

TRUSTING IN ALLAH'S OUTCOME

by Es-Seyyid Es-Shaykh Taner Ansari

Bismillah er Rahman er Rahim [In the Name of Allah, The One Who acts with mercy, The Source of Mercy]. All praise belongs to Allah. He owns everything. All power belongs to Him and not to us. May His peace and blessings be on his Prophet Muhammad and his family and on all the other prophets and their families.

Allah is everywhere and by being with Allah you are provided protection and other resources which are far beyond what you will ever muster by yourself. We must remember that Allah has all of the power and that we have no power. Abdul Qadir Geylani says, "When you were a baby, you could not take care of yourself, but Allah took care of you. Now that you are strong, you need to remember that all power belongs to Allah and not to us. Being with Allah is the best form of protection."

If you want to be with Allah, you need to have inner quietness. When you are with Allah, knowing that Allah is there all the time, then the outcome of any given situation becomes unimportant. Allah is good, and if you are a part of His domain, you will do good. When Allah wants to use you as His deputy in order to accomplish something in the world, Allah will use you as long as you are in a state of surrender. Your brain, your thinking mechanism, is not what Allah needs. When you silence your thoughts, the command power of Allah decides which part is going to do what. But if the command part of Allah is not with you, you are not capable of being used as Allah's deputy. Your actions in that state may have no moral merit. When you are surrendered to Allah, there is no merit one way or the other because in that moment you cease to exist. You are nothing.

How do you know what state you are in? You can test yourself this way. As long as you say "I" you are not with Allah. Be quiet and let Allah do his Allah-hood through you. In that state, you will not be aware of yourself. You will be nothing.

Sufis Must Have Above-Average Actions

Remember that we are Sufis. This means that we are above-average people. We have to have above-average actions. It is expected of us to do the best action, not just what is expected by custom or practice or what our neighbors do. For example, it is expected for us to have compassion for our enemies. That is what our Prophet (peace be upon him) had. Each time they swore at him or tried to hit him, he asked Allah to forgive them because they did not know any better. Once upon a time, you did not know any better either. Earth is a school. Everyone starts with nothing and begins learning and leaves with some degree of knowledge, that is, whatever they have accumulated during life here on Earth. But no one comes here in a perfect state. We have to tolerate every-one's incompleteness because we are in a learning stage no matter how old we are.

The Prophet (pbuh) talked about the men who used to sit on the *saffa* in his mosque. This *saffa* was a raised area or platform in the mosque. A certain group of young men used to come and sit on this *saffa* and make *zikr*. They were called the *Ahl-i Saffa*, people of the Bench. These were the ones who desired to be closest to the Prophet (pbuh). In these stories they are shown to be the people who are raised up, indicating their rank in connection with the Prophet (pbuh). This rank comes from following a higher order of behavior, as we have been discussing. They wanted to be closest to the Prophet (pbuh) in order to understand, to learn and to model themselves upon the Prophet's behavior. That is what we should do too.

Give Others A Chance To Learn

We have to forgive each other because we are all in the same boat. Nobody's perfect. Although someone may say he is a king, he is still incomplete and doesn't know his own ignorance. Even though somebody acts like a donkey because he is ignorant, we have to give him a chance to learn. Allah gives us the chance to learn. Allah says in the *Qur'an-i Karim* [Generous Qur'an] that if He were to take each person to task whenever they made a mistake, there would be no person left crawling on earth. Can you imagine how it would be each time someone does something wrong? Allah would then sweep in and, bang, they are gone? Allah leaves us room to grow and learn from our mistakes. We have to do the same thing for our fellow men, women and children, so that they have a chance to learn, too. This is the Sufi way because as Sufis we try to follow the patterns that Allah has set down for us.

Action for Another's Benefit

Allah brought you here and put you among those that he loves as a great favor. In return, everything that you do is a *zakat* [poor due; alms; charity]. The *zakat* of Sufism is being good and helping people and not getting angry. The human body is not compatible with anger and anger does not help the human body at all. Compassion, love and mercy are compatible with the human body and your system. If you get angry, you may get heart trouble, heart attacks, tension, and other diseases. This is a scientific fact that is one demonstration of this truth. If Allah wanted us to be angry and uncompassionate people, would He have made anger so detrimental to our bodies?

Let's say that there is a person who is working on a farm harvesting grapes. Somebody comes along and says to him, "Your house is burning." And so he gets on his horse and rushes towards his house. On his way he passes by a fountain. Sitting beside the fountain is a drunken man, begging for some water. The man on the horse says, "If you can, just reach next to you. The water is there, right where you are sitting." But the drunken man in his ignorance says, "Hey man, where are you going, aren't you going to give me some water? I am so thirsty." What would a Sufi do in this situation?

The answer is that you would get off your horse and give this man some water. If you can do this without resentment, then you can be a Sufi. If you can put aside your personal problems, ignore the fact that your own house is burning, and help someone who is so ignorant that they have made themselves drunk and cannot see that the water they need is right in front of them, then you are a Sufi.

In every situation, ask yourself, "What is a better action?" You are sick and you have all this work to do. Your son or daughter says, "Can you help me with my math?" Then what do you do? Can you be nice to them or talk to them without yelling at them? "Yes honey, what can I do for you?" Or do you tell them, "Look, don't you see that I am suffering here?" Can you be kind when people have been unkind to you? When you are sick yourself and need help, can you help others?

There are so many stories that illustrate this point. One time there is a war and the women are carrying water to the wounded. As one of the women is about to give water to a soldier, he says, "No, give the water to my brother over there. He is more wounded than I am." And the other soldier sends the water back to him, but by the time the woman returns to the first man, he is already dead. What is more important? Life and death matter, but can you say, "No, give the water to someone else," even when you are dying? This is a Sufi.

Judging Your Conduct by Allah's Standards Alone

As Sufis we are responsible for our own actions and will be judged by Allah according to the extent of our connection to Him and ability to serve as his deputy by becoming nothing and allowing Allah to act through us. Thus, we identify only with Allah and not with any group. If someone who calls himself a Muslim does an action that hurts others, it does not mean that all the other Muslims are responsible. Likewise, when Timothy McVeigh blew up all the people in Oklahoma City, Christians as a whole were not held responsible for this. How can anyone else be held responsible but the people who actually are involved in committing the act? One-fourth of the world is Muslim, so whatever bad or good is done, will one-fourth of the world be responsible? No. It is important to understand that there is good and evil on this earth. It is not only Muslims who do good or evil acts, but all the other ethnic, cultural, and religious groups do too. We can see examples of this in every culture. Although Muslims have done destructive things, Christians have destroyed cultures, such as that of the Aztecs. What about Egypt when the Romans conquered it? They killed all the priests and destroyed everything. That is why we could not read their writing until we found the Rosetta stone. Allah sent the Rosetta stone, so that the knowledge that was destroyed by human ignorance could stay in the world.

It is important to become accountable to Allah and to try to have good behavior of the highest kind, and not just do what your country or your tribe or your people do, but what Allah has told us what we must do. It is important to follow Allah's guidance and the example of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and to try to gain favor in the eyes of Allah at all times.

When it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed." They say, "Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers." What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance? (Holy Qur'an, 2:170)

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