

THE SHAYKH AND THE MURID

(Spiritual guide and Disciple)

The Benefits of becoming a Murid

There are several benefits in becoming a murid:

- 1 At times a person errs in the different methods of reforming the heart that were mentioned previously. The shaykh shows the correct path in this regard.
- 2 At times the effect and benefit that one derives from a book is not as great as that which one would have obtained from the guidance of a shaykh. One gains the barakah of the shaykh. Furthermore, if the murid displays any shortcoming in carrying out a good act or commits an evil act, he will be ashamed of this in front of the shaykh.
- 3 The person develops confidence and love for the shaykh. Based on this, he is inclined to follow and emulate the ways of the shaykh.
- 4 If the shaykh is strict in giving his advice or displays his anger, the person does not feel offended and endeavours to act upon his advice.

There are many other benefits which are acquired by those whom Allah has favoured. These can only be known by acquiring and experiencing them.

Qualities of the Shaykh

If a person wishes to become a murid, he should first consider the following factors in the shaykh. If the latter does not possess these qualities, do not become his murid,

- 1 The shaykh must know the masa'il of Din. He should not be ignorant of the Shari'ah.
- 2 He must not possess any quality that is contrary to the Shariah. His aqáid (beliefs) must be the same as those that have been mentioned in Part One of Bahishti Zewar. He should not possess any quality that is contrary to all the masa'il and all those things connected to reformation of the heart that have been mentioned in this book.
- 3 He must not be carrying out this programme (of shaykh and murid) as a means of sustenance. (That is, he must not be doing it for financial gain).
- 4 Become the murid of a person who is regarded as a pious person by the majority of good people.
- 5 Become the murid of a person who is spoken highly of by good people.
- 6 His programme of instruction must be such that one develops a love and inclination for Din. [his can be gauged by looking at the condition of his murids. Even if fifty- sixty percent of his murids are good. consider such a shaykh to be effective. Do not have doubts on him by looking at the condition of a few murids. You may have heard that the pious persons have a lot of effect. This (looking at the condition of his murids') is the criterion whereby one gauges the effect and power of a shaykh. Do not gauge the effect and power of a shaykh through other means, such as something occurring exactly as he mentioned it to you, someone getting cured by his mere touch, that a ta'wiz worked according to the reason for which he gave it to you or that if he fixes his gaze on a person he becomes completely entranced and at a loss. Never be deluded by these effects and powers.
- 7 The shaykh must be such that he does not take into consideration the status of his murith when giving them advice of the Din. (That is, he does not favour his murids when it comes to reprimanding them in matters of the Din). He stops them from useless and foolish things.

Once you have found such a shaykh, seek permission from your parents (if you are unmarried) or from your husband (if you are married), and become a murid of such a shaykh solely for the purpose of putting your Din in order. If your parents or husband do not permit you to become a murid, do not become one as it is not fardh to become a murid. However, it is fardh to tread the path of the Din. You should therefore continue treading this path even if you are not a murid of a shaykh.

Rules connected to the shaykh and murid

- 1 Be respectful to your shaykh. Remember the name of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'a in exactly the way shown to you by your shaykh. Have the following belief with regard to your shaykh: "The spiritual benefits that I can gain from this shaykh cannot be gained from any other shaykh."¹
- 2 If the murid's heart has not been reformed properly as yet and the shaykh passes away, he must become a murid of another shaykh in whom the above-mentioned qualities are found.
- 3 When you come across any wazifah in any book or read about the frugal life of someone, do not act upon it on your own accord. Ask your shaykh about it first. If any good or evil thought enters your heart or you decide to do something, first consult your shaykh.
- 4 Do not remove your purdah in the presence of your shaykh. At the time of becoming a murid, do not shake his hands. It is permissible to take the oath of allegiance (bayah) by holding one end of a handkerchief or piece of cloth while he holds the other end. A verbal bayah is also sufficient.
- 5 If you mistakenly become a murid of a person who acts contrary to the shari'ah, or if he was good in the beginning and later changed, then sever your contact with him and become a murid of some other pious person. However, if your shaykh commits a sin which could be overlooked, then think to yourself that he is also human and that he is not an angel. He has made a mistake which could be forgiven by his making taubah. Do not allow your conviction in him to dwindle over trivial matters. However, if the shaykh persists on such acts, sever your contact with him.
- 6 It is a sin to believe that your shaykh has full knowledge of everything you do.
- 7 Never read books which have stories of the dervishes which appear to be contrary to the Shari'ah. Similarly, you should not read poems that are contrary to the shari'ah.
- 8 Some dervishes say that the path of the Shari'ah is different from the path of the dervishes. Such dervishes are astray. It is fard to consider them to be liars.
9. If the shaykh asks you to do anything that is contrary to the Shari'ah it is not permissible to act upon it. If he insists on you to carry it out, sever your contact with him,
- 10 If, due to the barakah of taking the name of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala you experience a good state in your heart, you have a good dream or upon waking up) hear a voice or see some light, then do not mention this to anyone other than your shaykh nor inform anyone of the wazifahs that you read or the ibadah that you make because by doing so. this good fortune will go away.
- 11 If your shaykh asks you to recite a particular wazifah or engage in a particular form of dhikr and after some time you still do not experience any delight in this not be disheartened, nor should you lose your confidence in your shaykh. Instead think to yourself that the greatest effect is that your heart is making an intention remembering Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and that you are being given the opportunity to do good. Never think that you should be blessed with the opportunity of pious persons appearing in your dreams, that you should begin to have knowledge of things that are still going to occur, that you should be able to cry profusely or that you should become so engrossed in your ibadah that you are unaware of other things. these things occur at times and at times they do not. If they do, express your gratitude to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala If they do not occur, decrease after having occurred frequently or cease to occur altogether, then do not be saddened. However, if, All forbid, you display any shortcoming in following the Shari'ah or commit any then this is definitely something to be distressed about. You should immediately make an effort to put your condition in order, inform your shaykh about it and act upon advice.
- 12 Do not be disrespectful of other shaykhs or other sufi orders. Nor should you address the murid's of other shaykhs or other sufi orders by telling them that your shaykh is greater than his or that your shaykh's order is greater than his. By engaging such unnecessary and foolish conversations the heart begins to darken.
- 13 If your shaykh pays more attention to a fellow murid, or if a fellow murid gains more benefit from his wazifahs and dhikrs, do not be jealous of him.

Guidelines on how a Murid and every other Muslim should spend his night and day

¹ However, at no time should one be disrespectful to or look down upon any other shaykh

- 1 Acquire knowledge of the Din according to your needs. You could acquire knowledge either by reading a book or by asking the ulama
2. Abstain from all sins.
3. If you commit any sin, repent immediately.
4. Do not hold back in fulfilling anyones right. Do not cause anyone physical or verbal bairn. Do not speak ill of anyone.
5. Do not have any love for wealth nor any desire for name and fame. Do not cloth yourself with extravagant food and clothing,
6. If someone rebukes you for your mistake or error, do not try to justify your act. Admit your fault and repent.
- 7 Do not embark on a journey without any dire necessity. This is because many unconscious and unintended acts are committed while on a journey. Many good deeds are missed out, there is a shortcoming in the different forms of dhikr (remembrance of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala), and you are unable to accomplish your tasks on time.
- 8 Do not laugh excessively nor talk excessively. You should take special precaution in not talking with ghayr mahrams (those with whom the observance of purdah is incumbent) in an informal way.
- 9 Do not go about repeating or mentioning an argument that may have taken place between two persons.
- 10 Always be mindful of the rules of the Shari ah in everything that you do.
- 11 Do not display laziness in executing any act of ibadah.
- 12 Try and spend most of your time in seclusion.
- 13 If you have to meet and converse with others, meet them with humility and do not display your greatness.
- 14 Associate very little with rulers and those who hold high positions.
- 15 Stay very far from irreligious people.
- 16 Do not search for the faults of others. Do not have evil thoughts about anyone. Instead, look at your own faults and try to put them in order.
- 17 You should be very particular in offering your salaah in the proper manner, at the proper time and with great concentration.
- 18 Always occupy yourself in the remembrance of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala either with your heart or tongue. Do not be neglectful in this regard at any time.
- 19 If you experience any satisfaction in taking the name of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and your heart feels happy over this, then express your gratitude to Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala.
- 20 Speak in a nice, humble way.
- 21 Set aside specific times for all your different tasks and abide strictly to these times.
- 22 Consider whatever regret, sorrow or loss you may experience to be from Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala. Do not be despondent. Instead, think that you will be rewarded for this.
- 23 Do not think about worldly matters, calculations, profits and losses, etc. all the time. Instead, think about Allah Subhanahu Wa Taala.
- 24 As far as possible, try to help and benefit others irrespective of whether it be in worldly affairs or Deeni matters.
- 25 Do not eat and drink too little to the extent that you become weak and fall ill. Nor should you eat and drink too much to the extent that you feel lazy in carrying out the different acts of 'ibddah.
- 26 Do not have any desire or greed for anything from anyone except Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala. Do not allow your mind to wander towards any place thinking that you will be able to gain certain benefit or profit from there. .
- 27 Be restless in your quest for Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala.

- 28 Be grateful for the favours that are bestowed upon you irrespective of whether they are plenty or few, Do not be depressed with poverty and destitution.
29. Overlook the faults and mistakes of those who are under your control.
30. If you earn of any fault of someone, conceal it. However, if the person plans to cause harm to someone else and you learn of it, then warn the other person beforehand,
- 31 Be in the service of guests, travellers, strangers, ulama, and the pious servants of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala
32. Choose the company of the pious.
33. Fear Allah Subhánahu Wa Ta'ala all the lime.
34. Remember death.
35. Set aside a certain time daily wherein you should think about all your actions for that day. When you remember any good action, express gratitude. When you remember any evil action, repent.
36. Don't ever speak a lie.
37. Don't ever attend gatherings that are contrary to the Shari ah.
38. Live with bashfulness, modesty and forbearance.
39. Do not be conceited by thinking to yourself that 'I have such-and-such qualities in me.'
40. Continue making dua to Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala to keep you steadfast on the straight path.