there is a whole mechanism like that in the unseen world, where you cleanse yourself by your love and perseverance, and also your restraint? This is why, as we now stand for the prayer, we should pay attention to it. Our tendency is going to be to try to pay attention to the meaning of what is said, but what you should try to do is pay attention to those moments where you go, "Oh!" because that's when you seized the moment and caught the light. "Oh, I never thought of it in that way before." You have caught the light, now how do you hold on to it? Let's catch the light. *Asalaamu aleikum.*