

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Chapter 2 The Meaning of Initiation

GATHEKA: The meaning of the word "initiation" can be understood from its association with "initiative." It is a fact that every child which is born on earth is born with initiative; but then, as it grows, the spirit more or less dies away, because the knowledge it gathers in its lifetime makes it doubt. This doubt, increasing more and more, very often makes a man lose the power of initiative, and then he does not want to take another step until he is sure whether there is land or water in front of him, and very often water looks like land, and land looks like water.

TASAWWUF: There is an aspect of life called Urouj, and it comes mostly early in life and it can be called also impetus and its principles are very much like impetus as the term is used in the physical sciences. And this comes largely at first and again at the awakening of youth. But otherwise it does not come much without a great test and trial although sometimes it may also be the result of some great form of love. For love is the nexus of life though they are often looked upon differently.

Jesus has said that he functions in all children to the age of seven, and Mohammed has said that every child is born a believer. And there is some truth in it. And there is no doubt that one of the worst doctrines which ever got into religion was that of infant damnation which has no foundation anywhere excepting in the ego-mind of selfish persons.

GATHEKA: According to the mystics life is an illusion, and thus man bases his reason upon illusion. Nevertheless, the reasoning power which he acquires helps him in his life in the world, although it is very often just this reasoning which holds him back from taking what is called the initiative.

TASAWWUF: The subject of "Reason" is discussed both in the lessons of the study circles and also in *Cosmic Language* and elsewhere. By the use of Reason man is often able to control the forces of nature. He is also able to grow intellectually to a point although great scientists and inventors, in discussing their own states of mind, almost unanimously declare that other factors are at work chiefly in the line of imagination and intuition, also something like poetic fancy of inspiration. There is much more than Reason.

The ancient Greeks used to set up Reason against the Desire Nature and said that reason could control desire and the lower urges. But this is not entirely so. There is some truth in it, no doubt, but even physiologically, in order to overcome the urges of the lower part of the body there must be effort to center on the higher parts of the body. And in some circles, especially those actually or vaguely connected with Kundalini Yoga and also even in Hatha Yoga, there are exercises of tremendous help.

GATHEKA: It is through this spirit of initiative that anyone in the world who has accomplished something great, has been able to do so. At the beginning of his efforts people call such a person mad or fanatical, or crazy, or devoid of reason, but when they see the result they think that he is most wise.

TASAWWUF: This goes on all the time. In America most is made of the story of Columbus, but when we look further we find that this was the constant theme, the pattern is repeated over and over all the time. Sometimes the person succeeds and then he is adulated and especially adulated by the very ones who previously criticized him. And it is for that reason that the Prophets and Messengers of God have always condemned criticism and fault-finding as such until the point of view of the other is known. And mostly it remains unknown.

Ignorant people, successful in gaining control over religious instructions, have emphasized the importance of personality and de-emphasized the importance of teachings. But this is useless and is one of the great causes of miseries in the world. And it is necessary to accept part of Buddhist teaching to de-emphasize personalities as such, to learn the lessons they gave and even to put them into practice. We do not adulate scientists and inventors especially now that there have been so many of them. But we avail ourselves of their contributions to mankind. In somewhat similar fashion we can learn to avail ourselves of the moral and spiritual teachings of the representatives of God.

GATHEKA: Great prophets, the builders of nations, famous inventors, and great discoverers have all proved this.

TASAWWUF: And it is remarkable how often one finds great moral characters among them. They may not even believe in a God; they are often disgusted with religion. They see so much hypocrisy. But they are very devotional even if in different directions and this is a great asset to the soul, to be devotional. They are also concentrated and one pointed and they perform a “toward the one,” though perhaps different from the way religious people and others see it, but nevertheless it is God Who inspired them though they are unaware.

GATHEKA: One may ask then if they do not see what is before them in the same way that a reasoning person does. They do, but with different eyes. Their point of view is different; it does not always agree with the point of view of the average person, and so it is natural that people should call them fanatical, although they see perhaps more than do all those around them.

TASAWWUF: With the rise of the democratic spirit, and the assumption that one knows as much as another, any step in a different direction will receive some opposition. The result is that problems remain. Problems arise out of certain conditions and until those conditions are changed the problems remain. Still every attempt to go in another direction will receive opposition and so any pioneer will not only have to cope with the lack of deep reason being used, he may also have to face popular clamor.

GATHEKA: Those who have helped themselves to achieve success after complete failure, or to get over an illness after great suffering, have only succeeded in this by the spirit of initiative.

TASAWWUF: The story of Robert Bruce is given as an example. He is known in the British Isles. The story of Babar, the Mongol Emperor who invaded India is the same sort of story only Babar was a great devotee, and he was also a disciple of Sufism. And he passed the state of tauba—which is equivalent to the “repentance” of the Christians but not in the same dualistic sense. His life was full of excitement, honor, gallantry, devotion and idealism, and he died also a great hero.

There are many other such examples in all walks of life. The biblical “the stone which is rejected is become the corner-stone” stands out at all times and should cause all devotees to be very careful in

this life. For inside everyone is an urge to greatness which may, or may not be connected with the highest spiritual urges.

GATHEKA: There are different kinds of initiation that souls experience. One is natural initiation. A kind of natural unfoldment for which the soul cannot give any cause or reason, comes to a soul, although no effort or attempt has been made by that soul to experience it. Sometimes this initiation comes after great illness, pain, or suffering.

TASAWWUF: Sometimes there are those known as “advanced souls” who come into the world. People are not all of equal evolution on any basis. And there are often very high types, and especially where some doctrine of reincarnation is known or assumed, this explanation is easy.

From another point of view that God is All-in-All, He may manifest in countless forms. We even see that in the mineral kingdom, where the psychic state of all things seems similar, that the chemistry and the physical properties also are very different. For harmony is not monotony, and though angels may seem to us similar, as we pass down the scale of forms we find more and more differentiation. And this just from the physical point of view.

So every soul that is born into the world is different. If one wants some scientific proof it can be seen from the study of thumb-prints. Also from a different view from the study of the lines of the palms, handwriting and other arts. This shows that all forms are subject to constant change and transformation as Buddha taught.

But this alone does not produce the inner evolution. *Gayān* teaches that pleasure blocks while pain raises the potential of inspiration. So all deep suffering causes man to go deep into himself and sometimes discover or recover the pearls that are there.

GATHEKA: It comes as an opening up of the horizon, it comes as a flash of light, and in a moment the world seems transformed.

TASAWWUF: With the increased custom, or habit, of resorting to what are called “drugs” — a misused term — the psychedelic experience has shown many people there are other states of consciousness, other bodies. This supports the inner feeling that there is more to the universe than philosophy or tradition holds. This is sometimes called a “breakthrough” but it is not a break-through in a mystical sense unless it brings with it a change in ego and in outlook. On return to the so called balanced consciousness there may be no change in personality or outlook, although with increased awareness there may be a more forceful ego, and sometimes, fortunately, an increase in empathy.

The mystical and spiritual experiences are different. They effect a change in personality and outlook. There is a real break-through. There is a real widening of outlook. And the light that comes is more than just a flash of something that affects the outer sight. It brings with it new and broader vision, a real expansion of personality, a deeper understanding of oneself and of life. And one does not return to one’s former ego-habits. There is growth, especially in sympathy and understanding.

GATHEKA: It is not that the world has changed; it is that the person has become tuned to a different pitch. He begins to think differently, feel differently, see and act differently; his whole condition begins to change.

TASAWWUF: *Gayan* teaches that the world is what it is, that we cannot change it but that we can change ourselves. But it is also true that with change of outlook, the world seems different. One can look at a tree with an ordinary eye, with a microscope, from far, or with an ultramicroscope and one will get four different pictures, and they may be entirely different. But it is the same tree, only different vision.

There is a story of a little girl who went into a witch's hut while the witch was away. She found different ointments and put some on an eye and immediately the place seemed transformed. Actually it was not transformed, her vision was transformed. And so it is with life. Any transformatory experience transforms and the one who has had such experiences will not usually demand changes from others but he or she will show these changes in life, in new outlooks and change of habit.

Marie Corelli has given many novels illustrating this, from different views, but always the radical change which accompanies initiatory processes.

GATHEKA: One might say of him that from that moment he begins to live. It may come as a vision, as a dream, as a phenomenon—in any of these forms; one cannot determine the manner in which it will manifest.

TASAWWUF: Jesus Christ has said it would come in a twinkling of an eye, and in the hour one would think least. Zen proclaims sudden transformation which is called in some schools "enlightenment" but generally speaking it is known as **satori**. Satori is really initiation but cannot be known as such by those who have not had the experience. And as Mrs. Ruth Sasaki told one enterprising writer, a hundred such satoris may not prove enlightenment, that is, the acquisition of the conscious Buddha-nature. They bring glimpses.

So the initiation does transform, but as has been explained in the previous Chapter, there are many initiations. There are many grades, gradients and transformations, giving ever wider outlooks.

GATHEKA: Another initiation known to the mystics is the initiation that one receives from a person living on the earth. Every mystical school has its own initiation.

TASAWWUF: This has been given variously by different schools, yet when it comes to deepening of vision, to transformatory experiences, to internal revolutions, there is a similarity which pervades them all. The writer, Idries Shah, says that strictly speaking there are schools of Sufis, not any general thing called "Sufism." This shows non-attainment on his part for initiation into Sufism constitutes admittance into all Orders, always from the inner point of view, sometimes outwardly also.

GATHEKA: In the Orient, where mystical ideas are prevalent and are regarded as most sacred, any person who wishes to tread the spiritual path considers initiation to be the most important thing. If such a soul as Jesus Christ had to be baptized by John the Baptist, no soul on earth can say, "I have risen above initiation."

TASAWWUF: Yet it is done. It is done more and more because of two different lines in the West. One which has affected older people more is that they break away from traditions and by breaking away from traditions they presume that this automatically makes them universal. They may remain selfish, callous, narrow but because they have become free from tradition or have freed themselves from tradition, they think they have accomplished something.

Another type is those who have had psychic or psychedelic experiences. They think they have tapped the resources of the universe. The difference is that while both touch the subtle plane, most psychic experiences are not very deep and require what is known as "trance." And while the psychedelic experience seems more transformatory, and is somewhat transformatory, it is unbalanced. Still sometimes it opens a way.

In the stories of King Arthur many knights had the vision of the Holy Grail. That was the first step. Then they went to seek it and very few advanced far. This teaching is found in many lands but until it is taken seriously, not many can advance, for each thinks he is one of the few that do advance and such thoughts are confusing and illusory.

Common to these, and also of a different type are those who self-proclaim no need for a teacher. There are many such persons all over the world. They keep humanity divided. They lead to the formation of countless cliques, sects, groups and assertions of self-leadership in a confused and divided world which remains confused and divided.

GATHEKA: Is that then impossible? Nothing is impossible. It may be possible for a person to jump into the water with the intention of swimming to the port of New York, but his life will be more secure if he books his passage with the normal shipping lines. And the difference between these two souls is the same, or even greater—between the one who wishes to journey on the spiritual path by taking initiation, and the other who refuses to do so.

TASAWWUF: From historical data alone we have much to corroborate this. But as few study the history—and it is not an adjunct to the spiritual life, such evidence would not affect those who do not wish to change their outlooks. Only if they do not wish to change their outlooks or be changed, then they will not get far on the path to God.

In the ten Sufi thoughts abandon of ego-self is proclaimed. But this does not come easily. And one also learns that it is not for the sake of the Murshid, but for the sake of God that the pupil surrenders to the teacher. The teacher does not depend on that. The dependence of the teacher is in another direction.

There is little evidence of persons arriving at supreme states who have not had teachers. In cases where this occurs it is due to the Grace of Allah and even in cases where it does not occur it is due to the Grace of Allah. Such men as Walt Whitman and Edward Carpenter had some mystical experiences and then they agreed that one of them should seek a teacher, and Carpenter later wrote, "A Visit to a Gnani." But there are many people who are very proud, self-centered and think they can get along without a teacher. Of course they can get along without a teacher; anybody can get along without a teacher; anybody can remain immersed in ignorance. There is no compulsion on the spiritual path.

GATHEKA: Initiation by a spiritual teacher means both a trust given by the teacher to the pupil, and a trust given by the pupil to the teacher. And the progress of the one who is initiated depends upon how much he gives himself to the teacher's guidance.

TASAWWUF: While this looks very simple and has become natural to the people of many lands of Asia and Africa, it does not always follow in the western world where teachings of democracy and individualism have held sway. But whatever truth there is in such doctrines, they have no part in the

spiritual life. The spiritual life is one of surrender of ego and the more capacity and more efficiency one has in this surrender, the more accommodation is made for the manifestation of the divine light which is in all of us.

In this sense self-surrender may be called **fana** or effacement. But knowing there is such a process does not mean that one thereby goes through the processes of self-surrender. Knowing about it is just another thought, one of a myriad thoughts. Unless it is put to practice it is always a useless thought, one which has hindered the development of many people.

In nearly all schools where there has been any achievement, where doctrines have been accompanied or followed by awakening, there is a valid teacher, one in a chain of many, many teachers who have held aloft the light of truth through the darkness of human ignorance.

GATHEKA: One might give only a finger, another even part of a finger, while a third would give his whole hand. This makes a great difference, for if a pupil says, "Well, I will give a certain amount of my time and thought to your guidance, will that be enough?" the teacher will say, "Yes, if you think it is enough;" but in reality it is never enough.

TASAWWUF: There can be no compulsion in Sufism. Each Bayat, each initiation is an opportunity for the disciple, the devotee. There are some who will even worship the teacher, but that is not what the teacher may want; this is not always self-surrender. Self-surrender is illustrated by obedience and fidelity whether it is saying a simple prayer, doing any esoteric practice, or performing those duties which the murshid needs. When there are acts which merely bring gratification to the pupil, these are not acts of selfless service.

GATHEKA: Then one might wonder if one would not be giving up one's own point of view in order to follow someone else's point of view; but actually if one has a point of view, one never loses it. The point of view which one loses is not one's own.

TASAWWUF: Many are under the erroneous thought that the teacher demands subservience. It is nothing like that. A teacher, even a perfect teacher, is himself a seeker and he may be finding God or the Divine Wisdom, the Wisdom of God, in every seeker. He sees everyone as the beloved one of God and looks for their blossoming as of buds into full flowers. And once he has granted Bayat he considers himself under obligation to the pupil; and he is most fortunate if the pupil realizes the obligations to the teacher.

Besides, no matter how learned the teacher is, there are many fields of endeavor in which he may not be even a novice. So he encourages pupils to express themselves and offer their points of view on all extraneous subjects, or on all matters outside the direct spiritual teaching.

GATHEKA: And by looking at a thing from another person's point of view one only enlarges one's own; then one has two points of view instead of one.

TASAWWUF: Hazrat Inayat Khan has said, "I learn more from my mureeds than they learn from me." The wise teacher is always seeking knowledge and the wise pupil is always seeking wisdom and guidance. Besides there are so many subjects of which a teacher is ignorant so he listens and learns. And thus his disciples only learn to acquire the habit of listening and learning.

GATHEKA: If the thought of the pupil happens to be different from that of the teacher, by taking the teacher's thought his own is doubled; the pupil keeps his own point of view just the same, only now he has something for his vision from which to make his choice; the horizon of his thought is expanded. But the pupil who closes himself and says, "I will guard my point of view or it will escape me," will never derive any benefit from this attitude.

TASAWWUF: Often the teacher's outlook is of a higher dimension, with a broader base. It is therefore often quite inclusive so it does not refute the pupil's point of view but integrates it into a larger outlook. In "The Story of Lot" in *The Unity of Religious Ideals* the existence of the Vijnanamayakosh and Anandamayakosh is posited. But this does not tell us of their place in the universe, the functions and outlooks or what they really mean when man is consciously awakened to them.

The awakening is not a repudiation of what one has learned but its assimilation into a much larger outlook. As in the story of the six blind men and the elephant, all partial outlooks are at least partially right, right within their own dimensions. Then there is a larger dimension. And so what is called "abstracting" in philosophy is the ego assimilation of a point of view from something which may be called reality. What man calls "reality" is not the full reality but the ego-abstraction from it. It may be called right, it may be called wrong, it may be called both right and wrong; it may be called neither right nor wrong. And in the Mahayana psychology all of these are presented so many may attain a universal outlook which is all inclusive.

When one can understand this he will realize that his rightness is limited, but it is unwise to give it up. The real growth comes not in abandoning what one has collected but integrating it into a larger outlook until the whole cosmic point of view is attained.

GATHEKA: The mystical path is the most subtle path to tread. The relationship between teacher and pupil is too subtle for words to express.

TASAWWUF: Over and over is this stressed. It often takes a long time for this teaching to be assimilated. People often see in a teacher some ideal, or some fancy they have had come to objectification. They then demand a certain standard and if the standard evinced is not to their liking they see the short-comings of the teacher. They are right. Perhaps every teacher has some shortcomings in some things. But in the effort to awaken disciples and the generality, in this direction he may be regarded as perfect, and in the sight of God is he often perfect.

GATHEKA: Besides the language of a mystical teacher is always elusive; you cannot, so to speak, pin him down as to his words; you cannot ask him to say clearly that something is so and so, or such and such. And if a mystic does so he is not a mystic, for a mystic cannot do this.

TASAWWUF: The mystic is judged in heaven by the quality of the mureeds and not necessarily by the quantity. Of course there are cases where teachers have functioned before a multitude. Besides no one can say exactly what a spiritual teacher's duties are. But it is most important that he help awaken some people and the greater his facility in this the greater a teacher he is.

Nearly all schools have tests and trials. It is a peculiar thing, however, that some people who have a sort of emotional attraction toward esoteric schools which have the most severe tests themselves object to being tested. Thus the Pythagorean school was quite severe and the world is full of people

who believe they are or should be Pythagoreans, but in actuality, they desire nothing of the kind. They have not the mathematical prowess, they do not like to be silent for long periods, and they are concerned with mystery-making, not with mysticism.

Still, awakening does not come by answering simple questions or solving problems. It comes in, with and through transformation and transmutation.

GATHEKA: The mystic may seem to be standing on the earth, but he is flying in the air. The air cannot be made into a rock, nor can the mystic be made a gross entity. His "yes" does not mean the same as the "yes" of another, nor does his "no" mean the same as the "no" of others. The language of the mystic is not the language of words; it is the language of meaning.

TASAWWUF: A great deal of confusion has been caused by this. It was the habit of Hazrat Inayat Khan to offer a "Yes" to almost every person and to almost every question. But it was also his habit to add counter-questions and conditions. The people who heard the "yes" assumed that mystics must be very harmonious people, a sort of super-magician or Santa Claus who not only granted requests, but helped one to attain their wishes.

It indicated that whatever a person's thoughts, wishes, desires or outlooks were there was some justification, for the People were not necessarily mad or evil, but that did not mean they were automatically spiritual. Besides, spiritual questions and problems are not answered by any simple "yes" or "no." These answers do not transform everybody and everything. But they often help to guide others in their first step toward perfection.

And so it was with the successors of Hazrat Inayat Khan. They were judged. No matter what they said or did they were judged. Only in this case they did not lead many persons to and through spiritual transformations and awakenings. Besides there are and have been all sorts of awakened teachers using all sorts of methods and many quite successful in them.

The rise of the semantic outlook came many years after the first presentation of the Message to the Western world. Now it has been discovered that the value of words in many instances is questionable. And this is certainly true of the mystic who actually uses another type of communication in which the languages play a lesser part.

GATHEKA: It is the greatest distress for a mystic to have to use the words of everyday language, which are not his words.

TASAWWUF: We can see an analogy in hypergeometry that new words had to be coined to fit human concepts or even human experiences of another and higher order. True, the Sanskrit language has many terms which fit in with transcendental experiences and it is always possible that there will be more suitable words than there are now. But it is also true as in Zen that ordinary words can not be used in ordinary fashion with ordinary meanings to indicate clearly super-experience.

GATHEKA: He cannot express himself in these words. And we find the same in the action of the mystic. His outward actions will not express to everybody the meaning which is behind them, and that meaning may be much more important inwardly than the action is outwardly.

TASAWWUF: We may accept the premise of Paul Brunton that the mystic uses breath and heart and the eyes. None of these communicates ordinarily with ordinary language. And even if we had some machine which could interpret what they do, it would require extraordinary finesse to make it clear; and still it should not be made clear because these clear interpretations are only for the discursive and analytical mind. We do not use poetry and music in this way; how much more evasive is the language of the mystic!

GATHEKA: The teacher therefore tests his pupil continually. He tells him and he does not tell him, for everything must come in its right time. Divine knowledge has never been taught in words, nor will it ever be so taught.

TASAWWUF: For words are the products of what may be called "mortal mind." They fit certain finite conditions and are meant to be so. And when attempts have been made to explain the transfinite in traditional speech, there has been much controversy. Of course there is the transfinite; of course it cannot be explained in ordinary speech. It can only be clear on its own level but it can perceive the finite and understand the finite while the opposite is not true. The limited can never explain the unlimited; the unlimited can often explain the limited.

Once the commentator was with a Pir in the Himalayas and we were told there would be an examination for Khalifship. We were dismissed at ten o'clock after an hour's instruction to meet at noon. When we met the commentator said, "No examination." "Why not?" Because when I went to the room the Pir was there and he gave me full instructions.

No doubt such occurrences are very pleasing to certain types concerned with the occult. But actually God is everywhere and He manifests in many forms, and especially through inspiring teachers. And there are innumerable examples of cases of telepathy and beyond telepathy. For the teacher has full consideration for the disciple, and love is never limited by name and form, nor wisdom.

GATHEKA: **The work of the a mystical teacher is not to teach but to tune, to tune the pupil so that he may become the instrument of God.** For the mystical teacher is not the player of the instrument; he is the tuner. When he has tuned it, he gives it into the hands of the Player whose instrument it is to play. The duty of the mystical teacher is his service as a tuner.

TASAWWUF: Over and over again it is taught that one gains by attunement and not by goodness, kindness and charity. The effects, even the beneficent effects of these is limited. But by attunement one stretches into the illimitable. We have the phenomena of attunement and resonance in many types of sciences and they are all based on cosmic principles. In electricity in particular some form of attunement is used to step up the currents and so the magnetism. And in the spiritual life something of the sort is used, only there is infinite capacity. For the purpose of the attunement by the teacher is to bring the disciple into direct communion with God.

GATHEKA: Dispute with a spiritual teacher is never any good. For the pupil may be speaking one language while the teacher speaks another, and when there is no common language, how can the dispute be profitable? Therefore in the path of mysticism there is no dispute.

TASAWWUF: And yet there are disputes and sometimes the teacher will give way. He has before him the ideals of love and harmony and beauty and beyond them the Cause of God. The pupil has something else in mind which may be more limited, more personal. From the pupil's point of view he is right and from the standpoint of dualism also the pupil may be right. But it is not this kind of

“right” which is needed; what is needed is to bring about the attunement to God, for each and all. There are many ways to do this, and what is right for some may not always be right for others. So the work of the teacher is to upraise the disciple by attunement and as certain masters teach, “To argue is to lose the way.”

GATHEKA: Also, there are no fixed rules to follow on this path. For every person there is a special rule. But there is one law which applies to everything in life; sincerity, which is the only thing that is asked by a teacher of a pupil, for truth is not the portion of the insincere.

TASAWWUF: There are certain general codes and we find them in *Moral Culture*. But this is based on relativity and not on absoluteness. Besides, every case must be determined by its own merits and heart does not decide without full consideration of mercy and compassion. There are the standards and ideals which may be ascribed to Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Buddha and all prophets and messengers of God. But all of them hold up human consideration. So every case is, in a certain sense, different.

GATHEKA: Several initiations may be given to the pupil whom the teacher has taken in hand, but the progress depends upon the pupil himself. Just as parents are anxious, so the spiritual teacher is naturally anxious to see the advancement of his pupil.

TASAWWUF: There are in a sense fixed standards and patterns and also there is the general outlook. The descent of the Holy Spirit and all forms of realization may be related to the progress in **fana** or self-effacement. But this is not a blotting out of anything but the ego. All faculties, all purposes in life may be achieved, are to be achieved and for these the teacher may become a willing servant to the pupil and at the same time a guidance. It is the Spirit of Guidance which leads humanity to the Light, and in the Light.

GATHEKA: There is no reason for the teacher to keep any pupil back from success; for as the happiness of the parents lies in the happiness of the child, so the satisfaction of the teacher lies in the advancement of the pupil.

TASAWWUF: It is on this point that Sufism seems to be different from some other schools of spiritual advancement. For in Sufism the path is one wherein teacher and pupil journey together. The teacher does not compel or propel, but in a certain sense he accompanies the disciple and in other senses, he may be at the same time a stimulator and a follower.

The greatest joy that can come to the teacher is when the pupil arrives and the only reward that comes to the teacher is in and with the advancement of disciples.

GATHEKA: But then there is another kind of initiation which comes afterwards, and this initiation is also an unfoldment of the soul. It comes as an after-effect of the initiation that one had from the teacher. It comes as a kind of expansion of consciousness, and the greatness of this initiation depends upon the distance and width of the horizon of consciousness.

TASAWWUF: When Sufism was first presented the term “initiation” was used. And then **bayat** was substituted. But there are two forms of **bayat**, those which the teacher bestows upon the disciple and those in which he confirms the advancement of the disciple, from the experiences of the Grace of Allah.

When the teachings were first offered the importance of Grace was stressed above all else. It did not penetrate the minds of audiences, for the term “Grace” has taken on so many meanings, and when God is not regarded as actually Omnipresent, it loses its effect. The Grace that seems to come from a far away, transcendent Deity has not the same psychological effect as that which comes when the Divine Presence is felt.

Now there are people who sense some form of expansion of consciousness whenever and however they are raised from the denseness of earth. And perhaps all these forms, all these claims are in a sense correct. But the true expansion of consciousness comes with spiritual rebirths. Consciously or unconsciously the mathematician Dodson, writing under the name of “Lewis Carroll” has given some of this in the allegory called *Alice in the Looking Glass*.

GATHEKA: Many may claim it, but few realize it. Those who realize do not claim. As the more fruitful a tree is the more it bends, so the more divine his spiritual realization is the more humble a person becomes. It is the one who is less fruitful who becomes more pretentious.

TASAWWUF: In the confusion which has arisen because of the resort to artificial means to awaken the inner consciousness, the more claims there have been. Many of these claims totally lack any moral awakening and many have ego-claims which, because of the number making such claims, cannot all possibly be true. They may all be false when they claim to be messiahs, avatars and supermen. If there are any messiahs or avatars or supermen, they would bring illumination to many and perhaps in an instance. They would not have to make any claims at all. The awakening of those in their presence would be the claim and this is the highest of testimonials.

GATHEKA: The really initiated ones hardly ever mention the word **initiation**; they find no profit in convincing others that they are initiated. They possess their real inner gains so they do not want an outer gain; it is the one who has not got any who wants recognition from outside.

TASAWWUF: We may even use this as a standard of judgment. Still that would not necessarily always be fair. For there may be Madzubs who take advantage when the generality assumes that the arrived ones are silent, and babble and prate and talk and claim and thus chase others away, repel them. Which is what they want. They do not want the hypercritical and unworthy to come near them, so they may overclaim. But generally there is something about the light from the eyes and the atmosphere which a person carries which is the testimonial of advanced souls.

GATHEKA: And if we ask what profit we derive from initiation, the answer is that religion, mysticism, or philosophy – all that we gain – should help us to achieve one result, and that is to be best fitted for serving our fellow-men.

TASAWWUF: The same phrases are often used by false claimants, only they do not serve, they just use the words like “service” and often deceive, more often mislead. The actual Sufis and Vedanta Swamis whom one meets in the Orient do not speak much about “serving” but actually act as servants and perform servile duties without stressing it. Thus the great Pir-O-Murshid Hasan Nizami acted as flunky in his own printing establishment.

Nor is it necessarily in the line of healing that the great ones work. They often serve as lackeys, as cooks, even as janitors. They may wash the feet of pilgrims and offer food or drink to anybody without any distinction of class or religion.

GATHEKA: It may be asked whether it is desirable for every soul to take initiation. The word “initiation” and the associated word “initiative” suggest going forward, so the answer is that progress is life and standing still is death. Whatever be our grade of evolution, it is always advisable to try to go forward, be it in business or in a profession, in society or in political life, in religion or in spiritual advancement.

TASAWWUF: This is not necessarily ambition. There is an urge in every soul, from every soul, to struggle ahead. And if one cannot struggle ahead he feels he is in the wrong place. It is not that one strives to dominate over his fellow-man; it is that one strives to dominate over his lower self. So life is a constant battle but not necessarily a battle against others.

GATHEKA: No doubt there is a danger in being too enthusiastic. The nature that is too enthusiastic may, instead of benefiting, perhaps harm itself in whatever line it may have taken up, worldly or spiritual.

TASAWWUF: For that reason some of the goals of the Sufi Movement have not been attained. There is emotional assent, but such assent may be uncontrolled; one who says “yes” himself presumes that his favoring a project may bring it success. But this is not always success. Wishing is not achieving. Wishing with dependence on God may help one to avoid failure but without this divine reliance one is always subject to the karma.

GATHEKA: For everything there is a time, and patience is necessary in all striving. A cook may burn food by applying more heat in order to cook more quickly, and this rule applies to all things.

TASAWWUF: The statement that the principle applies to all things is easily grasped by the intuitive, but with difficulty by those of hardened minds. Very often there are people with hardened minds who are convinced that they are either seeking spirituality or are already spiritual. But they do not see and they do not apply beyond their immediacy. They are trapped in a limited dimension and cannot let go. If all the people in the world who are self-convinced that they can surrender, could surrender, there would be a continual paradise of God upon earth.

The commentator once lived in a spiritual commune and whatever was proposed a certain man supported with enthusiasm. He always supported any idea, any suggestion of anybody with enthusiasm. And he would usually be the first one who had an excuse—and sometimes his excuses were most valid—not to go along with that proposal which he had verbally supported. This happens often and it always brings confusion. It is wise, therefore, to watch breath and heart and to feel properly before speaking. If one feels first one will make fewer mistakes in speaking.

GATHEKA: With little children the parents are often anxious and enthusiastic; they think their children should learn and understand every good and interesting thing on earth. Too much enthusiasm is not right. We must give time to all things; the first and most important lesson in life is patience; we must begin all things with patience.

TASAWWUF: No doubt the sprinter must start off rapidly and accurately, but for the rheostat, one gradually builds up speed and power. If one wants the full efficiency one must do that. And the same is true in spiritual matters, and matters concerned with breathing. We do not always know all the potentialities of breath and we can not predetermine or think such things out. There is a program, so to speak, for them.

It is therefore that rhythms are studied and put into practice. And also in the Sufi trainings which use music and dancing, a similar program is followed.

GATHEKA: The Sufi Order is mainly an esoteric school. There are three principal esoteric schools known in the East; the Buddhist school, the Vedantic school, and the Sufi school.

TASAWWUF: These terms are used here in their broadest sense. The Vedantic and Buddhist schools have what they call the transmission of Dharma. It is not exactly definable but it is characterized by some transmission of light, wisdom and spiritual realization. In Sufism there is a term *silsila*. A mistake was made in assuming it took on a particular material form. It is transmateral, without being anti-materialistic. It is based on the continuum of spiritual realization and the direct experience of spiritual awakening is the basis of all these schools.

GATHEKA: The two former use asceticism as their principle means of spiritual advancement; the peculiarity of the Sufi school is that it uses humanity as its chief means to the same end.

TASAWWUF: There are verbal teachings in the other schools. The Buddhists, in particular some members of Mahayana Schools, repeat that no matter how innumerable sentient beings are they vow to save them all. Then they think the vow justifies them. They do not always pursue the path of their vows. Then they say that Zen is everyday life but Zen is not usually everyday life and the people who go in for most pursuits called "Zen" do everything but follow the usual everyday life. Yet Master Senzaki did accomplish the everyday life and was a most profound and advanced sage.

The one thing most stressed in the Sufi teachings, besides the recognition that God Alone is, is consideration of one's fellow man. This stands out and is what distinguishes the true from the false. It is not knowing the profundities or some esoteric exercises which are for any few, but the heart-consideration to God's creatures, especially to man that characterizes the Sufi.

GATHEKA: In the realization of truth the Sufi school is no different from the Vedantic or the Buddhist, but the Sufi presents truth in a different manner. It is the same frame in which Jesus Christ has given his teaching.

TASAWWUF: The American philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson declared that if one brought Pythagoras and Jesus Christ and Buddha and Mohammed together instead of there being any arguments there would be infinite peace and love demonstrated. The commentator took part in the introduction of the Zen Monk, Nyogen Senzaki, and the Sufi teacher, Hazrat Inayat Khan together. They went into a side chamber and both entered Samadhi by glance. The commentator many years later had the same experience with the Zen Roshi, Sogen Asahina and also with others. There was no difference in the experience, only in the backgrounds and they all brought the soul to its full realization.

Now Jesus Christ worked in the framework of Love and he kept on emphasizing love but it seems that doctrinarians and clergymen and philosophers do not want it that way. They say and pray for God's Will to be done on earth but they do not want it. Because in Love, in this sense, the distinctions and differences which divide men disappear. Jesus has given the example of the good Samaritan but that does not play any important part in traditional religion. It has not become an example. But to the Sufis it is a permanent example; that is the way they behave. They become, all of them, like the good Samaritan.

GATHEKA: No doubt the method of helping spiritual development by contemplation and meditation is used in all three schools, the science of breath being the foundation of each.

TASAWWUF: For that reason many think that Sufism was derived from the Orient. Yes, the Sufis have breathing disciplines; some schools of Buddhism have breathing disciplines, often quite different; and in India there are many such exercises, and some of the deepest are kept hidden from the public. They have been published, they are in the Lesser Upanishads, but leaders desiring to maintain their eminence, only lecture on them; they do not use them, they do not demonstrate them.

Yet the word "spiritual" means that which is connected with Breath. The ancient Egyptians knew this and it was the coordination of breathing as well as mechanical prowess which made possible the construction of the great pyramids and the marvelous wonders of the temples of Karnak and elsewhere. If they had not known about the Breath they would not have accomplished this.

Although this subject has been stressed more than any other in the literature, it takes many years to bring a few people to its realization. Complexities are too often taken for truth. A little child can learn to breathe; a little child would have difficulty in learning metaphysics.

GATHEKA: But the Sufi thinks that man was not created to live the life of an angel, neither was he created to live the life of an animal. For the life of an angel, angels are created, and for the life of an animal there are animals.

TASAWWUF: Yet the humanity includes both these aspects. There are organs in the body which are, in a sense, animal organs. There are also organs in the body which, if awakened, could enable man to accomplish what no animal could conceive. With all the advances in science and technology, deep thinking does not appear among the animals. And a study of the nervous system would show profound differences in construction and function, still to be studied and explained. For man, as Count Korzybski explained, was a time binder; and as technology indicates, to some extent a space binder and that is only the first step in bringing out the wonders in man.

GATHEKA: The Sufi thinks that the first thing which is necessary for man in life is to prove to his own conscience to what extent he can be human. It is not only a spiritual development, it is the culture of humanity; in what relation man stands to his neighbor or friend, to those who depend upon him and those who look up to him, to strangers unknown to him.

TASAWWUF: Mostly people expect angelic behavior from Sufis, and then they read about Madzubs and say they are not Sufis. But the Madzubs may be more Sufi than anybody else for they may be seeing God in everything and everybody. And in order to awaken the light and fire within everyone they will either avoid or castigate. And this shocks in general those who are envisioning a cosmic Santa Claus. Or following the traditions, they expect a Galahad who was not a living man at all but a figment of imaginations and his presumable virtues have overshadowed the actual qualities not only of the average people, but over the saints.

GATHEKA: How he stands with those younger than himself and with older people, with those who like him and others who dislike him and criticize him; how he should feel and think and act through life, and yet keep on progressing toward the goal which is the goal for every soul in the world.

TASAWWUF: The Sufi is aware of this goal and he often sees where other people stand in this respect. It has been said that the Message is a clarion call for those who are ready to awaken, and like a lullaby for others to keep them in their sleeps and dreams in ignorance. But as the tendency is always to criticize and find fault many do not see. Besides the Sufi is not seeking acclaim. He does not want the unworthy to follow him, and he can see with his inner eye those who are ready; and he can also tell by the ear's perceptibility from the tone of voice those who are ready.

This is also presented in *The Inner Life* and its commentaries, for those who wish to perceive with the heart.

GATHEKA: It is not necessary for the Sufi to seek the wilderness for his meditation, since he can perform part of his work in the midst of worldly life.

TASAWWUF: The supremacy of Mohammed is that he maintained his rapport with God while living in the midst of humanity, in society, performing ordinary tasks to support his family and himself, and he did not go out of the way in this. It is most difficult and also most worthy when one can do this. Almost anybody can go into retirement and have some uplifting experience. But can he maintain that state in the midst of the world? That is the real test.

GATHEKA: The Sufi need not prove himself a Sufi by extraordinary power, by wonder-working, or by an exceptional spiritual manifestation or claim. A Sufi can prove to his own conscience that he is a Sufi by watching his own life amidst the strife of this world.

TASAWWUF: It is usually the older people, those who have failed in life that look toward wonder-working. We have this at all times. But wonder-working is not part of the mystical life. For him everything is a wonder and therefore nothing especially is. And if he sees that the laws of nature, as they are called, are transcended, he also knows that everything can be transcended. But most of all he wants to see the ego transcended, not overly expressed.

GATHEKA: There are some who are content with a belief taught at home or in church. They are contented, and they may just as well rest in that stage of realization where they are contented until another impulse is born in their hearts to rise higher.

TASAWWUF: Although the Bodhisattvic vow is to try to save all people, and many of missionary bent also have some ideas about it, we do not awaken people by forced warnings. There are many who come and warn and nothing happens. There are many who believe that threats and fulminations are valuable. But it is still as with Jonah, that even a prophet did not succeed by such methods and God did not destroy Nineveh when the prophet said so. And it may have been that something happened. Besides, as Prophet Mohammed has said, "The Merciful leans toward the side of Mercy."

And no one is called upon to awaken everybody. There is a slow evolution for all the human race and everything and everyone has his time.

GATHEKA: The Sufi does not force his beliefs or his thoughts upon such souls.

TASAWWUF: Jesus has said not to cast pearls before swine and the ancient Greeks said that not all wood was fit to be used to make a statue of Hermes. Besides love does not operate that way. There is no dualism in true love, as in the sunshine and rain which are for everybody. But as Rumi has said,

God is asleep in the mineral kingdom, dreaming in the vegetable kingdom, awakening in the animal kingdom and comes to self-realization in man; there is a time and consideration for all creatures which really are God functioning at an infinite number of levels.

GATHEKA: In the East there is a saying that it is a great sin to awaken anyone who is fast asleep. This saying can be symbolically understood: that there are many in this world who work and do things and are yet asleep; they seem awake externally, but inwardly they are asleep. The Sufi considers it a crime to awaken them, for some sleep is good for their health.

TASAWWUF: Paul said, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ will give thee light." Of course this is true but many who claim to take the Bible literally take this symbolically; they do not think it can be literally true. Still there is a time for all things, and those who are awakened before their time may have a shock and relapse. When one is ready the master will surely appear. For appeals are in the sphere and God hears all such cries in some way.

GATHEKA: The work of the Sufi is to give a helping hand to those who have had sufficient sleep and who now begin to stir in their sleep, to turn over. And it is that kind of help which is the real initiation.

TASAWWUF: Although the Bodhisattvic vow is to save all, still this does not mean it must come by stirring and still less by stirring immediately. No great Master has said that little children have to have esoteric discipline. It might shock them. Besides as they have not hardened one would have to work in a different way.

The way of wisdom and compassion is not a way of negation, nor is a spiritual teacher a Santa Claus.

GATHEKA: No doubt there are things which pass the ordinary comprehension of man. There are things one can teach only by speaking or by acting, but there is a way of teaching which is called **Tawajoh** and this way of teaching is without words. It is not external teaching; it is teaching in silence.

TASAWWUF: The immediate conclusion is that teachers use telepathy and sometimes they do. They may communicate in many ways. A Pir once sent for the commentator to test if he could function as a Khalif. He gave an hour instruction from nine till ten in the morning and said the group would meet at twelve. But when they met the commentator told the Pir that he had been with him those full two hours from ten till twelve and that he had all the requisite answers. It was something more than telepathy; it was a sort of teaching through immediate subtle communication of the mental body. But even these words do not explain fully enough.

Tawajjeh also includes teaching by example and by rhythm, to be with the teacher and help him, drawing in his rhythm by attuned breathing or attuned action. This can often be done with or without words.

Another form of Tawajjeh is like the Indian Darshan. One uses the glance but one may use it deeply or personally; one may try to reach a whole audience or one at a time or between. This is more than a subtle communication. It demonstrates that "heart speaks to heart and soul to soul" — although in heart there are differences and in soul one finds in the end no differentiation. For the teaching of Sufism is that the Path is a journey in which teacher and pupil walk as if one.

And there is another aspect which comes in fana-fi-Sheikh, that the consciousness of the pupil becomes so absorbed in that of the teacher it is almost as if mental instruction or even supermental instruction were like a communion of milk.

GATHEKA: For instance, how can man explain the spirit of sincerity, or the spirit of gratefulness? How can man explain the ultimate truth, the idea of God? Whenever it has been attempted it has failed; it has made some confused, and it has made others give up their belief. It is not that the one who tried to explain did not understand, but that words are inadequate to explain the idea of God.

TASAWWUF: It has been said that to describe God is to dethrone God. There have been writers who have tried to explain and if one goes deeply into their work, it becomes mostly an emphasis on personality. It is a sort of deus ex machina, description is there but no attributes. The attributes are missing. And Allah without attributes is not Allah. Yes, in Indian teachings we have all sorts of representations of Deity and some seem very valid, are valid from certain outlooks. But then the Indian will say, "Neti, neti" Whatever is said, or described will also be refuted and both views are correct, showing that the ineffable is ineffable and never verbal.

GATHEKA: In the East there are great sages and saints who sit quite still, with lips closed, for years. They are called **Muni**, which means "he who takes the vow of silence." The man of today may think, "What a life, to be silent and do nothing." But he does not know that some by their silence can do more than others can accomplish by talking for ten years.

TASAWWUF: Buddha has been called **Sakya Muni** which is to say, the silent sage of the Sakya clan. And there is no doubt that much that appears in the Buddhist scriptures comes from impressions and visions and not necessarily verbal teaching. Besides, if there were telepathy, there would be the same impressions on a multitude; not a word need be spoken and yet a whole audience would receive it as if the words had been out loud.

Then it is taught in the Bhagavad Gita that action may prove to be inaction and inaction action. Many people study and they think they know it. And then when it comes to application they will see only action as action or inaction as inaction. Or they will accept the silence of many who live in the Himalayas and say their inaction is action. There is no proof for it. There were many who drew pictures or took photographs of Tibetan holy men, and these holy men were supposed to be casting inscriptions which were called "good thoughts." And many wondered and admired, yet there are no signs that anything happened at all; there were no signs that the world benefited.

When a sage sends out really good thoughts, thoughts of love, compassion, blessing, he is also aware of what he is doing. In the spiritual hierarchy which the Sufis recognize and which consists for the most part of Sufis, the work has to be done through and with silence but the one who does it is quite aware of the results. And if it does not come out right for him, he realizes that he has either not submitted to the Divine Will or that there is some imperfection in him which must be corrected. This correction of inner weaknesses is called **Mujahida**, or the "Greater Crusade" (or purification).

GATHEKA: A person may argue for months about a problem and not be able to explain it, while another, with inner radiance, may be able to answer the same thing in one moment.

TASAWWUF: This inner radiance is Kashf or Prajna. It is real. It is functional. All have access to it but all do not realize it. It is the awakened souls which realize and the sleeping souls which do not. This is beyond ordinary good and evil.

GATHEKA: But the answer that comes without words explains still more. That is initiation.

TASAWWUF: This may come with vision, and it will be cosmic vision, in light. It may also come with a sort of seizure. Mohammed, perhaps the most advanced of men, used to have seizures and they were wrongly understood. Superficially they may seem to have a resemblance to epilepsy or catalepsy. But they were always accompanied by light and brought an ever greater light, and love and sobriety to the consciousness of the people around him. It was something very real. Initiation is something very real.

GATHEKA: However, no one can give spiritual knowledge to another, for this is something which is within every heart. What the teacher can do is to kindle the light which is hidden in the heart of the disciple. If the light is not there, it is not the fault of the teacher.

TASAWWUF: There have been many false teachings given out by western scholars who did not have Sufi training, about the relation between teacher and pupil. They have falsely taught that an abject surrender is required. A mother does not compel abject surrender of the feeding child and a teacher does not compel abjectivity of any kind. It is all in love and consideration or it is not Sufism.

GATHEKA: There is a verse by Hafiz in which he says, "However great be the teacher, he is helpless with the one whose heart is closed." Therefore initiation means initiation on the part of the disciple and on the part of the teacher, a step forward on the path of both.

TASAWWUF: There is an incident in the life of Shibli, a great Sufi of Baghdad, that he went to his teacher, the grand Sheikh, Junaid and told him that Mohammed had manifested to him and blessed him and taught him. And Junaid remarked, "Yes, I know. Allah has told me." There are many such instances.

In the life of the commentator there were parallel experiences with both the Zen Nyogen Senzaki and the Sufi, Hazrat Inayat Khan. Unfortunately most of the disciples of the former accepted, though they knew little about him personally and the disciples of the latter refused to accept and so there has been much confusion in Sufism and clarity in Zen. The brotherhood of man cannot be based on rejections. Furthermore without such incidents there is no assurance that there is any such thing as the Sufi process. It lapses into personalism and conceptions and this is the downfall of any movements.

In pure Sufism transmissions go on continually and continuously whether mentioned or not, reported or not for every initiation is an example of God's success in seeking Himself.

GATHEKA: On the part of the teacher, a step forward with the disciple in order that the pupil may be trusted and raised from his present condition. A step forward for the pupil, because he opens his heart; he has no barrier any more, nothing to hinder the teaching in whatever form it comes, in silence or in words, or in the observation of some deed or action on the part of the teacher.

TASAWWUF: It is true that Hazrat Inayat Khan has left many teachings, in the literature, in the class instructions, in side-notes, and sometimes in articles that were repressed for some reason or no reason. Yet these are mostly the shadows of his efforts. The real efforts were hidden beyond these shadows. A God-realized disciple would be able to select the teachings whether they had been given in literary form or not. When the words are attached to the teacher only their relation with God is obscured. The real teaching is in the sphere and it is assimilated when it is received in and from the

sphere and not only from the shadow-forms which constitute the literature and lessons. These are not of themselves realizations.

GATHEKA: In ancient times the disciples of the great teachers learned by a quite different method, not an academic method or way of study. The way was that with open heart, with perfect confidence and trust, they watched every attitude of the teacher both towards friends and towards people who look at him with contempt; they watched their teacher in times of trouble and pain, how he endured it all; they saw how patient and wise he had been in discussing with those who did not understand, answering everyone gently in his own language; he showed the mother-spirit, the father-spirit, the brother-spirit, the child-spirit, the friend-spirit, forgiving kindness, an ever tolerant nature, respect for the aged, compassion for all, the thorough understanding of human nature.

TASAWWUF: In the efforts to bring the Message of God to the West there were many disciples who said they understood and by their actions they showed they did not understand. They were really not ready but they were won, just the same, by some of the qualities and also the wisdom and knowledge of the Teacher.

If we use the standards here we shall find very few of those who come to the West manifest anything of the sort. Claims to be superior are not the claims of enlightened men. Besides it is not claim, it is effectiveness. The commentator would not be recognized as a spiritual teacher until at least one of his immediate disciples showed the attainment. When the disciple manifested the attainment it was positive proof that the teacher must have reached some suitable spiritual attainment. Otherwise it is all claim, words and illusion.

Not that many institutions brought to the West by Asians were not needed. They were often sorely needed. But we do not worship the scientists who brought to Asia the knowledge and wisdom needed by those people. The science was accepted and assimilated but there was no personality-worship. Besides only God is worthy of worship and those who are emotionally effected by claimants, or even by actual teachers, indicate by their very emotions shortcomings. Exaltation is received by a group, or if by an individual it is shared; emotional euphoria is not so shared, it is not transmitted.

On the other hand those who have accepted some teacher often judge others from that standpoint and require more virtues from others and are less likely to overlook his shortcoming than those of their own guru.

GATHEKA: This also the disciples learnt: that no discussion or books on metaphysics can ever teach all the thoughts and philosophy that arise in the heart of man. A person may either study for a thousand years, or he may get to the source and see if he can touch the root of all wisdom and all knowledge.

TASAWWUF: The peoples of the far East are not prone to discuss. But also they will accept without question, they may not dare to question what is given them and so they are very obedient but not wise. The wise person has the direct faculty. If he receives philosophies and not faculties he is subject to short-comings.

The people of India are both credulous and argumentative. And when they think they have found a teacher they will accept everything from him and try to prove that everything he says and does is

right and that what others say and do is not so right. The result is utter confusion, and crosscurrents where there is also great wisdom and understanding.

But the people of the west, smothered in analysis, have great difficulty, for they are always looking with ego-thoughts, and they want something for the mind to masticate, and this is not the way. Still by evolution sincere souls are appearing in the West as in the East.

GATHEKA: In the center of the emblem of the Sufis there is a heart; it is the sign that from the heart a stream rises, the stream of divine knowledge.

TASAWWUF: This also comes in the new Sufi prayers, Saum, Salat and Khatum. If one meditated constantly on them, the realization might follow and then one would recognize the active voice of God from within, the Guiding Light of all souls. It would no longer be a symbol, it would be reality.

GATHEKA: On the path of initiation two things are necessary: contemplation, and the living of a life such as a Sufi ought to live; and they depend on each other. Contemplation helps one to live the life of a Sufi, and the life of a Sufi helps contemplation.

TASAWWUF: Contemplation is called *Mushahida*, in the Sufic language and it comes from the same root as the word *shahud*, which means a direct witnessing and which also comes as *ash-hadu*, "I bear witness" always repeated in the Islamic prayers. But in Sufism the goal is reached when God manifests through man as the devotee to Himself, and when man is so assimilated in God that although he performs prayers and practices he has ceased to be aware of his own personality.

And when one is no longer aware of his own personality as separate from others, then surely he lives a proper life.

GATHEKA: In the West, where life is so busy and where there is no end to one's responsibilities, one wonders if to undertake contemplation, even for only ten minutes in the evening, it is not too much when one is tired. But for that very reason contemplation is required more in the West than in the East where everything, even the surroundings, is helpful to contemplation.

TASAWWUF: We can now see the result. Instead of resorting to repose the whole tenor has been immersed in excitement and this excitement in turn spurs on the desire nature. And instead of finding contentment, there is more and more violence. Once the ego is inflamed he cannot stop, it is just like the laws of motion, when there is a strong impetus there will be a strong, even a violent motion. In Sufism this is called *Urouj* which is not only impetus, it brings also the results of such impetus. The laws of motion and emotion are quite similar.

At the same time there is also a strong trend toward some practice of meditation among the young. Unfortunately it is complicated by so many conflicting theories of self, and they may not be borne out by man's experience. Buddha was opposed to any theories and strong on practices; science points in the same general direction, but those prone to leadership operate otherwise. And even the little meditation that is practiced may bring about stultification as well as repose. Balance is needed.

GATHEKA: Besides a beginning must be made on the path. If contemplation does not develop in such a form that everything one does in life becomes a contemplation, then the contemplation does not do a person any good.

TASAWWUF: We have in Sufism several forms of the practice of the Presence of God, which is called **Akhlak Allah**. It can be done with the sacred phrases known as kalama or zikr, it can be done by suitable breathing exercises and also by Fikr, thinking of God consciously or unconsciously at all times. Such thinking does not interfere with daily habits or work. There is no division between the sacred and profane in the complete spiritual life.

We also find the same in Mantra Yoga, that by repeating in form, word or thought a sacred phrase, especially one imparted by a guru, the whole of life becomes changed, and for the better.

GATHEKA: It would be like going to church once a week and forgetting all about religion on the other days. To a man who gives ten or twenty minutes every evening to contemplation and forgets it all the rest of the day, contemplation will not do any good. We take our food at certain times every day; yet all the time, even when we are sleeping, the food nourishes our body.

TASAWWUF: By a corresponding process there is life and action going on in the mind, especially the settling on when there should be activity, when there must be repose. If one can settle on a rhythm, this alone would foment better mental health and if the mental health is high, then the mind can help control the body and its functions. But if the mental efficiency is low, then the body is more uncontrolled, the will-power is not so active, and the autonomic nervous system takes over to our betterment or to our loss.

If the Sufi training rhythm is inculcated at all levels, the daily habits benefit when there are rhythms and when a teacher is asked whether people should be engaged in profitable employment he will often say “yes” not because he favors such a way of life as ideal, but because it produces rhythms and these rhythms are very helpful in promoting mental and physical health. Those who are not so employed, who work when they wish and do not when they wish, losing the rhythms, lose health, lose vitality, lose self-control. And they become more deceived when they adopt what they think is a lofty philosophy – it is obtuse, it is complex but it is seldom really profound. It is no substitute for life itself. It is very wearing. It is very wearying.

GATHEKA: It is not the Sufi’s idea to retire in seclusion or to sit silent all day. His idea is that by contemplation he becomes so inspired that in study, in every aspiration, in every aspect of life, progress is made. In this way he proves his contemplation to be a force helping him to withstand all difficulties that come to him.

TASAWWUF: Mohammed declared that there should be no monkery in Islam. He worked all the time. When he had to help people he helped people; when he had to work to support his family he worked to support his family; when he had to listen to Allah, he listened to Allah. His whole life was one of balanced activity and repose, between internals and externals and he became perfect in both and also in balance which comes from perfection in both. But the balance is even more needed than the perfection; in fact in some senses the balance is the perfection, not just rising above flaws. Flawlessness is no doubt needed for many things, but an absolute flawlessness is not necessarily perfection.

And one who has the strong inclination to and in contemplation becomes able to continue in contemplation through all the activities and vicissitudes of life.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Chapter 7 Discipleship

GATHEKA: One wonders, especially in the Western part of the world, what the path of discipleship may really be. Although the path of discipleship was the path of those who followed Christ and all the other teachers, the modern trend of thought has taken away much of the ideal that existed in the past.

TASAWWUF: We often find those who declare that there must be another method, another path for the people of the West. And also in the West we find those who accept traditions of Oriental peoples which the Orientals have discarded because they did not find them perfect. We find both trends in the West.

Actually there is no way for the people attached to nufs to determine who is the advanced one. There are many tales of spiritual teachers appearing in the guise of vagabonds and of madmen and in all kinds of ways. But no matter how many are these stories the generality either expect a certain kind of gentility or a certain kind of outlandishness and it is most difficult to inform a self-ignorant person; even with evidence he does not want to be moved. And that shows that he is still spiritually asleep. There is no need to awaken him.

GATHEKA: It is not only that the ideal of discipleship seems to be little known, but even the ideal attitude towards motherhood and fatherhood, as well as towards the aged, seems to be less understood.

TASAWWUF: Sometimes it is because of the revolt against tradition. Tradition has so firmly established motherhood and fatherhood, but separated them from the spiritual ideal, that naturally there is a revolt. One no longer sees God in the parent because the parent no longer manifests the God-qualities. Sometimes just the opposite. And the failure to impart love, wisdom and generosity to children, although indulging them in all sorts of material things, has provoked revolts and many of them within.

It is really the duty of the parent to examine both their responsibility to their offspring and also to unite their way of life to something more ideal. This is no longer done. The responsibility and authority come to reside in the parent and when there is nothing beyond, the souls of children feel that. But if the parents offer any modicum of spiritual ideal, this could not happen. And then it would be easy to encourage love and devotion to and for the parents.

GATHEKA: This change in the ideal of the world has worked unwittingly to such an extent that world-conflicts have been the result in our times. The troubles between nations and classes, in social and domestic life, all arise for one and the same reason. If someone were to ask me what is the cause of today's world unrest, I would answer that it is the lack of idealism.

TASAWWUF: And perhaps the strength in the young, despite all sorts of abuses and even mental disorder comes from this acceptance of idealism. However else they differ in whatever direction they are striving, many seem to accept idealism and their critics do not. And in accepting this idealism

they are taking the first steps towards God-realization. Many intuitively feel that. This gives them continued strength.

This is not stopped by lectures, sermons, laws and campaigns. Laws and campaigns can not prevent the urges and surges which come from within. They have almost an infinite power in them, and so the more the efforts are made to stem the tide the more powerful the tide itself becomes.

GATHEKA: In ancient times the path of discipleship was a lesson to be applied in every direction of life. Man is not only his body; he is his soul. When a child is born on earth, that is not the time that the soul is born; the soul is born from the moment that consideration is born.

TASAWWUF: If people only knew that! Here by "soul" we mean the oncoming of an individual toward manifest consciousness, and the process of procreation should not be taken lightly. When it is taken lightly there is always the reciprocity and this works against man and woman who will not accept the responsibilities of adulthood.

If we read the Hebrew literature the responsibility is there and it has been codified legally. And it was not only among the Jews but among other peoples, that this being known, it became a restriction; laws had to be followed. And this freedom and joy a rarity. So what is necessary is to pursue righteousness freely, without restrictions. "To thee we give willing surrender." "Freely give, freely receive."

GATHEKA: This birth of consideration is in reality the birth of the soul; man shows his soul in his consideration. Some become considerate as children, others perhaps do not awaken to consideration throughout their whole life.

TASAWWUF: In his last Summer School, in his final addresses to mureeds and also to advanced disciples, Hazrat Inayat Khan emphasized this consideration above all else. His appeal was in vain. He knew it and left the mureeds never to return. It was only long after his passing that the teaching took any hold. Neither the speeches, the direct person or the words were effective for a long, long time.

But now the way is there for consideration. There is a new age with much purer outlooks and mankind is regarded as superior to all the things of earth, as it should be, for this was the very purpose of creation itself. God made man in His Image.

GATHEKA: Love is called a divine element, but love's divine expression is nothing but consideration; and it would not be very wrong to say that love without consideration is not fully divine.

TASAWWUF: This was also the emphatic teaching of Jesus Christ. He also had to withdraw when he saw people were concerned with his personality, not with his teachings. No Messenger of God ever came to be worshipped; he came to teach and to hope that mankind would accept the teachings. Always the personality was accepted and the teachings fell into abeyance. Over and over again it has happened, but now there is a possibility that it will not happen. We reach an age when teachings will be considered and all personalities will be regarded as the beloved ones of God.

GATHEKA: Love that has no consideration loses its fragrance.

TASAWWUF: In India there is Prema-Yoga. The soul is filled with ecstatic love. It is all directed to divinity. It is not directed to creation. Creation is called Maya and Maya is regarded as “illusion” yet in another sense Maya means Divine Mother. We cannot compel that. We can even direct our love to the God that is above all attributes and polarities. But until we love God’s creatures we really do not love God very much. We are still too concerned with ego-self. Even the highest of Bhaktis who becomes absorbed in Prema-Yoga may be suffering from illusion.

Therefore Papa Ram Das said Yoga should be two parts of Bhakti and one part of Jnana. But in Sufism it is not necessary to say that, for Sufism itself is two parts Bhakti and one part of Jnana—it is so inherent in the teachings

GATHEKA: Moreover intelligence is not consideration.

TASAWWUF: So neither is the path of Jnana a complete path. Yet we must be careful; Sankaracharya has left us his poetry. It is not read much. His essays are studied, his writings in prose. Certain conclusions are reached by the majority who judge, who have not fully attained. When they have fully attained they will find that Sankara had a very fine side. Besides one cannot discover God and not find love, mercy, compassion and all beautiful qualities.

GATHEKA: It is the balance of love and intelligence, it is the action and reaction of love and intelligence upon each other that produce consideration.

TASAWWUF: This confirms what has been said. And besides we do not find the perfection in all the claims that are made by so many people. Their claims, their wishes, their teachings are often unbalanced or incomplete. It is only by direct experience of mankind that fulfillment may come—never in words, seldom by rituals

GATHEKA: Children who are considerate are more precious than jewels to their parents. The man who is considerate, the friend who has consideration, all those with whom we come in contact who are considerate, we value most.

TASAWWUF: This is the meaning to love another as oneself, to treat another as one would treat oneself, to deal with another as if one were dealing with oneself.

GATHEKA: Thus it is the lesson of consideration given by the spiritual teachers which may be called the path of discipleship. This does not mean that the great teachers have wanted the discipleship, devotion, or respect of the pupils for themselves. If any teacher expects that, he cannot be a teacher.

TASAWWUF: And that is just what often happens. There has been a procession of personalities, mostly from Asia. They come to the West which does not know what initiation and discipleship and devotion are. Instead of leading the people toward God and toward their own enlightenment, they make of them followers and followers they often remain through the life. It takes a harder awakening to arouse them than to arouse the ignorant for they have been misled.

GATHEKA: How could he then be a spiritual teacher, as he must be above all this in order to be above them? But respect, devotion, and consideration are taught for the disciple’s own advantage, as an attribute that must be cultivated.

TASAWWUF: It may take a multitude of repetitions, "Thy light is in all forms, Thy love in all beings" before this properly impresses the mind. There are a million factors which make it otherwise but these all boil down to one, the nafs, the ego. As long as that persists one tends to expect more from others than he gives.

Besides this the teacher and indeed all the great ones should be examples to be followed, not personalities to be revered. All the reverence given to saints has not transformed the generality. But as soon as a great soul is taken as an example to be emulated, then there is a transformation. It may be very simple, it is always very real. And it is the love for all humanity that characterizes a great soul, not the accumulation of love as if it were some kind of wealth or possession.

GATHEKA: Until now there has been a custom in India, which I myself experienced when young, that the first things the parents taught their children were respect for the teacher, consideration, and a kindly inclination.

TASAWWUF: This is the natural tendency of the child anyhow. The soul is born uncovered and it becomes covered with a thousand veils. The culture, the society, the environment, any heaviness on the part of anybody approaching it, all these produce veils which hide the pristine purity. This is the life of every soul; it always happens. But there is also a way to combat it and this is the first lesson that may now be taught to children, no matter where they are born.

GATHEKA: A modern child going to school has not the same idea. He thinks the teacher is appointed to perform a certain duty; he hardly knows the teacher nor does the teacher know him well. When he comes home he has the same tendency towards his parents as at school. Most children grow up thinking that all the attention their parents give them is only part of their duty; at most they will think, "Perhaps one day if I am able I shall repay it."

TASAWWUF: This is a sense of separation that pervades all western society. There is something called "individualism" and it usually means to be more considerate toward oneself than toward others. And even when there is a change in the social philosophy, it is not always in this direction. Once the sense of separateness and separation is inculcated, it is not so easy to remove it.

GATHEKA: The ancient idea was different. For instance the Prophet Mohammed taught his disciples that the greatest debt every man had to pay was to his mother, and if he wished his sins to be forgiven he must so act through life that at the end his mother before passing from this earth would say, "I have forgiven you the debt." There was nothing a man could give or do, neither money nor service, which would enable him to say, "I have paid my debt;" no, his mother must say, "I have forgiven you that debt." What does this teach? It teaches the value of that unselfish love which is above all earthly passion.

TASAWWUF: We may see this throughout history in many cultures, in many lands. But with the rise of industrialism, with the appeals to cupidity and the desire nature, when the fulfillment of desires was considered the objective in life, there was a great change. Besides mothers were taken out of the home and put in business, in industry, in arts, in society, everywhere else. Then the cohesion diminished. There was no longer the manifestation of this selflessness and so a great social and spiritual revolution took place in protest.

And all the oldest people themselves protested against these protests. But they could do nothing, for the conditions against which the protests were made arose out of the turn of direction from God to ego-self. And when the parents and the powerful emphasize ego-self, then the soul must protest. It cannot be otherwise.

What is necessary is for the young to restore parenthood. To show love and consideration to their offspring. When this happens then the souls of the children will turn to their parents as the last words of the Prophet Malachi, which close the Hebrew testament say. These words have been skipped, religion by-passes so much of the scriptures which seem offensive to it. We must restore this teaching by example.

GATHEKA: If we inquire of our self within for what purpose we have come on earth and why we have become human beings, wondering whether it would perhaps have been better to remain angels, the answer will certainly come to the wise, from his own heart, that we are here to experience a fuller life, to become fully human. For it is through being considerate that we become fully human.

TASAWWUF: The same thing is clearly seen in the history of Buddhism. From an analytical point of view Buddha gave exercises and teachings and the paths to deliverance. But he also taught that all things were subject to change and his followers did not fully accept this. For the awakening soul is more subject to change than anybody else. And each change of outlook can change the philosophy and way of life.

It was through such changes that some became painfully aware of the travail of others just as Buddha himself must have at the beginning of his career. It was his sense of consideration that led him to break with his past and it was this same sense of consideration that brought forth his teachings. But when the priestcraft became satisfied with formalities and when the sense of consideration disappeared, there was a diminution in spiritual attainment. This was the very purpose of his original mission. This purpose had not only to be restored but adjusted to meet the needs of the times and of humanity. And it is this that led to what is known as Mahayana Buddhism and the principles connected with Karuna and Mahakaruna, utmost compassion.

In Sufism today we also accept these principles as the aims of life though with different techniques.

GATHEKA: For it is through being considerate that we become fully human. Every action done with consideration is valuable, every word said with consideration is precious. The whole teaching of Christ—"Blessed are the meek ... the poor in spirit"—teaches one thing: consideration.

TASAWWUF: There is no reason why **Karuna** should be translated as "compassion" and not as "consideration." Too often compassion is regarded as a virtue in the treatment of others, but if we really want to regard others as ourselves, we must pass to consideration. Too often there is verbal "compassion" without substance. This word, words in general have no meaning without essence. And the essence of compassion put into operation is consideration.

GATHEKA: Although it seems simple, yet it is a hard lesson to learn. The more we wish to act according to this ideal, the more we realize that we fail. The further we go on the path of consideration, the more delicate do the eyes of our perception become; we feel and regret the slightest mistake.

TASAWWUF: Thus in Sufism consideration is mingled with **tauba** which is called “repentance,” which means a turning, a change in the direction of life, a change from selfhood. It is this turning in life away from ego that brings the compassion and also brings about that which makes it possible to see from the standpoint of another as well as of oneself.

GATHEKA: It is not every soul that takes the trouble to tread this path. Everyone is not a plant; there are many who are rocks, and these do not want to be considerate, they think it is too much trouble.

TASAWWUF: We see this all the time. And there is no question that some of the greatest obstacles have been put in the path of the spiritual evolution by people who otherwise seem good but who are unable or unwilling to bend themselves. They want to remain as they are; they expect change from everybody else.

GATHEKA: Of course the stone has no pain, it is the one who feels who has pain. Still, it is in feeling that there is life; life’s joy is so great that even with pain one would rather be a living being than a rock, for there is joy in living, in feeling alive, which cannot be expressed in words.

TASAWWUF: And this is also one of the reasons for what has been called “generation gap.” It is not necessarily one of age; it is between those who want to feel alive, be alive, and those who are satisfied with themselves and do not want anything to happen to change this satisfaction. It may seem peaceful, but it is much like the peace of the cemetery, no life.

GATHEKA: After how many millions of years has the life buried in stones and rocks risen to the human being! Even so if a person wishes to stay a rock, he had better stay so, though the natural inclination in every person should be to develop the human qualities fully.

TASAWWUF: This teaching appears in Rumi in his glorious *Masnavi* and it is now recognized that principles of evolution were held by spiritual philosophers many centuries before scientists thought of any such thing (excepting those scientists who themselves were under the same influences). It is fairly clear now that there may be a cosmic evolution all the way from atom to God, so to speak. But the best work done in creation is by man who alone was made in the divine image.

GATHEKA: The first lesson that the pupil learns on the path of discipleship is what is called **Yaqin** in Sufi terms, which means confidence. This confidence he first gives to the one whom he considers his teacher, his spiritual guide.

TASAWWUF: This subject has been dealt with at length by many Sufis and especially in *Kashf Al-Mahjub* by Sheikh Hujwiri (Data Gang Buksh). He also means certainty and reliance and the teaching is to seek and emphasize reliance on God and not on ego-self. This is the teaching. When the *Kashf* is awakened and used the *Yaqin* comes automatically. When there is awareness of self it is seldom there.

One purpose of having a spiritual guide is to remove attention from self to what looks like “otherness.” But the teacher is the manifestation of self also, but not within the confines of nufs.

GATHEKA: In the giving of confidence, three kinds of people can be distinguished. One gives a part of his confidence and cannot give another part. He is wobbling and thinking, “Yes, I believe I have confidence; perhaps I have, perhaps I have not.” And this sort of confidence puts him in a very difficult position. It would be better not to have it at all.

TASAWWUF: There are many instances of it and it is very difficult for the teacher. He cannot always refuse guidance to such people, knowing they will not take it. They are no doubt also the beloved ones of God, but they are not yet fully awake. And we have this sort of character in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* who is called **Pliable** and he is always influenced by crowds.

GATHEKA: It is like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold. In all things this person will do the same, in business, in his profession. He trusts and doubts, he trusts and fears. He is not walking in the sky, he is not walking on the earth; he is in between the two.

TASAWWUF: In the Christian book of Revelation this sort of person is especially castigated, and also elsewhere in the scriptures. But in life this has not been so. The wicked have been called wicked and the good called good and a deep abyss has been made between them as if people had to be one or the other. But in life many, even the majority are not so.

Mohammed especially had to deal with these people and for a long time. He did not know which way they would turn. They did not know which way they would turn. They were called "hypocrites." Many ayats were written against them. They played a peculiar role for a long time. Then seeing victory was on the side of the Prophet and his successors; that honors and wealth would be won on the battlefield, they joined. But they also turned from Islam when the opportunity came and turned the Empire from a spiritual democracy to a dictatorial monarch in the name of Allah and Islam which they were certainly not.

GATHEKA: Then there is another kind, the one who gives his confidence to the teacher, but he is not sure about himself, he is not inwardly sure if he has given it. This person has no confidence in himself, he is not sure of himself; therefore his confidence is of no value.

TASAWWUF: And this person will be constantly seeking interviews. He will want to discuss everything. He will rely on the teacher, he will not rely on himself. He seems loyal and perhaps will remain loyal in a limited sense. The teacher is like a psychiatrist to whom he can go often without paying the fees. And so without paying the fees he will not always accept the suggestion.

One must become very strict about such people. One must learn how to make them carry loads, even simple ones, as if they were little children. One must be very patient in this; otherwise they will wear the teacher out without gaining much themselves.

GATHEKA: And the third kind of person is the one who gives confidence because he feels confident. This confidence alone can rightfully be called *Yaqin*.

TASAWWUF: Fortunately we find more and more of these seekers. In the New Age the seekers are seekers and not just led by curiosity. They must be taught with patience and yet assurance. And the wise teacher will see their paths, and build up confidence in them by reassurance and helping them to trust themselves.

GATHEKA: Jesus Christ had people of all these categories around him. Thousands of people of the first category came, thronged round the Master, then left him. It did not take one moment for them to be attracted, nor one moment for them to leave the Master.

TASAWWUF: This teaching appears in many places. It is especially stressed in the Gita. And while the intellectuals expound the Gita they make it appear otherwise. But the life is not so. The life is exactly as Sri Krishna has explained. Yes, it changes at times for at times there are many sincere and serious seekers on earth. When this occurs the teacher is fortunate. It is not because of himself he is fortunate, it is because of the evolution of the times.

There have been real or false spiritual teachers who have attracted wide attention. But it has not always followed; perhaps it never follows. For unless the vitality of the soul comes to the surface, it is all like a theatrical drama.

GATHEKA: In the second category are those who go on for some time, just as a drunken man goes on and on; but when they are sober again things become clear to them and they ask themselves, "Where am I going? Not in the right direction."

TASAWWUF: The slightest study of history and more particularly newspaper history which may be superficial, shows that this is a human tendency. It takes a very strong person to combat this tendency. And it is not at all necessary, for the same attention given to the seekers, to the pious, to the humble and intelligent will bear far more fruit. Although everyone is the beloved of God, there is a time for awakening for each one.

GATHEKA: Thousands and thousands in this category followed the masters and prophets, but those who stayed to the end of the test were those who before giving their confidence to the teacher first had confidence in their own heart.

TASAWWUF: Usually such people are called fanatics or braggarts. They are not always popular. They have to bear the brunt of ignominy and opposition. But the scriptures everywhere point to those who will stay with the Teacher and teachings "to the end." It is they who will get the reward.

Popular religions are full of doctrines of rewards and punishments. If we look closely everyone has plotted his self-reward. But if we study the teachings, the teachings in and of all religions, it is different. There are standards and it is these standards which operate, not the popular doctrines.

GATHEKA: It is they who, if the earth turned to water and the water turned to earth, if the sky came down and the earth rose up, would remain unshaken, firm in the belief they have once gained. It is by discipleship that a person learns the moral that in whatever position he is, as husband or wife, son or daughter, servant or friend, he will follow with confidence, firm and steady wherever he goes.

TASAWWUF: After Mohammed died, Khalif Abu Bekr proclaimed, "Let those who worshipped Mohammed know he is dead; and let those who worship Allah know that He is ever-living, ever present." And it was this Yaqin on the part of Siddiq that enabled Islam to persist in both its inner and outer aspects.

But the same thing often happens, that when a Master leaves the world, or is betrayed by society, many leave. They have not that Yaqin. And yet this shows the presence of the soul-light. It is neither thought nor emotion and if it manifests as thought or emotion, that is really not it. It is very deep inside and from it come all the confidence, all the perseverance, all the power and vitality a person may have. Really these are aspects of the soul itself.

And as a New Age appears with a different kind of person, so the spiritual principles will manifest more and more and cover the earth, not necessarily in power and authority, but there will be the spiritual sciences again. When they existed before there were not the material and psychic sciences. Now all can persist together.

GATHEKA: After acquiring Yaqin there comes a test, and that is sacrifice. That is the ideal on the path of God. The most precious possession there is, is not too valuable, nothing is too great to sacrifice. Not one of the disciples of the Prophet—the real disciples—thought even their life too great a sacrifice if it was needed.

TASAWWUF: This actually happened and this gave the initial strength to a suddenly rising empire. For it is said that if two or three people stand together in the Divine Makam, then the whole world will be at their feet. The power of uniting love, the power of the divine peace within man are like superhuman powers, but actually this is the human being. All the divine vitality and wisdom and life are there. And so the final lesson Hazrat Inayat Khan gave was to urge, even warn the disciples to stand by the teacher and teachings. They did not, but their short-comings establish guide-lines so that the same errors need not be repeated.

GATHEKA: The story of Ali is very well known: a plot was discovered, that one night some enemies wanted to kill the Prophet, and Ali learnt about it. He did not tell the Prophet. He did not tell the Prophet, but persuaded him to leave home. He himself stayed, for he knew that if he went too the assassins would follow him and find out where the Prophet was. He slept in the same bed in place of the Prophet, so that the assassins might find him, though at the same time he did not intend to lose his life if he could fight them off. The consequence was that the plot failed and the enemies could not touch either the Prophet or Ali.

TASAWWUF: There is another side to this. Ali was possessed both of Yaqin and Kashf. He had extremely keen sight and the blessings and wisdom of Allah were upon him. And besides this there is the strength of silence, by willing to make this sacrifice and keeping quiet he broke disturbance to the enemies, and what they had planned reacted upon themselves.

GATHEKA: This is only one instance, but there are thousands of instances which show that the friendship formed in God and truth between the teacher and the disciple is for always, and that nothing in the world is able to break it.

TASAWWUF: We are fortunate now in being able to obtain details about the first teachers in the Chisti chain, how they followed one another with the stream of descent and Baraka, and this persists to this day. This is also true of the Jilani (Ghailani) family. Once this strength is established through loyalty and devotion, nothing breaks it.

GATHEKA: If the spiritual link cannot hold, how can a material link keep intact? It will wear out, being only a worldly link. If spiritual thought cannot form a link between two souls, what else can constitute such a strong tie that it can last both here and in the hereafter?

TASAWWUF: The whole idea of commentaries may be challenged. Many have written commentaries to see them destroyed. Others have destroyed their own commentaries. But the link with Hazrat Inayat Khan enables us to restore a suitable science and art of commentaries to help people to under-

stand, especially those who go on the spiritual path. And more and more people will need this and do this and all the help that can be given them should be given them.

GATHEKA: The third lesson on the path of discipleship is imitation; this means imitating the teacher in his every attitude, his attitude towards the friend, towards the enemy, towards the foolish, and towards the wise.

TASAWWUF: This is a long, arduous and beautiful path. Many schools of Sufis do nothing but imitate Rassoul Mohammed in everything they do. They follow even little details. This is excellent for the young but it does not awaken the spirit nor enable the kashf to operate. Indeed one Sufi has said that initiation was the sign of the wise and imitation of the ignorant.

There is another way and that is through attunement. It is obvious even to the most devout in tasawwuf, that their bodies have some differences. There are inner differences and outer differences. Even the astrological factors hold and man does not by his own will overcome these. And why should he? Each can become a path to perfection, a different path but still a real one.

In performing tasawwuf one attunes. The members of an orchestra also attune. That does not change them completely. It does not make mannequins or monkeys of them. So by attunement one learns to walk like the teacher, to obtain his rhythms and then to apply them otherwise. But this takes away neither freedom of mind or of spirit. On the contrary it adds to them. One becomes a living light, not a mere shadow. It may look like imitation but this is just the winding. And in that way the spirit of the teacher may work through the disciples.

This is also a teaching which appears in the brochure called *Metaphysics* which gives the outline for one's functions in a supermental capacity. Others have written about the supermind, discussed at some length, but in this small brochure are all the keys. They may be put into practice.

GATHEKA: If the pupil acts as he wishes and the teacher acts as he wishes, then there is no benefit, however great the sacrifice and devotion. No teaching or meditation is as great or valuable as the imitation of the teacher in the path of truth. In the imitation of the teacher the whole secret of the spiritual life is hidden. No doubt it is not only the imitation of his outward action, but also of his inner tendency.

TASAWWUF: It may begin outwardly. It may be in walk or mannerism, but then it will produce a harmonization and unification of breath. They that breathe together really become one in spirit. Yes, something is gained by meditating with the teacher and more is gained through obedience. But it is not only the tree that grows but the branches. There are some trees that grow but their branches do not grow. In the real spiritual movement it is both the trunk and branches that grow and thus they will produce magnificent fruits and flowers.

In the attunement with the teacher it is especially the inner faculties that will awake. One does not become of the same profession, have all the same likes and dislikes and abilities, but one's potentialities become greater and greater. The inner eyes open, the inner senses function and then the heart comes to its proper place.

All this and more is laid down in *Metaphysics*. When man rises above his separativeness this happens. And although the literature states that the Sufi sees the Murshid in all living beings, it takes

time and discipline to bring this out. But when man sees his fellows as the beloved ones of Allah, then also he begins to function in the divine manner (Akhlaq Allah).

GATHEKA: The fourth lesson that the disciple learns is different again. This lesson is to turn the inward thought of the teacher outward, until he grows to see his teacher in everyone and everything, in the wise, in the foolish, and in all forms.

TASAWWUF: This is the true humility. Humility does not come by bowing to God as separate from His creation. Nor in the soft voice. It comes from listening, watching and appreciating others. The humble man is he with large heart and large ears.

As light and love are in all of us, the wise are very careful to keep this in view and also to encourage any increase of them. In other words, the Sufi acts as if he were a teacher of mankind even when he has not been ordained as teacher. He becomes elder brother. And he also teaches by listening, not by proclaiming.

GATHEKA: Finally, by the fifth lesson the disciple learns to give everything that he has so far given to his teacher—devotion, sacrifice, service, respect—to all, because he has learnt to see his teacher in all.

TASAWWUF: We can first see the false teachers and charlatans, that they do nothing of the sort. They expect devotion, sacrifice and service from others. They demand respect and if they do not get it, they become very haughty, but often this succeeds, many are won by such methods, many admire and they may even cluster around such people. But after a while it may wear off because there is no strong cohesion or gravitation.

Then in the attitude toward the humanity. We have many lessons. We even have the Moral Instructions in the literature. They show how one may live in the world for the greater glory of the Living God by manifestation of the divine attributes to the world. And when this is done the whole world benefits.

GATHEKA: One person will perhaps learn nothing all his life, whereas another will learn all five lessons in a short time. There is a story of a person who went to a teacher and said to him, "I would like to be your pupil, your disciple." The teacher said, "Yes, I shall be very glad."

TASAWWUF: There are Sufi teachers who turn down no one. They feel that their response builds up confidence in the other person and this may be of itself the first step, to have the self-confidence. And then they can make use of any virtue in the other. The other is not perfect, but by the establishment of friendship a first step is taken.

GATHEKA: This man, conscious of so many faults, was surprised that the teacher was willing to accept him as a disciple. He said, "But I wonder if you know how many faults I have?" The teacher said, "Yes, I already know your faults, yet I accept you as my pupil."

TASAWWUF: For in that way the person can be directed God-wards. We often forget that God in reality is the only teacher. The one regarded as a teacher on earth, the Murshid or Sheikh or Guru is only a stand-in, so to speak, for God. He has to act the part in order to help others.

GATHEKA: "But I have very bad faults," he said, "I am fond of gambling." The teacher said, "That does not matter much." — "I am inclined to drink sometimes," he said. The teacher said, "That does not matter much." — "Well," he said, "there are many other faults." The teacher said, "I do not mind. But now that I have accepted all your faults, you must accept one condition from your teacher." — "Yes, most willingly," he said. "What is it?" The teacher said, "You may indulge in your faults, but not in my presence; only that much respect you must reserve for your teacher."

TASAWWUF: It is the link between teacher and pupil that is most valuable. The teacher is not a teacher without pupils; and the pupil is not a pupil without a teacher. And it is the link which is valuable, which establishes brotherhood and chains of saints and all the marvelous evidence of spirituality. They come from these links.

GATHEKA: The teacher knew that all five attributes of discipleship were natural to him, and he made him an initiate. And as soon as he went out and had an inclination to gamble or to drink he saw the face of his murshid before him. When after some time he returned to the teacher, the teacher smilingly asked, "Did you commit any faults?" He answered, "O no, the great difficulty is that whenever I want to commit any of my usual faults my murshid pursues me."

TASAWWUF: And this is the true discipleship. One may have the teacher before him in vision or in heart. If he is sure of himself, and especially when his kashf operates it may not be necessary. But one should be willing to call on the murshid, and this without intruding on his presence. And the more one does that he is showing true faith.

GATHEKA: Do not think that this spirit is only cultivated; this spirit may be found in an innocent child. When I once asked a little child of four years, "Have you been naughty?" it answered, "I would like to be naughty, but my goodness will not let me." This shows us that the spirit of discipleship is in us. But we should always remember that he who is a teacher is a disciple himself.

TASAWWUF: No real teacher ever ceases to be a pupil. He will remain a pupil, a disciple, all his life. His teacher may have left the world, or he may be absorbed in higher mystical practices but he remains a pupil, a devotee. And this enables him to be a better teacher because he can also see from the standpoint of disciples.

GATHEKA: In reality there is no such thing as a teacher; God alone is Teacher, we are all disciples. The lesson we all have to learn is that of discipleship; it is the first and the last lesson.

TASAWWUF: This subject once appeared in literature written by a disciple called Nargis. But when it annoyed others the interest in it flagged. Too many wanted to lead without having gone through all the tests, the initiations, the growths, the lifting of the veils. They wanted to lead; they wanted power. In the end there was nothing but attrition, destruction. The spirit of God does not work that way. It is in all people and the wise know this, the foolish do not.

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