



Advice on spiritual retreat

Dear companions, following the indications that I have already given you, I was inspired to share with you some other advices as I am in solidarity with those who are about to embark on this battle against their soul and concerned about giving you every chance. What I would like to stress is the importance of balance in this spiritual journey. Our prophetic model *Sayidina* Mohammad (on him the graces of Unity and Peace) is representative of this balance in the composition of the graces necessary for the encounter with God.

Because the model of the *Khalwa* is *Isra wal Mi'raj* and it is not without reason that the *Boraq* mount is mixed and composite.

The energy of his *isra wa l mi'raj* journey is a mixture of four sciences which are the rivers of Paradise mentioned in the Qur'an :

- The **river of milk** : it is the science of *Shari'a*, it is what makes the unity of the society (as the mother is the pillar of the family) ;
- The **river of water** : it is the science of eternal principles, the metaphysics ;
- The **river of honey**: it is the wisdom (science of nature, medicine, nutrition, alchemy of the balance body, soul, spirit);
- The **river of wine** is love ;

It is therefore necessary to balance our prayers with religious practices (milk); meditation (water); the wisdom of the body and the psyche that must collaborate (honey) and finally Love without which no flight (wine).

In the practice of *dhikr* and meditation the aspiration by the warmth of the heart in love is very precious. In a concrete way, even before invoking the Name of Allah, add "*Ya Wadoud*" to light up your heart if it gets cold and especially by putting yourself in the Presence of the Prophet in this practice.

Finally, I would like to highlight in this same spirit how these practices are balanced in the Qur'anic teaching of Sura 94:



"*A lam nashrah laka çadraq*" (expansion of the chest) which is at the heart of the Naqshbandi teaching.

-1- **"Did we not expand your chest";**

The enlargement of the chest through the teaching of the *Lataifs* until the heart of the believer becomes "'*Arch Allah*" (the throne of God).

- 2 - **" And rid of your burden " ;**

- 3 - **" that weighed on your back " ;**

To get rid of the poisonous memories that constitute the ego since generations, our conditionings that are the consequences not only of our personal acts but the consequences of all the fixations and identification : I am this body, I am this thought I am of this country, of this culture, so many fixations with which we identify ourselves instead of being free of them. Let's leave these ego fixations and become free to go as Sheikh Muhhyî din says: "*min Al Haq Muqayada ila l Haqq al Moutlaq*", from the "conditioned Truth to the free and total Truth."

- 4 - **" We have raised your dhikr " ;**

Both the elevation of the divine invocation and that of the Prophet himself through the 9 *Lataifs*, which are the places of circulation of the breath.

- 5 - **" Certainly with the difficulty there is an ease " ;**

- 6 - **" With the difficulty there is an ease " ;**

This is the essence of Allah's Sunnah, which constantly offers educational trials to man so that he may reveal himself through these trials and progress through them.

- 7 - **" when you are free from your occupations get up " ;**

There are many *ichârat* of allusions in this *ayat* that are typically developed by the naqshbandi path. The science of the 9 points allows us to clarify them if we know, for example, the figure of the enneagram as an open circuit. Where there is a break in continuity, when we think we are finished, we are invited to "bounce back"; in fact to make a "quantum leap". It is a bit like talking about the second breath in sports.

- 8 - **"And seek your Lord with the fervor of passionate love"**

Here the word *Raghaba* indicates loving fervor often badly translated but it is a key word of the whole *sura* which in fact has an immense importance in the practice.



Indeed, it is the ultimate fuel for the pilgrim toward God, it is necessary to light up this passionate fervor in his heart. Maybe you now have a global picture of the balanced dosage which constitutes your fuel for this ultimate journey.

Understand that we are a somewhat special family and that the classic and ancient methods of practices really require adaptation, at this time and this category of souls that we are. This is what I propose to you from my experience which has no claims but which has the merit of being old by 50 years of practice, with the companionship of several masters and then their authorizations to teach.

If you agree to be my companions, you must absolutely integrate the condition of sincerity into your approach. It is impossible for our family to cheat, it is unbearable for us.

Vigilance on this point leads us to constantly evaluate where we are so as not to delude ourselves (another unbearable thing for us). For example, you must look at your dreams and note what they indicate to know where you are. You should be aware that the man of true meditation has no more dreams when his meditation is successful because he has solved his problems during the day in his meditation (he cleaned his head and cells of karmic memories) including his past memories or future desires and therefore these no longer come back to manifest at night. So measure where you are in your night and in your dreams. There is of course a distinction to be made between the dreams of the psyche and those inspired, positive and precious "*Ru'ya*" (which come precisely when the mind is quiet). Do not cheat in your discernment.

The practice of exterior *dhikr* (*zahrān*) or interior *dhikr* (*khafī*) still seems to me far too ritualistic and too mechanical.

Here Again take as a basis at least three things :

- The sincerity in the call starting from the divine Name "Allah", let come the Name which is associated with it according to your need, *Ya Wadoud*, *Ya Wali*, *Ya Latif* , *astarfirullah*, *Ya Hadi*, « *La ilaha ila Anta subhanak ini Kuntu min ad dhalimin* ».



Until you are seized by the ecstasy of a name, call from the bottom of your heart with sincerity.

- Vigilance against torpor or dispersion ; Don't delude yourself on this again, don't lie to yourself. If you are dozing, change position, be more upright, change formula, give yourself a smack, wake up. For the dispersion, remember to regain consciousness of breathing and learn breathing techniques because you will be responsible for not having learned these sciences. Don't say I don't know, learn techniques like those of kriya yoga which is perfect for your physical, mental and spiritual health. Science of breathing, essential and minimum technique for any serious practitioner.
- The most complete fervor in the call is a fundamental point. Calling, shouting, crying, yelling, clapping your hands during your *dhikr*, but above all do not stay lukewarm. We need a burst of love, powerful, burning. So turn on your heart, don't let it cool, don't cheat there again with your heart. Who could dare to cheat with the call of love! Shout, shout from the depths of your thirsty heart until you hear the answer.

Ecstasy in Joy and Peace is of course what we wish for, it indeed occurs in this path as an ineffable grace and it is right to seek it but you have understood that it is a gift that one does not may require. All the previous practices are meant to configure us so that this predisposition happens: **But this configuration of the heart establishes itself as a SYNTHESIS!**

Understand this well because it is the fundamental teaching of the Sufi path (as described by Sheikh Muhhyî-dîn Ibn arabi) and it is the foundation of our family of souls. **This synthesis is the FORM OF THE HEART constituted as the throne of God. It is not one of the subtle centers, it is not a station, it is not a state of awakening, not a state of Samadhi, it is the synthesis of our life, our virtues, our actions, of our spiritual practices, of our consistency in the life of work, that in the family, in our relationships in the world, in our faith, in our aspirations, in our understandings. It is the synthesis of the SENSE of our life in its Uniqueness. The Place of Divine Theophany, the House of God, the Kaaba within yourself.** It is the divine child that we bring forth within us throughout our lives, as divine Law has decreed for us. Realize therefore your "heart" in its deepest sense, this ultimate synthesis, the



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ultimate realization of your existence and contemplate the REAL (*Al Haqq*) that manifests there.

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