

Quarterly Newsletter of Jama'at Salikeen Aghaia Murtazviya

The Shaikh writes:

(We include here an extract from the book 'Mazameen-e-Kaef' (Page 13) written by our Murshid Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Mirza)

INSAAN-E-KAAMIL (The Perfect Human Being):

A human being is a great mystery! With an inherent paradoxical nature, he is such a secret that has surprised the thinkers and philosophers alike. He is mortal yet immortal; confined but free too; feeble to such an extent that a minor excuse brings death to him but powerful enough to control and use ferocious energies of nature to his advantage; born as a small piece of flesh but capable of realizing the Universal Soul within. He is an infidel and/or a polytheist, Muslim and/or a monotheist; destructive in character but also compassionate by nature; sinner and mean, but also a Prophet and a friend of God. He may be worst than dead in life and can be eternally alive after death. He is the King and he is the subject. He is illiterate and he is a scholar. Whatever does not exist, he is! Whatever exists, he is! An inexplicable shrouded mystery! Allama Iqbal (RA) says:

*Tilism bood-o-adum jiska naam hai
Adam, Khuda ka raaz hai qadir nahin
hae jis pae sukhan*

*Mystery of existence and non-existence,
whose name is Adam (Man)
Is a secret of God that is beyond language
and description*

*Zamana roz-e azal sae raha hai mehwaee
kharaam, Magar yeh uski tag-o-duo
sae ho saka na kuan*

*Since creation's immemorial dawn, time
constantly moves on And tried to subdue
Man but without any success*

*Agar na ho tujhe uljhan tou khol kar keh
doon, Wujood Hazrat-e-Adam na ruh hai
na badan*

*If it does not disturb you, let me tell you
openly, Presence of Man (Image of God)
is neither frame of clay nor soul*

Hazrat Ghaus-ul-Azam (RA) also says in one of his revelations:

Allah says, 'A human being is My secret and I am his secret. If he understands his self and recognizes his reality, then cer-

tainly, he will utter in every breath: "I am the absolute ruler and the monarch of the time. There is no other absolute ruler and monarch beside I." (Ilhamaat-e-Ghausia)

Rumi's Corner:

I read it somewhere that 'words' exist like a wooden bridge, which can only be used to cross the river. However, if one stops there and tries to check the strength of that bridge then not only he loses sight of his destination, but may even break the bridge.

Maulana Jelaluddin Rumi tells a parable in his Mathnawi:-

Four people were given a piece of money. The first was a Persian. He said, 'I will buy with this some angur.' The second was an Arab. He said, 'No, because I want inab.' The third was a Turk. He said, 'I do not want inab, I want uzum.' The fourth was a Greek. He said, 'I want Stafil.' They started to fight because they did not know what lay behind the words. They had information, but no knowledge. One man of wisdom could have reconciled them all as such a man could know that each in his own language wanted the same thing, grapes.

Words may be quite illusory. For instance, 'Music' as a word does not mean anything. It is not possible to produce a melody out of words. The rhythm and vicissitudes of *alaap* are beyond words. Likewise, a poet uses same words of day-to-day conversation to convey something more than those words. 'Ocean' as a word appears static - like a stop sign, though in reality exists as an 'oceaning' - i.e. always in motion with a roar of waves all around. The words are impotent in many such ways and only serve a utilitarian purpose to survive in the material world where sun is just a 'sun' without warmth and light. As one moves away from the gross presence of material world towards the realm of subtle presence, he again and again feels the futility of words. When one discovers the depth of love, words appear extremely shallow and helpless. In such a state, a song may happen or poetry can be born, but a speech will be a lie.

All of us know that words of 'DUA' do not reach God as such; rather it is one's attitude and intention, which bear fruits of qubooliyat. - Rumi Ikhtiyari

Editor's note:

Studying literature is an enjoyable experience, even in the classrooms if the meaning of the text is not given to the students. Meaning blocks the experience. Literature helps in clear thinking, forming independent judgment and responding sensitively to ideas and feelings. Experience of life derived from literature is a combination of readers' imagination with it rather than the intrinsic feature of writing. A literary piece is more like a sculpture. One is impelled to move around it and admire it and in doing so acknowledge that part of the meaning that his unique psyche and ideology manifest. In our case .. Love! The Newsletter in your hand is another bridge that brings us closer to many experiences which we may share on the basis of commonality of our faith .. more so, as mentioned afore .. our love! This Newsletter is a platform to share our views and creations. It will provide us all with the opportunity to contribute positively towards our order.

Brainchild of non other than Rumi Ikhtiyari sallamahu, the idea evolved during the period when our website "Agha Rang" was being put together. After a volley of emails between Pakistan and Canada, the form and the substance for the newsletter has been finalized .. and is now in your hands. The first issue has been designed and put together with efforts from a few amongst us .. mainly due to the reason of this being the first issue and also to make it a foundation stone, over which the building can be erected fully through contribution from all of us. Last, but not the least, its you who will make it a successfully continuing effort. Your contributions in the form of original pieces of writing, sharing of poetry and prose are required to carry the flagship forward. The context of every contribution, as you all know, must be the teachings and love which our Shaikh has inculcated in us. We aim to make it regular quarterly phenomena and you can easily identify the columns where your contributions will appear. Feedback and suggestions via email and letters are encouraged.

We pray for the continued blessings of Sarkaar and thank the elders for their patronage.

*Karam e peer e mughaan aam hae
maekhanay maen, Do jahan aek
ch.halaktay huay paemanay maen*

And we all remain ...- Talib

ALIF

by: Rumi Ikhtiyari

‘|’ - As this is our first NEWSLETTER, ALIF appears to be the most appropriate letter to start with.

Linguistically, *ALIF* is the first Arabic alphabet. It is written as a vertical line, which in turn comprises of connected dots that ascend and/or descend at the same time. Nothing comes before *ALIF* and in writing a sentence, it can only be connected to a letter appearing before it, otherwise it remains independent and stands on its own. It shows dependency of other letters on it, but not otherwise. *Allah* and *Adam* are both written with *ALIF* depicting a mysterious intimacy just as *Ahadiyat* and *Insan* reflect two extremes of proximity.

Numerically, *ALIF* symbolizes ‘one’; representing door to the world of multiplicity. As written before, *ALIF* itself has originated from a continuation of dots and each dot numerically denotes zero or nothingness. *ALIF* arises out of nothing while at the same time becomes a door to all the words/worlds. Such is the significance of *ALIF* where it is not just a letter rather a key to the treasure of letters and forms. How succinctly, our Murshid Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza, has alluded to the *ALIF* in the following verses:

*Urr kae meri khaak pohnchi aastaan tak
aap kae, Mehrbaani, khaak mein mujh ko
milaya aap nae,*

*Upon becoming dust, ‘I’ ascended to your
abode, Thank you indeed for annihilating
‘me’ to dust,*

Just by slight contemplation on the above verses, *ALIF* can be visualized in its totality. Repetition of (*khaak*) dust in both the verses not only creates a poetic play of language but also has esoteric relevance. If we visualize these verses as *ALIF*, then first or higher verse reflects the ascending part (*Aastan tak aap kae*) of *ALIF* signifying the path to higher self (*Ana-e-Haqiqi*), while the lower or second verse shows the descending aspect (*khaak mein mujh ko milaya*) alluding to the commanding or egoistical self. Unless and until lower self is transcended, real self remains an illusion. At two extremes of *ALIF*, it is the same dust yet with different capabilities – a metaphor for a seeker who at a lower stage exists as a denser aspect of creation that needs to be transformed into a subtle presence in order to be reborn at the zenith of existence. Interestingly enough, above verses start with letter *ALIF* too. It is the same *ALIF* that carved a special niche for *Baba Bulleh Shah* in the world of spiritual-

ity. It all started, when he was sent to attend the school with boys of his own age. The class teacher started the lesson with first letter *ALIF*. Other boys in his class finished the whole lesson of alphabet in a few days, while Bulleh Shah kept on trying to learn that first alphabet *ALIF*. When weeks had passed, and the teacher saw that the child did not advance any further, he thought him to be mentally incapable of learning and sent back to his home and mentioning it to his parents, ‘Your boy is deficient, I cannot teach him.’ His parents tried their best by placing him under the tuition of various teachers but, to their disappointment, he made no progress. One day, the little boy escaped from home and started living in a forest. He kept on trying to learn his first lesson. His concentration turned into contemplation, which then transformed into meditation making him aware of *ALIF*’s manifestation everywhere. *ALIF* as ONE became imminent in diverse forms. He saw one, felt one, realized one, and none else besides. Several seasons passed by and he turned older.

After mastering his lesson, he returned to the school. Upon reaching there, Bulleh Shah immediately recognized the teacher, who had expelled him but taught him the most inspiring lesson of his life. He paid respect to the teacher and said, ‘I have learned the lesson you had taught me; will you teach me anything more?’ The teacher laughed and thought, ‘This mentally deficient simpleton wants to learn more.’ Still, he asked Bulleh Shah to write his learned lesson on the wall. Bulleh Shah then made the sign of Alif on the wall, and to teacher’s surprise, the wall divided into two parts. The teacher was astounded at this wonderful miracle and said, ‘you are my teacher! What you have learnt in one letter *Alif*, I have not been able to master with all my learning,’ and Bulleh Shah sang this song:

*Ikko Alif Teyrey Darkaar
Ilmon Bus kareen Oh Yaar
Parh Parh Likh likh Laawen dheyr
veyd Kitaaban chaar chafeyr
Girdey chaanan wich anheyr
Apnay Aap dee Khabar Na saar*

*One Alif is all you need
All knowledge will be of no avail to you
You read and read and pile your books
into a heap,
Sacred books are lying all around you,
Surrounded by light you carry darkness
within you,
You have no self-knowledge at all.*

At another place, **Bulleh Shah** says:

*Alif Allah naal ratta dil mera..
mainoon ‘bay’ di khabar na kai..
‘bay’ parhdian mainoon samajh na
aaway..
lazzat alif di aayee..*

*My heart is coloured with the oneness of
Allah (Alif)
I have no awareness of “Bay” (2nd letter of
the Alphabet).
I do not understand anything about
“Bay”.(Bay signifies duality)
I taste only oneness i.e. see Allah (Alif) in
every thing.*

Another Sufi **Sultan Bahu** says:

*Alif Allah Chambe de booti
Murshid mun vich laee Hu
Nafi Asbaat da pani millia
si har rage har jae Hu
Andar booti mushk machaya
jaan phulan te aee Hu
Jeevay Murshid mera kamil Bahu
Jain aee booti laee Hu*

*Alif. My Spiritual Guide planted
the Love of Allah in my
heart just like a jasmine plant. Hu*

*With every vein [of mine] being
watered by nothing but [the truth
of] negation and affirmation [i.e.
La ilaaha illa Allah]. Hu*

*This plant has caused much turmoil
of fragrance within me upon
reaching its full bloom. Hu*

*Bahu! Long live my perfect Spiritual
Guide who sowed [within
me] this plant of Love of Allah
Almighty. Hu*

Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai says in Sur Yaman Kalyan:

“Peruse letter Alif alone, rest of the pages forget,
Turn not more leaves, brighten your inner self.”

Last but not the least, **Omar Khayyam** also comes up with a relevant quatrain:
Once and again my soul did me implore,
To teach her, if I might, the heavenly lore;
I bade her learn the Alif well by heart.
Who knows that letter well need learn no more

Sufi Humor: Mullah Naseruddin

by: Tauseef Ansari

Mullah Naseruddin in the subcontinent, Nasreddin Hodja in Turkey and the best-known trickster in perhaps all of Islam. His time period is contemplated to be in the 13th century. This mystic jester brought humor to the Sufi tradition. His stories appear in literature and oral traditions from nations in the Middle East to China. Some believe him to be a mythical character while most people claim this lovable son of the soil to be their own native.

Whether it's the Sufi teachings that enable its followers to look at the witty tricks and seemingly foolish attitude of Naseruddin as having a deeper meaning or; he himself was a mystic; the fact remains that he can be interpreted equally well in the context of each of the gnosis, ethics and analogy.

As per Sufi teachings, the Divine Truth is everywhere and is hidden behind the veil of relativity. Those who do not see beyond the veil and are engrossed in futile efforts that outwardly take them to their assumed goals are best explained by the following joke.

Restoring the Moon

One night the Naseruddin looked into his well and exclaimed "Oh no! The moon has fallen from the sky and into my well!"

He ran into his house and returned with a hook attached to a rope. He then threw the hook into the water and commenced to pull it up again, but it became stuck on the side of the well. Naseruddin tugged and pulled with all his might. The hook suddenly came loose, and Naseruddin fell over backwards and badly hurt his back. He looked up into the sky and saw the full moon above him.

"I may have injured myself in doing so," he said with satisfaction, "but at least I got the moon back into the sky where it belongs."

A deeper message of the importance of the guide and teacher can be derived from the joke below. Doubts about the teacher and his abilities and, most of all, a subtle indication of not recognizing one's destination is beautifully addressed.

Directions

Once Naseruddin was standing by the road near his house. A car came by and the man inside the car asked about directions. Naseruddin gave directions and the driver left thanking him. After a while he came back to him and annoyingly said, "What is this? I followed all your directions properly and here I am at the same place

where I began from." Naseruddin coolly replied, "Fine, I was just checking whether you could follow the directions. Now I will give you proper directions".

The house of the in-laws is referred to in the Sufi poetry as the material world we live in. Sufi poets have always mentioned it as the opposite of the real life which would be the here-after. Normally the worldly or extrovert teachings of the religion appear to go in the opposite directions when it comes to the intricacies of the Sufism and its seemingly un-orthodox concepts. This can be deciphered from the following joke.

The Contrary Mother-in-Law

A neighbor came running to Naseruddin house with the news that his mother-in-law had fallen into the river and drowned. "And we cannot find her body," he continued. "We searched everywhere downstream for her, but all to no avail".

"You should have searched upstream," replied Naseruddin. "My mother-in-law is so contrary that she would never go with the flow".

The Sufis believe that everything, whether apparently unfavorable, is from Allah and they accept it with the faith in Him that it definitely has a positive side to it. Mullah Naseruddin explains it differently.

Pumpkins and Walnuts

Naseruddin was lying in the shade of an ancient walnut tree. His body was at rest but his mind did not relax. Looking up into the mighty tree he considered the greatness and wisdom of Allah.

"Allah is great and Allah is good," said Naseruddin, "but was it indeed wise that such a great tree as this be created to bear only tiny walnuts as fruit? Behold the stout stem and strong limbs. They could easily carry the pumpkins that grow from spindly vines in field, vines that cannot begin to bear the weight of their own fruit. Should not walnuts grow on weakly vines and pumpkins on sturdy trees?"

So thinking, Naseruddin dosed off, only to be awakened by a walnut that fell from the tree, striking him on his forehead.

"Allah be praised!" he exclaimed, seeing what had happened. "If the world had been created according to my meager wisdom, it would have been a pumpkin that fell from the tree and hit me on the head. It would have killed me for sure! Allah is great! Allah is good! Allah is wise!"

Never again did Naseruddin question the wisdom of Allah.

Chronicle of Major Events Urs of Hazrat Dr. Meerza Murtaza Hus- sain Niazi (RA), Aghai

by: Imran Mirza and Sheeza Asim

Murhid o rehnuma hain aap, aap ka naam Murtaza.

The 72nd Urs Shareef of Maulana-o-Murshidna Hazrat Dr. Shah Meerza Murtaza Hussain Niazi Aghai (RA) was celebrated under the patronage of *Qibla-o-Kaaba* Hazrat Dr. Meerza Ikhtiar Hussain Kaif Niazi in Karachi, Pakistan at Khanqah-e-Aghaia Mu rtazviya on Saturday 1st Safar 1429AD i.e. February 9, 2008. The actual date of visa'l of Hazrat Meerza Murtaza Hussain (RA) is 2nd Safar which fell on Sunday February 10th. In line with the basic Sufi doctrine of love & care, Hazrat Meerza Ikhtiar Hussain (lovingly referred as Sarkaar by the followers) fixed the date of the Urs as February 9th so that the people, especially the ones taking active part in organizing and arranging the event, can have a day's rest before start of the next week. The concern and love for salikeen (the dwellers of Sufi path) has always been the principal practice of Sufi Masters of Niazia Aghaia order.

Just like any other gathering, the salikeen know that occasions, like Urs, require a lot of preparation and their efforts. This hard work is blended into the festivities of the day through the love of Shaikh which acts as a catalyst for the salikeen. The preparation reminds one of the wedding day; as true to the word, Sufis consider this as the day when the lover meets the beloved. Sarkaar himself takes a lot of interest in the organizational activities and all the salikeen have his blessings and guidance. In fact the dwellers of the Sufi path believe that it is not them who decide to put in the efforts for such auspicious occasions rather it's the Shaikh who chooses the ones who can have the honour of serving him - (Wohi suhaagan jo piya mun bha'e).

For this Urs, the management committee had designed new invitation pamphlets which were printed and distributed to the salikeen quite in advance. This marked the start of preparation for the big day. Concurring to the past practice, a meeting was convened by Asim Meerza, the khalifa and youngest son of Sarkaar to chalk out the plan and to delegate responsibilities to appropriate personnel. The meeting, as usual, got an overwhelming response and was attended by a lot of peer-bhais (brethren of the order), especially the active members of the younger generation. Their love for their Shaikh should be commended as they voluntarily assumed the responsibilities delegated to them and then carried them out wonderfully.

On the day of the Urs, Asim Meerza and family paid a visit to Khanqah-e-Aghaia Murtazviya which was the venue for the activities of Urs. He observed the preparations that were underway and participated with his advice and appreciation. He greatly appreciated the aura of love and harmony encircling the salikeen who were busy with their tasks at Khanqah.

The day of the Urs turned out to be an extremely cold one for the Karachiites. Temperature dropped to a single degree mark and people could feel the chill as they traveled to the venue. The venue was fully protected by tents and emanated a cozy feeling. Sarkaar had reached the venue at Maghrib prayers and graced the occasion till late in the night (yet another gesture of love for his spiritual children). Quran Khua-ni that commenced after Maghrib prayers, continued till the Isha prayers. After the prayers, qawwal Javed Taufiq Niazi and his troupe started the Samaa'. The qawwali, and most of all the spiritual influence of Sarkaar on his salikeen, infused the notions of spirituality and instilled the warmth of love throughout the audience, so much so that the hardships of cold weather were nowhere in anyone's mind. Keeping the traditional milieu of Samaa' in mind, which emphasizes more on the poetry and the underlying meaning, the qawwal rendered beautiful pieces from the poetry of Hazrat Niaz be Niaz Shah Niaz ahmed (RA), Hazrat Ameer Khusro (RA) and of Sarkaar. It was an occasion where ecstasy seemed to have been materialized:

*Chaandni se ch-haa gayee afaaq per
Hae kisi ka roo-e-anwer be-naqaab
Ru-ba-ru tum ho, mujassim Kaif maen
Ho gaya hae mast saagher be-sharaab*

The poetry selection by Javed Taufiq Niazi qawwal was excellent and had the listeners in a state of bliss, but again one should remember the main force behind these feelings – that is – of Sarkaar, his presence and his ever present blessings. The Samaa' continued for good two hours and as per the tradition of Chishtiyah order, started with Qaul and culminated with the rendition of Rung.

Samaa' was followed by the Fateha rendered by salikeen after which the Tabarruk was served to the attendees. Tabarruk was prepared at the venue and arrangements were made to serve it in one sitting to all the attendees. Although an uphill task, this was immaculately accomplished with the help of many volunteers to whom the responsibility was delegated, who served both the ladies and gents simultaneously. After the tabarruk, people departed with satiated spiritual selves. Notable and worth mentioning is the contribution of peer-bhais who wonderfully carried out the tasks assigned to them and made this event one of the most disciplined and well-organized ones. It would be injustice to name a few of them as everyone served Sarkaar to the best of his capability and the unity and discipline with which it was all carried out must be lauded.

Sarkaar stayed till late and observed the final wrapping up of the proceeding giving a boost to the salikeen who already had worked through the day. Late after midnight all the people departed the venue. Everyone who attended the Urs left with a line resonating in their mind from the Rung, recited at the end of Samaa' "maen tou aiso rung aur nahin daekho re"

Poetry of Hazrat Shah Meerza Agha Muhammad (RA) Niazi

by: Owais Ansari
Translation

Coming to life from nothingness; from Ahad to Ahmed identified
Present in every guise; the foremost manifestation – is none other than ME

From unity to diversity; defined as 'one' to 'many'
From many to Infinite; both scarce and abundant – is none other than ME

The Wajib and the Mumkin; the Creator and the Creation
Concealed within every excellence; cherisher of mankind – is none other than ME

The evident and the visible; the quintessence and the hidden
Greatness unparalleled; before and after - is none other than ME

Recognition of own self begets the love for it
The lover and the beloved; the admirer and the admired – is none other than ME

The Sheikh in the mosque; the monk in the monastery
Love leads to both the paths; believer and apostate – is none other than ME

Titled as 'Lion of Allah'; challenges great triumphed during youth
Uprooted the gate of Khyber ; Safdar and Haider - is none other than ME

Disciple of Shah Nizam; dear who is to Shah Niaz
Beloved of our Lord; Lost in his Love – is none other than ME

Transfigured into a physical form; named Agha Mohammad
Every name converges to one; Humble and Mighty – is none other than ME

Poetry of Maulana Rumi (R.A)

by: Owais Ansari

You've no idea how hard I've looked for a gift to bring You
Nothing seemed right.
What's the point of bringing gold to the gold- mine, or water to the Ocean.
Everything I came up with was like taking spices to the Orient.
It's no good giving my heart and my soul because you already have these.
So- I've brought you a mirror.
Look at yourself and remember me.

Original Poetry

*Berangi say rang mein aaye, Ahad say
Ahmed hum kehlay
Har har rang mein aap hi aai, awal mazhar
hum hi tou haen*

*Wahdat say kasrat mein aai, aik say doo
char kahai
Phir tou ungingty kahlay, aqal aur aksar
hum hi tou haen*

*Wajib hum hain mumkin hum hain khaliq
aur makhluq hum hi hain
Har har shan mein paida pinha, banda
parwar hum hi tou hain*

*Zahir aur zahur hum hi hain batin aur bu-
tun hum hi hain
Bay ghayat hai shan hamari, awwal aakhir
hum hi tou haen*

*Aap apni pehchan mein aai; apnay oupar
aap lubhaiy
Aashiq aur mashooq hum hi hain, shaida
dilbar hum hi tou haen*

*Sheikh banay masjid mein aae, qashqa
kheencha daer mein baethay
Ishq nay donon ghar dikhlai momin kafir
hum hi tou hain*

*Sher-e-khuda hai laqab hamara bala-pun
mein deo pacharra
Der Khybar ka hum nay ukharra, Safder
Haider hum hi tou haen*

*Shah Nizam hain peer humaray, Shah
Niaz kay raaj dularay
Hain rab kay mehboob piyare, ashiq in par
hum hi tou haen*

*Ashiq ho nasout mein aae, Agha Muham-
mad hum kehlay
Jitney hain sub naam humaray, Asgher
Akbar hum hi tou haen*

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