

“The Garden of the Lovers and the Excursion of Those Who Yearn” *Rawdah al-Muhibbeen wa Nuzhab al-Mushtaqaen*

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** Unfinished Rough Draft **

Chapter: Concerning the Desire for Allah and the Signs of the One Who Knows Allah

As for the desire for Allah (*rughbah*), feeling one’s need for Him (*lit.* His Countenance), and yearning for the meeting with Him, then such is the capital of the servant [of Allah], the foundation upon which he lives, the basis of his ‘goodly life’, the source of his true happiness, success and bliss, and is the coolness of his eye. It is for this reason that he was created and for it he has been commanded. The messengers have been sent and the books have been revealed for this purpose. There is no rectification or bliss for the heart unless its desire is solely for Allah, alone, Mighty and Majestic is He. Hence, He alone should be the servant’s desire, what he seeks out, and his goal. As Allah, the Exalted, has said, “*So when you have finished (your occupation), devote yourself for Allah’s worship. And to your Lord turn your desires and intentions*” (Qur’an 94:7-8). And He, the Exalted, has also said, “*Would that they were contented with what Allah and His Messenger gave them and had said, ‘Allah is sufficient for us. Allah will give us of His Bounty, and so will His Messenger. We implore Allah*” (Qur’an 9:59).

Those who desire are of three types:

1. Those who desire Allah,
2. Those who desire what Allah has,
3. And those who desire other than Allah.

The true lover is the one who desires Allah. The one who is concerned with spiritual works is the one who desires what Allah has. And the one who is satisfied with this life, in neglect to the Hereafter, is the one who desires other than Him. The person whose desire is for Allah alone, Allah will suffice him from every concern, take on all of his affairs, deflect from him what he is not capable himself to deflect, protect him like the protection of a father to his child and preserve him from all afflictions. Whoever prefers Allah to all others, Allah will prefer him to others. Whoever is for Allah, Allah will be for him, even where the servant is not there for his own self. Whoever *knows* Allah, nothing will be more beloved to him than Him and no desire will remain, in this type of person, for anything other than Him, except that which will bring one closer to Him or assist in the wayfaring to Him.

From among the signs of experiential knowledge (*ma'rifah*) of Allah is veneration and awe (*haybah*). As the servant's experiential knowledge of his Lord increases, so does his veneration and awe increase. As Allah, the Exalted, has said, “*It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah*” (Qur'an 35:28), meaning, those who are knowledgeable concerning *Him*. And the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “I am the most knowledgeable of you concerning Allah and I am the most intense in awe and reverence for *Him*” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Hence, whoever knows Allah (has *ma'rifah*) his livelihood will be pure, his life will be sweet, everything will revere him and all fear of created things will leave his heart. He will find intimacy with Allah and will have an aversion for people (that take him away from this state). Knowledge of Allah (*ma'rifah*) will bequeath to him shyness in front of Allah, veneration and reverence of *Him*, vigilance (concerning *His* watchfulness of the servant), love, trust in *Him*, turning to *Him*, pleasure in *Him* and submission to *His* ordinances.

It was said to Imam Junayd, may Allah have mercy upon him, “There are a group of people here that claim that they can attain righteousness by leaving all movement.” He responded, “Such ones have spoken of the removal of all action, and this is something very immense. The one who fornicates and steals is in a better state than the one who says that (as far as I am concerned). For verily, those who have experiential knowledge of Allah (the *'arifun*) have taken their actions from Allah and they have returned to Allah in them. If I were to live one thousand years I would not decrease in performing righteous works.” He also said, “One who knows Allah does not really know Allah until he becomes like the earth; the feet of the righteous and the unrighteous tread upon him. And (until he becomes) like the rain, it waters what it likes and what it doesn't like.”

Yahya ibn Mu'adh said, “The one who knows Allah leaves this world (at the time of death) and he has not had his fill of two things: crying over his self [*nafs*] and yearning for his Lord.” Others have said, “One who claims to know Allah will not really know Allah until the point that if he is given a dominion like the kingdom of Solomon it would not distract him from Allah for even the blink of an eye.” It has also been said, “The one who knows Allah has found intimacy with Allah, and has an aversion for other than *Him*. Such a one has realized his poverty in front of Allah, so Allah has enriched him from *His* creation. He has humbled himself in front of Allah, so He has ennobled him amongst *His* creation.”

Abu Salyman ad-Darani said, “While (resting) in bed, the one who has experiential knowledge of Allah has openings that do not even come to the one who is standing in prayer!”

Dhun-Nun (al-Misri) said, “For everything there is a punishment. And the punishment of the one who knows Allah (the *'arif*) is being cut off from the remembrance of Allah.”

In summary, the life of the heart is when it is with Allah and there is no life for it without that—no life. So when the heart is in agreement with the tongue in its *dhikr*

(remembrance of Allah) and the heart is in agreement with what the Beloved wants from it; when he (the servant) belittles the many works and statements that he has made and regards even Allah's subtle generosity and kindness as great; when he embraces obedience and leaves off disobedience, and has left all of it for the sake of his Beloved, so that nothing of it remains; when his heart has become full with reverence, awe, preference and pleasure in Him, and his patience in yearning for Him has reached its last straw; when he cannot find repose except in remembrance of Him, desire for Him, and yearning for the meeting with Him; when he cannot find true intimacy except in His *dhiker*, while maintaining His ordinances and preferring Him to others... Then know that this, this is the true lover (*mubibb*).

Imam Junayd said, "I heard al-Harith al-Muhasibi say: "Love (*mahabbah*) is your inclination to something with all of your being. It is your preference to that thing over your own self, your soul and your possessions and wealth. It is also your being in accordance with that thing inwardly and outwardly, privately and publicly. Then comes realizing your shortcomings with regards to your love of it."

It was said, "Love (*mahabbah*) is a fire that burns in the heart. It burns everything other than what the beloved wants from the lover." It was also said, "Nay, it is exerting all efforts in pleasing the beloved. And such can never be so until one no longer sees the 'love' itself anymore, but only witnesses the beloved." It is mentioned in some of the Hadith Qudsi, "My servant, I am, by your right, a lover of you. So, be you, by my right upon you, a lover of Me."

'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak said, "Whomsoever is given something of love and is not given its equivalent of awe and veneration (*kbashyah*), then he is deceived."

Yahya ibn Mu'adh said, "A muster seed's amount of love is more beloved to me than seventy years of worship without love!"

Abu Bakr al-Kattani said, "An issue concerning the matter of love (*mahabbah*) came up in Makkah, during the days of the Pilgrimage. Several of the shaykhs spoke on the matter. Imam Junayd was present, and was the youngest amongst them. So they said to him, 'Give us what you have, O Iraqi!' He lowered his head in humility, his eyes shed tears, and then he spoke: 'How great is the servant who has left himself, been connected to the *dhiker* of his Lord, while upholding His rights and witnessing Him with his heart. The lights of His Essence have burned his heart and his drink is pure from the cup of His pure love. If such a one speaks, it is by Allah. If he utters, it is from Allah. If he moves, it is by the command of Allah. If he remains silent, he is with Allah. So he is by Allah, for Allah and with Allah.' Upon hearing this the shaykhs cried and said, 'There is nothing that can be added to this. May Allah rectify you, O *Taj al-'Arifin* (crown of those who know Allah)!'"

It was said that Allah revealed to Prophet Dawud, peace be upon him, "O Dawud, I have made it prohibited (*harâm*) for the hearts to contain the love of Me and the love of others at the same time."

Those who know Allah (the *'arifun*) have all agreed that love is not acceptable

without compliance (with the Sacred Law), so much so that some of them said, “The reality of love is being in accordance with what the beloved wants, with special regards to what pleases and displeases him.” The People (of the Science of Inner Purity; *al-Qawm*) have also agreed that love is not acceptable without *Tawhid* (belief in the Oneness of Allah).

It was related that there was a man who claimed to be overwhelmed by the love of a certain person. So, one day, this person said to him, “How can this be so, when my brother over here is much more attractive and more perfect in beauty than I am?!” Upon hearing this, the man glanced over at him, at which the person pushed him and said, “One who claims to love us and then glances at other than us?!”

About the Translator:

Christopher ‘Khalil’ Moore was born in the United States into a practicing Christian family. He came to the path of Islam in the summer of 1994 at the age of 19. Since then he has studied Arabic and Islamic knowledge in the blessed city of Madinah (1996-1999), the deserts of West Africa, the Atlas Mountains of southern Morocco, and the Hadramawt Valley of Yemen. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in English, with a minor in Religious Studies (George Mason University), and hopes to complete his Master’s and PhD in the fields of translation, interpretation, and Oriental Studies.

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